



LEEDS LETTER

APRIL 2015

UPCOMING EVENTS 2015

APRIL 14

LCA Meeting

Tuesday, 7:00 - 8:00 pm

Leeds School teacher's lounge

- Litter Clean Up
- Hotel Bridge fundraising ideas
- Workin' Bridges event
- Village Wide Tag sale

APRIL 25

Litter Pick- Up Day

Icecream sundae for all participants!

Saturday, 9:00-11:00 pm

Register and pick up trash bags at Post Office starting at 8:45.

MAY 1

Leeds Bike Path 'Spur' design presentation by Smith College engineering students

Friday, 2:40 -3:45 pm

Smith College, Carroll Room, Campus Center

MAY 23

Armed Services Appreciation Day

Friday, All Day event

Look Park

MAY 24

Leeds Memorial Day Celebration

Sunday, 1:00 pm

Leeds Veterans Memorial Park

JUNE 1

Workin' Bridges - Hotel Bridge Restoration Community Meeting

Leeds School Cafeteria

Time to be determined



Lucas Gundersen constructs a truss bridge at the 2015 pizza party.

Photo by Pamela Cobb

Leeds Civic Association

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Leeds Civic Litter Pick-Up Day, April 25, 9:00 -11:00 am

Register and pick up trash bags in front of Leeds Post office starting at 8:45.

Fill the bags and leave by the side of the road. Its that easy! The focus this year will be on Reservoir Road to Chesterfield Road and River Road up to Champlain Cable. **At least 15 volunteers are needed to collect litter on this route.** Teenagers...time to get involved! Families...can do this together. Pickers will get free ice cream sundae coupons.

If there is another area or street that you are really attached to doing – that's fine – just register, so Sue and Tom know where to find your bags. The last run of the truck is 11:30. Garden Gloves are recommended. Heavy rain cancels the litter pick-up.



Expert Iron Bridge Team, Workin' Bridges, Inspected Hotel Bridge

The extreme cold temps that continued month after month this winter turned out to be lucky for Leeds in one regard; the Mill River stayed frozen long enough for the iron bridge restoration team, Workin' Bridges, to get a close-up look at the Hotel Bridge. When Workin' Bridges suggested they come to see the bridge while there was still ice, the preparations moved very quickly. The site-visit was coordinated and delivered in the span of 1 week. With the cooperation of the DPW and the City's chief procurement officer, the LCA was allowed to front the portion of the Workin' Bridges fee for the site-visit, and Workin' Bridges was able to get their flights arranged to make the visit happen before temps rose and the ice melted.

They climbed on and inspected the top chord, got a good look at the deck. Standing on the ice they could easily touch, measure, and photograph the components underneath. The site visit took place on Sunday, March 8th and there was a meeting with DPW and the LCA the next day. Workin' Bridges will be sending their restoration recommendations and costs to the city in the next few weeks. Julie Bowers, WB project manager, will be returning to Leeds on June 1 for the Workin' Bridges Town Hall style public meeting. She will lay out their findings and propose options for restoration. All Leeds residents are invited to come to this event and show support for restoring the oldest Pratt through truss iron bridge in the state... which happens to reside in our village of Leeds!

Little things and little amounts matter. Efforts by the LCA and volunteers over the past 5 years made the Workin' Bridges site-visit possible. Four bicycle ride fund raisers occurred in the past 5 years, organized by Alice Baedecker and Stephy Cho. Several dozen Leeds hats, Hotel Bridge shirts, greeting cards, and mugs have been sold. All of the proceeds from these ventures were available in the LCA Hotel Bridge account when the time was ripe to have the iron bridge team assess our bridge's needs. Thank you to everyone who contributed in these efforts or purchased an item. The LCA will continue to offer mugs, shirts and cards for sale to benefit the bridge restoration. Other fund raisers large and small are being planned. To find out how you can get involved please email: leedscivassoc@gmail.com.

Pizza Party Wrap Up

Year after year this party works! It does what it should, brings people together...and this year there were representatives from eleven decades! It was a pleasure to have guests from Highview-Northampton be a part of the fun. Among the senior group was 102 year old, Annette O'Leary, Sue Carbin's high school history teacher. Raffle prizes ranged big to small. Elsie Baker scored the coveted unicycle. One-time unicycle owner, Nick O'Connor scored the beautifully framed painting of the Bay Bridge. Mary from Highview won the salmon tie clips -just in time for the necktie tying workshop at Highview. Lucas Gundersen, age 5, had his eye on the play dough set and went all in with his tickets for that prize. Lucas made it well known during the party just how much he wanted that play dough set, and guess who won the play dough set? Yup, Lucas did. Everything works out just fine at the Leeds Pizza + Raffle party! Kids and adults got creative building bridges with tongue depressors, tooth picks and popsicle sticks. Hotel Bridge imagery was readily available to inspire! Thank you Jim Montgomery and Penny Geis for this party bonus.

