

Student musicians remember late instructor



Jabish Brook Middle School Band Director Corrie Smith conducts the world premiere of William Schmidt's "Song for Lloyd".

TURLEY PHOTO BY NICK BOONSTRA

BY NICK BOONSTRA
Staff Writer
nboonstra@turley.com

BELCHERTOWN – The Jabish Brook Middle School Band honored the late Lloyd Armstrong during their Spring Concert held at the High School on March 26, in a moving memorial to a man who had a profound impact on generations of Belchertown residents before being taken far too soon.

During the concert, the Eighth Grade Band, joined by guest performers who had known or studied under Armstrong, premiered "Song for Lloyd," written in Armstrong's honor by William Schmidt, a member of the last eighth grade class taught by the late musician.

Armstrong was actively involved in music programs across the town's schools and helped to found and run the Belchertown Community Band before passing

Please see **ARMSTRONG**, page 9

SB reviews ways to benefit the town's seniors

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

GRANBY – The Selectboard met recently to discuss and go over various contracts and appointments, as well as going over many new updates for the Council on Aging and programs to benefit the town's seniors.

The March 19 meeting was held by Chair Glen N. Sexton, and he was joined by Clerk Crystal Dufresne and member Richard Beaulieu. Town Administrator Christopher Martin was also present to help with decisions on grants and more.

Council on Aging

Dufresne brought forward to make sure "that we have a plan for who will be directing the COA", when the current director leaves for a vacation. They also briefly discussed the upcoming spring cookout for the Council on Aging.

"I'm looking for someone to do the job, but also interact well with our senior population," Sexton said of the search for a new COA Director.

Please see **SENIORS**, page 14

Celebrating Earth Day all month long

SUBMITTED BY THE
BELCHERTOWN ENERGY AND
SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

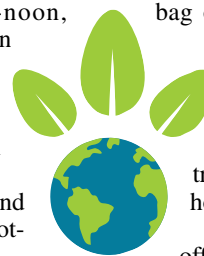
BELCHERTOWN – Join the Belchertown community in celebrating Earth Day with local events and initiatives happening all month long, making April an Earth Month.

Saturday, April 20 (rain date April 27), the Conservation Department, the Department of Public Works and the town's

Energy & Sustainability Committee, will host a town wide clean-up from 9 a.m.-noon, starting with registration at 8:30 a.m. at the Town Common Parking Lot. Participants will receive green biodegradable trash bags for the clean-up.

Dress for the weather and be sure to wear sturdy footwear and work gloves.

The DPW will be handing out a free Douglas Fir "Lincoln"



seedling to the first 100 volunteers who bring back a full bag of trash for deposit in a designated dumpster at the parking lot. The dumpster will be available for the disposal of the green trash bags all weekend, no household trash; please.

Tuesday, April 22, is officially Earth Day, which began in 1970 and mobilizes millions of Americans every

year for a focused day of action on environmental education and activism. This year's theme is "People vs. Plastics".

Single-use plastics, which are used for just minutes or hours, account for 40% of the plastic produced every year, but they can persist in the environment for hundreds of years. Join the Earth Day movement and find inspiration on ways to take action,

Please see **EARTH DAY**, page 4

Local runners prepare for Boston Marathon

BY NICK BOONSTRA
Staff Writer
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The 128th edition of the Boston Marathon is fast approaching, and a number of local runners across a range of experience levels are getting ready to run the iconic race, representing charitable causes, athletic clubs and their own personal triumphs across the grueling 26.2 miles from Hopkinton to Copley Square.

The race is set to be held on Patriots Day, April 15, with a record-breaking 33,000 athletes from around the world applying to run. According to Runner's World Magazine, 22,019 qualifying runners, alongside an additional roughly 8,000 participants running for charities or receiving invitational entries, will descend

on the Hub from all around the world this year to participate in one of the most prestigious long-distance events on Earth.

BJ Williams - Guiding the way Among the local runners participating is BJ Williams of Belchertown, who has already run the Boston Marathon three times and has been involved with Team Hoyt, the renowned organization that supports people with disabilities, for over 15 years.

Williams will be participating in a unique role as a guide runner for Morrie Ripley, a Canadian runner who suffered paralysis after a serious car crash at the age of 25.

"His story's pretty interesting," Williams said of Ripley. "He was paralyzed at 25, told he might

Please see **MARATHON**, page 10



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Gabrielle Cook of South Hadley, shown with her husband Dave and son Oliver, is preparing to run her first Boston Marathon a year after becoming a mother.

