



## Downingtown Area Historical Society Hist-O-Gram

*Interesting local history, accessed from our archives*

[www.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org](http://www.downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org)

*The past is never done. It is not even past--William Faulkner*

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## Where and What Is This?



The first person to correctly identify the site in the photo above will be recognized as a truly perceptive scholar. Please send your response to: [Info@downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org](mailto:Info@downingtownareahistoricalsociety.org).

*Officers of the Downingtown Area Historical Society are: Parry Desmond, president; Ernie Jameson, vice president; Marion Piccolomini, recording secretary; Francine Dague, treasurer; and Donna Capriotti, corresponding secretary. The board of directors includes: Harry Helms, Mike Dunn, Phil Dague and Dennis Walton. Carol Grigson is the archivist.*

# What locals were talking about 68 years ago

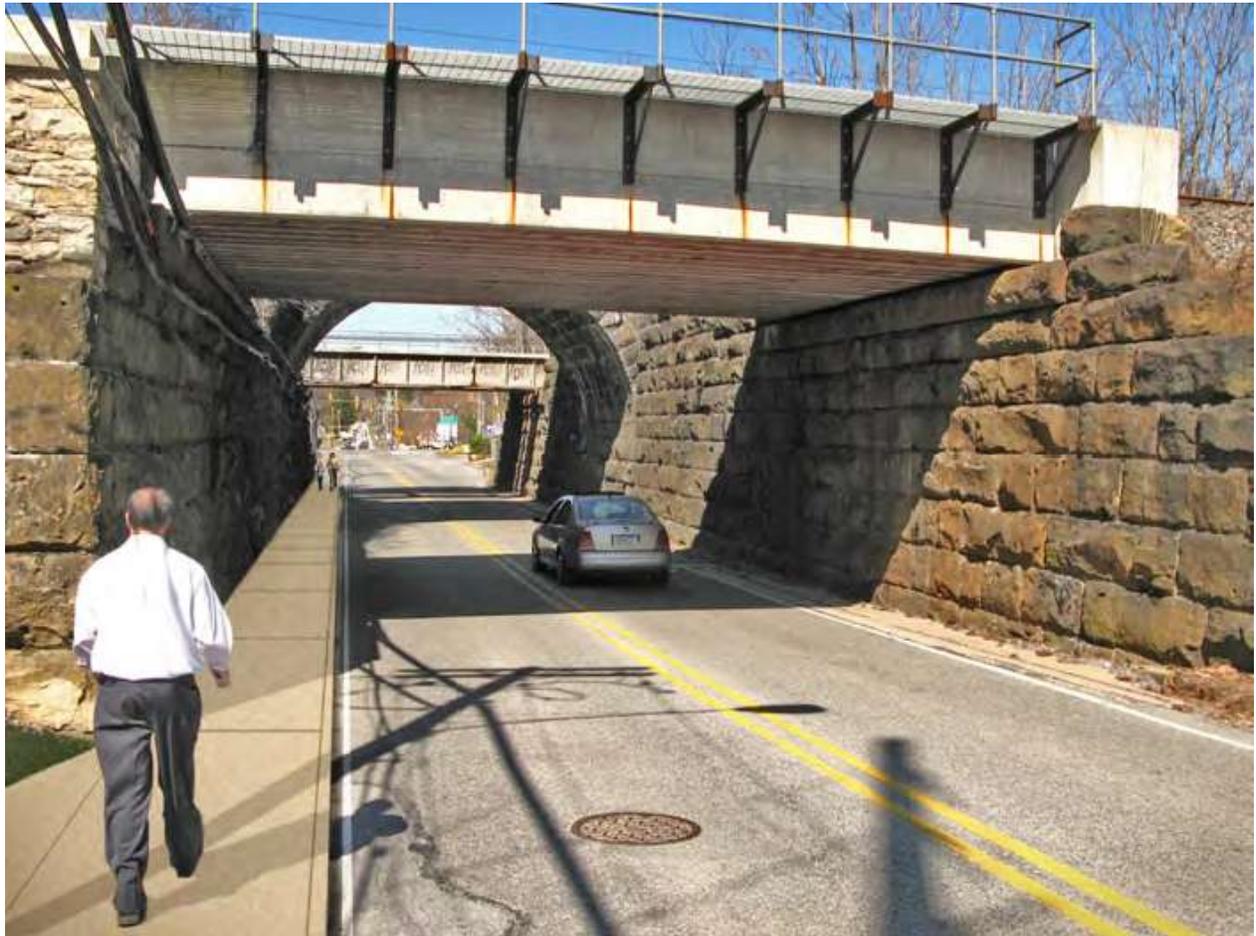
Noted below are news items originally published in *The Archive* in December 1948:

