

# Belchertown, Granby & Amherst SENTINEL

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## READY TO RACE

A group of Belchertown High School athletes donned the theme of Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles as they teamed up to participate in last Saturday's Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Road Race. See more details and photos from this year's race, which was run for the 49th time, in this week's sport section on page 9.



TURLEY PHOTO BY  
GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

## Select Board leans to free cash

New borrowing to stabilize budget

By Melina Bourdeau  
Correspondent

BELCHERTOWN – The Select Board moved to repay past stabilization borrowing, cap the use of free cash in the operating budget and signal new long-term borrowing as it reshapes town staffing and capital plans after last year's override.

The board's budget discussion focused on rebuilding reserves, structuring

capital spending around expiring debt and selectively adding positions in public safety, finance and administration. Officials said the strategy is meant to avoid another fiscal crisis while still addressing key service and infrastructure needs.

Town Administrator Steve Williams told the board the town and schools had identified savings in this year's health insurance lines, allowing Belchertown to undo an earlier draw on reserves.

"The School Department has agreed to put \$200,000

**"The DLS has recommended that we maintain our level of debt service as well as increase. If we don't, it's going to go back to our bond rate."**

– Steve Williams

out of their health insurance budget back to account, and I believe at least \$200,000 we're hoping to go a little bit higher than that," Williams said, referring to the shared savings between school and town health lines.

He reminded the board that Belchertown had previously dipped into stabiliza-

tion to cover health costs.

"If you recall, we borrowed \$325,000 out of stabilization to cover health insurance... That won't be necessary," Williams said. "Special FY26 budgets [will put] back in the stabilization. I can't guarantee we're going to be any but we're going to be very close."

Please see **FREE CASH**, page 7

## SB revises minutes regarding TA firing

By Melina Bourdeau  
Correspondent

GRANBY – The Selectboard revised its Dec. 1, 2025 minutes Tuesday to spell out a 2-1 vote terminating Town Administrator Tammy Martin after executive session, clarifying when the decision occurred as officials move to correct the record.

The board's move centered on tightening up the official account of a contentious personnel decision that previ-

ously was not fully reflected in the public minutes. By inserting explicit language about the return to open session and the vote to remove Martin under the probationary terms of her contract, members said they aimed to ensure the town's records match what happened that night.

Chair Mark Bail opened the March 19 meeting by flagging the minutes issue as the first order of business.

Please see **FIRING**, page 3

## Educating, gathering, through 'Magic'

By Gregory A. Scibelli  
gscibelli@turley.com

BELCHERTOWN – When it comes to Magic: The Gathering, there are a variety of ways it can be played, and it brings so many different kinds of people together for the enjoyment of the game.

If you do enjoyment, there is a Magic: The Gathering play group that meets many Saturday morning at Clapp Memorial Library. They typically play from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Skeylar Whitehead, who helps organize the group, said he only got into the game a couple of years ago, but wants to help share his



TURLEY PHOTO BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI  
Kenneth Hyde searches for a card to play.

## Larry Davis remembered by pickleball community

BELCHERTOWN/LUDLOW – On Sunday, Mar. 15, 60 enthusiastic pickleball players gathered at the Ludlow Tennis Club to honor the late Belchertown resident, Larry Davis, who passed away on Dec. 29, 2025.

Starting in 2017, Larry was one of the original instructors who offered lessons when the sport was first introduced to the Belchertown pickleball community. He donated all proceeds from that to the Belchertown Pickleball Community Fund. He also generously purchased the windscreens for Belchertown's Jabish courts.

He was a relentless advocate for pickleball in Belchertown, appear-

ing at Selectboard and Community Preservation Committee meetings, and met regularly with the town's Recreation Department. He happily and humorously appeared in a pickle costume in the Belchertown Fair parade and at fundraising and fun events.

At the Sunday event Larry's family was presented with a Golden Paddle Plaque engraved with Larry's name. Since 2022 the Golden Paddle has been presented to a worthy senior who has contributed to the growth of pickleball

in Belchertown. Unique to his paddle, his initials as he wrote them on it were preserved on the finished product.



Larry Davis

The three-hour event provided opportunities to play the game that Larry loved, and his spirit and joy for the game were present amongst the participants, including his grandkids. Many players recalled Larry's fond phrase "the net is your friend today" whenever his opponents might win a point.

Please see **DAVIS**, page 8

Please see **MAGIC**, page 4

**BELCHERTOWN**

# Multiple vacancies on boards, committees

**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](mailto: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 one (1) associate member seat 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.

**Animal Control Advisory Board:** The Town wishes to fill one (1) vacancy on the Animal Control Advisory Board. This Board works with the Animal Control Officer and the public when a complaint is brought against a dog in Town. The Board may conduct hearings as allowed in the Town Bylaw [Chapter 15] and Mass. Gen. Law ch. 140, Sec. 157 and pose conditions upon the animal owner(s) as deemed appropriate. As the Board works with dog complaints (only), an ideal applicant would be someone familiar with dogs; a current or past dog owner or person who works with dogs, or an interested community member.

**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](mailto: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.

**Energy and Sustainability Committee:** The Town wishes to fill a full member vacancy on the Energy and Sustainability Committee. Its purpose is to develop and recommend sound energy and sustainability programs and policies for the Town. Energy relates to the fuel choices we make for buildings, vehicles, and industry. Sustainability means meeting our own needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Visit their webpage at [www.belchertown.org](http://www.belchertown.org).

**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](http://www.qvdc.org).

**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.



## Community Garden now inviting registrations

**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](mailto:BCGardenNews@gmail.com).

## 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.

## Water Commission confidence report now available

**BELCHERTOWN** — The 2025 Belchertown Water District Consumer Confidence Report is available by mail by calling

(413)323-6987. It is available online on the District website [www.belchertownwaterdistrict.org](http://www.belchertownwaterdistrict.org) under “Reports” Direct URL: [https://www.belchertownwaterdistrict.org/Forms/ccrreport2025\\_bwd.pdf](https://www.belchertownwaterdistrict.org/Forms/ccrreport2025_bwd.pdf) This water quality report is also available at the Belchertown Select Board’s

office, the Belchertown Public Library, as well as Belchertown Water District office located at 206 Jabish Street.

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**HADLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**SCHOOL CHOICE OPENINGS 2026-2027**  
 Hadley Public Schools grades PK-12 is now accepting School Choice Applications.  
 They can be found at [www.hadleyschools.org](http://www.hadleyschools.org).  
 The cut-off date for applications is April 15th.  
 Hadley Public Schools offers the following advantages:

<p><b>HADLEY ELEMENTARY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small Class Sizes</li> <li>• Art, Band, Chorus</li> <li>• Tech &amp; Makerspace Lab</li> <li>• World Language Lab</li> <li>• 7:30am Homework support (free)</li> <li>• Afterschool Clubs: Newspaper, Equestrian, Board Games</li> <li>• Inclusive Special Ed Services</li> <li>• New Playgrounds</li> <li>• Project Lead the Way distinguished school</li> </ul> <p><i>*Open spots in grades K-2.                  Limited spots grades 3-5.                  Grade 6 closed.</i></p>	<p><b>HOPKINS ACADEMY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small Class Sizes</li> <li>• Advanced Course Offerings</li> <li>• AP, PLTW, Early College</li> <li>• Career Pathways in:                      Business &amp; Finance, Clean Energy, Manufacturing &amp; Engineering, Information Sciences, Social Assistance &amp; Health Care, Life Sciences</li> <li>• Extracurricular Offerings: Athletics, Band, Chorus, Drama, Equestrian, Leadership</li> <li>• Internships, Service Learning</li> <li>• Travel Opportunities</li> </ul> <p><i>Grades 7-12 open.</i></p>
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**Happy 60 Birthday DIANE**  
 3/26/66

**GRANBY**

# Town of Granby 2026 annual town election nominations

GRANBY – Any person interested in seeking elected office in Granby must take out nomination papers from the Town Clerk no later than March 26. Candidates must collect signatures of 40 or more registered voters and return the nomination papers to the Town Clerk’s office by Monday, March 20, 2026.

- Office Vacancies for Town Election, May 18, 2026
- Select Board, one seat for 3 years
  - Board of Assessors, one seat for 3 years
  - Board of Health, one seat for 3 years
  - Planning Board, one seat for 5 years
  - School Committee, two

- years for 3 years
- School Committee unexpired term, one seat for 1 year
- Commissioner of Burial Grounds, one seat for 3 years
- Library Trustees, three seats for 3 years
- Library Trustees unexpired term, one seat for 1 year

**Calendar of Dates for the Annual Town Meeting and Election**

**Thursday, March 26,** last day to obtain nomination papers.

**Monday, March 30,** last day to file nomination papers with Board of Registrars for

certification.

**Friday, March 27** is the last day to file with the Town Administrator for a Private Article for the May 11 Annual Town Meeting. For a private warrant article to appear on the Annual Town Meeting warrant, a petitioner must acquire 10 signatures of registered voters in town.