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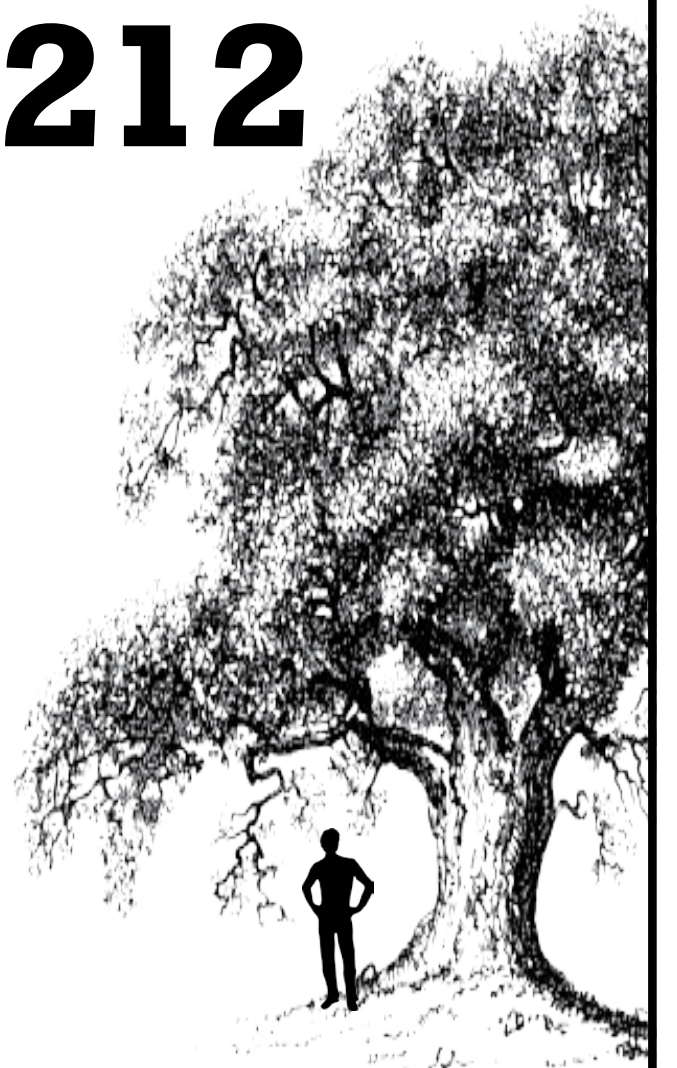
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COMMUNITY



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Cub Scouts from Pack 507 are collecting donations of bottles and cans on Saturday, April 6.

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.

Backyard chicken keeping, 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.



Town announces board, committee vacancies

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

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

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

Historic District By-Law Commission

One Real Estate seat

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

Deadline: Friday, April 26

Belchertown Family Center Committee

Three Active Voting Member positions

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

Deadline: Friday, April 26

Trail Stewardship Council

One vacancy

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

Deadline: Friday, April 26

Animal Control Advisory Board

Three vacancies

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

Deadline: Friday, April 26

Communications Committee

Three vacancies

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

Deadline: Friday, April 26

Council on Aging

One vacancy

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

Deadline: Friday, April 26

Belchertown Age and Dementia Friendly Implementation Group

One Community Member vacancy

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

Deadline: Friday, April 26

Please see **VACANCIES**, page 14

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BCTV Schedule Highlights

Thursday, April 4

- 8 a.m. – Select Board – April 1 meeting
- 10 a.m. – School Committee – April 2 meeting
- 12 p.m. – Agriculture Commission – April 3 meeting
- 7 p.m. – Select Board – April 1 meeting
- 9 p.m. – School Committee – April 2 meeting

Friday, April 5

- 8 a.m. – Conversation with Pakman
- 9 a.m. – Council on Aging – March 27 meeting
- 9:45 a.m. – Easter Egg Hunts 2024
- 10 a.m. – Clapp Memorial Library – State School Disability History
- 5 p.m. – Conversation with Pakman
- 7 p.m. – Council on Aging – March 27
- 7:45 p.m. – Easter Egg Hunts 2024
- 8 p.m. – Clapp Memorial Library – State School Disability History

Saturday, April 6

- 8 a.m. – Clapp Memorial Library – April Events
- 8:30 a.m. – Blue Ribbon Cooks – Comfort Food
- 5 p.m. – Clapp Memorial Library – April Events
- 5:30 p.m. – Blue Ribbon Cooks – Comfort Food

