

LEYDEN LIFE

LEYDEN, MASSACHUSETTS

March 2026

Select Board

With Monday holidays and snowstorms, the Select Board has had only two meetings since the last issue of Leyden Life. However, there are other committee meetings related to our agenda that keep us active and we are preparing for budget discussions and annual employee reviews. Spring is getting closer as we enter March and given the bumpy surfaces already on our paved roads, we may be in for some major frost heaves as the weather gets warmer. For those on dirt roads, let's hope for a mild mud season.

Regional School Projects Budgets

As you may have read or heard, all the regional schools in Franklin County are taking close looks at their budgets and making sharp cuts to present reasonable town assessment increases. The Pioneer Valley Regional School District (PVRSD) **School Committee voted to accept a revised budget of \$18.2 million representing a 4.47% increase over last year, with an 8.99% increase in assessment to the towns.** Increased costs from salaries based on collective bargaining agreements, health care costs and special education tuition combined with stagnant or reduced state aid are the main factors in the increases this year. PVRSD has recently lost the Director of Student Services and the Treasurer, however, both positions are to be rehired while the Director of Teaching and Learning and the high school Librarian position have been cut from budget. Leyden will be assessed \$1,005,170 for operational costs; a 12.34% increase and a capital (building improvements) increase of \$13,955.

A feasibility study for the Northfield Elementary School building was proposed to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) by the PVRSD in 2023 and the district was in the second stage of consideration. The feasibility study would have required the district to borrow approximately \$1.2 million to conduct a new, state-defined analysis, with an estimated reimbursement rate of about 58%. The PVRSD School Committee has voted to withdraw from the MSBA feasibility study. The decision reflects the School Committee's concerns about timing, cost, and the six-town regional planning work currently in process. The decision does not diminish the importance of addressing facility needs at the district schools; however the Committee members noted it was also important that any major capital project aligns with a comprehensive regional plans.

Select Board Report, continues on page 2

OFFICE HOURS

Town Office

Tuesday - Thursday 8:30am- 4pm

Select Board meetings

Mondays 9am or 5:30 pm

413-774-4111 x1

Selectboard@townofleyden.com

Town Coordinator

Tuesday through Thursday

8:30am to 4:30pm

(413) 774-4111 ext. 1

Fax: (413) 772-0146

towncoord@townofleyden.com

Town Clerk

Mondays: 3:00 - 6:00pm

To make an appointment:

townclerk@townofleyden.com

Tax Collector

Monday: 4:30 -7:30pm

To make an appointment

taxcollector@townofleyden.com

413-774-4111 ext. 4 (Leave a message)

Assessor's Office

Monday: 4:00-8:00pm

For appointment: 413-774-4111 ext. 2

Meetings: Usually 1st Monday of the month at 7:00pm

assessors@townofleyden.com

TOWN POST OFFICE ADDRESS

7 Brattleboro Road

Leyden MA 01301



SPRING FORWARD

Daylight Savings, March 8, 2026

Move your clock ahead one hour at 2am.



Select Board Report, continued from page 1

Franklin County Technical School (FCTS) has also cut its budget for next year with the elimination of six positions to bring in a **budget of \$16.8 million; 3.72% increase from this year.** FCTS is facing similar increased costs of salaries and health care combined with reduced state aid. The assessments to the towns is up by 7%. At this time, we do not have Leyden's assessment, but it is most likely to be large due to the increase to 13 students attending FCTS next year. At the same time FCTS is planning for its **new \$246 million school building project.** Although the total cost would not be borne by the towns, it will be substantial. A 30 year bond would be sought to fund the construction. The nineteen district towns will be asked to vote on this project, and it takes 51% of the towns to approve. A public hearing was recently held, and another is scheduled for May 4th. Mark your calendars if you want to hear and see the plans before being asked to vote later this year.

The challenges facing the towns and schools in Franklin County are not being ignored by our State Senator, Jo Comerford and Natalie Blais when she served as our state representative. They co-sponsored [An Act to Provide a Sustainable Future for Rural Schools](#) in the State Senate and House (respectively). Local organizers are calling for support from towns and citizens to support the passage of this Act. A **Rural and Declining Enrollment Schools Week of Action from March 9 to 13** has been organized to underscore the ongoing plight of our underfunded schools. **To find out more about the Act and how to support: [Rural Schools Advocacy in Massachusetts](#).**

Highway Department

Winter maintenance challenges and potential improvements to highway facilities are being discussed with Bill Brooks, Highway Superintendent. There are several capital projects, including ventilation and furnace upgrades, estimated at around \$25K and \$20K respectively, being considered which we hope to fund using free cash. Also, repairs to the salt shed, estimated at \$8K, could potentially be funded through Chapter 90 money. Bill will pursue estimates for electrical work and door modifications in the highway office with possible funding through this year's highway expense account.

Town Caucus

The Town Caucus is unique to New England and dates back to the 1700s when community meetings, often held in taverns, selected candidates for local offices. Now this practice is a legal requirement with protocols to be followed to ensure fairness, transparency and broad participation. **Leyden's Town Caucus this year is scheduled for March 23rd at 6pm at the Town Office.** A quorum of 25 is required for the caucus, so please attend and nominate those who are Leyden registered voters and who have the capability to fill the open positions. See the Town Clerk report on page 4 for a list of open positions. Direct, grassroots democracy at work!

