

# HEATH HERALD

## Heath's First Newspaper

\$2.00

Volume 41, Number 6

February/March 2020



**Heath Herald Volunteers**

Managing Editor: Nancy Thane, [nancythane@yahoo.com](mailto:nancythane@yahoo.com), 413-337-5580

Issue Content: Deb Porter, [debporterhenry@gmail.com](mailto:debporterhenry@gmail.com), 413-337-4715

Graphic Design: Rachel Grabelsky, [rachel.grabelsky@gmail.com](mailto:rachel.grabelsky@gmail.com), 413-337-8513

Layout: Cathy Tallen, [tallen@valinet.com](mailto:tallen@valinet.com), 413-337-5770

Copy Editor: Jack Estes, [estesja@gmail.com](mailto:estesja@gmail.com)

Subscriptions and Advertising: Mary Sumner, [msumner13@verizon.net](mailto:msumner13@verizon.net), 413-337-5330

Bookkeeper: Tara Mason [tmason@sgegroupp.com](mailto:tmason@sgegroupp.com), 508-259-6043

[TheHeathHerald@gmail.com](mailto:TheHeathHerald@gmail.com) Contact: Nina Hofkosh-Hulbert, [nina.hh1@gmail.com](mailto:nina.hh1@gmail.com)

Distribution: Pat McGahan, [patricia.mcgahan01@gmail.com](mailto:patricia.mcgahan01@gmail.com), 413-337-4078

Website: Nina Hofkosh-Hulbert, [nina.hh1@gmail.com](mailto:nina.hh1@gmail.com)

**On the Cover**

Peaceful winter scene in Heath. Photograph by Rachel Grabelsky.

**The Heath Herald Logo**

The *Heath Herald* proudly features a reproduction of the original *Heath Herald* logo design by Harriet Read for the *Heath Herald*'s first edition in April 1979.

**Payment Questions**

If you have questions regarding payment, please contact Mary Sumner. Contact information above.

**Correspondence**

There are three ways to submit your letters to the editor, articles, and/or subscription forms:

- Send to our email address:  
[TheHeathHerald@gmail.com](mailto:TheHeathHerald@gmail.com)
- Send to our PO Box:  
*Heath Herald*, PO Box 54, Heath, MA 01346

- Drop off at our Town Hall box:  
Local residents can drop a letter or subscription form into the black box on the wall to the left of the post office boxes in the vestibule (no postage needed).

**Submission Deadlines**

January 5 for inclusion in February/March issue  
March 5 for inclusion in April/May issue  
May 5 for inclusion in June/July issue  
July 5 for inclusion in August/September issue  
September 5 for inclusion in October/November issue  
November 5 for inclusion in December/January issue

**Photo Credits**

If you would like a photo credited, please identify the source when you send the photo to the Gmail account. Some uncredited photos courtesy of Getty Images.

**Image Guidelines**

If you are sending a document with embedded images, please include separate image files to facilitate editing.

Digital image resolution of 300 ppi is preferred (images

taken at 3.5 megapixel or greater will usually be sufficient). Please include information about the image, including the names of people shown, if such information is not included in an accompanying article. Please send us email with questions or to receive more detailed photo submission guidelines.

**Display Ads**

\$5 per vertical column inch\* for black & white

\$6 per vertical column inch\* for color

Please note with your ad:

black and white, or color

2 or 3 vertical inches

\*A vertical column inch=one column width by one inch height

Our staff will be happy to work with you to create your ad at no additional cost. Advertisers receive a free PDF subscription to the *Heath Herald*. Ads can be placed by sending your information with payment to our PO Box.

**Subscriptions**

The annual subscription rate for six issues is \$12 at time of renewal. Subscription forms may be found near the *Heath Herald* Direct Sales box in the hallway of the Town Hall and on the back page of every issue. Send form with payment to our mailing address or leave in the black *Heath Herald* box to the left of the post office boxes in the Town Hall vestibule.

**Color Sponsorship**

The color photographs and images in each issue of the *Heath Herald* are funded by you, our readers. Through the sponsorship of generous individuals, we are able to showcase the vibrancy of life here in Heath in such a way as would not otherwise be possible. Consider becoming a \$25 Color Sponsor for an upcoming edition of the *Heath Herald*. Should you wish to add your support, be sure to note "Color Sponsor" on your check so that we can acknowledge your contribution in a future edition.

*The views expressed in the Heath Herald are solely those of the authors and may not reflect those of the Heath Herald staff or advertisers.*

## *A Yankee Churchill*

by Merritt E. Churchill

“Here in warmhearted recall is a vivid picturization of a New England farm boyhood and lively young manhood at the turn-of-the-century [born in Heath on July 13, 1885], in the days when work was really work and play was all the more welcome because you thought it up yourself and enjoyed it to the full.”

*Merritt H. Churchill was Hilma (Churchill) Sumner's great uncle. An excerpt from his 1965 book appears here:*

After I got to be 10 or 11 I worked for Mr. S--- every year in sugaring. About March 20, weather permitting—and it usually did—we would start early in the morning, while the crust would hold up, delivering buckets around to the trees. About 300 of his buckets were tin and 200 were wooden. Part of his trees were along the side of the road. The rest were in the woods. After the crust got so it wouldn't hold up we would start tapping the trees. He would bore two holes and I would drive the spigots and hang the buckets. If the sap started running fast when we set the buckets we had to work fast to get the roads broken out to the trees in the woods before the buckets ran over and wasted the sap. As soon as we got a few barrels of sap gathered I would start boiling. He would gather the sap alone.



*Row of hogsheads, large casks of liquid measuring anywhere between 54 and 63 gallons.*

The sugarhouse equipment consisted of four hogsheads (left) that held about five barrels each, a rubber hose with a faucet on the end connected to one of these hogsheads and leading into the

"heater," as it was called, which sat next to the chimney in the arch that supported the pan. This was four feet wide and eight feet long, with three compartments.

The sap ran from the trees through the spouts into the small bucket, was picked up in pails, dumped into the gathering tub, hauled to the sugarhouse, and run from the gathering tub through a hose into the hogsheads. From there it went through a hose with a faucet (to regulate the flow) into the heater. When the heater got full

enough it spilled out through a pipe in the side into a pan that had three compartments with little gates to regulate the depth in each compartment.

Mr. S--- always had good dry wood in the sugarhouse. When I took command at 10 or 11 years old, I built up a good hot fire, kept the sap regulated to keep the heater from boiling dry and burning; manipulated the gates so as to keep the sweet sap coming to the front of the pan through the gates; and at last, when the syrup was thick enough to draw off, I thought that I was doing something. I had seen our father burn up our pan at home while playing checkers, so I was right up on my toes to see that nothing like that ever happened to me. I never scorched the pan—I knew what a loss like that meant.

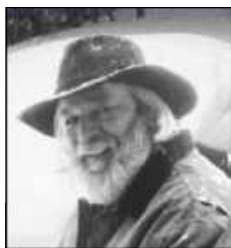
After the near syrup was drawn off from the pan it had to be taken in the sugarhouse and boiled down in an old iron kettle (a part of the old brick oven that was located in the kitchen), so it would run off the dipper into what they used to call "a leather apron." This constituted syrup that weighed 11 pounds to the gallon. They made quite a lot of soft sugar, also sugar cakes for different customers.

They were very neat people and took great pride in making their sugar and syrup as nice as possible. There were no laws to compel them to put stickers on each can to tell who made it. It was pride, not law, that made good sugar in those days. Boy, it tasted one thousand times better to me in those days than it does now. Another thing that I would like to kick Father Time in the shins for! How I pity boys who have to live in the city, where they never have experiences on the farm!



*Painting of Merritt Churchill's sugar house in Heath by Frances Mary Avery of Charlemont.*





## Wild Ramblings

—Bill Lattrell

### Nesting—A Valentine Story

Hikes in the woods provide time for reflection. Parallels between natural history and human life are abundant. In my mind, finding the root of human behavior and actions within an ecological construct is more than satisfying. It is essential.

About a week ago Samson Gitlit of Tennessee, our Majestic Hound, and I were exploring a small area of snow-filled hemlock forest near our house. Sam is kept on a leash by my side most of the time because of his propensity for following his nose instead of my hollow commands. He is a dog for the ages, however, when it comes to locating treasures under the snow. He pokes his nose into the snow up to his eyes and takes deep breaths. The sound that his scenting creates is a bit like a locomotive. And when he finds something he is keen about, he starts to dig furiously. On this day he stuck his nose into the snow at the base of a hemlock. He pulled his head back out of the cold, frozen precipitation and looked up at me with exclamation points tattooed into his eyes, and then he put his nose back to the ground and started digging with abandon. I immediately grabbed his halter and pulled him back thinking he was about to extricate a vole but was surprised to see at the bottom of his snowy hole a very small, in fact, tiny, nest (below).



I gently pulled the nest from the snow hole, amazed that it was intact and avoided destruction by Sam's enthusiastic digging. The nest was about half the size of my palm and

an intricate weaving of plant materials, bark, and the finest, most delicate, hemlock twigs. The nest was in perfect condition, and given its small size, its construction, and its position at the bottom of the hemlock trunk, I knew immediately that it was the nest of a black-throated green warbler. These wonderful, miniscule, birds often



*Black-throated green warbler*

nest about 10 to 12 feet up on a hemlock where they build on a small limb tight against the trunk of the tree. It was a weaving of hemlock twigs of the smallest variety (woodsmen or woodswomen will recognize these as a treasured fine tinder for starting fires), strands of white birch bark, a few slivers of yellow birch bark, with thin threads of spider silk (the material used for spider webs) holding it all together. This nest, built with love by the parents, with care and perfection, is a testament to both skill and art. It is, from my point of view, perfect.