There are lots of thanks to go around for the party's success. Of special mention are **Dana Collins** who contributed his DJ finesse, and **Jim Mias** who did his special MC-ing, and the **Northampton Country Club** for donating the space for the night. Area businesses also came through with a big "beat the winter blues" spirit by donating excellent raffle prizes. Thank you to **Highview Northampton** for donating the ninja trike, green ninja helmet, and a season pass to Look Park; **Leeds Package**, for donating a bucket of wine with accessories;



Bottom photos by Bren Maurer,
Top photo by Heidi Stevens

Brewmasters Tavern, Cup and Top, Roger's Bike Shop, On Point Salon and Florence Hardware, for donating gift certificates. The planning, advertising, shopping, collecting of raffles, contacting businesses, donating raffles, bridge building activity, bringing appetizers, salads and desserts, decorating tables, picking up pizza, serving pizza, setting up and cleaning up, and photographing the event - to everyone who helped, the LCA community thanks you! You can see the party photos at LeedsCivic.org.

Scholarship Application Time

If you are a senior at NHS or Smith Vocational and will be continuing your education, with college, tech school, or an apprentice program, now is the time for you to go to your guidance office and request an application for the Leeds Civic Association-Mark and Patricia Bradford Memorial Fund Award. Do this as soon as you can. Any questions can also be answered by calling Richard Greene, 584-5525 or Earl Meunier, 584-8858.

Out on a Limb - Heidi Stevens

On the corner of Grove Ave and Upland Road part way up the white pine is a honey bee hive. In the summer you can see the bees zooming in and out. The bees are now dormant, but recently the tree has been active with bigger wildlife. A mama bear spent a long time circling the base of the trunk, nose sniffing the air, then with a loud crackle of claws on bark she left the ground and chugged herself up the pine and sprawled out on a fat branch. Her two babies had already nabbed prime spots for a mid-day nap on their own branches. One youngster rested on the outer most edge of the limb extending over Upland. Second baby bear had curled up on a thick branch stump, tucked its nose to its chest and hugged the branch like it was a pillow. They may have smelled honey up in that tree (after all there are 6 other white pines in a row and they chose that one to climb.) A contractor in his truck stopped and snapped a few shots, the mail man craned his neck for a good look, and several walkers stopped to capture the family on film. The baby bears napped through the flurry of paparazzi below. Mama bear endured the audience. After over an hour in the tree, she called it quits and descended. One after the other, the little ones followed. The young bear on the end branch slowly backed its way all along the branch to the tree trunk, pivoted and spread its arms wide around the trunk. He/she shimmied sideways to take advantage of the best angle, and lumbered down, bottom first. This same bear family has been spotted in Look Park and in the neighborhood mauling several bird feeders, ransacking compost piles, breaking a porch rail, and knocking down a mailbox. Be forewarned - it's time to empty your bird feeders before the bears do it for you!

Smith Engineering Presentation on the Bike Spur to Main Street

If you missed the March presentation of the spur design to link the rail trail to Main St. given by Smith engineering students, you have another chance to see it on Friday, May 1 at Smith College in the Carroll Room at Campus Center from 2:40 - 3:45.

Making Leonard Street and Route 9 Intersection Safe

The Planning Dept. is going to hire an engineer to design a safer intersection for Leonard Street at Haydenville Road by making it into a right angle. This project received the highest support at the community meeting organized by the LCA. DPW and Planning both agree it is a major opportunity. Construction funding wouldn't be identified until they see how much money gets used for the design and how much that leaves for construction.

Rail Trail Extension North of Grove Ave in Leeds

The rail trail project for the design phase of extending the rail trail north from Grove Avenue is almost done. It is likely that within a month, the Planning Office will make a decision about the contractor for this work, with construction taking place in the summer and fall. Questions remain about the trail's connection to South Main Street in Haydenville. Will the paved path end in the middle of the woods until approval and funding is found for the connection? Last summer an MRGI survey to Leeds residents found 48% of residents preferred the trail to be left as is, 25% preferred stabilized soil with trap rock gravel, and 27% wanted to see asphalt. The 27% will be happy. The Planning Department has decided to create an 8 foot wide asphalt trail. If folks have questions or concerns, please contact the Director of Planning and Sustainability, Wayne Feiden, at wfeiden@northamptonma.gov.

Out on a Limb – Again!

People were climbing in trees at Mulberry Park last Saturday! Matt Verson, ecologist and tree specialist offered his expertise pruning the crab trees. Matt had a crew of four volunteers; Penny Geis, Karyn Nelson, Heidi Stevens, and Bren Maurer who had the bonus of learning correct pruning techniques, and the identity of various plant and tree species in the park. The group spent over 3 hours sawing and lopping off tangled branches, dead wood, and shooters. Thank you, Matt! This couldn't have happened without you and your guidance. It will be a welcome sight to see the trees and garden below waking up after such a brutal winter. Happy Spring!