Announcements:

- **RAVE service** for emergency announcements has been renewed for 6 months fee of \$1425.00.
Leyden has a \$99,905.22 balance in our revolving account from the **Franklin Regional Housing Authority septic program.** There is one current application at this time. For more information on this program and if you are eligible to apply, contact bmchugh@fcrhra.org.
- **Finance Committee will begin its review of budget requests on March 4th at 5:30pm.** There will be a series of weekly meetings until a budget recommendation is complete. These meetings are open to the public, interested – please attend.
- Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) and Mass in Motion are presenting a **workshop on Targeted Universalism: Tools for Inclusive Community Design.** In this workshop, you'll learn how Targeted Universalism applies to Age- and Dementia-Friendly planning—and how designing for older adults and people with dementia creates places that work better for everyone. Online workshop on Tuesday, March 10 from 10am-Noon. [Register here:](#) or contact Rachel Stoler, rstoler@frcog.org.
- On **January 28th the town's emails were not available**, due to a hacker attack. Our service provider, Montague WebWorks, had it up again within 8 hours and will be applying additional security and upgrades to help avoid future disruptions.
- **Thanks to all the volunteers,** Anders Ferguson, John Richardson, Pam Brown, Marcia Miller, and Carey Barton, who braved the cold to open and staff the town offices as a warming center during the Arctic weekend at the end of January.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Baker, Katherine DiMatteo, Erica Jensen
Leyden Select Board

TOWN OFFICIAL APPOINTMENTS

Seeking volunteers for appointments for town committees, commissions and councils is a year-round effort for the Select Board.

Not on a committee yet, it's time to consider serving.

Call or email the Town Coordinator, towncoord@townofleyden.com.

OPEN SEATS

Agricultural Commission – 1 position. 3 year term

Constables – 1 appointed position. 1-year term

East Hill Cemetery Commission – 2 positions. 3 year term

Fence Viewer – 2 positions. 1 year term

Franklin Regional Planning Advisory Board – 1 alternate town representative seat. 1 year term

Mass in Motion Advisory Committee – 2 positions. 2 year term

An abundance of gratitude for all those that volunteer!

Leyden Origins

This piece is submitted by Nan Rolstad, Chair of the Leyden Historical Commission. Nan will contribute articles of general historical interest to Leyden Life from time to time.

Leyden Schools

In 1789 Leyden was divided into five school districts and town money (\$100) was allocated for teaching in private homes. By the early 1800's there were five one-room schoolhouses: Beaver Meadow, East Hill, South, Center and West Leyden. Of those schools, all remain as private homes. The West school was moved from the corner of Bell and Gates roads to West Leyden Road near the top of George Lamb Road.

Leyden was one of the first towns to include girls during the regular school hours. In other places girls could only attend after the boys had gone home or on weekends.



Center school (current home of Clarks) was moved from corner of Mid County and West Leyden Rd

LEYDEN LIFE LOWDOWN

Easy Submission

Submit by email: leydenlife@gmail.com. Attach a document, preferably in Word format. If email is not possible, call Cornelia at 774-5146. Entries must be submitted by 5:00pm on or before the 20th of the month prior to the publication month.

Distribution

To receive *Leyden Life* in digital or print form, email: leydenlife@gmail.com, or call Cornelia at 774-5146.

Thanks to all our deliverers!

Barbara Wallace, Lisa Limont, Pat Dempsey, Pat Little, Priscilla Sherman, Karen O'Neil, Marie Lovley, Carolyn Asbury, and Cornelia Reid.

Leyden Life depends entirely on donors and volunteers for its printing and delivery.

Donations are welcome.

Please make checks out to *Leyden Life*, and send to: Leyden Life, 30 West Leyden Rd., Leyden, MA 01337.

What We Are

Leyden Life is published and delivered monthly in Leyden, MA by a non-profit group of volunteers.

Editors: Carolyn Asbury, Annie Garvey, Lisa Limont, and Cornelia Reid.

DISCLAIMER

Leyden Life is not an official publication of the town, nor an official source of town business. We do our best to print accurately and distribute promptly the announcements and information we receive. Please check with the town (townofleyden.com) to verify information regarding town business or activities.



**Thanks to Gordon Cobb
for a contribution
this month**

The spring came suddenly, bursting upon the world as a child bursts into a room, with a laugh and a shout and hands full of flowers.

- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Town Clerk

Annual Census Reminder: If you have not yet returned your census form, please do so as soon as possible. Completing the census is required by state law and provides essential information used by schools, emergency services, and other Town departments. Each household must list all individuals currently residing at the address, as this information helps verify residency, maintain active voter status, and ensure access to certain Town services. Returning your form promptly also helps minimize additional postage costs and staff time that would be required for a second mailing. A second mailing will be sent in March to households that have not yet responded.

All returned forms must be signed. Even if no changes or corrections are needed, the form must still be signed by the head of household and returned. Unsigned forms cannot be processed and will be sent back.