I held the nest in my hand and admired it. Sam looked up at me as if to say "Hey, I found it! Let me check it out!" I then held the nest in front of Sammy's nose. He snorted with great enthusiasm as (I imagine) the faint waft of warbler scent graced his olfactory senses. At that moment I realized, once again, that hounds live in a world that we cannot imagine. With a sense of smell thousands of times more powerful than our own, they experience a world that can never be part of us. I held the nest for about a minute in front of his nose when he tried to swat it out of my hand with his heavy, massive paw, something that Majestic Hounds have in common with Bloodhounds.

I pulled the nest back and held it high out of Sam's reach while kneeling and eventually sitting with my back against the hemlock trunk. I marveled at the nest from a human perspective using my vision to take in every single detail. It was, in fact, a work of art. As I sat there admiring it, Sam sat next to me, his attention now focused on some distant smell. He stuck his nose into the air and took in molecules of scent that I can only dream of.

I was still admiring the nest when my mind wandered to a time, long ago when my wife, Maureen, and I started our life together. When we first started dating, I had already begun to build a house. It was at the very early stages. I had felled the trees and was getting them made into lumber by a local sawyer. I spent more time handling logs and stacking lumber than I did building.

There was no urgency to the project. I had some carpentry skills and was a very hard worker. Mo had no carpentry skills but she was diligent when it came to getting things done. Not too long after our romance began and we started to get serious, we started talking

about building the house together. It was a bit daunting, but taking the process one day at a time seemed to make the project doable. And suddenly, without really planning it, both of us were working side by side putting all of our energy and spending all of our money on the house. We worked every day into the night after our day jobs, and also spent weekends weaving our own framing lumber, boards, salvaged windows, insulation, nails, and shingles to create a home. During our second year we were married at our partially built home, completely framed with a shingled roof and solid walls, with 86 friends and family members in attendance. Less than two weeks later Maureen told me she was going to have our baby. I was elated, scared to death, and more motivated than ever to finish the house so we could move out of our small 12-foot by 20-foot cabin.

Our baby was due in early spring. So we doubled our efforts, even though we did not think it was possible to do so, and pushed towards constructing a dwelling that we could live in as winter approached. We dug a well by hand, plumbed the house, and installed an indoor toilet that seemed like the most luxurious item in the world. In fact the day I hooked the toilet up, I called Maureen at work on our newly installed land line and flushed the toilet so she could “witness” the first flush. We laughed and laughed at this small miracle. We also installed handmade doors and recycled windows. About two months before our son was born, we moved in. And even though the interior walls were not finished and the upstairs rooms had floors with only rough-cut boards, we thought we were in the lap of luxury.

Our first son was born. We were still in love. Life was perfect. Much like the nest I held in my hand made by the black-throated green warblers and built with love and care.

—Bill Lattrell



**Happy Valentine's Day!**

## Spotted Around Town



### Duck. Goose. Goose.

These two geese and one black duck showed up at Pondsides early this fall. The pair of geese are regulars, having stopped by each spring and fall during migration for a few years now, but their little friend was new to us. It became clear early on during their autumn visit that they were a threesome, as the little duck tagged along everywhere the geese went. They were even seen to be sleeping as a group on our back lawn. These unlikely friends stayed rather later than usual, seeming not to notice that the water had turned to ice, then one day in early December we noticed that the gander and duck were gone. Mama goose, however, is still with us, hanging out on our back porch, eating leftovers from our feeder birds and traveling upstream for snacks in the open brook. We are afraid that she is here to stay at this point. In some ways it would be interesting for her to become tame enough that we could get a hold of her, as she is tagged, and we would love to know where she is from, and to let those who tagged her know what our piece of her migratory pattern has been. Then again, it would be a sad thing for her to become so tame as to be completely reliant on us for protection from predators. We will keep you posted!

—Nancy Thane





**JACKSONVILLE  
GENERAL STORE**

QUALITY MEATS • PREPARED FOODS • CHEESES • BREADS  
PIES • PRODUCE • GROCERIES • BEER & WINE • PARTY PLATTERS  
And more from your neighbors to the north

**Hours: Mon.–Sat. 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. • Sun. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

**802-368-2822**

**Follow us on Facebook for weekly specials!**

3054 VT Route 100, Jacksonville, VT 05342



**Tucker Litchfield**

Functional and Sculptural Glass Art

tucker@litchfieldglass.com  
413-337-5799 / 413-475-0521 (mobile)  
Mail: 218 Rt. 8A  
Heath, MA 01339

**LIVELY  
CARETAKING**

**Tom Lively**  
Phone 413-337-4061  
Cell: 413-325-1065  
Email: ThomasLively01@gmail.com



PO Box 55  
Heath, MA 01346



Carpentry — Repairs — Remodeling  
Mowing — Fields and Lawns — Painting

**MATT'S TRUCKING & EXCAVATING**



Providing professional and reliable excavating and trucking services at competitive prices for over 30 years.

- Septic Systems
- Sand
- Fill Dirt
- Gravel
- Final Grade
- Trucking
- Land Clearing
- Snow Removal
- Demolition
- Driveways & Road

**Bulldozer  
Backhoe**

**For a free estimate,  
call Matt Lively at 413-337-4331**

## Hawlemont Weaving Studio is Open

On December 12, 2019, an open house was held to mark the completion of the new weaving studio at the Hawlemont school. To someone entering the space for the first time that evening, it would be hard to imagine what it looked like just six months before.

Through the incredible efforts and vision of both Jean Bruffee, former Hawlemont HAY (Hawlemont Agriculture and You) director and Susan Gruen, master weaver of Heath, the space was transformed from a dark, basement storage area to a beautiful, light filled weaving studio. On the night of the open house, 12 looms sat all in a row and at each loom was a Hawlemont student, weaving as if they had done it their whole life. In fact, beyond the miraculous transformation of the room itself, the real prize of the evening was the way in which these students showed off their knowledge and work. They explained to all of us onlookers every aspect of the studio, the types of looms, the patterns they were weaving, the bobbin winder (an old hand held mixer repurposed by Bob Gruen), with total confidence and care. It was obvious that they took great pride in their work and were eager to share their craft.

The weaving studio is part of the HAY program and the 4-H program at the Hawlemont school.

—Deb Porter



*Sophia Mason of Heath demonstrates her weaving skills in the new weaving studio at the Hawlemont school.*





## Hawlemont 4-H Clubs

This school year Hawlemont 4-H is offering kids the opportunity to participate in several different 4-H clubs: Bug Club, Weaving Club, Lego Robotics Club, Farm Animal Science, Outdoor Adventure, and Painting Club. 4-H youth development programs aim to develop skills in becoming a confident, caring, and competent member of a community. Meetings are scheduled after school hours. For more information on how you can help, contact Sheila or Budge Litchfield at 337-4957.

—Sheila Litchfield

### 4-H Weaving Club

The weaving program for the 4-H program at Hawlemont Elementary School is very active, with 11 energized weavers. The group weaves on floor looms and table looms as well as Cricket looms, where their projects so far have been towels, bookmarks and mug rugs. The students are reading *Weaving Drafts* and are exploring color and yarn manipulation in their weaving.

They also recently explored and participated in dressing a new (old) loom. It is wonderful to see the children's progress and eagerness to try different colors and structures.

And all of the students are anxious to enter their weaving in this year's Heath Fair!

—Susan Gruen



## Heath Agricultural Society News

The Heath Agricultural Society (HAS) is pleased to announce its newly elected Board of Directors members at-large, Devon Clark and Bob Delisle. We welcome back Justin Lively as Vice President, Tom Lively as Treasurer, Kate Peppard as Clerk, and Conrad Halberg as the third member at-large.

HAS held our Annual Meeting in November and celebrated a great 102nd year of the Heath Fair. We are excited to tell you about our media award success. We were awarded several first place prizes from the Massachusetts Agricultural Fair Association (MAFA) at their annual convention in November, most notably the coveted Judge's Choice award for our television commercial. It is worth noting that this is our third year in a row winning the Judge's Choice Award.

Beyond the MAFA awards, we are delighted to announce our two 2019 "We Couldn't Do It Without YOU" Hearth award winners, Sheila Litchfield and Henry Josephson. Both were celebrated for their incredible and generous dedication of time, enthusiasm, ideas, and leadership, and for rolling up their sleeves to accomplish the many tasks that make the Fair and the fairgrounds thrive!. Honestly, we couldn't do it without them. Thank you Sheila and Henry, and congratulations.

And, we can't do it without YOU!

While the Ag Society is still setting its 2020 schedule, we will be holding monthly meetings beginning in January and we encourage all people, young and old, living in Heath and outside of Heath, who love the Fair to attend a meeting and get engaged. We will dig into decisions about music, premiums, attractions, media and artwork, fireworks, security, pulls, draws, and shows, consider what food to serve and look for new ideas to bring in (and bring back) attendees. Yes, the 2020 Heath Fair is made up of a lot of decisions and a whole lot of dedicated love and labor and we need YOUR help to make it all happen. So join us this year and help to plan and execute the 103rd Heath Fair!

We hope to see you at an upcoming meeting. Check out [Heathfair.org](http://Heathfair.org) for meeting dates, more information, and like us on Facebook.

