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TURLEY PHOTO BY NICK BOONSTRA
Students challenge each other to a game of chess.

Chess Club gives kids a fun challenge

BY NICK BOONSTRA
Staff Writer
nboonstra@turley.com

GRANBY – Local students have been meeting at the Granby Free Public Library on Thursday afternoons over the past few weeks to hone their skills as chess players, providing a fun way to challenge themselves mentally and connect with other like-minded players.

Andy Morris-Friedman has been running the Chess Club meetings, balancing informative lessons with free-play periods and making sure that participants of all skill levels are able to grow as players and enjoy themselves doing so. He said at the club's final meeting of the season on March 21 that he hoped to have another offering of the group this coming fall.

Chess has a history that is

believed to date back to the 6th Century, but its popularity has increased dramatically since the pandemic lockdowns, as some searched for a readily available hobby to keep busy with, while others were drawn in by the popularity of the Netflix series "The Queen's Gambit".

Morris-Friedman, a retired social worker, did not consider

Please see **CHES**, page 9

EDIC welcomes commercial agent

BY NICK BOONSTRA
Staff Writer
nboonstra@turley.com

BELCHERTOWN – The Economic Development and Industrial Corporation introduced Jeremy Casey, Managing Partner at SR Commercial Realty in Springfield, as their new real estate agent responsible for overseeing the marketing and sale of parcels on the former State School property for commercial development during a brief meeting on March 20.

He said that his team of eight brokers and agents were all completely focused on commercial opportunities, and shared that there were already two potential buyers in the manufac-

turing industry that they were in contact with.

Casey said that, in the six years of SR Commercial's existence, they had conducted over 500 transactions, and that they were the largest staffed, independently owned commercial agency in the region.

He also disclosed that he owned property on Stadler Street, not far from the State School property, getting out ahead of any concerns about potential conflicts while also making clear that he had an interest in seeing the town grow.

"I really wanted to see if this was something that we could not just support but also take

Please see **EDIC**, page 7

Ready to launch in the Quabbin



SUBMITTED PHOTO BY ED COMEAU

Photographer Ed Comeau captured this majestic image of a bald eagle at the Quabbin Reservoir last week.

Credit for Life

Country Bank brings financial literacy to schools

BY PAULA OUIMETTE
AND RYAN DRAGO
pouimette@turley.com

WARE – Now in its 11th year, Country Bank kicked off the first in its series of Credit for Life fairs held across the region, offering high school seniors an opportunity to boost their financial literacy.

"It's an honor every year to work with these kids," Vice President of Community Relations Jodie Gerulaitis said at the fair held at Ware High School

on March 13.

Seniors from Ware, Palmer and Belchertown high schools attended the Credit for Life fair, and also participated in an orientation led by Gerulaitis at each individual school prior to the fair.

During the Credit for Life fair, students receive a career, a salary and credit score, before visiting a number of booths designed to simulate life's expenses. These expenses range from housing, to insurance, to utilities and transportation, even furniture and "Fun, Fun, Fun."

"We try to make the fair as realistic as possible," Gerulaitis said.

Please see **CREDIT**, page 4

Oliveira: 'We need more homes'

Senator weighs in on housing needs in Pioneer Valley

BY NICK BOONSTRA
Staff Writer
nboonstra@turley.com



State Sen.
Jake Oliveira

In a recent phone interview, state Sen. Jake Oliveira (D-Ludlow) highlighted the work being done on Beacon Hill to address the housing crisis that thousands in the Pioneer Valley and across the commonwealth are facing, while also emphasizing

ing the areas in which more work needs to be done.

Oliveira, whose Hampden, Hampshire and Worcester district includes communities spanning from Warren to South Hadley, said that the first step toward helping both a veteran waitlisted for emergency shelter and a working family struggling to keep up with inflation was the same.

"The bottom line is that we need more homes," he said.

When it came to the issue of housing affordability, Oliveira said that he approached the sub-

ject from a unique point of view relative to others in his role.

"As one of the few renters who's a member of the Legislature, I see things from a little bit of a different perspective from some of my other colleagues," he said.

He also pointed out the unfortunate reality of what a lack of affordable housing can mean for Massachusetts residents, and why it is so important to address the issue head-on.

"We don't want people living on the streets, we don't want people living in tents, we don't want people living in the woods," he said. "It's a public

Please see **OLIVEIRA**, page 13



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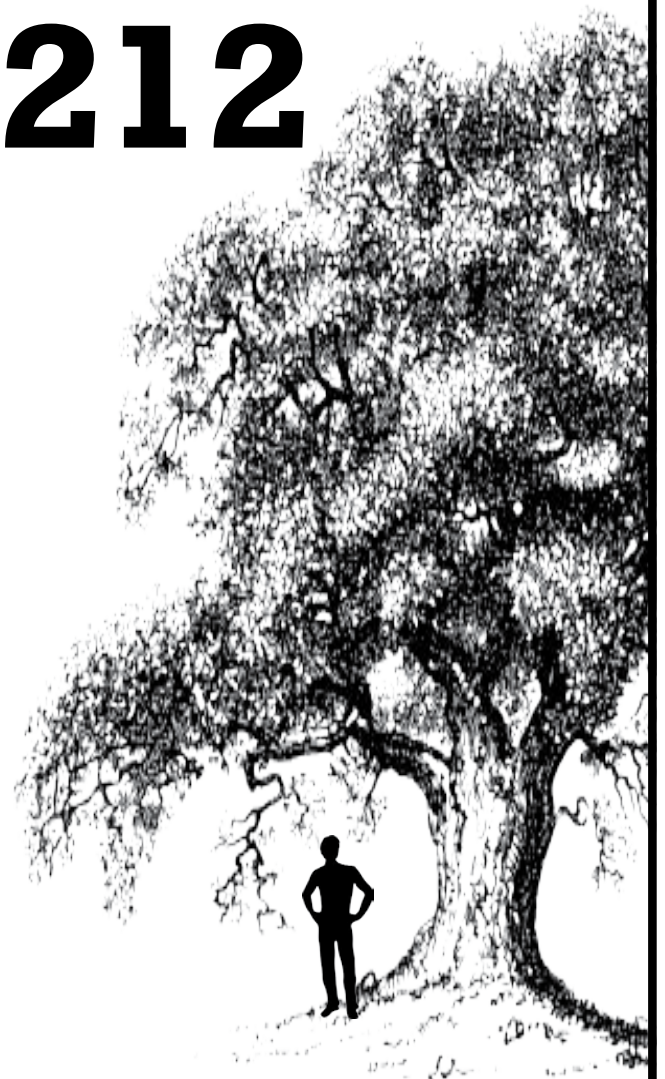
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COMMUNITY



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The McPherson Sensory Garden will have an open house on Saturday, May 18 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

The McPherson Sensory Garden taking shape

BELCHERTOWN – The McPherson Sensory Garden will be hosting an Open House on Saturday, May 18, so make sure to mark your calendars.

Drop in anytime between 10 a.m.-2 p.m. The open house will highlight the accessible paths that were installed October 2023 by Liberty Blue Landscaping that make this beautiful site accessible to all.

Located at 47 State St. on Lilac Drive, you will find the most incredible stone paths surrounded by an impressive stone wall.

This site was the home of George McPherson, the first

Superintendent of the Belchertown State School. Over the years, the site was forgotten and became overgrown.

A group of volunteers, guided by the McPherson Garden Committee, the Belchertown Department of Public Works and Town Manager, Steve Williams, has reclaimed this site from Mother Nature.

Invasives have been cut back, stone paths uncovered, gardens have been planted and the stone wall has been repaired by stonemason, Michael Smachetti. There is more to do.

The committee is very excited to have discovered another stone path

outside of the stone walls. More volunteers are needed as they continue to discover what this amazing site has to offer.

At the Open House, as you walk along the stone paths, you will learn how to make a life-size garden figure out of natural materials by artist Michael Melle. There will be rock painting, books in the woods, music and more.

Please don't wait until May 18 to enjoy the peace and tranquility of the McPherson Sensory Garden. It is open to the public.

For more information, call Sharon at 413-896-7531 or Pat at 413-478-4610.

Belchertown Community TV Schedule Highlights

- Thursday, March 28**
 - 8 a.m. – Conservation Commission – March 25 meeting
 - 10 a.m. – Planning Board – March 26 meeting
 - 12 p.m. – Communications Committee – March 14 meeting
 - 7 p.m. – Conservation Commission – March 25 meeting
 - 9 p.m. – Planning Board – March 26 meeting
- Friday, March 29**
 - 8 a.m. – Conversation with Pakman
 - 9 a.m. – Finance Committee/Select Board/School Committee Budget
 - 11 a.m. – School Committee – March 19 meeting
 - 5 p.m. – Conversation with Pakman
 - 6 p.m. – Communications Committee – March 14
 - 8 p.m. – Finance Committee/Select Board/School Committee Budget
 - 10 p.m. – School Committee – March 19 meeting
- Saturday, March 30**
 - 8 a.m. – Clapp Memorial Library – April Events
 - 8:30 a.m. – Blue Ribbon Cooks – Spring Light 'n Easy
 - 5 p.m. – Clapp Memorial Library – April Events
 - 5:30 p.m. – Blue Ribbon Cooks – Spring Light 'n Easy
- Sunday, March 31**
 - 4:30 p.m. – St. Francis Roman Catholic Church
 - 6 p.m. – Christ Community Church
 - 7 p.m. – Hope United Methodist Church
 - 8:30 p.m. – Clapp Memorial Library – April Events
- Monday, April 1**
 - 8 a.m. – Conversation with Pakman
 - 9 a.m. – Clapp Memorial Library – April Events
 - 5 p.m. – Conversation with Pakman
 - 6 p.m. – Clapp Memorial Library – April Events
 - 6:30 p.m. – Select Board – Channel 191
- Tuesday, April 2**
 - 8 a.m. – Blue Ribbon Cooks – Spring Light 'n Easy
 - 9 a.m. – Clapp Memorial Library – April Events
 - 5:30 p.m. – Clapp Memorial Library – April Events
 - 6 p.m. – School Committee – Channel 192
- Wednesday, April 3**
 - 8 a.m. – Conversation with Pakman
 - 9 a.m. – Clapp Memorial Library – April Event
 - 5 p.m. – Conversation with Pakman
 - 7:30 p.m. – Agricultural Commission – Channel 191

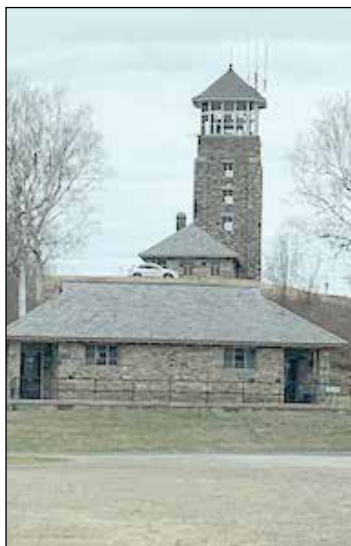
Easter Sunrise Service to be held at the Quabbin tower

BELCHERTOWN – All are welcome to gather together for an annual ecumenical Easter sunrise service on Easter morning, Sunday, March 31 at the Quabbin Reservoir's observation tower.

