

## Its Girl Scout cookie season in Belchertown

By Emily-Rose Pappas  
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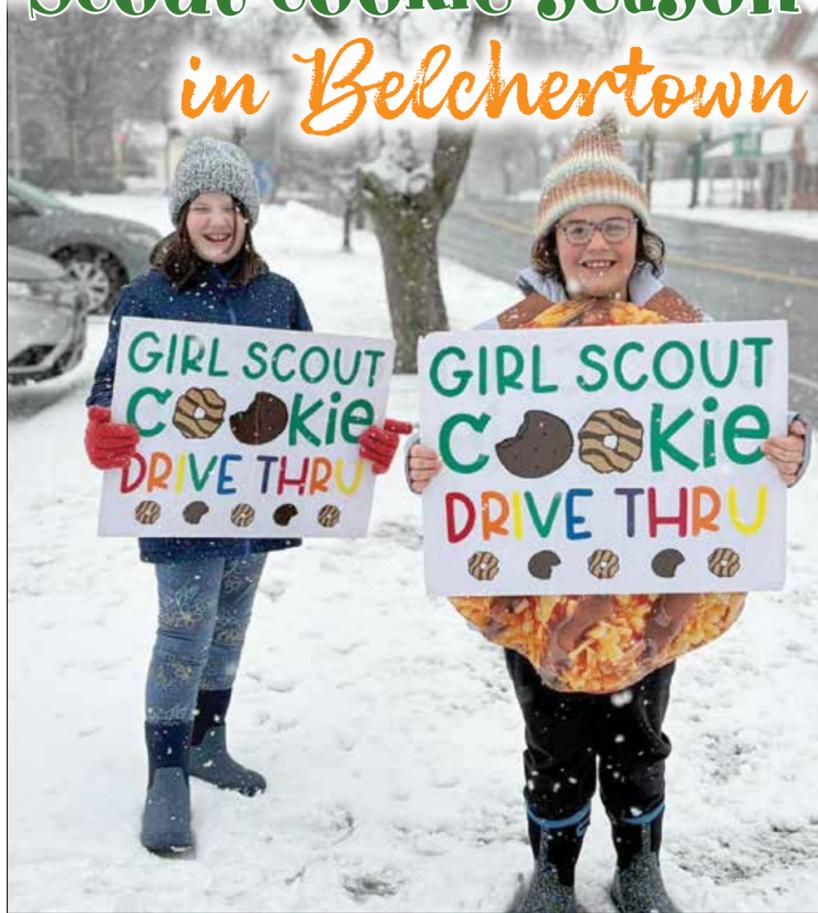
BELCHERTOWN – Girl Scout Cookie season has returned around the nation, and it is the perfect time to grab some cookies, support your local scouts, and have the perfect treat.

The first two weekends of cookie sales for the Belchertown Girl Scouts, and many other troops from all over were interrupted by the snow, but not stopped as they looked to sell their cookies and raise money to reach their goals.

“I think my troop inspires me in their acceptance. We have a lot of kids from different backgrounds and experiences, and the troop just brings them in. The troop is really accepting and helpful to every kid at every level,” said Troop leader Heidi Gutekenst. “Everybody helps everybody out, and they get along really well.”

The Girl Scouts are excited to share their new cookie this year, the ExploreMors, which is inspired by Rocky

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page 3



Harper Oberly and Evelyn Maldanis selling cookies on a snowy day for their drive-thru.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

## Learning to save lives with CPR

By Emily-Rose Pappas  
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BELCHERTOWN – The Clapp Memorial Library hosted the American Red Cross Association to host a CPR Class for people to come and learn about how to save people's lives.

Members of the American Red Cross Association, Jeff Peterson and Julie Kraus, came to the Town Hall Auditorium to teach a group of people how to perform CPR, including the basics of three checks, body position, and rhythm, and how to give chest compressions.

Bob Crowley, the lead instructor from the Red Cross, sets up the classes and informational presentations about CPR for the public, and works to coordinate and teach Community Preparedness Programs, beginning with the Red Cross as an instructor for First Aid, CPR-AED, and Wilderness First Aid in 2008. From there, he transitioned to teaching Disaster Cycle Services and hands-only CPR in 2022.

“You never know when you'll need to save someone's life,” said Peterson. “Learning this now can turn you from a bystander to a savior.”

The hands-only CPR lesson was sponsored by the American Red Cross, and several people came to learn the life-saving art of hands-only CPR.

“I have had a student tell me they actually used CPR to help someone who collapsed on the side of the street. The person survived. Being able to give people the skill and confidence to act is amazing,” said Crowley. “The more people that are exposed to the skill set, the better the outcome will be for people experiencing cardiac arrest.”

The lessons taught people not only about the beat to keep the heart pumping that is needed for chest compressions, but also about how to maintain rhythm, speed, and position your body over the person so that you are in line directly above them.

“The first and possibly the hardest thing to do

Please see **CPR**, page 5

## The Granby Free Public Library looks forward to a new year

By Emily-Rose Pappas  
Staff Writer  
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GRANBY – The new year is here, and with January almost over, people are in the swing of their New Year's resolutions, and the local libraries are getting ready and excited for their new pro-

grams, events, and so much more for the community to enjoy.

The Granby Free Public Library is looking forward to the new year and the opportunities it will provide to come up with new and exciting events, and so much more.

“In 2026, we are work-

ing toward writing our next Strategic Plan for the future of our Library, so we will be hosting public focus groups and sending out surveys for people to answer to have a say in what the plans are,” said Director Jenn Crosby. “We just really want to know what people want to get out of their community

“I'm excited to see what is to come.”

– Jenn Crosby

library space and how we can help them grow, learn, and evolve.”

The library hosted many new events in 2025, includ-

ing Astronomy Night, and is looking forward to supporting new programming and hosting more events like watercolor basics workshops, needle felting classes, family game days, and continuing its Tabletop Games Club, as well as creating and hosting many more new, fun, and engaging workshops, clubs,

and programs.

“Serving as the Director of the Library has always been a great joy of mine. I take a lot of pride in knowing that I can help our community learn and grow with the work that I do. Now more than ever,

Please see **LIBRARY**,  
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## The community shares the joy of a snowstorm



SEE MORE  
SNOWSTORM  
PHOTOS ON  
PAGE 2.



“Mom, its so cold!”



To dogs enjoying the cold and the snow- maybe a bit too much!

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Marilyn Morino trying out her snowshoes for the first time.



The Aurora tracing across the tree line with greens and pinks. (Debbie Moran)

## Belchertown admires the Aurora Borealis

BELCHERTOWN – The town admired and loved the views of the Aurora Borealis, the Northern Lights, as they danced across the skies, visible on January 19 and 20 in the evenings. Many residents took photos, and shared them on the town's Facebook page. Here's a few to look at and enjoy.

The beautiful rays of pink and purple arcing across the sky. (Suzanne M. Provost)



A beautiful view of the Aurora Borealis through the trees. (Michelle Jenks Garrow)

# There's SNOW place like home



When life gives you snow, you make snow cones! Well, minus the cone.



The biggest snowman, ever!

SUBMITTED PHOTOS



Two girls laughing as the snow drifts reach their height.



An epic wipeout from the sled and into the snow drifts.



A stunning capture of a bluejay in the snow.



Plowing a driveway in style.

LEFT: This little piggy liked to tunnel in the snow.



The Clapp Memorial Library shrouded with snow.



The snow coming down on the farm.

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COMMUNITY

# TM's quarterly update recognizes town's financial stewardship

By Melina Bourdeau  
Correspondent

BELCHERTOWN —The Select Board heard Town Manager Steve Williams and department heads detailing the town's progress and persistent challenges as they advance economic development, public safety, and long-term fiscal health.

Belchertown's town manager presented an ambitious progress report on goals and objectives to the Select Board, highlighting successful grant funding, major capital projects, and ongoing budget and staffing challenges during a long-range planning update.

