

Relay for Life team starts year on right foot

BY NICK BOONSTRA
 Staff Writer
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BELCHERTOWN – Members of the Quaboag Valley Relay For Life team gathered at Belchertown High School on Saturday for their annual First Lap event, ushering in the new year with focus and purpose.

The steps taken by these volunteers were a local display of the commitment of people worldwide to raising awareness and funds to aid researchers in their strides toward curing cancer for all.

The Relay For Life is an annual charity walk organized by the American Cancer Society that gives communities across the country and around the globe the opportunity to honor survivors, remember lost loved ones, and raise money toward cures for all cancers, all while having a bunch of fun doing it.

According to the American Cancer Society's website, First Lap is an annual worldwide event

that grew out of the passion of Joe Gillette, a Relay volunteer and cancer survivor based in Brooklyn, New York.

Taking place on the first Saturday of January, First Lap gives participants the opportunity to take their honorary first relay lap of the year together, symbolizing the renewal of their commitment to the Relay For Life and the cause of curing cancer.

Brian Meehan, event lead for the Quaboag Valley team, said that the group had been organizing the local Relay For Life for over 20 years, and had been participating in First Lap since the event was created a few years ago.

Despite his formal title, Meehan made clear that the organization of the event was definitively a team effort. Other team members also said their work was boosted by the strong support they consistently receive from local businesses and members of the community.

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Members of the Quaboag Valley Relay for Life team took part in the annual First Lap event at Belchertown High School this past Saturday.

TURLEY PHOTO BY NICK BOONSTRA

QHSUA starts 10th year preventing and reducing substance use

BY PAULA OUIMETTE
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The Quaboag Hills Substance Use Alliance held its first meeting of the new year this past Monday, as it prepares to reach its 10-year anniversary this July.

"Not every coalition sustains itself 10 years," QHSUA's Prevention Director Gail Gramarossa said at the Jan. 8 meeting. "We have been fortu-

nate."

QHSUA members looked back over the group's efforts over the past decade, and shared their hopes and goals for the future during a brainstorming session led by Rebecca Edwards.

Edwards directs the Drug Free Communities grant for Ware, Warren and West Brookfield.

Members shared what they like about the alliance, what they wish the alliance could do dif-

ferently in order to improve and the "what if;" goals the alliance could reach if it had unlimited resources and staffing.

Those present at meeting said they liked the alliance's cross-sector sharing with a wide range of people and organizations, ranging from health care to police and community volunteers. Members also liked that

Please see **QHSUA**, page 5



Writers share their story ideas and give each other helpful insight on how to better their storytelling. The group consists of time for writing and a group discussion.

TURLEY PHOTO BY RYAN DRAGO

Belchertown resident and horse named 2023 champions

JoAnn Bush and her Morgan gelding, Indian Creek Splendid Son, of Belchertown, are the United States Equestrian Federation Reserve Champion Horse of the year 2023 Morgan Classic Pleasure under saddle along with being USEF Region 1 Champion Morgan Classic Pleasure under saddle. They also won the Connecticut Morgan Association Classic Pleasure under saddle Champion for 2023 and the Massachusetts Morgan Horse Association 2023 Champion Classic Pleasure under saddle and Reserve Ladies Classic Pleasure under saddle.

SUBMITTED PHOTO



Writers share ideas during Writing Group

BY RYAN DRAGO
 Staff Writer
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BELCHERTOWN – For a couple times a month, the Clapp Memorial Library hosts a writing group for local writers in the area.

The Clapp Writing Group is run by Annie Macon of the Clapp Memorial Library and features anywhere from six-10 writers every session, helping to bring aspiring writers together.

The group meets twice a month, and every session includes 30 minutes of writing and then another 30 minutes of discussion. The Clapp Writing Group is for ages 18 and up.

Most writers have their own projects to work on, but for writers starting out or needing a project, Macon provides numerous writing prompts. Prompts are also provided by ideas from members of the writing group.

The current members of the writing group, including Macon, are currently working on novels.

The writing group began around February of last year and was offered once a month. As time went by, more writers joined the group, and the library began hosting the writing group twice a month.

Aside from novels, many

Please see **WRITERS**, page 3



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COMMUNITY

Town announces updated board, committee vacancies

BELCHERTOWN – The town’s Select Board is seeking citizens to share their expertise by serving on a town board or committee.

Those who have time and are interested in getting involved in the town’s activities are asked to submit a letter of interest to: Select Board, The Finnerty House, One South Main Street, P.O. Box 670, Belchertown, MA 01007, or by email to selectboard@belchertown.org (unless otherwise indicated below).

The town has announced that it wishes to fill the following vacancies:

Finance Committee
One vacancy

The town is looking for a volunteer to fill a vacancy on the Town Finance Committee. The Finance Committee consists of five members, each with a three-year term. The primary duties of the Committee are to advise and make recommendations to the Annual Town Meeting and any Special Town Meeting regarding the budget and other areas of finance. Members are required to attend regularly scheduled public meetings and any special meetings as needed. Additional information specific to this committee can be found at <https://ecode360.com/9050244>.

Deadline: Friday, Jan. 26

Conservation Commission
Two vacancies

The town wishes to fill two (2) associate member vacancies on the Conservation Commission.

The Commission is charged with the protection of the community’s natural resources and advises other municipal boards and committees on conservation issues relating to their areas of responsibility. Interested applicants will need to familiarize themselves with the Wetland Regulations and attend workshops and meetings regularly.

Deadline: Friday, Feb. 2

Trail Stewardship Council
One vacancy

The town wishes to fill a vacancy to represent landowners of the town on the Trail Stewardship Council. Interested individuals should be knowledgeable about local land use and related issues. Additional information specific to this council can be found at www.newenglandtrail.org.

Deadline: Friday, Feb. 2

Animal Control Advisory Board
Three vacancies

The town wishes to fill three (3) vacancies on the Animal Control Advisory Board. This board has the authority to conduct hearings as allowed in the town’s bylaws and pose reasonable conditions as deemed appropriate. The ideal applicants may be a dog breeder, a dog trainer, a veterinarian, non-pet owner from the community, a medical professional specializing in emergency medicine, animal enthusiast or caregiver, pet owner and/or interested residents.

Deadline: Friday, Feb. 2

Communications Committee
Three full-member seats

The town wishes to fill three (3) full member seats on the Communications Committee. The purpose of this committee is to develop a communication plan for the town of Belchertown to improve information flow from the Town to the public. Experience with marketing, communications, and/or social media is highly preferred.

Deadline: Friday, Feb. 2

Zoning Board of Appeals
One associate-member seat

The town wishes to fill one (1) Associate Member seat on the Zoning Board of Appeals. The ZBA is responsible for hearing and deciding on applications for Special Permits, Variances and Appeals from decisions of the Zoning Enforcement Officer/ Building Inspector.

Deadline: Friday, Feb. 2

Historic District By-Law Commission
One full-member real estate seat

The town wishes to fill a full member seat (Real Estate Seat) on the Historic District By-Law Commission. The Commission has regulatory control over new construction, reconstruction, alterations, movements, and demolition of all exterior architectural features of buildings and structures within the Historic District which are visible from any public street, public way, or public park.

Deadline: Friday, Feb. 2

Belchertown Family Center Committee
Three active voting positions

The Belchertown Family Center Committee is seeking passionate, service-minded individuals to fill three (3) active voting member positions. This committee is charged with oversight of the Belchertown Family Center and its support programming for families, and is actively working to create a breadth of resources for our community.

Deadline: Friday, Feb. 2

Council on Aging
One vacancy

The town wishes to fill one vacancy on the Council on Aging. Members of the Council on Aging coordinate programs and services for the elderly population and oversee the Belchertown Senior Center.

Deadline: Friday, Feb. 2

Belchertown Age and Dementia Friendly Implementation Group
One vacancy

The Belchertown Age and Dementia Friendly Implementation Group is looking to fill a vacancy for a community member. The main goal of the team is to implement the recommendations listed in the Age and Dementia Friendly Belchertown Community Assessment and Action Plan. The group meets quarterly at the Senior Center to prioritize, monitor progress and track outcomes.

Deadline: Friday, Feb. 2

Belchertown Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force
Two vacancies

The town is accepting letters of interest to fill a community two (2) member vacancies on the newly developed Belchertown Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force. The focus of the Task Force is to develop a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement for the Select Board to review and to consider adopting, to seek out opportunities to acknowledge and/or celebrate the diversity within our own community and to welcome the whole community to join in, and to offer suggestions on how the town addresses specific or potential acts of violence, including hate speech, should such acts arise in our community, region, or state. Efforts should be made to include voices from the community or communities that are directly affected. Partnership opportunities with surrounding towns to strengthen regional or state efforts might also be explored. This is a seven (7) member committee to include: A representative from law enforcement, a representative from Town Hall, and five (5) community members representing diversity in one or more of the following areas: Racial and ethnic backgrounds, Social positions with respect to gender identity and sexual orientation, social positions with respect to disability, and Age groups and prior vocational experiences. All are encouraged to apply.

Deadline: Friday, Feb. 2



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COMMUNITY

Dwight Chapel Provisions' Pantry open weekly

BELCHERTOWN – The Dwight Chapel Provisions' Pantry, located at 885 Federal St., has been serving Belchertown and the surrounding area for nearly 40 years.

The food pantry is thankful to have a generous group of congregants who donate their time and resources to ensure this ministry of Christ Community Church (previously known as Dwight Chapel) is equipped to serve the surrounding area.

In addition to their own congregants, some of the local businesses assist to ensure that the pantry is always stocked with non-perishables to give out to anyone in the area who has a need.

The Dwight Chapel Provisions' Pantry began in a small closet at Dwight Chapel storing dry goods and non-perishables. It now uses the old

office area at the chapel, where goods can be organized and stored along with some hygiene products for families who would benefit from this type of help.

Additionally, recent growth has enabled distribution to increase to every Saturday.

Would you or someone you know benefit from a weekly gift of non-perishable goods? The Provisions' Pantry at Dwight Chapel would be happy to serve you in this way.

Pickups are each Saturday between 9-10 a.m. or by appointment with a volunteer. You are asked to contact the church if you need a pickup.

Please contact Christ Community Church by calling 413-253-0292 or emailing office@gracefortheway.org if you would like more information or to be added to the distribution list.

Rabies and microchip clinic offered Jan. 20

BELCHERTOWN – A rabies and microchip clinic, hosted by Belchertown Animal Control and Westbrook Veterinary Hospital, will be held on Saturday, Jan. 20 from 1-3 p.m. at the shelter, 165 George Hannum St.

No pre-registration is required. Dogs must be on leash and cats in carriers.

Rabies vaccines are required per Massachusetts General Laws; all dogs, cats and ferrets must be current with rabies vaccine.

Rabies vaccines are \$15 and registered microchips are \$25. Please bring proof of prior years' rabies vaccine.

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WRITERS from page 1

writers also work on poetry, fiction, screenplays and short stories. One of the regular writing group members is a natural history writer.

Members work diligently on their laptops, notebooks and journals during the half an hour of writing. During the discussion portion of the writing group, writers have the option to share ideas and provide helpful feedback to each other.

Writers in the group also shared ideas on how to edit their work once they're completed. Many writers are ready to edit their novels and figure out what is the best direction to take when editing their work down to a reasonable amount of text. However, many writers admit that they work on several writing projects.

The Writing Group gave each other a lot of helpful tips and insight on how to better their stories. The group gives writers an opportunity to learn as they go along in the writing process and think about what their stories should be crafted as when they are complete.

The group is looking forward to National Novel Writing Month in November. During this activity, the



TURLEY PHOTO BY RYAN DRAGO

The Clapp Writing Group meets twice a month on Wednesday nights at the Clapp Memorial Library in Belchertown.

challenge for writers is to draft an entire novel in just one month.

According to Macon, the goal is to draft a novel that has at least 50,000 words. That event is taking place at the Forbes Library in Northampton.

The next Writing Group at

Clapp Memorial Library will be on Wednesday, Jan. 17 at 6 p.m.

Visit the Clapp Memorial Library at 19 South Main St. The library can be reached by calling 413-3230417. For more events, visit the website at clapplibrary.org.

RELAY from page 1

The Relay For Life held a personal meaning to all of the individuals participating in this year's First Lap. Of the 12 volunteers present at the high school, five were cancer survivors themselves, and others shared stories about being a caregiver or a support to relatives and friends battling with cancer.

One team member, Lori St. George, marked the occasion in style, decked out in an inflatable flamingo costume to reflect the team's flamingo-based "Flock Towards a Cure" theme for the 2024 walk. Themes from recent years included cowboys and dinosaurs, each complete with their own array of impressive costumes.

The Quaboag Valley team will be holding this year's Relay For Life on the Belchertown Town Common on

Saturday, June 1, from 10 a.m.-10 p.m. Meehan said that the event had seen around 400 participants in prior years, though in-person attendance had been down over the last few years in response to the COVID pandemic.

Anyone interested in registering for or learning more about the Relay For Life event, or donating to the local team, can check out their Facebook page under the name, "Quaboag Valley Relay For Life."

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COMMUNITY

Nominations papers available for town election

BELCHERTOWN – Nomination papers are now available in the Town Clerk's Office for the upcoming May 20 Town Election.

Open positions are as follows: Board of Assessors – one position open with a three-year term; Board of Health – one position open with a three-year term; Housing Authority – two positions open with three-year terms each; Planning Board – one position open with a five-year term; School Committee – two positions

open with three-year terms each; Town Clerk – one position open with a three-year term.

In order to be listed on the May 20 ballot, you must have 50 names certified on nomination papers.

The deadline to request nomination papers is 5 p.m. on March 28. The deadline to return completed papers for certification is 5 p.m. on April 1.

If you are interested in running for any of the above positions, please visit the Town Clerk's webpage at

<https://www.belchertown.org/clerk/index.php>, on the left hand column, click on "Candidates guide for running for Town office" for more information.

All election information for 2024 including In-Person Early voting information can also be found on the Town Clerk's webpage.

Please feel free to call the Town Clerk's office with any questions or concerns, at 413-323-0281 extension 340.

St. Francis of Assisi Parish announces 2024 bus trips

BELCHERTOWN – St. Francis of Assisi Parish, 24 Jabish St., announces the following bus trips for this year.

March 11, Celtic Angels at Aqua Turf, Southington, Connecticut, \$125/per person; April 4, Luncheon and Mystery Theatre at Storowtown, \$99/per person; April 17, Classic Country at Log Cabin, Holyoke, \$119/per person; May 7, Debby Boone "You Light Up My Life", Aqua Turf, Southington,

Connecticut, \$139/per person; June 6, Rhode Island Cruise, TBA; July 9, Neil & Johnny meet Elvis at Log Cabin, Holyoke, \$125/per person; Aug. 7, Eagles Experience at Log Cabin, Holyoke, \$125/per person; Sept. 8-10, Daniel in Amish Country, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, \$549/per person; Oct. 4, Turkey Train Luncheon, New Hampshire, \$139/per person; Oct. 15-17, Tropicana Atlantic City, New Jersey with Cher & Elton John, \$331/per

person; Nov. 13, Newport, Rhode Island Playhouse (Show TBA), TBA; and Dec. 11, Deck The Halls with Buddy & Elvis, Aqua Turf, Southington, Connecticut, \$125/per person.