**Monday, April 13,** last day of Registrars file town nomination papers with the Town Clerk.

**Wednesday, April 15,** last day to withdraw nomination papers.

**Monday, May 11,** Annual Town Meeting.

**Monday, May 18,** Annual Town Election.

## Granby Police Logs

*Editor’s Note: The Granby Police Department responded to 120 calls for the week March 13, through March 19. Those arrested are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. The Granby Police Department provides all information.*

**Friday, March 13**  
5:30 p.m. – While on patrol, an officer performed a random license plate query that showed the registered owner had a suspended MA driver’s license. The vehicle was stopped and the registered owner was operating. The operator was issued a

criminal citation.

**Sunday, March 15**  
6:47 p.m. – A resident reported a brush fire off Forge Pond Road #2, spreading towards houses. Granby Fire and Police responded. Mutual aid was provided from Belchertown Fire, South Hadley Fire, and Westover Fire. The fire was extinguished with no property damage.

**Tuesday, March 17**  
2:09 a.m. – A motorist reported that a utility pole and wires were across Route 116 blocking traffic. An offi-

cer responded and discovered that a large tree fell on the wires near the intersection of Amherst Street and Route 116. The tree knocked down three utility poles in total and the intersection was blocked for several hours until repairs could be made.

**Thursday, March 19**  
4:27 p.m. – While on patrol, an officer observed a vehicle seen in an area where a disturbance was reported. After stopping the vehicle, it was discovered that the operator had an expired MA driver’s license. The operator was issued a criminal citation.

**FIRING** from page 1

As members and staff discussed the wording, there was initial confusion over whether they were dealing with open session or executive session language.

Ultimately, they agreed that the key missing element was a clear description of what happened after the closed-door discussion, when the board returned to open session and acted on Martin’s employment.

Granby Police Chief and current acting Town Administrator Kevin O’Grady, who was helping with the wording and placement, read out the language that will now be appended to the Dec. 1 minutes:

“After at the at the end of

the vote, it says, at the conclusion of the Executive Session, Mark wants to put in there,” O’Grady said. “The board went back into open session, and Mark Bail moved to terminate the town administrator Tammy Martin, pursuant to probationary section of her contract, Dave Labonte seconded the motion to move into discussion. The vote was two to one, with Bail and Labonte voting in favor of the motion and (Glenn) Sexton voting no.”

O’Grady also confirmed where the new passage would go, saying it should follow the existing language “at the conclusion of the Executive Session” in the Dec. 1 record.

Board members agreed with that formulation and

moved to formalize the amendment.

After the language was settled, Bail moved to adopt the amendment and then to approve the minutes in their revised form.

This action comes after an Open Meeting Law complaint filed on Dec. 10, 2025.

Martin’s attorney John Clifford, of Clifford & Kenny LLP, filed an Open Meeting Law complaint, stating the dismissal was without cause.

In the complaint her attorney alleges the Selectboard violated the Open Meeting Law on the date they dismissed her from the position.

The letter alleges that Martin’s termination was a breach of her contract with the town and violated state labor and transparency laws.



# HOLY WEEK SERVICES

## St. Francis of Assisi’s 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 community 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.

## Hope United Methodist schedule

BELCHERTOWN — Hope United Methodist Church announced the following schedule for 2026 Holy Week:

**April 2 at 7 p.m.** A service of prayers, music, scripture, and Holy Communion

**Good Friday: April 3, 1 to 3 p.m.** Sanctuary open for prayer and reflection followed by steeple bell tolling at 3 p.m.

**7 p.m.:** A service contemplating the Shadows of Condemnation, Separation, Sorrow, Despair, Suffering, and Death.

**Easter Sunrise Service: April 5 at 6:15 a.m.** Quabbin Reservoir – Tower Parking Lot.

**Ecumenical Service Easter Sunday Worship: April 5 at 10 a.m.** Resurrection Celebration

### NEWS & FEATURES

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

For more information on news or community features for The Sentinel, please email [sentinel@turley.com](mailto:sentinel@turley.com).

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**DATE:** Saturday, April 11, 2026  
**TIME:** 3 p.m.  
**PLACE:** Belchertown United Church of Christ  
 18 Park Street, Belchertown  
**TICKETS:** \$20  
<https://buccsangels.ticketspice.com/rays-of-elvis-relay-fundraiser>  
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## Town of Belchertown Scholarship Fund now accepting applications

**BELCHERTOWN** — The Belchertown Scholarship Fund Committee is now accepting applications for academic year 2026. The scholarship program is open to all Belchertown residents who are graduating high school seniors, including students attending Belchertown High School, Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School, and those who are homeschooled.

To be eligible, applicants must have an acceptance to an accredited post-secondary institution, including college degree programs, trade certifications, or licensing programs. Scholarship awards may be applied toward the costs of tuition, books, and fees. Applications are evaluated based on financial need, academic achievement, character, and participation in extracurricular activities.

Paper applications are available for pickup at the Belchertown High School guidance office (142 Springfield Road), the Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School guidance office (240 Sykes Street, Palmer), and the Clapp Memorial Library (19 South Main Street, Belchertown). Applications may also be downloaded at [www.belchertown.org/2026\\_Scholarship](http://www.belchertown.org/2026_Scholarship).

All completed applications must be submitted on paper and dropped off at the Belchertown Public Schools Central Office, 14 Maple Street, Belchertown. No electronic submissions will be accepted. Applications are due no later than Thursday, Apr. 16 at 4 p.m. No exceptions will be made.

For more information and to download the application, visit [www.belchertown.org/2026\\_Scholarship](http://www.belchertown.org/2026_Scholarship)

## Scholarships available through Valley Press Club

**SPRINGFIELD** — The Valley Press Club, based in Springfield, Mass., will award \$1,000 scholarships to high school seniors in Western Massachusetts and Northern Connecticut who are interested in pursuing a career in journalism.

The Valley Press Club Scholarships, funded by contributions and dues to the Press Club, are for students planning careers in print, online or broadcast journalism.

The Republican Scholarship, funded by The Republican, is for students living within the newspaper's circulation area who are planning careers in print journalism.

The 22 News Scholarship, funded by WWLP-22News is for students planning careers in broadcast journalism.

The MassLive Scholarship is for a Massachusetts high school senior planning to pursue a career in print, online or broadcast journalism/communication. This scholarship is available to a student who is underrepresented in the field of journalism and is planning to attend an institution of higher education in the field.

The Edward J. Malley Jr. Memorial Scholarship, established in memory of a chief photographer for the Springfield Newspapers, is for students planning careers in photojournalism.

The Rhonda Swan Memorial Scholarship, established in memory of the award-winning journalist, editor and author, honors her legacy by supporting students from the Greater Springfield area who aspire to careers in journalism and bring voices and perspectives that have been historically underrepresented in the field.

Primary emphasis is placed on career goals, writing ability, scholastic aptitude and overall achievement as measured by an applicant's high school transcript, class rank, academic awards, SAT scores and extracurricular activities. The deadline for submissions is Apr. 10.

Scholarship applications are available at [www.ValleyPressClub.com](http://www.ValleyPressClub.com) or high school guidance offices. Applications may be sent by mail to Noreen Tassinari, Scholarship Chair, Valley Press Club, P.O. Box 5475, Springfield, Mass. 01102 or electronically to [NTassinari77@gmail.com](mailto:NTassinari77@gmail.com)

Over the course of six decades, The Valley Press Club has presented over \$140,000 in scholarships to eligible students. The Valley Press Club consists of active and retired journalists and public relations professionals from corporate and nonprofit organizations.



Ben Anderson, 12, and Noah DeStanis, 12, watch their opponents next move.



Kenneth Hyde and Thomas Cumming, 9, look across the table to see what their opponents have out.

**MAGIC** from page 1

knowledge and enjoyment of the game with others.

While a lot of younger players make their way out to play the game, Whitehead wants to make it clear that players of all ages are welcome to come out and take part in the group.

Whitehead said the group has meeting for about 10 Saturdays at a time, then the group takes a break. He is hoping it might become a weekly activity, but says sometimes the decision to hold the group has depended on the time of the year and what kind of activity is going on at the time.

Whitehead said he also

helps lead an afterschool program where students play the game, and says he has enjoyed educating young players about the game.

"It's really a lot of fun helping get people into it," Whitehead said.

Educating is a key theme, Whitehead said. When it comes to younger kids playing Magic, there is a lot of learning that happens.

There is mathematics involved as the cards have numbers for attacks and defense, and using them and other spells requires one to add and subtract, and depending on the situation, multiple and divide those numbers.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

Nora Wittbold makes a play during a match on Saturday, Mar. 14.

Even further, there is a lot of reading involved in the game. Many of the cards contain small paragraphs explaining what the card does and maybe multiple options with the card.

"You definitely have to read the cards," said Trinity Gillies.

During a session a few weeks ago, Whitehead welcomed five young players to the library. While one group of four engaged in the Commander version of Magic, Whitehead, Gillies, and nine-year-old Nora Wittbold had their own Commander matchup using completely different cards.

"It is really entertaining to play," Wittbold said. "This game has reading, math, and puzzles. It has it all."

To help get the group going, Wittbold received donations from multiple locations, including Arc Point, a game store in Ludlow, and X9 of Hadley, where he received starter Magic decks to use at the library. Many players, however, bring their sets, playmats, and dice to use.

