

SCHOOLS & YOUTH

It Takes A Village delivers on school supplies

By Wendy Long
Correspondent

HUNTINGTON – As of this writing, 608 families received backpacks that they were able to fill with school supplies, thanks to a back-to-school project headed by It Takes A Village.

In an event held on Sunday, Aug. 16 from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. in the parking lot at Gateway Regional School, families and students lined up to choose a new backpack and then selected school supplies that they need for the coming school year.

Littleville Elementary School Principal Melissa McCaul was thrilled with the outcome. “What an awesome event! It Takes A Village is such an incredible resource for our community. Their generosity helps make sure our students have the supplies they need to start the school year feeling prepared, excited, and ready to learn,” she said. “We are so lucky to have an organization that cares so much about our children and families.”

Her colleague, Chester Elementary School Principal Dr. Todd Gazda, concurred. “We’re very grateful for the work done by It Takes a Village to support our families. Back-to-school expenses can add up quickly and cre-

ates a challenge for some of our families. Having a new backpack and the supplies they need helps kids start the year feeling prepared and ready to learn.”

According to ITAV Communications and Development Director Kenzie Kinsella, the event used to be held at their site on Main Street. But the growing number of recipients required a more open space to manage the traffic flow and give people time to make thoughtful choices and meet their needs.

Funds, materials and volunteers were acquired at donation sites, through ITAV’s Amazon Wish List for donors, and through the generosity of a number of community partners including Multi Cultural Community Services of the Pioneer Valley, Baslie Subaru of Hadley, Done Right Chimney, Florence Bank, Greenfield Savings Bank, the Haydenville Congregational Church, Salvation Army, and the Westhampton Congregational United Church of Christ. Oliver’s Farmstand in Goshen even hosted a collection box at their Main St. business.

Savannah Colon of Williamsburg Hair was also on hand to offer complemen-

tary back-to-school haircuts, and managed 20 haircuts during the event.

Kinsella said the goal of this event is to help local families feel connected to community resources and to have kids feel ready to go back to school. “With every year, we see an immensely growing need. We wanted to make sure ITAV was prepared with the proper number of backpacks and supplies,” she said.

The model has changed from their earlier days of handing out backpacks already filled with school supplies.

ITAV recognized that each school and classroom had unique resources and needs; it made more sense to empower families and students to select their own supplies for the coming year. Some teachers and schools had already posted supply lists for the new year by the time this took place.

Of course, not everyone is able to make a single event. There are still some supplies and backpacks at the Village closet for people who stop in on Sundays.

They have a table at the Dept. of Transitional Assistance office in Pittsfield. New this year, ITAV also delivered backpacks to local school districts

like Gateway, Hampshire Regional and the Hilltown Charter School to cover families who were unable to attend or who might move into the area after the start of school.

ITAV’s surplus stock of school supplies was also distributed between the schools so that kids and educators all feel supported.

“Life can get so busy, sometimes it is not feasible to make it to a single event. Having supplies at each school helps keep people from slipping through the cracks,” Kinsella noted.

Kinsella said there are so many barriers to getting back to school supplies, especially for families in rural hill-towns. The amount of time it takes to get to a store and the price of gas alone increases the benefit for events like this.

Since 2019, It Takes a Village has offered a safety net for Western Massachusetts families, including providing basic needs supplies at their site at 2 East Main St.

They receive funding and donations through The Irene E. and George A. Davis Fund, the Women’s Fund, the United Way of the Franklin and Hampshire Region, the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, and



Photo submitted

School supplies were made available to families at a back-to-school event hosted by It Takes a Village, held at Gateway Regional School on Sunday, Aug. 16. To date, over 600 new backpacks have been gifted to families who were able to fill them with school supplies. Complementary haircuts were given at the event.

the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts.

They offer a Family Free Store at their site with clothing, toys, books, diapers and furniture, along with Free Stores in area schools where students can select clothing, sports gear and hygiene supplies. They also have a post-partum home visiting program that supports parents of newborns.

ITAV also relies on the support of businesses and individuals. One upcoming event is Diaper Need Awareness Week from Sept. 14 - 21. Diapers can be dropped off at It Takes a Village, 2 E. Main St. in Huntington.

Volunteers and donations are always welcome. People may visit hilltownvillage.org for more information.

MassDOT holds video contest for high school students

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Department of Transportation launches its 13th annual Safe Streets Smart Trips High School Video Contest, inviting students across Massachusetts to use their creativity to help promote safer travel on the state’s roads.

This year, students are being asked to create a 30- to 60-second video focused on safe riding behaviors for electric micromobility devices, including e-bikes, e-scooters and e-skateboards.

Submissions are due on Sunday, Oct. 4 by 11 p.m.

“Under the leadership of the Healey-Driscoll Administration, safety is a shared responsibility and engaging the next generation of drivers is one of the most important ways we can build a culture of safety on our roads,” said Interim Secretary of Transportation and MBTA General Manager Phil Eng.

“This safety video contest gives young people an opportunity to use their creativity and their voices to

remind all of us that the choices we make behind the wheel can have a lasting impact. We are proud to support efforts that empower young people to be leaders in roadway safety and help make state roads safer for everyone.”

“Year after year, we have found high school students a great resource for safety-related content that is current, effective and resonates with all roadway users across all modes,” said Undersecretary and State Highway

Administrator Jonathan Gulliver.

“Given the continuing rise and diversity of micromobility devices, we will for the 13th year of this Safe Streets Smart Trips campaign turn to these students to be part of our continuing efforts to make the Commonwealth’s roadways safer for everyone.”