For more information, contact Roseann Montefusco by calling 413-364-8161 or emailing rmonte61@yahoo.com or Anthony Ricchiazzi at 413-283-3966 or tricchiazzi@yahoo.com.

Belchertown Fire announces open burning season

BELCHERTOWN – Open air burning season for residential tree trimming begins Jan. 15 and ends May 1.

Residents can register at the Fire Department, 10 North Main St., from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. and on Saturdays, starting Jan. 20 from 9 a.m.-noon. There is a one time, \$20 fee to register for this season.

Please pay with exact cash or a check payable to "Town of Belchertown."

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection will only allow activation of burning permits for one day at a time, based on weather conditions. Renewal requests left on the answering machine are invalid.

For more information, please contact the Fire Department by calling 413-323-7571 with any questions.

Please note that the Belchertown Fire Department has full authority to revoke permits that are not used in accordance with Massachusetts General Law as well as authority to refuse burning on any given day based on weather conditions.

Belchertown Community TV Schedule Highlights

Thursday, Jan. 11

- 8 a.m. – Conservation Commission – Dec. 8 meeting
- 10 a.m. – Planning Board – Dec. 9 meeting
- Noon – Agriculture Commission – Dec. 10 meeting
- 7 p.m. – Conservation Commission – Dec. 8 meeting
- 9 p.m. – Planning Board – Dec. 9 meeting

Friday, Jan. 12

- 8 a.m. – Conversation with Pakman
- 9 a.m. – Communications Committee – Dec. 21 meeting
- 5 p.m. – Conversation with Pakman
- 7 p.m. – Communications Committee – Dec. 21 meeting
- 9 p.m. – Agriculture Commission – Dec. 10 meeting

Saturday, Jan. 13

- 5 p.m. – Clapp Hospice – Part 1
- 7 p.m. – JBMS – New school cost/design
- 9 p.m. – Quabbin Health District Meeting

Sunday, Jan. 14

- 4:30 p.m. – St. Francis Roman Catholic Church
- 6 p.m. – Christ Community Church
- 7 p.m. – Hope United Methodist Church

Monday, Jan. 15

- 8 a.m. – Conversation with Pakman (Martin Luther King Jr. Day)
- 5 p.m. – Conversation with Pakman

Tuesday, Jan. 16

- 6:30 p.m. – School Committee – Channel 192
- 6:30 p.m. Select Board – Channel 191

Wednesday, Jan. 17

- 8 a.m. – Conversation with Pakman
- 5 p.m. – Conversation with Pakman
- 6 p.m. – Zoning Board of Appeals – Channel 191
- 7 p.m. – BEDIC – Channel 192

Program on construction of Winsor Dam is Jan. 21

BELCHERTOWN – The Department of Conservation and Recreation's Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center will offer a free indoor/virtual program about the construction of the Winsor Dam on Sunday, Jan. 21 from 2-3 p.m.

Join staff from the DCR Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center to learn more about how the Winsor Dam and the Goodnough Dike were constructed and how they formed the Reservoir. Quabbin Reservoir is so noted for its natural beauty and pure water that we often forget that it is a constructed landscape created by the Winsor Dam and Goodnough Dike.

Space is limited and registration is required. In-person seating will be limited to 45 people.


All ages are welcome.

To register for any of these events, visit www.mass.gov/locations/quabbin-reservoir/events.

The presentation will be offered in-person and via Zoom. To register, follow the link in each program description and choose to attend in-person or to receive the Zoom link.

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- **Preparation Excellence:** Maintain neat and presentable office area and office equipment as necessary, take responsibility for inventory, and reorder office supplies as needed.
- **Active Team Member:** Participate in weekly updates with supervisors to share and exchange resources and ideas to meet goals; complete monthly and quarterly financial and administrative processes.

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COMMUNITY

Jigsaw Puzzle Competition celebrates National Puzzle Day

BELCHERTOWN – Teams of two are invited to participate in the Clapp Memorial Library’s Jigsaw Puzzle Competition for National Puzzle Day.

The competition will be held on Monday, Jan. 29 from 2:30-5:30 p.m. at the Library, 19 South Main St. Please try to arrive early in order to ensure that your team is able to begin on time - the clock will begin at exactly 2:30 p.m.

Latecomers are welcome but won’t receive additional time.

Registration is required by Jan.

15. Please sign up at <https://forms.gle/wMJ48Vew5wTDs5fQ8> or by visiting the Library.

In case of inclement weather, the puzzle competition will be rescheduled to Monday, Feb. 5.

Competition details: teams are limited to two people; teams may sign up at the library or by using the online registration form on its website; the event is open to all ages (per library policy, children under the age of 10 must be accompanied by an adult), each team will tackle the same 500-

piece puzzle; no one gets a sneak peek - the puzzle will be revealed when the competition begins; teams will work in the Community Room at the Clapp Memorial Library; the challenge concludes at 5:30 p.m.; prizes will be awarded to the top three teams; in case of unfinished puzzles, library staff will count the remaining pieces to determine the winners and the overall rankings.

All teams will get to take home their copy of the puzzle.

Explore ‘Secrets Beneath the Trees’

BELCHERTOWN – The Department of Conservation and Recreation’s Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center will offer a free indoor/virtual program on the “Secrets Beneath the Trees” on Sunday, Jan. 28 from 2-3 p.m.

Join Dr. Becky Seifried, Geospatial Information Librarian at UMass Amherst to learn how we can use Lidar (Light Detection and Ranging) to map the traces of historical settlements, like stone walls and road cuts - and you’ll discover just how much built heritage is hidden beneath the forests of Quabbin. Lidar is a technology that lets researchers peek beneath the tree canopy to model the surface of the earth.

Space is limited and registration is required. In-person seating will be limited to 45 people.

All ages are welcome.

To register for any of these events, visit www.mass.gov/locations/quabbin-reservoir/events.

Presentations will be offered in-person and via Zoom. To register, follow the link in each program description and choose to attend in-person or to receive the Zoom link.

Historical association hosts murder mystery dinner

LUDLOW – The Belchertown Historical Association will be hosting its 15th annual murder mystery dinner on Saturday, Feb. 3 at 6 p.m. (show starts at 6:30 p.m.) at Tony and Penny’s Restaurant in Ludlow.

This is a new venue for us this year and the Historical Association looks forward to sharing this exciting evening with all of you. Actors and friends from the

Belchertown United Church of Christ’s Playhouse, will once again be ready to entertain us with murder and mayhem.

“Foul Play on the Fairway” is the theme this year. This event will serve as a fundraiser for both the Historical Association and the Belchertown United Church of Christ, as well as providing revenue to a local business.

The tickets are \$43 and include the

show and a buffet dinner of chicken, haddock filets, pot roast with a vegetarian option of pasta primavera along with a soup, salad and dessert. Tickets are available at Cold Spring Discount Liquors (on the Common in Belchertown).

For more information people can call Sally Shattuck at 413-230-2022.

QHSUA from page 1

the alliance presented a safe space for all to share their ideas.

Members agreed that in its 10 years, the QHSUA has continued to move forward and build momentum in its mission “to prevent and reduce substance misuse, especially among youth; to break down stigma associated with substance use disorder; to reduce health problems resulting from substance use disorder; to contribute to community efforts to expand access to treatment services, and to value all pathways to recovery.”

The QHSUA has also provided many training opportunities to its members which benefit the 18 towns of the Quaboag Hills region. All of these towns are rural, and the QHSUA has continued to advocate for the health needs of this overlooked and underserved area.

The QHSUA has also served to connect organizations to each other, and allow members to network.

Looking toward the future, QHSUA would like more opportunities for in-person gatherings, in addition to virtual meetings.

Members would also like to grow the QHSUA’s membership into other sectors, and hear from parents as well as members of the faith community. Drafting a chart to show how each group within the alliance collaborates and interacts with each other would also be helpful to members and the community.

Under the “what if” category, QHSUA members would like to see more involvement from local businesses and community members to help reduce the stigma of substance use. The members would also like to offer individual grants and grant making opportunities.

“What if” also included the need for extended training and public health development, and advocacy for a community health center, as well as more access to harm reduction.

Members would also like to remove barriers for treating substance use and look at broader health issues related to substance use that aren’t addressed due to stigma. A need for policy and legislation was also discussed.

Upcoming trainings and events

Community Engagement Coordinator for QHSUA Abaigeal Duda presented several upcoming trainings and events, including a Palmer-focused meeting in the library of Palmer High School on Tuesday, Jan. 23 from 2:30-4 p.m.

Attendees at the group’s previous meeting held in November will continue discussion about substance use and related public health issues and how they apply to Palmer.

This meeting will be held in-person with virtual access as well. Register by visiting <https://forms.gle/7A588d1Mh1r2u4w79>.

Duda said the second part of the Positive Community Norms free training offered by the Montana Institute will be held Thursday, Jan. 25 from 2-4 p.m. via Zoom. This two-hour training will be part message development and part brainstorming session.

Registration is required by Tuesday, Jan. 23 by visiting <https://s.alchemer.com/s3/MIP2> or emailing aduda@townofware.com. The first part of the training can be viewed at <https://vimeo.com/853697015/6b5f65c88c?share=cop>.

Youth Mental Health First Aid training will be offered in two sessions. The first on Tuesday, Jan. 30 from 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. and the second over two days, Mondays, Feb. 5 and 12 from 6-8:30 p.m. Register at <http://s.alchemer.com/s3/TTMHFA>.

Healthy Quaboag and The Rural Vaccine Equity Initiative will offer COVID-19 and flu vaccine clinics on Sunday, Jan. 21 from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Town House, 32 Common St., Hardwick and Monday, Jan. 22 from 3-6 p.m. at Education to Employment, 79 Main St., Ware. Bring your ID, insurance card and vaccination card (you can still get vaccinated if you don’t have an insurance card).

All vaccinations are available at no cost. Walk-ins and families welcome.

The Quabbin Health District, QHSUA and Healthy Quaboag will host an opioids and opioids rescue training led by Kirsten Krieger, RN, BSN, Public Health Nurse on Tuesday, Jan. 16 at 4:30 p.m. at E2E, 79 Main St. Register by Friday, Jan. 12 by emailing kkrieger@townofware.com.

Community Strong Wellness

The Palmer Public Library, the Palmer

Police Department’s Drug Addiction Recovery Team and a mental health CHD clinician will be available at the library on Wednesdays, Jan. 17, 31 and Feb. 14 from 1-4 p.m.

They will be assisting people with problematic substance use, mental health concerns, housing stability, financial assistance, health insurance questions and more.

Palmer Police Sergeant David Burns said the team will be using these events to assess the needs of the community, and find ways to offer support.

Recovery Center of HOPE

Peer Recovery Coach Julie Lutz gave an update on the Recovery Center of HOPE’s Guiding Rides program.

Lutz said a van provides rides Monday through Friday morning to Springfield methadone clinics; rides to treatment, providers and other recovery supports; and more.

Rides can be provided for “anything that’s going to support somebody’s recovery,” she said.

Lutz said the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month will be for basic needs rides,

including trips to Walmart, Big Y and pharmacies. A sign-up sheet is available at the center for community members to request rides.

Peer Community Resource Navigator Susan Daley said attendance at All Recovery meetings is growing, with a total of 121 participants in November and 163 in December.

The Recovery Center of HOPE is now open five days a week, with hours Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Wednesday from 10 a.m.-7 p.m. and Friday from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. All Recovery meetings are held daily at 11:30 a.m.

HEALing Communities Study

Maegan Boutot shared a link to get medication for opioid use disorder and Narcan (qhsua.org/resource-map/) at locations in Belchertown in Ware.

“We put together a map of all NaloxBoxes...there are movements to make that statewide, hopefully soon,” Boutot said.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the QHSUA will be held on Monday, Feb. 12.



FREE FLY TYING CLASSES

Sponsored by the Western Mass Fly Fishermen, the Ludlow Elks Lodge 2448 and Turley Publications are starting January 11th, 2024.

Held at the Ludlow Elks Lodge located at 69 Chapin St. Ludlow Mass.

Thursday nights for eight weeks from 7PM to 9PM.

The classes are open to the public with children 8 years and up accompanied by an adult. Classes are geared to the beginner or novice. Course materials and tools will be supplied. Should you have your own tools, feel free to bring them.

No Registration is Necessary!

Should there be Bad weather please contact the Ludlow Elks after 4:00 PM for any cancelations at (413) 583-2448 or check our website <http://www.wmffclub.org>

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OPINION



New questions for the New Year!

Jim, who gardens in Bridgewater, sent this question in to the Garden Lady. "I liked your article on experimenting with holly seeds. I do some of my own propagating with trees and perennials, so the holly seeds thing was good. My question concerns being dioecious and at what point can one determine male or female? Is there some way to determine sex at an early stage or must I grow a dozen plants for years before I can wean out the males and keep the females? I have read that a single male will successfully pollinate all the females within a half mile radius so finding the females is my goal at the earliest possible stage of growth."

Sadly, the only way to figure out whether you have a male or female holly is by examining the flowers, so yes, that will require growing them on for some time; my research indicates about four to seven years.

The male flowers will have four petals and four stamens where you will see the pollen at the end. Female flowers look very similar except there is a green "bump" in the center of the petals – the ovary, where the berries will form from.

Garden centers usually propagate vegetatively from either male or female plants, so they are not playing the waiting game. Starting hollies from seed is still a fun experiment, time consuming nonetheless.

Dawn was worried that her amaryllis plant was dead. "My amaryllis was originally a Christmas gift. I've enjoyed it for a few years now, but its leaves yellowed, then they withered and died. I'm worried that I killed it!"

As soon as I heard from Dawn, my thoughts went to my own amaryllis, still in my bedroom window despite the fact that its leaves are brown and have fallen around the outside of its pot. I haven't watered it since it started to "decline."

It has sat there in this sorry state for a few weeks now. Never fear, it's likely our bulbs have gone dormant.

This timing is a little off if you think about all of those boxed sets of amaryllis bulbs sitting on store shelves just in time for Christmas giving and planting. Bulb companies can "time" growth stages a little more reliably than we can.

