



LEEDS LETTER

OCTOBER 2017

UPCOMING LCA EVENTS

OCTOBER 12 - LCA Monthly Meeting

Thursday, 7:00 p.m.
Haydenville Congregational Church

OCTOBER 14 - Old Mosquito Road History Walk

Led by historian and local Leeds author, John Clapp. Free.
Saturday, 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Advance registration required.

OCTOBER 25 - Northampton Candidate Forum

Wednesday, 6:30 - 9:00
JFK School Community Room

OCTOBER 28 - Leeds Pumpkin Contest & Party

Saturday, 4:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Raindate - Sunday, October 29
Corner of Chestnut Ave & Upland Road

OCTOBER 28 - Electronic Recycling Collection

Saturday, 9am - 12 noon
JFK Middle School (rain or shine)
Proceeds to benefit JFK PTO &
the Northampton Public Schools

Recycling Fees

Computers - \$15
Monitors - \$15
Printers - \$10
VCR, DVD Players - \$10
Office Machines - \$10
Computer Peripherals - \$5
TV's (under 30 inches) - \$25
TV's (over 30 inches) - \$45
All Freon Items - \$25
No charge for printer cartridges and cell phones

NOVEMBER 14 - LCA Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, 7:00 p.m.
Leeds School Teacher's Lounge

LEEDS CIVIC ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 114, Leeds, MA 01053
LeedsCivic.org
LeedsCivicAssoc@gmail.com



LEEDS 2017 PUMPKIN CARVING CONTEST PARTY

SATURDAY
OCTOBER 28
4:30 - 8:30

Corner of Upland & Chestnut
(Rain Date - October 29)

**SIGN UP
NOW**
to bring a soup,
chili, side, or
dessert at
LeedsCivic.org.

4:30-6:00
Drop off food
at party site

3:30-5:00
Drop off
pumpkin
entries at
party site

4:30
Kid's
Pumpkin
Roll Begins
(12 and under)

**5
PRIZE
CATEGORIES:**

- Funny
- Scary/Gross
- Most Original
- Classic
- Master (\$5 Buy-in)

Enter as many
pumpkins as
you want!

Bring your Jack-O-Lanterns & Decorated Pumpkins—Light up the Party!

The main attraction at this annual community party will be your pumpkin entries, without which the party would certainly be a dud. People really have fun at this shindig – It's like a pumpkin arts night out! There will be prizes, food, cider, and everyone gets to cast a vote for their favorite pumpkin in each of the five categories. It's free to enter your pumpkins in all categories except for the MASTER category which is a \$5 buy-in for the folks who carve as an art form! Half of the proceeds will go to the Hotel Bridge Restoration

Fund and the other half to the Master category winner. The Kid's pumpkin roll will start at 4:30 sharp, so be sure to get your kids there a bit earlier so they have time to select their pumpkin.

If you're new to Leeds or didn't participate last year, you might want to go to the LCA website, LeedsCivic.org and sign up to bring a soup, chili, side or dessert to share. The absolute best way to be involved is bring a carved or decorated pumpkin entry! The best parties in years past have been when we had over 60 pumpkins on display. Let's make it even more this year!

What are Mini-Splits?- Amy Stamm

You might have heard the recent buzz about HeatSmart Northampton. After the success of the 2013 Solarize Northampton project, the city decided to continue its energy efficiency efforts with this mini-split project. What are mini-splits? They are super efficient, whisper quiet air source heat pumps that can heat and cool particular rooms or your whole house using the equivalent of a light bulb's worth of energy. The most important thing about mini-splits is that they both heat and cool, so the same unit can be used as an air conditioner in the summer and a heater in the winter. Mini-splits can either supplement or replace existing heating systems, depending on your particular needs. Through January 31, 2018, Northampton is offering a 15% discount on systems, along with 0% financing and Mass. Clean Energy Center and Mass Save rebates to total more than \$900 in discounts on these systems, which entirely pay for themselves in a matter of a few years. Visit <http://wepowr.com/heatsmart-northampton> to find out more.

Walking Robert's Hill with a Local Naturalist - Heidi Stevens

Before we headed out on the guided hike, Laurie Sanders, naturalist & co-director of Historic Northampton, shared a few descriptions of the Robert's Hill area written by Sylvester Judd in the mid 1800s. Judd's notes helped us envision how the landscape on Robert's Hill once looked. Back then it was an area that was cut heavily for firewood.