—Jessica O'Neill

President, Heath Agricultural Society

## Dine. Dance. Make Some HAY!

### Friends of HAY Spring Dinner Dance

To benefit the Hawlemont, Agriculture and Youth Program



Friday, March 20, 2020 • 6 p.m.

Warfield House Inn, Charlemont

Music by Trailer Park

Join us for an evening of fine dining, music, and dancing at the beautiful Warfield House Inn. Festivities will begin at 6 p.m. with appetizers, a raffle, and silent auction, followed by a chicken dinner plated locally by Hillside Organics. Then we'll dance the night away to the lively sound of Trailer Park.

Tickets: \$40—\$60 (sliding scale)

Reservations: [atulloch@mtsr.org](mailto:atulloch@mtsr.org) or 339-8316, ext. 118



**NEW ENGLAND'S  
OUTDOOR  
ADVENTURE  
CENTER**

BerkshireEast.com | Charlemont, MA | 413.339.6617




**BLOWN GLASS BY ROBERT DANE**  
20 WEST MAIN STREET, HEATH, MA 01346  
413.337.5736  
[WWW.ROBERTDANE.COM](http://WWW.ROBERTDANE.COM)



**Hager's Farm Market**  
*Serving Breakfast & Lunch Everyday!*  
ESPRESSO DRINKS • MAPLE SYRUP • HOMEMADE  
PIES, BREADS & BAKED GOODS • LOCAL PRODUCTS  
Open Mon.—Fri. 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. • Sat. & Sun. 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
[www.hagersfarmmarket.com](http://www.hagersfarmmarket.com)  
1232 Mohawk Trail, Shelburne, MA • 413-625-6323

**NANCY L. DOLE  
BOOKS & EPHEMERA**  
Buying & Selling  
Good Used Books  
Browsers  
Welcome!



20 State St. (Bucklandside), Shelburne Falls • 413.625.9850 • [ndole@crocker.com](mailto:ndole@crocker.com)

*State Street Style*  
**Angela Dodge** & Spa  
Owner/Stylist

**Rachel** Stylist  
**Jodi** Nail Tech  
**Samantha** Stylist

36 State Street, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370  
[www.statestreetstyle36.com](http://www.statestreetstyle36.com)  
413.522.8927 or text 413.834.7175

**Jerry Ferguson**  
Insured • Honest • Reliable • Fully Licensed  
"Spark your imagination"  
ELECTRICIAN &  
HOME IMPROVEMENT CONTRACTOR  
Phone: 413-337-4317 Fax: 413-339-4839  
MA Lic. #21493E MA Reg. #142164 MA Lic. Const. #96880



**Wanda Mooney**  
GUIDING YOU HOME SINCE 1993

*Serving your real estate  
needs throughout  
Franklin County*  
**(413) 337-8344**  
[Wanda@WandaMooney.com](mailto:Wanda@WandaMooney.com)  
[WandaMooney.com](http://WandaMooney.com)





UPTON-MASSAMONT REALTORS®

**Richard C. Bishop**  
**Elder Law Attorney**  
*Massachusetts, Florida, Arizona*  
P.O. Box 121, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370  
413-625-2574 / fax 625-8321  
40 School St., Suite 5, Greenfield, MA 01302  
413-773-1818 / fax 773-1881

**A.L. Avery & Son**  
GENERAL STORE  
Charlemont • 339-4915





## Nature Note

—Susan Draxler

### Counting Cardinals

Do you have cardinals at your bird feeder? When we moved to Heath from New Jersey where cardinals were plentiful, it was disappointing that we didn't see any in our yard. Occasionally one would appear and we would note it as if we were seeing a rare bird. Over the nine years that we have lived here however, cardinals have gradually become regulars, and one day this winter I noticed four cardinals among the juncos and house finches.



Cardinals are considered to be a bird of the southeastern U.S., but according to records and bird surveys, they have been expanding their range northward since the 1880s and are now found as far north as southeastern Canada. They are an adaptable species and prefer open areas with shrubs and brushy cover such as old fields, backyards, and landscaped areas, so they have taken advantage of the growth of suburbs to expand their range. Increasing interest in backyard bird feeding has also helped their northern movement as cardinals are very fond of sunflower seed and thus are common visitors to feeders. A more recent factor in northward movement for cardinals, as well as other forms of life, is the warming climate which makes the winter more tolerable.

Plant communities are also advancing northwards to adjust to the changes in temperature and precipitation. Mass Audubon has created a map that projects what our

forests will look like in the next 50 to 100 years based on the current rate of warming. It shows that our northern hardwood forests of maple, beech, and birch would give way to forests of oak and pine in Massachusetts and that the spruce and fir trees of boreal forests found in high elevations would disappear from New England. Birds that breed in boreal forests, such as crossbills, are adapted to feeding on spruce and fir seeds so would need to keep moving north to keep up with the shifting range of their suitable habitat. Species like cardinals, which have a more diverse diet and have adapted to human-created habitat, should be able to cope with the changes. But unfortunately some species that are already dealing with habitat loss or other environmental stresses might not survive.

The ranges and abundance of bird populations are known to fluctuate, but there will likely be some dramatic changes in the coming years. Observations of the birds in our backyards and neighborhoods are valuable to scientists who are tracking these changes. Programs like Project FeederWatch, the Christmas Bird Count, and ebird are places where we, as citizen scientists, can contribute our observations. Even if you only have 15 minutes to spend identifying and counting the birds you see, you can participate in the upcoming Great Backyard Bird Count (see below), which will be held Friday, February 14 through Monday, February 17. It is run by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society and enlists 160,000 bird watchers worldwide. You can see the observations as they come in, view photos being submitted to the GBBC contest, and register to submit your own sightings and photos at [gbbc.birdcount.org](http://gbbc.birdcount.org).

The Great Backyard  
**Bird Count**

Art by Charley Harper

**February 14-17, 2020**

[www.BirdCount.org](http://www.BirdCount.org)

The **Cornell** Lab  
of Ornithology

Audubon

BIRD STUDIES  
ETUDES D'OISEAUX CANADA



## Green Thoughts

—Pat Leuchtman

### Constance Spry, Floral Artist

“I want to shout out: do what you please, follow your own star; be original if you want to be and don’t if you don’t want to be. Just be natural and gay and light-hearted and pretty and simple and overflowing and general and baroque and bare and austere and stylized and wild and daring and conservative, and learn and learn and learn. Open your minds to every form of beauty.”

—Constance Spry

Recently I saw a full-page florist ad that showed gourds, pumpkins, artichokes, millet, wheat, kale, sage, and Indian corn arranged in profusion with roses, mums, daisies, miniature calla lilies, and water lilies. The arrangements were very pretty. Any of us would have been happy to put such a centerpiece on our Thanksgiving table.

Very pretty. Definitely not shocking. But shock is what greeted Constance Spry’s outrageous arrangements in the Britain of the ‘20s and ‘30s. She was possibly the first to break down the barriers that existed between the flower garden and the kitchen garden. I think we can credit Constance Spry with many of the ways we use and decorate with flowers today.



In her excellent biography, *The Surprising Life of Constance Spry: From social reformer to society florist*, Sue Shephard takes us from Spry’s humble beginnings, to her 1929 meteoric success as a ‘flower decorator’ to the noble and wealthy in London, through the wartime years when her efforts led her into the kitchen as well as the garden, and closing the

circle with arranging flowers for Queen Elizabeth II’s coronation.

Constance Spry is not a household name. Certainly not to Americans, not even American gardeners, although those rose lovers among us may have noticed that

David Austin, the great British rosarian and hybridizer, named the first of his English roses after her.



*David Austin’s peach-colored Constance Spry rose, named for Spry—‘flower decorator’ to London’s noble and wealthy during the 1920s and 1930s.*

Among her many admirers was Beverley Nichols, the British gardener, writer, and wit. He talked about “Doing a Constance Spry,” which is to say, standing before a bed of hydrangeas, when summer has fled, and seeing beauty in their pallid parchment blossoms. It means suddenly stopping in a county lane and noting for the first time a scarlet cadenza of berries, and fitting it, in one’s mind’s eye, into a pewter vase against a white wall. It means bouts with brambles, flirtations with ferns and carnivals with cabbages.”

According to Charlotte (Cox) Thwing, of Hawley, who apprenticed with Spry in the 1930s in Spry’s NYC florist shop, Spry used any kind of container: watering cans, teapots, baby shoes, baskets. “But the flowers were the main thing. The vase was essentially hidden. For example, she would use a flat white vase with white flowers and trailing branches. Her arrangements were very clever and interesting, never dull. You always had to remember that you were creating Art.”

Constance Spry’s arrangements showed up at society weddings and the windows at Bergdorf’s. She traveled to France to arrange huge pink peonies, cascades of lilies, lilac and flowering laurel, acanthus and white yucca for the wedding of the Prince of Wales to Wallis Simpson. However, her friendship and work for this controversial couple put an end to other royal commissions for a while.



Her energy and optimism never wavered. The war sent her in a slightly new direction—the vegetable garden. Her thoughts about fresh vegetables and cooking would sound up-to-date today. The kitchen garden had always been a part of her decorating. She once said, “One has only to look at the lovely line and form of a group of kale leaves to realize that the humble kitchen garden can hold its own with the aristocrats of the hot-houses.”