Sunday, April 7

- 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. – Easter Egg Hunts 2024

Monday, April 8

- 8 a.m. – Conversation with Pakman
- 9 a.m. – Clapp Memorial Library – State School Disability History
- 5 p.m. – Conversation with Pakman
- 6 p.m. – Clapp Memorial Library – State School Disability History
- 7 p.m. – Conservation Commission – Channel 192

Tuesday, April 9

- 8 a.m. – Easter Egg Hunts 2024
- 8:30 a.m. – Clapp Memorial Library – State School Disability History
- 6:30 p.m. – Easter Egg Hunts 2024
- 7 p.m. – Planning Board – Channel 191

Wednesday, April 10

- 8 a.m. – Conversation with Pakman
- 5 p.m. – Conversation with Pakman
- 6 p.m. – School Budget Presentation – Channel 192
- 7:30 p.m. – Agriculture Commission – Channel 191

BARC holds 8th Annual Craft Fair on April 6

BELCHERTOWN – Please join Belchertown Animal Relief Committee on Saturday, April 6 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Jabish Brook Middle School, 62 North Washington St. for its 8th Annual BARC Craft Fair

There will be over 60 local artisans displaying their crafts. Roosters Roaming Cantina will also be there at 11 a.m. for lunch.

Oliver, Belchertown Police Department's Comfort Dog will be

there with Officer Austin. There will also be BARC swag, dog tails, catnip fish toys plus much more – there will be something for everyone.

EARTH DAY from page 1

including a map of events in the region, by visiting EarthDay.org.

Saturday, April 26, is Arbor Day, and the Energy & Sustainability Committee encourages residents to individually celebrate the day by planting native trees and shrubs in their own yards. These efforts are vital for enhancing local ecosystems by supporting local wildlife, including beneficial insects and bird populations.

Native plants provide essential habitat and food sources, leading to healthier and more resilient natural environments. Moreover, native vegetation plays a significant role in soil conservation and water management.

Check out arborday.org and nativeplanttrust.org for more information.

Monday, April 29, the Clapp Memorial Library will host a special Earth Day Ceremony and Celebration of Indigenous People, featuring Raymond LaChance (Nouba Tewk Tomakwa) at 3:30 p.m. The event, suitable for individuals aged 10 and up, will take place on the library's front lawn, including, land recognition, music, an interactive smudging of a tree, seed planting, and the creation of an Indigenous necklace.

The event is made possible by the Friends of the Clapp Memorial Library. Space is limited; registration is required on the Clapp Memorial website.

In case of rain, the event will be held in the Town Hall Auditorium. Earth Day is an ideal time to consider your own carbon footprint.

In celebration of Earth Month, Belchertown showcases its commitment to environmental stewardship through significant strides in energy efficiency and sustainability over recent years. Recognized as one of the state's first Green Communities in 2010, the town has been steadily achieving reductions in municipal energy usage thanks to grants and utility incentives for energy-efficient equipment, reducing both energy consumption and operating costs.

Furthering its environmental commitment, Belchertown has embraced its role as a Pollinator-Friendly Community, with the Conservation Department leading initiatives to protect pollinators by promoting the planting of native species and chemical-free gardening.

The town's green journey continues with the 2023 adoption of a Climate Resilience and Sustainable Growth Plan and a decarbonization pledge by the Select Board, aiming to decrease carbon emissions and uphold sustainability goals.

These efforts, especially poignant during Earth Month, underscore Belchertown's dedication to creating a greener future, detailed further on Belchertown's Energy and Sustainability Committee's web page at belchertown.org/committees/energy_and_sustainability.

By joining the town-wide clean up, planting native plants and trees, sowing pollinator friendly seeds, or deciding to sign up for 100% renewable electricity, your action will be part of the collective action which makes Earth Day such a wonderful testimony to the positive results of individuals working together. One

individual's actions when added to others can truly lead to massive strides towards improving the earth, honoring the ancestors of these lands, and carrying our future generations forward.

Belchertown Community Energy Choice Aggregation Program update

Earth Day is the perfect time to consider your carbon footprint. One of the easiest ways to reduce your household's carbon emissions is to source your electricity supply from a 100% renewable energy provider.

