

Supt. details next steps

Parents express concerns in Cold Spring School closure plan

By Melina Bourdeau
Correspondent

BELCHERTOWN — Belchertown school officials outlined key next steps and ongoing concerns tied to the closure of Cold Spring School and a broader grade reorganization during a Feb. 24 School Committee meeting.

Superintendent Brian Cameron said the district has held two listening sessions with families — one focused on Cold Spring students moving to Swift River and another at Jabish Brook Middle School.

“We met twice for a listening session with parents,” Cameron said. There was a crowd of about 15 people show up at Cold Spring and about 30 at Jabish.

He said the district is compiling questions raised at those meetings.

“We’re going to put them in a Q and A and put them on the website,” Cameron said.

Scheduling for next year is already in motion, including specialist schedules and classroom configurations across multiple buildings.

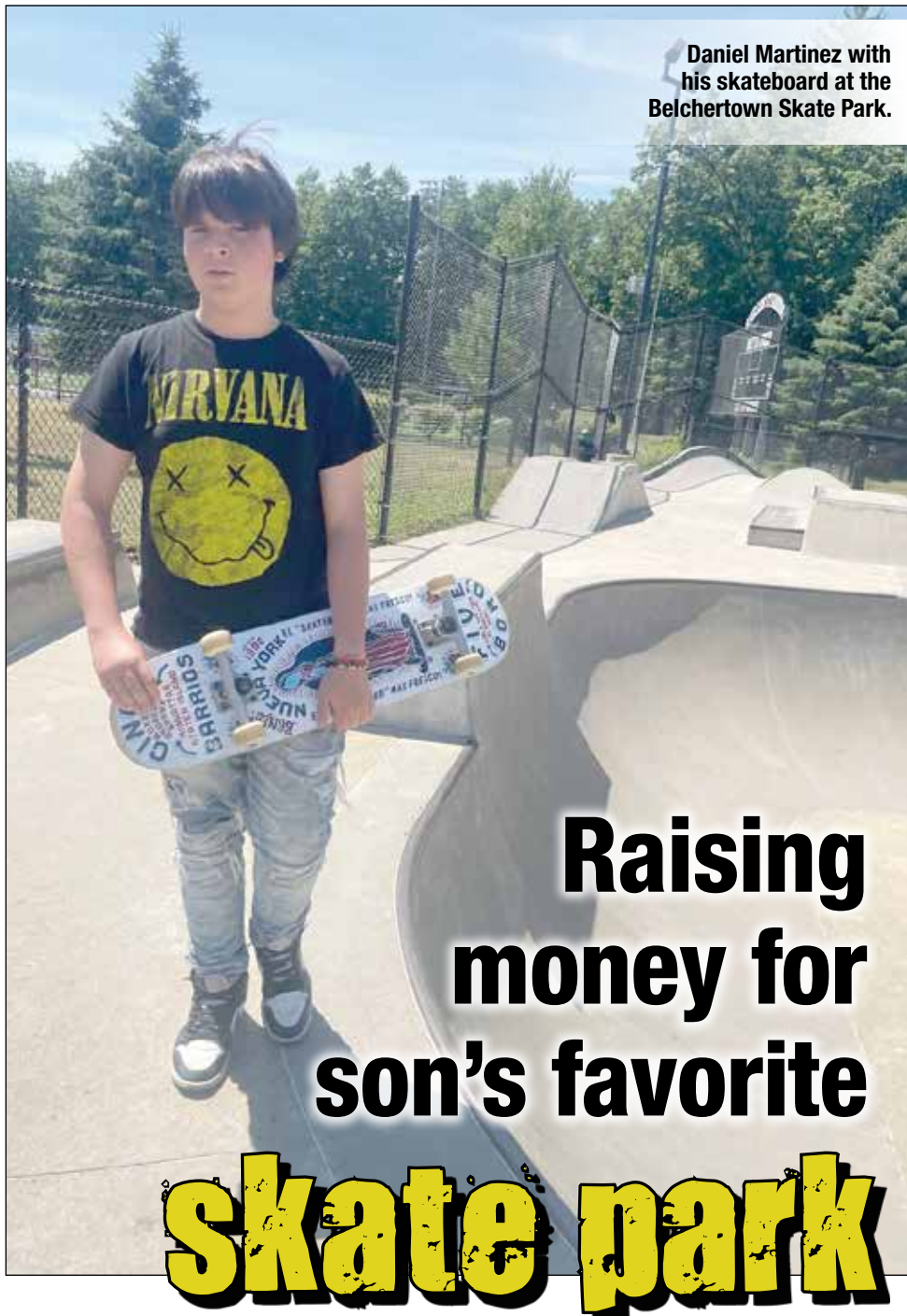
“We have been doing a lot of work around scheduling at Jamish,” he said, including “behind-the-scenes scheduling of specialists at Swift River, Chestnut Hill, and Jabish.”

A meeting for Swift River parents whose children will move to Chestnut Hill will be rescheduled.

“We were supposed to meet with Swift River parents ... We will have to reschedule that,” Cameron said.

Facilities changes are also underway, especially for preschool spaces and technology. Cameron said Pathfinder’s plumbing program is helping “start working on our toilets for the preschool and lowering those toilets”, and “Neil is in the process of ensuring that technology will be uploaded in each of the classrooms.”

Please see **CLOSURE**, page 4



Daniel Martinez with his skateboard at the Belchertown Skate Park.

Raising money for son’s favorite skate park

Bringing forward awareness, sharing love for Pathfinder student

By Emily-Rose Pappas
Staff Writer
epappas@turley.com

BELCHERTOWN — We all have someone special in our lives we have lost, and one of the ways we can feel “connected” to them again is by dedicating our time to focus on the things that that person loved the most.

Eileen Martinez has taken it upon herself to seek help from the community in refurbishing, fixing, and restoring the Belchertown Skate Park in memory of her son, Daniel

Martinez.

Daniel took his life on April 6, 2025, at fifteen, after a long battle with chronic pain, but lived his life striving to be with others, including his friends and older sister, Gabriela.

“This is something I really want to do for him and for his friends,” said Martinez.

Daniel loved the skate park, was born and raised in Belchertown, and attended Pathfinder Regional

Please see **SKATE PARK**, page 11



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Daniel with his sister, and best friend, Gabriela Martinez, viewing the eclipse.

EDIC tightens broker protocol

Grant work advances for Parcel D

By Melina Bourdeau
Correspondent

BELCHERTOWN — Belchertown’s Economic Development and Industrial Corporation is tightening how it handles interest in Carriage Grove, directing all potential buyers through a real estate broker and a shared tracking system as it prepares Parcels B and D for marketing.

The protocol, discussed at the EDIC’s March 4 meeting, is meant to create a single, transparent point of entry for developers at the former Belchertown State School site and avoid the risk of mixed messages or lost leads.

“What I’m wondering is ... establishing protocols for inquiries,” said Cheryl Dutton, an EDIC . “If I were to get an inquiry because somebody knows I’m on EDIC, I would tell them they have to contact our broker.”

Under the approach, EDIC members who are contacted directly by a business or developer will give out the broker’s information, collect the caller’s name and contact details, and hand that information to the broker rather than having in-depth discussions themselves.

A shared spreadsheet maintained by EDIC member Matthew Jackson and MassDevelopment will track all inquiries, whether they originate with the broker, the board, or the state agency.

Please see **EDIC**, page 4

Community Summit to create opportunities for collaboration

By Emily-Rose Pappas
Staff Writer
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BELCHERTOWN — The Belchertown Creative Economy will be hosting a special Summit this Saturday, March 14, with

the main goal of having a conversation with the community and having a time of talking about the future of the Belchertown community.

“We are looking forward to connecting with people, sharing resources and ideas,

and hearing about the work committees and community groups are doing across Belchertown,” said Cultural District Manager Lisa Stahl. “We loved the idea of creating a space where people could come together to share ideas and collaborate!”

This is the first Community Summit the Economy has hosted, and they hope to make it an annual occurrence, pulling inspiration from Radically Rural out of Keene, NH, by using its three-day model to create one large Summit between 10 a.m. and noon.

The Economy hosted a Pre-Summit on January 29, and the recording of it can be found on the BCTV YouTube channel. The Pre-Summit went very well, and has served to inspire and

Please see **SUMMIT**, page 5



TURLEY PHOTO BY EMILY-ROSE PAPPAS

Louise Levy, with the Friends of Lake Wallace, helped build the Lake into a place for all to enjoy.



TURLEY PHOTO BY EMILY-ROSE PAPPAS

DA David Sullivan, Anita Wilson, and Rachel Webber.

Preventing scams and identity theft

By Emily-Rose Pappas
Staff Writer
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SOUTH HADLEY — The Northwestern District Attorney’s Office came to the South Hadley Public Library with a presentation and information on preventing scams and identity theft.

Rachel Webber, the Program Coordinator for Elders and Persons with Disabilities, District Attorney David Sullivan for the Northwestern District (Hampshire and Franklin County), Anita Wilson with the Consumer Protection Unit, the only DA office that has this unit in the district,

and Melissa Sippel, Director of Communications and Community Engagement for the DA’s Office were present to provide information about this important topic.

“Tonight’s topic for scams and identity theft prevention is important for everybody,” said DA David Sullivan. “There is a myth that only senior citizens get exploited, but everybody can get exploited.”

The Local Consumer Program works with the Massachusetts Attorney General’s Office to help with resolution and advocacy, and works to help people with information about their consumer rights and to prevent

fraud and scams.

The Elders and Persons with Disabilities Unit works with agencies and the local law enforcement to look at a case with anyone over the age of 60, and those with disabilities to investigate crimes these individuals may have been victimized by.

Identity Theft

Identity theft is when someone steals or obtains your personal information through scams or data breaches and then uses your information to open accounts, file tax returns, collect unemployment, or other services that are detrimental to you and your

health.

“Once they get your information, there really is no limit to what damage they can do,” said Rachel Webber.

Scammers can steal your information through your personal ID, social security card, or other means of identification.

Identity theft and “data breaches” can come in the form of your wallet or purse being stolen, pretending to offer you a job, dumpster diving for tossed mail, stealing your mail, or tricking you into revealing your information through scams.

Please see **SCAMS**, page 3

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COMMUNITY

Community garden registration now open

BELCHERTOWN – Do you need additional garden space, fertile soil, or more sunshine? Want to raise your own chemical-free vegetables? Join us at the Belchertown Community Garden!

Individual, fully prepared, 300-square-foot garden plots are available to all Belchertown residents and gardeners from surrounding areas. We are located at beautiful Lampson Brook Farm, at 275 Jackson Street, Belchertown. Residents may obtain a plot for \$35 (non-residents \$40) for the season. Several plots will be made available to SNAP benefit recipients for half price.

The garden fee includes: plot preparation, compost for use in your plot, the use of shared tools in a well-organized tool shed, convenient access to water and ample parking space. The garden is a community effort where each member also contributes a few hours of their time during the season to setting up, main-

taining, and cleaning up the common areas, such as our community flower and herb gardens, or donating time to our plot dedicated to donations to food pantries. The companionship and wisdom of your gardening neighbors are free! Join for yourself or purchase a Community Garden plot as a gift for your favorite gardener.

Our garden is a program of the New England Small Farm Institute (NESFI), which leases the rich farmland of the former Belchertown State School from the State. All gardeners, beginner or experienced, are welcome. Depending on weather and soil conditions, the garden will be open mid-May through late October.

All applications must be received by April 6 and are processed on a first-come, first-served basis. A limited number of plots are available—so don't delay!

If you have questions or to receive a 2026 registration form, email BCGardenNews@gmail.com.



Officer Valerie Austin and Comfort Dog Oliver

BPD celebrates officers for International Women's Day



Officer Draine Colon Rivera



Officer Hannah Rondeau

BELCHERTOWN – Today we celebrate the women of our department whose professionalism, dedication, and leadership help make our agen-

cy and community stronger. We want to recognize our three female officers, Officer Valerie Austin, Officer Draine Colon Rivera, and Officer Hannah

Rondeau. We would also like to recognize our two female Record Clerks, Lisa Haughey and Sara Avery. Happy International Women's Day.

SCAMS from page 1

Scams and Types of Scams

"Scammers are very tech savvy, and they know how to get around things to steal your information," said Webber. "If anyone calls you and asks you for this information, stop and do research and verify who it is that is seeking this information."