If you're looking to join the group, they are still meeting weekly on Saturday mornings. Simply go to the Clapp Memorial Library website to check the calendar or call the library to confirm that weekend's session is happening.



Trinity Gillies and Skeylar Whitehead enjoy a game of Magic: The Gathering at Clapp Memorial Library.

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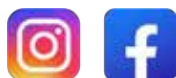


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REGION

# C4R looks to the future in 2026

Volunteers needed to continue watershed council

By Paula Ouimette  
pouimette@turley.com

PALMER – The Chicopee 4Rivers Watershed Council held its spring kickoff meeting to reflect on the work that has been done to ensure the health of the area's rivers, and also to look ahead to the future.

Community members and volunteers joined Chicopee 4Rivers Watershed Council Coordinator Keith Davies and Events Coordinator Jim Emerson at the Palmer Historical Cultural Center in Three Rivers on Sunday afternoon, close to where the rivers in the watershed meet up. These rivers include the Swift, Ware, Quaboag and Chicopee.

"They all meet right here within a half mile of each other," Davies said.

The Chicopee River Watershed is the largest in the commonwealth and the largest in the Connecticut River basin. Despite its geographic area, this watershed is often overlooked.

"It's the largest watershed in Massachusetts," Davies said. "It's also one of the least recognized in the state."

Davies said the council needs a dedicated core group of volunteers to keep a focus on the watershed, and continue to grow its mission.

"We need long term commitments and people to really engage," he said.

### Water monitoring and restoration

Davies said the former watershed council, the Chicopee River Watershed Council, was inactive, and by 2014, he and others worked to revitalize it, and changed its name to Chicopee 4Rivers Watershed Council to encompass all of the local rivers.

In 2015, the council put a major focus on water quality sampling, with grant funding under the umbrella of the Connecticut River Conservancy. The council has also received financial support from various towns, in addition to Country Bank, the Lake Wickaboag Preservation Association and the Quaboag & Quacumquasit Lake Association.

"It largely relates to bacteria," Davies said of the water quality sampling. "The bacteria sampling is kind of that pulse...that annual physical. That's what the sampling is; it's really that check-up."

Water quality sampling is conducted at sites across the watershed from late spring to late summer. The bacteria levels are then analyzed at Connecticut River Conservancy's lab, and posted on its website c4river.org or at isitclean.us.

Water quality is listed for "primary" or "secondary"



Keith Davies, coordinator of the Chicopee 4Rivers Watershed Council, gave the history of the council at the spring kickoff meeting held at the Palmer Historical Cultural Center this past Sunday.

TURLEY PHOTO BY PAULA OUIMETTE

use, with primary being safe for swimming and secondary for boating or fishing.

In 2023, the Department of Environmental Protection awarded a grant that allowed the council to take samples from more sites than ever before.

"There were six sites in 2015," Davies said. "Since 2023 we've done 25 sites."

Davies said the council was recently notified that the Connecticut River Conservancy received DEP grant funding again for this year's sampling season.

In addition to collecting water samples for testing, the council's volunteers also collect data on weather conditions and water temperatures.

"If there's rainfall before sampling, it can elevate bacteria levels," Davies said.

He said if there's an elevated bacteria level without rainfall prior to sampling, it could be an indicator that something along the river is causing the spike.

"We do look at how those values change," he said.

C4R has also facilitated invasive plant removal from waterways, such as water chestnuts.

Davies explained the importance of continuing to monitor rivers for the invasive plant, as its spiked seeds are easily transported by waterfowl, and can lay dormant for 10 years.

"If it's not checked it will inundate the area again," he said.

### Blue Trails expansion

C4R also works to establish and maintain the Blue Trails, which have sections along all of the rivers in the watershed.

This year, C4R is continuing its focus on a new section, the Lower Quaboag, spanning from Route 67 to Laviolette Park.

The new section will start at an old rest area on Route 67, passing through to Water Street, then to Laviolette

Park. Davies said a kiosk will be built by local Scouts and placed at the access point.

"The whole trail is about 12 miles," he said.

Davies displayed a draft of the map for the new section of Blue Trail, which highlighted historic points along the river. Points of interest include the second oldest flow gauge in the state at the Route 67 access point, the remnants of Blanchardville, a unique concrete T-beam bridge, a mysterious rock with the "1856" carved in it and much more.

The Lower Quaboag Blue Trail ends at Laviolette Park, which prior to 1960 was a backwater impoundment for the dam near the confluence. The Army Corps of Engineers built flood control measures and created the park following flooding in the 1930s and 1950s.

Davies shared a photo that showed people ice skating where the park is now.

"It's still a place of recreation, it's just not wet, it's land," he said.

Davies said trail crewmembers are also needed to act as stewards of the Blue Trails

Duties of a trail steward includes looking for downed trees, checking portage areas, picking up trash, talking to Blue Trail users, taking photos and reporting findings back to C4R.

### Macroinvertebrate monitoring

Davies said he would like to expand the river monitoring to include macroinvertebrate sampling – taking a closer look at the insects in the water.

"Certain bugs can only live in healthy water," he said.

Davies said sampling for macroinvertebrates is especially appealing to children, and could be a great way to protect (and enjoyment) of the watershed.

"It's a fun way to get people involved because it's

hands-on," he said.

### Upcoming paddles

A special birding paddle with a Mass Audubon-certified bird guide will be held on Saturday, May 16 on the Quaboag River. A dragonfly paddle is being planned for July at a location to be determined.

More information about future paddles can be found on C4R's website, c4rivers.org.

### How to get involved

"If you know someone who really loves these rivers," Davies said. "Talk to them – have them get in touch with me."

Davies said it's important to get more people involved who can help with communication, organization, and other tasks.

"If we can't get some of this organized in the next years, I don't know if we're going to be here," Davies said of the council. "We've got to bring some movers and shakers

### About C4R

Memberships and donations help C4R with resources for basic operations, including preparing events, creating and maintaining Blue Trails, collecting samples, writing reports and performing community outreach.

C4R has established a nonprofit relationship with the Connecticut River Conservancy, which holds and manages C4R funds for tax-exempt purposes for all donors who want this coverage.

To become a member, visit c4rivers.org and click on "Membership/Support – C4R."

For more information or to get involved, visit c4rivers.org, email chicopee-watershed@gmail.com or find Chicopee4Rivers on Facebook.

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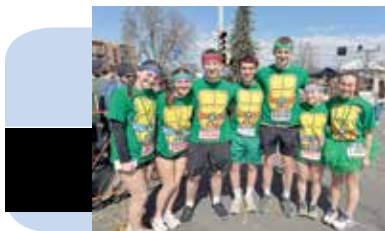
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## OPINION

## SOCIAL SECURITY

## Matters

By Russell Gloor

## Social Security reduced my monthly payment

Dear Rusty:

My last Social Security payment decreased by about \$400, so I went to my online SS account and found a November 2025 letter explaining that my 2024 tax return showed a greatly enlarged Adjusted Gross Income.

Thus, SSA decided to withdraw monies, as of January 2026, from my bank account because I'd owed far more monies to them. The letter itemized my greatly diminished 2026 SSA monthly payment, explaining should my next tax return show a regular AGI, then SSA would return my SS income to regular amounts and return every prior month's deficits? Said letter also mentioned an optional recourse, that of compiling an "Appeal" to regain my ongoing decreased income. The extra amounts now withdrawn for Medicare Parts A and D alone are outrageously high. I'm a retired senior citizen on a fixed income.

According to SSA, my having sold a piece of land in 2024 allows SSA to decrease my SS income. Has this become a common practice against U.S.A. senior citizens? Thank you in advance for your input.

Signed: Feeling Wronged

Dear Feeling Wronged:

From what you have shared, it appears that your SS benefit amount has been affected by a provision known as Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amount. IRMAA isn't really a Social Security issue, rather it is a Medicare premium thing. But when IRMAA applies, it reduces your net Social Security payment because Medicare premiums are automatically taken from your Social Security benefit, thus making your net SS payment less.

If you look at your gross Social Security payment at your online "my Social Security" account you will see that your gross SS payment did not change, but your Medicare premium did, thus affecting your net SS payment. IRMAA, essentially, makes Medicare a "means tested" program, where those with a higher AGI can pay a higher Medicare Part B (and Part D) premium.

However, IRMAA is usually based on AGI from two years prior to

the current year because your current AGI information isn't available from the IRS when Medicare premiums are determined in October of each year. FYI, you may have received a notice in the mail in early December telling you what your 2026 Social Security and Medicare amounts would be.