This year's service is hosted by St. Francis of Assisi Parish, the Hope Methodist Church, Christ Community Church and

the Belchertown United Church of Christ. Please join them in this joyous celebration.

The entrance gates will open at 5:30 a.m. and the service will begin at 6:15 a.m. The service will be held in the parking area below the tower, as the tower remains closed for repairs.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

All are welcome to join an ecumenical Easter sunrise service in the parking area below the Quabbin Reservoir observation tower on Sunday, March 31 at 6:15 a.m. The entrance gate will open at 5:30 a.m.

Friends group seeks donations of used books

BELCHERTOWN – The Friends of Clapp Memorial Library are holding their semi-annual book sale this coming April 22-27 and they need your help to reach their goal of having 50,000 new and used books available.

Now is the time to start spring cleaning by bringing your used books, movies, and music to the Clapp Memorial Library at 19 South Main St. during normal library hours. The Friends need fiction or non-fiction books, hardback or paperback, DVDs,

vinyl LPs, and CDs.

They cannot take magazines, Readers Digest Condensed Books, encyclopedias, VHS tapes, or older cassettes and 8-track tapes. The sooner you bring the donations in the sooner they can sort, appraise, and value these items before they go on the shelves.

All proceeds from the book sale directly support the Clapp Memorial Library. For more information go to www.friendsofclapplibrary.org or call the library at 413-323-0417.



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CREDIT from page 1

Superintendent of Schools Michael Lovato greeted the students at the start of the fair and said Credit for Life was an opportunity not offered in most schools, and to be grateful for it.

"What you're about to learn here today, is going to be so beneficial for you," he said.

Incoming Country Bank President Mary McGovern, who will also be the bank's first female president in its nearly 175 year history, told the students to take advantage of the knowledge each volunteer brings to the fair with them.

"It's really a terrific opportunity," McGovern said. "I remember graduating high school and not even knowing what a credit score was. There was really no course that taught that."

McGovern said her own children have benefitted from attending Credit for Life, adding that "it's a great program," and has always been a great experience for all involved, from students to volunteers.

Volunteering at each booth are Country Bank employees, joined by members of the business community.

Helping to run the "Insurance" booth was Country Bank's Board of Trustees Chair James Phaneuf, who has been a trustee with the bank for over 25 years.

"Credit for Life is one of the many things that sets Country Bank apart from the competition," Phaneuf said. "It's a way to help young people prepare for life."

Phaneuf said the Credit for Life fair not only helps students preparing to head off to college in the fall, but it also helps those entering the workforce after graduation.

"This gives them an opportunity to see which jobs pay more than others," he said.

Mike Pulchtopek from Kanzaki Specialty Papers Inc. returned as a volunteer and said its "fun to see the kids learning."

Volunteering at the "Housing" booth was JoMaria Velez, who helped students go over housing options such as renting an apartment and buying a home. In this exercise, the student's randomly assigned credit score helped provide them with more options the better it was.

Velez believes the biggest responsibility students must have when they shop for a home is affordability.

Students need to make sure they can afford a home, she said. "Know what you want," she said,

whether renting or buying.

Transportation is another important purchase that involves credit as well. Transportation volunteer Michael DeMarco helped students decide between buying bus passes or leasing or owning vehicles that are fuel efficient. Interest rates also factored into transportation, and credit scores impacted them heavily.

"You must work within the parameter of your salary. It is a true real-life example for the kids," he said.

Ware High School students Lily Bissonnette and Angelina Wilcox both selected careers as artists during the fair.

Wilcox said choosing a career was a "hard choice" and that she wouldn't mind working in an office or retail store in her future.

"A lot of these are really cool," she said of the career options.

Bissonnette said she chose to become an artist because she wants to pursue a career in animation or character art.

Both Wilcox and Bissonnette opted to become roommates, to help cut down on expenses.

Also deciding to be roommates were Belchertown High School students Evan Johnson and Karyna Rondeau. Johnson chose to become an electrician and Rondeau an environmental technician.

Salaries for both of these jobs were lower than either student expected.

The two also decided to adopt a dog from a shelter, which increased their monthly expenses by \$100.

Rainer Kristensen and Nathan Fernandes, also from Belchertown High School, chose careers in mechanical engineering and biology, respectively.

While their salaries were less than expected, Kristensen said they both ended up pulling high credit scores, which gave them an advantage in housing.

Both agreed that rent was the biggest expense they faced so far at the fair.

Students that needed more money were able to apply for part-time jobs to help supplement their income. But they quickly learned that landing a second job wasn't an easy task as students competed for a select few jobs.

Palmer High School students Jordan Bigda, Grace Burke and Vanessa Baer each choose a career they will pursue when they've graduated.

Bigda decided to select law clerk, after interning at the Palmer District Court, an experience she said was "a lot of fun." Burke chose to become a dental

hygienist, which comes with a higher salary than she expected.

Burke even used some of her extra income to purchase a trip to Cancun from the "Fun, Fun, Fun" booth.

Fionn Lydon and Thomas Marshall of Belchertown High School also selected careers in which they were interested. Marshall wants to be a State Trooper and Lydon wants to be a U.S. Marshal.

Both agreed that law enforcement, given the risk to personal safety, was paid much lower than they thought it would be.

Ware High School senior Nick Bousquet viewed the fair as a chance to learn from the experience and be prepared to handle real life situations.

"It helps to learn how to mitigate and fix your finances," Bousquet said, as well as understanding credit.

Belchertown seniors Caleb and Conner stayed together during the exercise and appreciated the experience of Credit for Life.

Caleb's career choice for the exercise was accounting although he aims to pursue a career in science. Conner's career choice was being an architect and he plans to study construction management after high school.

Palmer High School senior Nyela Dupre chose registered nurse as her career and she was able to get a good credit score, as well as share an apartment with friends and share a car.

Dupre said the fair helped her "learn to cut back on expenses and balance a budget."

Dupre plans to study nursing after high school and wants to follow in her mother's footsteps.

After students visited each booth, they turned in their budgets to receive a prize, and walked away with a better understanding of their personal finances and the importance of budgeting.

Gerulaitis encouraged the students to "stick with it," as they navigated through the fair and said, "you're going to learn a valuable lesson today."

Gerulaitis said Country Bank has been active in supporting a bill at the State House that would make financial literacy a mandatory requirement for high school students. If enacted, this bill would make the commonwealth the 26th state to have this requirement.

Even without financial literacy as a requirement, Country Bank is still able to sponsor and provide education to high school seniors in 12 schools through its Credit for Life program.



Belchertown High School students Fionn Lydon and Thomas Marshall explored careers in law enforcement.



Belchertown High School students Rainer Kristensen and Nathan Fernandes learned that rent was their biggest monthly expense.



Belchertown High School students Evan Johnson and Karyna Rondeau both chose careers that aligned with their future plans.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA QUIMETTE

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Holy Spirit, You who made me see everything and showed me the way to reach my ideal. You, who gave me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and you, who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dialogue want to thank you for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from you no matter how great the material desire may be. I want to be with you and my loved ones in your perpetual glory. Amen. Thank you for your love towards me and my loved ones. Persons must pray the prayer three consecutive days without asking your wish. After third day wish will be granted no matter how difficult it may be. Then promise to publish this dialogue as soon as this favor is granted. I will never stop trusting God and His power.

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Up, Up and Away

Quilt guild announces spring show

BY EMILY-ROSE PAPPAS
Staff Writer
epappas@turley.com

SPRINGFIELD – The Pioneer Valley Quilt Guild was formed in 1988, and since then, has been an amazing addition to the community where lovers of quilting can come together.

“The Pioneer Valley Quilt Guild was originally formed in 1988 by six quilters who met at Calico Stitchery. Enthusiasm was so great that in less than six months the space was outgrown, and they moved to the Agawam Baptist Church,” Elaine Conway said.

Since then, the guild has over 60 members, and meets once a month on the first Wednesday, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Elks Lodge #61, 440 Tiffany St.

The guild meets together to learn new quilting techniques from the occasional speaker, or a workshop will happen. At the end, there’s always a show-and-tell for members to talk about their recent projects.

Conway, the secretary and publicity person for the group, is very excited to announce that the guild will be hosting a special “Up, Up and Away” Quilt Show the first weekend of May, on Saturday, May 4 from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sunday, May 5 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

The cost of admission is \$10, and groups of 10 or more are eligible for a discount by calling Janet at 413-267-9997.

“The main attraction is going to be the 82 quilts and quilted items on display for people to enjoy and look at. We will have a ballot for people to vote for their favorites, with ribbons given for the winners,” she said.

The show will also feature a beautifully made raffle quilt made by members of the guild, along with tables of quilted items the guild members made to sell. There will also be a basket raffle.

The guild will also include its famous Hot Air Balloon for display. The balloon part is made of quilts the guild has made, and is composed of 24 panels total, 12 on top, 12 on the bottom.

“It’s our pride and joy,” Conway said of the Hot Air Balloon. It was made in 2012, and to this day is a treasured part of the guild and its foundation.

The show raises funds for the guild to buy supplies for the quilts, as well



One of the Pioneer Valley Quilt Guild members finished and shared their vibrant animal quilt at this past meeting.



Submitted photos
This year’s Quilt Show raffle quilt, made by the Pioneer Valley Quilt Guild, has beautiful shapes and colors.

as providing speakers and workshops to enhance quilting skills for those who attend.

But that’s not all the Pioneer Valley Quilt Guild does.

“We donate to shelters across the Pioneer Valley,” Conway said.

The beautifully made quilts are donated to organizations that help people in need, including the Springfield Rescue Mission.

They also donate quilts and quilted items to veterans organizations, foster children organizations, and before COVID, brought quilts to people recovering from surgeries.

“We want to serve the community and also bring an awareness of quilting to the general public and encourage people who may be interested in quilting to go ahead and do so. We are open to men and women,” she said.

The upcoming April meeting will focus heavily on prep-work for the Quilt Show, and the members will put together the baskets for the raffle and any other finishing touches.