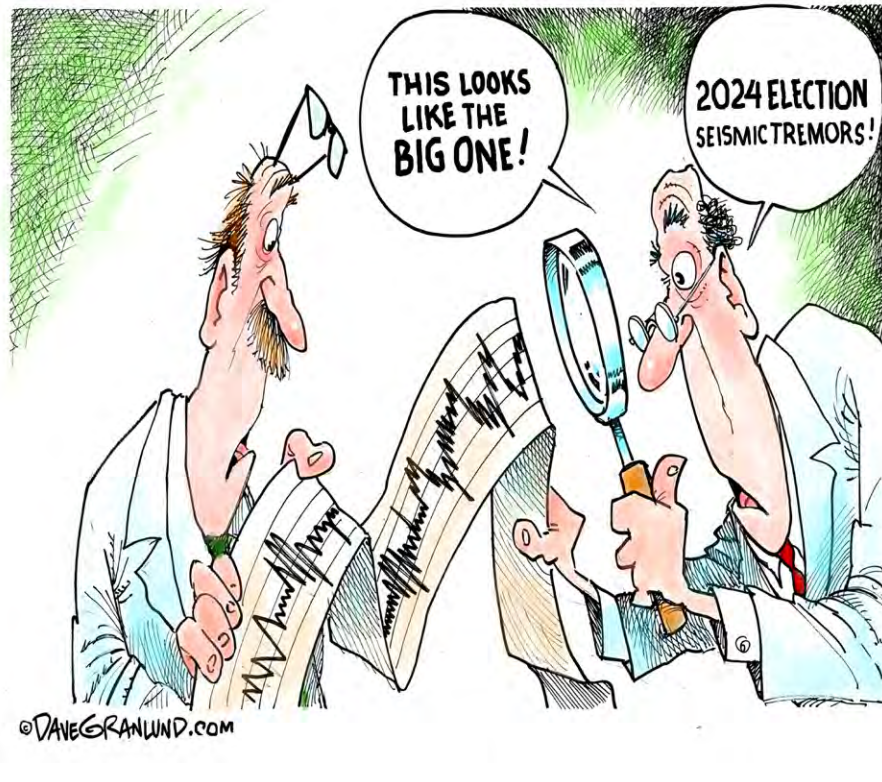
After a month or two of dormancy watering can resume and with good fortune, blooms should reappear in 6-8 weeks. Some experts recommend putting the dormant bulbs in a cool, dark room to rest.

I often move dormant pots of bulbs to my mudroom where temperatures are in the 50s this time of year and when I see green tips on the bulb I bring it back into the living area of my house. Usually regrowth comes, but a flower sometimes doesn't.

In this case, the bulb is likely depleted of nutrients and without enough reserves left for re-bloom. I would recommend watering with an all-purpose plant fertilizer during active growth.

Seed production also diminishes the plant's reserves, so be sure to deadhead the individual flowers as they go by, leaving the stem intact until it yellows. Hopefully these tips will give your amaryllis a few more good years of flowering.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 31 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.



LETTERS

EDIC member addresses resident's letter regarding State School

Editor's note: This letter is in response to Richard Barry's letter that ran in last week's Sentinel.

Dear sir,

Is western Massachusetts growing?

New figures from the U.S. Census show the four counties of western Massachusetts ranked at the bottom in the state for percentage population growth over the past 10 years. Hampshire County grew 2.7%, Hampden County grew 0.5%, and Franklin and Berkshire counties lost residents (Aug 13, 2021).

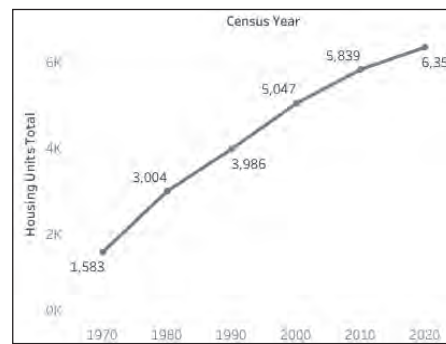
"The aging population in Massachusetts, as with the U.S. as a whole, is reflected in the long-term population trends among age cohorts. Since 2000, the percentage of persons over 65 in Massachusetts counties has generally increased while the percentage of children under age five has decreased," according to an Aug. 8, 2023, release from the UMass Donahue Institute; Economic and Public Policy Research; Population Estimates Program.

The School aged population in Belchertown breaks down like this.

1993-1994, total enrollment 2,098 of which 445 were in High School.

1999-2000, total enrollment 2,338 of which 549 were in High School.

2009-2010, total enrollment 2,610 of



SUBMITTED PHOTO

This graph shows housing statistics in Belchertown from 1970 to 2020.

which 760 were in High School

2019-2020, total enrollment 2,240 of which 701 were in High School. (School Enrollment Data Sheet)

The most difficult thing in the world is trying to shrink a School. Everything that we have done in the Economic Development and Industrial Corporation has been to promote the development of the State School with the best interest of the people of Belchertown as the Top of Mind purpose.

Sincerely,

Bob Rivard
Industrial Seat, EDIC

Residents shares thoughts on State School development

Dear editor,

Some thoughts on the Dec. 18 Selectmen's meeting.

Carriage Grove – an almost identical proposal was soundly defeated at town meeting a decade ago (see town meeting minutes from Dec. 1, 2014, article 6), to my distress. I served on the EDIC (Economic Development and Industrial Corporation) from the 1980s through the 2000s.

We feared that the Assisted Living part of the proposal (housing) would also be voted down. The developer pulled out.

Per the EDIC representative at a previous town meeting vote, "We declined...150 houses because there was nothing beyond that." Wrong! 150? Hospital and infirmary buildings were to be renovated and reused for Assisted Living, and significant infrastructure to them rebuilt (see EDIC and Selectmen meeting minutes).

Corrections – An EDIC representative (only lately appointed) commented, "No matter what plan has been presented to the EDIC, it has always had a housing component." Not true, only one plan had housing and that was defeated. A musician home failed to materialize (see EDIC meeting minutes).

The representative says, "We have had numerous other developers come to retirement the EDIC..." with preposterous plans. Not true. Very few developers, but mostly

with serious intentions (see town meeting minutes from May 12, 2008, article 15).

The EDIC representative says, "it was never planned to be only business or tax generating, tax positive flow endeavors there." Wrong, tax revenue is always important. It has always been a business/industrial plan.

Also, provided local employment, local services, reuse of Belchertown State School, major BSS infrastructure improvements.

The EDIC representative – "The other phases...light industry and business." Shakey, no commitment yet. No funding. No guarantee of compliance. Plus, more Assisted Living. They can't fill it now.

If it's more low-income housing you are after, I agree. There is a more appropriate town-owned location for the state required low-income housing. Not at the State School with good business access.

In the last 20 years EDIC has brought in some 18 new structures and businesses. Not too bad for a town that business avoids. I've put a lot of time in trying to attract business.

A major business developer, Colvest, owns developable property here. He told me companies have evaluated Belchertown, but few find it viable, but he's trying.

Thanks for your attention,

W. Daniel Fitzpatrick
Belchertown

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Will my friend's fiancée be entitled to a survivor benefit?

Dear Rusty

I have a very good friend who has cancer and will begin chemotherapy this week. He is 71 years old and is currently receiving Social Security benefits.

He has been living with his fiancée for a little more than two years, but they have been a couple for about 15 years and will be married in the next few weeks. She is 60 years old.

I am naturally concerned about his and her, future so my questions are:

What, if anything, should he and his wife do to ensure that she gets his Social Security benefits?

What benefits will she be entitled to and how soon will she be able to begin receiving them after his death?

Signed: A Friend with Questions

Dear Friend

You are kind to be concerned about your friend and his fiancée. Here's what you need to know:

Social Security goes by state rules when it comes to what is often referred to as "common law marriage." That means that whether your friend's fiancée will receive any benefits as a surviving spouse in a "common law" relationship depends on whether they live in a state, which recognizes common law marriage.

Most states do not, but state laws have changed over the years and many states which once recognized such unions as "marriage" no longer do. Although they may have "been a couple" for 15 years, if your friend and his fiancée have been living together for only two it is likely only the last two years will count for Social Security benefit purposes.

So, whether your friend's fiancée will get anything when your friend dies depends on where they live, unless they get married, in which case the rules are different.

In order for a married widow(er) to receive surviving spouse benefits, the couple must have been married for at least nine months. If they marry and your friend

lives longer than nine months thereafter, then his wife will be entitled to a surviving spouse benefit from her husband.

The amount of his wife's benefit will be based upon the amount your friend is receiving at his death, adjusted for her age when she claims her surviving spouse benefit.

A surviving spouse can claim benefits from the deceased as early as age 60, but those benefits will be reduced for claiming before full retirement age (FRA). Taken at age 60, the wife's benefit would be 71.5% of your friend's SS benefit at his death.

The wife need not claim the survivor benefit immediately; she could opt to delay claiming in order to get a higher percentage of the husband's amount. Survivor benefits reach maximum, 100% of the deceased's benefit amount, at the recipient's FRA.

So, if your friend and his fiancée now live in a state which currently recognizes common law marriage (Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Montana, New Hampshire, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Rhode Island or in the District of Columbia), then your friend's partner will be considered his "wife" and entitled to survivor benefits as normal (the fiancée would need to prove they cohabitate in a marriage-like relationship to claim benefits).

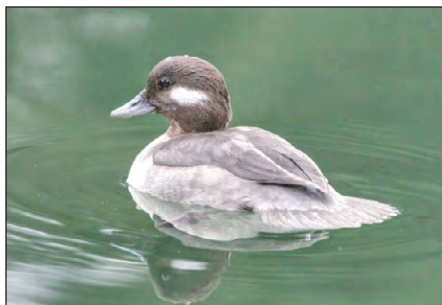
If they do not live in one of those states, but they get married and the marriage lasts for at least 9 months, then the wife will be entitled to normal benefits as a surviving spouse as described above.

But if the couple do not live in one of the above states which recognize "common law" relationships or if their soon-to-occur marriage doesn't last at least nine months or if they do not get married, I'm afraid your friend's partner will not be entitled to any survivor benefits from your friend.

The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. This article is intended for information purposes and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.



By Ellenor Downer



Female Bufflehead

I received an email from a Brimfield resident, who along with his wife, participated in the Allen Bird Club's Christmas Bird Count on Saturday, Dec. 16.

One unexpected species they saw were three female buffleheads at the Springfield Reservoir.

The bufflehead is a small duck about 14 inches long. It has a distinct, large rounded head.

The male has a white wedge behind its black head. The male also has white flanks and breast. The female is gray brown with a small patch of white behind the eye.

They are diving ducks and feed on mollusks, fish, snails and crustaceans. They summer on wooded lakes, rivers and winter on lakes and coastal waters.

The female lays eight to ten ivory to buff eggs in a tree cavity or nest box. There courtship begins in January and these ducks show a high level of aggression during that time.

Buffleheads are generally silent. However, the female makes guttural sounds during courtship.

Bird count

In his email, the Brimfield resident said he did his first Allen Bird Club count in the late 1970s. He said, "We have been covering the town of Ludlow, excluding the Westover Conservation Area covered by others, since 1989. The club's count circle center is in Springfield and includes adjacent towns.

He also said, "We had an excellent day weather wise, but the songbirds were hard to come by. With all the water ice free, we had high number of Canada geese (93), common mergansers (170, mostly males) and mallard (115). The common mergansers and many of the mallards were at the Springfield Reservoir."

He reported 20 ring-necked ducks at a pond near the Ludlow Country Club was another unexpected species in the count. In all, they had 32 species on their list, slightly more than the average of 29 species. Following the time in the field, the participants held a zoom meeting to discuss the results. No one mentioned seeing any winter finches i.e. redpoll, siskin or evening grosbeak.

Large flock of Canada geese

Recently, I saw a large flock of Canada geese in a cornfield in Spencer. There must have been at least 100. I did not stop to take an accurate count, but it was the largest flock I've seen.

Christmas card count

Years ago, Thelma Crawford told me she kept a Christmas card bird count every year. While she was alive, we would share our card counts.

Often the bird fell into the unspecified species category. I even received a Christmas card one year with a loon with an evergreen wreath around its neck. This was the first year I did not receive any Christmas cards with birds even one perched off in a distant tree in the backyard.

Suet feeder

I now have my suet feeder out all the time as I have not seen any sign of wandering black bears in awhile. I also feed a combination of mixed bird seed, black oil sunflowers and shelled peanuts, which I mix together to put out daily.

I have the usual juncos, chickadees, titmice, nuthatches, blue jays, mourning doves and of course, squirrels. I have not seen the cardinal pair yet, but then I don't have a lot of time to spend watching my feeders.

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by calling me at 413-967-3505, leaving a message at extension 100, emailing mybackyard88@aol.com or edowner@turley.com or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005.

Granby Library lists upcoming January events

GRANBY – The Granby Free Public Library, 297 East State St., offers free programs that are open to the public.

The Library is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.; Thursday from 10:30 a.m.-7 p.m. and Saturday from 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. For more information about the Library or any of its programs and services, call 413-467-3320 during open hours.

Nature Story Times & Fun with Ranger Tasha

Stop by the Library on Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. for Nature Story Times, Crafts & Hands-on with Ranger Tasha Daniels, Park Ranger/Visitor Services Specialist at the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. This drop-in program is recommended for ages 3-5; siblings and homeschoolers are wel-

come.

On Tuesday, Jan. 23, learn about how animals deal with winter both over and under the snow, whether its migrate, hibernate, or insulate. For a few small mammals, survival depends on the snow itself, and the deeper the better, the subnivean zone.

Children will make a snowshoe hare puppet.

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Minimum qualifications: High school education with courses in office procedures and business practices; plus two (2) years of progressively responsible office experience; or any equivalent combination of education and experience. This is a grade 5 position, 40 hours/week, with a pay range of: \$24.54 - \$31.32/hour. Applications are available online at www.belchertown.org/human_resources and can be sent to tojobs@belchertown.org. Applications will be accepted until filled. The Town of Belchertown is an EEO employer; we encourage women, minorities, and veterans to apply.

■ PUBLIC SAFETY

Hadley woman sentenced to probation in animal cruelty case

BELCHERTOWN – A Hadley woman was sentenced by a Hampshire Superior Court judge to five years of probation and prohibited from possessing or working with livestock after she pleaded guilty to three counts of animal cruelty related to animals in her care that were so emaciated, they had to be euthanized.

Acting on several tips in March of 2022, animal welfare professionals investigated Shannon Rice-Nichols for allegedly neglecting 35 animals, including cows and goats, according to an official press release from the office of Northwestern District Attorney David E. Sullivan.

As the result of their conditions, one cow and two goats had to be euthanized.

The Massachusetts Society of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals found new homes through adoption for eight head of Kerry cattle, a Holstein cow and 22 goats.

As part of a plea agreement jointly recommended by Northwestern Assistant District Attorneys Erin Aiello

and Matthew Russo and defense attorney Zoe Zeichner, and accepted by Hampshire Superior Court Judge Edward McDonough, the Commonwealth dropped the remaining 32 charges against Rice-Nichols.

Rice-Nichols had been charged following an investigation into neglect and malnourishment of goats and cows at an Amherst farm where she had been boarding her animals.

“This case involved egregious neglect and maltreatment that resulted in extreme animal suffering. We believe the sentence imposed by the Court was justified,” said Aiello. “When there is a concern of animal neglect, we work closely with animal protection agencies to assist individuals in accessing resources in an effort to avoid unnecessary criminal prosecution. But occasionally there are cases, like this one, for which criminal prosecution is appropriate.”

