

HAMPTON Connections

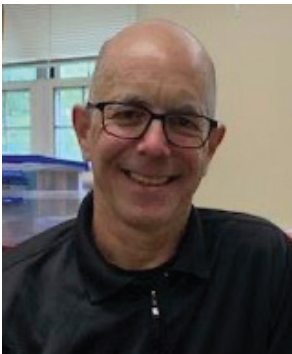
Volume 1, Issue 1 | August 2024

Welcome to Hampton Connections

MISSION STATEMENT

Hampton Connections focuses on building community by promoting a positive view of the people and events in our town. We provide news, features, and information to connect our readers and to foster respect and appreciation for each other and all our town has to offer.

Andrew Skarzynski, New Superintendent at Hampton Elementary



Mr. Andrew Skarzynski is the new superintendent of Hampton Elementary School. Using his impressive credentials and wealth of experience in education, he plans to build on the school's existing programs. With his optimism and enthusiasm, he is up to the task.

Skarzynski believes, "Building relationships is pivotal to success in our school." He hopes to build relationships by being a positive presence in the school and the community. He looks forward to supporting the faculty and students, as well as working with the administration and the Board of Education.

One idea Skarzynski hopes to implement is to use a wider range of multi-grade classes for projects that foster cooperation and exchange of ideas among the students. Another idea is inviting students to attend Board of Education meetings during the Audience for Citizens and Staff in order to have the Board acknowledge student achievement.

Also important to Skarzynski is the role technology plays in education and the need to teach students to use it as a tool and not a distraction.

He believes teaching students to use critical thinking when using technology is an effective way for them to achieve positive results from the unlimited information available to them.

And lastly, knowing that students and teachers are more than just a grade or a score, he would like to share their ideas and accomplishments in a more visible and tangible way.

Welcome, Mr. Skarzynski. We look forward to your success.

What's in Your Garden

Beautiful blooms in Frank Russell's garden



An old favorite, blue hydrangeas



The beauty of butterflies



Showstopping dinnerplate dahlias

Things I've Seen in the Grocery Store Parking Lot

By Claudette Russell

To understand human behavior, you might think you have to read great works of literature, earn an advanced degree in psychology, or delve into the tomes of ancient philosophers. Let me assure you, you don't have to do any of that. What I've seen in my grocery store parking lot is more than enough to enlighten you about human behavior.

Let's begin with runaway grocery carts. I've chased them, stopped them, and cursed them. I've seen them keel over after hitting a curb, thus obstructing empty parking spaces, and I've been furious after finding their telltale scratches and dents on my own car. But let me make this clear. These runaways didn't have diabolical minds of their own. These carts were left in the parking lot by adults who made the decision not to wheel them back to the cart return. Did these adults abandon common courtesy just because no one was looking? Maybe they went rogue to seek revenge against rusty carts with wonky wheels. Or perhaps the trek to the cart return was just too arduous. Whatever excuses they had for leaving grocery carts in the parking lot, I can't help but conclude the obvious. When left to their own devices, people often choose convenience over common sense.

Let's move on to the parking lot trash cans. These receptacles are conveniently located throughout the parking lot for the disposal of takeout coffee cups, fast food wrappers, and so on. But some people who see a trash receptacle automatically think: personal dumping ground. One day after wheeling my cart back to the return, I had difficulty fitting it into the designated area. Filling up that space was what looked like the remnants of a yard sale or items from a recent basement purge. Among the discards were a small fan, outdated electronics, rusty tools, and sealed cardboard boxes that in no way tempted my curiosity. Did the perpetrator of this shameful act just happen to be driving around looking for a place to unload some trash? Did an angry spouse dispose of the other spouse's clutter because it was spilling out of the garage and onto the driveway? Suffice it to say, some people have no qualms about dumping their junk in a public space as long as doing so clears out their personal one. For these people, expediency triumphs over sound judgement.

But human behavior includes more than its foibles. One day when I was putting groceries into my car, I heard a woman shout, "Stop, stop." Within seconds I heard her again. "Wait, stop, wait." I walked in the direction of her voice until she came into view. What I saw was a young woman waving her arms and chasing a bus that was way ahead of her as it headed out of the parking lot. I knew there was no way she was going to stop the bus, but she continued her pursuit with determination. Clearly she was hopeful that she could overcome the odds of getting the driver's attention. She didn't stop the bus, but I remember thinking we should all have such optimism. Missing the bus isn't the worst adversity life can throw at us, but often the way we handle small annoyances determines how we'll handle life's more challenging problems.

More lessons in Human Behavior 101 are available at a parking lot near you. The next time you're in one, observe your surroundings and the people in them. You never know what you may learn about your own species.

Bridge Construction Under Route 97

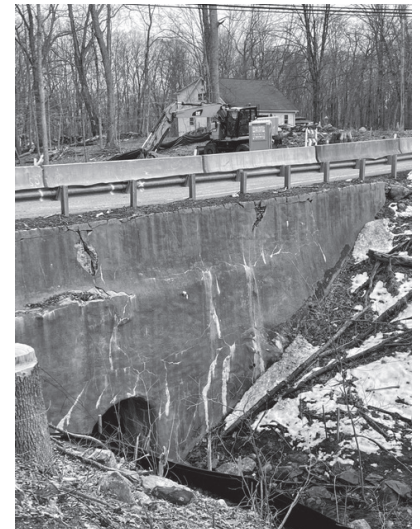
While it may seem that the project has been going on forever, there is an end in sight. According to project foreman, Doug Brown, they hope to have one lane of traffic open on Route 97 by September. Right now the project is slightly ahead of schedule but as with any construction of this size unforeseen obstacles crop up.

For example, toward the beginning of the project progress was slowed because the cable and power lines had to be moved across the street which meant waiting until that was complete. Once they started, the crew discovered more ledge than they had expected and had to drill down an additional four and a half feet and then had to redesign the footing.

The project began because the two bridges under the road had seriously deteriorated and presented the potential of collapsing. Fortunately, Congress had passed the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law which provided funding. The final bridge will contain eighteen concrete wing wall segments and will measure seventy-two feet long and twenty-two feet wide.

There is still much to be finished such as pouring the final wing walls, refilling the culvert, moving the cable and power lines back, and repaving the road. The fill from the culvert has been stored on land in the north end of town and will be trucked back to the site.

Once the project is finished our neighbors on the detour roads will again have peace and quiet and all of us will rest assured that the bridge under Route 97 will be safe and solid for generations to come.



Contributors to our first edition include: Arlene Becker, Stephanie Bayne, Lena Fontaine of Gulemo Printing, Joan Fox, and Claudette Russell.

Please email your comments/suggestions to
hamcon1786@gmail.com