- About 200 people turned out for the Downingtown's first annual **Charity Ball**, which generated about \$250 in proceeds, to be used by the borough's **Christmas Committee**. The committee's plans for the kids' Christmas party--also underwritten by donations from local businesses and service organizations--included: Santa Claus (Bob Barker), who landed his plane at Pollock's field (now part of the DHS West campus) and, accompanied by the DHS band, marched down Manor Avenue to the Log House in Kerr Park, where toys were distributed. Other Christmas activities in the area included: the Lions Club's party for kids in the DHS auditorium; the DYMA Chorus carol singing in the Town Motors lot on East Lancaster Avenue, a party for kids at the Moose Home, and free movies at the Roosevelt Theatre on the morning of Dec. 24.
- Based evaluations by coaches of football teams that had played Downingtown during the 1948 season, Bill Hayes was named the Whippets' outstanding back, and Anthony "Sonny" Milano was cited as Downingtown's outstanding lineman. The awards were given by the Downingtown Young Men's Association at the **DHS football banquet**.
- And at the annual banquet of **St. Anthony's Lodge** in Downingtown, University of Pennsylvania backfield coach Jack Welsh was the featured speaker. Welsh was a cheerleader at DHS before he went on to star as a back for both the Whippets and the Penn Quakers. Oscar "Skid" DiBerardinis, president of St. Anthony's, presided over the affair, which was attended by some 350 members and guests. Ben Valocchi was the toastmaster. The committee that prepared and served the five-hour-long meal, which got underway Sunday afternoon, was headed by Anthony "Cap Wando" DiGiovantonio, Ventura Visichini and Mary Sciarretta.
- Glen Moore's **John Shrader** was honored for his natural color photographs at the Photographic Society of America annual exhibition in Cincinnati, at the International Color Slide exhibition in Chicago, and at the California State Fair.
- News about Downingtown merchants: **Romig's Electronic Service**, 121 Washington Ave., had cut the price of GE radio-phonographs lowboy floor models by \$40, to \$119.95. You could buy a 1-pound box of mixed nuts for just 53 cents at **Daller's Food Market**, 208 E. Lancaster Avenue. **Charlie Furlong** sold his grocery store at the corner of Jefferson Avenue and Chestnut Street to **Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Esworthy**. **Victoria's Ladies Specialty Shop**, 41 E. Lancaster Ave, was selling nylons for only \$1.60 a pair. Tartan coffee cost 57 cents a pound at **Mittel's Food Store**, 203 W. Lancaster Ave. And if you were too tired to cook after Christmas shopping, Jim Hurtt proprietor of **The Cottage**, 101 E. Lancaster Ave., suggested you stop in at his restaurant for a chicken in the basket dinner.
- Allan Hughes, owner of the Esso gas station at East Lancaster Avenue and Green Street, was elected president of the **Downingtown Young Men's Association**. Also elected were John Johnson, vice president; Morris Stevens, treasurer; and Francis Summers, secretary.