"Some of the key accomplishments that we highlighted are the pathway release, infrastructure work at Sports Haven, hiring the grant manager, addressing the health insurance deficit," Williams summarized during the first part of his report.

The discussion highlighted accomplishments in economic development, grant-writing, and infrastructure, while calling attention to ongoing risks posed by budget constraints and recruit-

ment difficulties. Members and Williams reflected on department-by-department achievements and identified issues the town must tackle to ensure continued progress in the coming years.

The update began with an executive summary. "There's been notable progress across economic development, public safety, communications, human resources, and fiscal planning," Williams said. "We've been very successful in securing competitive grants. We have money to support the zoning review. You know that one grant encompassed about three or four different items on our goals and objectives, so that was huge for us."

The accomplishments noted included a marketing grant, improvements to ADA compliance in public buildings, the town's Complete Streets grant, and ongoing progress with capital projects for the fire department, town beach, and recreational fields.

"We've also been advancing many capital projects, such as the fire department facilities, the town beach improvements, and recre-

**"There's been notable progress across economic development, public safety, communications, human resources, and fiscal planning."**

— Steven Williams  
Town Manager

ational fields. We've been working on public safety planning, milestones, communications, accessibility initiatives, and the implementation of the DLS recommendations," Williams said.

Williams praised the "unbelievable work" of town employees and interdepartmental cooperation. "I can't express how proud I am of the people I work with and how hard they've been working to move these initiatives forward. In spite of sometimes an overwhelming workload, they all keep their heads up and keep positive attitudes. Any successes that have been outlined here tonight are direct results," he said.

Select Board Chair Lisa Lessard Pearson echoed the sentiment.

"What was clear to me is that all of the departments

embraced these goals, and each department, depending on their expertise, helped move the goals forward in a way that is tangible,"

she said. "You can see it, and that's kudos to you as our town manager, and to everyone that works in town government, pretty impressive, Steve."

Despite positive momentum, Williams acknowledged significant hurdles.

Current challenges range from the looming "grim" FY27 budget process, collective bargaining with three unions, filling a key Conservation Administrator post, and adapting to health insurance cost pressures.

Looking ahead, Williams flagged personnel turnover and funding needs for critical management positions, including a Deputy Fire Chief and additional HR support.

"I'm concerned that we're going to be able to fund any of these higher-level posi-

tions, so I think we're going to have more conversations about that for the budget," he said.

Williams is seeking creative solutions and potential grant opportunities to address these needs. "We've talked about our finance director, we've talked about the Deputy Fire Chief, second lieutenant position at the police department. So we have ideas on what these things would cost the town," he explained.

The board highlighted the importance of public transparency—especially in tax communication, after recent confusion among residents.

As Belchertown enters the next quarter, Williams said the town is "positioned to maintain momentum or prioritizing high impact initiative, leveraging grant consultant resources, aligning policy decisions, [and] long-term fiscal sustainability."

He closed by thanking staff and board members for their support: "Any successes that have been outlined here tonight are direct results of our employees."

## Local student Kayleigh Olszewski receives national honor

BHS student recognized for superior academic achievement by the National Society of High School Scholars

BELCHERTOWN / ATLANTA, GA — The National Society of High School Scholars (NSHSS) today announced student Kayleigh Olszewski from Belchertown, MA, has been selected to become a member of the esteemed organization. The Society recognizes top scholars who have demonstrated outstanding leadership, scholarship, and community commitment. The announcement was made by NSHSS Co-founder and President James W. Lewis.

"On behalf of NSHSS and our co-founder Claes Nobel, a member of the family that established the Nobel Prizes,

I am honored to recognize the hard work, passion, and commitment that Kayleigh has demonstrated to achieve this exceptional level of academic excellence," said Lewis. "Kayleigh is now a member of a unique community of scholars— a community that represents our very best hope for the future."

"We are proud to provide a lifetime membership to young scholars to support their growth and development," stated Lewis. "We help students like Kayleigh build on their academic success by connecting them with learning experiences and resources to help prepare them for college and meaningful careers."

NSHSS members automatically become lifetime members at the time of their initial membership. Each step along the way - from high school to college to career - NSHSS connects outstanding young scholars with the resources they need to develop their

strengths and pursue their passions.

### About the National Society of High School Scholars

Formed in 2002 by James W. Lewis and Claes Nobel, a member of the family that established the Nobel Prizes, the National Society of High School Scholars recognizes academic excellence at the high school level and helps to advance the goals and aspirations of high-achieving students through unique learning experiences, scholarships, internships, international study, and peer networks. Currently, there are more than two million members in over 170 countries. To help us further efforts that provide students with continued opportunity, please acknowledge NSHSS in any press release mentions by providing a resource link to [www.nshnn.org](http://www.nshnn.org). For more information about NSHSS, visit [www.nshss.org](http://www.nshss.org).

### COOKIES from page 1

Road ice cream. The new cookie is described in flavors by the troops and their leaders to taste almost like a chocolate graham cracker, but with a "retro chocolate flavor" that reminds one of their childhood and has a nostalgic taste.

The other, classic flavors of cookies are still here, including Thin Mints, Samoas, or Caramel Delights, Trefoils, Tagalongs, and more. The Girl Scouts have also created a special gluten-free cookie, Toffee Tastic.

If you can't eat cookies or don't want them, you can optionally purchase cookies to donate to the military, where the Girl Scouts bring boxes of cookies to Westover Air Base to be enjoyed by the men and women serving there.

In the past, the troops have also donated to the police and fire stations, the Senior Center, Veterans' Department, the Town Hall, and the various food pantries and scattered pantry boxes around town.

The ages of the scouts in the troop range from first-

grade Daisy Girl Scouts to eleventh-grade Senior Girl Scouts. But that doesn't stop the Scouts from working together and learning from one another.

"What we'll do is we'll have my older scouts orchestrate things, like a game, to help the younger ones work on something. We try to organize things so that everyone is working on a different badge," said Gutekenst.

This year, the Troop is looking forward to a camping trip with the other Belchertown Girl Scout Troops, seven in total, to the Lewis Perkins campground in South Hadley, where they are planning to learn about animals and host a traveling petting zoo, as well as a dog training business.

Another fun event includes working on the detective badge: they will spend the night, take a tour of the police station, and end the night with a fun murder-mystery game after dinner.

Each scout has their own personal goal for what to sell for the cookies, but there is no specific amount they have to sell. They also

have the opportunity to win prizes based off how much they sell, like t-shirts, water bottles, stuffed animals, and more.

"I want everyone to just do their best, and sell what they want to sell, and what they can. Someone who has a goal of 50 boxes is just as important to me as someone with a goal of a 1,000 boxes," said Gutekenst.

The Belchertown Girl Scouts are a dedicated bunch, and you can find them for various cookie booths from now until the end of February and early March, and can find their booths through the Cookie Finder website, which also shows other troops in neighboring towns, at [www.gscwm.org](http://www.gscwm.org), under "Find Cookies."

"I want the town to know that Girl Scouts is an awesome opportunity for kids in town to get to be able to do things that are important to them," said Gutekenst.

Cookie season is short, so get your cookies while you can, and support a troop of dedicated young people and their mission to make the world a better place.

## Open positions for May Belchertown town elections

BELCHERTOWN — The town election is coming up in May, and there are several positions available to run for across many boards and committees in town.

- Board of Assessors - 1 seat open with a 2-year term
- Board of Assessors - 1 seat open with

- a 3-year term
- Board of Health - 2 seats open with 3-year terms each
- Housing Authority - 1 seat open with a 4-year term
- Moderator - 1 seat open with a 3-year term
- Planning Board - 1 seat open with a 3-year term

- School Committee - 2 seats open with 3-year terms each
- Select Board - 1 seat open with a 3-year term

Nomination papers are now available in the Town Clerk's office and are due back by 5 p.m. on March 30, 2026.