Please note political party affiliation or voter registration changes cannot be made on the census form. To register to vote or change your party affiliation, you must submit a voter registration form. Forms are available at the Town Offices or online at: www.sec.state.ma.us/ovr.

Dog Licenses Reminders: Dog licenses are due by March 31st, and application forms were included in the same envelope as your census form. Licenses not renewed by this date will incur a \$10 late fee per dog. While many vaccination records are already on file, it is helpful to include a copy with your application. All records are scanned and returned.

Town Caucus Reminder: The Town Caucus is scheduled for **Monday, March 23, 2026, at 6:00 PM**, and several seats will be up for election. Please note that the Board of Assessors is no longer an elected position, which is why it is not listed on the caucus ballot.

The following positions are up for election this year, along with the incumbents who must run for re-election if they wish to retain their seats:

Board of Health	3 years	Elizabeth Kuzdeba
Constable	3 years	Gary Russell
Library Trustee	3 years	Tom Raffensperger
Moderator	1 year	John Harris Golden
Planning Board	5 years	Emily Yazwinski
Select Board	3 years	Erica Jensen
Tree Warden	1 year	William Brooks

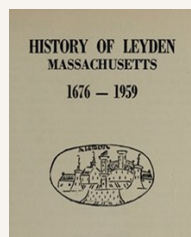
Anyone wishing to run for office is encouraged to attend the caucus to be nominated. If you are unable to attend, nomination papers may be obtained from the Town Clerk. **The deadline for obtaining these papers is Monday, April 13, 2026, by 5:00 PM**, and the **deadline to submit them to the Board of Registrars is Tuesday, April 14, 2026, by 5:00 PM**.

Office Hours: The Town Clerk’s Office is open Mondays from 3:00–6:00 PM at the Town Offices building. If Monday falls on a holiday, the office will be closed. While staff are usually in the office by 9:00 AM, please call ahead to confirm. The best way to reach us is via email at townclerk@townofleyden.com, which is checked remotely. Voicemail is only checked in the office.

George Stephan



Friday, March 20
The first day of Spring - Spring Equinox



The Leyden Historical Display
is open by appointment.
 Email nannetterolstad@gmail.com

The Sunday Coffee Hour
will return in April.



Board of Health



Of the 260 deaths in Massachusetts due to flu this season, 7 of these deaths were children. Because the flu vaccine strains are determined so far ahead of the flu season, it is not always perfect. Even at it's worst, it provides some immunity and can lessen the duration and severity of symptoms. It can prevent death. Flu shots are still available at local pharmacies. They DO NOT cause autism.

With Spring on the horizon, you should be determining the last time you had your septic pumped and well water tested. Septics on average should be pumped every 3 to 4 years. A basic water test should be performed on your well yearly and a more extensive test every 10 years by a state certified laboratory. A well is a private source of water and as such, the responsibility/cost of testing falls on the homeowner. It is not the town's responsibility.

Because of where we live, our homes require more maintenance. A properly maintained septic protects your home but also the environment. A properly maintained well protects your health.

March is Women's History month. Over my 64 years on earth, I thought women and women's rights/healthcare were mostly moving forward. This past year has been devastating to that line of thought. Ruth Bader Ginsburg said "Women belong in all places where decisions are being made. It shouldn't be that women are the exception." The decisions about women's health should be just that...a woman's decision. Women are not creating laws that limit what a man can decide about his health. Women should have the same rights and the same level of availability to care. Decisions made between a woman and her doctor should stay between a woman and her doctor. Families suffer when women cannot get proper and appropriate care. When families suffer, communities suffer.

Food insecurity is an issue throughout the country. A group of wonderful people have stocked the Leyden Cupboard and it is available to all. Information about the Cupboard can be found in Leyden Life.

Thank you for allowing us to serve you

Beth Kuzdeba Marcia Miller Devorah Vester

boh@townofleyden.com

413-774-2820



Police Department

The Winter rolls on and we look forward to Spring's arrival. We at the Bernardston Police Department are happy to report that the last month has been a relatively quiet one. While major incidents have been on the low end, we wouldn't be doing our jobs if we didn't mention the lead feet driving on Leyden's roads. Surely some are passers through, but many are locals and while we take no joy in stopping our residents, we do take road safety seriously. Please watch the signs and be safe.

We are also pleased to report that when the warmer weather arrives so will our Municipal Road Safety Grant patrols so we can devote some extra attention to safe driving. We kindly ask anyone and everyone to reach out and let us know any problem areas they would like us to address. As we have said before, our goal is not to write tickets, but to ensure everyone on the road, be it driving, walking and cycling or whatever mode of transportation you have, is safe. Please let us know how we can best serve the town in that endeavor.

As most of you are aware there has been a lot of work being done roadside throughout town. Several companies have long term work to do in the area and will be around for a good chunk of time, possibly into May and beyond. While we know the road closures and lane closures can be inconvenient, it is something that needs doing. Please relay any concerns you have to us and please watch our Facebook page for any major updates. We will try and notify of any road closures ahead of time.

Officer Jordan Zukowski



Jared Smith of East Hill Branch is the President of the Snowmobile Club. The Club maintains trails in Leyden, Bernardston, and Gill, and recently took over Northfield as well, bringing the total to about 70 miles of trails. The Club's work is a labor of love, and the snowmobilers, skiers, snowshoers, hikers, bikers, and horseback riders who can access the winter "snomo" trails are lucky to have the Snowmobile Club as neighbors!