## Here's how YOU can receive a Hist-O-Gram every week

If you occasionally receive a pass-along copy of our Hist-O-Gram from a subscriber, you'd like to receive a copy of our FREE Hist-O-Gram directly every week, you can do that by accessing our website: [www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org](http://www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org), and typing your email address into the sign-up box on the home page. We won't share or sell any email addresses. And you can access previously published Hist-O-Grams at: [www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms.html](http://www.downingtownareahistoricalociety.org/Histograms.html).

## It's the railroad tunnel at Marshallton-Thorndale Road & Route 30



Peter Chim is a truly perceptive scholar because he was the first person to correctly identify the site in the photo above at the railroad underpass at the intersection of Marshallton-Thorndale Road and Route 30.

## Downingtown area news 52 years ago

Noted below are items originally published in local newspapers in the latter part of June 1964:

- **Downingtown Borough Council** appointed Larry Jamieson, a Republican, to fill the seat vacated when John Helm, a Democrat, was appointed as Downingtown's acting postmaster. Local Democrats had campaigned for Helm's wife, Theresa, to replace him.
- Bids for additions at **Lionville Elementary School**, which included 12 classrooms, a library, a special education room, a cafeteria, an expanded multi-purpose room, and additional boiler room space and equipment, totaled \$720, 896, 3 percent more than was projected.
- Nancy DiBerardinis and Richard Plunkett received awards at the eighth grade commencement of **St. Joseph's Catholic School**, for having the highest academic averages. Kathleen Brown received an award for excellence in music and service to the school. Also honored for their service to the school were Michael Caporale and Mary Jo Valocchi.

- Leaders of the **Downingtown's summer recreation programs** were: Edward Novak, overall director and tumbling; Daryl French, arts and crafts; Herbert Lee, basketball; George Pastino, tennis; and Lillian Schoenberger, libraries. Responsible for playgrounds were Carol Lillard, Mary Ann Phillips, Barbara Thompson, Bonita Plank, Mary Ann Smedley, Paula Tweed, Linda Hatfield and Ray DiSerafino.

- Installed as officers of the **Downingtown Lions Club** were Tom Courtless, president; Bill Woodruff, first vice president; Horace Rodgers, second vice president; Horace Schanely, third vice president; Ev Gill, secretary; William Wessner, treasurer; Francis Walton tail twister; Elmer Hemberger, assistant tail twister; Cal Mingione, lion tamer; Joe Tremul, assistant lion tamer; Stan Walters, chaplain; and Herb Lambert, Al Skiles, Larry Jamieson and Maurie Davis, directors. Warren Strawsnyder, outgoing president, noted that 1,037 persons had recently taken a train trip, sponsored by the Lions Club, from Downingtown to the World's Fair in New York.

- Members of **Brownie Troop 166, Glenmoore**, who spent two nights at Camp Indian Run, included Sherry Carr, Beth Ann Zulker, Vickie Stiffler, Paula Rissell, Linda Reber, Maria Oppenheim, Gwen Swavely, Wendy Colestock, Susan Evans, Jeanne MacDougal, Jean Ann Harrington, Billie Rae Haclerthorne, Peggy Nelson, Vicky Ireys and Helen McDowell.

- **East Ward School** students, who had an A average in the 1963-64 school year, included: Steven Fleck, Joseph Light, Dennis Bireley, Judith Bell, Kenneth McCardell, William Webb, Jeanette Moore, Deborah Ladika, and Patsy Green.

- Members of **Junior Girl Scout Troop 172, East Brandywine**, who spent a week at Camp Tweedale, included Robin Forbes, Loretta Moore, Ginny Baker, Marjorie Lewis, Cheryl Whiteman, Susan Dixon, Sharon Smith, Ann Lucas, Sharon Peazzoni, Pamela Whiteman, Meryl Decovny, Debbie Whiteman, Mary Rusden, Rosalinde Harrington, Lois Slater, Diane and Kathy Yost, Joan Baldwin, Terry Green, Lynda McGirk, Donna Fryberger and Debbie Alexander.