Conway started quilting in 2014 and joined the guild in 2018 at the recommendation of a friend after falling in love with the craft, and the guild itself.

“My favorite part is the camaraderie with the people who are a part of the guild,” Conway said. “I think that there is always something to learn from one another.”

The guild and its members want to open their doors to the community and let them know that anyone with an interest in quilts or quilting is wel-

Please see **QUILT**, page 7

Seasonal Laborer(s)

Looking for summer employment? Like working outdoors and with your hands?

The Belchertown Department of Public Works is looking to fill 2-3 temporary seasonal laborer positions working approximately 40 hours per week. Duties include using commercial grounds maintenance equipment (i.e. mowers, leaf blowers and vacs, string trimmers, brush and chainsaws, and basic hand tools). Must be able to engage in heavy physical labor on a regular and continuous basis, and capable of driving a pickup truck/landscape trailer combination. If you are an enthusiastic individual looking to learn, we can help train you. Positions are temporary and non-benefited.

Applicants must be at least 18 years of age, possess a valid Massachusetts Driver’s License and have a clean driving record. Job description and applications are available online at www.belchertown.org/human_resources. Applications will be accepted until the positions are filled.

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OPINION



Primroses serve double duty

This week's column was half done when I received a text from a good friend who I haven't seen in a few months.

She had just read last week's article and was reaching out to congratulate me on my impending delivery. What? If I were having a baby, my name may end up in more than just the local paper- try the Guinness Book of World Records.



Anyhow, I accidentally sent an old column in, not the one I revamped in honor of my first born's birthday. I am sorry you all missed out on a few new things I had to say about the Gerber daisy, but I hope this gave you a good laugh.

Another dear friend visited Cape Cod this past week. She left the morning that we had some freezing rain and light snow.

Later in the day I received a picture in a text message that said, "at least it's spring somewhere!" I chuckled as I looked at the pretty Polyantha Primroses (*Primula* spp.) planted outside of an establishment, almost beckoning tourists to jump start the busy season!

I countered her picture with one of my own, a picture of a primrose in my garden, just greening up but still weeks away from flowering. Why not take a closer look at this double duty plant, just in time for Easter giving.

What exactly do I mean by double duty? Pick one up at the grocery store to enjoy indoors this spring and then plant it in the garden.

Better yet, purchase a primrose as an Easter hostess gift and it will be a spring harbinger for years to come - a memory of you! Even though they are usually sold in small pots, it's hard to miss their brightly colored flowers poking up through basal foliage.

They come in almost every color of the rainbow. Like the infamous pregnancy gift from last week's column, primroses also fall into the happy plant category!

Many types of primrose make great garden plants; check the label to make sure the one you purchase is hardy before planting it outdoors. I have had a clump of primroses blooming for years now that originally started out as a potted plant.

If it's been growing indoors for a while, be sure to let it harden off a bit before planting it in the ground; a partly shady spot with moisture retentive soil is best.

Typically, primroses need to be divided every three years or so, evident by die-out that begins in the center of the plant. Simply separate a chunk from the outer portion of the plant and replant it in rejuvenated soil.

I prefer to do this early in the season, but it can also be accomplished right after flowering has ended. In the heat of the summer, and especially in drier soils, the plant can look a little yellow and ragged.

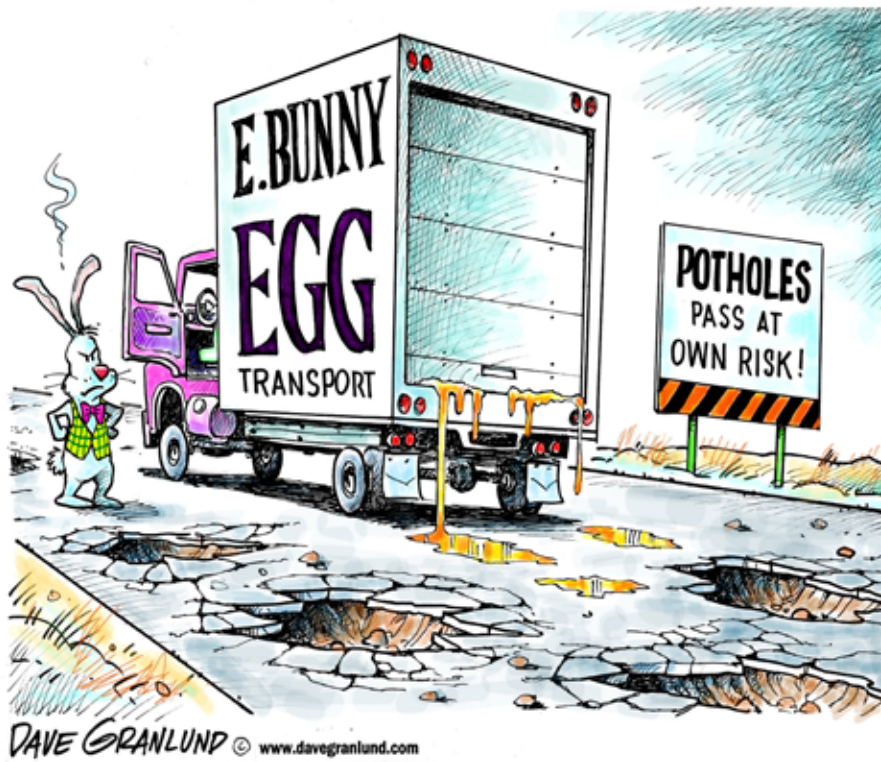
Keeping it well watered helps.

One year, when money was tight, I divided a plant and potted up one of the divisions and gave it to my sister in law as a hostess gift. She still has it growing in her garden, and every once in a while, will send a picture of it happily blooming.

I've tried in earnest to grow Japanese Primrose (*Primula japonica*) but something in my soil apparently isn't right. I will probably buy another one this year and hope beyond hope to eventually end up with a stand of them like they have in the display gardens at Positively Perennials.

The sea of whorled flowers in light and dark pink is arboretum worthy.

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



Veteran uncertain about Social Security and healthcare coverage

Dear Rusty:

I'm not sure what I should sign up for in terms of Social Security; I am 64 and I am still employed full time and intend to stay employed until age 70.

I am retired from the Navy and receive military retirement payments and have military TriCare, as well as medical, dental, eye and life insurance through my employer. I don't want to lose benefits, but I also don't want to take Social Security until it reaches the maximum at age 70 (I think that is correct?).

I will turn 65 in four months. Can you advise me?

Signed: Uncertain Veteran

Dear Uncertain Veteran

First of all, thank you for your service to our country. From what you've shared, and since you're still working full time, not claiming Social Security yet is a smart decision.

If you were born in 1959 your Full Retirement Age is 66 years and 10 months and, if you claim SS before your full retirement age, you'll be subject to Social Security's earning test, which would likely make you ineligible to receive SS benefits at this time.

The 2024 earnings limit (limit changes yearly) when collecting Social Security early is \$22,320 and, if that is exceeded, Social Security will take away \$1 in benefits for every \$2 over the limit (half of what you exceed the limit by). If you significantly exceed the limit, SS will declare you temporarily ineligible to collect SS benefits until you either reach your FRA or earn less.

The earnings test no longer applies after you reach your FRA. So, if you're now employed full time and plan to stay so until age 70 and you expect at least aver-

age longevity (about 84 for someone your current age), delaying until age 70 to claim Social Security is how to get your maximum Social Security benefit.

As for your healthcare coverage as a veteran: TriCare requires you to enroll in Medicare Part A inpatient hospitalization coverage and Part B coverage for outpatient services at age 65, but you do not need to take Social Security when you enroll in Medicare. You must, however, enroll in Medicare at age 65 or you will lose your TriCare military healthcare coverage.

You could choose to delay enrolling in Medicare at 65 because you have "creditable" employer coverage, but if you do so you will lose your current TriCare coverage and need to rely solely on your employer healthcare plan. In that case, you would still be able to enroll in both Medicare and TriCare-for-Life without penalty prior to your employer coverage ending and have coverage under both programs thereafter.

I suggest you contact TriCare directly at 1-866-773-0404 to discuss your personal TriCare coverage after age 65. You can also go to www.TriCare4U.com.

Whenever you enroll, Medicare will be the primary payer of your healthcare costs and TriCare will be the secondary payor. Your vision, dental, and prescription drug coverage would be through TriCare (Medicare does not cover those services) or acquired separately.

Just remember, you must be enrolled in Medicare Part A and Part B to have TriCare-for-Life coverage after age 65.

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

Turley Publications Letters to the Editor Policy

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

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Turley Election Policy

This newspaper will print free self-submitted statements of candidacy only four weeks or more out from the election. All candidates running in both contested and uncontested races are asked to submit their statements to the editor to include only biographical and campaign platform details. Total word count for statements is limited to between 300-500 words maximum. Please include a photo. We will not publish any statements of candidacy inside the four weeks from election threshold. To publish any other campaign publicity during the race, please contact our advertising representatives.

We also do not allow personal attacks against other candidates or political parties in statements of candidacy, nor do we publish for free any information about key endorsements or political fundraisers.

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



Comments on CONGRESS

By Lee Hamilton

Big decisions and American history

Big decisions have shaped the United States; we wouldn't be who we are as a nation without the decisiveness shown by America's founders and by our leaders in times of crisis.

It's an essential quality of successful countries: the ability to make big, consequential decisions.

We can start at the beginning, when the colonists made the enormous decision to break away from Britain and form an independent nation. Then, 85 years later, U.S. leaders decided it was essential to preserve the Union against secession by the Southern states.

Another big decision came in the 1930s and 1940s when President Franklin D. Roosevelt persuaded Americans to abandon isolationism and engage with the world. U.S. participation in World War II and our leadership in creating security and economic institutions shaped the post-war international order.

This isn't an all-encompassing list of big decisions. There are many others we could mention. But these decisions stand out for their influence on American history.

The colonists' decision to break with Britain wasn't inevitable, nor was it easy. It meant defying the most powerful empire in the world, and it put the colonists at severe risk.

Benjamin Franklin supposedly said, "We must all hang together or most assuredly we shall all hang separately."

Inspired by Enlightenment principles and prodded by British oppression, the Continental Congress voted to declare independence and ratified the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. Thomas Jefferson's idealistic words – "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights" – set a high bar.

The founding ideals were tested when divisions between North and South led to the Civil War. While Confederate leaders made it clear that protecting slavery was their primary objective, Abraham Lincoln framed the conflict as

a battle to preserve the Union. Again, there was nothing preordained about this.