Some of the information scammers will call and ask for includes account log-in and passwords, bank account numbers, credit card numbers, an medicare or health insurance numbers. Real banks and health insurance companies will not call you for your information and will have that on file.

"There is a wide spectrum of people who are getting ripped off and reporting it," said Anita Wilson. "A lot of it comes through phone calls, emails, and text messages."

These scams affect people of all ages, but unfortunately, the senior population falls victim to these scams and loses a lot of money.

There are many different types of scams, including government and law enforcement impostors, bank or credit company impersonators, a business imposter from Amazon, PayPal, or your cable company, for example, someone pretending to be a family member or grandchild, romance scams, like with dating websites, offering fake investment opportunities, lotteries, prizes, sweepstakes giveaways or prizes, or a computer virus or breach in computer security.

You should never look at or listen to a scammer over the phone, email, or text message telling you something about your account, without

first consulting your own apps and bank account apps.

Artificial Intelligence

With AI on the rise, scammers have been able to use it to clone your voice over the phone or to use your own voice to confirm or deny services.

Something else AI can do is create deepfake scams, like creating fake videos or photos to falsely claim someone didn't do something. Phishing or email attacks can be tampered with AI to make them more personalized to the recipient.

AI can also create fake websites that look identical to the real thing, and fake reviews for products or investment techniques.

Scams Targeting Homeowners

Many scams will come in the form of paving and home improvement, including people who come to your home claiming they are in the area and can do work on their property, but then keep coming back for more money. Another scam can include them saying they have extra materials to help.

You should always proceed with caution, get estimates on the costs for no hidden surprises, never pay for the work all at once, check their license and insurance, get everything in writing, research before switching electric suppliers, like solar, and report suspicious behav-

ior to the police.

Home Title Theft is when someone pretends to be you and transfers your deed to someone else. They can then use these forged documents to transfer the deed and may even take out loans tied to the property, or try to sell your home. Always sign up for free monitoring with the Registry of Deeds.

Easy Payments

Many scammers will try to steal money through bank transfers, bitcoin or cryptocurrencies, gift cards, prepaid cards, wired money, or by pretending to be a courier and come through to pick up money they have asked you to store in certain forms.

Reduce Your Risk of Fraud and Identity Theft

"Always, always slow down and take time to verify information before you act," said Webber.

Never click on links or attachments from text messages or emails from contacts that you do not know, as malware and viruses can be linked to these and then steal your information.

Cellphones and other electronic devices have updates, and it is recommended that you update your devices regularly to keep them secure.

Make sure your passwords are all different and hard to guess with different symbols, or by using Multi-Factor

Identification to get into multiple accounts, like requiring your password as well as a six-digit code texted to your cellphone to enter.

Be aware of ads and deals offered on social media. "If it's too good to be true, it probably is," said Webber.

Keep all your passwords and log-in information safe and hidden, and only carry cards when you need them. Do not give financial or personal information to anyone who calls to ask for it, and shred your monthly statements and medical documents that you no longer need.

Be mindful of what you post, and that you check your privacy settings to make sure only people you know see your content.

How to Report Identity Theft or Scams

The first thing to do is to call your bank to put a stop to any fraudulent withdrawals of your assets.

You can also report identity theft to the Federal Trade Commission, www.identity-theft.gov, and the FBI, www.ic3.gov. You can also report these scams to your local police department so they know what types of fraud and scams can affect their community members. Your local Consumer Protection Program is also another good place to report these frauds and scams to.

Reports are always anonymous, whether for elders or those with disabilities.

You can contact the Northwestern District Attorney's Office through their two offices: Greenfield (413-774-3186) and Northampton (413-586-9225).



Granby Police Log

Editor's Note: The Granby Police Department responded to 143 calls for the week of Feb. 27 through March 5. Those arrested are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. The Granby Police Department provides all information.

Friday, Feb. 27

7:58 p.m. – While on patrol, an officer observed a motor vehicle fail to stop for a stop sign at Cold Hill Road and Pleasant Street. The vehicle was stopped, and the operator was issued a civil citation.

Saturday, Feb. 28

1:38 p.m. – A motorist reported a minor 2-car accident on West State Street. There were no injuries.

Sunday, March 1

12:15 p.m. – An officer observed a male party walking on State Street who was known to have an active arrest warrant. Upon seeing the cruiser, the male party turned around and ran to the lobby of the public safety complex, where he was placed under arrest. Andre Pelletier, 38, of Granby, was placed under arrest for an active WMS warrant.

Tuesday, March 3

4:38 a.m. – While on patrol, an officer observed a motor vehicle traveling at a high rate of speed, estimated to be at least 75MPH on West State Street. The vehicle also crossed marked lanes. The vehicle turned into Cumberland Farms and parked. It was discovered that the operator had a suspended MA driver's license. The operator was issued a criminal citation for marked lanes violation, speeding, and operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license.

5:11 p.m. – A motorist reported a 2-car accident at State and West Street. There were no injuries.

8:38 p.m. – A motorist reported sliding off the road and striking a tree on Amherst Road. There were no injuries.

Wednesday, March 4

8:58 a.m. – A motorist reported that a vehicle slid off the road and struck a boulder at Chicopee and School Street. There were no injuries.

Thursday, March 5

4:23 p.m. – A motorist reported a two-car accident at Pleasant Street and West State Street. Granby Police and Fire responded. There were no injuries.



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Warning homeowners to monitor space heaters

SOUTH HADLEY – If you use a space heater please check it. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) announced a voluntary recall of the following models because they can overheat, fail to meet the UL 1278 voluntary safety standard, and pose fire and burn hazards: H7130 (including H7130101, H7131, H7132, H7133, H7134, 7135

These heaters were sold widely in the U.S. and Canada. Testing showed the wireless control features could contribute to overheating.

The CPSC notes that these heaters do not comply with safety standards and can overheat, creating a real risk of ignition. Over 512,000 units were sold in the U.S.,

meaning many households may still be using them unknowingly.

Fire departments, including Ludlow's, have already encountered fires linked to these recalled models.

What to do if you own one: stop using the heater immediately.

Check the model number on the label (usually on the bottom or back).

If it matches any of the recalled models, contact Govee for a refund.

The CPSC lists Govee's recall support line as 8337725360 (9 a.m. to 5 p.m.).



SUBMITTED PHOTO
The different kinds of space heaters available to go into homes.

Office of Rep. Mindy Domb announces office hours

AMHERST — Representative Mindy Domb (D-Amherst) office will host community office hours in March at the following times:

Tuesday, March 24, 4 to 5 p.m. at the Granby Free Public Library (297 E State St., Granby)

Friday, March 27, 4 to 5 p.m. at the Amherst Town Hall, 1st floor, (4 Boltwood Ave., Amherst)

Tuesday, March 31st, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. at the Amherst Survival Center (138 Sunderland Road, Amherst)

This is an opportunity for constituents of the Third Hampshire District to speak to the Representative and her team and to share concerns and thoughts on state legislation, and to seek assistance. There is no need to schedule an appointment; constituents can stop by anytime during the hour to speak to Representative Domb or a member of her staff. If this is an urgent matter, please do not wait for office hours; you may want to call (413) 335-1362 or (617) 722-2060.

If you are unable to attend at these times or if you have a time-sensitive or private matter, Representative Domb's office can be reached via email at mindy.domb@mahouse.gov or via phone at (413) 335-1362 or (617) 722-2060. Please include your name, address, and contact information when reaching out to the office. Rep. Domb holds community office hours every month in the district and meets regularly with residents.

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The Sentinel

Voting: Your census is required to keep your voting status active

BELCHERTOWN – Unfortunately, there are still thousands of Town Census forms yet to be returned.

If we do not receive your census, we are mandated by State Law: <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleVIII/Chapter51/Section37> to send out post-paid return postcards to each resident. This is not how we want your tax dollars spent. Help us save your money by

returning your census today. The second reason to return your census is that it will keep your voter status active, which is very important as we enter election season.

Please feel free to call our office with any questions on the importance of returning the yearly census or on your voting status. We are always happy to help. 413-323-0281.



EDIC from page 1

“Matt has to enter it into the tracking system. And then MassDevelopment sometimes gets inquiries, and they would add and let Matt know also,” said EDIC member Jonathan Spiegel.

“To take that one step further, that sheet and contacts that MassDevelopment gets, they’ll be sharing with us on a regular basis, correct?” Dutton added.

The protocol comes as the board advances work on Parcel D through an extension of a MassDevelopment site readiness grant. Spiegel said EDIC members, town officials, and consultants recently met with the state agency to narrow the scope and remove language that would have left the town on the hook for cost overruns.

“We reiterated that there were three or four really important things ... that are the most important things to get done,” Spiegel said, describing a conference call with MassDevelopment and engineering firm Tighe & Bond. He said the revised agreement now focuses on “furthering the preliminary design” and technical work to help market the property.

“The grant money is going to be spent on furthering the preliminary design ... all the items that market the property,” Town Administrator Steve Williams told the board. “We’re not going to take that step” into full construction documents, he said.

Later in the meeting, the EDIC voted 6-0 to authorize Chair Kirk Stephens to sign the latest version of the site readiness grant extension.

Meanwhile, Robert Jenkins of MassDevelopment said the agency is exploring whether it can list the Belchertown parcels on its own statewide property marketing website once a broker is chosen.

“I can see if we can list it on our site,” Jenkins said. “Our involvement has only been with the site readiness grant, but I can check just see if it’s okay for us to list it.”

Spiegel said the goal of the combined grant work and new broker protocol is to make sure no serious prospect falls through the cracks.

“In the past, we’ve had different people take those conversations to different depths. I’ve done that,” he said. “I think there’s a value in having it clear how we capture the information and we don’t lose somebody’s interest.”

CLOSURE from page 1

He added that improvements around Jabish Brook may advance on the town side, noting “the Jabish Brook parking is at the top of the list” in the town capital plan.

Cameron confirmed that world language classes will not run at Jabish Brook under the new model.

“There is not going to be any foreign language at Jabish,” he said.

He linked the change to long-term hiring difficulties. “We couldn’t find a French teacher for so long,

and then Spanish ... and then we moved one to the high school,” Cameron said.

The shift is expected to reduce the number of students in the state’s Seal of Bilingualism pathway, but the district plans to maintain that opportunity through Belchertown High School.

“We probably won’t have as many students doing it, but certainly it’s still the opportunity,” Cameron said. “We will work with the high school.”

Cameron said two concerns stood out from the listening sessions: the Cold Spring playground and how

sixth graders will fit in at Jabish. “The playground at Cold Springs was a big” topic, he said, along with “sixth grade recess going to Jabish.”

Recess at Jabish is currently more informal than at the elementary schools.

“Their recess is a little bit different. It’s more of hanging out for 10 to 15 minutes. It’s not like Swift River,” Cameron said.

Parents also raised questions about younger students mixing with older peers at social events.

One idea is to phase in mixed-grade dances.

“Maybe we start with just sixth grade and then sixth grade, seventh, and then sixth, seventh, and eighth,” Cameron said.

The future of playground equipment was another focus. Cameron said the Cold Spring structure will be evaluated, along with aging equipment at Swift River. The Cold Spring playground “is cemented in,” he said, and “the one at Swift River needs to be taken down. It’s just not in good shape.”

Despite worries, Cameron said many families appreciate that students will stay longer in a single school.

“We appreciate that they’re not going to have to move schools after one or two years,” he said.

Under the new configuration, some students may spend as many as five years in the same building.

Cameron pledged to keep the committee and community informed as more details are worked out.

“Once I meet with the parents, I will give you an update ... and then I will have a timeline of certain events that will occur from March,” he said.

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ANNUAL CEMETERY CLEANING NOTIFICATION

The Department of Public Works, Maintenance Division will be conducting the annual removal of ALL seasonal decorations within the Towns’ Cemeteries. For anyone wishing to retrieve personal graveside items, please do so before March 23, 2026.

All items will be removed beginning March 23, 2026.

Welcome Dr. Meunier

We are excited to introduce the newest addition to Ludlow Family Dentistry, Dr. Zachary D. Meunier. Dr. Meunier is returning to Western Massachusetts and is a general dentist who has earned his D.M.D. degree from Midwestern University in Illinois.

During dental school Dr. Meunier presented research nationally at the American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research (AADOCR) conference in Portland, Oregon through the Academic Dental Career Fellowship Program (ADCFP). He also lectured and taught dental students reflecting his dedication to both excellent patient care and continued dental education.