Photo credit: Lisa Limont

Spring Cleaning

March bustles in on windy feet
 And sweeps my doorstep and my street.
 She washes and cleans with pounding rains,
 Scrubbing the earth of winter stains.
 She shakes the grime from carpet green
 Till naught but fresh new blades are seen.
 Then, house in order, all neat as a pin,
 She ushers gentle springtime in.

- Susan Reiner



WELLS TRUST SCHOLARSHIPS

The Fred W. Wells Trust is an organization that provides scholarships to students graduating from high school who planning to enter college or an advanced educational program and to students who are already enrolled in these programs. Recipients are selected based on scholarship, need, extracurricular activities and recommendations. Applications may be obtained from high school college counselors, or from the Town Clerk during normal business hours. They may also be downloaded at <https://www.wellstrustscholarship.com> All applications, letters of recommendation and official transcripts must be postmarked **on or before MARCH 20, 2026** and sent to:

Prudence Blond
 Greenfield Savings Bank
 400 Main Street
 P.O. Box 1537
 Greenfield, Ma. 01302

**For further information,
 please call Lois at
 774-4092**

Targeted Universalism: Tools for Inclusive Community Design



When initiatives focus on one group, others may wonder how it helps them. **Targeted Universalism** reframes that question—showing how strategies for specific groups can strengthen the whole community.

In this workshop, you'll learn how Targeted Universalism applies to Age- and Dementia-Friendly planning—and how designing for older adults and people with dementia creates places that work better for everyone.

This training is geared towards Town staff and volunteers who work with or on behalf of the public, and community members interested in ensuring our towns are Age- and Dementia-friendly.

Presented by Mass in Motion Franklin County and Health Resources in Action (HRIA).

You Will Learn:

- What does Targeted Universalism mean?
- How does Age and Dementia-friendly work relate to Targeted Universalism?
- How does Targeted Universalism help us to connect age and dementia-friendly work with other efforts in our community?



In-person option (lunch provided):
Thursday February 26, 9:30am-12:30pm
 (Snow date Tuesday March 3)
 J.W. Olver Transit Center, Allen Conference room.
 Click [here](#) or scan QR code to register



OR Zoom option:
Tuesday March 10 10am-12pm
 Click [here](#) or scan QR code to register



Fire Department

Greetings from the Leyden Fire Department!

Winter is not done with us yet. Hopefully this will mean more opportunities to spend time outdoors with winter gear. Please have fun and take care of each other.

It is time for new batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) detectors. March 8 brings the bounce forward to Daylight Savings Time. It is a great reminder to change out batteries in alarms. Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas that is emitted by furnaces and other fuel-burning appliances when they malfunction or if they are in need of cleaning. The human body will silently replace oxygen with carbon monoxide in red blood cells during an exposure. Prolonged exposure is deadly. Early stages of carbon monoxide exposure can cause confusion, drowsiness, and irritability, making it potentially even more difficult to diagnose. Check the dates on the detectors in your house: it is recommended these be replaced every 8-10 years. Give them fresh batteries. When they are working properly, smoke detectors and CO alarms save lives.

As of this writing, yet another snow storm is barreling toward Leyden. Please keep your driveway clear – with a lane at least wide enough for a large truck. If there is an emergency, response will be delayed if a truck cannot get there.

Open burning is allowed January 15 to May 1. A permit from the Fire Department is required for burning. According to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection open burning must be done 75 feet from all dwellings.

To get a burn permit, use the website: <http://www.fcburnpermits.com>

In recent weeks Leyden Fire Department has been engaged in driver training on the UTV in snowy conditions, including practicing rescue with a stretcher, and we've been washing the trucks.

We are always looking to add to our crew. If you have an interest in learning more about being a firefighter in Leyden, please reach out to fire@townofleyden.com or fireadmin@townofleyden.com.

Submitted by Firefighter Samantha Wood



Leyden Firefighters Corrinna Thompson and Matthew Muka wash Tanker 1 on the evening of Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2026.

Photo credit: Samantha Wood

Photo on right.
Leyden Fire Chief Carey Barton plays the role of a victim in the stretcher during a training using the UTV on Feb. 10, 2026.

Photo credit: Matthew Muka



Walk-In Wellness Clinic
Wednesday, March 11th at 10:30am-12:30pm
in the Town Hall

Everyone is welcome. No appointment needed.

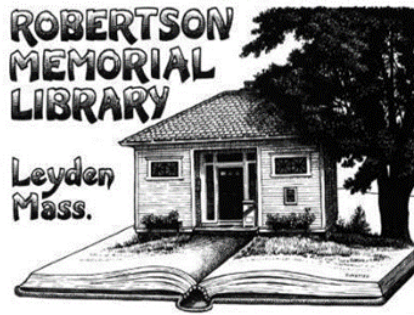
Services are free and confidential.

For more information or to discuss a health concern call
Lisa White at 413-774-3167 X156

The clinic is held on the 2nd Wednesday of every month.