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**COMMUNITY**

# Health insurance update includes plan comparison

By Melina Bourdeau  
Correspondent

**BELCHERTOWN** — Facing rising costs and continued uncertainty, Town Manager Steve Williams told the Select Board that the town is soliciting new bids for its employee health insurance ahead of a likely increase in premiums for the upcoming fiscal year.

The move marks a proactive step as Belchertown leaders weigh stability, employee needs, and budgeting challenges before finalizing coverage in the coming months.

Williams said that the town is not yet committed to changing its longtime insurer but is seeking proposals to ensure the best possible terms for employees and taxpayers.

“We did receive our claims history from New Hampshire

County Group Insurance Trust. Joanne has been working with our broker to get an RFP out. The RFP should be out this week. We’re going to be looking for plan options that include an apples-to-apples plan design, what we currently have at the trust,” Williams said.

Williams explained that alternate plans with deductibles or different benefit levels will also be considered.

“We’re also going to be looking for plans that have deductibles and different benefit limits to see where things come in. We should have the RFPs received by the first week of February, and we’re hoping to have all the results compiled and ready for discussions by the end of February,” he told the board.

The town’s current insurance is provided by the

Hampshire County Group Insurance Trust, a cooperative with member towns throughout the region. While Williams called the trust’s plan “still a very good program,” he acknowledged concerns about long-term stability.

“There’s obviously concerns about stability. They’ve been working with a consultant. We are starting to see some indication that they’re going in a good direction. So that’s still on the table as well. Nothing says we pull ourselves out of here,” he said.

Williams said that any decision will consider both cost and the impact on employee coverage. “We know that the trust is going to be looking for increases this upcoming fiscal year. I think it’s very important that

we have a comparison, yeah, so that even if we stay with the trust ... we at least say we’ve done our homework. We know that it was very marginal, if any savings with GIC and it would have been a huge impact on planned benefits, so it just really didn’t seem to make sense to follow that path,” Williams said.

Board members and Williams also emphasized transparency for employees during the process. Williams praised staff for their work navigating the proposals.

“(HR Director Joanne Cleveland)’s been working incredibly hard on this. Not only does she attend the insurance advisory committee meetings, but she’s also part of the executive committee, so she’s held duty on meetings with the trust. So, I’m sure she’s going to be

happy we get some stability,” Williams said.

The town expects to review all options and present them to the board for final decision-making by the end of February. With budget pressures mounting and regional insurance trends uncertain, Williams said, “Things are progressing. That’s really a message tonight, is that we’re finally starting to get to the point where we’re going to have something to work with, which is good because we’re heading into the budget season.”

As Belchertown prepares to set its fiscal year 2027 budget, the board intends to weigh cost savings against employee needs and coverage stability before selecting its health insurance plan for the coming year.

## Kindergarten registration now open

**BELCHERTOWN** — If you are a resident of Belchertown with a child who will be 5 years of age on or before September 1, 2026, you are encouraged to contact Christina Aponte via email: [caponte@belchertownps.org](mailto:caponte@belchertownps.org) or by phone at 413-323-0423, Ext. 100 to receive instructions regarding registration for the upcoming 2026-2027 school year.

## A reminder to return your Town Census ASAP

**BELCHERTOWN** — From the Belchertown Town Clerk: “Please try to return your census as soon as possible. You can drop them in the drop box here at the Town Hall, 24/7. By maintaining an accurate count of residents, it helps the town to receive as much funding from the State/Federal funds as possible. If we don’t have an accurate count, we could be leaving money on the table.”

The Town Hall is located at 2 Jabish Street. The box is located at the top of the steps/top of the ramp at the left-hand door at the back of the building (adjacent to the parking lot).

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## Death by Cupcake!

**BELCHERTOWN** — The Belchertown Historical Association is holding its annual murder mystery dinner on Saturday, February 7, at Tony and Penny’s Restaurant in Ludlow. The show will begin at 6:30 p.m., followed by the dinner buffet at 7 p.m. Guests can arrive as early as 6 p.m.



This year’s show, written by Paula Hilton, is entitled: Death by Cupcake. We look forward, as always, to the hilarious antics of the BUCC Players from the Belchertown United

Church of Christ. Plan a night out of dinner and entertainment while supporting our historical association, the United Church of Christ, Belchertown, and a favorite local restaurant business.

The tickets are \$47 each and include the show, dinner, and dessert. There will be a cash bar. Tickets are

available at Cold Spring Discount Liquors (on the Belchertown Common) or by contacting Sally Shattuck at 413-230-2022 or [sallyshattuck54@gmail.com](mailto:sallyshattuck54@gmail.com).

## Community invited to Belchertown drinking water listening session

**BELCHERTOWN** — The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC), in collaboration with the Belchertown Water District and the Town of Belchertown, invites residents, business owners, and community members to a Community Listening & Information Session on Drinking Water on Thursday, January 29, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Belchertown Senior Center, 60 State Street, Belchertown.

The session will provide an opportunity for the public to learn about Belchertown’s water supply, including both the public drinking water system and private wells. Attendees will be able to share concerns, ask questions, and hear updates from Kevin

Williams, Superintendent of the Belchertown Water District, and Andrea Crete, Director of Public Health for the Quabbin Health District.

“This listening session is about communication and collaboration,” said Patty Gambarini, Chief Environmental Planner at the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission. “We want to hear from residents and business owners about their experiences and priorities around drinking water so that local and regional planning can best reflect the needs of the Belchertown community.”

Topics will include Belchertown’s public water system, where drinking water comes from, and factors to consider for maintaining a safe drinking water supply.

Residents are encouraged to submit questions in advance by emailing Becky Basch at [bbasch@pvpc.org](mailto:bbasch@pvpc.org) with “Belchertown Drinking Water” in the subject line.

Pizza and beverages will be provided. While registration is not required, it will help PVPC plan for food and materials. The first 10 people to register will receive a \$25 gift card. Registration is available online at <https://tinyurl.com/BelchertownDW>.

The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission is the regional planning agency serving 43 cities and towns across the Pioneer Valley. PVPC works with communities to support sustainable growth, safe water systems, and informed public engagement throughout Western Massachusetts.

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Attendees of the CPR Class learning how to keep rhythm, pressure, and hold position over the body.

**CPR** from page 1

is to make sure the scene is safe before acting. Rushing to help someone could put you in danger. Victims do not need another victim by their side; they need a helpful responder. It could be simple, and someone walking down the street could collapse into the roadway. You getting hit by a car is not helpful," said Crowley.

Peterson and Kraus gave the attendees a small Styrofoam ambulance that helped to teach how to apply compressions. By keeping

the ambulance on all four wheels, the attendees of the class knew they were keeping their arms and compressions straight.

"Giving CPR is important, but what we need on the scene is an AED and skilled responders, such as EMTs," said Crowley. "Simply recognizing that it is an emergency and calling 911 is the most important thing you can do. That quick response makes a huge difference."

The hands-only CPR class was a great success, as people left with a newfound knowledge of how to save a life.



Kids getting to learn how to save lives, too.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY EMILY-ROSE PAPPAS



Kraus uses a squishy ambulance to teach about how to make sure your compressions are even, your arms are straight, and to be able to feel how deep your compressions are.

**LIBRARY** from page 1

access to information is so important. Our community deserves a beautiful space to meet up, learn, and thrive in what is important to them," said Crosby.

Crosby and her team of librarians are dedicated to making the library a home for all members of the community; a place to explore, learn, laugh, grow, relax, and enjoy.

"I want patrons to know that I am accessible, friendly, and always love a good book chat! I love receiving feedback about what materials to get, which programs people want to attend, and just honestly want to know what's on people's minds. Tell me what is important to you in Granby," said Crosby.

The library has welcomed many new staff members this year and is looking forward to what other new experiences and people will come through their doors.

New staff include Andi, the Children's Librarian, who is looking forward to the revamped and special Children's Summer Reading Program coming this year. Wenny, the new Cataloger and Circulation Assistant, began a Sci/Fi and Fantasy book club, which is going well, and Griffin has also joined the circulation desk.