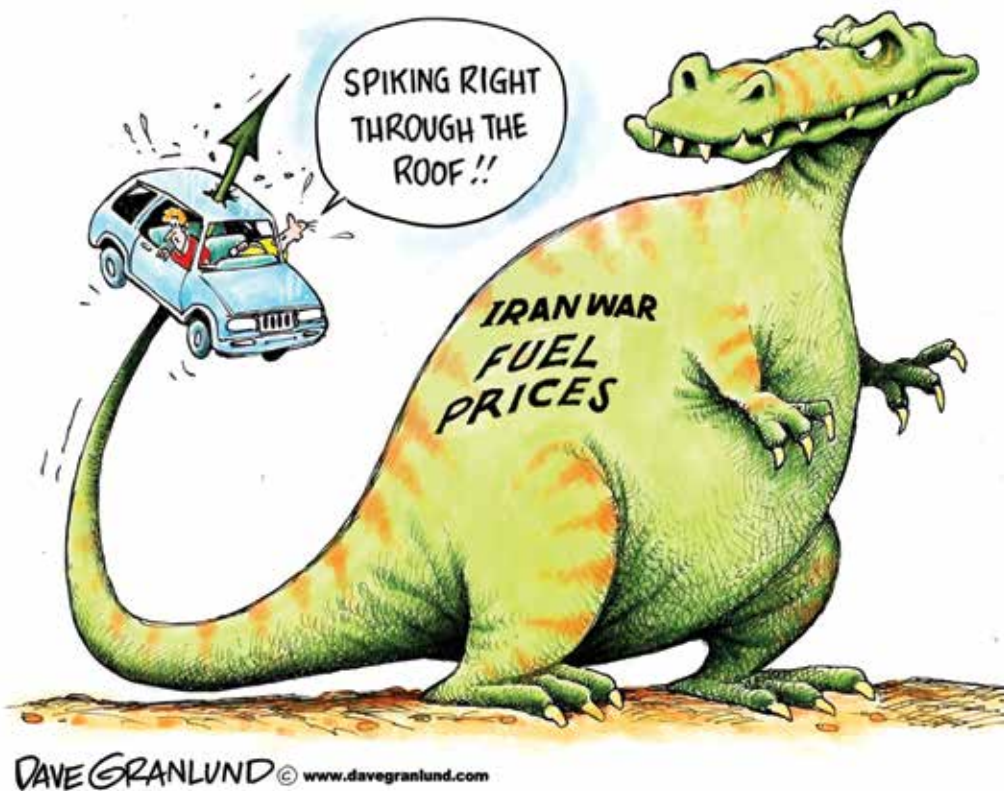
In a nutshell, the land you sold in 2024 apparently increased your AGI to exceed the base IRMAA thresholds, which are \$109,000 if you file your taxes as a single or \$218,000 if you file your income tax as "married/jointly." And the IRMAA supplements are "progressive" (higher if your AGI is more), so if your Medicare premiums went up by about \$400 about twice the 2026 standard premium, it's likely that your 2024 AGI was over \$137,000 if you filed as a single or over \$274,000 if you filed as "married/jointly." FYI, you can see the 2026 IRMAA brackets/premium amounts at this link: [www.ssa.gov/benefits/medicare/medicare-premiums.html](http://www.ssa.gov/benefits/medicare/medicare-premiums.html)

A couple of additional points:

Your Medicare premiums will, indeed, revert to the standard amounts for 2027, if your 2025 AGI amount is under the IRMAA threshold for your tax filing status.

There is no premium for Medicare Part A, which is coverage for inpatient hospitalization care, because you are receiving Social Security benefits. However, there is a premium for Part B of Medicare (which is coverage for outpatient medical services) and you must also separately pay a premium for Part D, which is coverage for prescription drugs offered by private insurers. And these IRMAA supplements apply even if you have a Medicare Advantage plan from a private insurer.

Unfortunately, your only "recourse" is, as SSA suggested, to appeal the IRMAA supplement, but that is usually successful only if you can prove you had a "life changing event," which caused (or will cause) your AGI to be less than that used to determine your IRMAA surcharge. Your best option at this point will likely be to appeal using a "Request for Reconsideration" (Form

Please see **SSI**, page 7

## Plants to celebrate Easter and then some

It's hard to believe that in just a little over a week we will be celebrating the Easter holiday!

I am sure that many readers will be either receiving the Easter lily as a gift or purchasing one for someone else. Its pure white, intensely fragrant blooms are emblems of new life and hope for the future – I can think of no better symbol of the holiest day on the Christian calendar than this one.

If you find yourself in the market for an Easter lily this week, select one that is deep green and has more buds than open flowers. It should be proportionate in height and not top heavy.

If outdoor temperatures remain chilly, be sure to cover the plant well upon exiting the store, and don't leave it in the car while you do other errands!

Once home, the Easter lily prefers temperatures around 65 degrees and bright but indirect light. Water thoroughly, but allow the soil to dry out in between waterings.

Be careful for the decorative foil or plastic wrapper – sometimes water will pool in the bottom, keeping the soil too moist. If you like how the wrapper looks, poke some holes at the base and place the pot on a shallow saucer to catch any water that drips out. Dump the saucer as needed. You can also remove the wrapper and allow the pot to drain in the sink for a few minutes after each watering.

To prolong the life of your plant, be sure to remove the anthers before the pollen ripens. This will also prevent the pollen from staining the pure white flowers and your nose!

As flowers start to wither, cut them off – this will keep it looking its best and redirect energy back to the bulb.

Once the soil warms, the Easter lily can be planted outside in full sun and well-drained soil. Sink the bulb with foliage and stem

attached, to a depth of three inches and water well.

flowers as they wither and allow the foliage to brown. At this point stop watering and let the bulbs dry out.

They can be planted outdoors in spring, or saved until the fall for planting as you normally would.

Sometimes I get the job done in spring, although it does feel odd to be doing it then, simply so I won't forget to plant them in the fall!

After the original foliage dies, cut it back to the soil surface. New growth will soon emerge. Lilies benefit from a layer of mulch to keep their roots cool. Although they are quite hardy, do provide some winter protection in the form of straw, evergreen boughs or the like.

With any luck you will be delighted with big, beautiful white flowers next summer. Although lilies bloom in spring under the controlled conditions of the greenhouse, they bloom naturally during the summer months.

Another good and widely available option for Easter gift giving is a pot of spring bulbs.

With tulips, daffodils and hyacinths to choose from, there will no doubt be a fragrance and flower color that appeals to you. Be sure to choose them in bud, rather than full flower because warm household temperatures will cause them to burst into bloom in no time.

To maximize indoor bloom time, enjoy in your living space during the day, but move to a basement, spare room or garage each night where temperatures are cooler, but not freezing!

The great thing about forced bulbs is that they can be enjoyed in the house this Easter and next year in the garden.

Daffodils and hyacinth are the most dependable repeat bloomers. Tulips (depending on the type) may bloom great the following season but then take a few years off-time to recharge before blooming again.

If you wish to plant your bulbs outside, remove spent

## in the Garden

by Roberta McQuaid



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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](mailto:sentinel@turley.com). The deadline for submissions is Friday at 5 p.m.

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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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## in my BACKYARD

By Ellenor Downer

An Oakham resident saw a yellow-bellied sapsucker also known as yellow-bellied woodpecker at her suet feeder earlier this month.

They have a long pointed bill and the typical black and white feather pattern of the downy and hairy woodpeckers. Sapsuckers are larg-



Male yellow-bellied sapsucker

er than downy woodpeckers and smaller than hairy

woodpeckers. The yellow feathers are muted and not

that visible as the resident noted. They also have vertical, white wing patches. Both adult males and females have a red forehead. However the male has a red throat and the female, a white throat. Their young have brownish coloration, but they do have the white wing patches

As the name sapsucker implies, these woodpecker drill holes, row after row, to get at the sap found in many native species of trees such as aspen, birch (paper and yellow), elm, eastern hemlock, sugar maple, etc. in springtime. Other birds such as ruby-throated humming-

birds, bats and insects also

drink from these "sap taps."

People who burn wood most likely have seen the neat rows of holes drilled by the sapsucker in some of the wood from their pile.

The drumming of the yellow-bellied sapsucker is very distinctive, consisting of a roll with clearly separated taps at the end and sometimes at the beginning "tap-tap trrrrrrrrrrr ta-ta-tat-tat." Both sexes drum. Ritual tapping at the lower rim of the nest hole is a rather common acoustic signal.

The yellow-bellied is the only sapsucker seen in the

Please see **BACKYARD**, page 8

AMHERST

# Artist Angel Abreu reimagines classic American literature in new exhibit

AMHERST — Augusta Savage Gallery at UMass presents “Crossing Narratives,” a new exhibition by Angel Abreu that reimagines foundational literary works through a contemporary lens.

The exhibition opens on March 27 and runs through May 8. A reception will be held March 27 from 5 to 7 p.m.

As artist in residence at Augusta Savage Gallery, Abreu embarks on an artistic exploration of “James,” Percival Everett’s Pulitzer Prize-winning reimagining of “Adventures of Huckleberry Finn,” told from the perspective of the formerly enslaved character Jim. Like Everett’s

novel, Abreu’s work challenges dominant narratives around race, agency, and representation in American literature and culture. Through visual reinterpretation, “Crossing Narratives” invites audiences to reconsider Jim’s journey as one of resilience, survival, and self-emancipation, offering a bold counternarrative to traditional portrayals of Black figures in classic American texts.

Abreu’s mixed-media works transform book pages into contemporary statements that layer symbols and colors over literary works. Other works in the show respond to literature including “The Fire Next Time” by James

Baldwin, “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” by William Shakespeare, “The Scarlet Letter” by Nathaniel Hawthorne, and “All About Love: New Visions” by bell hooks.