There were strong forces pulling the country apart. Lincoln, celebrated as the Great Emancipator, insisted his duty was to maintain the Union, not to end slavery. In 1862, he declared: "If I could save the union without freeing any slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that."

Preserving the Union was a big, costly decision. By the time the Civil War ended, 617,000 Americans had died. Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation to free Southern slaves in 1863 and slavery was, in fact, abolished with the 13th Amendment.

Over 100,000 more Americans died in World War I. When Franklin Roosevelt took office in 1933, the country was exhausted by war and suspicious of foreign entanglements.

Isolationism was at a high level. Roosevelt spoke forcefully about freedom and democracy, but his foreign policy was cautious, deferring to popular sentiment.

But when World War II broke out, the president pushed America to support our allies. Pulled into the conflict by Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, the U.S. played a leading role in fighting and, later, in creating the institutions that would rebuild Europe and Asia and restore peace and security.

The postwar world order owes much to FDR's decision to engage assertively with the world.

What big decisions does America face today? It's an open question, but issues that called for tough decisions in the past are still with us.

With the nation deeply divided, can we unite and preserve the Union? With many Americans increasingly skeptical of involvement in international conflicts, will we engage with the world or return to the "America First" attitudes of the 1930s.

Successful countries must make big decisions, even when they involve risk and controversy. Our well-being and that of the world depend on our ability to make these decisions when necessary.

Lee Hamilton is a Senior Advisor for the Indiana University Center on Representative Government; a Distinguished Scholar at the IU Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies; and a Professor of Practice at the IU O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.

GUEST COLUMN

Life Together

A few weeks ago, Sesame Street's Elmo posted: "Elmo here, just checking in. How's everybody doing?"

Hundreds of responses flooded the posting. People poured out their lives to the puppet. Cheaper than therapy, the fear and pain of many were shared online.

People are hurting. People are alone. Mental health professionals now tell us that the leading cause of mental illness is loneliness.

So many of us seek healing for our broken lives. Whether due to loss and our grief, addiction, or our disconnect from others to eliminate the stimulation of our nerves, or our inability to enter into and sustain intimate relationships, we seek connection and support.

Mental health is about relationships. When we are in relationship to others who care about us, they give us good energy and hope. We seek peace in our troubled times. We seek truth in our delusional politics.

One possible interpretation of TRUTH is: "Stop Forgetting".

Stop forgetting who loves you. Stop forgetting to whom you belong. Stop forgetting there is hope. A hope we need to do it all again tomorrow.

An acronym for HOPE, is, Help Other People Endure. When in pain and suffering we need to be grounded in hope.

Whatever your faith, or lack of faith, wise words come to us from St. Paul in Romans 5: "Suffering produces Endurance, Endurance produces Character, and Character produces Hope, a hope that does not disappoint."

To be fully present with another person, to sit with them, walk with them, care for them, is the healing source for those who are alone and feel hopeless. Our presence embodies hope.

We need not say anything.

Helping another person endure their suffering and move towards hope is a sacred event. In the end we may get to gratitude and discover that in our being present, not only may the other person endure and find peace, we too share the transformation from suffering to endurance to character to hope.

Who will you sit with? Who will, is, sitting with you?

May you trust you are not alone and there is a way forward.

Elmo hears you. Elmo cares. And we are called to hear each other and care for each other.

Rev. Dr. Randy Wilburn
Minister, Therapist, Consultant

Life Together is written by Rev. Dr. Randall K. Wilburn. With over 54 years as a parish minister, Wilburn is also an experienced marriage and family counselor. Life Together will deal with topics such as stress, grief, anxiety, healing and hope.

QUILT from page 5

come – no requirement for skill level.

"Joining the guild has given me a chance to improve upon my quilting skills, while at the same time making lifelong friendships," Conway said.

You can join the guild at any time, and the cost for a yearly membership is \$30. A guest can be brought by an existing member for \$5, and it will go toward membership if they choose to join.

"We started with the formation of the guild because of its desire to give back to the community," Conway said. And it does, in many, many ways.

For more information about the Pioneer Valley Quilt Guild, visit pvquilt.org or follow them on Facebook.

Vendors wanted for Relay for Life craft/vendor fair

BELCHERTOWN – Crafters and vendors are sought for the American Cancer Society, Quaboag Relay for Life's 3rd Annual Spring Craft/Vendor Fair to be held on Saturday, June 8 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. on the Common, Routes 9 and 202.

All proceeds from the fair will benefit the American Cancer Society, Relay for Life.

For crafter/vendor selling information, please contact Vicki McAndrew by email at sv_jewelry@charter.net.

EDIC from page 1

action to get this development to the place that all of you want to get to," he told the members of the EDIC. "We're looking forward to working alongside you and MassDevelopment."

Robert Jenkins of MassDevelopment highlighted the benefit of having Casey and his team onboard.

"It's always good to have somebody that's there," he said. "So if someone is interested, it's not BEDIC members going out on a Sunday."

He also echoed the positive aspects of having a town resident at the helm of these commercial real estate efforts.

"He understands the zoning, he understands the players on the local level which we will be dealing with," he said. Jenkins added that SR Commercial will be respon-

sible for actively marketing these properties through the relevant channels in the commercial space.

"I think it's really what we need in order to get the commercial component of this master plan going, so we're looking forward to it," Jenkins said.

Casey shared that things had gotten moving quickly since he had assumed responsibility for the location.

"We are working with two potential buyers from the surrounding communities at the moment," Casey said.

He said that further discussions hinged on separate contract negotiations being concluded, but expressed optimism over the opportunities.

He said that the potential buyers were "both for the industrial aspects of the land, which is really our initial focus to bring critical mass to this development." He

added that both groups were "in the manufacturing side of the world."

He said he expected that these buyers "will be a very positive outcome for this land, because I think that's a real opportunity that is needed in a heavier depth in Belchertown specifically."

Meetings of the EDIC are held on the third Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m. in hybrid-access format at Town Hall. Information about upcoming meetings for the EDIC and other town boards and committees can be found on the town's website, belchertown.org.

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Open House
Saturday, April 6
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www.macduffie.org to register



EDUCATION

PVPA's Catalyst Dance Company presents 'Divergence'

SOUTH HADLEY – Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School's Catalyst Dance Company is pleased to present "Divergence," an evening of original student and faculty choreography.

The show will run Friday and Saturday, March 29 and 30, with performances beginning at 7 p.m. in the main stage theater at 15 Mulligan Drive. Ticket prices are as follows: \$10 general admission; \$7 military and seniors; \$5 PVPA alumni, and \$3 students and are available at the door, or online at www.pvpa.org.

Catalyst dancers are diverse in skills and backgrounds, and their work represents many different dance styles, choreographic voices, and movement aesthetics. Dancers in the group break boundaries and surpass expectations with their sophisticated choreography, often creating works that are rich in story lines related to the human experience and the world we all inhabit.

About PVPA

Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School is a regional public charter school serving 400 students grades seven-12, from over 50 towns throughout western Massachusetts. PVPA seeks to connect the creative process with critical thinking to inspire a love of learning.



Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School's Catalyst Dance Company will present "Divergence" on March 29 and 30. SUBMITTED PHOTO BY JULIAN PARKER-BURNS

As a charter school, the work PVPA does informs educational policy at local, state and national levels. For more information about PVPA please visit www.pvpa.org.

Knights of Columbus offers scholarships for graduating seniors

BELCHERTOWN – The St. Francis of Assisi Knights of Columbus Council 10698 of Belchertown is again offering a scholarship to deserving high school graduating senior(s) who plan to continue their education at a college, university, trade school or other accredited post-high school institutions of higher learning, and as striven and demonstrated traits of the same principles of our order or charity and service to their school, faith, and community.

The scholarship is being offered to applicants who are:

A graduating high school senior with a grade point average of 2.5 or higher (and either a Belchertown resident, or family member of a member of the St. Francis of Assisi Council #10698, or parishioner of a Catholic parish in the council's general vicinity of Belchertown, Granby, and parts of Palmer and Ware) and

To use the awarded scholarship for payment of tuition to an institution of higher learning.

The application submittal deadline is postmarked no later than April 20. No email submissions will be accepted.

Applications are available in area High School Guidance Offices, St. Francis Parish Church vestibule, or online at the Belchertown Knights website page at https://www.stfrancisbelchertown.com/knights-of-columbus. Notification of scholarship recipients will be in early June, either by following their high school scholarship awards presentation traditions or my email.

Should you have any questions, please contact the Council's Scholarship Committee at kofcbelchertown@gmail.com.

CAMPUS NOTES

Charlotte Luddy named to Dean's List at Biola University

LA MIRADA, CA – Charlotte Luddy was named to Biola University's Dean's List for academic excellence.

Luddy, a psychology major from Amherst, was one of approximately 1,600 students who were named to the Dean's List in fall 2023. Biola students are placed on the Dean's List to honor those with a GPA of 3.6 or higher while enrolled in 12 or more credits and whose cumulative GPA is at least 3.2.

Hannah Bernashe inducted into KDP education honor society

WILLIMANTIC, CT – Eastern Connecticut State University inducted 32 students into Kappa Delta Pi, the international honor society for education.

Among those inducted was Hannah Bernashe, Class of 2026, of Belchertown, who majors in Elementary Education and English.

In order for an applicant to be considered, they must have more than a 3.0 GPA and have completed a total of six hours of education courses.

Natalia Jacobs named to the Dean's List at Bates College

LEWISTON, ME – Natalia Jacobs of Amherst was named to the Dean's List at Bates College for the fall/winter semester ending in December 2023.

This is a distinction earned by students whose grade point average is 3.92 or higher. Jacobs is majoring in environmental studies and minoring in dance at Bates.

Logos sought for 165th Belchertown Fair

BELCHERTOWN – The Friends of the Belchertown Fair are looking for potential logos to represent the theme of this year's Fair, "Barn in the USA."

Selected logos may appear on the cover of the Exhibit Hall booklet, the volunteer reusable bags, and T-shirt designs.

Artwork should be created digitally, in color, with a minimum of 300 dpi.

Additionally, but not required, the following text can be included in the design: "165th Belchertown Fair," "September 20-22, 2024," and "Barn in the USA."

All submissions will become the property of the Friends of the Belchertown Fair.

The winning artist will receive recognition and a token of appreciation in the amount of \$50. There are no age limits.

Please submit artwork for consideration to belchertownfair@gmail.com by Saturday, March 30.

Cub Scouts host bottle and can drive April 6

BELCHERTOWN – Cub Scouts from Pack 507 will host a bottle and can drive at the Pride Station, 165 State St. on Saturday, April 6 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Please bring your returnable cans, bottles and box flats to hold them.