Spry explained herself: “If to use a kale leaf for its fine modeling, a bunch of grapes for its exotic bloom, a spherical leek flower for its decisive shape, a bare branch for its delicate strength, is to like strange materials, then I am guilty, but not guilty of liking them for any perverse reason.”

You can find even more about Constance Spry when you visit my blog at [commonweeder.com](http://commonweeder.com).

## Letter to Home

### Farming Common Ground:

#### A Letter from Bangladesh

by Connor Steele-McCutchen



It is not immediately clear what Bangladesh and Heath have in common. Since I got to this place nearly half a year ago to work with the non-profit, United Purpose, on small business and farm development, I’ve wondered more than once what experience I have to offer to farmers who have spent their whole lives working the land in rice paddies, skirting venomous snakes and water rats the size of small dogs to make their living. Bangladesh is a country near India of nearly 200 million people on an area of land the size of New York state. Criss-crossed by wide rivers, most of the country is less than 12 feet above sea level and farmers regularly watch as the ocean rolls over their land or the rivers shift yards each week in one direction or another as their sandy banks build up and wash away. It's hard to imagine what comparisons you could make to Heath, especially at this

*Continued on page 19*



## Library Lines

—Donald Purington

### Computers available in Library for the 2020 Federal Census this Spring

Most households will receive an invitation in the mail in mid-March with options to respond online, by phone, or to request a paper copy of the Census. If you wish to fill out the Census online and don't have a computer at home you may come to the Library and use one of ours.

### A Few of the New Items at the Library

Use the New Titles link at [heathlibrary.org](http://heathlibrary.org) to see all the new items added to our collection in the previous two weeks.

**Fiction Books for Adults:** *Criss Cross* by James Patterson, *A Small Town* by Thomas Perry, *A Divided Loyalty* by Charles Todd, *Many Rivers to Cross* by Peter Robinson, *The Tenant* by Katrine Enberg

**Non-fiction Books for Adults:** *The Plant Paradox Family Cookbook* by Steven Gundry, *Wetland, Woodland, Wildland* by Elizabeth Thompson

**Audiobooks on CD:** *The Body: a Guide for Occupants* by Bill Bryson, *The Giver of Stars* by Jojo Moyes

**Books for Young/Teen Readers:** *Becoming RBG: Ruth Bader Ginsburg's Journey to Justice* by Debbie Levy

**Children's Picture Books/Boardbooks:** *The Shortest Day* by Susan Cooper, *Home in the Woods* by Eliza Wheeler

**DVDs:** *Downton Abbey* (the movie), *Ad Astra*, *The Chaperone*, *Abominable*, *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*



### Libraries in the Woods Community Read

This spring Heath Library and 23 other libraries will unite to coordinate a shared reading of *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teaching of Plants* by Robin Wall Kimmerer. Events will be held in March and April relating to themes drawn from the book.

More information will be posted at [www.heathlibrary.org](http://www.heathlibrary.org) and in the library as the event approaches.





## The Way We Love To Eat

—Deb Porter

*“If thou tastest a crust of bread, thou tastest all the stars and all the heavens.”* —Robert Browning

Home-baked bread has been a staple in Heath from its earliest days, as evidenced in the beautiful old beehive shaped ovens in some of the oldest homes in town, where baking loaves of bread was part of daily life. Later, bread was made in the wood-burning ovens in farm kitchens throughout town and then in modern ranges. Although our heritage is very much rooted in the Colonial America of New England, the making of bread in Heath today is a wonderful example of how our culture over time has been enriched as people from different ethnic or regional backgrounds have moved to town. In the next few issues of the *Herald*, we will be featuring some of the bread recipes that have immigrated to Heath in this way to grace the potluck tables and bake sales in our community. Our first one comes from Barbara June Gordon.

### Tante Ida’s Challah

Despite a Protestant upbringing, my heritage includes Judaism on my father’s side. Additionally, the suburban neighborhood outside of Boston where I grew up was quite diverse and I had many close Jewish friends. Challah was always a treat that I looked forward to enjoying at their homes during their holidays and special celebrations.

In the late 1970s I spent a year living in Israel. Mostly, I lived on a kibbutz (a communal farming community) in the upper Galilee, on the border of Lebanon. I also spent abundant time in Jerusalem with old friends who had resettled there. Even among the less observant Jews, the traditions of the Sabbath were closely held, albeit less strictly. Friday evening sundown would find every family settled into their homes around a table, lighting the “shabbat” candles, singing the evening prayer, and breaking and sharing the blessed challah bread to welcome the Sabbath. The words, “Shabbat Shalom,” were always exchanged, meaning, “I wish you a peaceful Sabbath.”

The challah might be baked in the home earlier in the day, or purchased at a nearby bakery. There was a wonderful bakery in the Jerusalem neighborhood where I spent time. Their signature challah was widely celebrated, and many went far out of their way to pick up one of their loaves on their way home from work as the sun set. On kibbutz, the bread was prepared each week with the help of the young children in the children’s houses. They loved to help with the kneading and braiding. The loaves would then be baked in the communal kitchen and served in the dining hall that evening.

After returning to the States, I longed to reproduce the wonderful bread that I had enjoyed in Israel. I tried many recipes, and none seemed quite right until I stumbled upon this recipe in the *Miami Herald* food section while living in Miami with my boyfriend (now husband), David. It has been a family favorite ever since.

I do not keep the Sabbath, and I surely don’t manage to make this bread every week. It takes about four hours from start to finish. We do try to make it several times a year, though, when our full family can gather around one table. We have come to call it the “MONSTER CHALLAH.” Despite the large size of the loaf, it will disappear fast. If any should happen to remain long enough to grow stale, it makes incomparable French toast!

Perhaps you might enjoy making this on a stormy winter day, when the roads are not worthy of travel.

Enjoy!

—Barbara June Gordon



Barbara Gordon, newly minted Heathan, ‘kvells’ over her Monster Challah.

**Ingredients:**

½ cup lukewarm water  
 2 envelopes dry active yeast and 1 teaspoon sugar  
 1½ cups water  
 ½ cup sugar  
 2 to 3 teaspoons salt  
 3 eggs  
 ¼ cup vegetable oil  
 7 to 8 cups bread flour (hard wheat with high gluten content)  
 For garnish before baking:  
 1 egg beaten with a dash of water  
 sesame seeds (or poppy seeds, as preferred)

Mix yeast and teaspoon of sugar in the 1/2 cup of lukewarm water and set aside in a warm spot. Yeast is ready when foam forms on top.

Meanwhile, in a large bowl, mix remaining water, sugar, salt, eggs, and oil. By hand, or in a standing mixer on lowest speed, begin adding flour one cup at a time. After adding the first three cups, slowly add the yeast mixture. Gradually mix in the remaining flour. Flour should be added until the dough is just dry enough to be handled without sticking to your hands. It is a very moist dough.

The amount of flour required will vary with the density of flour and weather conditions.

Allow dough to rest for five minutes before kneading. Turn dough onto a floured board for kneading or use the dough hook in a standing mixer. If you use a mixer, you should still complete the final kneading by hand. Knead dough until surface is very smooth and soft (about five to six minutes by hand). Do not over-knead or the bread will be tough.

Place dough in a lightly oiled large bowl. Turn once. Cover. Rise in a warm place for 1-1/2 hours or until doubled in size. At end of first rise, punch down the dough with a floured hand and turn onto a floured board. Slice off about 1/4 of the dough and set aside. Divide the remaining dough into three equal portions. Allow dough portions to rest a few minutes to relax before working to shape the loaf. Using the three portions, roll/squeeze each into an 18-inch long rope. Braid the three ropes tightly into a single braid, working from the center to each end. Pinch the tails together at each end and tuck them under the braid. Place the braid on a large baking pan, preferably a light-colored metal one. Dark pans will encourage burning of the sugar content on the bottom of the loaf.



Repeat this process with the 1/4 dough previously set aside, making three ropes about nine inches in length, creating a similar but smaller braid. Center the smaller braid on top of the larger braid and tuck its ends into it creating a “double decker” braided loaf. Cover with wax paper and allow to rise another hour. Meantime, prepare your egg-wash garnish and preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Before baking, brush the surfaces of the loaf with the prepared egg-wash and sprinkle with sesame or poppy seeds.

Bake at 350 degrees until crust is golden brown and loaf yields a nice hollow thump when tapped (or until the bread reaches an internal temperature of 190 degrees). Some ovens will require tenting of the loaf with foil during the second half of the baking to prevent burning of the top braid. Baking times vary with the type of oven, but usually the bread is done in somewhere between 30 and 60 minutes. Remove from the pan with a spatula, and transfer to a rack to cool.

(Recipe originally published in the *Miami Herald* food section 1980 / 1981. True origin not specified.)

### Artisanal Cheesemaking Workshops

Learn the basics of making artisanal cheese at home

Custom-designed classes



Sheila Litchfield Dell Farm, Heath, MA (413) 337-4957

## What, Why, and When of Broadband A Primer and Update

*Note: Those of you who have been “patiently” waiting for your broadband to be hooked-up can skip the first two introductory paragraphs below.*

### What is Broadband?

The term broadband commonly refers to high-speed internet access that is always on and faster than traditional dial-up access. Broadband includes several high-speed transmission technologies such as: Digital Subscriber Line (DSL), Cable Modem, Fiberoptic, Wireless, Satellite, Broadband over Powerlines (BPL).