**In March the earth remembers its own name.
Everywhere the plates of snow are cracking.
The rivers begin to sing."**

- Mary Oliver



Library Hours:
Monday 1-6
Wednesday 1-6
Saturday 10-12

“That’s the trouble with March—the warmth never lasts. There’s that narrow stretch when it parades as spring, just enough for you to thaw if you’re sitting in the sun, but then it’s gone.”

— V. E. Schwab

As March rolls in, we’re happily noticing those slightly warmer afternoons and the gift of a little more daylight each day. February felt like living inside a snow globe that just wouldn’t stop shaking! But hang in there — the first day of spring arrives on March 20, and we are so close.

Our book group continues to be such a joy. We had a fantastic discussion of *Frankenstein* — a classic monster tale that sparked great conversation (and, as always, was made even better by delicious snacks). Next up, we’ll be reading *Anxious People* by Fredrik Backman. Join us on **Thursday, April 2nd at 5:30 pm at the Town Office** for what’s sure to be another lively discussion. We’re alternating between newer titles and classics you may not have picked up in a while, and we love suggestions — if there’s a book you’d like the group to consider, please let us know! Be sure to grab your copy soon and mark your calendar.

Our Cyber Seniors appointment calendar is completely full through March — which is wonderful to see! If you’d like to book for April, please reach out. If those dates don’t work, contact the library and we’ll do our best to find a time that helps you tackle those tech troubles.

April is full of literary celebrations, and we’re cooking up something fun. Keep an eye out for details about an upcoming trivia event — we can’t wait to share more!

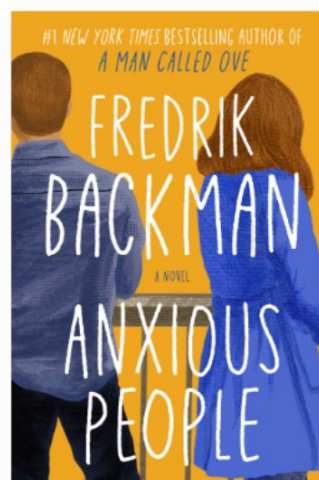
Karin Parks

library@townofleyden.com

(413)773-9334



Photo credit: Laura Schlaikjer



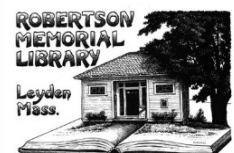
Thursday, April 2nd
5:30 PM
 Leyden Town Office

RML READS



Adult Book Club

Join us for our book club discussion of *Anxious People* by Fredrik Backman and bring your favorite appetizer to share. Copies of the book are available at the library.



Recreation Committee

Snowshoes Available for Borrowing

The Leyden Recreation Committee in partnership with the Robertson Memorial Library have attained several snowshoe sets (includes snowshoes, poles, and carrying cases) for use by community members, to encourage outdoor recreation and healthy winter activities. Sets range from youth snowshoes to adult sized snowshoes. They are available to Leyden residents and Robertson Memorial Library Patrons, for up to seven days. Snowshoes will be available to sign out at the library with a library card. Due to limited space, advance notice is required as snowshoes are not stored at the library.

To make a request to borrow, call the Robertson Memorial Library at 413-773-9334 or email at library@townofleyden.com, or by contact Leyden Recreation Chair Steve Richter (call or text 413-768-9540, or email at reccom@townofleyden.com).

Jazz Piano Concert April 1st

You're invited to a rare opportunity to attend a jazz piano concert by the brilliant Stephen Page. The Recreation Committee in collaboration with the Leyden Cultural Council will sponsor the Jazz Piano Concert, entitled "A Flowering of Song" on **April 1st from 5 -6pm at the Leyden Town Hall** . (Please see flyer below.)

Avery Pavilion Rentals

The calendar is now open for Avery Pavilion rentals for the 2026 season. If you are planning a graduation party, family reunion, bridal shower or a wedding, Avery field is a wonderful venue for your event. The rental fees remain the same as in the past: \$125 per day or \$200 for 2 consecutive days. Amenities available include a gas grill, a Blackstone griddle, some cooking supplies, clean bathrooms, a variety of yard games and plenty of space. To reserve a date please call or text Steve Richter at (413) 768-9540, or email reccom@townofleyden.com.

Submitted by

Steve Richter, Chair

Leyden Recreation Committee

Reccom@townofleyden.com

Open Space and Recreation Plan Listening Session

Monday March 23rd at 6:45pm

at the Town Offices

Thank you for your *incredible* response to the Open Space and Recreation Plan Survey. The committee received 142 responses with your thoughtful ideas and suggestions which have become the foundation of our community's updated plan.

A draft summary of the results of the survey can be found on the Town's website at <https://www.townofleyden.com/p/24/Open-Space-and-Recreation-Committee>.

Over the past months, the committee and community volunteers have drafted goals and objectives for our ten-year plan and we would like to have your input as to whether we have captured what you believe are the most important long-range goals. The draft goals and objectives will be posted on the Town's website by March 1st.

A Listening Session to review the goals and objectives will be held at the Town Offices immediately after the Town Caucus on Monday, March 23rd at 6:45pm. Join us for dialog about retaining and enhancing the natural resources of Leyden.