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BELCHERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FISCAL YEAR 2025 BUDGET PRESENTATION
PUBLIC HEARING
The Belchertown School Committee will hold a Public Hearing on Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 6:00 p.m., to present the FY 2025 School Department Budget. The public is invited to attend the presentation, which will be held in the Chestnut Hill Community School Auditorium. Members of the Public can access the meeting via live stream. Link will be located at www.belchertownps.com under the School Committee link at the top of the page beside the Agenda for this meeting.

HADLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL CHOICE OPENINGS
2024-2025
Hadley Public Schools – serving grades PK-12 is currently accepting School Choice Applications.
Applications can be found on our website at www.hadleyschools.org or call (413) 586-0822.
The cut-off date for applications is April 17th.
Hadley Public Schools provides a safe and supportive environment that fosters cooperation, critical thinking, creativity, integrity, and a love of learning.



TURLEY PHOTO BY NICK BOONSTRA

Students contemplate their next moves while playing chess with the help of Chess Clubw coach Andy Morris-Friedman at the Granby Free Public Library.

CHESS from page 1

himself any sort of chess expert, but did share that his interest in the game was boosted by the popularity of figures like Bobby Fischer and Boris Spassky, especially around the famous match between the two in 1972.

“For a few short weeks, nerds ruled the world,” Morris-Friedman said.

The participants present at the March 21 meeting all had previous playing experience, and spent the 90 minutes of the meeting split between solving checkmating puzzles and playing games with each other across a range of chess variants.

As they played, Morris-Friedman walked the room, looking for teaching moments while still ensuring the young players were given the chance to learn lessons for themselves.

“What is your plan?” he would ask one of the participants as they pondered their next move. “Tell us in chess notation.”

He would also offer quips that were both playful and helpful, such as when he shared

the story of 19th Century American chess master Paul Morphy, who Morris-Friedman said eventually “gave up chess and sadly became a lawyer.” Other notes were more encouraging: “Don’t worry if you lose a piece; you just get it back the next game.”

One of the players was a young man named Ben, aged 12, who showed particular promise for the game. He said he played games every day, whether they were online or against family, and he performed well against his opponents at Chess Club.

He seemed hungry for an even greater challenge, though, saying, “I haven’t been able to play coach Andy yet.”

Morris-Friedman said he saw the club as an opportunity to impart lessons that went beyond the chess board.

“I always try to teach the kids: in chess and in life, the first thing that pops into your head is usually not the best idea,” he said.

Events and programs at the Granby Free Public Library are available for people of all ages, and information about upcoming offerings can be found online at <http://www.granbylibrary.com>.

Quabbin Visitor Center lists First Thursday hikes

BELCHERTOWN – The Department of Conservation and Recreation’s Les and Terry Campbell Quabbin Visitor Center, is hosting First Thursday Habitat Hikes each month.

All ages are welcome at these programs; however, dogs are not allowed anywhere at Quabbin Reservoir.

Quabbin is an area of immense diversity of habitat, from shady vernal pools to sunny mountaintops. Staff will be hosting hikes one Thursday each month (weather permitting) to spotlight some of these beautiful landscapes.

Hikes will vary in location and intensity and may focus on an individual species or on a more general area. For more information and to register visit www.mass.gov/locations/quabbin-reservoir or email QuabbinVisitor.Center@mass.gov

Wetlands Walk

A 1.5-mile easy Wetlands Walk will be held on Thursday, April 4 from 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (<https://goo.gl/maps/RvC5y8AMtmWToTTq5>).

This Habitat Hike will visit two different types of wetlands. It will begin at the parking area for Goodnough Dike in Quabbin Park and walk the Dike Road down to the wetlands’ location and back, covering approximately 1.5 miles round trip.

Please dress appropriately for the weather and be prepared for wet/muddy conditions (wear appropriate footwear).

Register at: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/fe46ba08256404fa1bd-49660f68c624>.

Gate 37 Forest Walk to Wetlands

A 1.5-mile east Gate 37 Forest Walk to

Wetlands will be held on Thursday, May 2 from 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (<https://goo.gl/maps/wPedFYxiN5Qp8sVv9>)

Meet at Gate 37 off Route 122 in the North of Quabbin Reservation. Parking is limited.

This Habitat Hike will be a short walk down a forest road to a stunning wetland habitat. It is a little over 1-mile round trip.

Those who are feeling adventurous may opt to hike further, up the side of Soapstone Mountain to a spectacular view of the Quabbin, though be advised this portion is difficult and will not be a part of the official hike. Please wear appropriate footwear and protect yourself against ticks.

Register at: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/c3936c4d26c8443694b6b3fc-0beb97d4>.

Tower Trail Habitat Hike

Join a 3-mile moderate Tower Trail Habitat Hike on Thursday, June 6 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. (<https://goo.gl/maps/9K3L4xf-44nbVK4bG7>)

This hike will meet at the parking area inside the Middle Entrance off Route 9. It is a moderately difficult hike, approximately 3-miles round-trip up Quabbin Hill through woodland and mountain habitat and back.

Due to safety issues, hikers will not be able to go up to the tower itself, as it is currently closed for renovations. Please wear appropriate footwear and protect yourself against ticks.

Register at: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/c2dd1551fbb7467bbd-da704a469c7929>.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Belchertown Police Log

Editor's note: The following are brief explanations of select entries in the Belchertown Police log and arrests for the weeks of March 6 through March 12. The information was provided by a member of the police department based on the review of the detailed log summary. This feature is designed to provide context and explanation to some of the calls police respond to every day. Of the 333 calls police responded to, there were 18 incidents, six accidents, seven arrests/summons and 38 citations.

**ARRESTS/SUMMONS
Wednesday, March 13**

12:10 p.m. – A 19-year-old South Hadley man was charged with assault and on family members and threatening to commit a crime.

Friday, March 15

3:37 p.m. – A 51-year-old Poole Road man was charged with negligent operation of a motor vehicle and a marked lanes violation. An officer responded to Bay Road for a report of a pick-up truck traveling on three wheels was headed east towards Federal Street. The officer was unable to locate the vehicle in the area of Federal Street, but observed scratches in the roadway near Stebbins Road. The scratches in the roadway were consistent with a vehicle driving on a rim without a tire. The scratches went over the fog line. The officer followed the scratches to Poole Road and observed a vehicle matching the description in a driveway. It was missing a rear tire. A person was standing outside of the vehicle. There was heavy damage to the driveway. The person told the officer the vehicle was having some transmission issues. The officer pointed out the wheel was missing and the person said they had no idea. Their speech was slurred and they had red blood-shot eyes during the interac-

tion. The person was charged accordingly.

Saturday, March 16

9:36 a.m. – A 17-year-old was arrested on charges of violation of an abuse prevention order.

Tuesday, March 19

8:33 a.m. – A 45-year-old Chicopee man was issued a summons for cruelty to animals. An officer responded to a residence for a report of delivery driver that hit a dog that was in their vehicle. The calling person said while a package was being delivered, they saw the person pull a dog out of the vehicle and strike it. The person was able to take video of the incident. Animal control was contacted and asked for another agency to be contacted to respond to the person's residence. They responded to the person's home in Chicopee. A copy of the video was obtained.

ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS

Wednesday, March 13

7:58 a.m. – An officer took a report of a missing "no trespassing" sign. The caller wanted the matter documented.

2:46 p.m. – A person turned in a firearms license card found on Federal Street. A phone number associated with the card was out of service when officers attempted to call it. The card was entered into property.

Friday, March 15

1:40 a.m. – An officer on patrol around the Department of Public Works garage reported a burglar alarm went off. The doors were found secured.

2:27 p.m. – An officer responded to an accident on North Main Street. A vehicle stopped in traffic rear ended the vehicle in front of it. There was minor damage to both vehicles. No injuries were reported and no tow was needed. The operator of the second vehicle said they didn't break in time and struck the car lightly.

Saturday, March 16

2:35 p.m. – An officer on patrol on State Street ran a registration plate which came back cancelled. The officer pulled the vehicle over. The operator was unable to reinstate their registration. A tow company was contacted. A citation was issued to the driver for an unregistered motor vehicle.

9:40 p.m. – An officer responded to an accident on Barton Road. A vehicle going north on Barton Road struck a bear that ran into the roadway going east. The vehicle was unable to stop in time. The vehicle was able to be driven from the scene. The status of the bear is unknown.

Sunday, March 17

2:28 p.m. – An officer to a State Street business for a report of vandalism to a restroom. The owner reported there were three juveniles responsible for the vandalism. The officer obtained descriptions of the juveniles. They were later found and asked what transpired and they denied it. The owner said they flooded the bathroom by emptying a jug of soap in the sink and shoving paper towels in the toilets. The owner of the business wanted the juveniles' parents informed.

7:56 p.m. – An officer took a report someone struck a guardrail in front of their residence on State Street and took off towards Granby. Officers advised Granby Police. Another officer in the area reported a mailbox was struck and there was mail all over the roadway. The box was mostly intact and upright. A Massachusetts State trooper came by and reported they didn't see any vehicles matching description. The caller came outside to speak to the officers. They said they heard a noise and a vehicle back out of a driveway and leave the area. The owner of the mailbox was unaware it was struck. The matter is under investigation.

Monday, March 18

2:19 p.m. – A home care agency wanted to speak with an officer concerning issues related to a client.

10:10 p.m. – An officer took a report of an abandoned golf cart in the roadway. The officer contacted the owner to get it. There was nothing else out of place.

Tuesday, March 19

10:54 a.m. – An officer responded to perform a wellbeing check for concerns about a person's mental health.

12:16 p.m. – An officer responded to Bay Road for a report of a person covered in blanket carrying a broom. It was determined the person was having a mental health crisis and was transported to the hospital.

6:12 p.m. – An officer spoke with a person about concerns about their child.

6:51 p.m. – An officer spoke with a person about a letter they got from the U.S. Small Business Administration about a payment. They reported they never started a business. They were advised to get documentation and to contact a credit bureau just in case other information was compromised.

10:10 p.m. – An officer responded to an accident on South Washington Street. A vehicle traveling south on South Washington Street struck a bear that ran into the roadway. It was a large black bear. No injuries were reported and no tows were needed.

Granby Police Log

Editor's Note: The Granby Police Department responded to 160 calls for the week of March 15 through March 21. Those arrested are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. The Granby Police Department provides all information.

Friday, March 15

4:14 p.m. – A resident came to the station to report that they were the victim of identity fraud. An incident report was completed.