The Belchertown Community Energy Choice aggregation program will allow National Grid customers to do just that. Mailers on town letterhead will be going out in April to customers being supplied electricity through National Grid, informing them of their energy options under this new program developed by the Town.

The "Belchertown Standard" enrollment choice provides 10% more renewable energy content than the state requirement, while the "Belchertown 100" option allows residents to select a 100% renewable energy supply, both at rates lower than the current and annual average National Grid supply rates. Be on the lookout for the mailer, announcements on public meetings, and information packages in various Town locations.

Visit BelchertownEnergyChoice.com for program overview and details. It's never been easier to choose 100% renewable energy and reduce your bills at the same time.



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The cut-off date for applications is April 17th.


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NEWS & FEATURES

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

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

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This photo shows a partial display of the Quabbin Art Association's display at the Clapp Memorial Library. "ART meets POETRY" can be viewed April 1-30.

Celebrating National Poetry Month 2024

BELCHERTOWN – Inaugurated by the Academy of American Poets in 1996, National Poetry Month is the largest literary celebration in the world.

To commemorate the art of poetry, six unique pieces of work have been donated by Quabbin Art Association members Virginia Bard, Nancy Birmingham, Elaine Darr-Morton, Anna Jacke, Sarah Madison and Randi Shenkman. They will be on display during the month of April at the Clapp Memorial Library, 19 South Main St.

Poets and writers are invited to view their work and compose a poem in response to one piece that calls to their literary talents. All poetry entries must be original and unpublished and should be submitted to the library no later than noon on April 30.

Each entry must include the author's name, e-mail address, phone number, mailing address,

and title of the poem being submitted. The contest allows for only one poetry entry per person.

A poem cannot be submitted for more than one piece of work on display.

Each artist will select one winning poem and the poets will be notified by May 5. Winning poems will be on display at Clapp Memorial Library from May 6 through 16.

The poets will be awarded their prize at the Quabbin Art Association meeting on Thursday, May 16 at 7 p.m. at the St. Francis Parish Center, Lower Level, 12 Park St.

About QAA

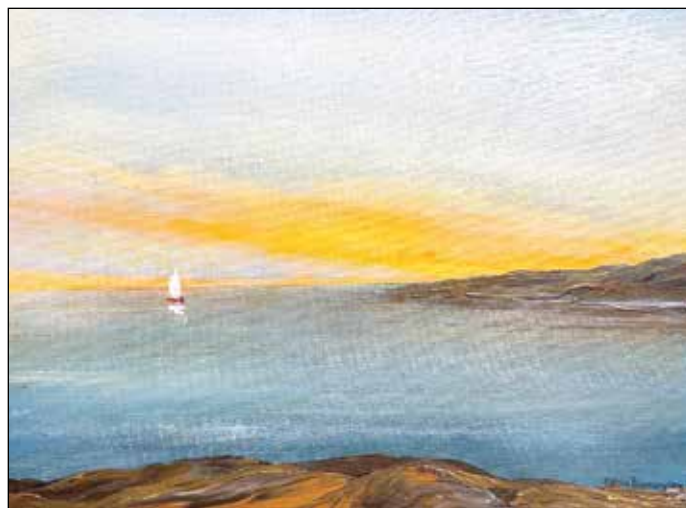
The Quabbin Art Association was founded in 2016, with a goal of providing education, support, and opportunity for local artists, and to promote community interest and appreciation in the visual arts. For more information, visit www.quabbin-artassociation.com.



"Seeds of the Sun" by Anna Jacke is one of the art pieces displayed by Quabbin Art Association at the Clapp Memorial Library.



Poets and writers are invited to view the work displayed by Quabbin Art Association members and compose a poem in response to one piece that calls to their literary talents.



Nancy Birmingham's painting will be displayed through April 30.

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OPINION



When should we claim Social Security?

Dear Rusty:

I am almost 63 and my husband will be 61 soon and we are looking to see when our best time would be to start our Social Security benefits.

We would like to know if one of us qualifies for benefits from a previous marriage from 1984 to 1995. And we are wondering if I can start drawing at age 65, in two years or if it is better that I wait until 67 because my spouse is two years younger than me. Also, if I were to continue working limited hours after 65, what would my earning limit be?

Signed: Almost Ready

Dear Almost Ready:

The first thing to understand is that Full Retirement Age for both of you is 67. If either of you claim before that, your monthly benefit amount will be permanently reduced and, because you are working, you will be subject to Social Security's "earnings test."