“Angel Abreu’s exhibition ‘Crossing Narratives’ enters into direct dialogue with seminal thinkers like James Baldwin, bell hooks, and Percival Everett, inviting us to reconsider the politics of relatability and interiority,” said Elana Casey, associate director of Augusta Savage Gallery. “In the wake of a literacy crisis, Abreu centers literary texts and narratives that reflect the Black experience, echoing the ambitions of Augusta Savage Gallery to find common-

ality within our differences.” In the lead-up to the exhibition, Abreu led a workshop centered on “James,” collaborating with participants to create new works for inclusion in the exhibition. This community engaged approach reflects Abreu’s longstanding commitment to education and collaboration through workshops with young people.

Angel Abreu is part of the Fine Arts Center’s fiftieth anniversary season artist in residence program, which also features Camille Turner at the University Museum of Contemporary Art, Sally Prasch at Hampden Gallery, and Larissa Fasthorse in the performing arts program.

# Office of Rep. Mindy Domb announces March hours

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

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

**Tuesday, March 31,** 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; consti-

tuents 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](mailto: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.

FREE CASH from page 1

The Select Board later voted to use a one-time transfer at a special town meeting to restore those reserves.

Board members also agreed to further limit their dependence on free cash for recurring spending. Williams walked them through a worksheet comparing using 50% vs. 40% of free cash for operations.

Selectboard Chair Lesa Lessard Pearson backed the more conservative approach.

“I think it’s the right decision,” she said of the 50% cap. “I think going from 100% to 50%...those are huge strides.”

The board then voted to use only half of free cash for the FY27 operating budget, with the rest flowing to capital and stabilization.

Looking at overall reserves, Williams said the projected stabilization balance would bring Belchertown closer to state best practices.

Select Board members said they were satisfied the town is “moving in the right direction” on reserves.

Williams summarized the emerging bottom line, noting that “the overall budget looks like \$61 million dollars, though detailed presentation is slated for a March 23 joint tri-board meeting.

With a long list of build-

ing and infrastructure needs, Williams urged the board to keep annual debt service steady by replacing old debt with new bonds as older obligations are retired.

“In the FY 27 budget, we are making a final payment on a bond that is going to free up about \$250,000 worth of money,” he said.

“The DLS has recommended that we maintain our level of debt service as well as increase. If we don’t, it’s going to go back to our bond rate,” Williams added, explaining why he wants to immediately reuse that capacity.

For FY27, he said he intends “to borrow enough money to cover at least a \$250,000 annual payment next year” and then layer on more projects as cost estimates and grant opportunities are refined.

Williams outlined a multi-year capital pipeline, emphasizing that many numbers are still placeholders:

- FY27: \$1.8 million worth of projects
- FY28: \$7.8 million worth of projects
- FY29: \$3.9 million worth of projects
- FY30: \$9 million worth of projects
- FY31: \$3.8 million worth of projects

He noted those out-year estimates include big-ticket issues like Jabish Brook Middle School improve-

ments and “our 60-year-old DPW complex,” as well as possible costs “if we try to keep after the Tadjell building.”

Williams said an updated capital improvement plan would be ready this week, with the Capital Improvement Planning Committee set to present at the March 23 meeting.

Alongside the financial strategy, Williams laid out a series of staffing and structural changes that are being incorporated into the FY27 budget. He said they are driven by both service needs and looming retirements.

Among the changes Williams said are funded in the working budget:

- Library – “We are going to fund this is a need. You would ask for additional five hours per position. We were able to accommodate that.”
- DPW – “We are going to maintain three seasonal positions in our DPW maintenance division for bond maintenance repairs. They work for the summer.”
- Police – “The police chief [will] reinstate the Second Lieutenant position. You’re able to do that through promotion. So it was a very small amount of money, overall, \$10,000.”
- The town is also working with Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School: “They want to bring in a school resource officer. They’re going to

pay upwards to 70% of that cost because of the amount of time that they use it,” Williams said. “We’re going to cover the three months or so that officer will just be working. Then Pathfinder takes over 70% of the cost.”

- Fire Department – “We have been in need of a Deputy Fire Chief right now. I’m going to be able to fund that starting July 1, and I’m already working on a plan to fund it for the full year in FY28.”

- Grant writing and communications – “We have additional hours for our grant writer and our communications director built into this,” Williams said. He later specified: “The grant writer will be able to be 27 and a half and the communications manager will be going from 19 to 25” hours per week, moving both into benefited status.

- Information Technology – “We have a part time it position that’s 19 hours a week, 35 hours a week,” Williams said, describing a move to nearly full-time IT support with benefits.

- Finance director placeholder – Williams wants to begin formalizing a finance director role, at least financially. He said he will “include a placeholder \$20,000 for a finance director,” likely as a stipend tied to an existing financial position at first. He noted that the town is still decid-

ing whether a future “number two” position should be more focused on finance, or structured as a “Special Projects Manager” or assistant town manager.

- Economic development – Williams also raised the idea of adding a part-time economic development role. He said he wants “a 19 hour a week, economic development plan, part time, non-benefited” position as “also a consideration at the moment.”

Selectboard member Nicole Miner asked for a full written breakdown of staffing changes, including benefit status and cost.

Williams agreed to send the board a summary of all new or expanded positions and their budget impact.

The board plans to hear a full capital improvement plan and the detailed FY27 budget at the March 23 tri-board meeting with the Finance Committee and School Committee.

Ritter said this year’s budgeting process, which features earlier alignment between school and municipal sides and clearer guardrails on free cash and debt, is the closest he has seen the town come to a balanced plan before final votes.

“This is the closest we ever got our budgets,” he told his colleagues.

# Relay hosting concert fundraiser

BELCHERTOWN – Quaboag Valley Relay for Life will host a fundraiser to “Scare Cancer Away” on Saturday, Apr. 11 at 3 p.m. at the Belchertown Untied Church of Christ, 18 Park St.

The featured performer is Ray Guillemette, Jr. the 10-time international award-winning Elvis tribute artist. The event being held to help cancer patients, fund more research to help with the government cutbacks, and to honor those we’ve lost too soon to cancer.

Tickets are \$20 and are available at <https://buccsangels.ticketspice.com/rajs-of-elvis-relay-fundraiser>. Refreshments will be available for purchase.

SSI from page 6

SSA-561) asking that your 2026 Medicare premium be based on a recent year’s (e.g., 2025) lower income.

Finally, IRMAA isn’t really a new thing – it was enacted in 2003, effective in 2007. But it does have a profound effect on many seniors, as I explained in this article I recently published on the topic: <https://amacfoundation.org/irmaa-a-medicare-surprise/>.

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# Zonta to celebrate Earth Day

**BELCHERTOWN** — On Apr. 13 at the Ludlow Country Club Zonta will celebrate Earth Day with a look at gender equity in rural MA and an online, local, farm to door delivery service connecting Quaboag Valley to the freshest farm products, bakeries & specialty food shops.

Anne Gobi became Massachusetts's first Director of Rural Affairs in January 2023. Beginning her political life in the town of Spencer in 1998, she was first elected to the state House in an October 2001 special election. While a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, Gobi worked on multiple committees; including the Joint Committee on Environment and Natural Resources. She served as co-chair of the Committee on Agriculture. In 2014, Gobi was elected to the state Senate. In the Senate, Gobi served as the Senate Co-chair of the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture and Joint Committee on Higher Education. She will be speaking to us on Women in Rural Massachusetts, opportunities and challenges.

Also joining us is Farmer At The Door Entrepreneur Jessica Petrie-Cummings of Petrie Family Farm, Brimfield MA. Her online, local, farm to door delivery service connects Quaboag Valley to the freshest farm products, bakeries & specialty food shops. Jess will share her story and have items for sale before and after the program.

The public is invited to join us on Apr. 13.

# Belchertown ViewFinder 2026 Photography program underway

**BELCHERTOWN** – The Belchertown ViewFinder 2026 photography program is underway ([www.belchertown.org/ViewFinder](http://www.belchertown.org/ViewFinder))! The project includes a series of workshops for adults and children and will culminate in a contest of photographs taken in Belchertown celebrating the beauty and heritage of our town. The workshops and contest are free and open to anyone.

A series of three adult workshops in April will

focus on Smartphone Photography, Photography for Beginners and Advanced Photography techniques. They will be led by three noted Belchertown photographers and will include field exercises to put into practice what was just covered in the classroom.

Two workshops for children will be held in May at the Swift River Elementary School garden and will show the students how to gain an appreciation for nature, large

and small, through the lens of a camera

The ViewFinder 2026 Photo Contest kicks off on March 21 and will run until May 30. While anyone can enter, the submitted photos must have been taken in Belchertown. A panel will review the submissions, and the winning photographs will be exhibited at the Clapp Memorial Library for the month of July.

The ViewFinder project, now in its third year, is

a collaboration between the Clapp Memorial Library, the Quabbin Photo Group, the Friends of Lake Wallace and the Belchertown Creative Economy Initiative.