The Northwestern District Attorney’s Office worked closely with the MSPCA, Massachusetts Department of Agricultural

Resources and local Animal Control Officers on the case, as it does with other cases involving mistreatment of animals.

“Community members should know that animal welfare professionals are available to work with anyone who may be struggling to properly care for their animals,” said Aiello. “This kind of unnecessary suffering should not be allowed to happen. If anyone needs help with animals in their care they can always reach out to the MSPCA or local animal control officers to find available resources.”

This case was investigated by Amherst Police, the MSPCA and the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture Resources’ Division of Animal Health conducted the investigation. The plea agreement also calls for Rice-Nichols to take an online curriculum about proper animal care.

Criminal charges are based on probable cause to believe a person has committed a crime. All defendants are presumed innocent unless proven guilty in court.

Senate passes ‘Blue Envelope’ bill

An act facilitating better interactions with police and people with autism

BOSTON – The Senate recently voted unanimously to pass “An Act facilitating better interactions between police officers and persons with autism spectrum disorder” (S.2542), also known as the “Blue Envelope” bill, filed by Senator Jo Comerford (D-Norhampton).

The bill creates a voluntary program to make available special blue envelopes to people with autism spectrum disorder that hold the driver’s license, registration, and insurance cards, and which can be handed to a police officer in the event of a traffic stop. On the outside of the envelope are specific instructions for law enforcement officers on the driver’s diagnosis, impairments, triggers, emergency contact information, as well as best practices for communicating.

“I am deeply grateful to Senate President Karen Spilka, Ways and Means Chair Michael Rodrigues, Transportation Chair Brendan Crighton and my colleagues for passing this important legislation,” said Comerford in a press release. “The Blue Envelope bill will make our Commonwealth a safer place for people who are neuro-diverse. It moves us closer to equal opportunity and access for people of all abilities.”

“The Arc of Massachusetts and Advocates for Autism of Massachusetts are grateful to Senator Comerford, Senate President Spilka and Chairman Rodrigues for passing the Blue Envelope, a priority bill for our advocacy organizations. This bill will ease interactions between police and autistic drivers. We know these situations can escalate and become traumatic or even dangerous,” said Maura Sullivan, Director of Government Affairs, The Arc of Massachusetts/Advocates for Autism of Massachusetts. “The Arc and



Shown from left are UMass Police Chief Tyrone Parham, Max Callahan and Senator Jo Comerford.

AFAM applaud the Senate for taking action to be inclusive of the needs of the drivers with autism, in Massachusetts.”

“The Blue Envelope Bill would be a game changer for our family and for so many Massachusetts residents,” said Ilyse Levine-Kanji, an Executive Committee member of Advocates for Autism of Massachusetts. “Like many people with autism, my 25-year-old son Sam does not have any physical characteristics that indicate he has autism. In a stressful situation, where split second decisions must be made, I’m relieved that a police officer could see a blue envelope in Sam’s car and immediately understand that any unusual behavior or speech pattern is a result of autism. Thus, this bill could dramatically decrease the possibility of a tragic misunderstanding. Advocates for Autism of Massachusetts is extremely grateful for Senator Comerford’s leadership in introducing and championing this common sense initiative and to the Senate for moving so quickly to pass the bill.”

“Massachusetts police officers conduct thousands of traffic stops each year. While most of these interactions are relatively ‘routine,’ officers do not know who

they are interacting with before the traffic stop so they proceed with caution. Each driver reacts differently when they are pulled over by the police,” said Tyrone Parham, UMass Amherst Chief of Police. “The introduction of the blue envelope under stressful interactions will provide immediate information and context to the officer as they begin to communicate. This will be instrumental to help bridge the communication gap for both motorists and police officers.”

For drivers with autism spectrum disorder, being stopped by a police officer can be particularly challenging. At times, law enforcement officers or other first responders have had little or no training about how to communicate appropriately with people with ASD.

The bill facilitates understanding and better communication between law enforcement and drivers with ASD. In other states, like Connecticut, a similar voluntary program has been shown to reduce stress, facilitate better communication, and improve safety.

This bill will now move to the Massachusetts House of Representatives for consideration.

Belchertown Police Log

Editor’s note: The following are brief explanations of select entries in the Belchertown Police log and arrests for the weeks of Dec. 29, 2023 through Jan. 2. The information was provided by a member of the police department based on the review of the detailed log summary. This feature is designed to provide context and explanation to some of the calls police respond to every day. Of the 259 calls police responded to, there were 11 incidents, four accidents, two arrests/summons and 41 citations.

ARRESTS/SUMMONS

Friday, Dec. 29

9:58 p.m. – A 63-year-old Belchertown man was issued a summons for improper storage of a firearm, improper storage of a large capacity firearm, two counts of carrying a firearm without a license, ammunition without an FID. An officer made a service of a restraining order where the person possessed firearms. Officers were allowed into the residence to check for firearms. Several were seized from the residence and were put into property.

ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS

Friday, Dec. 29

3:11 p.m. – A person came to the station to speak with an officer regarding concerns about a family friend.

4:59 p.m. – An officer got a call from DCF requesting a well-being check on some children. The check was performed. While performing the check, the officer was bit by a canine. The officer is well.

5:11 p.m. – An officer responded to an accident on Ware Road. A vehicle traveling east on Ware Road struck a guard rail. There was rain and severe fog on the roadway. No injuries were reported, and the vehicle was towed.

7:01 p.m. – An officer to Federal Street for a report of an erratic operator that almost crashed to their vehicle then stopped on Federal Street. There was an elderly person operating. The officer was concerned there was a medical issue and requested an ambulance. The person said they had a difficult time seeing because of fog and difficult road conditions. Belchertown Fire and paramedics arrived and were concerned for the person’s well-being but did not transport them. The officer contacted a relative and planned to pick up the person. Based on what transpired, an immediate threat was filed.

Saturday, Dec. 30

12:48 p.m. – An officer was purging files, evidence and property that have been there for several years. Involved charges were adjudicated. Items were entered into evidence to be later destroyed.

1:04 p.m. – An officer responded to an accident on Federal Street. Two vehicles were backing out spaces and rear ended each other. Neither of the two drivers’ saw each other when backing up. There was damage to driver’s side panel of the second vehicle. No injuries were reported, and no tows were necessary.

4:12 p.m. – An officer responded to an accident on Amherst Road. A vehicle parked next to another was attempting to back

up when it struck the vehicle next to it. There was damage to the driver’s side of the second vehicle and the passenger’s side of the first. One vehicle was not occupied. No injuries were reported, and no tows were needed.

Sunday, Dec. 31

2:24 p.m. – An officer responded to an accident on Mill Valley Road. A vehicle going south on Mill Valley Road when the officer saw a motor vehicle traveling north and speeding. Activated radar displayed 50 mph. The officer stopped the vehicle, and the registration was expired non-renewable. The operator was given a warning for the offense and towed to a friends’ residence.

5:25 p.m. – The officer responded to a residence for a report of vandalism. The resident pulled their truck out of the garage earlier that day and their motion lights worked. Then later the lights were not working properly. The resident noted that the motion sensors were snipped. The residents were at home at the time and didn’t hear or see anything suspicious.

Tuesday, Jan. 2

8:59 a.m. – An officer responded to an accident on Old Amherst Street. A vehicle traveling north on Old Amherst Road when the driver sneezed and became distracted. The vehicle left the roadway and struck a couple mailboxes. There was damage to the front passenger’s side of the vehicle. The matter was documented. No injuries were reported and no tow was necessary.

6:07 p.m. – An officer spoke with a person in the lobby regarding child custody issues.

Granby Police Log

Editor’s Note: The Granby Police Department responded to 156 calls for the week of Dec. 29, 2023 through Jan. 4. Those arrested are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. The Granby Police Department provides all information.

Friday, Dec. 29

5:03 p.m. – A motorist reported a two-car accident. Granby Police and Fire responded. There were no injuries.

Monday, Jan. 1

2:09 a.m. – A motorist reported that a vehicle struck a utility pole. Granby Police and Fire responded. There were no injuries.

10:53 a.m. – A resident reported that a vehicle went off the road near the home and that it was unoccupied. Granby Police responded. The operator was eventually identified and issued a criminal citation for crossing marked lanes, leaving the scene of a property damage accident and operating without a license.

4:48 p.m. – While on patrol, an officer observed a motorcycle traveling at a high rate of speed. Radar confirmed that the vehicle was traveling at 60 mph in 45 mph zone. The motorcycle was stopped and the operator was issued a civil citation for speeding.

Thursday, Jan. 4

6:29 a.m. – Several motorists reported a motor vehicle off the road on its side. Granby Police and Fire responded. There were no injuries.

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DL&G TREE





This painting is called "Untie Laces".

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

QAA opens 2024 Winter Group Exhibit in Sunderland

SUNDERLAND – The Quabbin Art Association of Belchertown has opened their first group exhibit for the new year at the Sunderland Public Library, 20 School St., now through the end of February.

More than two dozen pieces including watercolor, oil, acrylic, pencil and photography are available for viewing during regular business hours. Many pieces are for sale directly from the artists.

Come visit the library and support the arts.

The Sunderland Public Library will be temporarily closed from Wednesday, Jan. 10 through Tuesday, Jan. 23 for maintenance. They will reopen on Wednesday, Jan. 24 at 1 p.m.

Please check their website for updated business hours at www.sunderlandpubliclibrary.org.

The Quabbin Art Association promotes community interest and appreciation in the visual arts by providing education, support, and opportunity for local artists. To learn more about the organization or to become a member, visit www.quabbinartassociation.com.



This pencil portrait of a dog will be featured in the 2024 Winter Group Exhibit hosted by the Quabbin Arts Association, on display at the Sunderland Public Library, 20 School St.

QAA hosts Maggie Nowinski at January meeting

BELCHERTOWN – The Quabbin Art Association of Belchertown will host interdisciplinary and teaching artist Maggie Nowinski at their first meeting of the new year.

The meeting will be held on Thursday, Jan. 18 at St. Francis Parish Hall, Lower Level, 12 Park St. Doors will be open at 6:30 p.m. for socializing and light refreshments with a business meeting at 7 p.m. followed by Nowinski's presentation.

With the rise in COVID and other flu viruses, attendees are asked to wear a face covering if you have been exposed or consider joining at another time if you feel ill.

Based in western Massachusetts, Nowinski's current body of work is rooted in drawing and print-making, though her artworks usually take the format of installation and combine traditional and unusual media, audio, and performative processes.

Her work investigates somatic response human emotion through imagined specimen drawings that appear as abject human-botanical entities or specimens.

Nowinski's practice is embodied by an awareness of the conceptual and political inevitability of art making and an adoration for repetition, daily mark-making and long walks. She is currently engaged in collaboration with other visual artists, dancers, sound artists and poets within an expanded field of drawing.

Nowinski received her bachelor's degree in painting from the State University of New York at New Paltz and her master's degree in visual art from Vermont College of Fine Arts. She is a full time faculty drawing program coordinator at Manchester Community College and is a visiting lecturer in drawing at Smith College.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Maggie Nowinski is shown with her artwork. Nowinski will be the featured presenter at the Quabbin Art Association's Jan. 18 meeting.

In 2022 she was a visiting artist at Mount Holyoke College, where she designed two courses in drawing and recently was an adjunct instructor in the visual fine arts programs at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. Nowinski is frequently an Artist-Mentor in the Vermont College of Fine Arts low residency MFA program.

Nowinski regularly exhibits throughout New England and her work has been in numerous exhibitions nationally. She is the recipient of multiple awards and grants and has been featured in numerous interviews and articles.

She was recently featured in an artist spotlight called "Drawing (un)limited" in Art Spiel. To learn more about her recent work and find works in progress, please visit her website at www.maggielowinski.org or at @maggienow.

Funding for this program is supported in part by a grant from the Belchertown Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency. For more information visit www.quabbinartassociation.com or email info@quabbinartassociation.com.

State Fire Marshal urges to check CO alarms and keep vents clear

STOW – With the season's first significant snow in Massachusetts, State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine reminds residents to test their carbon monoxide alarms and keep dryer, furnace and other exhaust vents clear of snow.

"Carbon monoxide is a leading cause of fatal poisoning, and home heating equipment is the primary source of carbon monoxide in the home," Davine said in a press release. "As part of your storm planning, check your CO alarms to be sure they're working properly, and if an alarm is past the manufacturer's recommended lifespan, replace it."

Residents should also be sure to keep outside vents clear of falling, drifting or shoveled snow.

In January 2005, 7-year-old Nicole Garofalo died when a heating vent was blocked by snow drifts outside, allowing carbon monoxide to accumulate inside her Plymouth home. This tragedy led to Nicole's Law, which requires CO alarms on every habitable level of a Massachusetts residence.

"Fuel-fired heating appliances like dryers, furnaces, boilers, and fireplaces are all sources of carbon monoxide," Davine said. "If the vent or flue is blocked, this poisonous gas can reach deadly levels inside the home. Know where the vents on your home are, be sure to clear them when shoveling and be careful not to blow snow onto them if using

Please see **FIRE**, page 15

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■ BUSINESS

Leena's Place celebrates one-year anniversary

BELCHERTOWN – Leena's Place located at Cold Spring Country Club, 336 Chauncey Walker St., has enjoyed meeting all the new faces, sharing laughs and great food during its first year, according to owner Jessica Morehouse.

On Jan. 8, the restaurant celebrated one year since opening.

"We have enjoyed navigating through every obstacle and hope to continue to be a supporter in the Belchertown community," Morehouse said in a press release.

She said Leena's Place mission is to continue to be a gem at the top of Cold Springs Country Club and bring the town together by being diverse.

"We have an absolute amazing view which we would love for people to view. We love when people gather with us from dinner to weddings, tournaments, birthday parties, gender reveals, breakfast and more!"

Morehouse said the restaurant's space is available to book a private event.

Morehouse thanked everyone who has helped make Leena's Place's first year successful.

"We appreciate all the relationships we have made with local vendors, businesses, bands and custom-

ers, we wouldn't be able to do it with you," she said.

Morehouse said there will be more in store for Leena's Place in the next few years.

Currently, the restaurant offers a pool table and jukebox for customers to enjoy, as well as a variety of events ranging from Mixology classes to sip and paints, sushi making, line dancing and more. Leena's Place also offers Door Dash and Toast delivery services.