"My all-time favorite part of my job is getting to research and order all the new books. Nothing beats that new book smell and feel," said Crosby. "I then love getting to share those new items with our patrons and see how excited they get, especially when I know exactly who would like each one. Getting excited with others about books brings me so much joy!"

The library is a wonder-



The library began their Board Game Club in 2025, and it's still going strong.



Library director Jenn Crosby with a book.

ful place and provides the community with many new opportunities to learn, grow,

and have fun. "I'm excited to see what is to come," said Crosby.

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## OPINION

SOCIAL SECURITY  
*Matters*

By Russell Gloor

Claiming Social Security  
early and investing it

Dear Rusty:

I am a 63-year-old single lady and I have questions regarding Social Security "early retirement," though I will still be working full time.

I know there is a maximum allowable income limit and, if I exceed that, I will need to return probably 2/3 of my received Social Security benefit. I'm thinking about taking those early SS benefits about \$1,400 per month and putting them in my high yield savings or CD where I can gain the interest on it and have it stay "liquid" so I can return what I need to.

My current interest rate is 3.65% on the savings and over 4.25% on CD, with options for 3,6,9 mos. or longer - but I want to be able to access the money to pay Social Security back at the end of the year. Can you advise me on this?

Signed: Still Working  
but Wondering

Dear Still Working:

I commend you, for investigating your options before claiming early Social Security benefits while still working. FYI, the 2026 annual earnings limit for those collecting early SS benefits is \$24,480 (changes annually). If your 2026 work earnings exceed the annual limit, Social Security will take away \$1 in benefits for every \$2 you are over the limit. The annual earnings limit lasts until you reach your Full Retirement Age and the limit is about 2.5 times higher during the year you attain FRA.

FYI, when you apply for benefits, Social Security will ask if you are working and, if so, how much you make. Using that information, they will evaluate whether you can take benefits now and, if so, how many months they can actually pay your benefits.

For example, if your projected 2026 earnings are, say, \$100,000, you would be about \$75,000 over the annual limit which means that half of that \$37,500 would need to be paid back to SS. Since your monthly SS benefit at your current age would be about \$1,400 per month, Social Security will say that you are temporarily ineligible to collect early benefits because you cannot pay back within one year what you would owe for exceeding the limit. In other words, they won't pay your SS benefits just yet because your earnings are too high and they do not want to overpay benefits, which you will only need to return.

For additional perspective, if your expected 2026 earnings are less say about \$50,000 that means you would be about \$25,000 over the limit about half of that (about \$12,500) would need to be paid back to SS. In that event, SSA would tell you they

will withhold nine months of your SS payments in advance and pay your benefits for only 3 months. This because the overpayment, with your current benefit of about \$1,400, could be recovered by withholding your SS payments for nine months. They do not want to intentionally overpay your SS benefits.

So, despite your best repayment intentions, Social Security will not favor intentionally overpaying your benefits. Historically, overpayment of benefits due to exceeding the annual earnings limit has been a notoriously difficult issue for the Social Security Administration. So, to get your early SS benefits while you are working full time, you would likely need to lie about your anticipated 2026 earnings on your application for SS benefits, which we strongly discourage.

Keep in mind that this all changes when you reach your FRA (67), because the earning limit goes away entirely when you reach FRA and the limit goes up by about 2.5 times in the year you attain full retirement age. So, depending on your earnings level, you may wish to either wait until your full retirement age, or until you stop working full time, to claim SS.

Now, as for the general idea of taking early benefits and investing them, many have said they wish to do that and we understand that logic. Our caution is that it requires religious discipline to put the SS money into a higher yield investment vehicle to accomplish the goal of beating the SS increase realized when you wait to claim. Many who try it succumb to the temptation to use the invested funds for emergency needs and sometimes non-emergency needs. I offer this only as something to be aware of, as some have shared that they failed in their investment objectives with their Social Security money.

*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](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at [ssadvisory@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadvisory@amacfoundation.org). Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.*



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## Sow onion seeds to get the season started

If you are sick and tired of winter, and want to get the gardening season going already, why not sow some onion seeds?

Onions are the first seeds I sow each year and I always welcome this task as a true harbinger of spring! Many gardeners only know of growing onions from sets, but you can indeed start them from seed, both indoors in the garden.

Read on for more information on growing onions from start to finish, right out of the archives.

First it's important that we "understand the onion," in other words, come to know its life cycle. Onions are biennial.

We are all familiar with biennial flowers like foxglove, hollyhock and Canterbury bells, who develop foliage the first year of their lives and bloom and set seed in the second, but few gardeners today ever experience a biennial vegetable. That wasn't always the case. Just visit the Freeman Farm at Old Sturbridge Village where in the summer you will see beets, parsnips, onions and more in year two of their life cycle, complete with seed heads.

As the seeds ripen, 19th century gardeners would have stored them away for use the following spring.

So then, if the onion is a biennial and its goal is to make seeds the second season of its life, what is it trying to accomplish in its first? Exactly what you and I want: a big bulb!

The bulb is the food storage unit for the plant during its dormancy period- the winter between years one and two. A big bulb gives the second year plant a good head start and almost always directly relates to increased seed production as compared to smaller bulbs.

For me, understanding this concept was one of those "ah ha" gardening moments. It all really came together when I recognized that big bulbs are a direct result of lush topgrowth.

Just imagine the green part of the plant photosynthesis-

ing, drawing in all of that wonderful energy from the sun and turning it into a big, fat onion! Luckily, we gardeners can provide just the right conditions for lush top growth.

in late January through Valentine's Day- good news for those of you itching to get your hands "dirty!"

Onion seeds are sown indoors in small flats filled with moist soilless growing medium. Spacing can be a little closer than prescribed for outdoor germination, with sowing at ¼" apart. The use of heat mats set at 72 degrees is helpful, but not entirely necessary; regular room temperatures will also encourage sprouting.

Supplemental lighting is vital, however, so that the onions grow straight and strong. Once onions are up, thin seedlings ½" to 1" apart from one another - onions hate competition, so this step is important!

I generally cut out the extras using scissors, right at the soil line so as not to dislodge the roots of those we are growing on. As the seedlings continue to grow, keep them trimmed at 3" tall; this will encourage strong roots and a straight, bulky plant.

About a month prior to the last frost, the transplants should be hardened off for a week by gradually acclimatizing them to outdoor conditions. When they are ready, seedlings are sunk into 1" furrows 3-4" apart and watered carefully; they can be protected from sun and wind off and on for the first week should it seem necessary; here a floating row cover supported by wire hoops would come in handy, but old pots or trays would work fine too. Additional rows should be one foot apart.

Stayed tuned for part two of this column next week, and extra-large onions will be yours come fall!

*Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 33 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](mailto:pouimette@turley.com) with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.*



## Get an early start

All onions have a built-in mechanism that triggers "bulbing up" in response to warmer temperatures and increased daylight hours. Likewise, as daylight begins to decrease, the onion is cued into dormancy.

If lush tops are our first goal, we have to get our onions in early, so that they achieve lots of top growth before being prompted to bulb up. Those of us who garden in the north choose "long day" onions, while southern gardeners opt to grow "short day" types.

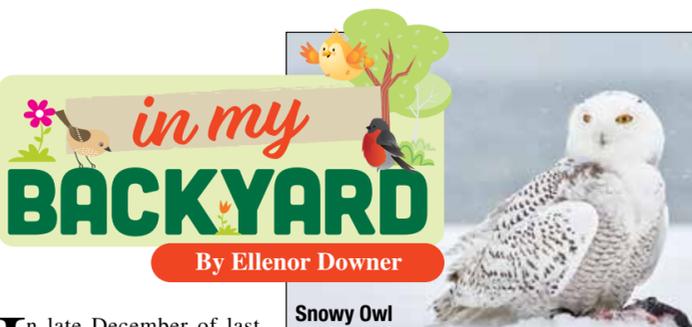
Long day onions bulb up when day length reaches 14-16 hours per day; short day begin at 12-13 hours. If we plant short day in our locale we'd end up with fat scallions, but not much more, so choose accordingly.