“We’re really excited about this year,” said Cyndi Harbeson, Director of the Clapp Memorial Library. “The partnership with the Quabbin Photo Group adds a whole new dimension to the project, and we are delighted to have their expertise in helping deliver the educa-

tional component.”

“Education is a big part of what the Quabbin Photo Group is all about,” added QPG President Mark Lindhult. “It was part of the mission when Les Campbell founded the club in 1984, and it has only become stronger over the years.”

More information on ViewFinder 2026 can be found at [www.belchertown.org/viewfinder](http://www.belchertown.org/viewfinder)



The local pickleball community recently had a gathering to remember Larry Davis.

### DAVIS from page 1

Proceeds from the event will be applied towards a permanent tribute to

Larry that will be erected at the town's pickleball courts. Donations to the Larry Davis Memorial Fund; checks

payable to the BOAA/ Belchertown Pickleball Community, PO Box 1214 Belchertown, MA 01007



The Golden Paddle was presented by Debbie Wood, of Belchertown, to Larry Davis' wife, Bonnie Prindle, of Belchertown, daughter Julie Colson and husband Mark, grandkids Samantha and Andrew.



Ann Marie Lavalie (Belchertown) and Debbie Wood (Belchertown) played with grandkids Samantha and Andrew Colson at the event.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS



### BACKYARD from page 6

eastern half of the U.S. and across the northern forests. These sapsuckers are migratory, which is a fairly rare trait for woodpeckers. They live in a variety of habitats from low-lying floodplains to mountainous forests at 10,000 feet. Their breeding range extends from Alaska to Newfoundland and south along the Appalachians. They

winter across the East from New Jersey west to Texas and all the way south to Panama.

A common breeding display involves males pointing their bills skyward as they showcase their red throat patch for an interested female. Though both sexes are involved with excavating nesting cavities; males do most of the work. Occasionally, sapsuckers

visit bird feeders for suet.

### Bald eagle and turkey vultures

Early this month, a Worthington resident sent an email. He said he had a “lucky and thrilling sighting of an eagle, white tail obvious, circling on high with three turkey vultures and he called it “intra species cooperation” or more likely, the eagle using the vulture’s abil-

ity to find carrion.

I saw three turkey vultures along Route 122 in Barre near Vernon Avenue on March 16. I saw two turkey vultures in Oakham on St. Patrick’s Day. Their return is a sign of spring.

### Canada geese

The Canada geese are also returning. I saw quite a few geese in a cornfield in Spencer last week. I also saw about a dozen or saw fly overhead.

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

### Robins

Huge flock of robins. Last week, I saw a huge flock of robins, probably close to 100 birds fly over head along Route 32 in Gilbertville. Robins overwinter in this area, but large flocks are the returning robins that migrate.

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# SPORTS

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*Perfect day for a road race:*

## Holyoke runs 49th holiday 10K

By Gregory A. Scibelli  
gscibelli@turley.com

HOLYOKE – A warm and hot day is not ideal for running long distances, but give a harrier a 40-50-degree day, and it's the perfect environment make great time.

Louis Serafini, of Cambridge, experienced that as he completed a sub-30-minute 10K in the 49th running of the Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Road Race last Saturday afternoon. Serafini completed the hilly course throughout downtown Holyoke in 29:45. He had a great pace going, averaging 4:47 a mile with thousands of people cheering him on as he completed the course 50 seconds ahead of the runner-up.

Yankarlos Diaz was the second-place finisher. He comes from Manchester, CT. He completed the 6.3-mile course in just 30:35.

This year's top female finisher was Rachel Schilkowsky. She comes from Providence, RI and placed 12th overall. She completed the course at 34:03, winning the race for the very first time.

Among local finisher, Monson's Matt Provost came in at 34:15. He had a pace of about 5:30 per mile.

According to the results provided by Presidential Timing, which took over the timing of the race last year, nearly 4,900 runners, male, female, and many children

and teenagers, completed the 10K race.

In addition to the ideal temperature for running, the day was sun-splashed and beautiful, making for a great setting for the running of the race, which had more than 6,200 runners signed up.

The race included multi-



The runners are off in the 49th running of the Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Road Race.



Matthew Talbot heads for the finish line.



Lee Belisle, of Belchertown, hustles toward the end.



Robert Scibelli, of Granby is nearing the finish.



Benjamin Chartier completes the course.

Please see **RACE**, page 10



Jameson Mowa tries to go around an opponent to grab a shot.



Will Nadeau looks to shoot.

### Orioles defeated in 5-6 final



Landon Tellier drives to the hoop.



Jason Kravczyk heads down the court.

BELCHERTOWN – Earlier this month, Belchertown hosted the 5-6 finals in the Suburban boys basketball league. Thanks to a last-second basket, Belchertown was defeated by the rival Ludlow in the final matchup held on Friday, Mar. 7.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY  
WWW.SWEETDOG PHOTOS.COM

### Fernandez represents Granby at All-Star game



The Girls Senior All-Star Game also took place last Friday evening at the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

SPRINGFIELD – Last Friday night, the Senior All-Star Games took place at the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame. Granby was represented in one of the matchups by Zavien Fernandez. Fernandez had an excellent regular season for Granby High School. In the girls game, one of the teams was coached by Granby High School girls basketball coach Dave Padavano.



Granby's senior representative drives into the paint.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI  
Zavien Fernandez heads down the court.

SPORTS

# Railers hold off Thunder in victory

WORCESTER – Days like this have been rarer than eclipses of the sun for the Railers this season.

They snapped a three-game losing streak in front of a large, raucous crowd at the DCU Center Sunday with a 4-3 victory over the Adirondack Thunder. The good news does not end there. The two teams directly ahead of them in the fight for fourth place in the North Division, Reading and Trois-Rivieres, both lost.

So, everything that could have gone right for Worcester did and that has not happened very often this winter, especially in recent weeks.

Beyond that, the 6,030 fans saw one of the best games of the season, with the outcome in doubt until the final seconds.

The triumph allowed the Railers to close to within eight points of fourth place Reading and within one point of the fifth-place Trois-Rivieres Lions.

Worcester fell behind early, 2-1, then scored the game's next three goals

to build a 4-2 lead. The Thunder closed to within a goal with 8:44 to go and the final minutes were bedlam with four penalties totaling 11 minutes and four power plays being called.

Anthony Callin, Ryan Miotto, Anthony Repaci and Riley Piercey had the Worcester goals. Thomas Gale picked up the win in net with a 26-save afternoon. Jeremy Brodeur was the losing goaltender.

It may, or may not, be a coincidence that events began to turn in the Railers' direction when Railers forward Max Dorrington fought Adirondack defenseman Jackson van de Leest in front of the Thunder net at 14:48 of the first period.

It was a real heavyweight bout, one of the season's

best.

The two fighters were a combined 12 feet, 10 inches tall. Together they weighed 450 pounds with Dorrington giving up a little in both height and weight. He did not give up anything in terms of the battle, however, and wound up on the positive side of the scorecard.

"I thought our physicality was right," coach Nick Tuzzolino said. "We didn't get down like we had in a lot of the other games, go on our own page once we start to lose the lead...I think tonight they just stuck with it no matter what happened."

"It was a physical start and I think that Max getting into that fight kind of settled stuff down."

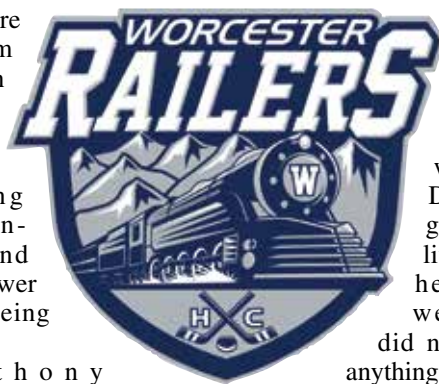
Brandon McManus gave the visitors a 1-0 lead a mere 2:47 after the opening

faceoff but Callin responded at 3:41 from in close. Dylan Wendt got the lead back for Adirondack at 14:21 and it was 2-1 going into the second period.

Miotto tied it at the 2:21 mark of the second period as he and Lincoln Hatten worked a textbook 2 on 1. Repaci got the Railers a 3-2 lead with just 16 seconds left in the period; he was credited with the goal when the puck went in off an Adirondack defenseman who was just outside the crease.

Piercey scored on a neat deflection at 3:52 of the third period. It turned out to be the winner as Patrick Grasso scored on a high deflection at 11:16.

Repaci was 1-1-2 and plus-2 to lead the Railers offense. Cam McDonald was plus-2, also. The teams combined for 12 power plays with Adirondack having eight of those. While he was pointless, Cole Donhauser had a terrific game killing those Thunder penalties.



# Registration continues for new players in QVBL

SOUTH HADLEY – Registration for new players in the Quabbin Valley Baseball League, an over-28 recreational league, continues. The league is now headed for its open practices for new players and the new-player draft for players looking to join the league.

There will be open practices for all players but specifically targeted at new players scheduled for Mar. 29 and Apr. 4 at times and locations to be announced. The draft is currently scheduled to take place on Apr. 4 following that practice. Any players who sign up will be contacted directly for the time and location of the open practice.

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 determine as the league's board explores possibilities for interleague matchups with another league in the region.

