PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contact:

Cindy Skowyra

Executive Director

Hitchcock Academy

(413) 245-9977

**Spring Into Something New at Hitchcock**

**Homesteading Workshops in Canning, Seed Starting, and Beekeeping,**

**“Peep” Cake Decorating & More**

Brimfield, MA – After a long winter, you may be itching to get outside and experience the rejuvenating offerings of spring. Want to learn from an expert about seed starting, canning, or beekeeping? Maybe you’d like to celebrate spring with a talk about native plants or with a festive spring-themed cake decorating workshop? Whatever your interests, the line-up at your local community center boasts many opportunities to spring into something new.

Ever wonder how skunk cabbage manages to bloom through the snow, sometimes as early as February? Join Opacum Land Trust President Leslie Duthie to discover the wide variety of native plants that herald spring's arrival in south-central Massachusetts. From the heat-generating skunk cabbage to the delicate bluets and mayflower carpeting the forest floor, learn when to expect different wildflowers and explore the critical role that these plants play in our ecosystem. “Celebrating Spring” is the latest installation in Hitchcock’s recently reinstated Brown Bag Speaker Series. It will take place on Wednesday, March 26 at 12pm.

Opacum Land Trust is also offering a Native Plant Container Garden Workshop for families on May 6 at 6pm.

Hitchcock is excited to announce a partnership with Petrie Family Farm in a series of homesteading workshops, kicking off on March 29th with a session on seed starting: a beginner class for starting your garden seeds and up-potting with guidance on planting times, plant care, companion planting, and seed saving. Each participant will leave with a tray of planted seeds to care for until planted. Participants will choose from many varieties of cucumbers, heirloom tomatoes, squash, lettuce, beans and pollinator plants. A canning workshop has already sold out and a new date will soon be added.

For those interested in Beekeeping, Master Beekeeper Mary Duane will share a Basics of Beekeeping introductory seminar on April 15th and 29th. The two-night program will cover the importance of honeybees in the environment and economy, what is involved in managing a honeybee hive, and what you can do to help our state’s pollinators. Designed for those who are new to beekeeping, those who are looking into becoming a beekeeper, and those who simply want to learn more about honeybees, come to learn about this fascinating hobby.

Let’s Cake Decorate offers a spring-themed cake decorating class on April 17th with an Easter Peep Cake. Participants will learn piping and smoothing skills while decorating a cake with buttercream and piping buttercream swirls and flowers on top. A beak and feet will be made from fondant. All supplies are provided with the use of decorating tools during class. Registrants go home with a decorated 6" vanilla cake, carry home box included.

For more information or to register, visit [www.hitchcockacademy.org](http://www.hitchcockacademy.org). Hitchcock Academy is a community center located at 2 Brookfield Road in Brimfield serving the community with educational, recreational, and cultural programming.