Reputable seed companies will list the type of onion it is next to the variety name, or feature them under appropriate headings.

## Choose your method

There are three ways onions can be grown: by seeds sown directly in the garden, from transplants started indoors, or from sets, which are tiny onions. One huge advantage of utilizing seeds is the variety at your disposal as compared to sets.

They are also less expensive. Some folks even argue that onions sown from seed store longer. The rest of this article will be devoted to starting onion seeds indoors, which is best accomplished



By Ellenor Downer

Snowy Owl

In late December of last year and early January of this year, a snowy owl has been seen at Northampton Airport and in a cornfield.

The snowy owl is an irruptive species from the tundra. Usually, it is the young snowy owls that head this

way. There have been reports of snowy owls at Plum Island this month. Logan Airport is another common location for them.

The snowy owl is large and white. The mature males

have a lot of white. Females and juveniles have dark brown and black barring. Living in the Arctic, it is well adapted to cold with dense feathers including feathers on their feet. They hunt rodents like lemmings in open tundra. They have exceptional

Please see **BACKYARD**, page 9

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## Four Orioles score double digits in win over Agawam



Morghan Litz carefully works around an opponent.

BELCHERTOWN – Last Tuesday evening, Agawam High School girls basketball had its offense going early in the matchup with Belchertown, but the Orioles came back as the game went on, took a lead and held on to it during the second half for a 62-40 victory. Belchertown got some big offense from its starters. Gabriella Slovack had 18 points while Aubrey Klingensmith had 17 points. Morghan Litz scored 14 while Kina Roy had 11 points. Agawam was led by Alanna Rose with 17 points. Agawam fell to 2-10 on the season while Belchertown is now 7-4 with four straight wins.



Aubrey Klingensmith goes for the jump shot.



Kina Roy heads down the court.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM



Gabriella Slovack goes for the layup.



Camila Adamczyk watches her shot sail to the hoop.

## Granby girls grab win against Ludlow

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

GRANBY—While their first three losses of the 2025-26 regular season were on the road, it has been more than a year since the Granby girls' varsity basketball lost a game at Sullivan Gymnasium.

The Lady Rams secured a Division 5 state tournament berth by defeating Franklin West rival Ludlow, 67-42, last Thursday night, staying undefeated at home.

"We just earned our tenth win and a spot in the state tournament," said Granby head coach Dave Padavano. "We played very well right from the start of tonight's game. Everyone contributed."

The Lady Rams had a 10-3 overall record and a 6-2 league mark following their sixth home victory of the season. Southwick was the last visiting girls' basketball team to win a game at Sullivan Gymnasium. They defeated Granby, 50-27, on Jan. 20, 2025.

Granby was ranked seventh in



Brenna Moreno angles toward the hoop.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

the MIAA Division 5 state power rankings, which was released on January 23. The Lady Rams are hoping to play a couple of home games in this year's state tournament as opposed to having to make a long bus ride to Eastern

Mass. like they did a year ago. "One of our goals at the beginning of the regular season was to play a couple of home games

Please see **RAMS**, page 8



Kalli White tries to nab an offensive rebound.



Kara White looks to pass inside the paint.



Rhett Ribeiro reaches out and snags the puck.



Jackson Gagner collects a puck on defense and heads up the ice.

## Second period goal sinks Ludlow hockey

WEST SPRINGFIELD – Last Monday, the Ludlow High School ice hockey team, which co-ops with Belchertown, was defeated by West Springfield 2-1. The teams each scored a goal

in the first period, but West Springfield snagged a goal in the second period. Ludlow could not match that and the game ended with that 2-1 score. Ludlow's lone goal came from Nick Deroin.

The Lions would also fall to Westfield later in the week and are 6-7 heading into the later part of the season. The Lions next face East Longmeadow on Jan. 31 at 12:30 p.m.

SEE MORE HOCKEY PHOTOS ON PAGE 8

## Pioneers turn on offense in win over Turners

PALMER – Last Tuesday evening, Pathfinder girls basketball defeated Turners Falls 52-28. The Pioneers did an excellent job on defense, limiting Turners to single digits in every frame of the game. Addison Doktor had a great game with 22 points while Megan Clark contributed 21 points for the Pioneers. Pathfinder is an even 5-5 this season.



Ciara Green makes a pass in transition.

SEE MORE PATHFINDER PHOTOS ON PAGE 8

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM



Megan Clark shoots with pressure on.



**■ POLICE LOGS**

**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 Jan. 19, through Jan. 21. 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.*

**ARRESTS/SUMMONS**  
**Monday, Jan. 19**

12:35 a.m. – A 38-year-old Belchertown male was issued a summons on charges of leaving the scene of property damage/accident. An officer responded to North Washington Street for an accident. A vehicle was found on top of a rock and abandoned. The tire rim was off, which made the vehicle inoperable. An officer responded to a residence where the owner of the vehicle lived. The area was also searched to see if there was any other potential damage. A traffic sign was hit and knocked over. A tow company was contacted, and the vehicle owner was issued a summons.

**Tuesday, Jan. 20**

10:42 a.m. – A 31-year-old Plant City, Florida resident was issued a summons for charges of unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle. An officer responded to Hamilton Street at the Transfer Station for a single-vehicle accident. The driver of a tractor-trailer unit was on Hamilton Street at the time of the accident when the vehicle struck the security gate. There was damage to the security gate and post consistent with a strike. The Department of Public Works was contacted. While running information about the vehicle, the officer found out the operator's license was inactive. The driver didn't do their physical to keep it active and operating, and without a valid license, issued a citation, and then another driver took custody of the tractor-trailer.

**ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS**  
**Friday, Jan. 16**

1:59 p.m. – An officer and Belchertown Fire responded to a Bridge Street business for a well-being check.  
4:13 p.m. – An officer responded to an accident on State Street. A vehicle going west on State Street was in the left lane to turn onto Turkey Hill Road. Another vehicle went into the left lane, striking the first vehicle.

No injuries were reported, and no tows were needed.  
4:44 p.m. – A person located a gun shell on the side of the roadway that had been there for an extended period and turned it in. It was placed into property.

**Saturday, Jan. 17**

1:47 a.m. – An officer responded to South Liberty Street for an accident. A vehicle was traveling south on South Liberty Street when the vehicle struck a deer. There was heavy front-end damage. The vehicle was driven from the scene, and the deer left the scene as well.

8:49 a.m. – An officer responded to Rainbow Drive for a report of a vehicle in the road during snow removal. The parking ban is in effect. The DPW requested that the vehicle be removed from the scene. It received a parking ban warning, and then the officer responded to another car, but the vehicle was still there. It was towed from the scene.

9:15 a.m. – An officer responded to Warner Street for an accident. A vehicle traveling south on Warner Street slipped on snow and ice, lost control, went southbound to the other side of the road, and struck a utility pole. The road conditions were slippery at the time of the incident. No injuries were reported, and the vehicle was towed from the scene.

12:55 p.m. – An officer responded to an accident. The operator was in their driveway when the vehicle slid down the driveway. The driveway was covered in snow, and it was actively snowing at the time of the accident. The vehicle struck a tree and rolled into an embankment, stopping on the passenger's side. The operator was able to self-extricate via the vehicle's sunroof. The person was transported from the scene. The owner arranged for a private tow.

1 p.m. – An officer responded to an accident on George Hannum Road. A vehicle going through the underpass when another vehicle was speeding and passing through, struck the first vehicle. The operator of the second vehicle was evaluated by EMTs and denied medical attention. Witnesses later said that the second vehicle was speeding at the time of the accident. A third vehicle going down the hill swerved off the road to avoid the crash and struck a tree. No injuries were reported, and no tows were needed.