Dr. Meunier has shadowed and trained alongside specialists across every dental discipline and completed one-on-one implant training through the Implant Pathway program. As a general dentist, he provides endodontics, implant dentistry, and oral surgery while referring highly complex cases to specialists to ensure the best outcomes for his patients.

He believes in listening carefully to his patients to fully understand their needs and concerns, allowing him to provide personalized, high-quality care for every individual.

Outside the office, Dr. Meunier and his wife, Joyce, share their home with their three loving cats. He enjoys cooking, mountain climbing, hiking and camping.

Dr. Meunier looks forward to partnering with you in achieving a lifetime of excellent oral health.

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COMMUNITY

Quaboag Valley Relay for Life seeing more teams

BELCHERTOWN – The Quaboag Valley Relay for Life is looking for more teams, more team members, Cancer survivors, and donations for our Relay on May 30 on the Belchertown Common from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.



You can form a team in memory or honor of a loved one or friend to raise donations for the American Cancer Society and raise awareness of this dreaded disease, Cancer. Cancer has touched EVERYONE, and we need your help to rid the world of Cancer as we know it. If you are a survivor, we would like you to get registered and come for a walk with us on May 30. If you aren't able to walk, just come and hang out with us. All survivors who get registered will receive a free Survivor shirt and be treated to a free luncheon for you and a caregiver.

year, there will be a Big Craft Fair going on at the same time. This event also benefits the American Cancer Society. There will be many Gift Baskets you can purchase tickets to win. We have ordered great weather for this event too.

For each person who joins a team and donates or gets donations of at least \$100 will get a free HOPE shirt to wear with pride, knowing you have helped the American Cancer Society raise money for their many services to our Survivors. We like all team members to get a little donation, but you don't have to get the \$100 necessary to get the free HOPE shirt. To donate, form a team, join a team, or register as a survivor, please go to the following link: <http://main.acevents.org/goto/eleanoregray>. If you have any questions, please email ctellie@juno.com.

Open positions for May 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 5-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.

Save the date for the STM and ATM on May 11

BELCHERTOWN – Mark your calendars, Belchertown.

Our Annual Town Meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 11, 2026, beginning at 7 p.m. Please note that a Special Town Meeting will also be held that same eve-

ning, beginning at 6:30 p.m.

All registered voters in the Town of Belchertown are encouraged to attend. Your voice matters - come be a part of the decisions that shape our community! Stay tuned for more details.

SUMMIT from page 1

propel them forward to the final, big Summit this weekend.

"The Summit is open to everyone. Whether you're already involved with a committee or community group, looking to get more involved, or simply interested in hearing what's happening around town, we encourage everyone to attend," said Stahl.

The Summit will feature delicious, donated refreshments from local businesses Auntie Elsie's, Morning Glory Bread, Oak & Ash Farm, and Starbucks.

The members who put together the Summit include members from the Belchertown Creative Economy Committee, the Belchertown Cultural Council, town officials, staff from the Communication and Planning Departments, and Cultural District Manager Lisa Stahl.

"[I love most the] passion of the volunteers - the town runs on a volunteer economy and helps supplement the operations of the town," said Jen Turner.

The day will begin with check-in at 9:30 a.m., followed by a welcome and introduction, then session one of roundtable discus-



Library Director Cyndi Harbeson, Cultural District Manager Lisa Stahl, Jennifer Turner, and members from Radically Rural with the Travelling Quilt.

TURLEY PHOTO BY EMILY-ROSE PAPPAS

sions from 10 to 10:45 a.m. Signature events will include Money and Marketing, Land Use and Space, and Volunteer Recruitment and Retention. Another roundtable discussion will take place, and at the end of the Summit will

have a chance for feedback and more.

"We hope this is the beginning of a new tradition and that each year we can build on the momentum of this year's Summit to create an event that becomes a lasting

staple in the Belchertown community," said Stahl.

Join the town this Saturday in the Town Hall Auditorium at 9:30 a.m. for a wonderful opportunity to share what you want the Belchertown community to become.

THE BEST FRESH FOR ST. PATRICK'S DAY!

GOING GREEN SPECIALS March 11th-17th

- Green Cabbage 59¢/lb
- Brussels Sprouts \$1.99/lb
- Asparagus \$3.99/lb
- Yukon Gold Potatoes 5 lb Bag \$2.99
- Yellow Onions 2 lb Bag \$1.49
- Baby Carrots 1 lb Bag 2 For \$3.00
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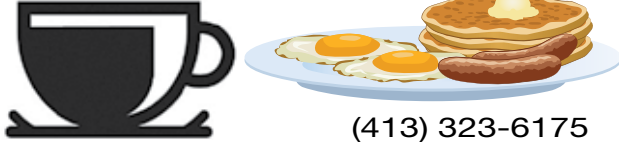
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SOCIAL SECURITY

Matters

By Russell Gloor

Is there income tax on Social Security benefits?

Dear Rusty:

The Trump Administration is saying that now there will be no taxes on Social Security benefits. Since we're getting ready to start our 2025 income tax return, can you explain how this all works?

Signed: Confused Taxpayer

Dear Confused Taxpayer:

You are obviously referring to the so-called "One Big, Beautiful Bill" and how that bill affects income tax on your Social Security benefits. And this is because of the publicity surrounding the so-called "one big, beautiful bill" enacted last year, which claims to "eliminate income tax on Social Security benefits." Well, that bill did, yet technically didn't, fully eliminate income tax on benefits." Allow me to explain.

The OBBB does eliminate income tax on most SS benefits, but it does so in a somewhat unique way – by providing an additional \$6,000 (per person) deduction to your federal taxable income as reported to the IRS. Thus, you will pay less total income tax when you file your taxes with the IRS because of that additional deduction to your taxable income.

The extra deduction is available to those over age 65 and is meant to offset the income tax which will still be levied by the IRS on the SS benefits you received in 2025. Essentially, the rules governing income tax on Social Security benefits have not changed.

The IRS will still levy income tax on your SS benefits if your combined income from all sources (known as your "provisional income") is over \$32,000 as a married couple filing jointly or more than \$25,000 if you file as an individual. If your provisional income is below the threshold for your IRS filing status, you will pay no income tax on your received 2025 SS benefits.

But if your provisional income exceeds the threshold for your IRS filing status, then somewhere between 50% and 85% of your received SS benefits will be taxed (how much SS income to be taxed depends on your combined income in 2025). By now, you should have received form 1099-SSA which advised of your 2025 Social Security income, including any income tax you had withheld from

your SS benefits.

This income should be reported when submitting your 2025 income tax return. If your "provisional income" is over \$32,000 as a married couple filing jointly (or over \$25,000 as an individual filer), then your 2025 SS benefits will still be taxed by the IRS. But when completing your 2025 Income Tax Return, you will also be able to claim an additional \$6,000 per person (\$12,000 if you file jointly), which will likely offset any income tax you must pay due to the SS benefits you received in 2025.

If you use a tax preparer or tax preparation software, they will guide you through this calculation. Note, too, that the \$6,000 per person deduction amount will be less if your combined taxable income is more than \$150,000 as a married couple (or more than \$75,000 as a single filer).

Be aware, though, that the OBBB is temporary tax accommodation which expires after tax year 2028. And that's because the process used to pass the bill in Congress (a "budget reconciliation" process) didn't actually change SS law; rather it provided a way around it to offset income tax paid on SS benefits.

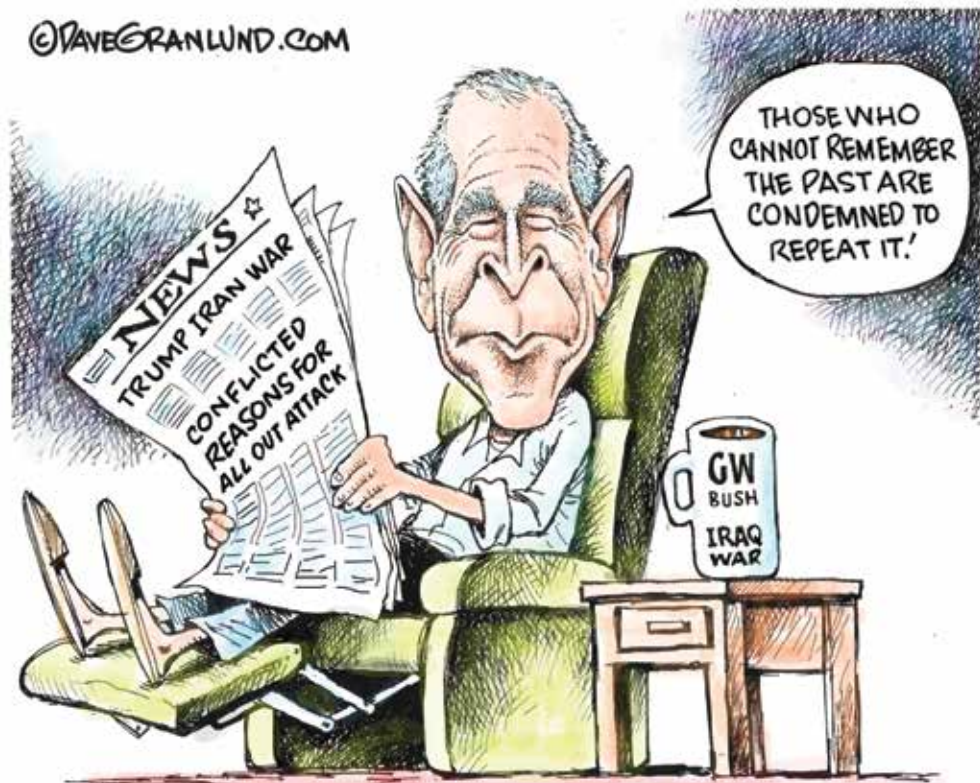
So, to recap, the IRS can still levy income tax on your received Social Security benefits but, because of the OBBB, you will likely also (depending on your provisional income level) receive an extra deduction which offsets any taxes calculated on your Social Security benefits.

Finally, be aware that if your first husband also predeceases you, you will then become eligible for a surviving ex-spouse benefit from him, even if he has remarried.

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 amac-foundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadvisor@amac-foundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

OPINION

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An herb catalog and a favorite herb

One of my favorite seed and plant catalogs of all time is Richters Herbs (richters.com). I look forward to the paper copy arriving in the mail by early December.

The company is out of Ontario, Canada, and offers over 1,200 unique varieties, mostly herbs of all kinds with a few vegetables thrown in for good measure. I've ordered from them for well over two decades and think their products are just great, everything from common culinary herbs to unique medicinal plants and everything in between, even dye plants and ornamentals.

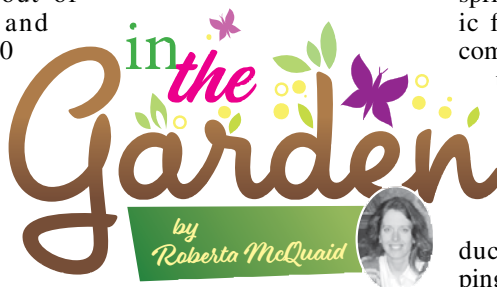
I love how the seeds are packaged in foil lined envelopes and quantities are liberal, often giving you enough seed for two or three years of sowing, depending on the variety. On occasion I have had to order plants that I couldn't find locally and despite the distance, they arrive in good shape.

Basil (*Ocimum* spp) is one plant in particular that we typically order seed of, and we will soon be starting it indoors. The Richters catalog boasts 29 varieties, and we grow nine of them in the Paul Rogers Herb Garden at Old Sturbridge Village.

A trip to our herb garden in season is really worthwhile. Who doesn't like Italian or Genovese basil? Picture the pesto!

But in addition to our old favorites, there is lemon, anise, cinnamon and spice, each with fragrant leaves. Looking for unique foliage? Try dark opal, whose leaves are tinted dark purple or bush basil, whose tiny leaves altogether make a round globe of a plant, and who could leave out lettuce leaf, with its crinkled pale green leaves.

Over the years I have found that there are just a few obstacles to growing great basil. Seeds should be planted indoors – rarely will they do well from an outdoor sowing.



Start basil about the same time that tomatoes are sown, in mid to late March. Make shallow furrows and space the seed one-eighth of an inch apart in rows within a small pot or seed pack. When true leaves form pluck out the tiny seedling and transplant it into a cell of a four or six pack, or an individual tiny pot.

Grow on indoors until the weather improves. Basil is particularly cold sensitive, so be sure that all danger of frost has passed before transplanting it into the garden.