Light refreshments will be served.

Pam Brown, Chair, Open Space and Recreation Committee

pambrown01301@gmail.com

A Flowering of Song

JAZZ PIANO

with Noted Jazz Pianist Stephen Page

Where: Leyden Town Hall
When: Wed., April 1, 5-6 pm

"A brilliant talent" – Archie Shepp
Free and open to the general public

This program is supported in part by the Leyden Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency, and Robertson Memorial Library, and Parks and Recreation.

Jazz Piano in the Hands of a Master Can Make Flowers Bloom – well, almost! There are pianists and there are pianists... Welcome to this rare opportunity to listen in depth to jazz piano by the brilliant Stephen Page. He's performed up and down the eastern seaboard, with top names in jazz. Experience the delight of the music, the excitement of his playing, and songs to entertain and inspire you.

Mass Cultural Council

Come and visit the Leyden Cupboard at the Town Hall!

If you find that your food budget just doesn't fill your basket the way it used to, you are not alone. In the spirit of community care, Neighbors Helping Neighbors has filled the kitchen cupboards at the Town Hall so that our *neighbors who need a sharing hand can help themselves to items they would like*.

The Cupboard is chock-full of non-perishable staples for you to refill your pantry. The cupboard has everything from soup to nuts, so come nourish yourself. There are no eligibility requirements and *everyone is welcome*. No need to be shy!



The Cupboard will be open on: Monday, March 2nd from 5-7pm

Wednesday, March 25th from 1-2pm

Wednesday, March 11th at 1pm (immediately following the Community Meal)

If these hours don't fit with your schedule, you can reach out to our Librarian, Karin Parks (413-522-2581) who can open the Cupboard for you during library hours on **Mondays and Wednesdays between 1-6pm**.

If you would prefer to have the privacy of shopping alone, or have a bag delivered, you can contact one of our Coordinators, Jenny Campbell at 774-217-4195 or Karen O'Neil at 413-834-8009, and they can make special arrangements for you.

Additionally, thanks to an outpouring of generosity from our community Neighbors Helping Neighbors has more grocery gift cards for distribution. If you, a family member, friend or neighbor needs food assistance, please call Pam Brown at 413-775-3470. Your privacy will always be respected.



Maple Frosting

Photo credit: Lisa Limont



Leyden Cookbook

The Leyden Historical Commission is making a new cookbook reflecting many things about Leyden (OLD and NEW). Please be thinking if you have a special recipe you'd like to share.

Some sections will be Maple Products, School Lunch Ladies, Leyden Produce and Meat (Lamb, Goat, Blueberries, Figs), Fair Booth, Pie contests, Chili cookoff, Vegan, some wonderful sourdough and so on.



Recipes can be sent to nanetterolstad@gmail.com

Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance Program

With Certified TJQMBB instructor Penelope Corcoran

Monday & Thursday 10 to 11am

Leyden Town Offices

For improving strength, balance, mobility, and fall prevention.

Beginners are welcome. Please drop in and learn about our class.

A donation of \$10 per class is appreciated to support our teacher.

Sponsored by the Leyden Council on Aging

Council on Aging



Community Lunch

Wednesday, March 11 in the Town Hall

11:30am: Maple Sugaring in Leyden: Past and Present

Nan Rolstad and Warren Facey will tell stories and present slides about the production of maple syrup in Leyden.

Lunch at Noon: American Chop Suey, salad, garlic knots, and cookies

Reservations are appreciated. Call [Linda Allis at \(413\) 834-4417](tel:4138344417). Leave your name and the number of guests. If you want a to-go lunch, please call Linda, leave your name and how many meals you will be picking up so we can have them ready. If you are unable to pick up the lunch(es) because of health problems, let us know and we can arrange delivery.

Not just for seniors - all ages welcome.

If the lunch must be cancelled due to inclement weather, we will follow the PVRSD weather cancellation policy. Cancellation notices will be posted on the PVRSD website: <https://pvrs.pvrsdk12.org/home>. WWLP also carries the latest cancellations and delays.

Foot Clinic for Seniors: Monday, April 6th at the Town Offices

If you have questions would like to reserve a spot Please call **Linda Allis at 413-834-4417**. There is a \$25 copay at the time of your appointment.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors. We have community support services in Leyden for people who need support and help for any reason. If you need help with transportation, picking up food or medicine, household help, medical appointments, or a friendly call, **contact Amy at 774-6907** or amy.woodsprite@gmail.com. To volunteer to help, contact Amy.



Amy St. Clair and Madeleine Gens preparing for the February Community Lunch. Photo credit: Laura Schlaikjer



Carole Rose preparing fifty salads for the Community Lunch. Photo credit: Laura Schlaikjer

Weekly Craft Get-Togethers. Mondays, 1-3pm at the Town Offices. Knitting, Stitching, Crafts, and more! Everyone is welcome. No need to respond, just come when you can!

Leyden residents are welcome to attend events and classes at the Bernardston Senior Center.

Activities include meals, art classes, music, games, book groups, and fitness classes for seniors at all levels of physical abilities. Call **(413) 648-5413**. Sign up for their E-newsletter at coa@townofbernardston.org.