Sunday, March 17

1:47 a.m. – While on patrol, an officer observed a motor vehicle travel through an intersection without stopping for a stop sign at speed of approximately 15 mph. The vehicle was stopped and the operator was issued a civil citation for failing to stop at a stop sign.

2 a.m. – While on patrol, an officer observed a motor vehicle travel through an intersection without stopping for a stop sign at speed of approximately 15 mph. The vehicle was stopped and the operator was issued a civil citation for failing to stop at a stop sign.

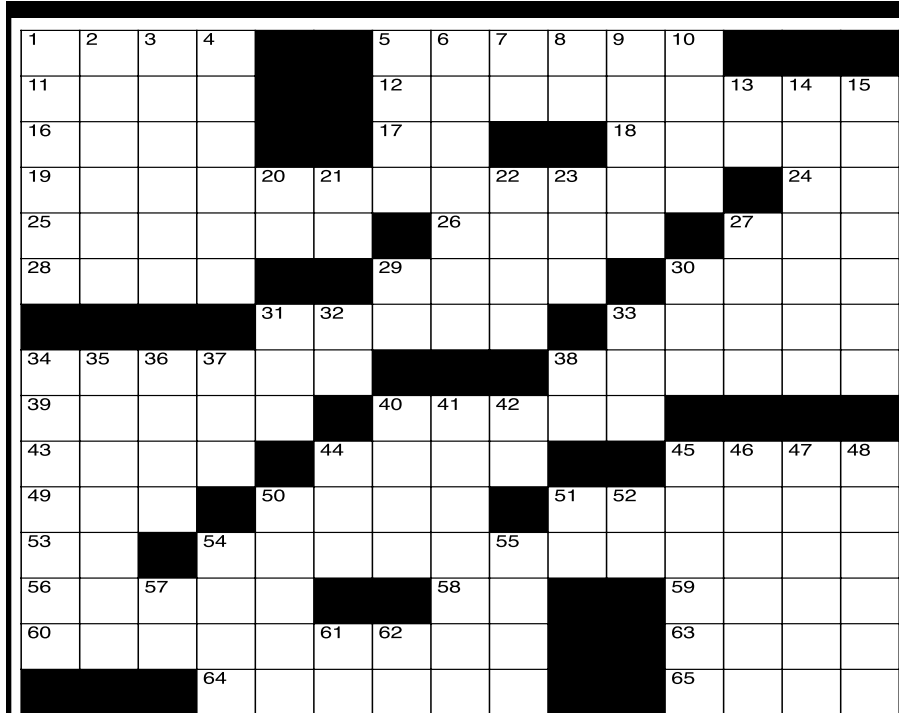
4:16 p.m. – A resident came to the station in station to report they had been the victim of a scam. An incident report was completed.

Tuesday, March 19

5:47 p.m. – While on patrol, an officer observed a motor vehicle traveling at a high rate of speed. Radar confirmed that the vehicle was traveling at 59 mph in a 35 mph zone. The vehicle was stopped and the operator was issued a civil citation for speeding.

Wednesday, March 20

1:44 p.m. – A motorist reports a two-car accident. Granby Police and Fire responded. There were no injuries.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Database management system
- 5. Medical procedures
- 11. ___ Clapton, musician
- 12. Defender
- 16. Exert oneself
- 17. Indicates position
- 18. Quay
- 19. Atrocities
- 24. A way to address an adult man
- 25. Ends
- 26. Unable
- 27. Taxi
- 28. Gratuities
- 29. A famous train station
- 30. Japanese persimmon
- 31. Sours
- 33. Beneficiary
- 34. Baseball official
- 38. Confused situation

- 39. Unworldly
 - 40. Yemen capital
 - 43. Type of soil
 - 44. Beloved beverage ___-Cola
 - 45. Lying down
 - 49. ___ Angeles
 - 50. Fail to amuse
 - 51. Collapsible shelter
 - 53. Commercial
 - 54. Taste property
 - 56. Lordship's jurisdictions
 - 58. It cools your home
 - 59. Dismounted
 - 60. Charge in a court of law
 - 63. One less than one
 - 64. Spoke
 - 65. Famed garden
- CLUES DOWN**
- 1. Show a picture of
 - 2. Small sultanate
 - 3. Unfortunate incident
 - 4. A way to ski

- 5. Abba ___, Israeli politician
- 6. Observed
- 7. "Westworld" actor Harris
- 8. Belonging to me
- 9. Shoelace tube
- 10. Takes to civil court
- 13. Early multimedia
- 14. Produces anew
- 15. Horse races
- 20. Of I
- 21. Equally
- 22. Changes color
- 23. A place to stay
- 27. Town in Galilee
- 29. Mathematical figure
- 30. Klingon character
- 31. They ___
- 32. Atomic #58
- 33. Showed up extinct
- 34. Loosen grip
- 35. Unpleasant smell
- 36. Innermost membranes enveloping the
- 37. Esteemed college "league"
- 38. Partner to Pa
- 40. Small American rail
- 41. A salt or ester of acetic acid
- 42. Sodium
- 44. Military figure (abbr.)
- 45. Lighted
- 46. Paid to get out of jail
- 47. All of something
- 48. Ohio city
- 50. More abject
- 51. A radio band
- 52. Scientific development (abbr.)
- 54. Monetary unit
- 55. Scored perfectly
- 57. A punch to end a fight
- 61. The Golden State (abbr.)
- 62. The Beehive State (abbr.)

Belchertown Fire announces open burning season through May 1

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

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

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

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection will only allow activation of burning permits for one day

at a time, based on weather conditions. Renewal requests left on the answering machine are invalid.

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

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

Are you having difficulty communicating with your partner, struggling with boundaries, and healthy relationships?

We invite you to join us Friday afternoons from 1-2:30 pm to explore these topics and more.

This group will be held in zoom, is educational, confidential, and free.

Please contact **Pat James 413-726-8661.**

NOTICE

ERRORS: Each advertiser is requested to check their advertisement the first time it appears. This paper will not be responsible for more than one corrected insertion, nor will be liable for any error in an advertisement to a greater extent than the cost of the space occupied by the item in the advertisement.

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Spring season begins



BELCHERTOWN – Last week, spring teams began practices, including Belchertown baseball. The Orioles will have a full two weeks of practice before they open up the season with a matchup against Northampton on April 1. The Orioles then travel to Minnechaug on Friday, April 5.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

Members of the baseball team take some instruction at practice last week.



Ryan Gould pitches in the cold last Friday afternoon.



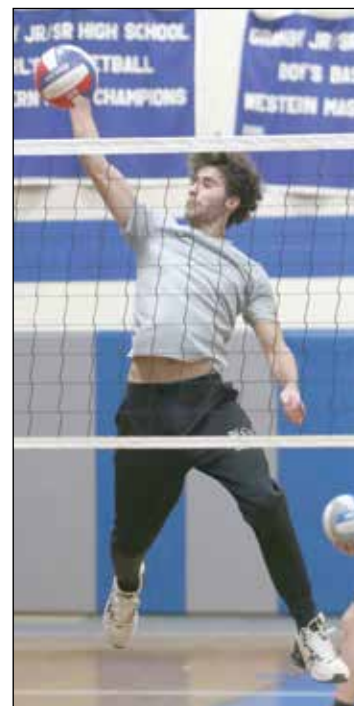
The baseball team practices at the high school last week.



The Orioles are set to open up on April 1 against Northampton.



Braeden Gallagher sends a spike down during practice last Thursday.



Nicolas Grandmont keeps the ball in play during practice.



Daniel Santiago practices his hits.



Durant Garden tips one over the net.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM
Santiago Blasco Gomez dribbles up the field.

WMass Pioneers fall in Open Cup

LUDLOW – Last Thursday night, the Western Mass. Pioneers opened their season with a match-up in the US Open Cup. The Pioneers faced Union Omaha and unfortunately were shut out by a 4-0 decision. With the loss, the Pioneers Open Cup chances have ended after just one game. The Pioneers will now gear their preparations toward the May 18 season opener. The Pioneers will also have an exhibition contest on May 10 against Third Eye FC.



Abdel Talabi sends a pass away ahead of pressure.



Boys volleyball prepares for season

GRANBY – Last Thursday, Granby boys volleyball continued its preparation for the regular season. The Rams have an early opener this season as they will travel to nearby Holyoke High School this Thursday, March 28 to face the Knights. Their home opener is on Tuesday, April 2 against Chicopee at 5:15 p.m.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

Ralph El Aouji sizes up a bump.

SPORTS

T-Birds rebound to defeat Crunch

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds (28-29-3-2) got a hat trick from one of their key stars en route to a 6-4 triumph over the Syracuse Crunch (35-20-4-2) on Saturday night before the 11th consecutive sell-out crowd of 6,793 inside the MassMutual Center.



Alnefelt on the glove side of the net for his 10th tally on the year. That marker gave the T-Birds a 2-1 lead going into the first intermission, and Zherenko made that stand up with a sensational diving stop on Waltheri Merela with barely a second remaining on the clock on a crease scramble at the end of the frame.

It was the home team that drew first blood on the scoreboard. Right winger Will Bitten intercepted a Syracuse pass in Springfield's defensive zone and went in alone on a breakaway. Bitten made a nifty forehand to backhand move before tucking the puck past Syracuse netminder Hugo Alnefelt, notching his 14th goal of the season and giving the T-Birds a 1-0 lead at 3:37 of the first.

It only took 30 seconds for the Thunderbirds to add to their lead in the second. Mikhail Abramov found his linemate Jakub Vrana streaking down the left wing on a stretch pass. Vrana took the feed and ripped a perfect shot past the glove of the Syracuse netminder to give Springfield a 3-1 lead.

Unfortunately, the Springfield lead slipped away in the waning seconds of Syracuse's first power play. After taking off on a rush up-ice into the T-Birds zone, Felix Robert filtered a pass into the blue paint that glanced off a defender before slipping in past Vadim Zherenko at 16:22.

Still, Syracuse would not go away as they narrowed the Springfield lead back to one less than three minutes later. After a Syracuse shot took a crazy carom off the plexiglass behind Zherenko, the puck found the stick of Crunch defenseman Devante Stephens, who quickly spun a turnaround shot through Zherenko to make it 3-2 at 2:44.

The T-Birds, though, responded in kind and regained their one-goal lead with less than a minute to play in the opening period. After a brief give-and-go between Hugh McGing and Hunter Skinner at the offensive blue line, Skinner made a terrific pass through traffic to the left-wing side. Ryan Suzuki received the pass and wasted no time whistling a release past

Tempers flared shortly thereafter as Sam Bitten and Tyson Feist dropped the gloves at the 14:11 mark of the period. As he had done all season, Bitten's fight fired up the sold-out crowd in the Thunderdome, and it, in turn, led to offensive fireworks a few minutes later. After Quinn Schmiemann was called for a hooking infraction, Will Bitten got his second of the night, tak-

ing advantage of a crazy carom off the corner glass that skittered right to him in front of Alnefelt. While the Crunch goalie got a piece, the puck squeezed home, and the two-goal lead was restored, 4-2, at 9:59 of the middle frame.