Downy mildew disease was discovered to be prevalent some years back. While I don't take any particular precautions, and my basil shows little sign of the familiar leaf blotching, Richters does offer seeds of resistant varieties for you to try if this disease has been troublesome in your garden.

Basil foliage has also been known to burn if planted outdoors without a period of hardening off. For this reason, gradually get seedlings used to bright sun and wind over the course of a week before planting in the ground.

Provide your transplants with fertile, well-drained soil in a sunny spot. If, over the course of the summer you notice that the leaves are

no longer grass-green, but instead are pale or even turning brown, your plants may have a nitrogen deficiency.

I usually have had to "top dress" my basil twice after planting, each time with a sprinkling of balanced organic fertilizer and some aged compost. Usually they green up in a matter of days.

Basil has the insatiable desire to flower. We must "deadhead" or the plant will fulfill its earthly desire to reproduce by making and dropping seed, all at the expense of foliage production.

Since we grow this plant for its leaves and not its seed, or its flowers for that matter, clip away the buds at the first sign of them. Another challenge to basil growing has been the Japanese beetle.

Basil leaves riddled with chew marks should best be removed. Japanese beetles are relatively easy to hand pick in the morning and at night.

A gentle tap on a leaf will easily knock beetles into a wide mouth jar of soapy water positioned underneath. Ideally, basil leaves should be harvested after the dew has dried in the morning but before the sun shines too brightly; at that particular time its oils are the most pungent.

Enjoy the new catalog recommendation and be sure to get those basil seeds started by the end of the month.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 34 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.

single male may mate with up to 15 different females in his territory. Red winged blackbirds can form huge roosts during the winter of up to a million birds.

Brimfield resident

A Brimfield resident sent an email recently. He said, "On Saturday I was driving to West Springfield to put up some picture at the library for an exhibit. Some members of the Allen Bird Club are displaying photographs there for the month of March. On the way I stopped by a nest in Ludlow that bald eagles have used for at least three years."

In Brimfield, he said, "Lately we have been seeing a Cooper's several times in the yard and a broad-winged hawk was seen on Feb. 22. The broad-winged hawk sat in a tree in front of the house for over an hour. Last

year a pair of broad-wings had a nest on the next door neighbor's property. They could see the nest from their deck, but I was never able to see the nest walking around near where they described its location."

Turkey vultures

On Feb. 11, the Brimfield resident saw a turkey vulture in the center of Palmer near the intersection of Routes 20 and 32. This week, his wife saw 25 turkey vultures flying above that area. They often see vultures soaring over that area and the first of the year shows up in mid-February. He said, "I believe the vultures nest in the area, possibly on or near Mount Dumplin that is just north of the turnpike ramps."

Please see **BACKYARD**, page 7

Turley Publications Letters to the Editor Policy

Letters to the editor should be 350 words or less in length. No unsigned or anonymous opinions will be published. We require letter writers to include his or her town of residence and home telephone number. We must authenticate authorship prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions deemed to be libelous or contain unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks, defamation of character and offensive language. All unknown or alleged facts and quotations offered by the author need to cite credible, unbiased sources. Send letters to: Sentinel, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069 or via email to sentinel@turley.com. The deadline for submissions is Friday at 5 p.m.

Turley Election Policy

This newspaper will print free self-submitted statements of candidacy only four weeks or more out from the election. All candidates running in both contested and uncontested races are asked to submit their statements to the editor to include only biographical and campaign platform details. Total word count for statements is limited to between 300-500 words maximum. Please include a photo. We will not publish any statements of candidacy inside the four weeks from election threshold. To publish any other campaign publicity during the race, please contact our advertising representatives. We also do not allow personal attacks against other candidates or political parties in statements of candidacy, nor do we publish for free any information about key endorsements or political fundraisers.

Letters to the editor of no more than 250 words from supporters endorsing specific candidates or discussing campaign issues are limited to three total per author during the election season. No election letters will appear in the final edition before the election. We reserve the right to edit all statements of candidacy and letters to the editor to meet our guidelines.

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By Ellenor Downer

On March 2, I received an email from a Worthington resident that he just saw a red-winged blackbird.

Male red-winged blackbirds arrive before the females. They are one of the first birds to return to northern breeding grounds, arriving in late February or early March.

Red-winged blackbirds are abundant songbirds, who inhabit marshes, wetlands and fields. The male is glossy black with bright red and yellow shoulder patches or epaulets. Females have



Male red-winged blackbird

streaked brown plumage.

The highly territorial males often sit on high perches, singing and displaying their epaulets. Their "conk-la-ree" is heard frequently. They are known for "dive bombing" crows, hawks and even humans to defend their territory. They primarily eat

insects such as beetles, dragonflies and moths during the breeding season and seeds and grains during fall and winter.

They nest in loosely associated colonies in shrubs or cattails and are found across most of Northern America. They are polygamous and a



Sunrise on the Quabbin (photo by Ed Comeau).

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Free Photo Workshop at Pelham library

PELHAM - The Pelham Public Library will be hosting a free workshop for beginner photographers on Saturday, March 21, from 12:30 to 1:30 pm.

Whether you are using a smartphone, DSLR, or mirrorless camera, a free one-hour nature photography workshop at the Pelham Library will help you get more out of your camera and improve your photos.

Nature photographer Ed Comeau will lead a presentation covering core photography concepts that

include composition, lighting, framing, depth of field, and more. The workshop is designed for beginners and casual photographers and focuses on techniques that apply across all types of cameras and devices.

Ed's photography centers on landscapes and wildlife of the Quabbin Reservoir region, as well as images from Maine, Alaska, and other locations. His work has been exhibited in a number of places in the valley as well as featured in the Country Bank calendar

for the past two years. You can find his work at www.comeauphotography.com and on Instagram @edcomeauphotography.

The workshop is free and open to the public. No registration is required.

Event Details: Saturday, March 21, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. at the Pelham Public Library, 2 South Valley Road, Pelham, MA 01002. Call 413-253-0657 for more information.

St. Francis of Assisi's announces its Holy Week schedule

Palm Sunday

March 28 and 29: The Mass celebration of the triumphal entry of Jesus into the Holy City will take place on Saturday, at the 4 p.m. Vigil and on Sunday at 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

Sacred Triduum Services Holy Thursday

April 2: As we begin the Sacred Triduum, we commemorate Jesus's betrayal by Judas with the Mass of the Lord's Supper at 7 p.m., followed by Adoration in the "Garden of Gethsemane" until 10 p.m. The garden will be set up in a corner of the main Church.

Good Friday

April 3: At 7 p.m., the Sacred Triduum continues with the commemoration



of Jesus' passion and death, including the Veneration of the Cross.

Additionally, the following devotionals will be offered during the day:

Children's Stations of the Cross will be offered at 11 a.m. for children in grades K-6 and their families. During the hours of noon to 3 p.m., all are encouraged to spend silent time in prayer. At 3 p.m., the Stations of the Cross will be prayed.

Holy Saturday

April 4: At 8 a.m., the com-

munity will hold a Prayer Service with the Rites of Preparation for those entering the Church during the Easter Vigil.

At 11:30 a.m., the Blessing of Easter Food Baskets will take place in the Church gathering space.

Easter Vigil

April 4: The Sacred Triduum concludes with the Easter Vigil, which will take place at 8 p.m., beginning with the lighting of the Easter fire outside the Church, followed by the Procession of Light into the Church. This is the Church's greatest liturgy, which invites us to truly enter into the great mystery of our faith regarding the death and resurrection of the Lord.

Wilbraham Women's Club to host Fashion Show

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham Women's Club is sponsoring a FASHION SHOW LUNCHEON on Thursday, April 23, at the St. Cecilia Parish Center, 42 Main St., Wilbraham.

Clothing from CHICO'S in the Longmeadow Shops will be featured. The catered luncheon choices are Salmon

with dill sauce or Chicken Francaise. There will also be a raffle for many prizes and gift certificates.

Join us at 11:30 a.m. for a social time with hors d'oeuvres, followed by lunch at noon. The donation is \$42 and is a fundraiser for the club's scholarships and charitable donations to needy

organizations in the area. For reservations, please make checks payable to Wilbraham Women's Club and mail them to Sue Agnew, 7 Aspen Dr., Wilbraham, 01095. For questions, call Sue at 596-9480. Be sure to include the meal choice in the memo of the check. Also, include whom you wish to sit with.

BACKYARD from page 6

Other birds and more

The Brimfield residents still has lots of junco about as well as a healthy the gray squirrel population. Recently they saw two and sometimes three red squirrels. He is enjoying the longer days and looking forward to warmer temperatures.

Red-tailed hawk

A Rutland couple saw a red-tailed hawk quickly grab a gray squirrel her husband shot. They watched it hungrily consume a "warm meal" in the yard. They moved their feeder nearer to the house due to the deep snow. They

have lots of black-capped chickadees and woodpeckers come to the new location

Bluebirds

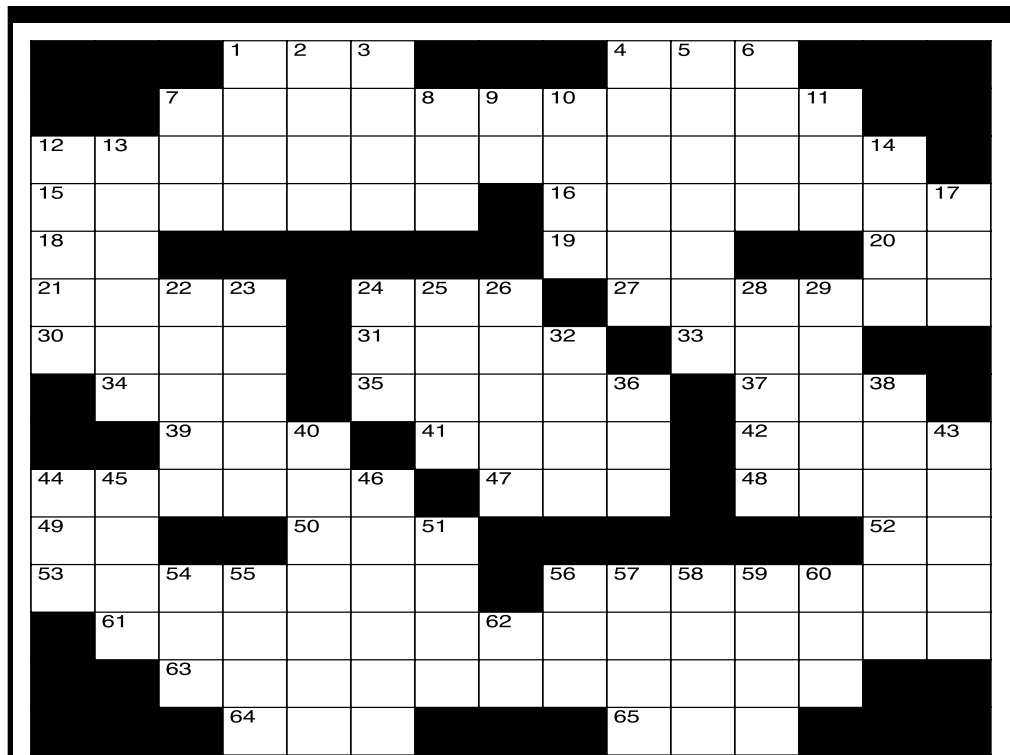
An Oakham resident sees bluebirds on a daily basis. She enjoys watching them.

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by emailing mybackyard88@aol.com or edowner@turley.com or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005. The Palmer office has a new phone system and I will be getting an extension where messages may be left. I will publish the number as soon as it is set up.