The next COA meeting is on Tuesday, March 17 at 2pm at the Town Offices.

Leyden Dems Caucus

The Leyden Democratic Town Committee will hold its caucus on **Saturday, March 7, 2026, at 10am**, in person with a virtual option, at Leyden Town Hall, 16 West Leyden Road, Leyden, MA. *Refreshments will be served.*

Virtual link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87804209414>

At the caucus, registered and pre-registered Democrats in Leyden will gather to elect a delegate and an alternate to represent the town at the 2026 Massachusetts Democratic Convention, Friday, May 29th and Saturday, May 30th in Worcester.

All are welcome to attend, and first-time participants are encouraged. To vote or run for delegate or alternate, you must be a registered Democrat in Leyden. Eligible voters who are not yet registered as Democrats may register at the caucus.

A meeting of the Leyden Democratic Committee will immediately follow the caucus at 11am. For further information or accessibility needs contact pambrown01301@gmail.com

Leyden Cultural Council

Antenna Cloud Farm Spring Residency with Yasmin Williams. Monday, March 16 through Tuesday, March 24

Antenna Farm will produce its second annual Spring Residency program, this year featuring world-renowned guitarist, composer, and artist-activist Yasmin Williams, who will engage with the community in a number of robust ways:

- 1) interactive educational workshops and performances at schools in the Gill-Montague and Greenfield public school districts, and with after-school student music programs (Pioneer Valley Symphony Youth Orchestra, Strings for Kids in Greenfield, and others)
- 2) a mini-tour in the New England area, centered around a live performance at Shea Theater featuring Yasmin accompanied by a large ensemble comprised of a mix of local and regional musicians
- 3) the arrangement, development and studio recording of new works to be released on a new album
- 4) an artist project incubation retreat for all performers involved, taking place at Antenna Cloud Farm in Gill.

For more information: <https://www.antennacloudfarm.com/home>

Lose Your Blues: Jazz Piano Concert Wednesday, April 1, 5-6pm at the Leyden Town Hall

Jazz Pianist Stephen Page will present an approx. one-hour concert of jazz piano on his professional keyboard in Leyden. His concert will include upbeat, lively jazz tunes and rich ballads, classic and new with exciting improvisations. He brings decades of professional expertise that for more than 30 years has delighted and wowed audiences up and down the eastern seaboard. He plays a wide range of musical selections from standards to originals in varied jazz styles as played by Thelonius Monk, Coltrane, Miles Davis as well as original pieces uniquely his own. An exciting performer who consistently wows his audiences. Please see flyer on page 9.



These events are supported in part by a grant from the Leyden Cultural Council.



Cedar Waxwing with a Winterberry

Photo credit: Laura Schlaikjer



**Monday, March 23rd
at the Town Offices**

➔ **Town Caucus at 6pm**

➔ **Open Space and Recreation Plan
Listening Session at 6:45pm**

CLIMATE CORNER: PARALLELS

“Trofim Lysenko probably killed more human beings than any individual scientist in history...a Soviet biologist condemned perhaps millions of people to starvation through bogus agricultural research” (Kean, Sam. “The Soviet Era’s Deadliest Scientist is Gaining Popularity in Russia”, [The Atlantic](#), 12/19/2017)

Who was this scientist? How did it result in so many deaths? Why do we care?

Trofim Lysenko was a poor peasant from the Ukrainian portion of the then U.S.S.R who attended agricultural and agronomy schools. He developed genetic hypotheses in the 1920s and 1930s which directly contradicted the emerging and more widely accepted explanations in “Western” scientific findings originally proposed by Gregor Mendel.

The Soviet Union of that era covered an expansive area challenged to feed all of its people. Lysenko’s ideas and some of his experiments seemed to show that one could change the characteristics of one variety of wheat, and by subjecting it to moisture and cold, successfully grow an earlier crop. He was, at the time, convinced that wheat grown in these conditions would pass on cold resistance, a process he called ‘Vernalization.’ Because Lysenko rose from a peasant background similar to Joseph Stalin, the leader of his country, **and** had ideas which seemed to promise greater food production, he was promoted to prominent positions in agronomy. Additionally the Soviet Union’s ideology was derived from the anti-elitist doctrine, pro-peasant revolutionaries and was promoted in all aspects of Soviet governance.

Some of Lysenko’s early experiments seemed to show promise in small scale experiments. But his data were incomplete and he had been credited with saying, “There is no mathematics in biology.” As time passed millions died during several consecutive years of famine; Ukraine and its peasants were forced to ship most of their grain to other areas of the U.S.S.R. A particularly detailed account of this time is found in Anne Applebaum’s 2017 book, [Red Famine](#). Scientists who offered opposing views on inheritance were fired, imprisoned and/or executed. When ideology and science clash, ideology often wins. The result can be catastrophic. Some have said that Lysenko’s influence on agricultural research in the Soviet Union set them back 50 years, as embodied in consistent food shortages and severely weakened scientific research in biology.

Today there is an assault on climate research in the U. S. References to climate have been scrubbed on U.S. Agencies’ websites. The National Center on Atmospheric Research has been dismantled. At EPA, 6 atmospheric greenhouse gasses regulated since 2009 under an “endangerment to human health” designation will no longer be regulated as announced last week. How long will denying climate change set **us** back in **this** country? Can we learn from past mistakes in history?