If you claim your benefit at age 65 your monthly payment will be about 87% of what you would get if you claimed at age 67. If your husband claims at age 62, his benefit will be about 70% of his FRA amount.

The only way to get 100% of the benefit you've each earned from a lifetime of working is to claim at your FRA. You can choose to claim at age 65 as long as you're comfortable with the benefit reduction which will occur and as long as your annual work earnings do not significantly exceed the earnings limit for that year. In any case, when each of you claims will not affect the other's retirement benefit amount.

Social Security's "earnings test" for those claiming before FRA sets a limit for how much can be earned before some or all benefits are taken away. The earnings limit for 2024 is \$22,320, but it changes yearly. If you claim early benefits and your work earnings exceed that year's limit, Social Security will take away \$1 in benefits for every \$2 you are over the limit.

They take away by withholding future benefits long enough to recover what you owe for exceeding the limit. If you significantly exceed the annual earnings limit, you may be temporarily ineligible to receive SS benefits until you either earn less or reach your FRA.

The earnings test no longer applies after you reach your FRA. I cannot predict what the earnings limit will be two years from now, but it will be more than the 2024 limit and published at that time. FYI, in the year you turn 67 your pre-FRA earnings limit will be much higher and when you reach your FRA the earnings test no longer applies.

Regarding your previous marriage, you cannot receive spousal benefits from an ex-spouse while you are currently married. But when to claim may also be influenced by whether either you or your current spouse will get a spousal benefit from the other. If the FRA (age 67) benefit amount for one of you is more than twice the other's FRA entitlement, the one with the lower FRA amount will get a "spousal boost" to their own amount when both of you are collecting.

Spouse benefits reach maximum at one's FRA, but each person's personal SS retirement amount will continue to grow if not claimed at FRA. Waiting past FRA to claim allows the SS retirement benefit to grow by 8% per year, up to age 70.

So, with an FRA of 67, claiming at age 70 will yield a payment 24% higher than the FRA amount, 76% more than the age 62 amount and about 37% more than the age 65 amount. But waiting beyond FRA is only smart if financially feasible and life expectancy is at least average about 84 and 87 respectively for a man and woman your current ages. And, as a general rule, if one's spousal benefit at FRA (50% of their partner's FRA entitlement) is highest, then that spouse should claim at FRA to get their maximum benefit.

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



LETTER

Resident urges attendance at meeting about new JBMS building

To the editor,

In June we will be asked to approve the spending of about \$120 million dollars (or \$20,000 per family) on a replacement for the Jabish Brook Middle School building.

In order to be an informed voter, please attend a public meeting April 9 at 6:30 p.m.

at JBMS school. The Selectboard, Finance Board, and the School Committee will all be in attendance.

(Note that this is separate from the public hearing on the FY25 School budget April 10, 6 p.m. at the CHCS auditorium.)

Mike Hoffer
Belchertown



Asparagus plants- upkeep, harvest and oddities

It was so much fun to be outdoors on Easter Sunday.

I enjoyed just sitting on the deck, talking with family and moseying around the yard while the little kids enjoyed an Easter egg hunt. It's funny that being outside is one of those things that once you do it, you want to do it more often.

It got me thinking of some of the tasks back home I have to do to get the gardens ship-shape.

One of the tasks concerns my asparagus bed. The grocery stores are teasing us lately, with spears from Mexico making an appearance in the sales circular.

I usually hold off buying it, preferring my home-grown to anything store-bought. I never did get to cut back the foliage in the fall after the first frost.

Presently, its laying down in the beds, making a catch-all for leaves. I'll to get in there with a pair of sharp clippers, cutting away the foliage, then with a rake to further tidy up.

Once complete, I'll sprinkle lime on the beds, followed by some compost, since asparagus prefers fertile soil on the alkaline side.

It'll be a few weeks still before the spears start to poke through the surface. Since my beds are several years old at this point, I will

be able to harvest for a good eight weeks.

Be on the look-out for the asparagus beetle midstream and the black eggs that are laid horizontally shortly thereafter, usually apparent on the upper portion of the spears. I monitor my beds often and flick the bugs into a yogurt container of soapy water while squishing the eggs in-situ.

I don't do more than that in terms of pest control and I'm able to keep populations down.

Weeds are another foe. It's important to keep the beds weeded – especially free of perennial grasses, and you will likely have a productive asparagus patch for decades to come.