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30. Scottish island group
31. Expression of annoyance
33. Large tree
34. Engine additive
35. Conspiracy
37. Drunkard

39. Someone who is morally reprehensible
41. Ancient Syrian city
42. Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls
44. Carry (slang)
47. Sweet potato
48. European river
49. The Golden State
50. Windy City ballplayer
52. New Testament
53. Possess spiritually
56. A treeless grassy plain
61. Popular historical novel
63. In a law-abiding way
64. A place to sleep
65. Criticize

4. Occupant
5. Member of Great Plains people
6. Social media firm
7. Digital audiotape
8. Midway between east and southeast
9. Chronic, progressive disease
10. Chinese lute
11. Not wet
12. Moves wings up and down
13. Communication devices
14. Swiss river
17. Female sibling
22. Receive
23. Relating to a type
24. General's assistant (abbr.)
25. Steep bank
26. Taxi driver
28. Moves into without

29. Bicycle manufacturer
32. Traditional rhythmic pattern
36. Fugitives are on it
38. Bitter-tasting organic substance
40. Die
43. Matched
44. Literary genre ___-fi
45. Cannot
46. Pounded
51. British rock group
54. Debt relief order
55. 2006 NL Cy Young winner
56. Green vegetable
57. Tough outer skin of fruit
58. ___ Spumante (Italian wine)
59. Ailments
60. Famed singer Charles
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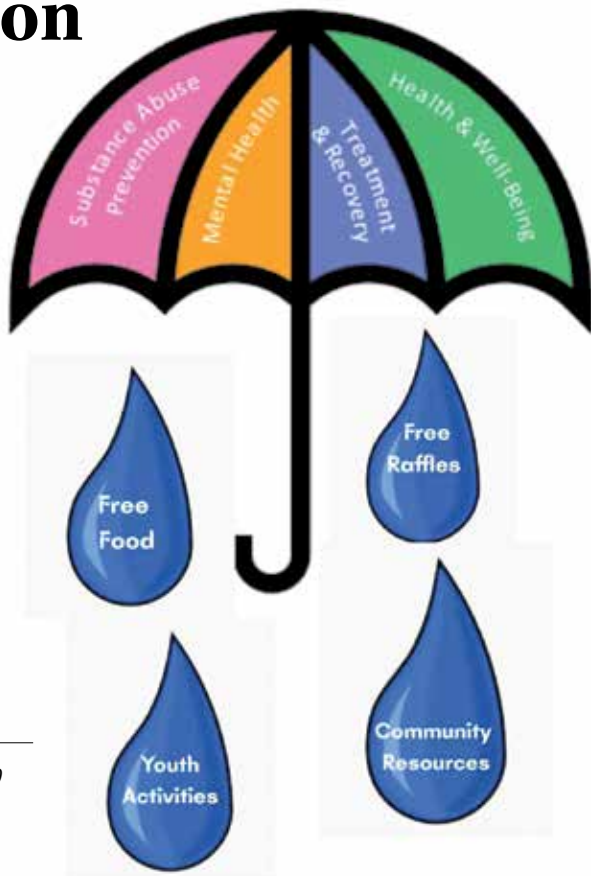
We're on Facebook!

COMMUNITY

BOAT Umbrella of Wellness returning soon

BELCHERTOWN – Belchertown Overcoming Adversity Together will be hosting its 5th Annual Umbrella of Wellness Fair at Chestnut Hill Community School on May 16, from noon to 4 p.m., with many things to enjoy, and resources to take advantage of.

The purpose of this fair is to promote health and wellness to our community through education, engagement and empowerment. We anticipate over 60 organizations hosting tables, youth activities, free raffle giveaways, a token worth \$10.00 at any of the food trucks, Hidden in Plain Sight Tractor, Touch-a-Truck, our main stage speaker, Former NFL Patriot's player: Chris Sullivan, and much more!!



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Get ready for the 5th year of a wonderful event of service and fun for the community.

Jabish Brook Middle School announces Quarter 2 Honor Roll

BELCHERTOWN – Congratulations to those on the Honor Roll at Jabish Brook Middle School.

McNeill, Lucas Nesbitt, Anna Sherwood, Jaden Son, Callen Stellato, and Layjai Tiangebe.

Attebury, Jaymes Besaw, Nolan Busse, Alexis Campos, Zachariah Cartel, Bradyn Cavanaugh, Parker Chianciola, Tucker Chotkowski, Gwyneth Conlin, Arin Freilicher, Harper Glenn, Tyler Goodsell, Nicholas Hodgen, Lelia Hulvey, Lilah Jordan, Ayva Kaplan, Sophie Karabetsos, Claire Lacroix, Karolina Landrio, Caleb MacDonald, Amelia Mann, Charlotte Martin, Logan Martin, Hazel Martins, Jaxson Martins, Elizabeth McSpadden, Peyton Milou, Adam Mueller, Liam O'Connell, Cora Pelletier, Lillian Pelletier, Rosalie Pelletier, Amaya Peters, Jonathan Rainaud, Stella Reece, Declan Rege, Addyson Renkie, Hailey Rosienski, Aliya Schneider, Khloe Shaik, Reese Sheldon, Krystian Skora, Asher Sloat, Daniel Stanton, Ruby Stapt, Wyatt Swiatowski, Annabelle Tarnawa, Cora Thomas, Nolan Timms, Nicholas Wall, Reese Warchelak, Lilianna Whalen, and Aiden Yacek.

Grade 8 High Honors:

Joshua Annis, Miranda Barrett, Ryan Blazejewski, Eliza Boyko, Sophia Brown, Laurah Chaverri, Anna Cormier, Lilliana Deleo, Brielle DuBois, Leo Fisher, Heaven Foster, Lucas Kofidis, Olivia Leahy, Orelia Manduley, Sovanmolika Mao, Olivia Murphy, Madelyn Murray, Gracelynn Nite, Katalina Pazos, Alexa Pobieglo, Bentley Pope, Quinn Rathburn, Emma Scoon, Logan West, Benjamin Williams, and Carter Winterle.

Grade 8 Honors:

Elizabeth Andrews, Rioghan Auffrey, Jack Bolduc, Olivia Brach, Emery Calvanese, Isabella Chapman, Natalie Couture, Kiernan Crosby, Emma Dean, Bridget Donah, Amelia Donovan, Ariaiah Dubreuil, Awrenna Duncan, Jeffrey Duprey, Alina Fisher, Maya Gariepy, Flynn Goldman, Archer Goraj, Jazmine Griffin, Ruby Harrington, Alilah Jordan, Lillian Jurczyk, Kristofer Kelly, Lauren Lebeau, Samuel Leblond, Ryan Litz, Torrence MacTavish, Emelia Maldanis, Nolan Martinez, Donovan, McMahon, Aliah Miller, Avery Miller, Tenzin Namgyal, Giana Patruno, Zackary Ritter, Alexandra Ronke-Golding, Matthew Santos, John Shattuck, Jacob Staples, Collin Verrochi, and Amelia Wilcox.

Grade 7 Honors:

Ethan Arceri, Quinn

Belchertown Select Board announces board/committee vacancies

BELCHERTOWN – The Belchertown Select Board is looking for citizens interested in sharing their expertise by serving on a Town Board/Committee. If you have time and are interested in getting involved in your Town's activities, please 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). You may also submit a volunteer form on our website: <https://www.belchertown.org/374/Volunteer>

All vacancies are posted until filled.

The Town wishes to fill the following vacancies:

Agricultural Commission: The Town wishes to fill two associate member seats on the Agricultural Commission. This commission promotes agricultural-based economic opportunities; preserves, revitalizes and sustains the Belchertown agricultural industries, and encourages the pursuit of agriculture as a career opportunity and lifestyle.

Belchertown Buildings & Grounds Committee: The Town wishes to fill one (1) full real estate member seat and one (1) associate member seat on the Belchertown Buildings and Grounds Committee. The committee will advise the Town and the Select Board on funding opportunities for maintaining and developing Town buildings that fit the guidelines of repurpose and/or renovation to benefit the local economy and population as well as advising on historical and cultural development opportunities. Expertise with real estate/architecture, grant writing, or historical experience to strengthen the skill set of the committee is highly preferred.

Board of Assessors: The Town of Belchertown is looking to fill a vacancy on the Board of Assessors. This position has a stipend of \$1,000 per year. This recently vacated position will be appointed in accordance with the provisions outlined in MGL Chapter 41, Section 11 by a joint appointment of the Board of Assessors and Select Board. The appointed individual will fill the seat's remaining term and shall perform duties of the office

until the next annual election in May 2026. The applicant must be a registered voter in the Town of Belchertown.

In accordance with MCL Chapter 59, Section 21, the Assessors shall assess all taxes duly certified to them and perform all necessary duties as defined in MGL Chapter 59. Some of the duties include the classification and valuation of all real and personal property along with setting the tax rate each fiscal year.

For further information, contact Jay Whelihan, Director of Assessments, at 323-0413, jwhelihan@belchertown.org or Steve Williams, Town Manager, at 323-0403.

Capital Improvement Planning Committee: Belchertown is seeking two (2) residents with demonstrated knowledge of construction, facility maintenance, fleet management, architecture, engineering, or a related field to fill a full member seat.

Communications Committee: The Belchertown Communications Committee is looking for two (2) new full members and two (2) associate members to help shape how our town shares news and stays connected. This group has supported projects like the Belchertown.org upgrade, Carriagetown Chronicles, and installing a broader social media strategy. We're seeking residents with everyday skills in communications, document preparation, accessibility, social media, or technology - especially individuals with practical experience using AI in workplace or business settings, to support the careful and responsible adoption of these tools in town government.

Creative Economy Committee: The Town of Belchertown is accepting letters of interest to fill one (1) vacancy on the Creative Economy Committee. This Committee oversees the strategic planning, municipal arts program development, outreach & marketing, activity implementation, evaluation & reporting, and coordinates arts and culture outreach for the town of Belchertown and forthcoming Cultural District.

Pioneer Valley Transit Authority Advisory Board: The Town is seeking an individual to represent and serve as a Liaison to the Town of

Belchertown on the PVTA Advisory Board. Interested individuals should have the time and desire to attend respective meetings in Springfield and periodically review the PVTA's services to the Town and its contiguous communities.

Quaboag Valley Business Assistance Corporation (QVBAC) / Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation (QVDC) Board Member: The Town is seeking an individual to represent and serve as a Liaison to the Town of Belchertown on the QVBAC to bring the concerns of Belchertown's residents and small business community forward to ensure that the services provided by the QVBAC/QVDC are in line with the town's needs. The board member also helps disseminate information from the QVBAC board to Belchertown's residents and small business community, especially when there is a particular program or initiative they'd benefit from.

While no business acumen is required, an interest in and or connections with Belchertown's small business community would be advantageous. Enthusiasm for Belchertown, and the ability to determine and communicate the interests of its residents are the most important qualifications. For more information about the Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation and the Quaboag Valley Business Assistance Corporation, please visit www.qvdc.org.

Veterans' Services Advisory Board (VSAB): The Town is looking to fill one (1) vacancy on the VSAB. The Board works closely with the Town's Veterans' Agent on issues pertaining to veterans to include but not limited to Veterans Day and Memorial Day ceremonies, war memorials, veterans' graves or any other related areas of concern.

Zoning Board of Appeals: The Town wishes to fill two (2) openings for associate member seats 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.

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Aug 30.....8-Day Nova Scotia Cruisefrom \$1699

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SPORTS

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B-Town grabs playoff win



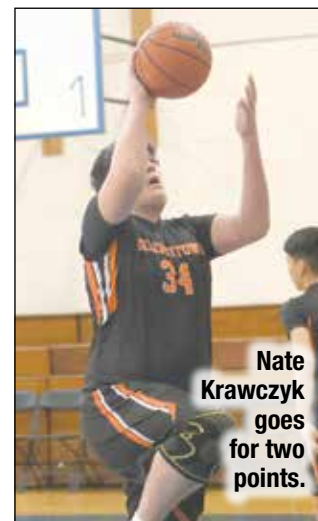
Nico Fazio nails the easy score.



Kris Kelly goes for a layup.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY
WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM
Donovan McMahan holds the ball near the top of the arc.



Nate Krawczyk goes for two points.



Tenzin Namgyal takes the short jump shot.



Leo Fisher is pressured near the arc.

BELCHERTOWN – In last week’s playoff matchup at Jabish Brook Middle School, Belchertown 7/8 in the Blue-Green Division defeated Hampshire 52-34. The Orioles would unfortunately fall in the next round to Greenfield 53-39.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

The participants are off in the 48th running of the Holyoke St. Patrick’s Road Race last March.

Road Race set to kick off big weekend

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

HOLYOKE – Last March, for the first time in several years, it was gorgeous weather for the Holyoke St. Patrick’s Road Race.

More than 6,000 people participated in this year’s event, with nearly 5,000 participants finishing the 10K, or 6.2-mile course.

It was Samuel Whittaker of Salem, CT, who finished the race in 31:24. Alex Corbett, who placed second in last year’s race, came in 23 seconds later at 31:47.

The top female finisher was Angelia Rafter at 34:13 and she placed 12th overall. Rafter is from Glastonbury, CT.

Among local finishers, Matt Provost of Monson was 19th overall at 35:09. Ryan Davis of South Hadley was a close 20th at 35:10. Lindsay Smith of South Hadley finished 22nd at 35:12.