1:51 p.m. – An officer responded to an accident on Stebbins Street. A vehicle going eastbound on Stebbins Street attempted to turn right and, due to slippery condi-

tions, went off the road and struck a guardrail. No injuries were reported, and no tows were needed.

2:02 p.m. – An officer responded to an accident on North Street. A vehicle traveling west on North Street went down a hill, and while attempting to take a right turn in the road, the vehicle went off the roadway and struck a tree. There was front-end damage to the vehicle, which was backed out and driven from the scene. No injuries were reported.

4:03 p.m. – An officer responded to Clark Street for a report of two vehicles parked on the side of the road, inhibiting DPW from clearing the road. The officers knocked on doors nearby and were able to call one of the vehicle owners, who was too far to come back to move the vehicle. It was later towed and impounded. The other involved vehicle was able to be moved by its owner.

4:42 p.m. – An officer responded to Summit Street for an accident involving a vehicle going south on Summit Street during an active snowstorm. A vehicle couldn't navigate the turn, went off the roadway, and struck a utility pole and a mailbox. No injuries were reported. The vehicle was towed from the scene.

6:11 p.m. – An officer spoke with a person about an ongoing harassment issue with a neighbor.

**Monday, Jan. 19**

4:47 p.m. – An officer responded to Summit Street for a report of a vehicle pulled to the side of the road and an open driver's side door with a male party with their feet out of the door. It appeared as if the person was passed out. They didn't know where they were and said they were going to Gardner. Belchertown Fire and paramedics arrived to evaluate them. They were transported to the hospital. A resident told the officer the vehicle had been parked in the area since 2 p.m. The vehicle was towed.

5:42 p.m. – An officer responded to West Street for an accident. A vehicle traveling east on West Street tried to make a corner, but due to slippery road conditions, couldn't successfully navigate it. The vehicle struck a small tree and some shrubbery in front of a residence. There was damage to the right front side of the vehicle. No injuries were reported, and no tows were needed.

10:19 p.m. – An officer took a report of motor vehicle theft. A person rented a car to someone else, who hadn't returned it.

**Tuesday, Jan. 20**

12:29 a.m. – An officer responded to a call about a person who fell and declined to be transported to the hospital.

11:38 a.m. – An officer responded to an Allen Road residence to assist the Belchertown Fire Department and the Belchertown Building Inspector. It was reported that the home was purchased some time ago, and neighbors believed the pipe burst in the home. It was reported that water leaked in the home, and there was a potential fire hazard. The officer reported that they did not see anyone in the home, and it was unfurnished. There was water leaking and standing water in the basement. There was a vehicle in the garage, and an ID was found. The matter is under investigation.

**Wednesday, Jan. 21**

7:33 p.m. – An officer responded to George Hannum Road for an accident. A vehicle going straight on George Hannum Road left the roadway and struck a utility pole. It was reported that the operator was speeding at the time of the crash. The vehicle came to rest on

an embankment and was towed from the scene. The person denied medical care.

**Granby Police Log**

*Editor's Note: The Granby Police Department responded to 133 calls for the week of Jan. 16 through Jan. 22. Those arrested are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. The Granby Police Department provides all information.*

**Friday, Jan. 16**

10:27 p.m. – A resident called to report hearing a loud crash. Granby Police and Fire responded and confirmed a vehicle struck a tree. The operator was transported to the hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

**Saturday, Jan. 17**

6:23 a.m. – A motorist reported that a car struck a guardrail. Granby Police and Fire responded. The operator was transported to the hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

1:23 p.m. – A motorist reported a minor two-car accident at the rotary. There were no injuries.

1:25 p.m. – A motorist reported that they slid off the road into a tree. There were no injuries.

2:33 p.m. – A motorist reported a two-car accident. Granby Police and Fire responded. SHD2 responded to mutual aid with a second ambulance. Both operators were transported to the hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

4:40 p.m. – A motorist reported sliding off the road and striking a utility pole. There were no injuries.

**Tuesday, Jan. 20**

6:06 p.m. – A motorist reported striking a deer. There were no injuries.

**Wednesday, Jan. 21**

10:51 p.m. – A motorist reported striking a utility pole. There were no injuries.

**Thursday, Jan. 22**

7:22 a.m. – A motorist reported sliding off the road and striking a utility pole. The utility pole and wires are down across the road. There were no injuries.

1:40 p.m. – A motorist reported a two-car accident. There were no injuries.

**BACKYARD**  
from page 6

sight and hearing.

Their flight is silent allowing them to catch unsuspecting prey. They hunt during the day, a rarity for most owls. They expand south during winter food scarcity in the tundra. It is one of North America's heaviest owls with a wing span of 4.5 to 5.5 feet.

They are generally solitary, but form pairs. They build nests in the ground in shallow scrapes. The female lays three to 11 eggs, the number of eggs depending on food availability. Males bring food and the females incubate and feed the chicks.

**Helping owls**

Here are some tips if you see a snowy owl. Keep a safe distance to observe quietly. Do not play bird calls from your phone or other device. Don't feed the owls. Avoid flashes when taking photos. Keep noises to a minimum. If you find an injured owl: contact your state wildlife agency

or local rehabilitator. If you find a dead owl: contact your state wildlife agency.

Also people should avoid using rodenticides; they are poisonous to birds and other animals even a pet. If an owl or other birds of prey eat a rodent that ingested, it will kill them.

**Evening grosbeaks**

A Worthington resident reported a friend saw two evening grosbeaks on Tuesday, Jan. 6. He said in his email he remembered when they used to be in giant flocks. He asked if they were rare out my way. I have not seen evening grosbeaks in some time. Other people in Central Massachusetts have seen them recently. The Massachusetts Audubon Society reported six evening grosbeaks in North Brookfield.

**Mass. Audubon sightings**

Recent Mass Audubon sightings include western grebes, eared grebes, tufted ducks and sandhill cranes as well as an unusual visitor, a scissor-tailed flycatcher, a rare state record

and a rosy-billed pochard. Other sightings include goldeneye, mergansers, horned larks, and wintering raptors like Northern harriers in Massachusetts in early January.

On Jan. 6 and again on Jan. 13 a male King Eider was seen among thousands of common Eiders in North Chatham. A Pacific loon and over 400 razor-bills were at Race Point in Provincetown.

**Brimfield resident**

A Brimfield resident sent an email on Jan. 6 that he received a preliminary total for the Springfield Christmas Bird Count, which was 66 species, a few below the average. He also said, "We occasionally see them in the yard and sometimes hear the barred owls calling."

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.

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For more information and to apply, contact **Wally Connor, Facility/HR Manager** at (508) 885-8700 Ext. 550 or by email: wally@spencerabbey.org

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Wilbraham United Church is hiring a part-time, experienced **ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT/BOOKKEEPER.** Apply to **Wilbraham United Church, Attention: Alesia; 500 Main Street; Wilbraham, MA 01095.** More information at [www.wilbrahamunitedchurch.org/about-us-2/](http://www.wilbrahamunitedchurch.org/about-us-2/)

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**OUR CLASSIFIEDS REACH 50 COMMUNITIES EVERY WEEK!**

**Happening this week**

**BELCHERTOWN** – What’s going on at the Clapp Memorial Library? Check out these upcoming events and programs!

Love your neighbor... donate to those in need!

**Teen Advisory Board’s “Love Your Neighbor” Food Drive**  
Friday, February 6 - Friday, February 13

The Clapp Memorial Library’s Teen Advisory Board will be collecting nonperishables at the library in their second-ever Food Drive February 6 through 13. There will be a designated donation box inside the library during those dates. Donations will be sorted by Teen Advisory Board members on the 13th and distributed evenly amongst Belchertown food pantries. TAB is a group of 7th-12th-grade students who meet monthly during the school year to propose library programming for teens, provide input on teen services, volunteer, and have fun. New members are welcome!