Think about what those two words, Climate Change, mean to you. I’ll ask you about them next month.

Thank you,

Karen O’Neil, oneilk160r@gmail.com Resource for information on Lysenko: brittanica.com/biography/Trofim-Lysenko



LEYDEN CUPBOARD
at the Town Hall Kitchen

*All Leyden residents are welcome
to refill their pantry!*

Open Hours
Monday, March 2nd at 5-7pm
Wednesday, March 11th at 1-2pm
Wednesday, March 25th at 1-2pm

By Appointment and Home Delivery:
Jenny Campbell 774-217-4195
Karen O’Neil 413-834-8009
Karin Parks 413-522-2581



Photo credit: Laura Schlaikjer

Unclassified Ads

Unclassified Ads Policy Statement

We welcome unclassified ads from Town residents, and will run them free of charge (though a small donation would be most welcome.) We will run an ad for one issue unless requested to extend it.

CJ DESIGN, a small jewelry business. Are you looking for a one of a kind gift for that special someone? Holidays, birthdays, anniversaries or just because! I sell online at Poshmark.com my account is @cj_design. If you are a first timebuyer on Poshmark you can receive \$10 off your first purchase by using my code: cj_design. Make a bundle with your purchase and I will send you an offer. You can message me from your bundle or contact me, Carol Kuzdeba, 413-539-4684.

For Sale: Ariens 1332 Pro Snowblower. Very good condition. Asking \$450. Susan Coan 413 624-3906 Doylegf@verizon.net

Erik's Handyman Service: Let me help you with your "to do" list. Property maintenance, brush control, lawn mowing, roto-tilling, odd jobs, and miscellaneous projects. If you could use some help, give me a call at 413-774-9948 and ask for Erik, or e-mail erikshandy1@yahoo.com. Reasonable rates. Insured.

Vintage, Ethnic, & Just Plain Good-Looking Fabrics:

Baby quilts, aprons, placemats and runners. All the fabric items you never knew you needed!

Sue Carlson (413-624 3695; suancarlson455@gmail.com)

Pottery Classes. Private and group lessons in hand building and wheel throwing are available at my studio in Leyden. \$45.00 per hour and a half class, or \$275 for six classes. The classes do not have to be consecutive. Materials included. Call or email Rhonda for more info: 413-624-5175 or 413-325-3629 or rhondawain@verizon.net

I play Irish music on a tenor banjo and am looking for someone to play with and to give me banjo lessons. Please contact David Pomerantz: davpome@gmail.com. Thanks.

Come join our coop! The principal goal of our coop is to support local organic produce and products by purchasing in bulk. We welcome all! Let me know if you are interested in joining us. You can reach me (Devorah) at 617.331.1598 or devorah.vester@gmail.com for more information.



Support Leyden Farmers

Boer Goat Meat is available at Frizzell Hill Farm. Goat is quite tasty, low in fat and cholesterol, and high in protein and iron. Give it a try! Visit frizzellhillfarm.com for information and a price list. Thanks for supporting local Leyden farms!

Ed's Sugar Shack has fresh local maple syrup for sale. Available in gallons, half gallons, quarts and pints. Call **773-7619**, Ed Johnson, 72 South County Road, Leyden. Member of Massachusetts Maple Producers Association

Orchard Valley Farm is now offering Wool blankets that contain our own wool. "Throw" size is 52x76". Plaid with natural color with a dark gray banding. \$150.00. Also scarves Natural or Dark Gray 9x60". Both were woven in 2024 through our Baaay State Blanket Program. We also have a few sheep skins that were tanned naturally at a Vermont tannery. Natural Lamb available as always. Most cuts. Call 413-624-5562 or email ovbecky324@gmail.com for more information.

Quality Soap and Salve at Ninny Nanny Farm!

All-natural, nourishing, locally sourced lard-based goat milk soap. Many lovely scents and styles. Beef tallow balm to soothe and soften your skin. Come see what's new at the Soap Stand at 868 Greenfield Road!"

Patti Lawall at (413)325-1511. ninnynannyfarm@gmail.com

For help with: Water Retention features. Rain gardens. Rainwater Harvesting - barrels and in the soils. Biological Soil Testing. Edible landscaping. Garden sites - no till, in ground garden, garden boxes, etc. Food Forests. Wildflower Meadows. Composting- thermophilic, static, vermicompost. Biological soil drenches - compost teas and extracts Disease and pest management without chemicals - no herbicides, fungicides, or pesticides. Text or call Janell Howard at 385-685-0544 or email how2grolandscapes@gmail.com

J. Caesar:

"The Ides of March are come."

Soothsayer:

"Ay, Caesar, but not gone."

William Shakespeare



Contacting the Police

Emergency – Dial 911 **Non-Emergency** but would like a call from a duty officer: Call **(413) 648-9208** or **(413) 625-8200**.

(A dispatcher will answer these numbers.)

Non-Emergency and you want to request information or report something that doesn't need immediate attention, please email us at police@townofbernardston.org. (Note: emails are normally answered daily, but may take a few days with the Chief's days off.)