In Heath right now, we have some homes with no broadband, a few use a dial-up internet connection through the phone, some have DSL, and some have a satellite connection. Each of these services provides various internet speeds. People with Verizon DSL report a significant slow-down of their internet speed. Verizon has indicated its business plan involves a focus on wireless in more populated areas rather than maintain or expand DSL service in rural areas.

Fiber optic technology converts electrical signals carrying data to light and sends the light through glass fibers about the diameter of a human hair. Fiber transmits data at speeds far exceeding current DSL or cable modem speeds, typically by tens or even hundreds of Mbps (megabits per second). Mbps is a measure of the amount of data transferred within one second. The Heath broadband project will provide fiber optic service to customers at speeds up to one gigabit (1000 Mbps). Gigabit internet connections are currently only available in some areas but are considered a wave of the (near) future.

### Why Do We Need It?

High-speed broadband is now a necessary utility that is expected to surpass the significance of telephone services in terms of importance to daily living. Fast internet services are a fundamental infrastructure necessity for students, business, municipal operations, and many routine interactions with state and federal government. You may feel you can “get by” with a dial-up, DSL, or even satellite internet services, however the very near future will see our homes needing one Gigabit internet services—an internet speed that is expected and considered standard in urban and suburban areas. Essentially, people without access to fast internet speeds are considered “underserved.” Unfortunately for us here in western Massachusetts, that translates to increased difficulty

selling our homes or working from home.

The Heath broadband project will help ensure our future—for ourselves and our children.

### Why is Heath Building a Broadband Network?

Unlike residents in more populated areas, residents in rural western MA towns are unable to subscribe to high-speed internet and internet-based phone services simply by signing up, because the service is just not available. This is because utility companies have determined our low population and low density of population centers make it a poor return on investment to build the infrastructure necessary for these services. Federal and State regulators understand the need for essential utilities, such as broadband, for all residents and have created incentives to towns to make these basic services available. This has meant that our broadband network construction is subsidized in part by the state and federal government, with the balance of the cost coming from taxpayers and subscribers.

The Heath broadband project is building the infrastructure necessary to bring fiberoptic broadband service to subscribers in Heath.

### When Can We Expect To Have It?

Heath is in queue with neighboring towns doing their own broadband fiber installation. The “make-ready” phase for Heath Broadband is nearly complete. During this phase short poles were replaced by taller ones and wires were relocated on poles to accommodate the new fiber optic cable. Service in Rowe is complete; Heath and Leyden are next, followed by Colrain. Heath’s fiber hut, the small building installed in the town center next to the basketball court, is the central point of connection and distribution for Heath fiber. We are preparing for the fiber hut’s internal components to be built. In the next month we should see trucks with spools of fiber optic cable around town. Once the cable is installed, a notice to residents will go out to describe options for service. You will be informed of the monthly cost of each option and how much, if anything, you will need to pay to receive a “drop” to your home.



*Installation of Heath’s fiber hut in town center. The hut is the central point of connection and distribution for Heath fiber.*

Photos: Art Schwenger



A drop to a home with a long driveway will obviously cost more than a drop to a house at the roadside. The current schedule shows some homes in Heath are on target to “go live” beginning this summer with additional homes receiving service by late fall 2020.



We have been faced with new challenges, recently. In addition to a significant increase in cost from the original estimate to build the Heath network, is the fact that the state broadband funds are intended for public ways, only. Therefore, the broadband advisory committee is exploring design ideas and policies to address the best way to serve Heath’s many seasonal camp lots on private ways as well as all of the permanent residences in town.

—Sheila Litchfield

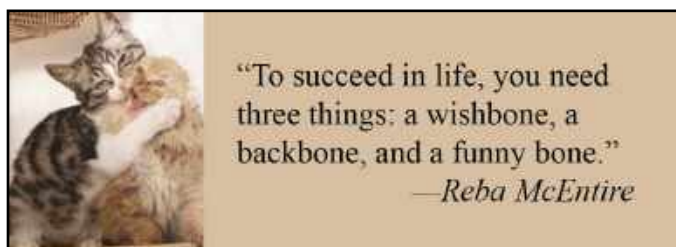
Heath MLP (Municipal Light Plant)  
Advisory Committee

## Letter of Gratitude

We want to thank everyone from the bottom of our hearts for the generosity shown to our grandson, Lance Fenderson, who was badly injured in a lacrosse tournament several months ago. Lance received significant spinal cord injuries and has been adjusting to what he calls his “New Beginning.” Lance is an amazingly strong, determined young man with plans to attend college after graduation from Davidson Day School in Davidson, N.C. this spring. Go Lance, you make us proud!

From offers of rides to and from airports, invitations from neighbors for dinners, donations to Lance’s “GoFundMe” page, and the “Uber Eats” gift cards for Lance, your outpouring of love and support to our family is helping us get through such a sad and difficult time. Please know that everything you have done for our family brings us comfort, and we especially ask that you please keep Lance in your thoughts and prayers.

—Ken and Sandy Gilbert



## Town Nurse

—Claire Rabbitt, RN

### Reversing Type 2 Diabetes

The December 2019 *Nutrition Action Health Letter* has a very interesting article exploring the possibility of reversing Type 2 Diabetes. It refers to a study done in the UK in 2018 on overweight patients who had been diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes in the previous six years. The “intervention group” was put on a diet of a liquid formula and salads and other vegetables that were about 850 calories a day for 12 to 20 weeks. Under the care of their physicians, all diabetes meds were stopped when starting the diet and restarted only if necessary. Then, under the care of a nurse or dietician they gradually added back foods to help maintain their weight loss. At one year, 46% of people were free of diabetes and off medication. At two years 36% were still free of diabetes. Those who lost at least 22 pounds were free of diabetes.

The article went on to discuss how excess fat in the liver causes insulin resistance, preventing insulin from helping the blood sugar enter the body’s cells where it is either used for energy, or stored. High blood sugar levels stimulate the pancreas to produce more insulin but eventually the stressed pancreas will start to fail. A “pilot study” done in 2011 demonstrated that the fat in the liver and pancreas went down in seven days in people on a very low calorie diet. “It’s not easy keeping weight down after losing weight, but if you can it’s possible to escape from Type 2 Diabetes.”

As I write this article just after the New Year, I have been hearing on the news how many people will give up on their diet and exercise New Year’s resolutions by February 1. I’m hoping this will give my readers new incentive to keep going on diet and exercise programs as we begin American Heart Month. The risk of heart attack and stroke increases for people with diabetes.



413-625-6623

**HAIR BY HANA**

102 Bridge Street - Shelburne Falls, MA 01370

*"Where People Go To Get Things Done"*

Desks  
Land Line  
Office Space  
Work Stations  
Business Class Internet  
Commercial Quality Networked Printer/Copier/Scanner  
3-month leases starting at \$80/month  
5 STATE STREET SHELburne FALLS ♦ 413-834-3477  
[www.bridgeofflowersbusinesscenter.com](http://www.bridgeofflowersbusinesscenter.com)

**BRIDGE OF FLOWERS BUSINESS CENTER**

Fax  
Shredder  
Kitchen  
Shower  
Conference Room

**Rowe**

Camp &amp; Conference Center

PO Box 273 Rowe, MA 01367  
413-339-4954  
[www.rowecenter.org](http://www.rowecenter.org)

A magical place to explore new horizons, heal,  
make new friends, have fun, be a part of  
community or find your place in the world.  
We offer weekend retreats on a wide variety  
of topics as well as space for private retreats.

*Retreat ♦ Relax ♦ Reflect ♦ Relate ♦ Revitalize*

# Osterman

Propane

**339 Amherst Road**  
**Sunderland, MA 01375**  
**800-287-2492**  
**[www.ostermangas.com](http://www.ostermangas.com)**

**RUSSELL E. DONELSON**

61 Sumner Stetson Rd  
Heath, MA

**Design/Construction/Cabinetry**  
*To New and Existing Buildings*

**413-337-4460****Licensed/Insured****The Baker Pharmacy****31 Bridge Street • Shelburne Falls****Tel: 625-6324****Weekdays: 8:30 a.m.–8 p.m.****Saturdays: 8:30 a.m.–3 p.m.****Holidays: 9 a.m.–12 noon**

**Support your local, independent pharmacy.**

**An Independent College Preparatory Day School  
for Grades 6–12 and Post Graduate**



*OUR STUDENTS LOVE SCHOOL.  
SHOULDN'T EVERYONE?*

**1359 Mohawk Trail Charlemont, MA 01339**  
**413.339.4912 ♦ [charlemont.org](http://charlemont.org)**

**Blackmer**  
INSURANCE AGENCY, INC  
SINCE 1934

**Protection • Selection  
Great Service • Competitive Pricing**

**(413) 625-6527****1147 Mohawk Trail, Shelburne MA**

## **Hawlemont-Heath School Regionalization Update**

The Regionalization Study Group (Marguerite Rancourt, Beth Flaherty, Hussain Hamdan, Bob Gruen, Budge Litchfield) proposes that Heath join the Hawlemont Regional School District (HRSD). The Hawlemont Regional Agreement would be amended to comply with current laws and regulations and would preserve many familiar features to the current Hawlemont agreement. Amendments can only be approved by “yes” votes at Town Meetings. All necessary votes should happen by or at Town Meetings in May 2020, with the expanded district to become operational on July 1, 2021.

### **Education**

- The addition of Heath students (via tuition agreement) has brought most class sizes to viable levels.
- Staffing expansion has taken place during the tuition agreement phase.
- The Hawlemont building is full but well configured to provide effective and varied educational spaces for children from all three towns.