Vrana and Bitten's line was not done, either. As the game went to 4-on-4 in the closing minutes, Vrana and Abramov capitalized on a 2-on-1, as Abramov slipped a left-wing shot over Alnefelt's glove, giving Springfield a 5-2 lead at 17:46, a lead that carried into the intermission.

Syracuse did not go quietly into the night, and Ilya Usau's goal at 4:46 made it a 5-3 game. Zherenko kept the Crunch at bay until Alnefelt went to the bench for an extra skater with under six minutes to play. Just moments after the ensuing faceoff, Cole Koepke redirected a pass in the slot from Alex Barre-Boulet, and the Springfield lead was down to 5-4 with just 5:05 to go.

Things got dicey for Springfield with just over a minute to play when a Barre-Boulet shot squeezed through Zherenko's legs and rolled precariously across the goal line. Jack Finley seemed to have a wide-open net, but he could not get the puck across the line, and the T-Birds survived the threat.

Bitten capped off his sweet night by racing up ice and chipping the loose puck into the empty net with 1:01 remaining, making it a 6-4 final.

Springfield begins a crucial six-game road trip on Friday night in Hartford against the Wolf Pack.



Gianluca Cersosimo sends a free kick away.

WMass Pioneers fall in Open Cup

TURLEY PHOTOS BY
DAVID HENRY
WWW.SWEETDOG
PHOTOS.COM

Joaquin
Lauria Calvo
settles the
ball before
making a
pass.



Railers pick up much-needed win

READING, PA – The Worcester Railers HC (27-28-5-3, 62pts) beat the Reading Royals (26-31-5-2, 59pts) on Sunday afternoon by the final score of 6-3 in front of a crowd of 3,310 at Santander Arena. Worcester heads back home to take on the Newfoundland Growlers for the first time from the DCU Center this season on Wednesday, March 27th at 7:05 p.m.

Reading controlled the flow of play in the first, testing Tikkanen with nine shots on goal. Joe Nardi (16th) found a rebound along the near goal line and hammered it back towards Tikkanen, beating him near side to give Reading the late 1-0 advantage in the first. Worcester was outshot 9-6 in the first period.

Reading's Joe Nardi (1-1-2) scored his second goal of the weekend to open the scoring with 6:43 left in the first. Worcester fired back with three unanswered in the second from Ashton Calder (1-0-1), Keeghan Howdeshell (1-0-1) and Anthony Callin (1-1-2) to put Worcester ahead 3-1 going into the third. Andrei Bakanov (1-1-2) scored along with two empty net goals from Trevor Cosgrove (2-1-3), while Reading got goals from Jake Smith (1-0-1) and Tag Bertuzzi (1-0-1) en route to a 6-3 Railers victory.

The second period played out similarly for the Railers to their third period on Friday, which was headlined by a flurry of goals. First it was Ashton Calder (16th) in the slot off a nice feed from Ryan Scarfo to beat Maier and tie the game 1-1 2:04 into the period. The assist was Scarfo's first point as a Railer. Just 3:21 later, Keeghan Howdeshell placed a perfect wrist shot over the blocker hand of Maier to put Worcester ahead 2-1. Mason Klee picked up his first professional point on the goal, notching the secondary assist. Worcester's Anthony Callin piled on with a goal 3:26 later. Zach White hit him with a pass on the tape while

he sped into the offensive zone and sent a wrist shot top shelf past Maier and give Worcester a 3-1 lead goign into the third.

The Railers tagged on one more early in the third with a shot from Andrei Bakanov (11th). He picked up the loose puck in the slot and wristed it past Maier to open Worcester's lead to 4-1. Reading bounced back 1:06 later as Jake Smith outwaited Henrik Tikkanen and wrapped it into the open net to make it a 4-2 game for most of the third. With the net empty, Trevor Cosgrove found the puck in open ice thanks to Andrei Bakanov chipping at it and sailed it into the empty net to make it 5-2 Worcester. Reading came back thirty seconds later with a goal from Tag Bertuzzi past the left arm of Henrik Tikkanen and cut it back down to a two-goal game. Cosgrove once again scored an empty netter, this time from 180 feet as Worcester skated away with a 6-3 win over Reading on Sunday afternoon.



Tomas Duben and Khalid Rose fight to keep the ball with some pressure from the opposition coming on.

Registration now open for Quabbin Valley baseball

The Quabbin Valley Over-28 Baseball League is looking to infuse new talent into its league for the 2024 season.

Registration for the 2024 season is now open and any interested players can go to www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org to get registered, or to seek more information or make inquiries about the league. The league website will also be updated over the next month with information about the upcoming season.

There are many open roster spots available in the league for the 2024 season, which is tentatively scheduled to begin on Sunday, April 21. The league plays most Sunday from late April through late August with playoffs following that. The league plays a 15-game schedule and typically fields six teams each year. Games are usually played at 10 a.m. with fields in Easthampton and South

Hadley normally used.

The Quabbin Valley league is an all-abilities league and all are welcome to join. Eligibility is players who are age 28 and over. You must be 30 to be eligible to pitch in the league. Your age for eligibility is whatever age you will turn in 2024. The league is also able to entertaining taking in an entire group as a team to add to the league. Please email the league board for to inquire about entering a team.

The league is currently in the process of preparing for the 2024 season and held a meeting on March 24 to discussion plans for the upcoming season. The next meeting will be held after the league's open practice for all players, including players interested in joining the league. The open practice will be at Beachgrounds Park in South Hadley at 10 a.m. on April 7.

Registration now open to take part in Bay State Games

WOBURN – Registration for the 42nd annual Bay State Summer Games is now open. The 2024 Summer Games will include thirty sports with competitions from May 11 – July 27 at venues throughout eastern and central Massachusetts including Game On in Fitchburg, Boston Sports Institute in Wellesley, Union Point Sports Complex in Weymouth, and North Star Ice Sports in Westborough. Bay

State Games participants range in age from 5 to over age 75 and represent more than 300 Massachusetts communities as well as surrounding New England States in some sports. From grassroots participants to accomplished amateur athletes, the Bay State Games provide opportunities for the athlete in all of us.

Seven high school showcase sports will take place for a vari-

ety of sports, including baseball, basketball, field hockey, ice hockey, soccer, softball, and volleyball. Athletes currently in grade 8-11 who live or go to school in Massachusetts are eligible to attend regional tryouts during the month of June. These tryouts will determine teams representing the various regions of the Commonwealth that will

Please see **GAMES**, page 13

GAMES from page 12

compete against each other in July. Check each sport page for specific eligibility requirements.

The Summer Games include a wide variety of individual sports including swimming, track & field, figure skating, pickleball, wrestling, weightlifting, badminton, and more. These sports are open to a wide range of ages and skill levels from youth participants to masters-aged athletes. Adaptive sport divisions in archery, swimming, and track & field are offered, as well. Bay State Games also organizes tournaments for pre-existing teams in rugby, and 6v6 field hockey.

Returning in 2024, Table Tennis will take place on June 1 at PingPod in Boston after a 5-year hiatus from the Summer Games sport lineup. New venues include Babson College, which will host the Girls Basketball Showcase, and NorthStar Ice Sports, which will host Figure Skating and the Girls Ice Hockey Showcase. Game On in Fitchburg

will serve as a hub venue for eight sports. Bay State Games expects 1,500 athletes and their families to attend competitions at Game On during the second week of July.

Bay State Games is pleased to announce a new partnership with Marathon Sports to provide athletes, officials, and volunteers with a special, traditional Bay State Games gift. Details will be released later in March.

"We are excited to present the 2024 version of the Bay State Summer Games where Massachusetts amateur athletes of all ages and abilities can have their 'Time to Shine,'" said Kevin Cummings, Executive Director of the Bay State Games. "This year will feature the addition of table tennis and ultimate as well as several new host venues including Babson College in Wellesley, Howard Park and Maplewood Park in Malden and NorthStar Ice Sports in Westborough. We look forward to welcoming athletes from across the Commonwealth as we celebrate the 42nd year of

the Bay State Summer Games."

An additional feature in 2024 is that in over a dozen sports, athletes who win a gold, silver, or bronze medal at the 2024 Bay State Games will qualify to participate in the 2024 State Games of America in San Diego, California. The State Games of America features more than 8,000 athletes from over 25 different state games programs nationwide. To see the list of qualifying sports, please visit www.stategamesofamerica.com.

In addition to sports programming, Bay State Games offer college scholarships, a sportsmanship initiative, college internship opportunities, and a High School Ambassador program.

For more information on all sports in the 2024 Summer Games, links to online registration, and information on other programs, go to www.baystategames.org.

For questions, email info@bay-stategames.org or call 781-932-6555.

Backyard chicken keeping and seed swap event

BELCHERTOWN – The Belchertown Agricultural Commission is pleased to present its annual Backyard Chicken Keeping and Gardening event on Saturday, April 6 from 1-3 p.m. at the Town Hall Auditorium at 2 Jabish St.

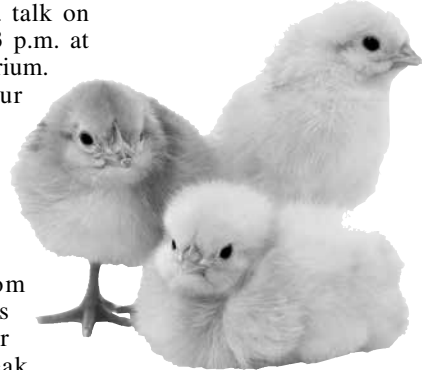
Sarah McEachern, a representative from the Poulin Grain Company, will give a talk on chicken care from 1-3 p.m. at the Town Hall Auditorium. She will answer your questions after her talk.

Adding to the event with her knowledge of chicken raising will be Lindsay Baird of Oak and Ash Farm.

Edna Colcord from Western Massachusetts Master Gardener Association will speak

about seed saving. There will be a seed swap table so bring your extra seeds and expand the varieties in your garden.

Come join them and benefit from the expertise of your community, swap seeds and enjoy refreshments.



OLIVEIRA from page 1

safety issue; it's a humanitarian issue."