While the race course,

commonly known as a “hilly” course throughout downtown Holyoke ending with a turn off Beech St. and up the hill on Hampden St. toward the finish line remained largely the same, there was one noticeable change in this year’s event.

Presidential Timing took over the official timing duties after 4RUN3 went out of business last year. Those looking for more results from the events can go to www.presidentialtiming.com to look at more specific results from the race. Like previous

timers, you can look up people by name and bib number to get more specific results.

This year, the road race is set to take place on Saturday, Mar. 21 with the main race beginning at 1 p.m.

Please see **RACE**, page 10



The first wave of harriers starts the course on Maple St.

Local high school seniors headed to All-Star Games

SPRINGFIELD – The Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame announced the team rosters for the 2026 Western Massachusetts Senior High School All-Star Games. On Friday, Mar. 20, the Hall of Fame will host the 2026 All-Star event on the Jerry Colangelo Court of Dreams at the Hall of Fame. Sixty of the region’s top seniors were selected from different divisions to participate in the final high school contests of their prep career.

“We are honored to welcome Western Massachusetts’ top high school basketball players to the 15th annual All-Star celebration at the Basketball Hall of Fame,” said John L. Doleva, President and CEO of the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame. “This event is a special opportunity to recognize the hard work and achievements of these outstanding seniors, and we invite the community to join us as they take the court one final time in their high school careers.”

A committee of local coaches and media members, representing each division on both the boys’ and girls’ sides, selected the teams. Using the designated classes for the PVIAC Tournament, the players will be divided into six teams: two girls’ teams, two boys’ teams of Class A and B players, and two boys’ teams of Class C and D players. Only graduating

seniors are eligible for the All-Star Games. Rosters are on the next page.

For the 15th year, the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame will recognize one boy and one girl as the Western Massachusetts Players of the Year. A special presentation will be made for the recipients during halftime of one of the participating games. A panel of local media members selects the award winners, who are recognized for their achievements on the court as well as their sportsmanship and character off the court.

Participants in the Boys Class C and D game include: Ware’s Jack Gaudreau and Brady Guimond, Palmer’s Dylan Doherty, Gavin Smola, and Stephen Fredette, Mahar’s Jayden Delgado, Granby’s Zavien Fernandez, and Monson’s Austin Meacham.

In the girls game, participants include: Minnechaug’s Cailin O’Brien, Kelly Cronin, and Elizabeth Woytowicz, Mahar’s Hayden Comeau, and Agawam’s Isabella Laprise,

And in the Boys A and B game, participants include: Holyoke’s Jordan King-Perilli, Chicopee’s Dominic Garcia, Belchertown’s Jake Pacunas, Minnechaug’s Miles Fergus, Chicopee Comprehensive’s Brody Fay, and South Hadley’s Isiah James.

SPORTS

T-Birds upset by Wild

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds (22-27-5-2) put forth a big push down the stretch but succumbed to a late goal in falling 2-1 against the Iowa Wild (19-30-4-1) on Saturday night before the ninth consecutive Pink in the Rink sellout crowd of 6,793 inside the MassMutual Center.

The two clubs, who combined for 23 goals in two games in Des Moines in February, continued a weekend of tight checking in the opening period, with young netminders Will Cranley of Springfield (eight saves) and William Rousseau of the Wild (nine saves) turning away every shot that reached the target in period one. Dillon Dube came the closest to breaking the tie for Springfield, ringing the post behind Rousseau with one offering.

The Thunderbirds were frequent penalty killers in the opening half of the game, and the Wild finally connected as their fourth power play began at 9:01 of the third, as Dylan Gambrell stole a clearing attempt, firing a shot on net to force a rebound off Cranley's pads. Tyler Pitlick drove to the rebound and backhanded it under Cranley to make it a 1-0 game as the veteran potted his ninth goal in 14 AHL games this season.

Cranley had to atone for his own gaffe late in the period when he turned a puck over right in front of an open goal,

but he recovered to sprawl back into his crease and make a stop to hold the score at 1-0 into the third.

Steve Ott's team emptied the tank in the final period, to the tune of an 18-5 shot advantage. After failing to connect on two more power plays, the T-Birds used a great effort on the rush to finally crack into the scoresheet as Matthew Peca made a perfect drop pass onto the tape of Hugh McGing, who one-timed it through Rousseau to even the score at 13:49.

The Thunderbirds had thoughts of jumping to the lead down the stretch, but Rousseau and Iowa kept Springfield from a tie-breaking goal. Instead, it would be the visitors who tasted victory late in the third. After a misplay at the offensive blue line from the T-Birds, Jean-Luc Foudy raced up the ice to set up a 2-on-1 with Gambrell, who one-timed a shot past a stretching Cranley with exactly 2:00 remaining in regulation. Springfield's last-ditch efforts with Cranley on the bench for a sixth attacker came up empty, and Iowa completed the two-game sweep of the weekend. The visiting team won each of the four matchups in the season series between the teams.

The T-Birds returned to a sold-out Thunderdome on Wednesday, Mar. 11 as they host the Providence Bruins for the first of two games wearing St. Patty's Day specialty jerseys.

Railers fall to Lions in shootout

TROIS-RIVIÈRES, QC — The Worcester Railers HC (25-22-5-2, 57 pts) fell in a shootout to the Trois-Rivières Lions (26-24-1-3, 56 pts) on Sunday, Mar. 8, with a final score of 3-4 at the Colisée Vidéotron, in front of a crowd of 2,010. The Railers are back in action on Wednesday, March 11th against the Norfolk Admirals at the DCU Center for a 7:05 p.m. puck drop.

Trois-Rivières struck first on Sunday afternoon, as Jacob Dion (1-2-3) gave the Lions a 1-0 advantage just 0:59 seconds into the first off a redirect from a Railers defenseman's skate. The Lions grew their lead to 2-0 at 6:22 as Mathieu Bizier (1-0-1) sank a one-timer from the left circle. Riley Piercey (1-1-2) picked up the first goal for the Railers unassisted at 6:47 in the second on a rush from the defensive zone. Calle Odellius (1-0-1) tied the game for Worcester just shy of eight minutes later with a point shot through the pads of Benjamin Gaudreau. Trois-Rivières closed out the second with a late power play goal from Isaac Dufort (1-1-2), which regained the Lions' lead heading into the third (3-2). Worcester tied the game once more as MacAuley Carson (1-0-1) narrowly snuck the puck between the pads of Gaudreau (3-3). Carson's goal pushed the game into extra-time. Nicholas Girouard claimed the only goal scored in the five-round shootout for the Lions' narrow 4-3 win.

Trois-Rivières picked up the game's first goal

just 59 seconds into play.

Jacob Dion (5th) capitalized on the Lions' first shot of the game, as a lucky bounce off Calle Odellius' skate put the puck in the back of the net. Another goal for Trois-Rivières at 6:22, this time a one-timer from Mathieu Bizier (2nd) along the inner edge of the left faceoff circle, put the Lions ahead by two. Cam McDonald and Anthony Poulin came to blows with just over a minute remaining on the clock. Both men headed to the box for roughing to serve their first half of the penalty. As the period came to a close, Worcester remained shut out by Trois-Rivières goal-tender Benjamin Gaudreau. Worcester outshot Trois-Rivières 10-9, and both teams finished the first period with one penalty apiece.

Worcester was eager to close the growing gap created by Trois-Rivières in the first. Riley Piercey (4th) fired a shot in the left corner over Gaudreau and shrunk Trois-Rivières' two-goal lead to one at 6:47. Piercey gained quick possession in Worcester's zone off the faceoff and made a 2-on-1 rush down the near boards alongside Max Dorrington. Calle Odellius (2nd) kept the scoring going for the Railers at 14:29. The puck remained loose in the Lions' zone after a quick initial save from Gaudreau. With a rebound that ricocheted off the right boards, Odellius stepped

up to the puck and fired it

between the legs of Gaudreau and evened the board at two apiece. The tie game didn't last long, however, as Isaac Dufort (9th) closed out the second with a slapshot to beat Gahagen with 16 seconds remaining on the Lions' power play and just 1:24 left in the frame. Worcester tied Trois-Rivières with shots on goal at 10 each. The two teams also tied in penalties with two each.

MacAuley Carson (3rd) kept the game alive for the Railers as he tucked the puck through Gaudreau's five-hole at 11:24. Max Dorrington set up the play as he entered the zone with just one hand on his stick and set Carson up for the goal with a quick pass. Carson's goal was the only one scored in the third period and pushed the game into overtime. Shots on goal favored Worcester with 9 to Trois-Rivières' 8. Worcester and Trois-Rivières were even with penalties at two.

As overtime came and went, neither team found the back of the net for the extra frame of play, and both Worcester and Trois-Rivières were forced into a shootout. In the end, it was Nicolas Girouard for the Lions that came out on top and lit the lamp for a fourth and final time in the fifth round for a 4-3 final in favor of Trois-Rivières. Worcester trailed in total shots on goal by two, with 33 to Trois-Rivières' 35.

Registration underway for QVBL

SOUTH HADLEY – Registration has opened for the Quabbin Valley Baseball League, an over-28 recreational league, held its first meeting of 2026 to prepare for the upcoming season.

For the 2026 season, the cost will be \$215 and will include a 16th game added to the regular season schedule.

During the 2025 season, the league experimented with playing on Mother's Day Saturday as well as a weeknight game to allow players an opportunity to play under the lights. While the night games were very successful, the Mother's Day Saturday games were rained out.

Those elements will return along with a 16th game with an opponent to be determined as the league's board explores possibilities for inter-league matchups with another league in the region.

For returning players to the league, the deadline is Mar. 22 at 12 noon to be registered for the 2026 season in order to be guaranteed a roster spot. There will be open practices for all players but specifically targeted at new players scheduled for March 29 and April 4 at times and locations to be announced. The draft is currently scheduled to take place on April 4 following that practice.

The season is currently slated to start on Sunday, April 19 and following the success of the six-team fall league last year, the league will also have a fall league in September and October this season.

The registration is live at www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org. Players must register and then pay the league dues via Venmo or contact the league leadership if an alternate form of payment is needed.

Aside from the weeknight and Mother's Day games, other games take place Sundays at 10 a.m. outside of Mother's Day, Memorial Day and July 4 weekends. Playoffs will be in August.

This is the 30th season for the league and league officials are looking to celebrate the anniversary with a couple of events.

More players wanted for Pioneer Valley Baseball

SOUTH HADLEY – The Pioneer Valley Baseball League, an adult baseball league for players who are age 18 and over, is now fully open for registration for the 2026 season.

The adult league will be administered by the Quabbin Valley Baseball League, and a registration link is on the home page of the league's website www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org. Thought it will be under the Quabbin umbrella, there will be no major changes in how the league is operated.

This year, the PVBL will have a 22-game regular season schedule followed by a double-elimination playoffs. The league, which had five

teams last year and had to utilize multiple byes throughout the season, will be fielding a sixth team this season.

There are several spots open for that sixth team, so players interested in joining the league should get signed up as soon as possible to claim a spot.

The league is a wood-bat only league utilizing playing under regular baseball rules though all players do bat. The league operates on a Saturday-Tuesday schedule. Games are played on Saturday mornings with 10 a.m. starts typical and on Tuesday evenings with start times in the 5:30 to 6 p.m. range. The league will start play in late April and run



through the end of August. There are slots open for both full-time players and part-time players. The fee for full-time players will be \$260 with part-time players get-

In addition to the new sixth team, there are limited open roster spots on the other teams in the league, so get your registration in as soon as possible to participate in this season.

Games are played at ballfields throughout the region from as far south as Southwick's Whalley Field, through South Hadley's Beachgrounds and up north at Frontier Regional High School in South Deerfield.

For any questions, please go to the league website for more information. The league hopes interested players will come out and join the fun this spring and summer.

RACE from page 9

This year's race would feature runners from all over the region, the state, and surrounding states as many are preparing for the Boston Marathon, set to take place in just under a month. Many runners over the years have enjoyed using the St. Patrick's Day Road Race as practice for the marathon because of the challenging

hills throughout the streets of Holyoke that runners must navigate through.

While there has been a considerable amount of snowfall this past winter, the Holyoke DPW will have the streets utilized in the race ready to go for both runners and spectators. Helping matters has been the recent warmer weather that has helped accelerate the melting a lot of the snow.



Samuel Whittaker crosses the first line first overall.