### **Finances**

- In FY 2020 (current school year), Charlemont is responsible for 79% of the operating cost assessment, Hawley covers the remaining 21%, and Heath (via Mohawk Trail Regional School District, MTRSD) pays \$11,000 tuition per child in accordance with the current Tuition Agreement.
- For comparison purposes, if HRSD had been a three-town district in FY 2020, Charlemont would be paying 51% of the operating cost assessment with Hawley paying 14% and Heath paying 35%.
- There is no capital cost “buy-in” in the proposed Regional Agreement. But for any new capital (building) project, Heath would be assessed using the same formula as Charlemont and Hawley. The percentages of costs assessed to each town would be similar to percentages above.
- Heath is projected to bring an additional amount of Chapter 70 state aid to the HRSD revenue stream.

### **Governance**

- The School Committee would have two members from each town, their votes weighted based on the population of each town relative to the others.
- For a School Committee meeting to be held and/or a vote to be passed, at least one member from each town

would need to be present and voting “yes” on the motion being considered.

- For the annual school budget to be approved, all three Town Meetings would need to vote “yes” on their respective assessments.
- Special Legislation will be needed to allow the use of some of the governance provisions, which simply allow current District governance practices to be continued. All three towns have already voted to support this special legislation.

### **Heath Specific**

- Heath would need to withdraw from the Mohawk Trail District for grades Pre-K through 6th. The town would still be a member of MTRSD, for grades seven to twelve just as Charlemont and Hawley are currently.
- Heath will need to negotiate an agreement with the Mohawk Trail District with respect to our obligations for Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) relative to the Pre-K through 6th-grade portion of our student population.
- Heath will need to elect two additional school committee representatives to join the Hawlemont School Committee.

*—Budge Litchfield*

### **Steps Needed for Heath To Join Hawlemont**

- Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) needs to give final “pre-approval” to the amended Hawlemont Regional Agreement.
- Hawlemont School Committee approves admission of Heath.
- Heath and MTRSD agree on terms for payment of Heath’s Pre-K-6 Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) liability and execute inter-municipal agreement.
- Three required pieces of special legislation are approved by the legislature/governor.
- DESE approves changes to MTRSD Regional Agreement (recharacterizing Heath as a 7-12 member).
- Hawley, Charlemont, and Heath vote to approve changes to Hawlemont Regional Agreement.
- MTRSD towns vote to approve changes to MTRSD Regional Agreement.

*—Martha Thurber*

Chair, Mohawk Trail Regional School Committee



## Select Board Report

### Fiscal Year (FY) 21 Budget

The Selectboard and the Finance Committee have been meeting to review budget items for the coming fiscal year. This is careful, detailed work in light of the Town's needs and the borrowing of \$1.45 million for broadband. Town departments, boards, committees, and commissions have been asked to carefully review their budgets and to consider submitting a budget that is 5% to 10% less than last year.

### Tropical Storm Irene

Included in the state's FY 20 supplemental budget was \$170,000 for the Town of Heath for costs related to tropical storm Irene. The supplemental budget was approved and the town will be receiving that money. Many thanks to Rep. Paul Mark and Sen. Adam Hinds for their support.

### Meeting with Legislators

On November 22, the Select Board, the Finance Committee, Mohawk's Business Manager, and Heath's Hawlemont regionalization committee members met with Rep. Paul Mark and Sen. Adam Hinds to discuss Heath's efforts to regionalize with Hawlemont and the \$1.2 million dollars that Heath needs to pay as its share of Mohawk's Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB). The OPEB consists mainly of retirement health benefits for Mohawk employees. Both Rep. Mark and Sen. Hinds mentioned a new Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) grant that could possibly help. Both legislators said they would speak with the commissioner of DESE, and our school regionalization committee members will speak with their contacts at DESE as well. Also discussed at that meeting was the \$170,000 included in the supplemental budget for Heath and the one million dollars authorization for Heath to help build a new fire station. The Executive Office of Public Safety has said they would not agree to release that money, but Rep. Mark said if a detailed plan is submitted for a shovel-ready project, the money may be released.

### Website

As many of you may have noticed, the Town's website was down for several weeks due to a change Crocker Communications made that was not able to support our site. The Select Board hired Montague WebWorks (MWW) to design and host a new website. The new site is up and running but still has some holes. MWW will come to the Town Hall to teach people how to update



*Home page for the new Town of Heath website.*

their pages. Residents' patience with this unexpected project is appreciated.

### Green Communities Grant

The town has hired Franklin County Technical School students to replace town building lights with LED bulbs and to replace the fixtures where necessary. The highway garage and Sawyer Hall have been finished; work proceeds with Community Hall and the fire station. The Select Board is working with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments to add the former school building to the grant.

### Housing Rehab

The Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority (FCHRA) is proposing to include Heath in their next round of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) applications. The CDBG program provides no-interest deferred loans to income eligible homeowners to make improvements to existing conditions including energy efficient measures. The loans can be used for roofs, windows, insulation, heating systems, septic systems, electrical and plumbing system repairs, and more. For more information and to be placed on a waiting list, contact FCHRA at [fcrhra.org](http://fcrhra.org) or Jen Morrow at 863-9781 or [jmorrow@fcrhra.org](mailto:jmorrow@fcrhra.org).

## REVERSE 911 CODE RED: ALL CALL

The reverse 911 system uses a list of town phone numbers to impart emergency and town-related information to Heath residents. This could include information on road closures, emergency preparations for a storm and what to do afterwards, or notifications of important town meetings. The system is used approximately four to five times each year. The Select Board urges every household to enroll in this vital system ASAP.

To add your name to the list, please contact Hilma Sumner, Town Coordinator, at 337-4934, extension 0 or email [bos@townofheath.org](mailto:bos@townofheath.org).

*(Continued from page 11)*

time of year with snow on the ground and the muddy ruts in Long Hill Road still a few months away.

The similarities become clearer when you start talking to farmers. You hear how the land around them is changing and the wet times are a good bit wetter and the dry times a whole lot dryer. Change has always been part of being a farmer. When my dad was growing up on our farm, the maple trees were replacing the old ash and oak. And now, walking around our forest, you'll find that most of the young trees growing in our forest are beech—the soil seems a little too low pH to make maple seedlings happy. But the change that's happening now in farming communities around the world is something that will resonate with the dairy farmers of Franklin County and the poultry farmers of Jamalpur, Bangladesh. As large corporations continue to drive down the prices of products and squeeze small farmers, family farms around the world are closing down.

The comparisons are not all bleak, however. In Franklin County and the river lands of Bangladesh, there are farmers innovating, sharing new practices and lending a hand to try to get an edge on the whirlwind around them. Those that succeed are the ones that band together to resist the pressure to sell their land to corporate ag and move to the town. The ones that succeed open up new markets to compete in with superior products and build connections with their customers who trust them. The effort to buy local is as relevant and necessary to Franklin County as it is to Bangladesh. So is the need for co-operation between farmers to create local markets where they can earn a fair price for their work. In today's changing world, the future of farming is not small family farms struggling alone to adapt to the challenges that come fast and often, it's multiple farms supporting each other, growing crops that complement the others' vulnerabilities, and pooling their collective resources and political power to compete with larger companies and middlemen. Here in Bangladesh, a race is underway to build these farmer-led enterprises as the rain becomes unpredictable and the surging tide makes its way farther and farther up the rivers each year. For these farmers, their survival has never been more clearly tied to their collaboration. Though it may not be as apparent in the mid-winter hills of Franklin County, this is another thing we share with them.

—Connor Steele-McCutchen

## Obituaries

### Elizabeth Elmer

Elizabeth A. Elmer, 86, of 229 Number Nine Rd., died Thursday, Dec. 26, at Buckley Healthcare Facility in Greenfield. She was born in Bristol, PA, October 12, 1933, the daughter of George F. and Helen A. (O'Brien) Elmer. She was employed for many years in a large department store in Pennsylvania before moving to Heath four years ago to be closer to family.

Elizabeth is survived by her sister Kathleen Elmer of Heath, Pat (Ralph) Demech, also of Heath; nephews Ralph G. Demech and John Demech, nieces Helen (Bob) Mair, Jackie (Rob) Rode, Tina (Jon) Winnick, and Peggy (Lenny, deceased) Roberts, who was also Elizabeth's godchild; and several grandnieces and grandnephews.

### Lorayne E. Hamilton



Lorayne E. (Singleton) Hamilton, 70, of Heath, beloved wife of 46 years to Robert L. Hamilton, entered into Eternal Rest on Sunday, December 8, 2019, at St. Francis Hospital. Daughter of the late John and Florence (Garvey) Singleton, she was born in Elizabethtown, NY, on March 27, 1949. She was employed as a bookkeeper for many years. Outside of work, she had a great love for camping. She was an active member of Mohawk Estates, where she frequently enjoyed golf cart rides through the estates.

In addition to her husband Robert, Lorayne is survived by her children, John Hamilton and wife Jenny of Enfield, CT, and Steven Hamilton and wife Jennifer of Ellington, CT; her grandchildren, Crystal, Payton, Ellen, June, James, Nathan, Emily, and Ryland; and her brother, John Singleton and his wife Dee of Florida.

A private graveside service for Lorayne will be held at the convenience of the family.