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](http://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 new team in Pioneer Valley League

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.

New players are especially wanted for the new sixth team. 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 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](http://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.

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 getting up to 11 games for \$130. Fees paid go toward the operation of the league, paying for insurance, umpires, fields, and baseballs. No one profits in any way.

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.

# Shorthanded goals lead to win for Thunderbirds

BELLEVILLE, ON - The Springfield Thunderbirds (25-28-6-2) rode a fantastic night from their shorthanded unit to a 5-3 win over the Belleville Senators (24-30-8-1) on Saturday night at CAA Arena.

The Thunderbirds' penalty-killing unit had a first period for the ages. As if going 3-for-3 was not impressive enough, Springfield added not one, but two shorthanded tallies in the opening 5:31 of the contest. Chris Wagner set up Alek Kaskimaki for the first one, just 1:48 into the festivities, sliding a 2-on-1 pass to the crashing winger in the low slot before Kaskimaki deked to his backhand to beat Mads Sogaard.

On Springfield's second kill of the period, Dylan Peterson picked off a loose puck at his whole blue line and finished off a shorthanded breakaway with a forehand snapper through Sogaard at 5:31, making it a 2-0 score.

Tyler Boucher would bring Belleville back to within one when he banked a centering pass off a T-Bird and past Will Cranley at 7:48 of the first, cutting the score to 2-1.

However, Springfield used offensive zone time from a man advantage to strike back at 16:24 as Zach Dean feathered a smooth saucer pass to Juraj Pekarcik for the T-Birds' third goal of the period and first even-strength marker of the night.

With the teams skating 4-on-4 early in the second, Sam Bolduc netted his first goal as a Senator as he wristed a shot through a screened Cranley to make it a 3-2 game just 55 seconds into the middle stanza.

However, the one-goal score would last only another 55 seconds before Peterson cashed in for his second of the evening, tapping a loose puck past Sogaard in the blue paint following a pass from Pekarcik.

With the 4-2 advantage, Springfield added still more

insurance at 5:42 when Chris Wagner stole a break-out pass in the neutral zone and tapped the puck forward for Dillon Dube, who slipped a forehand through Sogaard's five-hole for Springfield's fifth goal on just 13 shots.

Sogaard's night came to an unceremonious end, as he gave way to Leevi Merilainen, who promptly picked up where he left off from a 40-save shutout in Springfield on Jan. 24, stopping the final eight T-Birds shots of the period to keep the score at 5-2 heading into the third.

Belleville far outshot Springfield in the third, but the T-Birds kept the Sens from high-danger chances, relenting only a late power-play goal by Carter Yakemchuk at 17:45 of the final period. Cranley picked up his third win of the season in his home province, stopping 23 in the win, including 14 in the final period alone.

Belleville far outshot Springfield in the third, but the T-Birds kept the Sens from high-danger chances, relenting only a late power-play goal by Carter Yakemchuk at 17:45 of the final period. Cranley picked up his third win of the season in his home province, stopping 23 in the win, including 14 in the final period alone.

Springfield added still more

RACE from page 9

Anthem by a member of the Holyoke Grand Colleen Court, Bridie Bowler.

Crews in the city did an excellent job preparing for the race, getting the course prepared despite a lot of snowfall during the past couple of months.

While there were plenty of local runners, race results showed individual participants from all over New England, New York, and New Jersey. There were even some international runners.

Last Saturday's even included a fun run for children and a walk as well that have been traditions in recent years. Prior to the race, there were musical performances and other entertainment downtown.



Bridie Bowler sings the National Anthem.



The first wave of runners are off.



Rachel Schilkowsky, of Providence, RI, was the top female finisher at 34:15.



Louis Serafini, of Cambridge, won the 10K race at 29:45.



URLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

Belchertown's Paul McCloskey gets in full stride near the end.



## Sensory Friendly Egg Hunt set for Apr. 4

**H O L Y O K E** – Wistariahurst Museum is egg-static to bring back our Sensory-Friendly Egg Hunt for a third year! Designed for families with sensory sensitivities, this festive egg hunt focuses on gentle exploration and enjoyment so every bunny feels comfortable and welcome. This year's egg hunt will take place indoors throughout the halls of Wistariahurst. Weather permitting, outdoor games and activities will add some egg-straw fun to the event. Each child can gather eggs and exchange them for prizes ranging from candy to fidget toys. Hop to it and register for one of the available time slots. Registration is available for free on Wistariahurst's Eventbrite page.

When interviewed at last year's egg hunt, Museum Director Megan Seiler noted "The city of Holyoke does an amazing job putting on a big egg hunt downtown, but not every kid thrives in that environment... So we wanted to be able to offer a more quiet, more calm space for



kids who might have sensory sensitivities." Wistariahurst is egg-cited to bring this event back for after families in Holyoke and beyond enjoyed this event the past two years.

Families can sign up for timed entry to ensure smooth check-in between 2 and 4 p.m. on Saturday, Apr. 4. Families are welcome to enjoy the egg hunt any time during their timeslots, and each time slot will be limited to 10 families. If you are late for your time slot, don't worry. We still encourage all registrants to attend

even if they are running late. Families are also welcome to explore the gardens and enjoy outdoor games, weather permitting, during the event.

Outside of this event, we have open hours on Mondays from 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. and Tuesdays from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., and our gardens are open every day from dawn until dusk. We also host Sensory Friendly Sunday Funday events monthly. Hop to it and get your tickets for this year's Sensory Friendly Egg Hunt.

## 'The Old Bag Sale' is back to benefit the Stone House Museum

**B E L C H E R T O W N** – The Stonehouse Museum's opening day is Saturday, May 9 and the hugely popular Old Bag sale will be there again.

The museum needs your help to make this event a big success. We are collecting gently used bags, pocketbooks, purses, wallets, backpacks, etc. (please no suitcases).

Now is the time to clean out your closets and donate. Spread the word to friends and family as well.

Donation bins have been placed in several locations around town including the Senior Center, Clapp Memorial Library, Town Hall, Pine Valley Plantation mail room, Bell and Hudson insurance Agency, Easthampton Savings Bank, Swift River Gift Shop, Tina Marie's Hair and Boutique, Eclips Salon, Rannsaka Gift Shop, Dynamic Do's, Making Waves Salon, Looks To Kill Salon, and Station Five Salon. We also have 2 collection bins in Granby at the Granby Senior Center and the Granby Free Library. Collections end May 1 so do not delay. Help us make this this fundraiser a big success.

## Quaboag Valley Relay for Life seeking more teams

**B E L C H E R T O W N** – 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 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. During our Relay this 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](mailto:ctellie@juno.com).

## OBITUARY

### Ronald L. Harrop, 1948-2026

**GRANBY** – Ronald "Top" Harrop, 78, of Granby passed away unexpectedly on March 17, 2026. Born on February 12, 1948, in Holyoke he was the son of the late William Harrop Sr. and Margaret (Bernier) Harrop.



Ronald grew up working side-by-side with his brothers in the family construction business. While life eventually took them on separate paths, the years they spent building and working together remained a defining part of Ronald's history and the Harrop family legacy.

A man of profound discipline and service, Ronald dedicated over 34 years to the United States Army, retiring as a proud First Sergeant. His distinguished career spanned the Vietnam, Cold War, Gulf War, and War on Terror eras, during which he served in Communications, Infantry, and as a Motor Transportation Operator. Ronald "lived and breathed" everything Army; he was a leader who was fiercely devoted to his troops and always willing to sacrifice for those he led.

Following his military retirement, Ronald continued to serve his community as a Cemetery Commissioner and a mem-

ber of the Planning Board for the Town of Granby. A true First Sergeant to the end, Ronald was known for his unfiltered directness and never hesitated to speak his mind. Yet, beneath that tough exterior was a heart of immense selflessness; he consistently placed the needs of others above his own, living a life of quiet sacrifice for his country and those he loved. He also had a deep love for animals, both domestic and wild.

When he wasn't in uniform or serving the town, Ronald could often be found at local flea markets and swap meets with his best friend, Jerry Torrell, with whom he shared a passion for working on cars. He also cherished his regular lunches and dinners with his dear friend, Sylvia.

Though Ronald had no biological children, his life was defined by the profound bonds of the family he chose. He leaves a legacy of devotion in his 'son,' Derek Hughes, and Derek's wife, Jaimie of Dexter, NY. His greatest joy was his role as 'Papa Top' to Emma (Hughes) Keighley and Gracie Hughes of Dexter, NY, who loved him as their own grandfather.

Ronald is survived by his brothers, William and Kathy Harrop Jr. of Granby; David and Robin Harrop of Ludlow;

## Death Notice

**Harrop, Ronald**  
Died March 17, 2026  
Services are private.

## 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](mailto:obits@turley.com).

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

and niece Sarah Harrop of Granby.

A private ceremony will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Ronald's name to a veteran's organization or a local animal shelter of your choice.