Female winner Angelia Rafter crosses the finish line at 34:13.



Alex Corbett takes second in the race for the second year in a row.

What's going on at the library?

BELCHERTOWN – The Woolies Silent Auction was a great success! Thank you to all who participated, and to The Woolies, for their beautiful, handmade donations. A total of \$959.00 was raised, 100% of which will go directly to library programs and building maintenance.

Clapp Memorial Library's Upcoming Programs and Events:

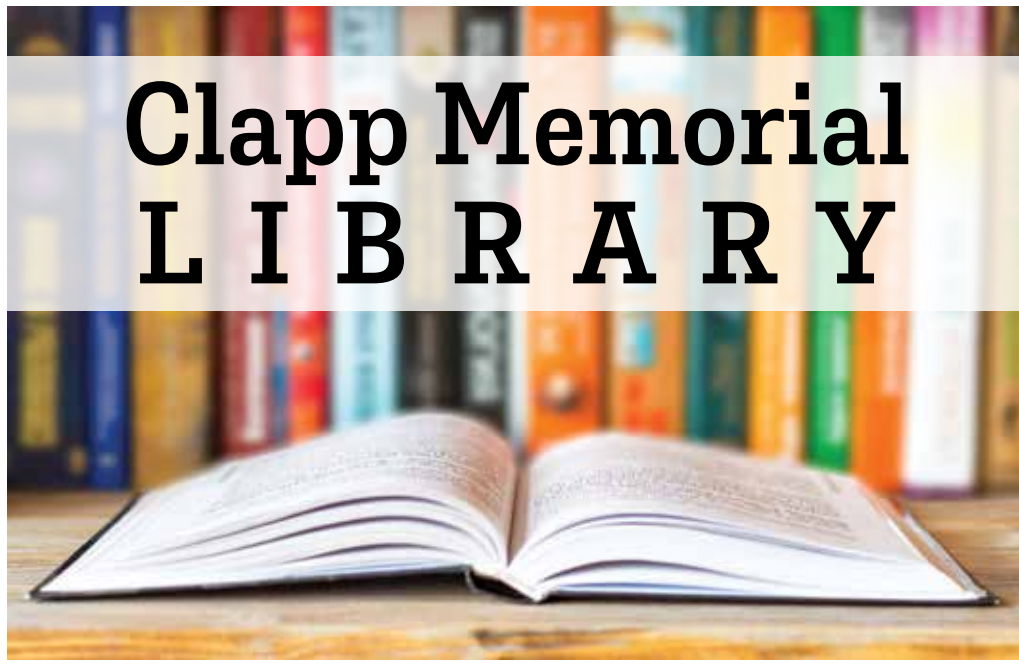
For Adults:
Mindfulness Meditation:
8 Week Course
Thursdays: March 12 - April 30, 7 to 8:15 p.m.

Clapp Memorial Library is once again offering an introductory Mindfulness Meditation and Stress Reduction Awareness course. Mindfulness meditation skills teach us to be fully present in the moment, help decrease stress levels, and improve general well-being and health. Registration is required. We ask that you register only if you are able to attend each session. Register online at clapplibrary.org or call 413-323-0417. This course will be taught by Magda Bechar, a retired nursing professor who has taught mindfulness meditation skills to many groups, including at the Clapp Memorial Library, for many years.

Coming Up!
Frankenstein Reading Group for Adults
Tuesdays, March 31 - April 28, 2 to 2:30 p.m.

Have you ever wanted to take the time to discuss a novel in depth? In this five-session group, we will discuss the Gothic novel, Frankenstein by Mary Shelley. The discussion will be introduced and facilitated by retired professor David Spector. Copies of the book will be available to check out at the circulation desk. Registration is required. Register online at clapplibrary.org or call 413-323-0417. A public screening of Frankenstein, the 1931 film starring Boris Karloff, will take place on Tuesday, April 7 at 7:30 pm.

For Teens:
Drama 101 Returns!
Wednesday, March 11 (BPS early release day), 2 to 3 p.m.
Teens in grades 7-12 are invited to register for this teen program perfect for



drama and theater enthusiasts and those looking to try their hand at acting. The library's Teen Services Coordinator (a former theater kid herself) will lead teens and tweens in various theater games in the library's Activity Room. Teens can email clapplibrar-ytab@gmail.com with any questions and to register.

Free Food Friday
Friday, March 13, 2 to 3:30 p.m.

Free Food Fridays are back! Teens in grades 7-12 are invited to the library after school on the second Fridays of months March through May for free snacks as they visit and use the library! This program is funded by the Friends of the Clapp Memorial Library.

D&D Afterschool Adventures: Into the Abomination Vaults
Mondays through March 30, 2:30 to 4 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 and Teens:
Magic the Gathering
February 28 - April 18:

Saturdays, 10:30 am - 1:30 pm

Join us for Magic the Gathering in the Activity Room. Bring your own deck or use one of our learning decks. Everyone is welcome, however players must be fluent readers. Players under the age of 10 must have a caregiver who is at least 14 years old on the Library premises. Join us for every session or just one - it's up to you! We will have two instructors to help get games started and assist with rules of the game. No registration is required. Questions? Please email Jennifer at jwhitehead@cwmares.org.

For Children:
Spring Story Times For Kids 3 Months to 6 Years Old

Stories and fun for children and their care givers! We'll tell stories, sing, dance, have finger plays, do crafts, and play instruments. Registration is required. Emails will be sent to confirm enrollment. When sessions are full, children will be put on a waitlist. Register online at clapplibrary.org/story-hour, or call 413-323-0417.

MONDAYS:
March 16, 23, and 30, April 6 and 27, and May 4
Babytime: 3 months to 12 months, 9 to 9:45 a.m.
Firststeps: 13 months to 24 months, 10 to 10:45 a.m.

TUESDAYS: March 17, 24, and 31, April 7 and 28, and May 5
Toddler: 2 years, 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.
THURSDAYS: March 19 and 26, April 2, 9, and 30, and May 7
Preschool 3 yrs - 6 yrs 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.

Full STEAM Ahead Afterschool Club for Ages 8-11
March 19 - April 16: Thursdays, 3:30 to 5 p.m.

Full STEAM Ahead will inspire kids to explore Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics (STEAM) through interactive activities and problem-solving challenges, all while learning about the value of persistence and creativity. Registration is required. Register online at clapplibrary.org/story-hour or call 413-323-0417. Children under the age of 10 years must have a caregiver who is 14 years or older on the Library premises. Students who are 10 or 11 years old that would like bus transportation from a Belchertown Public School should contact Jennifer Whitehead at jwhitehead@cwmares.org.

Children's Scavenger Hunt
Every Month in 2026.

March's Theme: Author Julius Lester and Illustrator Jerry Pinkney

Prize: \$20 Gift Card to PlayNow! Toys in Ludlow
We're inviting children to participate in March's Scavenger Hunt! Look for book illustrations hidden in the children's area and write down the word you find with them. When you have all of the words, figure out the saying and enter to win this month's 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.

Museum celebrates 20 years of student-curated program

AMHERST – The University Museum of Contemporary Art at UMass is celebrating 20 years of its student-curated exhibition program, a cornerstone initiative that empowers graduate students to curate an exhibition of works from the museum's permanent collection.

The Eva Fierst Student Curatorial program, founded in 2006, was established to provide students with hands-on experience in all aspects of museum curation, from conceptual research and thematic development to exhibition design, installation, and public engagement. "The excitement and intensity of this project and the demands it requires of the students - research, communication, and collaboration, all under a tight deadline - teach valuable skills the students can apply throughout their academic careers and carry with them beyond UMass," said Kristina Durocher, the Fine Arts Center's director of visual arts. Deja Vu: The Cycles that Haunt Us will stand as the student curator's legacy and gift to future student scholars. This year's exhibition, Deja vu: The Cycles That Haunt Us, co-curated by Suzanne

Bagia (MFA, English) and Caelen Trujillo (MA, art history), is on view through May 8.

Drawing from the museum's collection of more than 3,800 contemporary works on paper, Déjà Vu engages visitors through participatory activities that prompt reflection on the past and invite them to envision new, liberated futures.

Highlights from the show include photographs by Andy Warhol, stunning work by painter Joan Snyder, and a newly acquired print by Native American painter Emmi Whitehorse. Over its 20-year history, the program has mentored students from diverse disciplines, including history of art and architecture, studio arts, Afro-American studies, art education, and English, providing them with practical skills and professional experience.

The museum's student curatorial program has been supported by the Eva Fierst Student Curatorial Exhibition Fund since 2021. This year's program is also supported by the History of Art and Architecture Department and the Department of English.

SKATE PARK from page 1

Technical High School. His love for his community shone brightly, but he still wanted to go out and do something with his life.

"Daniel was a kind, funny, and was one of the smartest people I knew. He loved skateboarding, skiing, baseball, and music. He was a phenomenal musician and could sing. He could play any instrument. He loved animals, especially his cats, and he was a history buff. The world is a worse place without him," said Martinez.

Martinez hopes to raise awareness about chronic pain, which is an invisible disability and greatly misunderstood by society and those who do not experience it.

Martinez started a GoFundMe, which is called Belchertown Skate Park Renovations for Daniel, last week, and so far, has raised \$2,400.

The Skate Park needs a lot of work, and the ground alone needs between \$10,000 to \$15,000, and the ramps need work as well. The skate park is riddled with cracks that make it dangerous to skate on.

"The skate park is a place where a lot of teens, like my son, like to hang out and play who don't do sports. It's a place for a lot of kids, and it was a place my son loved to go to meet up with his friends," said Martinez.

Newer renovations are expensive, cement, kids are sharing the ground, which is very uneven, and not safe for skateboarding. As a result, Martinez is looking to put together various fundraising events, as well as an upcoming kick-off event for the park.

Because Daniel was a student at Pathfinder, many parents from the school are also involved in trying to make this skate park a better and safer place for everyone to use and enjoy.

Martinez has big goals for the park and also wants to have a resource board at the skatepark with suicide prevention hotlines and resources for others who may experience chronic pain, so that, whether they struggle with suicidal thoughts, chronic pain, or both, they can find hope in the fact that they are not alone.

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OBITUARIES

Dr. Frederick Knowlton Utley III

The family of Dr. Frederick Knowlton Utley III is saddened to announce his passing on March 6, 2026.

Born at Cooley Dickinson Hospital in Northampton, Massachusetts, on May 4, 1935, he was the son of the late Florence and Fred Utley of Chesterfield.



University of Connecticut and a Doctorate in Education from Boston University.

While serving as a professor in Alabama, he also earned a Master of Library Science from the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa.

In 1983, Dr. Utley accepted a position as Assistant Professor and Library Director at American International College (AIC). In 1996, he was instrumental in founding a secondary private school in South Hadley, often working 70-plus hours a week to manage both programs. Following his retirement from AIC in 2006, he took a part-time position at Old Sturbridge Village—a role that allowed him to figuratively step back into his past and his grandfather's farm. He retired permanently after eight years, spending his time writing and self-publishing family heritage books for his loved ones.

Knowlton leaves behind his wife, Faith of Belchertown; his three sons, Richard of Amherst, Stephen and his wife Celia of Belchertown, and David

of Lakeville; and his dear daughter-in-law, Karen. He is also survived by his three grandchildren, Tabatha Arnold of Spokane, WA, Randy Utley of Orange, and Kaylyn Utley Lyons of Philadelphia, PA; and several great-grandchildren, of whom he was so very proud. He was preceded in death by his parents and his sisters, Betty Mannett and Hazel Davis.

A man of deep and abiding faith, Knowlton was a devoted and active member of the church throughout his life. His commitment to his community was an extension of his beliefs; he sought to serve others with the same diligence he applied to his career. He was recognized by the Massachusetts State Legislature and various professional organizations. He served as President of CWMARS and the Western Mass Media Council and volunteered for a "cot" program providing accommodations for the unhoused in Northampton.

A memorial service will be held at his home church, Christ Community Church, 1255 Federal Street, Belchertown, MA, on Saturday, March 21, at 10:30 a.m.

Joan Mary (Adams) Hennessey

BELCHERTOWN – Joan Mary (Adams) Hennessey, a longtime resident of Belchertown,



passed away February 27, 2026 with her loving family by her side. She was born in June of 1937 in Chicopee and attended Chicopee schools until her junior year. She met and married Patrick "George" Hennessey in 1953 and they began their life together.