Oliveira acknowledged that Massachusetts' unique status as the only state in the nation with a right-to-shelter law had become a point of discussion as the housing crisis has escalated. However, he also clarified that this guarantee for emergency shelter only applied to families with children, and that over half of those families currently in the shelter system were citizens of Massachusetts and of the United States.

"There are a significant number of migrants that are being housed, but there's a significant number of Massachusetts residents that are in the system as well – veterans and seniors and other working families that are here in the commonwealth," he said.

Oliveira pointed to Gov. Maura Healey's \$4 billion Affordable Homes Bill, filed in October, as having the potential to significantly address the housing shortage in Massachusetts, with its call for the creation of over 40,000 new homes for both low- and middle-income residents.

"It's not just low-income folks that are struggling to afford home rates," Oliveira

said. "It's also middle-income families and working families as well." He added that he hoped to see the House and Senate take up their own versions of the bill this spring.

Importantly, some of these new homes might already be hiding in plain sight.

"My family came to Ludlow in the early part of the 20th century from Portugal and Poland to work in the Ludlow mills, and a lot of those mill buildings have remained vacant for decades now," Oliveira said.

He said that the state was assisting with having these buildings redeveloped for both affordable and market-rate housing. He said that there were plenty of other locations and abandoned buildings throughout the valley that could be redeveloped in the same way, citing the former Belchertown State School campus as another example of such a work in progress.

He also said that these sorts of redevelopments of existing buildings were helpful in ensuring the character of the communities in which they sit are maintained.

"You can develop those buildings in a respectful manner which doesn't really require new construction," he said.

Oliveira stressed that the senior population was an especially important one in the conversation around housing.

"A family who's been in a home for a couple decades, they might have paid off their mortgage, but they're struggling to afford property taxes to stay in their homes," he said.

He said that the Legislature had already passed an expansion of the Senior Circuit Breaker Tax Credit, which applies to certain Massachusetts homeowners and renters over 65 and helps offset the cost of their property taxes or rent. This expansion was signed into law by Healey in October as part of a suite of tax cuts that go into effect this year.

Oliveira also recognized that the issue of affordable housing was only one part of the broader issue of the cost of living in Massachusetts and affordability in general.

He said that the EARLY ED Act, a comprehensive bill passed by the Senate earlier this month that would reform early childhood education in Massachusetts, included provisions to make childcare more affordable for working families in the state.

"We're seeing so many families being priced out, or having to make a decision whether or not they go to work or they stay home with their children, because they can't afford childcare," he said.

He went on to say that supporting child-

care providers with better wages, expanding the Commonwealth Cares for Children Grants program and making middle-class families eligible for childcare subsidies were important steps toward solving this problem.

He also cited a prescription drug reform bill passed by the Senate in November as critical to improving affordability for Bay Staters, saying it would be a "huge game-changer for any senior or family that relies on these life-saving prescriptions." He added, "Massachusetts could be leading the way on this."

Away from the State House, Oliveira was in Ludlow last month along with state Rep. Aaron Saunders (D-Belchertown) to advocate for mobile-home owners facing steep rent increases from park owners, a situation he said people throughout the Commonwealth have been reaching out to him about.

"Hopefully we're putting some pressure on these owners of these properties," he said.

Ultimately, he said, "We're trying to do everything we can to make Massachusetts a more affordable place to live and to raise a family and retire with dignity."



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PUBLIC NOTICES

Belchertown Planning Board Public Hearing Special Permit Legal Notice
In accordance with the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40A, Sections 9 and 11, the Planning Board will hold a public hearing to discuss a Common Drive Special Permit submitted by Chocurua Realty Investments, LLC, 5 Bayberry Lane, Hadley, MA 01035, No. Liberty Street, Map 268, Lot 34 & 34.01, Belchertown, MA.
A public hearing will be held as follows:
Place: Belchertown Town Hall, 2 Jabish St., Belchertown, MA
Date: April 9, 2024
Time: 7:00 PM
The application is available for inspection during regular business hours at the Town Clerk and Planning Board office, 2 Jabish Street.
Daniel Beaudette, Chair
Planning Board
03/21, 03/28/2024

Public Hearing Special Permit Legal Notice Belchertown Planning Board
In accordance with the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40A, Sections 9 and 11, the Planning Board will hold a public hearing to discuss a special permit application for an accessory apartment by Lucienne Hyson for #11 Cottage Street., Map 243, Lot 47, Belchertown, MA.
A public hearing will be

held as follows:
Place: Belchertown Town Hall, 2 Jabish St., Belchertown, MA
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Daniel Beaudette
Chair, Planning Board
03/21, 03/28/2024

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 "Industrial Road" all Prepared for The Inhabitants of the Town of Belchertown, a "Street Acceptance Plan Industrial Road," dated February 14, 2024, prepared by Sherman & Frydryk, Land Surveying & Engineering. 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 on the first floor of Lawrence Memorial Hall, 2 Jabish Street, Belchertown, on **Tuesday, April 16, 2024 at 7:03 p.m.** 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 13, 2024.

Room on the first floor of Lawrence Memorial Hall, 2 Jabish Street, Belchertown, on **Tuesday, April 16, 2024 at 6:33 p.m.** 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 13, 2024.

TOWN OF BELCHERTOWN SELECT BOARD
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03/28, 04/04/2024

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 "Meadow Pond Road" all Prepared for The Inhabitants of the Town of Belchertown, a "Street Acceptance Plan & "As-Built" Conditions Plan, "Meadow Pond Road (and a portion of Jasons Way)" dated December 22, 2023, by Sherman & Frydryk, Land Surveying and Engineering, a Division of Hancock Survey Associates, Inc., and recorded with the Hampshire Registry of Deeds in Northampton, Plan Book 255 Page 96(1-4). 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

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The Sentinel
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Arcpoint Brewing nears grand opening

BY NICK BOONSTRA
Staff Writer
nboonstra@turley.com

BELCHERTOWN – With their taproom hoped to be just about a month from opening, Arcpoint Brewing’s Dave Pare said that the chain of events that led to the business settling in its new home happened more or less by accident.

Pare, an early investor turned full partner in Arcpoint, lives just minutes away from the 30 Front St. location, and said that an unexpected detour that his wife took one day tipped him off to the potential for the site.

“The road that we normally take to get towards Granby was shut down, so we had to come this way and she saw there was a sign here that said, ‘For Lease,’” he said. After consulting with Chris Peterson and CJ Eldridge, Arcpoint’s founders and fellow partners, Pare called the property owner and met with him later that same day.

He asked the owner point-blank, “What do you think about a brewery?” Given that the business operating out of the other half of the building was in the machining industry, the question understandably came as a shock.

“The thought never crossed my mind,” Pare recalled being told. “I never thought I would be talking about leasing our facility for a brewery.”

But before long a lease was signed, and preparations began for the development of Belchertown’s very first brewery. Now, Pare says he hopes the taproom will be open to the public by early May.

Arcpoint started as a micro-brewing hobby that Peterson said he picked up from a neighbor when he first moved to Belchertown.

“I had been into drinking craft beer for a few years at the time,” Peterson said. “He asked if I wanted to come over and home-brew one of these days, and I was like, ‘Absolutely.’”

From there, his interest in the craft only grew, reading as much as he could on the techniques used

as well as the science behind them. “It’s as easy or as complicated as you want it, really,” he said.

Soon enough, people started trying his beer, and liked it to the point of asking for some of their own. Peterson said that was the point when he thought that something more could have come from his hobby, and he approached his friend and fellow Airman Eldridge about the possibility of starting a brewery.

Eldridge was onboard without any hesitation, and thus Arcpoint Brewing was born.

Peterson said that the Arcpoint name was an homage to his and



TURLEY PHOTOS BY NICK BOONSTRA

Here is a view of the taproom from what will become balcony seating above the bar



Arcpoint Brewing co-owners Dave Pare (left) and Chris Peterson. Co-owner CJ Eldridge is not pictured.

Eldridge’s roles in the Air Force performing maintenance on navigation and guidance systems. He added that many of the beers offered by Arcpoint also had navigational references in their names.

Pare clarified how the roles were split between the three partners, saying that he handled the business side of things, Eldridge managed sales and marketing, and Peterson is in charge of making the beer.

Since its founding in 2017, the independent brand has certainly lived up to its tagline, “Brewed With Tenacity,” in the time since then. At first, Peterson and

Eldridge worked with other companies to have their beer distributed and get their name into the world, but their eyes were always fixed on the same objective.

“The goal was always to do what we’re starting here now, to open up a place in Belchertown that we can have everyone come and enjoy the beer and enjoy each other,” Peterson said. “It’s been a circuitous route to get here, but it’s finally happening.”

One obstacle that none of them could have foreseen at the start would have had the potential to stop the whole operation in its tracks had it remained unnoticed:

the town had no zoning bylaw on the books that would have permitted a brewery.

“We ended up writing the whole thing for them,” Peterson said. Pare explained that preparations had to be delayed until their bylaw amendment could be approved at Town Meeting, which it ultimately was.

Through all of the challenges, though, Arcpoint’s belief in their mission and commitment to the town were unwavering.

“I had full confidence in Belchertown,” Peterson said. “To me it’s like a powder keg...It’s needing a social renaissance. And we always envisioned us being that epicenter for this area to start.”

He went on to say, “We really stuck to our guns throughout these years to make sure that we actually were able to pull this off in Belchertown.” Peterson and Pare also affirmed that the support from both the town’s residents and its administration had been overwhelmingly positive for them every step of the way.

Pare said he hoped that Arcpoint would also help to spark a com-

mercial renaissance in town, adding that he had already been looking for opportunities to partner with other local businesses and organizations.

“We don’t want to take business from anyone,” he said. “We want to help; we want to promote Belchertown.” He added that he hoped Arcpoint would bring in customers unfamiliar with the rest of town, and wanted to be able to provide recommendations to them about what else is available.

He said he envisioned working together with various food trucks in the area to complement their planned beer garden, where they would feature live music, and hoped that the large soccer fields across the street as well as the lawn behind their building would make the location a central attraction on warm summer days and weekends.

Information about Arcpoint, including future updates around an opening date, can be found on the company’s Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/ArcpointBrewCo/>.

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U	M	P	I	R	E					M	O	R	A	S	S
N	A	I	V	E		S	A	N	A	A					
C	L	A	Y		C	O	C	A			A	B	E	D	
L	O	S		B	O	R	E			C	A	B	A	N	A
A	D		P	A	L	A	T	A	B	I	L	I	T	Y	
S	O	K	E	S			A	C			A	L	I	T	
P	R	O	S	E	C	U	T	E			Z	E	R	O	
					O	R	A	T	E	D		E	D	E	N