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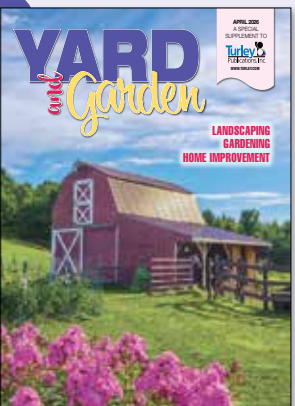
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**PUBLIC NOTICES**

**Granby School Committee Proposed FY27 Budget Notice of Public Hearing Changed**

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 has been changed from Tuesday, March 24, 2026 at 6:30 pm to **Tuesday, March 31, 2026 at 6:30 pm.** This meeting will be held in person in the East Meadow Elementary School Library/Media Center.  
3/26/2026

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampshire Probate and Family Court  
15 Atwood Drive  
Northampton, MA 01060  
(413)586-8500  
Docket No.  
HS26P0153EA  
Estate of:  
Francis Rock Martineau  
Date of Death: 02/12/2026  
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION**

To all interested persons:  
A Petition for Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Nicholas Rock Martineau of Edgewater, FL requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that Nicholas Rock Martineau of Edgewater, FL be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 04/15/2026.** This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affi-

davit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

**UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)**

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Diana S. Velez Harris, First Justice of this Court.  
Date: March 18, 2026  
Mark S Ames, Register of Probate  
03/26/2026

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampshire Division  
Docket No.  
HS26P0127EA  
Estate of:  
Peter M. Praisner  
Also Known As:  
Peter Matthew Praisner  
Date of Death:  
December 22, 2024  
INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE**

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner Scott Barry of Marlborough, MA

a Will has been admitted to informal probate.

Scott Barry of Marlborough, MA has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve without surety on the bond.  
The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any

matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.  
03/26/2026

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampshire Probate and Family Court  
15 Atwood Drive  
Northampton, MA 01060  
(413)586-8500  
Docket No.  
HS26P0110EA  
Estate of:  
Debra Lynn Slate  
Also known as:  
Debra Slate, Debra L. Slate  
Date of Death: 01/24/2026  
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION**

To all interested persons:  
A Petition for Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Cynthia D. Ulmer of Port Saint Lucie, FL requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that Cynthia D. Ulmer of Port Saint Lucie, FL be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 04/15/2026.** This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without

further notice to you.  
**UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)**

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Diana S. Velez Harris, First Justice of this Court.  
Date: March 13, 2026  
Mark S. Ames, Register of Probate  
03/26/2026

**NOTICE OF INTENTION OF SELECT BOARD TO LAY OUT A TOWN WAY AND PUBLIC HEARING**

In accordance with the provisions of General Laws, Chapter 82, Sections 21 through 23, the Select Board of the Town of Belchertown intend to lay out as a town way, a certain street in Belchertown, MA identified as Pepper Ridge Drive, all prepared for The Inhabitants of the Town of Belchertown, as shown on an As-Built Plan for Pepper Ridge Drive, dated October 20, 2025 prepared by RLA, R Levesque Associates, Inc., and recorded at the Hampshire Registry of Deeds in Plan Book 251, Page 21, on November 21, 2025. This plan is available for inspection at the office of the Town Clerk, Lawrence Memorial Hall, Belchertown, Massachusetts.

You are invited to attend a public hearing to be held by the Select Board in the Select Boards Meeting Room, First Floor of the Lawrence Memorial Hall,

2 Jabish Street, Belchertown, on **Monday, April 6, 2026 at 6:50pm.**

The Select Board will determine the boundaries and measurements of the ways, file the same in the office of the Town Clerk and submit the resulting layouts for acceptance at the next Town Meeting scheduled for Monday, May 11, 2026.

**TOWN OF BELCHERTOWN  
SELECT BOARD**  
Lesa Lessard Pearson, Chair  
Jennifer D. Turner, Vice-Chair  
Nicole Miner, Clerk  
Whitney Jorns Kuhlentz, Member  
Jonathan Ritter, Member  
03/19, 03/26/2026



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

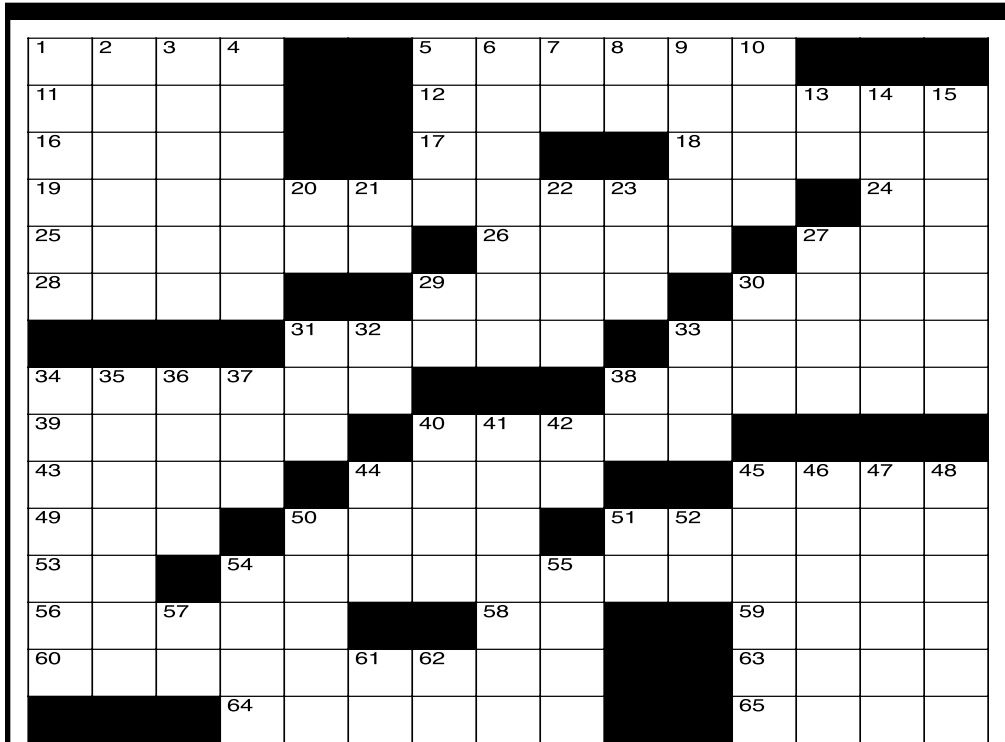
**PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE**

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**Public notice deadlines are Friday at 3 p.m.**

**visit www.publicnotices.turley.com**

**Crossword Puzzle**



**CLUES ACROSS**

1. "Bird of Paradise" constellation
5. Red Sox WS winner Bronson
11. Whirl
12. The State Dept. has a notable one
16. Energy, style and enthusiasm
17. Part of the mind
18. Mountainous country
19. Type of beverage
24. Atomic #109
25. Opposite of falsities
26. Female sheep
27. Rocky peak
28. Sensitive information sharing environment
29. Ethnic group of Thailand
30. Patron saint of Rome Philip
31. Psychedelics
33. Japanese pine

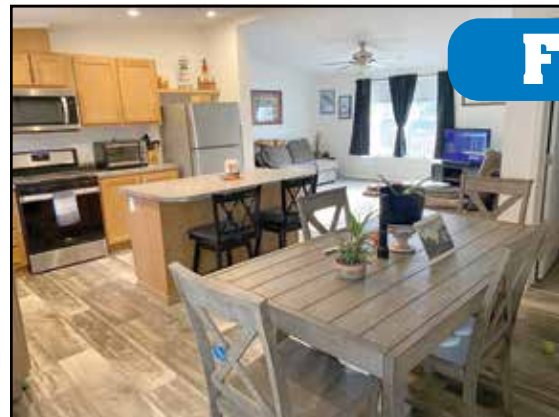
34. Have an impact on
38. Violent disorder
39. A French river
40. Early Mesoamerican civilization
43. Messenger
44. Musician Clapton
45. Ancient Greek sophist
49. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
50. Valley
51. A way to unwind
53. Atomic #93
54. Recommending
56. Indigo bush
58. Larry and Curly's pal
59. Off-Broadway theater award
60. Fencers
63. Small Eurasian deer (pl.)
64. Relating to songbirds
65. A way to assign

**CLUES DOWN**

1. Some are "secret"
2. Intestinal openings
3. Distant planet
4. Assembly possessing high legislative powers
5. Genus of typical owls
6. One with distinctively colored hair
7. Red cross
8. An alternative
9. Abominable snowmen
10. About ear
13. The opening letters
14. Feeling of regret
15. Atomic #39
20. Luteinizing hormone
21. Atomic #55
22. Carries a debt
23. Albanian monetary unit
27. Semitic abjad letter
29. Yes
30. Negative
31. Earn a perfect score
32. Connecticut

33. Partner to cheese
34. Snack nuts
35. Quadruped's body part
36. Locate
37. Pitching statistic
38. "\_, myself and I"
40. Utah city northwest of Provo
41. Football players in the trenches
42. One who runs the show
44. Wood
45. Performing artists
46. Slang for a cut
47. More breathable
48. Most crafty
50. Provokes into action
51. University of Dayton
52. Sodium
54. Large fish of the mackerel family
55. Not one
57. \_ and behold
61. Sports highlight show
62. "The Great Lakes State"

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Email: jamie@turley.com

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