In 1971, while working nights and at the age of 34, she attended Belchertown High School with her two sons, Mark and Steve. In 1972, she graduated in the same class as Mark and she proudly achieved her high school diploma. For 30 years she worked at the former Belchertown State School as an attendant.

Besides her parents Raymond and Stella Adams, Joan is predeceased by her husband, Patrick "George" as well as her siblings, Gordan, Robert and Stewart Adams. Her love will forever remain with her two sons, Mark G. Hennessey and his wife, Joan of Arizona and Steven W. Hennessey and his wife, Marie of Belchertown. Joan's grandchildren, Scott

P. Hennessey and wife, Laurna of Georgia, Adam M. Hennessey and wife, Jessica

of Belchertown, Stacy Nadeau and husband, Tim of Longmeadow as well as great grandchildren, Shane P. Hennessey and wife, Shannon of Georgia, Connor Nadeau, Zachary Nadeau, Carson Hennessey and great great grandsons Carter, Liam, and Nolan Hennessey will also carry her memory close to their hearts.

In her leisure, Joan enjoyed playing cards with her friends from the Senior Center and Pine Valley Plantation. She also enjoyed scrabble and dancing to Elvis songs. Joan loved life with her family and friends. She will be sadly missed by all but she will always be in their hearts.

In lieu of flowers, please make donations to the Hospice of the Fisher Home, 1165 North Pleasant St., Amherst MA 01002. A Celebration of Life graveside will be held Saturday, April 18 at 10 a.m. at South Cemetery in Belchertown. Beers & Story Belchertown Funeral Home has been entrusted with the arrangements.

DEATH NOTICE

Joan Mary (Adams) Hennessey
Died Feb. 27, 2026
Celebration of Life graveside to be held Saturday, April 18 at 10 a.m., South Cemetery, Belchertown
Beers & Story Belchertown

Dr. Frederick Knowlton Utley III
Died March 6, 2026
Memorial service at Christ Community Church on March 21 at 10:30 a.m.

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 \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice (with a word limit of up to 500 words) 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

Belchertown Zoning Board of Appeals Public Hearing Legal Notice

In accordance with the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40A, Section 11 the Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing on **March 18, 2026 at 6:00 PM**.

This hearing will be held in the Planning Board's meeting room of Lawrence Memorial Hall, 2 Jabish Street, Belchertown, MA on the application from Joshua Kenney seeking a special permit §145-69; for the addition of a one bedroom apartment in the existing attached garage at 167 Warren Wright Rd (Map 217 Lot 3, Zoned AG-A); §145-11 Residential Use (4). A copy of the application may be inspected at the Town Clerk's office (Room 201) 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday, Lawrence Memorial Hall, 2 Jabish Street, Belchertown, MA. or at website https://www.belchertown.org/committees/zoning_board_of_appeals/index.php

Any Person interested and wishing to be heard should appear at the time and place designated.

Jennifer Sharrow, Chair
Zoning Board of Appeals
03/05, 03/12/2026

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, March 23, 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 Joshua Kenney to permit the restoration of a parking area at 167 Warren Wright Road (Assessor's Map 217-3) in Belchertown. Anyone interested in this matter should appear at the time and place designated.
03/12/2026

Granby School Committee Proposed FY27 Budget Notice of Public Hearing

In accordance with MGL Chapter 71, Section 38N, a public hearing for the proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Budget will be held during the meeting of the Granby School Committee scheduled for **Tuesday, March 24, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.** This meeting will be held in person in the East Meadow Elementary School Library/Media Center.
03/12/2026

TOWN OF GRANBY INVITATION FOR BIDS STANDBY GENERATOR REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT GRANBY JR SR HIGH SCHOOL, EAST MEADOW SCHOOL, AND PUMP HOUSE SURGE PROTECTION BD-26-1275-GRANB-GJSHS-125578

The Town of Granby is soliciting sealed proposals from qualified firms, pursuant to for the removal and replacement of the standby generator at the Granby Junior/Senior High School and installation of surge protection devices at the Granby Junior/Senior High School, East Meadow Elementary School and Pump

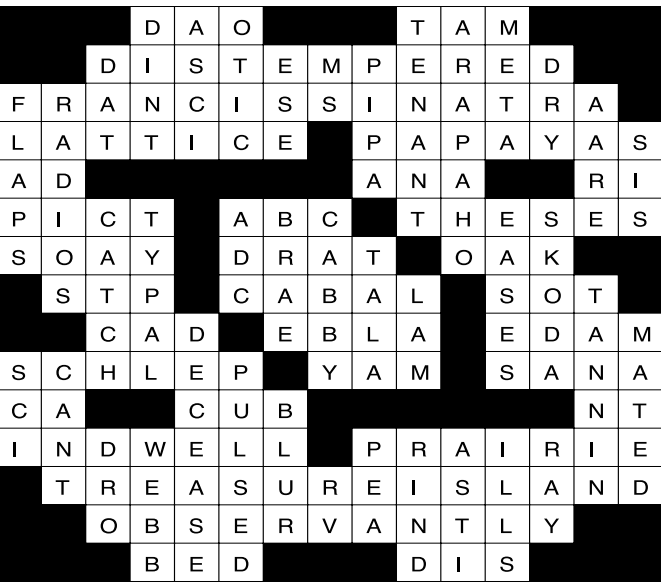
House.
Estimated Construction Cost: **\$100,000**
Proposals Due: **Thursday, April 16, 2026 1:00 p.m.**
Bid documentation will be available on March 9, 2026 via the Town's website at: <https://www.granby-ma.gov/selectboard/pages/bid-documents>
Bids (using the attached pages 3-10) shall be enclosed in a sealed envelope with the following marked clearly on the outside: **Bid for the removal and replacement of the standby generator at the Granby Junior/Senior High School**, with the bidders name, business address, email address and phone number and sent to the attention of Holly Young, 10-B West State

Street, Granby, MA 01033.
Bid documents will be available Monday, March 9, 2026.
Pre-Bid walk through of the Granby Junior/Senior High School shall be held on **Thursday, April 2, 2026 at 2:30 p.m.** Please contact Mr. Todd Dorman at 413- 409-5393 to verify your attendance at the tour.
03/12/2026

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, March 23, 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 Tina Champagne to determine if the expansion of a parking area at 52A Old Bay Road (Assessor's Map 229-17) in Belchertown is subject to jurisdiction of the Wetlands Protection Act. Anyone interested in this matter should appear at the time and place designated.
03/12/2026



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SUMMER CAMP

Check Out These Great Camps!

The benefits of attending summer camp

Summer camp is something akin to a rite of passage for millions of youngsters each year. Many adults look back fondly on their experiences at summer camp, often crediting such times as formative periods in their lives.

Summer camp benefits children in myriad ways. Recognition of the many advantages of attending summer camp can serve as a great reminder of just how fun it can be for children to spend their time away from school at a camp of their choosing.

• Campers continue to socialize throughout summer.

Socializing isn't just for the school year. While children in high school might be independent enough to come and go with their friends during summer break, kids who are still in elementary school or middle school might not be old enough to handle such freedom. That can make it hard to stay in touch with friends, which in turn can contribute to feelings of boredom and loneliness. Camp provides ample opportunities for young children to socialize during a time of year when they might not see their school friends as often as they're used to.

• Campers can expand their horizons. Though some summer camps are exclusive to residents of certain communities, many tend to feature children from numerous towns or municipalities. Such camps provide an opportunity for campers to expand their horizons by engaging with youngsters who come from different backgrounds. Indeed, the Graduate School of Education at Harvard University notes that summer camp may be the first time children spend substantial amounts of time with people whose backgrounds differ from their own.

• Camp can get kids off their devices. Modern children are growing up in a digital world, and parents know how hard it can be to get kids to put down their devices and get outdoors. But the key to making that pivot could be access to outdoor play spaces. A 2025 study from researchers at the University of Michigan published in the journal Health and Place found that efforts to reduce kids' screen time are more successful when children are given a chance to play outside. Many summer camps are structured around outdoor play, making them a

potentially invaluable ally as parents seek to help children cut back on the time they spend using their devices. Children who do not attend camp and live in households where both parents work or in single-parent households where Mom or Dad works may be forced to spend much of summer indoors, which could increase the frequency with which they turn to devices to occupy their time.

• Camp adds structure to summer days. Once a school year ends, the structure a school day provides vanishes into thin air. Couple that with extracurricular

activities that go on hiatus during summer vacation, and kids accustomed to structure are left with little to do and no need to schedule their time. That can add an aimlessness to summer days. Camp can provide the structure kids are accustomed to but still offer a break from responsibilities like homework or the commitments required of extracurricular activities.

There's no shortage of benefits to enrolling youngsters in summer camp, where kids can socialize, grow and get off their devices while engaged in structured but stress-free activities.

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 July 6-10 and 13-17, Fun Bites with Chef Swanigan (ages 9-16)
 July 20-24 and 27-31, Around the world with Chef Swanigan (ages 9-16)
 July 6-10 and 13-17, Cooking without Borders with Chez Vargas-Gonzalez (ages 9-16)
 July 20-24 and 27-31, Passport to Flavors with Chef Vargas-Gonzalez (ages 9-16)

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Greene Acres Equestrian Center L.L.C.

2026 Summer Riding Sessions

June 29 - July 3 • July 20 - July 24
 August 10 - August 14 • August 24-28

9AM - 3PM LUNCH NOT PROVIDED

Basic Horse Care, Daily Riding, English & Western, Ages 5 & up

Call to Register (413) 813-9291
 53 Ware Road, Belchertown
 Email: Amanda.greeneacres@gmail.com

Girl Scout Camp For All Girls!

DAY & OVERNIGHT

www.gscwm.org



Belchertown Kidz Club

TODDLER • PRESCHOOL • SCHOOL AGE
 Offering Flexible Care Programs For Kids Ages 15 mo. - 12 yrs.
 Open 7:00 a.m.-5:30* p.m. / MONDAY - FRIDAY
 Both Full Time & Sibling Discounts

NOW ENROLLING FOR SPRING/SUMMER/FALL PROGRAMS

KIDZ SUMMER PROGRAM/K-6TH GRADE
 Ages 5 - 12 yrs. • JUNE 22ND-AUGUST 21ST
 9 Weeks • Full & Part Time Options/Single Weeks or All Summer!
 Swimming • Field Trips • Close walk to Playgrounds & CHCS Pool
 Daily Creative & Educational Indoor/Outdoor Activities!
 *Start of camp based on Belchertown School Schedule

BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL CARE
 K-6th Grade • Full & Part-Time • Homework Support
 School Bus Pick Up & Drop Off • Indoor & Outdoor Activities

PRESCHOOL Year round program for Ages 3-5 yrs.
 Full & Part Time • Choose from Full Day or 3/4 Day Options
 Creative Educational Kindergarten Readiness Curriculum

TODDLER/YOUNG PRE-K Year round program for Ages 15 mos.-3 yrs.
 Choice of Full Day 7:00-5:00 or 3/4 day option 8:30-2:30
 Come Grow, Learn, and Play!

Join Our Toddler Room Waitlist

4 Stadler Street • (413) 323-5439 Follow Us 
belchertownkidzclub@gmail.com EEC LICENSED PROGRAM #177446



REGISTER FOR SIX WEEKS, GET THE SEVENTH FREE!

BEMENT SUMMER CAMP

FOR CHILDREN ENTERING GRADES K-9
 Campers participate in a wide variety of fun activities including arts & crafts, swimming, nature programs, hiking, and 18 enrichment themes! Lunch is included and before and after care is available!

DAY CAMP JR. DAY CAMP	ENRICHMENT CAMPS	Weekly Tuition \$350-\$500	MOUNTAIN BIKING & ADVENTURE CAMPS
WEEK 1: JUNE 15-19 WEEK 2: JUNE 22-26 WEEK 3: JULY 6-10 WEEK 4: JULY 13-17 WEEK 5: JULY 20-24 WEEK 6: JULY 27-31 WEEK 7: AUGUST 3-7	Studio Arts & Crafts Speech & Debate Broadway at Bement Magic Behind the Music Graphic Novel Camp Little Explorers Camp Movie Magic Camp	Cross Country Camp Taylor Swift Camp Soccer Club D&D Camp Counselor in Training Soccer Camp Spanish Explorers	Camer's Guild STEM Challenges! Mission Monadnock History Hunters Flag Football & More PE Games & Sports

The Bement School 141 Old Main Street Deerfield, MA 01342
 Registration Link bement.org/summer