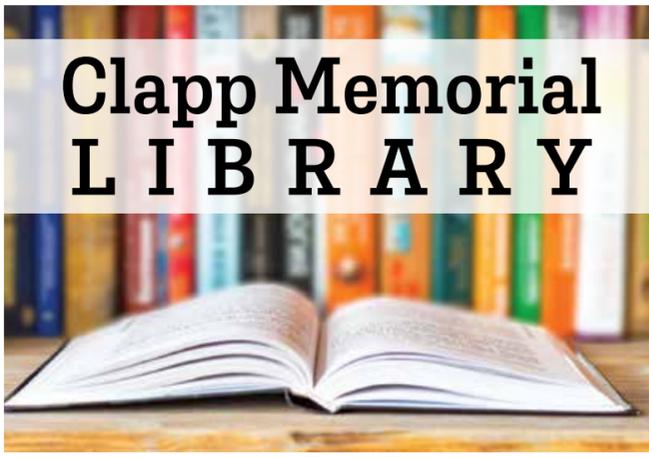
**For General Audiences:**

**Indigenous Stories from this Valley and Beyond with David Brule**  
Saturday, January 31, 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Join Clapp Memorial Library for an afternoon of Indigenous stories with David Brule, President of the Nolumbeka Project and chair of the Nehantic Tribal Council. Drawing from oral traditions, research, and a decade-long study of King Philip’s War, his stories highlight gratitude, balance with nature, and cultural resilience. Sponsored by the Friends of Clapp Memorial Library.

**For Adults: MassSave Pop-Up Resource Table**

Thursday, February 5, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
Learn about no-cost Home Energy Assessments (HEAs) and other MassSave



benefits for homeowners and renters. Stop by the resource table any time between 11:00 am and 6:00 pm. Representatives of HomeWorks Energy will help explain all the benefits and answer any questions. This program is funded by HomeWorks Energy, Inc.

**What “YA” Readin’? Book Club**

Thursday, February 5, 7 to 8 p.m.  
The library’s What “YA” Readin’? Book Club, a group for adults who read Young Adult books, will meet to discuss Fangirl by Rainbow Rowell. March’s book will be Twenty-Four Seconds From Now by Jason Reynolds. Copies of the book are available for checkout at the circulation desk. New members are welcome!

**Mending the Body with the Mind Book Talk**

Wednesday, February 11, 7 to 8 p.m.  
Join us for a talk from Belchertown resident and pediatrician, David Gottesgen, author of Mending the Body with the Mind: Harnessing Kids’ Superpowers To Heal and Stay Healthy. Dr. Gottesgen will discuss integrative medicine in general, then talk about how he utilized the mind-body-spirit connection in all parts of his practice.

**For Adults and Teens:**

**A Night With Paranormal Investigators**  
Monday, February 9, 6 to 8 p.m.

Spend an evening with Eastern States Paranormal Investigators as they set up a mock command center in the library showcasing their cameras and equipment. They’ll share evidence they’ve gathered during overnight stays at some of Massachusetts’ most haunted mansions. Sponsored by Eastern States Paranormal Investigators.

**For Teens:**

**Teen Crafternoon: DIY Chalkboard**  
Monday, February 9, 4 to 5 p.m.

The library will host a Teen Crafternoon for students in grades 7-12 on Monday, February 9th. Teens will make their own DIY chalkboard wall-hanging: perfect for jotting down schedules, reminders, and doodles! All materials will be provided. Space is limited. Email clapplibrarytab@gmail.com to register. This program is funded by the Friends of the Clapp Memorial Library.

**Teen Advisory Board Meeting**  
Friday, February 13, 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.

The Clapp Memorial Library’s Teen Advisory Board will meet Friday, February 13th. TAB is a group of 7th-12th grade students who meet monthly during the school year to propose library programming for teens, provide input on teen services, volunteer, and have fun! At this meeting, teens will sort items from their “Love

Your Neighbor” Food Drive to distribute to local food pantries. Teens can email clapplibrarytab@gmail.com to register. New members are welcome!

**Coming up! D&D Afterschool Adventures: Into the Abomination Vaults**  
Mondays, February 23 - March 30, 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Grab your dice and join us for our Spring Teen D&D Campaign! Brave adventurers are needed once again to delve deep within the Abomination Vaults and defeat the dangers below! For teens in grades 7-12. Teens who played in last year’s Abomination Vaults may return with their same characters as the story progresses. No experience necessary. Space is limited, and registration is required. Register online at clapplibrary.org or call 413-323-0417. Confirmations will be sent out to students confirming enrollment or waitlist status. Please email any questions to tmannino@cwmares.org

**For Children:**

**Children’s Scavenger Hunt Every Month in 2026!**

February’s Theme: *Dav Pilkey, Prize: Dav Pilkey Book Bundle*

We’re inviting children to participate in a Monthly Scavenger Hunt! Look for book characters and write down the word you find with them. When you have all of the words, figure out the saying and enter to win the month’s themed prize! One raffle ticket per child each month.

**Clapp Memorial Library Hours:**

Monday 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
Tuesday 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.  
Wednesday 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.  
Thursday 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.  
Friday 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
Saturday 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**PUBLIC NOTICES**

**Belchertown Conservation Commission LEGAL NOTICE**

Pursuant to the authority of the Wetlands Protection Act (M.G.L. Ch. 131, Sec. 40, its Regulations (310 CMR 10.00) and the Belchertown Wetlands Protection Bylaw (Chapter 139), the Belchertown Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on **Monday, February 9, 2026 at 7:00 PM in the Lawrence Memorial Hall Auditorium, located at 2 Jabish Street in Belchertown, MA 01007** to review a Request for Determination of Applicability permit application submitted by Rachel Telushkin c/o Berkshire Design Group to permit two existing docks that extend into the Swift River at 241 East Street (Assessor’s Map 258-10) in Belchertown. Anyone interested in this matter should appear at the time and place designated.  
01/29/2026

the Belchertown Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on **Monday, February 9, 2026 at 7:00 PM in the Lawrence Memorial Hall Auditorium, located at 2 Jabish Street in Belchertown, MA 01007** to review a Request for Determination of Applicability permit application submitted by Zachary Restucci to permit the rehabilitation of an existing bridge at Scarborough Brook Conservation Area (Assessor’s Map 202-19.01) in Belchertown. Anyone interested in this matter should appear at the time and place designated.  
01/29/2026

**Belchertown Conservation Commission LEGAL NOTICE**

Pursuant to the authority of the Wetlands Protection Act (M.G.L. Ch. 131, Sec. 40, its Regulations (310 CMR 10.00) and the Belchertown Wetlands Protection Bylaw (Chapter 139), the Belchertown Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on **Monday, February 9, 2026 at 7:00 PM in the Lawrence Memorial Hall Auditorium, located at 2 Jabish Street in Belchertown, MA 01007** to review a Notice of Intent permit application submitted by Town of Belchertown c/o Fuss & O’Neil for the proposed work to rehabilitate an existing Trestle Bridge located near Franklin Street (Assessor’s Map 269-109) in Belchertown. Anyone interested in this matter should appear at the time and place designated.  
01/29/2026

**Belchertown Conservation Commission LEGAL NOTICE**

Pursuant to the authority of the Wetlands Protection Act (M.G.L. Ch. 131, Sec. 40, its Regulations (310 CMR 10.00) and the Belchertown Wetlands Protection Bylaw (Chapter 139), the Belchertown Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on **Monday, February 9, 2026 at 7:00 PM in the Lawrence Memorial Hall Auditorium, located at 2 Jabish Street in Belchertown, MA 01007** to review a Notice of Intent permit application submitted by Joseph Miller c/o R Levesque Associates, Inc for the proposed work to construct a single family home and associated facilities at Lot A West Street (Assessor’s Map 275-19) in Belchertown. Work is proposed to occur within the 100-foot Buffer Zone to Bordering Vegetated Wetlands. Anyone interested in this matter should appear at the time and place designated.  
01/29/2026

**Belchertown Conservation Commission LEGAL NOTICE**

Pursuant to the authority of the Wetlands Protection Act (M.G.L. Ch. 131, Sec. 40, its Regulations (310 CMR 10.00) and the Belchertown Wetlands Protection Bylaw (Chapter 139),

**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.**

**Belchertown Select Board proclamation of International Holocaust Remembrance Day**

**BELCHERTOWN** – The Belchertown Select Board made a proclamation that January 27 would be International Holocaust Remembrance Day. Their first ceremony was held on Tuesday, January 11, at the Town Hall.