Breakfast is now offered on a daily basis, opening at 8 a.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

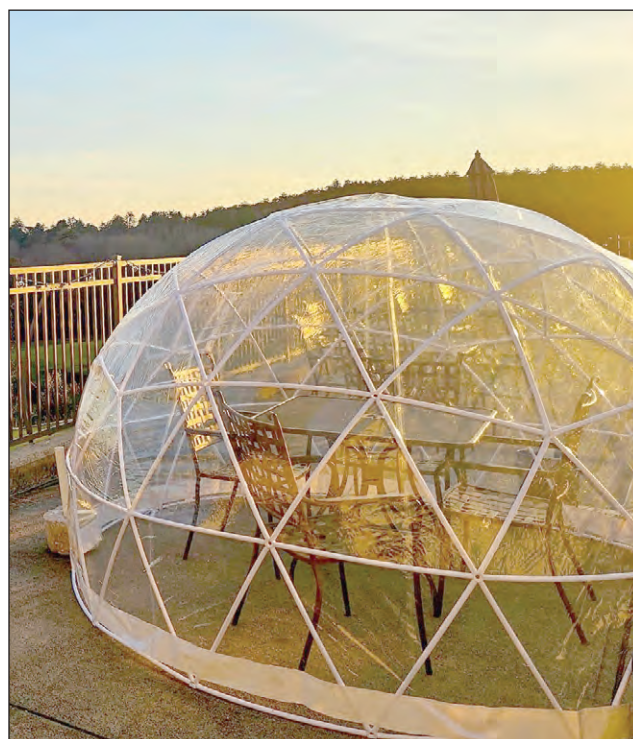
Morehouse said Leena's Place plans to expand early breakfast hours in the future.

"We understand the economy is difficult, which is why we hope you will take the time to support a small local business so that we can continue to strive to be successful. We can't do it without you," she said.

For more information about Leena's Place, follow them on Facebook or visit leenasbartendingandcatering.com.



Lily Hopkins, general manager, left is shown with owner Jessica Morehouse.



Igloos provide warm outdoor dining at Leena's Place.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS





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EDUCATION

PVPA Music Department presents Winter Music Showcase 'Imbroglío'

SOUTH HADLEY – The Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School Music Department is pleased to present "Imbroglío", a Winter Music Showcase.

The show will run Friday and Saturday, Jan. 12 and 13, with performances beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the main stage theater at 15 Mulligan Drive.

Ticket prices are as follows: \$10 general admission; \$7 military and seniors; \$5 PVPA alumni, and \$3 students and are available at the door, or online at www.pvpa.org/shows.

Under the direction of Rahul Roy, PVPA's Winter Music Showcase features the sounds of our premier ensembles as well as some of our up and coming musicians. Both nights will feature different groups and different material, making for two unique musical evenings directed by Jeremy Milligan and David Cavellin.

Friday night performances will feature student first semester works from PVPA's Orchestra, Middle School String Ensemble, Concert Band and Chorus, as well as the High School ensemble Adagio. Saturday evening performances will showcase the department's audition ensembles including A Cappella, Gig Band, Razz Da Roof, and Pop R and B.



SUBMITTED PHOTO
Pioneer Valley Performing Arts students rehearse for their upcoming Winter Music Showcase.

PVPA's music department works diligently to provide students the opportunity to explore music in a variety of formats, play for different audiences, experience the demands of professional musicians, and encourages creativity in the musical process both on and off stage.

About PVPA

Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School is a regional public charter school serving 400 students in grades 7-12, from over 50 towns throughout western Massachusetts. For more information about PVPA, or to apply www.pvpa.org/admissions.

HCC announces Dean's list for fall 2023 semester

HOLYOKE – Each semester Holyoke Community College recognizes superior scholarship through the Dean's list.

A student is placed on the Dean's list if their G.P.A. is 3.2 or higher. The students listed below have earned Dean's list honors for the Fall 2023 semester.

Amherst

Sandra Alvarado, Isabella Coleman Baird, Kai Francisco Caban, Carlos Stiven Jovel Cruz, Lexie B. Ephraim, Daniele Weidlich Freitas, Elizabeth Christine Hanlon, Lily Hana Kaufman Harris, Benjamin Haupt, Benjamin Keil, Adam Thomas Kellogg, Bogdan Konev, Jiaoqi Liu,

Norma Alexandra Mejia Ayala, Marie Christine Siri, Tenzin Tsering, Nguyen Hai Trieu Vu, Katherine Wang and Virginia Eve Wardlaw.

Belchertown

Joseph Baltazar, John William Barrington, Eileen Rosemary Barrington, Nathan Benoit, Christine Victoria Bertone, Amber Ashley Blinn, Riley Jared Breen, Chloe Breton, Aaron Patrick Brown, Alex Joseph Brunelle, Meghan Muriel Carey, Ceren Meryem Cayan, Jacob Daniel Chaisson, Natalie Layne Daigle, Matt Fournier, Hailey Marie Garrow, Olivia Rose Golenski, Joel

Please see **HCC**, page 16

SNHU announces fall 2023 President's List

MANCHESTER, NH – Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates the following students on being named to the fall 2023 President's List.

John Blomquist of Amherst; Rebecca Potter and Melissa Walker, both of Belchertown; Dylan Moore and Michael Collins, both of Granby.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.



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TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI
Jackson Couchon angles toward the hoop under pressure.



Tyler Marino runs into pressure near the hoop.

Late surge by Falcons hurts Orioles

BY TIM PETERSON
Sports Correspondent

WILBRAHAM—Four of the previous five games played between the Belchertown and Minnechaug Regional girls' varsity basketball teams were decided by five or fewer points. Their only meeting of the 2023-24 regular season was another close affair for the first 16 minutes.

The Lady Falcons, who held a 21-14 halftime lead in the non-league contest, outscored the Lady Orioles, 29-16, in the second half enroute to a 50-30 home victory, last Tuesday night (Jan. 2).

"We really didn't play very well in the first half," said first-year Minnechaug head coach Ryan Minns. "I thought we played with a lot more energy during the second half."

Minnechaug senior guard Jayla Comes didn't play in the game against Belchertown because of a right foot injury.

"Jayla suffered an injury at practice the other day," Minns said. "While it stinks not having her on the court, it gave a few of our other players an opportunity to play in tonight's game."



TURLEY PHOTO BY SOFIA DIGRANDE
Avery Cooper winds up for a two-hand pass.

Orioles suffer blow against Tigers

SOUTH HADLEY – Last Thursday night, Belchertown boys basketball took on South Hadley with the Tigers prevailing in the matchup 73-66. The game was a physical contest with a lot of high-paced action throughout. South Hadley pulled away at the end, though, and took home the win to improve to 4-2. Belchertown, looking to get back to .500, fell to 3-5 on the season. Belchertown was led by Ian McDonald with 16 points. Brice Letendre had 13 points. South Hadley got 38 points from Jack Loughrey while Brady Currier added 17 points.



Ian McDonald gets low to avoid a block.

Freshman guard Ainsley Holden (4 points) made her first start in a varsity basketball game against the Lady Orioles.

"Ainsley is a very good basketball player," Minns added. "I thought she handled everything very well."

The Lady Falcons (5-2), who closed out 2023 with a two game winning streak, has now won the last four meetings against Belchertown on the hardwood. They squeaked out a 49-44 road win versus the Lady Orioles last January.

A total of ten players scored at least two points for the Lady Falcons led by sophomore guard Kelly Cronin, who scored a game-high 12 points. She made three 3-pointers.

Sophomore forward Cailin O'Brien contributed with nine points off the bench. Senior forward Lylah Jeannotte scored all eight of her points in the second half. Sophomore guard Elizabeth Woytowicz added six points.

The last time that the Lady Orioles (1-2) celebrated a win in the series was a 50-45 victory on February 6, 2017.

"We managed to keep the Please see **ORIOLES**, page 14



Chloe LaRoche takes the long jump shot.



Cal Orzech makes a line for the basket.



Brice Letendre makes his way down the court.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI
Megan Clark makes a pass on the run.



LEFT: Addison Doktor lunges for a shot.

Early lead paces Pioneers to win

PALMER – Last Friday evening, Pathfinder girls basketball jumped out to a 9-2 lead, then more than doubled that while holding Westfield Tech to just four points in the first half. The Pioneers would go on to get the win 34-24 and improve to 4-3 on the season. Greenly Lagimoniere would lead Pathfinder with 11 points.



Taylor Allen passes inside the arc.



Greenly Lagimoniere makes her way down the court.

SPORTS

Railers fall to Mariners on the road

PORTLAND, ME – The skate was on the other foot here Sunday afternoon, much to the Railers' dismay.

After spending a lot of the first part of this season crafting miraculous comebacks, Worcester had it happen in reverse, losing to the Maine Mariners, 4-2.

The Railers squandered a 2-1 lead as they allowed two goals by Alex Kile in the game's closing minutes, then an empty-netter by Curtis Hall at 19:59.

Kile's goals were his 19th and 20th of the season. The tying goal came with Maine on a power play at 17:09 of the third period. The winner was a 5 on 5 shot through a screen from about 55 feet at 19:33. It came after a Railers' mistake, an errant pass that led to an icing call and a faceoff in their own end.

Joey Cipollone and Anthony Callin scored the Worcester goals. Owen Pederson had the first Maine goal.

John Muse stopped 25 of 28 Maine shots. Brad Arvanitis was

excellent for the Mariners with 34 saves.

Worcester had a chance to put things out of reach earlier in the third period but could not capitalize on more than three straight minutes of power play time, much of it skating 5 on 3.

The first period was a real trip for the Railers, but in the worst way.

Referee Michael Zyla did not call a penalty and missed a blatant trip that took down a Worcester player and it cost the Railers a goal. It happened at 11:12, or just before that, as Riley Piercey controlled the puck along the right wing boards in the Worcester zone.

As Piercey began to move out he was tripped. The puck wound up on Pederson's stick. He carried it into the slot and popped a high backhand past Muse.

Otherwise, Muse and Arvanitis were equal to the task to make 18 combined saves.

It took Worcester a while to tie the game but Cipollone finally

did at 5:02 of the second period. He entered the Maine zone with Piercey on his right and one Maine defender between them. Cipollone took the puck in deep and his wrist shot broke through Arvanitis to make it 1-1.

Worcester made it 2-1 about seven minutes later on Callin's power play goal. He was set up by Blade Jenkins and zipped a 40-foot wrist shot just under the crossbar for the go ahead goal. The goal snapped an 11-game drought without one for Callin, although he had seven assists in that time.

Jenkins continued a very productive run of games with the assist. He is 2-9-11 in the last eight.

The Railers' next game is Friday night at the DCU Center, the first in a three-in-three versus the Norfolk Admirals. Worcester and Norfolk are likely to jockey for playoff position for the rest of the season and the Admirals have been leading the series to date, winning four of the five meetings.

HoopHall Classic to be broadcast nationwide

The Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame announced today the broadcast schedule for the 2024 Spalding HoopHall Classic, an annual basketball showcase now in its 22nd year. Games will be played at Blake Arena from January 11-15 at Springfield College, the Birthplace of Basketball.

ESPN is returning as a broadcast partner, with 10 matchups broadcast nationally across Sunday and Monday's schedules. Coverage starts on Sunday with LaLumiere School, KY, vs. Prolific Prep, CA, at 1:30 p.m. Two matchups will be broadcast on ESPN2, five on ESPNU, and three on ESPN+.

Saturday's slate of eight games, which will tip off with Bishop Hendricken High School (RI) vs. Gulliver Prep (FL) at 9 a.m. and conclude with Grayson High School (GA) vs. Perry High School (AZ) at 9 p.m. will stream on the NBA App, with

the first four games and last four games simulcast to NBA TV and NBA YouTube, respectively. Additionally, content and highlights from Saturday's games will be featured on NBA Future Starts Now. This marks the first time that HoopHall Classic games and content will be featured on NBA platforms.

BallerTV continues as a broadcast partner for the event and will stream 14 games throughout the weekend.

18 of ESPN's Top 25 High School basketball programs will be participating in the event: Montverde Academy (#1), Long Island Lutheran High School (#2), Paul VI High School (#3), Link Academy (#4), Christopher Columbus High School (#5), Prolific Prep (#7), Arizona Compass Prep (#8), Don Bosco Prep (#9), La Lumiere School (#11), Harvard-Westlake High

Please see **HOOPHALL**, page 15



Lia Pikul keeps the dribble going under pressure.



Aubrey McCain attempts to get the layup with heavy coverage.



Logan Moses drives toward the arc.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY SOFIA DIGRANDE

ORIOLES from page 13

score close in the first half," said longtime Belchertown head coach Jason Woodcock. "We're a very young team this year, and we're just trying to get better in every game that we play. I'm very proud of my players effort in tonight's game."

Junior forward Chole LaRoche, who's one of the few Lady Orioles returning varsity players, scored eight of her game-high 13 points in the first half. She also made three 3-pointers.

Another returning varsity player for Belchertown is senior guard Laura Cote (4 points).

"Chole and Laura are the only two players who played a lot of minutes at the varsity level last year," Woodcock

said. "We have a bunch of new players this year."

Freshman guard Morghan Litz provided a spark offensively for the Lady Orioles during the second half. She scored seven of her nine points during the final three minutes of the third quarter.

"We haven't had a true point guard like Morghan in a very long time. She sees the court very well," Woodcock said. "Her father (Bryan) coached her at the youth level. He did a very good job of coaching her and the other four freshmen on the varsity team."

Besides being a youth basketball coach, Bryan Litz is also the Director of the Wilbraham Park and Recreation Department.

The Lady Falcons, who never trailed, took a 5-2 lead a little more than three minutes into the opening quarter with the help of an old fashion three-point play and a lay-up from Woytowicz.

With two minutes left in the first quarter, Minnechaug was leading 12-4 following an inside basket from junior guard Ava Ofcarik, which were her only points of the game, and an O'Brien lay-up.

A Holden jumper pushed the Lady Falcons lead into double digits (18-8) for the first time with 6:35 remaining in the opening half.

The Lady Orioles responded with a 5-0 spurt. A LaRoche 3-pointer from the right side closed the gap to 18-13 with 4:15 left in the first half.

The visitors wouldn't get any closer than five points, as the Lady Falcons began the second half with a 9-3 run.

Cronin and Jeannotte combined to score the first seven points of the run before an O'Brien lay-up pushed Minnechaug's lead to 30-17 with a little more than three minutes remaining in the third stanza.

Then Litz made an inside hoop, a pair of free throws, and a 3-pointer from the top of the key cutting the deficit to 33-24 entering the final eight minutes.

With the help of six different players, Minnechaug pulled away during the final quarter.

The Lady Orioles squeaked out a 46-41 home win over Southwick the following night. The duo of LaRoche (17 points) and Cote (12 points) combined for 29 points.

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SPORTS

T-Birds suffer loss against rival Bruins

PROVIDENCE, R.I. -- The Springfield Thunderbirds (16-12-3-2) could not overcome an early blitz by the Providence Bruins (19-12-3-0) in a 6-3 loss on Sunday afternoon at Amica Mutual Pavilion.

It did not take the Bruins long to flex their offensive muscles, as John Farinacci slipped into an open area in front of the net, received a pass from Brett Harrison, and one-touched it past Vadim Zherenko to make it a 1-0 Bruins lead just 2:40 into the game.

Just 1:04 later, Justin Brazeau added to the advantage, taking a Georgii Merkulov pass and deking to the backhand past Zherenko on a point-blank opportunity. Anthony Richard added a third at 6:05, and before the T-Birds knew it, the home side had a 3-0 lead.