### Vintage Ad of the Week

Loose Coffee, 2 lbs. for.....	75c
Waldorf Toilet Paper, 4 rolls for.....	25c
Worcester 5c Salt, 3 pkgs. for .....	10c
Tartan Shaker Salt, 3 pkgs. for.....	25c

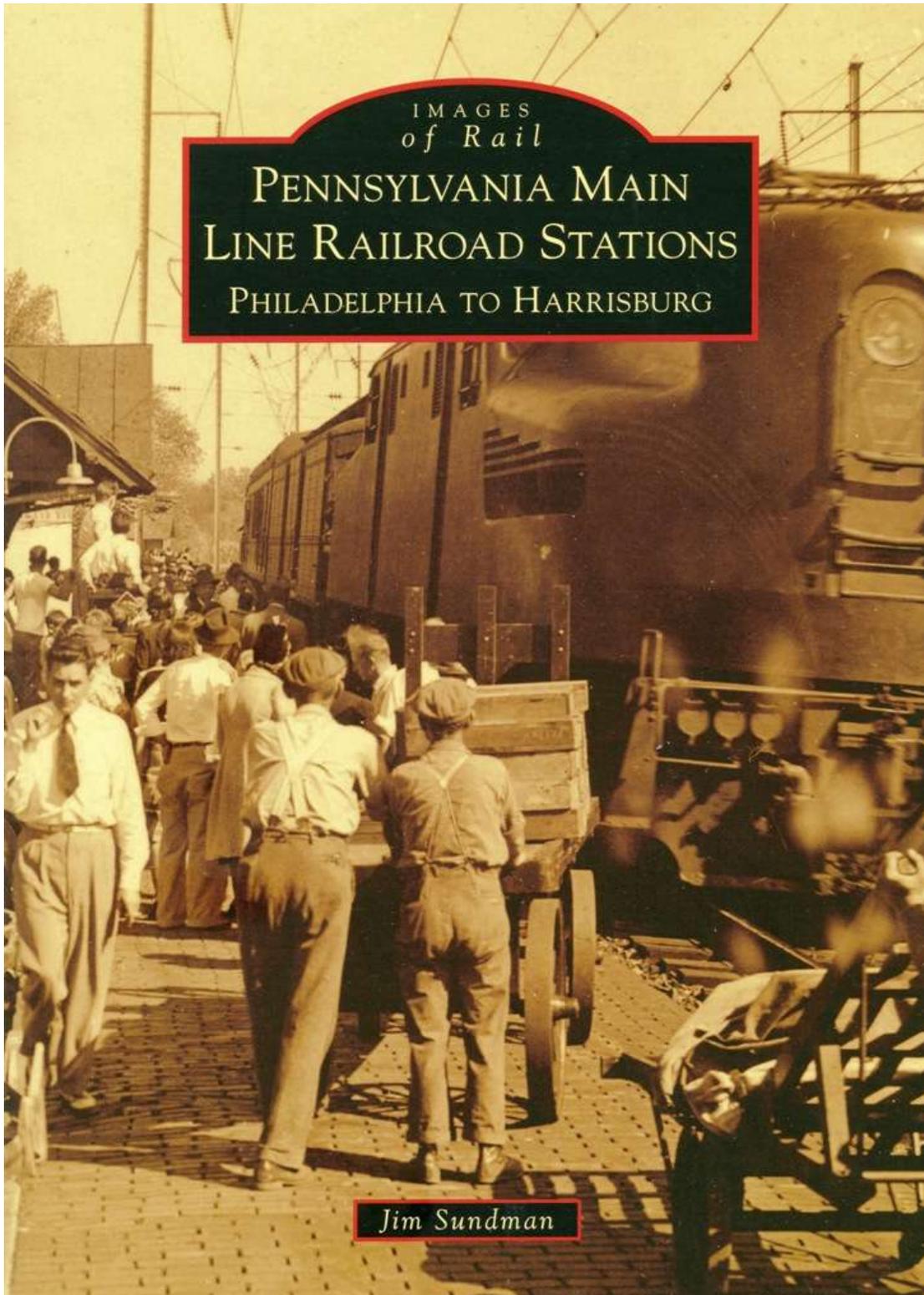
**With every 30c Tin of Tartan Sliced Pineapple—  
1 Tin of Tartan Peaches FREE!**

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**Myers & Bicking**

Phone 280                      135 West Lancaster Ave.