Here is something from the Sylvester Judd manuscript: *"Old William Clark, born 1721, said that when he was young (say 1740) a deer could be seen on Roberts Hill 40 rods, there being no underbrush, and trees were sparsely scattered. Fires destroyed all the brush and small trees except in swamps, and large trees were almost as far apart as oaks in a western 'oak opening.'"*

And here are two entries from Judd's personal journals (1789-1860): *30 May 1855 - Fires in the woods. Fire has raged in the woods for two days past and some on other days, on Roberts Hill and vicinity. It is doubtless set by some careless, drunken hunters or smokers. It runs in the leaves and any limbs of trees, left when the wood was carried off. It kills much more of the young trees. It is less hurtful where trees are large. More or less wood piled up is burnt. We hear of fires in the woods in many other places, and much damage done.*

31 May 1855 - Fire had burnt over about 500 acres of Roberts Hill. All the small trees and brush are killed.

On the morning of September 22, 2017 a group of 20 walked the lush forest trails with Laurie who drew our attention to a variety of interesting vegetation. She pointed out a tree growing near the ice pond with enormous leaves shaped like a cat's head, a tulip tree. Nearby, was a Sassafras tree. Conversation about the trees

stopped when a king fisher cried out, circled the ice pond in a low swoop and landed on a tree branch as if on cue!

Laurie taught us a bit of "forest forensics." When we paused at one Oak tree, she pointed out the enormously wide span of lower branches that shows the area around it was once an open field. Vegetation growing closer to the ground was identified: Pipe Sap, a twig type stem shaped like a pipe; Wintergreen, its crushed leaves smelling and tasting like a wintermint lifesaver; Partridge Berry, a ground cover with dark green leaves and bright red berries that is also referred to as the "two eyed berry," because two berries fuse together forming a single berry with two dark dots that look like little eyes.

Halfway up the blue trail heading toward the summit Laurie informed us that we were in the foothills of the Berkshires, a transition zone, where some southern tree species and some northern species grow. At the top our group of 20 took in the spectacular view to the west and pondered the remnants of a small stone quarry on the eastern side wondering if perhaps the stone was quarried for the dams in Leeds. Hopefully, Laurie will lead another nature walk soon! Robert's Hill trails are well marked and a trail map can be downloaded at LeedsCivic.org

Northampton Candidates Forum - Penny Geis

Are you SURE who you will vote for Nov 7? Here's your chance for an in-person live comparison. The candidates will answer questions and talk about what they hope to accomplish for you and your city.

Mayoral Candidates: John Riley and David Narkewicz

Candidates for City Clerk: Pam Powers, Robert Driscoll

Panel: Stan Moulton, Gazette; Bill Newman, WHMP; Jean Cherdack, League of Women Voters

Moderator: Ingrid Flory

Leeds Celebrity Corner - Heidi Stevens

If any of you out there watched the Vietnam documentary by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick that aired on PBS recently you may not have realized that one of the editors is a Leeds resident!

Tricia Reidy of Leonard Street interned for Ken Burns while in college and worked on and off for him for the past thirty years. She spent two years working on the Vietnam documentary, both at Ken Burn's studio in New Hampshire and in her home studio.

Tricia edited the first episode which explains the history of French involvement in Vietnam. In the episode we are occasionally fast forwarded to American scenes leading up to and during our country's involvement. This back and forth adds historical echoes and foreshadows what's to come. A very complicated story to tell, for sure. Tricia explained that the first episode "set the table" for the unfolding story. She gleaned through easily 10,000 still images and 50 hours of archival footage looking for the best visuals. She selected still images, footage and live cinematography in an attempt to visualize the over 50 pages of narration and interviews.

Tim O'Brien, a Vietnam veteran and author of *The Things They Carry* (A must read story about being in war) was an advisor on the project. He also shared his experience in the documentary. Tricia said that O'Brien's strong sense of narrative was hugely helpful to her. Tricia also edited episode 7 and half of episode 8 of the series. If you missed the Vietnam documentary, you can watch it on demand or at PBS.org/shows.