After a pair of matching minors put the game at 4-on-4 for the first time, the Bruins found another seam in the defense, as Frederic Brunet made a perfect diagonal pass to the right post, where Ian Mitchell guided it into the twine, ending a potent first period for the Bruins with the 4-0 goal at 17:05.

Malcolm Subban entered in relief of Zherenko to start the second period, but the Bruins were

not done on the attack, as Jayson Megna beat Subban on an odd-man rush from the slot, and the lead ballooned to 5-0 at 6:27 of the frame.

Despite the mountain of a deficit, the T-Birds showed tremendous character as Zach Bolduc and Adam Gaudette each found the back of the net behind Michael DiPietro in just a 2:12 span to bring the margin down to 5-2 at the 13:52 mark of the period. Bolduc's fifth of the season broke a personal 11-game drought, and Gaudette scored for a third straight game, becoming the first AHL player to reach 20 goals this season.

The third period went 11 minutes with relatively minimal offensive chances for each team. Springfield would get another one as MacKenzie MacEachern roofed a shot from the right of the crease at 11:54 to cut the margin down to 5-3 off a slick set-up from Wyatt Kalynuk, but the comeback effort would not get any closer. Richard's second goal of the afternoon, a power play marker into an empty net, ended the scoring at the 17:54 mark of the third.

The T-Birds continued their four-game road swing on Wednesday night when they visited the Bridgeport Islanders.

HOOPBALL from page 14

School (#12), Brewster Academy (#13), IMG Academy (#14), Bishop O'Connell High School (#15), Gonzaga College High School (#16), Oak Hill Academy (#17), Archbishop Stepinac High School (#19), Grayson High School (#24), and McEachern High School (#25).

Ten of the last 12 No. 1 overall picks in the NBA Draft have played at the Hoophall Classic.

This year, Hoophall Classic will feature 43 players in ESPN's Top 100 from the Class of 2024, 18 from the Class of 2025 Top 60, and five from the Class of 2026 Top 25.

The tournament will feature four women's games this year. Eight of the Class of 2024's HoopGurlz WESPN Top 100 recruits will be featured, five from the Class of 2025's Super 60, and two from the Class of 2026's Terrific 25.

BBB warns of prescription medication scam

When demand for something exceeds its supply, scammers are quick to take advantage. The Better Business Bureau warned in a press release.

It's happened recently with popular toys, baby formula, and even rental cars. Now, it's happening with Ozempic, a prescription-only drug for people with Type 2 diabetes.

Scammers are aware of the drug's popularity for weight loss, and they're targeting folks looking for a convenient way to purchase it. Here's what you need to know to stay alert.

How this scam works

You are looking online for a pharmacy that carries Ozempic and are pointed to a website claiming to sell the drug at a reduced price. You may find the website through a web search, an ad, or even a friend's post on social media.

The website claims that buying Ozempic is easy, and you can save a few hundred dollars by purchasing it online versus through a doctor. All you must do is make a payment through a digital wallet app like CashApp or Zelle (CashApp and Zelle are BBB Accredited Businesses as of this writing in December 2023).

Many such websites don't even ask for a prescription before "selling" the drug, but some sites work harder to appear that you are dealing with a legitimate pharmaceutical company. One consumer reported having a "tele-consult" with a "doctor" before paying to receive

Ozempic.

The consumer told BBB: "I have not received the drug. When I reach out to customer service, they send automated responses. They refuse to refund my money, even though they claim not to know when or if the drug will be shipped."

In some versions of the scam, the con artists claim to encounter issues when shipping the drug, all of which require additional fees. For example, after your initial payment, scammers may insist that you need to pay for insurance or a discreet shipping fee to get the package past customs.

If you refuse, scammers may resort to threats. For example, they may claim to report the transaction to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and you'll be held responsible for buying illegal drugs without a prescription.

In reality, scammers never planned on sending you anything at all. Any problems encountered when "shipping" the medication is only a trick to get even more money from you.

If you give in and use a digital payment app to send funds, your money is gone for good.

How to avoid similar scams

Don't buy medicines from foreign countries. The FDA warns consumers that non-FDA-approved products sold by internet pharmacies in other countries can be downright dangerous.

Avoid risking your health and getting scammed by sticking with

pharmacies based in the country where you live.

Don't buy prescription-only medications from a seller who doesn't ask you for a prescription. This is a huge red flag and one of the biggest signs that you are dealing with a scammer.

Even if they are selling the drug, offering it to consumers without a prescription is illegal.

Watch out for unreasonably low prices. This is another red flag.

Ask yourself, why is a vendor offering a high-demand, name-brand prescription at such a low price? It's probably a scam. After paying, you could end up with counterfeit products or no products at all.

Don't use digital wallet apps to pay for a prescription. A reputable pharmacy won't ask you to make a payment using a digital wallet app, prepaid debit cards, or wired funds.

These payment methods are a common denominator in countless scams.

Only buy from reputable pharmacies. If you come across a pharmacy online that you aren't familiar with, research is a must.

Make sure the business has legitimate contact information and a working phone number. Look for consumer reviews, keeping a sharp eye out for reports of scams or shady business dealings.

Remember, your personal information, some of your medical details, and your money are all on the line.

FIRE from page 10

a snowblower."

Massachusetts fire departments detected CO at nearly 5,000 incidents in 2022, officials said and 90% of these calls were at residential settings.

The poison gas can cause headache, fatigue, dizziness and/or

nausea at lower concentrations and death at higher concentrations. Exposure while asleep is particularly dangerous.

Children, older adults and people with lung or heart disease are especially vulnerable.

"We can't see, smell, or taste carbon monoxide, but we can detect it with working CO

alarms," Davine said. "If your alarm sounds, get outside and call 9-1-1."

For more information on carbon monoxide and CO alarms, people may visit the Department of Fire Services website, <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/department-of-fire-services>.



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AMHERST

Winter programs offered at Mount Holyoke Range State Park

AMHERST – Free public programs are held at the Notch Visitor Center, Mount Holyoke Range State Park, Department of Conservation and Recreation, 1500 West St., from January through March.

All programs meet inside the Notch Visitor Center, unless otherwise noted, and program times and dates are subject to change. Parking is free.

All children must be accompanied by an adult. Reasonable accommodations available upon request.

Inclement weather or extreme cold may cancel programs, and trails may be snow-covered, icy, or muddy. For more information call the park at 413-253-2883.

Notch Visitor Center hours

The Notch Visitor Center is open Tuesday through Saturday, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. December through mid-March. The Visitor Center features park orientation information, exhibits, restrooms, and drinking water.

Take a walk or hike in the park. Accessible by PVRTA public transit (Amherst R38). Wheelchair accessible.

Range Reveals

Range Reveals are offered Tuesdays through Saturdays from 9 a.m.-noon for ages 7 and up. Three self-guided exploration stations reveal wonders of the Range including Mountain Building, a better understanding of how the Range was made; Dinosaur Tracks, look closer at fossilized tracks; and Animal Tracking, look carefully and see what animal has been here.

Staff available to help uncover the story.

Winter Wonderland Challenge

Winter Wonderland Challenge will be held Wednesdays and Saturdays from 1-3 p.m. for ages 10-adult. Ask the park staff

for the “trail of the day” and try one of these self-guided exploration challenges as you hike along.

Come back and share your findings with park staff: Animal Tracking Excursion – who’s been here? Tree Bark Challenge – how many trees can you ID?

Winter hiking tips

Winter hiking tips will be offered Wednesdays and Saturdays from 9-9:30 a.m. for ages 7 and up.

Before you head out on the trail take in this short hiking safety demonstration. Familiarize yourself with the Range’s trails. Park staff offer great trail suggestions.

Haiku Club

Haiku Club will be held on Wednesdays, Feb. 7, 21 and March 6 from 10-11 a.m. to share Range-based Haiku and Senryu poetry. How does the Range inspire you? New to haiku? Come join in and learn.

Nice & Easy Hike

Nice & Easy Hike will be held on Thursdays from 1-3 p.m., allowing participants to see the forest differently through the eyes of winter. These easy paced, guided hikes geared toward active seniors, but open to all ages.

Modest slope, 2- to 3-miles. Dress appropriately for winter weather; hiking poles and traction devices for boots (or snowshoes) recommended. Note hike meeting location changes: North Side Ramble, Jan.18; Feb. 1, 15 and 29, meet at Notch Visitor Center in Amherst; South Side Ramble, Jan. 11, 25; Feb. 8, 22 and March 7, meet at 79 Batchelor St. Parking Lot in Granby.

Kiddleidoscope

Kiddleidoscope will be held on Fridays from 10-11 a.m. for ages 3-6, accompanied by an adult. The program includes a story, activity, and a craft. The featured story for Feb. 2 is “The Mitten”; Jan. 26 and Feb. 16 is “Whose Tracks are These?”; Jan. 12 and Feb. 23 is “Chipmunk Song”; Jan. 19 and Feb. 9 is “White Owl, Barn Owl”; March 1 is “My Dad is a Tree” and March 8 is “The Salamander Room”.

Discover the local wildlife who make the park their home. Siblings and friends welcome.

Meet in the Notch Visitor Center. All materials are provided.

Off the Beaten Path Hikes

Off the Beaten Path Hikes will be held on Fridays from 1-2:30 p.m. These hikes are geared for adults, but all ages are welcome.

Guided 1- to 2-mile hikes for discovery or destressing. Dress for winter weather. Hiking poles and traction devices for boots, or snowshoes, recommended.

Hikes include:

Forest Bathing on Jan. 19, Feb. 2 and March 1. Can the forest help us feel more at peace? Yes! A Forest Bathing walk is a great way to destress and find inner peace. Meet at Notch Visitor Center.

Tale of Two Trails on Jan. 12, 26, Feb. 9 and 23. Two trails tell two very different stories, and over two very different times. Come explore and discover. Meet at Notch Visitor Center.

Exposed Rock - Erratics and Layers on Feb. 16 and March 8. Explore the Range geology in winter. Meet at Skinner State Park, Mountainside Trailhead, Route 47, Hadley.

Winter Explorations

Winter Explorations for families (ages 9 and up) will be held on Saturdays from 10-11 a.m. and 1-2 p.m.

Park staff-guided discovery. Held inside Visitor Center.

Programs include:

Animal Tracking on Feb. 3. Winter is a great time to see what animals wander in the park. See how to identify park wildlife by the tracks they leave behind and see

what they’ve been up to.

Tree Bark ID on Jan. 27 and Feb. 10. No leaves? No problem! There is a year-round way to identify trees – bark. Learn some basics, and try out a new skill.

How was the Range Formed? on Jan. 20. The Holyoke Range is a unique geologic formation. Dig a little deeper into this fascinating timeline.

Winter Birding on Jan. 13 and Feb. 24. Which birds are around in winter? How do we find them? What do they sound like? Join a guest Mass Audubon guide for this birding primer. 10 a.m. only – field walk, talk and inside if rain.

Emergent Spring on March 2 and 9. Spring is just around the corner. Discover early signs of spring.

Story Walk

A Story Walk will be available Feb. 17-25 for all ages. The book is “Goodbye Winter, Hello Spring” by Kenard Pak.

This self-guided story walk is for all ages.

Join a boy and his dog as they explore nature and take a stroll through the countryside, greeting all the signs of the coming season. In a series of conversations with everything from the melting brook to chirping birds, they say goodbye to winter and welcome the lushness of spring.

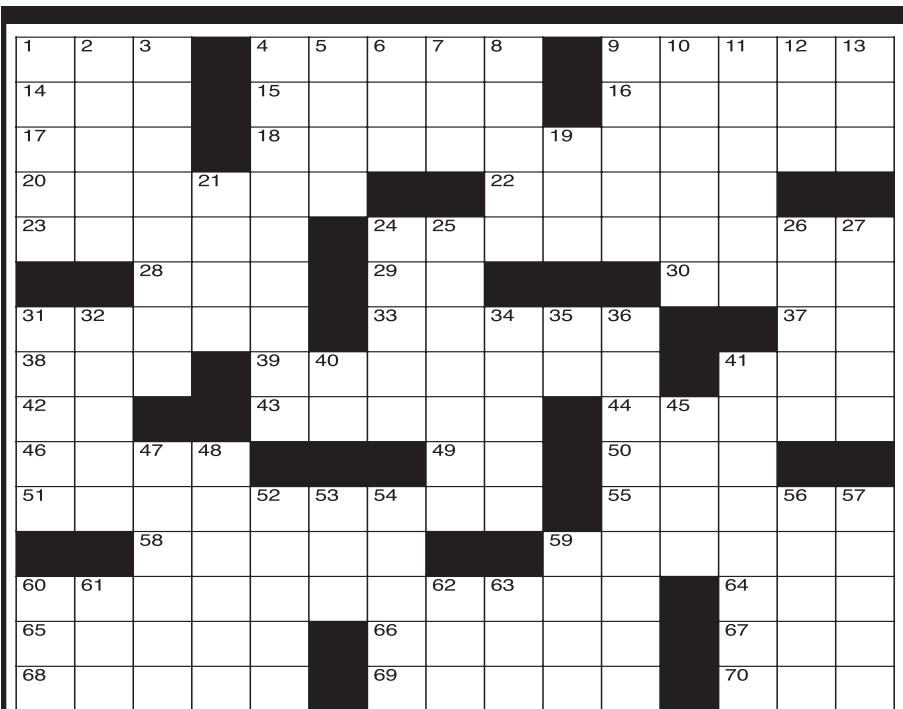
The StoryWalk® Project was created by Anne Ferguson of Montpelier, VT and developed in collaboration with the Kellogg-Hubbard Library. Story Walk® is a registered service mark owned by Ferguson. This StoryWalk® is provided by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation Interpretive Services.

Holey Basalt!

A special program by professor and geologist Richard Little, Holey Basalt! The Amazing Geology of the Holyoke Range will be held on Saturday, Feb. 17 from 1:30-2:30 p.m. for ages 8 and up.

The Holyoke Range looms over many Connecticut River towns and cities. How did this happen, and why? Come discover the mystery.