The contest is an initiative of the Massachusetts Strategic Highway Safety Plan and is open to all Massachusetts public high school students. Students

will compete in two categories: freshman/sophomore and junior/senior.

A MassDOT panel will select a grand prize, runner-up and honorable mention in each category. Winning videos will be shown on Tuesday, Oct. 27, at MassDOT’s annual Moving Together active transportation conference.

Grand prize winners will receive \$500 Amazon gift cards, runners-up will receive \$300 Amazon gift cards and honorable mention winners will receive \$100 Amazon

gift cards. Selected videos may also be featured in future MassDOT roadway safety campaigns.

More information about the Safe Streets Smart Trips High School Video Contest including contest guidelines and submission information, is available by visiting Mass.gov/roadway-safety-video.

Past winning videos are available on the Roadway Safety Video Contest Results page and MassDOT’s YouTube channel: Mass.gov/roadway-safety-video.

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE’S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue of and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Matthew F. Montague and Happy Montague to Peter E. Montague and Mary P. Montague, Trustees of the Peter and Mary Montague Living Trust, said mortgage being dated June 6, 2014, and recorded in the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds in Book 11659, Page 145, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing, the same will be sold at Public Auction at **11:00 A.M. on Wednesday, September 30, 2026**, upon the premises described in said mortgage, namely 61 Chesterfield Road, Westhampton, Hampshire County, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage, to wit:

A certain parcel of land in Westhampton, Hampshire County, Massachusetts, with the improvements thereon, located on the easterly side of Chesterfield Road, and being shown as Lot

A on a plan of land entitled, “Plan of Land in Westhampton, Massachusetts Prepared for Peter E. Montague,” prepared by Holmberg & Howe, Inc. dated May 17, 2013 and recorded in the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds, Plan Book 229, Page 121, to which plan reference may be made for a more particular description.

Containing 6.50 acres of land, more or less

Being the same premises conveyed to the Mortgagors by deed from Peter E. Montague and Mary P. Montague, Trustees of the Peter and Mary Montague Living Trust, Dated July 2, 2009, recorded in the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds immediately prior hereto, and subject to the right of first refusal in said deed.

Said premises will be sold subject to and/or with the benefit of any and all rights, rights of way, restrictions, easements, improvements, covenants, outstanding tax title, municipal or other public taxes, assessments, liens or claims in the nature of liens, rights of parties in possession, and existing encum-

brances of record created prior to the mortgage, if any there be, whether or not reference to such restrictions, easements, improvements, liens or encumbrances is made in the Deed.

No representations, express or implied, are made with respect to any matter concerning the premises which will be sold “as is”.

The successful high bidder will be responsible for paying the Massachusetts State Documentary Tax Stamps, all closing costs and all recording fees.

TERMS OF SALE: The highest bidder in the sale shall be required to deposit cash, bank treasurer’s check or certified check in the amount of **TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$25,000.00)** at the time and the place of the sale of the premises to qualify as a bidder (the present holder of the mortgage is exempt from this requirement) to be held by the Mortgagee. The successful bidder will also be required to deposit an additional sum equal to ten percent (10%) of the amount bid less the \$25,000.00 deposit (but no less than \$25,000) with the Mortgagee’s auctioneer, Aar-

on Posnik & Co., Inc., 31 Capital Drive, West Springfield, Massachusetts 01089 or the Mortgagees attorney as may be directed within five (5) days of the date of the sale to be held by the Mortgagee, and the balance of the purchase price shall be paid in cash, certified or bank treasurer’s check at the closing which shall occur within thirty (30) days after the date of foreclosure sale, time being of the essence, unless the Mortgagee agrees otherwise. The successful bidder at the sale will also be required to pay a buyer’s premium of 5% and shall sign a Memorandum of Terms of Sale containing the above terms at the auction sale.

In the event that the successful bidder at the public auction shall default in purchasing the within described property according to the terms of this Notice of Mortgagee’s Sale and/or the terms of the Memorandum of Sale executed at the public auction, the Mortgagee reserves the right, at its election, to sell the property to the second highest bidder at the public auction provided that Mortgagee, in its discretion, may require (1) said second highest

bidder to deposit the amount of the required deposit as set forth herein within three (3) business days after written notice to the second highest bidder of the default of the previous highest bidder, (2) the second highest bidder to execute a Memorandum of Sale, and (3) the closing to occur within twenty (20) days of said written notice, time being of the essence unless the Mortgagee agrees otherwise. The Mortgagee reserves the right to sell any parcel or any portion thereof separately, or in any order that Mortgagee may choose and/or to postpone this sale to a later time or date by public proclamation at the time and date appointed for the sale and to further postpone any adjourned sale date by public proclamation at the time and date appointed for the adjourned sale date.

Other terms, if any, to be announced at the time and place of the sale.

The description for the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.

Peter E. Montague and Mary

P. Montague, Trustees of the Peter and Mary Montague Living Trust
Present Holder of said Mortgage

By /s/ David A. Lavenburg
David A. Lavenburg,
Its Attorney
BACON WILSON, P.C.
33 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
413-781-0560

09/03, 09/10, 09/17/2026

Town of Worthington Conservation Commission Notice of Public Hearing

The Town of Worthington Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on **Thursday, September 17, 2026, at 7:00 PM** in the Meeting Hall at 160 Huntington Road. The Commission will consider the filing of a Notice of Intent for the following project: A Large-Scale Ground Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Installation (LSGMSPI) at 190 Ridge Road.

Virtual access is available via a link found on the Community Calendar Posting.
09/03/2026

Country Journal

OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice (with a word limit of up to 500 words) and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.

HELP WANTED

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