Winter sunset. Photo: Julianne Hallman

*(Obituaries, continued)*

### Charlene Ellen Churchill



Charlene Ellen Churchill, 66, of Ellsworth, Maine, died Sunday, December 22, 2019, at the Heath, MA, home of her sister, Hilma Sumner. Charlene was born in Greenfield, MA, on January 23, 1953, the daughter of Clyde and Ruth Churchill. She grew up in Heath, graduating from Mohawk Trail Regional High School in 1972. Charlene received an A.A. from Colby-Sawyer College in 1974, and a B.S. in Journalism from Syracuse University in 1976. She later received her M.S. from Simmons College in Information and Library Science in 2006.

Charlene lived much of her life in Maine, from York to Bar Mills, to Grey early on, working in hospitality and accounting before returning to Heath to serve as librarian at the Heath Free Public Library from 2001 to 2006. While in Heath, she was a founding member of the Friends of the Heath School Library. She was also a member of the Heath Historical Society and sat on its Board of Directors, and was a member of the Heath Union Church, where she also served as treasurer.

Charlene returned to Maine, to Ellsworth, where she served as Director of the Ellsworth Public Library from 2006 to 2015. Charlene was an active participant in the Ellsworth community, most notably as a member of the Ellsworth Rotary Club, where she served as long-time secretary, and participated in a leadership role with many fundraisers, including an annual auction, blueberry pancake breakfasts, youth sponsorships, and more. She lived in Ellsworth up until the time of her death.

An avid reader and sports enthusiast (Boston Red Sox and New England Patriots, naturally), Charlene also enjoyed theater and music. She took pleasure in returning to Heath to see her family and many friends, and to attend the Heath Fair, and the annual Churchill Family Reunion. Charlene was a devoted sister, aunt, and great-aunt, and a loyal friend.

Charlene is survived by her sister, Hilma A. Sumner; nephew Carl Ayers, his wife, Louise; and great-nieces Daria and Carys, recently of Cambridge, England; as well as her niece, Ruth Ayers, and fiancé Robin Creamer of Leyden, MA. Her brother-in-law, Richard Sumner,

passed away, recently. Charlene will be greatly missed by numerous others of her family members and friends.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, February 8, at 1 p.m., at the Heath Union Church, Main St, Heath, MA.

In lieu of flowers, Charlene asked that donations be made in her memory to the Heath Free Public Library, 1 East Main St., Heath MA 01346. And she asks that you remember her by reading a good book!



*Charlene Churchill at a party celebrating her retirement as Heath Librarian.*

### Remembrance

I am so heartbroken by the loss of our beloved friend, Charlene. She was the kind of big sister to our younger crowd that you always long for—kind, fun, funny, protective, wise, and loving. Charlene had a way of finding out what mattered to each person she knew and then connecting people who might care deeply about similar things. She remembered people in a very special way. From the time of my early childhood, I always felt seen and welcomed by Charlene, in a way that was powerful and special to me as a shy and sensitive kid. It was just the way she was. I don't know that she had any idea how many lives she touched or in how many ways, from so early on in her life, but she loved life and we were blessed to have her with us. She fought hard for her life and when there was no more fighting to do, she knew that she wanted to end her life in Heath, and she did, with the help of her wonderful sister Hilma and family and many friends. She will be deeply missed and always deeply present... in Heath, in Maine, and anywhere that good people gather in community to do good things.

May her spirit continue to weave peace and caring and gratitude and forgiveness and love of community in the hearts and actions of all those whose lives she touched over her long, beautiful, generous life.

—Allison Ahara-Brown



**Richard Sumner**

Richard (Dick) A. Sumner, 80, of 291 Route 8A, Heath, died Thursday, Jan. 2, at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield, MA. Richard was born in Heath, October 8, 1939, the son of Ralph G. and Rachel M. (Burrington) Sumner.

Dick attended grammar school in Heath and was a 1958 graduate of Arms Academy in Shelburne Falls. After high school he attended the University of Massachusetts, and was a 1961 graduate of Stockbridge School of Agriculture.

Richard worked on the family farm, as a carpenter, and as an apprentice electrician. He served in the Massachusetts National Guard. In 1974 he started his own electrical business and for the next 40 years worked as a self-employed electrician serving the West County and surrounding areas.

A life-long outdoorsman, Richard enjoyed hunting, fishing, cutting wood, raising pigs, and working in his yard. He enjoyed sharing hunting stories and reports of wildlife sightings. He was a dedicated Red Sox fan.

For many years, Richard volunteered his electrical services to the Heath Fair. He served on the Heath Planning Board, was a Boy Scout leader, and was a reliable volunteer at work bees in town. Throughout his life, Richard was an active member of the Heath Union Church and contributed his talents to maintaining the church buildings.

Richard is survived by his wife, the former Hilma Churchill, sons Todd (Mark Melchior) Sumner of Groton, MA, Eric (Mary) Sumner of Heath; daughter Ree (Edward) Martin of Northfield; stepchildren Carl (Louise) Ayers of Cambridge, England, Ruth Ayers and fiancé Robin Creamer of Leyden; grandchildren Rachel Sumner, Sydney, Tyler and Alyssa Martin, Lillian (Jared) Crast, Austin and Kaylin Sumner, Daria and Carys Ayers; and sisters Ruth Corey of Heath and Dorothy Harding of Townsend, MA. He was predeceased by wife Joan (Sessions) and brother Robert.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, February 1, at 1p.m. in the Heath Union Church. Memorial donations may be made to the Heath Union Church Building Fund, P.O. Box 87, Heath, MA 01346.

Remembrance will follow in the next issue.

**Heath Union Church**

The Rev. James Koyama, Minister  
Dennis Ainsworth, Organist  
Sunday Morning Worship 10 a.m.  
Thursday Bible Study 5:30 to 7 p.m.

**All are Welcome**

Rev. Koyama is in town on Thursdays, with church office hours in the afternoon. Cell phone: 808-282-6711; Church phone to leave a message: 413-337-4019

**Board of Deacons**

Hilma Sumner, Chair, 337-4845  
Claudia Ainsworth 624-8952  
Dana Blackburn 413-221-0961  
Victoria Burrington 337-4425  
Walt Gleason 337-4479

Find us on Facebook: Heath Union ChurchChurch  
Building facilities are available for private events.

Call Victoria Burrington at 337-4425

**Church News**

Greetings from Heath Church! December was a busy month. On Saturday, December 14, a Soup and Bread meal was held to support the Good Neighbors Food Pantry. At that event, a Fred Burrington print was auctioned and we received a warm and neighborly visit from the community Carolers, who blessed the gathering with song and many hugs and handshakes. A good time was had by all. The month was also marked by good attendance of 60-plus people at the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service. For the congregation it has been a season of both joy and grief, as we have grown together in faith, but also said farewell to several members who have left us for the journey into God's arms.

We invite you to join us for worship at 10 a.m. on Sundays and for fellowship and food every first Sunday after worship. And for those who may be interested in an Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) group closer by, there is one tentatively in the works to begin downstairs in the church social hall, so stay tuned for details.

May God bless you and guide you with wisdom as you meet the challenges and opportunities in this coming year.

—The Reverend James Koyama

## Community Calendar

- Feb 7-21 **Preschool Story Hour**  
10:30 a.m. at the Heath Library. Ages birth to five. All ages welcome. No school on February 21
- Feb 10 **Heath Agricultural Society Meeting**  
5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Board meeting, members welcome. 6:30 to 8 p.m. members meeting and potluck at Heath Union Church
- Mar 6-20 **Preschool Story Hour**  
10:30 a.m. at the Heath Library. Ages birth to five. All ages welcome.
- Mar 9 **Heath Agricultural Society Meeting**  
5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Board meeting, members welcome. 6:30 to 8 p.m. members meeting and potluck at Heath Union Church
- Mar 20 **HAY Benefit Dinner Dance**  
Fundraiser to benefit HAY program at the Warfield House: 6 p.m., appetizers, raffle, and auction; 7 p.m., dinner, followed by live music. Tickets \$40 to \$60.
- Apr 4 **5th annual HAY Conference**  
9:30 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. at Hawlemont School. Information and registration at the school, online at Hawlemont website for HAY, Hawlemont Facebook page, or call Amber Tulloch, 339-8316, ext 118.

**Fifth Annual HAY Conference**  
Hawlemont, Agriculture & YOU



Saturday, April 4, 2020  
9:30 a.m. to 2:15 p.m.  
Hawlemont School, Charlemont

Join us for an educational and inspirational day of workshops, presentations, and displays by local experts, craftspeople, and vendors on such wide-ranging topics as robotics, beekeeping, jam-making and much more.

For details on specific programs and to register online, visit the HAY web page at [hawlemont.mohawktrailschools.org](http://hawlemont.mohawktrailschools.org) or visit the school in person.

For more information, contact Amber Tulloch at 339-8316, ext. 118.

## Ongoing Calendar

### Foot Clinic for Seniors

Third Tuesday of each month at the Senior Center, downstairs in Heath Community Hall. Contact Eileen Lively at 337-4742 to set up an appointment and/or arrange transportation.

### Healthy Bones and Balance

Tuesdays, 11 a.m. to noon; Thursdays, 10 to 11 a.m. at the Senior Center, downstairs in Community Hall. This exercise program will help prevent osteoporosis and falls. For ages 55 plus.

### New Listing!

#### High-speed Internet Access

Available for use noon to 2 p.m. Monday through Friday at former Heath school building.

### Senior Brown Bag Lunch

First Thursday of each month, 11:45 a.m. at the Senior Center, downstairs in Heath Community Hall. Bring your own lunch, dessert provided.