Sponsored by the Friends of Mount Holyoke Range State Park. Meet at Notch Visitor Center.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Defensive nuclear weapon
- 4. Moved back and forth
- 9. One-time coach of the Cowboys
- 14. Last letter
- 15. Cause to become less intense
- 16. Genus of tree bugs
- 17. Body art
- 18. Romance novelist
- 20. Be filled with love for
- 22. City
- 23. Make vivid
- 24. Horses
- 28. Mauna ____, Hawaiian volcano
- 29. Atomic #18
- 30. Shortly
- 31. A type of prejudice
- 33. Whirls
- 37. Six
- 38. Old world, new
- 39. __ Hess, oil company

- 41. Talk
- 42. Not off
- 43. Begets
- 44. Cars need them
- 46. Computing architecture (abbr.)
- 49. Of I
- 50. Journalist, activist
- 51. Takes apart
- 55. Lists
- 58. Positively charged electrode
- 59. Hard, colorless compound
- 60. Inflammation of the peritoneum
- 64. Trent Reznor's band
- 65. Simply dry fruit
- 66. “Ivanhoe” author
- 67. Google certification
- 68. French commune
- 69. Medieval circuit courts
- 70. Soviet Socialist Republic

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Indigenous people of Mexico
- 2. Dietary supplement
- 3. Having a particular sheen or luster
- 4. Views
- 5. Academic Bill of Rights
- 6. Automobile
- 7. When you anticipate arriving
- 8. Beef or chicken intestine
- 9. Conspiracy
- 10. Blood disorder
- 11. Long-time NBAer
- 12. Time zone
- 13. US, Latin America, Canada belong to
- 19. Upton Sinclair novel
- 21. What a cow does
- 24. Cavalry-sword
- 25. Ancient Greek war galley
- 26. Stars

- 27. Rebukes
- 31. Billion year periods
- 32. Some are in a bottle
- 34. Tears down
- 35. Lethal dose
- 36. Humorists
- 40. Midwestern US state (abbr.)
- 41. Frameworks
- 45. Rocker Billy
- 47. More thin
- 48. Dog
- 52. Habitual repetitions
- 53. State of fuss
- 54. Uneasy
- 56. Chemical compounds
- 57. More cognizant of reality
- 59. A place to build
- 60. Exclamation that denotes disgust
- 61. Supplement with difficulty
- 62. Very slick
- 63. Hill or rocky peak

Amherst Historical Society news and events

AMHERST – In 2024 the Amherst History Society will celebrate 125 years, from 1899 to 2024, and will hold its annual meeting on Sunday, Feb. 11, at 2 p.m. in the Munson Library, South Amherst.

Dr. Julie Dobrow will talk to us about Mabel Loomis Todd and the New England Transcendentalists.

The Conch Shell Award

Nominations are now open for the 2024 Conch Shell Award sponsored by the Amherst Historical Society.

This award goes to a person, business or organization that has contributed to the preservation and awareness of Amherst history, has demonstrated a commitment to education and interpretation, and has used innovative and creative methods to showcase Amherst’s historic resources.

The Society welcomes nominations

from the public. To make a nomination, contact the AHS by letter (Amherst Historical Society and Museum, 67 Amity St., Amherst, MA 01002-2214) or email (info@amhersthistor.org) with a description of the nominee’s work by Saturday, Jan. 27. The recipient(s) will be honored at the Founder’s Day ceremony in February.

The Amherst Historical Society established the Conch Shell Award in 2007 to recognize individuals who have made valuable contributions to the preservation and appreciation of Amherst history. It is named for the conch shell or “ye auld kunk” that was used in the 1700s to call Amherst residents to town meeting and to worship.

A list of previous Conch Shell Award winners is available at <https://amhersthistor.org/founders-day-and-awards/>.

HCC from page 12

Daniel Gonzalez, Caterina Clementine Guerin, Lexi Ann Harris, Brianna Jaiden Hauschild, Bridget Clare Hegarty, Chloe Marie Jenks, Morgan Brier Kite, Hailey M. Lamica, McKenna Katherine Martin, David Peter Mastalerz, Caleigh McCormack, Olga Minina, Kassidy Renee Morrisette, Sienna Riley Murch, Justin Allen Pendrick, Hali Jean Race, Kevin J. Reidy, Ebony Ivory Shaughnessy, Elijah Cameron Smith, Dmitri Matthew Weise and Sophia Williams.

Granby

Maxwell Alan Anischik, Alexis Haziell Ariza, Irene Bouchard, Jordan Croteau, Kaila Deprey, Tyler Laramée, Paige Lynn Maziarz, Colleen Marie McLaughlin, Nicholas Tyler Menard, Karlie Bridget Moriarty, Thomas Nathan, Sam D. Ortensi, Declan James Otto, Jessica Annette Roy, Diana Swanigan, Amelia Jean Tocchio and Stephanie Danielle Willyard.





CAREER Education

HCC announces healthy cooking series for new year

If you’ve made a New Year’s resolution to eat healthier in 2024, Holyoke Community College might have just what you need.

The college is running a series of noncredit cooking classes this spring focused on diabetes but geared toward anyone interested in learning how to prepare healthier, more nutritious meals.

Classes in the “Nutrition for Diabetes” series run either on Tuesday or Wednesday nights beginning Feb. 7. All classes are held at the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute, 164 Race St., and taught by Marissa Chiapperino, a registered dietitian and instructor in HCC’s Culinary Arts program.

“Certain foods can lower your risk of heart disease and diabetes or help to manage it,” Chiapperino said. “Making healthy adjustments to your daily meal plan does not have to be hard or boring. Oftentimes, adding in sources of healthy fats, whole grains, and high fiber fruits and vegetables can boost flavor and decrease the risk of chronic disease.”

Each three-hour, stand-alone class will focus on a different theme. The first

hour will be an education session with Chiapperino, followed by a two-hour hands-on cooking activity after which participants can take home leftovers and recipes that align with the nutritional topic of the evening.

Wed., Feb. 7, 6-9 p.m.: “What is a carbohydrate?” (white bean egg shakshuka, breakfast casserole, overnight oats, vanilla bean pancakes, salmon toast)

Tues., March 5, 6-9 p.m.: “What is a protein?” (grilled skirt steak with chickpea salad, fideo, raspberry chicken, tahini-baked cod)

Wed., March 20, 6-9 p.m.: “What is a fat?” (smoothie bar, zucchini fritters, roasted chickpeas, cheesy egg souffles, Vietnamese spring rolls with peanut sauce)

Wed., April 17, 6-9 pm.: “How to read a food label” (grilled swordfish and pepper salad; chicken, lemon and olive bake; sweet potato berry muffins; easy breakfast salad; cheddar and herb savory overnight oats)

Tues., April 30, 6-9 p.m.: “What is a carbohydrate?” (desserts for diabetes:

chocolate date spread, oatmeal cookies, orange chamomile blondies, homemade popcorn four ways, caramelized spiced pears)

In addition, on Tues., April 2, from 6-9 p.m., Chiapperino will lead a similarly structured class on meal planning, “Building a balanced meal,” featuring chilled avocado and cucumber mint soup, eggplant and lentil meatballs, chili-stuffed spaghetti squash, kale and fava bean salad, and grain-free granola.

“Making dietary changes can feel overwhelming,” she said. “In this class, we will talk about how meal planning can make or break your ability to lead a more nourishing life with food. The concepts discussed will be suitable for those with many different health concerns and also those who just want to get more comfortable in the kitchen.”

Chiapperino holds a bachelor of science degree in dietetics from the State University of New York at Oneonta and a masters of public health from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. She specialized in medical nutrition therapy for critical care and oncology at West-



chester Medical Center in New York and was the first bariatric dietitian at Holyoke Medical Center, where she helped build their nutrition program.

She is a past president of the Western Massachusetts Dietetic Association and currently serves as executive secretary.

Each session is \$84. For more information, or to register for classes, please go to hcc.edu/healthy-cooking

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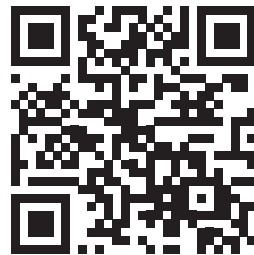
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HCSS proudly provides seven years of unparalleled college preparatory education for grades 6-12 students, paving the way for college admissions and a wealth of scholarship opportunities. College and Career Readiness at HCSS is a tailored process forging the best possible alignment between each distinctively talented student and the most suitable college or university for them. Students collaborate closely with their counselors to delve into their manifold talents and interests, set aspirations based on these insights, and identify colleges that align with their ambitions.

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• **University Partnerships and Dual Enrollment:** Engage in university outreach programs that offer dual enrollment opportunities, bridging the gap between high school and college.



• **Enhanced College-Prep Curriculum:** HCSS's amplified curriculum prepares students comprehensively for higher education.

• **Early SAT and PSAT Preparation:** To build a strong foundation, Rigorous SAT and PSAT training starting in 8th grade.

• **Comprehensive College and Career Guidance:** A thorough guidance program that starts as early as 6th grade, equipping students for future academic and career choices.

• **Experiential College Campus Visits:** Hands-on learning through college campus tours and informative sessions, providing real-world college experience.

viding real-world college experience.

• **Community-Driven Guest Speakers and Career Workshops:** Gain insights from guest speakers and partake in career workshops led by community professionals.

• **Consistently High College Acceptance Rates:** An impressive average college acceptance rate of 95% since 2014.

• **Substantial Scholarship Achievements:** More than \$51M in scholarships raised since 2014.

HCSS Curriculum Highlights:

• Project-Based Instruction and Con-

textual Learning: Engage in real-world problems and hands-on projects that bring learning to life.

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• **High-Level Academic Discussions:** Opportunities to improve critical listening, thinking, and analysis skills across all subjects.

• **Advanced Placement (AP) Opportunities:** Access 14 AP courses starting in 9th grade to challenge and elevate academic capabilities.

• **Early Honors Courses:** Availability of honors courses beginning in 7th grade for an academically accelerated path.

• **Inquiry-Driven Curriculum:** A focus on fostering inquiry, discovery, innovation, and collaboration in learning.

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CAREER Education

St. Michael's Academy to hold Open House

Are you looking for a school that educates each of its students as an individual? Are you looking for dedicated teachers who want their students to succeed? Are you looking for a school that combines faith with education in order to teach strong moral values, respect and kindness? Are you looking for a school with a structured environment that promotes learning?

Then we have a school for you!

St. Michael's Academy, located at 153 Eddywood Street in the East Forest Park section of Springfield, invites you to an Open House and Curriculum Fair on Sunday, Jan. 28, 2024. There will be a special presentation for prospective students and their families that will begin at noon. The event will include an information session, followed by a panel of students, teachers

and parents for questions and finish with a full school tour. The full school will be open to visitors with teachers in each of the classrooms to accommodate questions.

Attend the Open House and learn what St. Michael's Academy can offer your child. St. Michael's Academy is not just books and papers. The educational process strives to form the entire child academically, spiritually, physically and emotionally. The dedicated teaching faculty truly care about their students and want them to learn, grow and succeed. The final result is a graduate who is well prepared for high school, college and beyond. Each student takes with them a solid foundation for continued growth and achievement, having learned the value of respect, kindness and community service.

Unable to attend the Open House on January 28th? Simply call the Admissions Office at (413) 782-5246, ext. 1208 and schedule an informational session and tour.

St. Michael's Academy is located off of Plumtree Road in Springfield, directly behind Holy Cross Church. The Academy educates students from preschool 3 years old, through grade 8. It is the largest Catholic elementary school in Western Mass and the only Catholic elementary school in Springfield.



Apex Homecare of Western MA expands programs and staffing to meet growing needs in the elder care arena

Direct Support Professionals at Apex Homecare of Springfield provides home care aides to increase independence for the people with disabilities and seniors, every day.

Caregivers and students pursuing a degree in the healthcare field are encouraged to contact the agency to take advantage of Apex's Direct Support Professional (DSP's) training program. To attract top quality Aide's, the agency provides attractive benefits and a career path.

The direct care worker shortage is a global issue, stretching well beyond Massachusetts. In the U.S., 3 out of every 4 agency providers has a wait list for caregiving services. According to the Global Coalition on Aging Report, 70% of Americans who reach age 65 will need long-term services and support. If nothing changes, the report predicts there will be a national shortage of 151,000 care workers by 2030, and a 355,000-caregiver shortfall by 2040.

Pew Research states that one in four Americans live with a disability that interferes with activities of daily living and a recent national survey reports 90% of Americans age 50 and over want to 'age in place'.

To compound the situation, demand in the family caregiving market is increasing as well. Currently, 53 million Americans serve as family caregivers and the number is growing.

An Executive Order from the White House signed in April 2023 offers new



Direct care workers and students pursuing a degree in healthcare are encouraged to contact Apex.

resources to remedy the caregiver shortage crisis to meet increased need. It is the most sweeping set of executive actions to improve care in the nation's history and takes immediate action to enhance job quality for the direct care workforce. Like many of Apex's services, the Executive Order also provides resources for family caregivers that foster emotional well-being and stems the financial and health strain that caregiving has on a family.

About Apex Homecare

Apex provides a safe, compassionate and friendly atmosphere to enable the client to enjoy and maximize the excellence of life in the comfort of his or her home. If you or a loved one needs services, contact Cheryl Rumley RN at Apexhealth01@verizon.net. If you are seeking a career in the caregiving, disability or healthcare field, visit the Apex career page.



St. Michael's Academy

Attention Elementary School Teachers!

Looking for a rewarding teaching experience?

St. Michael's Academy will be hiring teachers for the 2024-2025 academic year.

Interested? Send your resume to a.dougal@smaspringfield.org.



Looking for a new school for your child?

Join us on Sunday, January 28th

at noon for an

Open House

Learn what St. Michael's Academy can offer YOUR child!

St. Michael's Academy, 153 Eddywood St., Springfield, MA
Check us out at smaspringfield.org



Apex Homecare

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CAREER Education

Come and see what great things are happening at St. Stanislaus

St. Stanislaus School in Chicopee is under the new leadership of Principal Katherine Rorrio, who fully appreciates the Franciscan values and long-standing traditions of the school. Mrs. Rorrio is a graduate of the school, was a teacher at the school for 20 years, and is now Principal.

This year the school's theme is "For it is in giving that we receive", an inspirational quote from St. Francis about the value of giving back. Students are focusing on a different Corporal Work of Mercy each month. Some of the Corporal Works of

Mercy that have been covered are - Feeding the Hungry and Working for Peace. The most recent Work of Mercy was Shelter the Homeless. Students and families collected 100 blankets, 50 hats, coats, and many undergarments that were donated to a local homeless shelter to help those in the community. Service projects are done throughout the year to help teach students the value of giving back.

The school will be holding an Open House on Sunday, Jan. 21 from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. (no appointment needed).

If you would like to schedule a private tour for another time, please call the school to schedule an appointment at (413) 592-5135.

St. Stanislaus School is a Roman Catholic, Franciscan, co-educational Pre-K through 8th grade school. Students are assisted in developing their potential spiritually, physically, and socially within a safe and diverse community. A foundation of academic excellence is created to prepare students to become contributing members of a global society. The school

has a welcoming Franciscan environment, modern air-conditioned facility, strong core curriculum, enrichment classes, certified faculty, full-day preschool (PreK3 and 4) and Kindergarten, free breakfast and hot lunch, before & after school program, and one to one use and integration of iPads and Chromebooks into curriculum. Financial Aid is available. Interested students are invited to "spend a day with us". To learn more please visit www.saintstansschool.org.

We can't wait to meet you!