This ad was originally published in the Oct. 30, 1926 edition of *The Archive*.



The photo on the cover of Jim Sundman's book is of the Downingtown Station, taken in the early 1940s. The photo was found in the archives of the Downingtown Area Historical Society. For more details about the book, check out the article below.

# Downingtown historian authors book on area railroad stations

Downingtown resident Jim Sundman was researching the Borough's train station, he expected to find a book on the Main Line stations to use as a reference. "There were a couple of very good books", Sundman said, "but these were large and expensive volumes written more for a railroad audience." As a result, and with his interest in history and early railroading, he saw an opportunity to do one himself, but for a more general audience. Sundman contacted Arcadia Publishing, which specializes in regional history books written by local authors, and they strongly encouraged him to do the project.

It took a little over a year from when Sundman first contacted Arcadia until *Pennsylvania Main Line Railroad Stations, Philadelphia to Harrisburg* was released by the publisher earlier this week. He spent five months researching, acquiring images, and writing the text before sending a first draft to Arcadia. Those efforts were followed by several months of editing and replacing images if better ones could be found. One of the more challenging pieces actually turned out to be the book's cover image. "Arcadia rejected, albeit nicely, the first ten or so cover images I submitted to them," Sundman said. "I wanted an historic station photograph with a train and people, but at the same time Arcadia had layout guidelines that needed to be met." With the help of Carol Grigson, he found one of the Downingtown Station taken in the early 1940s in the archives of the Downingtown Area Historical Society. It met Arcadia's guidelines, and the photograph had everything Sundman wanted, including his favorite locomotive, the Pennsylvania Railroad's GG1.

Other challenges were finding quality images (there are 221 total in the book), especially ones that may not have been published before. In addition, because the book covers the Main Line from Philadelphia to Harrisburg, he wanted to arrange the stations in geographical order from east to west. "I felt the book would be easier to follow this way, but that ended up being quite hard to do," Sundman said. He also wanted to keep a balance, and include as many of the old stations as possible, but he admits, "Downingtown is generously represented."

All in all, he's very pleased with how the book turned out. "It was a really fun learning experience," Sundman said. "There was so much I didn't know about the old Main Line." Though many images in the book came from his personal collection, a large number also came from local libraries, historical societies, archives, and individuals. "Many people and organizations were great to work with. Many went out of their way to help with this project."

Copies of *Pennsylvania Main Line Railroad Stations* can be purchased locally at Barnes & Noble in Exton, and online at: [arcadiapublishing.com](http://arcadiapublishing.com), [amazon.com](http://amazon.com), or [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com). Copies are also available at the Downingtown Area Historical Society headquarters on Route 30 in East Caln. All proceeds from purchases of the book at DAHS go entirely to the Historical Society.

## Group Photo of the Week



Members of the DHS field hockey team, which won the Ches-Mont championship in 1976, included, left to right: first row, co-captains Janet Reed and Heidi Bittmann; second row, Barb Dunwoody, Cindy Brown, Barb Blye, Colleen Murtaugh, Ronnie Della Motta, Leslie Ward, Kim Brian, manager; third row, Coach Jean Shiffer, Rene Sweeney, Janet Westenberger, Sharon Watson, Cathy Treer, Lina Mattioni, Sandy Bireley, Kathy Herion and Anne Kennedy.

## Free Ads for Non-Profits

### *Summer Jam Series*

Downingtown's next Summer Jam Series event, brought to you by the Downingtown Main Street Association and Kimberton Whole Foods, will be held from 6-10 PM on Friday, July 29 in the Concert Gazebo at Kerr Park. The event will include live music, food, local crafts and more.