The Select Board’s Proclamation:

WHEREAS, International Holocaust Remembrance Day is observed to honor the memory of the six million Jewish people and millions of other innocent victims who were systematically murdered by the Nazi regime and its collaborators during the Holocaust; and

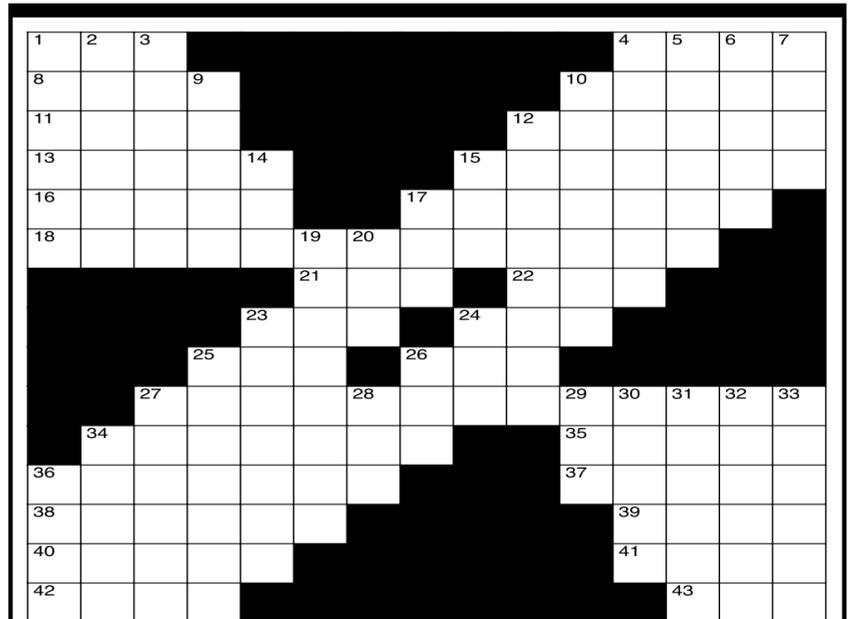
WHEREAS, Presidents of the United States have consistently affirmed the importance of remembering the Holocaust, honoring the survivors, and reaffirming the responsibility of all people to confront hatred, antisemitism, racism, and intolerance in all its forms; and

WHEREAS, remembering the Holocaust serves as a solemn reminder of the consequences of indifference, silence, and the erosion of human rights, and underscores the need to uphold the dignity and worth of every individual; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Belchertown is committed to promoting education, reflection, and understanding so that the lessons of the Holocaust are never forgotten, and such atrocities are never repeated.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that on this 27th day of January 2026, the Belchertown Select Board hereby proclaims International Holocaust Remembrance Day and encourages all residents to pause in remembrance, honor the victims and survivors, and recommit themselves to combating hatred and standing up for justice, equality, and human dignity for all.

**Crossword Puzzle**



**CLUES ACROSS**

- 1. Racket sport pros
- 4. Make tea
- 8. City South of Moscow
- 10. Spanish bullfighting term
- 11. Egg-shaped
- 12. Could not remember
- 13. French modernist painter
- 15. Persons
- 16. Painful intestinal obstruction
- 17. Professions
- 18. Is up to the task
- 21. Wood or metal bolt
- 22. Tax collector
- 23. A way to save for the future
- 24. Georgia rockers
- 25. Midway between

- north and northeast
- 26. High schoolers’ test
- 27. Does not accept responsibility
- 34. One who prepares
- 35. Gout-indicative deposits
- 36. Place to play games
- 37. Book of Genesis character
- 38. Cleans oneself
- 39. Unloaded for money
- 40. Genus of flowering plants
- 41. Take a puff
- 42. Congressmen
- 43. God of battle in Scandinavian mythology

**CLUES DOWN**

- 1. Type of bomb
- 2. South Pacific islands
- 3. Celestial body
- 4. Negotiates
- 5. Consider in a specified way
- 6. Type of group in organic chemistry
- 7. Buddhist monasteries
- 9. Inhabitant of Bering Sea island
- 10. Body part
- 12. Milestone birthday
- 14. Thyroid-stimulating hormone
- 15. More (Spanish)
- 17. Chicago ballplayer
- 19. Leaves a place

- 20. Cannot be found
- 23. One’s internal body parts
- 24. Tell on
- 25. North American peoples of southwest
- 26. Soviet Socialist Republic
- 27. Extract used for jams and jellies
- 28. Greek goddess of the dawn
- 29. Old English letter
- 30. A way to exaggerate
- 31. Get up and leave
- 32. “Boardwalk Empire” character
- 33. More generous
- 34. Hanging cloth used as a blind
- 36. Ancient Greek sophist

**Join the new youth group at HUMC**

**BELCHERTOWN** – A Youth Group has recently formed at Hope United Methodist Church in Belchertown. At our first gathering in January, eight youth met at Claymates for a fun time. Our next monthly meeting will be held in Fellowship Hall at the church, at 11:15 am on Sunday, February 8th. We will be doing a service project. This is an invitation for youth between the ages of 8 years old and high school age to join. If this sounds like fun and sparks an interest please come on Sunday, the 8th of February. Call the church at 413-323-7584 if no answer leave a message and ask for Youth Group leaders, Meg or Diana’s

contact information. Thank you. Hope United Methodist Church is located at 31 Main Street.

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Service



Storm  
Damage



Stump  
Grinding



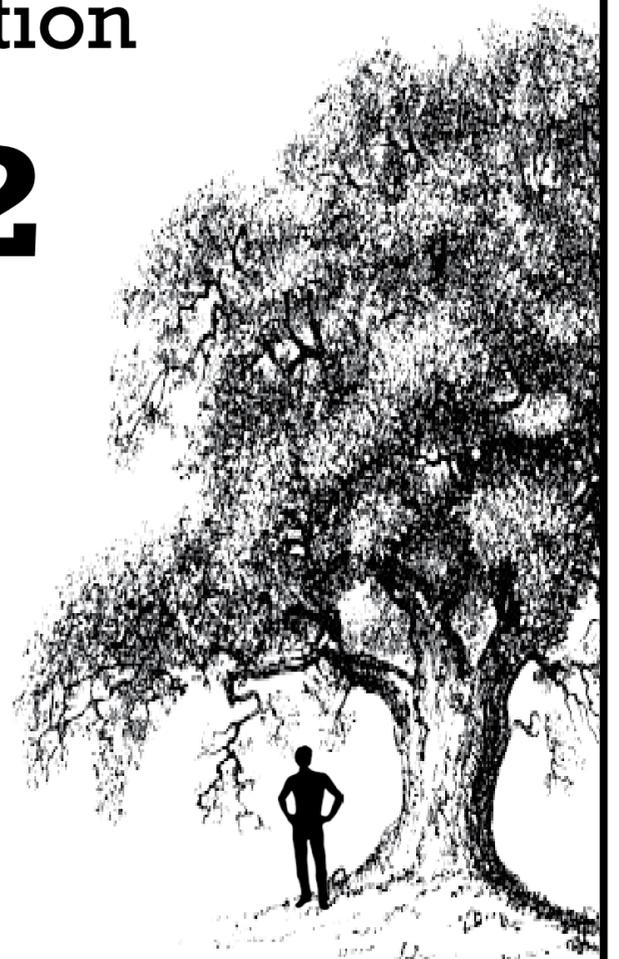
Lot  
Clearing



Give us a call for your free estimate  
and tree evaluation

**413-478-4212**

# DL&G TREE



**INSURED AND CERTIFIED**