### Senior Luncheon

Third Thursday of each month, 11:45 a.m. at the Senior Center, downstairs in Heath Community Hall. A count is required by Monday before the scheduled meal. Sign up at the Senior Center, or call Margo Newton at 339-8580.

### Senior Open Art

Taking February off—resuming in March. Mondays, 1 to 4 p.m. in the Senior Center, downstairs in the Heath Community Hall. Open to all. Contact Eileen Lively at 337-4742 with questions.

### Tai Chi

Mondays, 10 to 10:45 a.m. upstairs in Heath Community Hall. Newcomers welcome! Suggested donation (\$5). Contact Lois Bascom, [lola621@comcast.net](mailto:lola621@comcast.net) for more information.

### Yoga

Fridays, 9:30 to 10:30 a.m., downstairs in Heath Union Church. Led by Kate Peppard. Beginners welcome! Mats available. Suggested donations (\$5-10) accepted. Contact Kate at 617-669-4891 with questions.

## Heath Town Offices

1 East Main St, Heath MA 01346  
Phone: 413-337-4934, Fax: 413-337-8542  
[www.townofheath.org](http://www.townofheath.org)

**Town Coordinator**, Hilma Sumner  
[bos@townofheath.org](mailto:bos@townofheath.org)  
Mon./Wed. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Tues./Thurs.  
9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Fri. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**Selectboard**, [bos@townofheath.org](mailto:bos@townofheath.org)  
Tuesday 7 p.m., Sawyer Hall  
Brian DeVriese, 413-337-5525  
Robyn Provost-Carlson, 413-337-5316  
Gloria Fisher, 413-337-6626

**Town Clerk**, Hilma Sumner  
[townclerk@townofheath.org](mailto:townclerk@townofheath.org)  
Tuesday and Thursday 9 a.m. to noon  
Or call for appointment 413-337-4845

**Accountant**, Dave Fierro  
[accountant@townofheath.org](mailto:accountant@townofheath.org)  
No regular hours at this point  
413-337-4934, ext. 5

**Tax Collector**, Elizabeth Nichols  
[taxcollector@townofheath.org](mailto:taxcollector@townofheath.org)  
Monday 4 to 6 p.m.  
or call for appointment 413-337-6665  
413-337-4934, ext. 2 / Fax: 413-337-8542

**Treasurer**, Kristi Nartowicz  
Monday 3:30 p.m. (varies)  
[knartowicz@gmail.com](mailto:knartowicz@gmail.com)

## Boards and Committees

**Board of Assessors**  
Wednesday 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. 413-337-4934, x3  
[assessors@townofheath.org](mailto:assessors@townofheath.org)  
Alice Wozniak, Assistant Assessor  
Robyn Provost-Carlson, Chair  
Heather Hathwell, Heidi Griswold

**Board of Health**, 413-337-4934  
Betsy Kovacs, Chair, 413-337-5346  
Mary Sumner, Clerk  
Armand Clavette, Henry Godek, Susan Gruen,  
John Palmer, Gene Garland (Member at-large)

**Finance Committee**  
Ned Wolf, Secretary, 413-337-4476  
Ken Gilbert, 413-337-4461  
Jan Carr, Kathy Inman, Alice Wozniak

**Library Board of Trustees**  
Deborah Porter, Chair, 413-337-4715  
Emily Cross, 413-337-4816  
Maureen O'Malley

**Planning Board**  
Calvin Carr, Chair, [calvinccarr@verizon.net](mailto:calvinccarr@verizon.net)  
Douglas Mason, Sec., [dougmason@hughes.net](mailto:dougmason@hughes.net)  
Robert Viarengo, [viarengo932@crocker.com](mailto:viarengo932@crocker.com)  
Jo Travis, [jtravis156@verizon.net](mailto:jtravis156@verizon.net)  
Bill Gran, [whgran@gmail.com](mailto:whgran@gmail.com)

**Agricultural Commission**  
Jessica O'Neill, 413-339-4820  
Doug Mason, 413-339-4756  
Nina Marshall, 413-339-4756

Sean O'Neill, 413-339-4820  
Haynes Turkle

## Cemetery Commission

Jerry Gilbert, Central Cemetery, 413-337-4355  
Claire Rabbitt, North Cemetery, 413-337-8309  
Eric Sumner, South Cemetery, 413-337-5330  
Matthew Lively, Sexton, 413-337-4331  
Hilma Sumner, Burial Agent, 413-337-4845

## Conservation Commission

Brian DeVriese, Chair, 413-337-5525  
Dennis Peters, 413-337-4014  
Bernard "Buck" den Ouden, 413-337-4002  
Jessica O'Neill, 413-339-4820

## Historical Commission

Heather Hathwell and Jayne Dane, co-chairs  
Susan Gruen, Nina Marshall

## Community

**Public Library**, Don Purington, Director  
Lyra Johnson-Fuller, Library Assistant  
[www.heathlibrary.org](http://www.heathlibrary.org), [heath.library@gmail.com](mailto:heath.library@gmail.com)  
Monday 3 to 7 p.m., Wednesday noon to 7 p.m.,  
Saturday 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.; 413-337-4934, ext. 7

**Post Office Manager**, Charlene Reynolds  
Monday to Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.  
413-337-4934, ext. 4

## Schools

### MTRSD School Committee Representative

Budge Litchfield, 413-337-4957  
Barbara Rode

### Franklin County Technical School Representative

Art Schwenger, 413-337-4077

### Hawlemont Elementary School

Lindsay Rodriguez, Principal, 413-339-8316

## Town Nurse, Claire Rabbitt, RN

Office hours, Senior Center, 413-337-4847  
Tuesday 12:15 to 1:15 p.m. and Thursday 11 a.m.  
to 1 p.m.; Voicemail: 413-337-4934, ext. 109  
Home phone: 413-337-8309

## Senior Center/Community Hall, 413-337-4847

Eileen Lively, Senior Coordinator, 413-337-4742

## Public Works and Safety

**Animal Control Officer**, Kyle Dragon. 413-768-0983,  
or if not available, call Shelburne Dispatch  
413-625-8200. All emergencies, dial 911

**Highway Department**, Jeffrey Johnston, Road  
Superintendent; 413-337-4462; cell, 413-406-4516

**Police Department**, John McDonough, Police Chief  
Office hours: Tuesday 6 to 8 p.m. 413-337-4934, ext.  
108, or call Shelburne Dispatch at 413-625-8200 to  
have paged. All emergencies, dial 911

**Transfer Station**, Ken Erho, Attendant  
Wednesday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Saturday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

## Volunteer Fire Department

Nick Anzuoni, Fire Chief, 413-337-4461, or 911 for  
an emergency

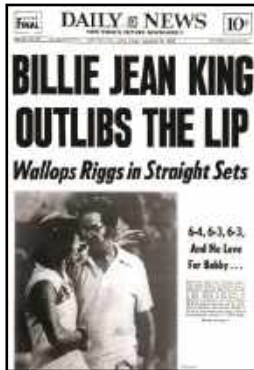


February is Black History Month



"Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world."

—Harriet Tubman



"Whatever you want in life, other people will want it, too. Believe in yourself enough to accept the idea that you have an equal right to it."

—Diane Sawyer

March is Women's History Month

## HEATH PRECIPITATION

Reprinted from the *Heath Herald*, February 1980By Ralph H. Dickinson, Observer  
for Mass. Water Resources Commission

January 1980 .85 inch, snow 3 inches  
 January 1979 11.64 inches, snow 39 inches  
 January, average for past 15 years -  
 3.67 inches, snow 19.1 in.

In January 1970 we also had .85 inches of precipitation with 3.5 inches of snow, but in the preceeding November and December we had 44 inches of snow. In 1979 we had 2 inches of snow in October, none in November, and 3 inches in December - Total of 5 inches.



Special thanks to our  
color sponsors for this edition!

**Betsy Behl****Jean Gran**Consider a gift of color for the *Heath Herald*.

Please send a check for \$25 made payable to the  
Heath Herald, P.O. Box 54, Heath, MA 01346.

Note "Color Sponsor" on your check.

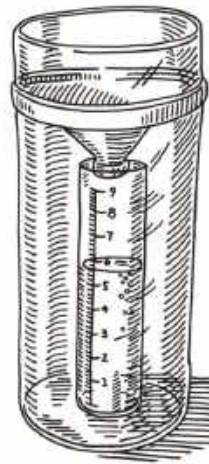
Thank you.

## Heath Online

Stay connected with what's happening in Heath.

Visit [www.townofheath.org](http://www.townofheath.org)

Town Directory • Meeting Minutes • Community News  
 Upcoming Events • Emergency Announcements • and more

To contact the Selectboard, email [bos@townofheath.org](mailto:bos@townofheath.org)**WANTED:  
PRECIPITATION MONITOR**

The *Heath Herald* is seeking an enthusiastic volunteer to monitor the monthly precipitation in Heath on an ongoing basis. The data that is collected will be published in each issue of the *Herald*.

If you are willing to weather this responsibility, please contact Deb Porter at [debporterhenry@gmail.com](mailto:debporterhenry@gmail.com) for more details.



**Support Your Local Newspaper**  
 Get six issues of the *Heath Herald* for only \$12  
 Subscribe today!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ **Yes!** Please send me six issues of the *Heath Herald* for just \$2 an issue by (check one):

Mail ☐ PDF ☐ Reserved pick-up at Town Hall ☐

Please make your check for \$12 payable to the *Heath Herald*, P.O. Box 54, Heath, MA 01346