### *Paper Shredding*

State Rep. Harry Lewis is hosting a paper shredding event from 9 AM until noon on Saturday, July 30, at Bishop Shanahan High School, 220 Woodbine Road, Downingtown. The event, which will feature an industrial paper shredder, will be an opportunity for households and businesses to shred up to four packing boxes of materials. The boxes will be returned to residents; Wiggins Shredding will not keep nor shred the boxes. Only paper – no cardboard – will be accepted. Staples and paper clips need not be removed. All shredding takes place onsite. For more information, please contact Rep. Lewis's office, (610) 269-1289.

### *Wall That Heals*

Hopewell United Methodist Church and East Brandywine Township will host to *The Wall That Heals*, a 250-foot replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Part of a national tour, the replica memorial wall and accompanying mobile education center will be on display throughout the day and night, from Thursday, July 28 until Sunday, July 31, at East Brandywine Township Community Park, 440 Dilworth Road. For more details, see:

[www.ebrandywine.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=74](http://www.ebrandywine.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=74).

### ***Chicken Bar-B-Que***

The Alert Fire Co. will have its annual Bar-B-Que at the fire house, 122 W. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown, from 4-7 PM on Saturday, August 13. You can eat-in or take-out. A complete dinner—half of a chicken, corn on the cob, baked potato, apple sauce, roll, dessert and beverage—costs only \$13.

### ***Chicken BBQ Dinner***

Marshallton United Methodist Church, 1282 West Strasburg Road, will host a Chicken BBQ Dinner (either "Eat-in" or "Take-out") from 4:30-6 PM on Saturday, August 13. Besides, BBQ chicken (leg/thigh), the menu will include cole slaw, corn on the cob, baked beans, roll & butter, dessert, and beverage. Cost is \$10/adult and \$5/child (5 to 12 years of age). Contact the church office at (610-696-5247) or [office@marshalltonchurch.org](mailto:office@marshalltonchurch.org) with any questions.

### ***Class Reunion***

DHS Class of 1986 will have its 30<sup>th</sup> Reunion, from 6-10 PM on Saturday, Sept. 10, at the Brickside Grille, 540 Wellington Square, Exton. For more info, email [dhs86reunion@gmail.com](mailto:dhs86reunion@gmail.com) or see our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/113326642077578/> (DHS Class of 1986).

### ***Farmers Market***

The Downingtown Farmers Market has returned to Kerr Parks. It will be open from 9 AM to 1 PM on Saturdays. For more info, see: <http://growingrootspartners.com/downingtown-farmers-market>.

### ***Brochure on DARC classes & activities***

You can gain access to the latest DARC brochure, listing all classes and activities, at: [www.darcinfo.com](http://www.darcinfo.com). For more info, call 610-269-9260, or stop by the DARC office (8:30 AM-4:30 PM, Monday thru Friday), 114 Bell Tavern Road, Downingtown.

### ***Banquet room for rent***

The Downingtown (Williamson) Masonic Lodge, a non-profit organization located at 210 Manor Ave. has a Banquet Room for rent. The area is perfect for parties of up to 80 people and has a full kitchen. Rental fees are reasonable. Call 610-269-3555 for more information.

### ***Joseph's People, Downingtown chapter***

An ecumenical support mission to help unemployed or underemployed people. The group is entirely conducted by volunteers, and has been at St. Joseph's since 1995. Meets at 7:30 PM on the 2nd & 4th Tuesdays of the month. All are welcome. Visit web page, [www.josephspeople.org](http://www.josephspeople.org), or just come to a meeting at St. Joseph's Parish Meeting Room behind the school, 460 Manor Ave., Downingtown. Call 610-873-7117. Leave Message. Leader: Cheryl Spaulding, Email: [JPCheryl@verizon.net](mailto:JPCheryl@verizon.net).