ST. STANISLAUS SCHOOL

SERVANT LEADERS FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

OPEN HOUSE
SUNDAY, JAN. 21, 2024
11AM-1PM

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- Enrichment classes
- Certified faculty
- Full day Preschool & Kindergarten
- Free breakfast and hot lunch
- Before & After school program
- One to one use and integration of iPads & Chromebooks into curriculum

PREK - 8TH GRADE SCHOOL
PHYSICAL, SPIRITUAL, AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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Call us for more information and to schedule a tour. We welcome the opportunity for you to experience St. Stanislaus School! Interested students are invited to "spend a day with us."

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Please register for our Open House at www.macduffie.org or contact the Admissions Office at (413) 255-0000 to reserve your spot.

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KIRSY SEGARRA -
[KSEGARRA@GANDARACENTER.ORG](mailto:ksegarra@gandaracenter.org)

↓ ↓ ↓

LUIS COLON -
[LCOLON@GANDARACENTER.ORG](mailto:lcolon@gandaracenter.org)



CAREER Education

Explore the difference at St. Joan of Arc School

Explore the difference at St. Joan of Arc School in Chicopee! Lively Letters and OSMO Tangible Play programs have been added to our PreK and Kindergarten programs. Lexia, a phonics instruction that gives students independent practice in basic reading skills, is now offered to Kindergarten through Grade 8 students. And a Robotics Curriculum is coming soon for our 8th graders.

The school will be holding an Open House on Saturday, Jan. 27 from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. (no appointment needed). Appointment only tours for families will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 30 and Thursday, Feb. 1 from 3 p.m. – 7 p.m. Please call Chris or Janine in the Business Office at 536-6038 for registration information or to make

an appointment.

St. Joan of Arc is a welcoming, safe and secure school community providing social, physical, spiritual & intellectual wellness for students in Pre-K 3 to Grade 8. SJA has innovative offerings that include affordable tuition and extended care, free breakfast and lunch, extracurricular programs to include Chess, Book and Lego Clubs, as well as a Performing Arts Club. Computer fundamentals with intro to computer science, music, library, and Duolingo language classes are also offered. Located at 587 Grattan St., Chicopee offers easy access to I391 & I90. Financial aid and tuition assistance is available. To learn more visit www.sjachicopee.org.

We look forward to meeting you!

St. Joan of Arc School ~ Pre-K to Grade 8
 587 Grattan Street, Chicopee ~ 533-1475 ~ sjachicopee.org
Learning Rooted in Christian Values

OPEN HOUSE

Saturday, January 27th 9am-12 noon
No Appointment Needed

January 30th & February 1st 3pm-7pm
By Appointment Only



- Affordable Tuition & Extended Care
- Free Breakfast & Lunch
- Extracurricular Programs
- Technology ~ Phys. Ed
- Music ~ Library ~ Duolingo

- Welcoming, Safe & Secure School Community
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- Easy Access to I-391 & I-90
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The Town of Huntington is seeking an **INTERIM TOWN CLERK**. This is a salaried position for approximately 18 hours per week. Application and complete job description are available online at www.huntingtonma.us or by emailing admin@huntingtonma.us. Applications are due by January 26, 2024. Town of Huntington is an Equal Opportunity Employer

HELP WANTED

TOWN OF WILBRAHAM
P/T ADMINISTRATIVE CLERK - ASSESSORS

Looking for a reliable P/T Administrative Clerk for our Assessor's Office. For application and more information please visit www.wilbraham-ma.gov. Open until filled. EOE

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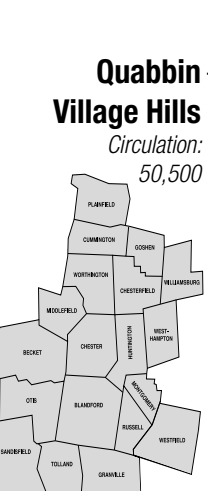
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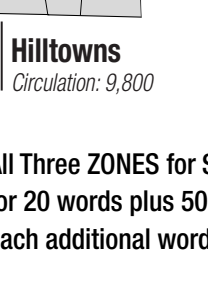
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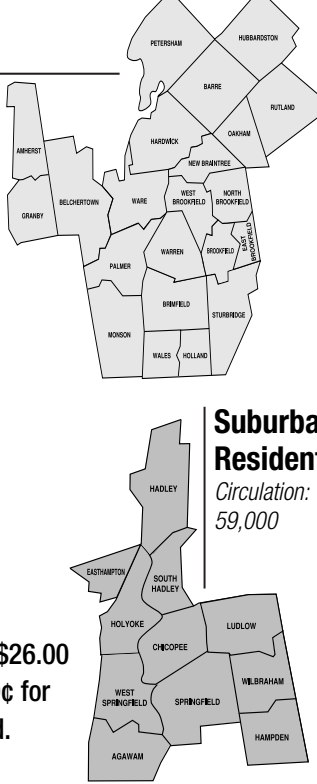
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Legislators help launch Browse Borrow Board in region

SPRINGFIELD – State Senator Jake Oliveira (Hampden, Hampshire & Worcester District) joined his colleagues in the Western Mass Delegation, representatives from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority, and the Massachusetts Public Library System to launch the Browse Borrow Board Program in the Pioneer Valley.

Browse Borrow Board will bring MassDOT and PVTa riders the opportunity to browse digital audiobooks, eBooks, newspapers, and magazines while waiting for their bus to arrive before borrowing and enjoying their reading materials on the go. The program was made possible through Oliveira's fiscal year 2024 budget amendment that increased state aid to regional public libraries by \$750,000.

For Oliveira, the program extends far beyond what riders can access.

"Like our public libraries, Browse Borrow Board is about more than just books. The program is a reflection of the values of equity, inclusivity, and accessibility upheld by our public libraries across the state. I'm thrilled to see the program expanded across the Commonwealth from Boston to the PVTa and to our regional transit authorities to provide the regional equity we strive for in the Legislature," Oliveira said in a press release.

Oliveira went on to thank his colleagues in the legislature, the PVTa, and the Mass Library System for making the expansion possible.

"I want to thank the partners in this who have joined me today and were instrumental in making Browse Borrow Board a reality, Senator Adam Gomez and State Representative Carlos Gonzalez, as well as our partners at the Massachusetts Library System, the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority, and the Boston Public Library," he said.

Senator Adam Gomez (Hampden District) was grateful to Oliveira and expressed excitement about the potential of further expanding the program through the upcoming West-East Rail.

"Launching the Browse Borrow Board program at Union Station with Mass Library,

MassDOT, and the PVTa is exactly the kind of engagement we as legislators want to partake in," said Gomez. "This pilot program, coupled with PVTa's Try Transit program, can entice families to browse digital audiobooks and eBooks while riding the bus. I look forward to seeing this program succeed and entertaining its viability down the line when East-West Rail is up and running."

Also on hand were PVTa Administrator Sandra E. Sheehan and the Executive Director of the Massachusetts Library System, Sarah Sogigian.

"We are happy to join the Browse Borrow Board program that brings riders a vast assortment of reading options to ride the bus with an enjoyable read. Browse Borrow Board makes it as easy as one, two, three," said Sheehan.

Browse Borrow Board strives to promote literacy, local libraries, and public transportation. The program is multilingual and provides riders of all ages and backgrounds the opportunity to browse digital audiobooks, eBooks, newspapers, and magazines while waiting for their bus to arrive and enjoying their reading materials on the go.

No library card is needed to access the collection. It's free and very easy to use. Just scan the QR code, create an account, and start browsing.

Browse Borrow Board's primary goal is to reach riders who may not already be familiar with the library's offerings.

Library cards are not required to use this service. The program gives riders access to books, magazines, and other material through QR code links and doesn't need an app.

The program builds on efforts to make public transportation more enjoyable while also connecting residents to the resources the Boston Public Library offers.

Since the start of the program in Boston, there have been a total of 4,145 QR scans, including 3,829 unique scans. 1,371 people have created accounts since March, and some of the most checked-out items are those in Spanish and Portuguese.

The top rented item is "La Ladrona de Libros" (The Book Thief).

Baystate Wing honors Gift Shop and Auxiliary volunteer

Estelle Carbonneau recognized for 14 Years of Service

PALMER – Estelle Carbonneau was recently recognized for her many years of service as a member of the Baystate Wing Auxiliary and volunteer in the hospital's gift shop.

"We are grateful for the many years of service Estelle has given to the gift shop and Auxiliary," said Evelyn Glabicky, president of the Auxiliary at Baystate Wing Hospital in a press release. "She has served in many roles as the manager of the gift shop, helping with purchasing merchandise, and training new volunteers. Generously giving of herself and her time has been a way of life for Estelle and her connection to our hospital has always been extra special. A committed volunteer and member of our Auxiliary for 14 years, she now serves as trustee of the organization."

Auxiliary members and volunteers help in several areas of the hospital including greeting and transporting patients as needed, welcoming patients, families and visitors arriving for appointments, providing directions for visitors on campus, operating the gift shop, and volunteering on the Med/Surg unit.

"Volunteers are extraordinary people who want to contribute to the greater good," said Becky George, manager of volunteer services for Baystate Health. "We have several opportunities open for individuals to share their talents and skills to support and assist our staff in creating wonderful experiences for our patients. Every hour and every minute that our volunteers serve makes a difference in the lives of our patients, families, and our team."

Volunteers are currently being sought to fill positions in various departments,



ESTELLE CARBONNEAU, left, is shown with Evelyn Glabicky, president of the Auxiliary at Baystate Wing Hospital.

including greeters, patient-care areas, and the gift shop. Duties will vary depending on the volunteers' interests and the needs of the hospital.

"During their service at Baystate Wing Hospital, we want to ensure that all of our volunteers are doing something that they enjoy," said George.

The Volunteer Services program is open to anyone interested in giving back to their community. All potential volunteers must be age 16 or older and complete a volunteer application, submit to and pass a background check, and meet all vaccination requirements.

The program is an ideal opportunity for seniors and young adults who wish to volunteer in a healthcare setting. Volunteers will receive training and support and can receive credit for school (if they require it) and grow personally through service to others.

For more information or to fill out an application online, visit www.baystate-health.org/about-us/volunteer or call Becky George at 413-370-5295.

PUBLIC NOTICES

Public Hearing Special Permit Legal Notice Belchertown Planning Board

In accordance with the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40A, Sections 9 and 11, and pursuant to the Town of Belchertown Chapter 145-29.2 and 145-69, the Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing to discuss a special permit proposed by Kalyx, LLC., One Monarch Place, Suite 730, Springfield, MA 01144 for a proposal to place a Non-medical Marijuana Establishment at 125 North Main Street, Belchertown, MA 01007, Map 238, Lot 183, owner: Colvest/Belchertown, LLC.

Place: Belchertown Town Hall, 2 Jabish Street, Belchertown, MA

Date: January 23, 2024
Time: 7:00 pm
Remote access information:

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

<https://meet.goto.com/173538941>

You can also dial in using your phone.

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The application is available for inspection during regular business hours at the Town Clerk and Planning Board office, 2 Jabish Street

Daniel Beaudette, Chair
Belchertown Planning Board
01/04, 01/11/2024

Please check the accuracy of your legal notice prior to submission (i.e., date, time, spelling). Also, be sure the requested publication date coincides with the purpose of the notice, or as the law demands. Thank you.



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NEWS & FEATURES

As a paper of record, we attempt to cover all general news, personality profiles, and community features that we know about. This includes all selectmen and school committee meetings as well as spot planning board, board of health, finance, and other town meetings determined by the issue's relevance to our readers. There are the annual major community event features that we should always cover, but we are more than open to suggestions of other features to celebrate the fabric of our communities and their many interesting occupants. Our loyal advertisers provide funding for this paid staff coverage.

For more information on news or community features for The Sentinel, please email sentinel@turley.com.

TURLEY PUBLICATION
www.turley.com

The Sentinel
OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$225, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.

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PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

- 1 Email all notices to notices@turley.com
- 2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.
- 3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts' public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

*Public notice deadlines are Mondays at noon,
Fridays noon for Monday holidays.*

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

High levels of radon gas detected in 21.8% of Massachusetts homes

Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer, and the “State of Lung Cancer” report reveals that it is detected at high levels in about 21.8% of homes in Massachusetts.

During January for National Radon Action Month, the American Lung Association in Massachusetts is urging everyone to help save lives by testing their home for radon and mitigating if high levels are detected.

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas emitted from the ground. Radon is odorless, tasteless and colorless, and can enter a home through cracks in floors,

basement walls, foundations and other openings.

Radon can be present at high levels inside homes, schools and other buildings. It is responsible for an estimated 21,000 lung cancer deaths every year and is the leading cause of lung cancer in people who have never smoked.

Here in Massachusetts about 21.8% of radon test results equal or exceed the Environmental Protection Agency action level of 4 pCi/L, according to the Lung Association’s “State of Lung Cancer” report.

“Radon in homes is more common than

you think. In fact, high levels of radioactive radon gas have been found in every state but most places in the country remain undertested, so this isn’t something that should be taken lightly. Exposure to radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States,” said Daniel Fitzgerald, director of advocacy for the Lung Association in a press release. “Testing for radon is the only way to know if the air in your home is safe. The good news is that it is easy to test. Do-it-yourself test kits are simple to use and inexpensive.”

After high levels are detected, a radon professional should install a radon mitiga-

tion system, which is easy and relatively affordable. A typical radon mitigation system consists of a vent pipe, fan and properly sealing cracks and other openings.

This system collects radon gas from underneath the foundation and vents it to the outside. Contact your state radon program for a list of certified professionals in your state. Some state health departments offer financial assistance or low interest loans for radon mitigation.

Learn more about radon testing and mitigation at Lung.org/radon and take the Lung Association’s free Radon Basics course at Lung.org/Radon-Basics.



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CONTACT

-  413-687-1387
-  apalanoimpact@outlook.com
-  www.quabbinhealthdistrict.com
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ABOUT US:

THE INNOVATIVE, MULTI-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS FOR COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION (IMPACT) IN PUBLIC HEALTH, LAUNCHED IN 2022, SUPPORTS PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN GOVERNMENTAL PRIVATE HEALTH DEPARTMENTS AND THE PUBLIC SECTOR.

PARTNERSHIP TEAM:

QUABBIN HEALTH DISTRICT
TOWN OF WARE
QUABBIN WIRE AND CABLE CO., INC
QUABOAG VALLEY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
QUABOAG HILLS SUBSTANCE USE ALLIANCE
HEALTHY QUABOAG

ACTION ITEMS:

OUTREACH/AWARENESS OF RESOURCES
INCREASE WORKPLACE WELLNESS/RECOVERY SUPPORTIVE WORKPLACE PROGRAMS/POLICIES/PRACTICES
IMPROVE ACCESS TO PROVIDERS AND PRESCRIBERS (MEDICAL, DENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH)

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JOIN US AROUND THE TABLE AND HAVE YOUR VOICE HEARD! WE ARE LOOKING FOR:

Legislators; Health systems; Senior Centers; Providers; Childcare Centers; Faith Communities; Residents with lived experience; Local Businesses and Civic Associations; Schools; VAs; and more!