I usually harvest asparagus with a knife, so that the cut is clean. If the spear has gotten a bit too tall, but the buds haven't opened too much, I will still harvest it at the appropriate length of 6-8" long, and cut the rest of the stem off at ground level.

If the buds have opened and are too far gone to be edible (at least in terms of looking like traditional asparagus) I will just allow the foliage to grow, figuring that the photosynthesizing will benefit the roots in the long run, just as later foliage does after the harvest period is over. I usually let really skinny spears go to foliage as well – they are usually kind of tough.

Speaking of tough, what about those really thick spears, the kind that are "thumb-thick?"

If you notice the base of these spears to be woody and tough in appearance, get out the potato peeler and remove the outer skin, revealing a much more tender interior portion. An old friend taught me this trick, and it works out pretty well.

I'd be in remiss if I didn't address the stinky smell associated with eating asparagus.

Please see **GARDEN**, page 14

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.

GRANBY

Upcoming CFCE Preschool Programs at the library

GRANBY – CFCE Preschool Playgrounds are held on Wednesdays and Fridays from 10:30-11:30 a.m. at the Granby Free Public Library, 297 East State St.

Drop in and join this free playgroup, where you and your child (birth to 5 years old) can enjoy playtime, an activity and story circle time with Marti.

There is no Playgroup when Granby schools are closed, including school vacation weeks. Saturday Playgroup is held once per

month.

On April 12 at 11 a.m. join the drop-in Family Friday program during The Week of the Young Child. Meet friendly Granby Firefighters and create your own family fire safety plan with their help.

Climb on the firetruck too (if the truck is available).

A Pre-K and Kindergarten Readiness Event with the CFCE will be held on April 24 from 2:30-4 p.m. There will be informa-

tion tables and activities (2:30 p.m.) that will help prepare your children for preschool and kindergarten. Followed by lively songs with Liam Hurley (3-3:45 p.m.) No registration required.

Playgroups are made possible with funding from a Coordinated Family and Community Engagement grant from the MA Department of Early Education and Care, administered by the Collaborative for Educational Services.

GFPL offers April school vacation fun

GRANBY – Stop by the Granby Free Public Library, 297 East State St. during school vacation week for a number of fun activities.

Lego Free Build

A Lego Free Build will be held on Wednesday, April 17 at 11 a.m. Bring your imagination and build away with our extensive collection of Lego. This drop-in activity is for ages 4 and up.

Spring Scavenger Hunts!

Try the library's "I Spy" Mini Fairy Garden Tank through April. During the week of April 17-19 join the "Outdoor Fairy Find" and find four fairies hiding in outdoor garden and fill out their names on the find sheet.

The form you fill out from each activity is a raffle ticket for a fairy garden basket.

Puppet show

Fairies of the Season Puppet Show Thursday, April 18 at 11 a.m. Every season has unique qualities: the trees look different, different kinds of plants are growing, and people wear and do different things.

In this magical show, each season has its own fairy that takes care of changing the natural world accordingly. This puppet show is for ages 2-7 and pre-registration is required.

All library programs are free of charge and open to the public. Call the library at 413-467-3320 during open hours for more information and to pre-register for programs.

bankESB promotes Clark to Wire Transfer Officer

EASTHAMPTON – bankESB recently promoted Seth Clark to wire transfer officer, based in the 36 Main St., Easthampton office.

Clark, of Westfield, has 11 years of banking experience and has held a variety of positions since joining bankESB in 2013, including wire transfer manager, assistant branch manager, personal banker, and senior teller. He holds a bachelor's degree from Westfield State College.

Outside of work, Clark has been a part-time church organist in Westhampton and Holyoke for 20 years.

For more information, visit bankHFG.com.



Seth Clark

Annual poster contest announced

BELCHERTOWN – The Friends of the Belchertown Fair are kicking off the annual poster contest.

The theme of the 165th Fair is "Barn in the USA" Selected artwork will be used on posters advertising this year's fair. Anyone 18 years and younger is welcome to enter.

Entries should be submitted on an 8 1/2 by 11 inch sheet of paper and artwork must include the following information: "165th Belchertown Fair", "Barn in the USA" and "September 20-22, 2024." On the back of the poster, please include: name, address, phone number, age, grade level, and if applicable your school or organization.

Deadline for submission is April 28. Entries can be mailed to: Friends

Please see **CONTEST**, page 8

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.

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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.

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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 20 through March 26. 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 391 calls police responded to, there were eight incidents, seven accidents, seven arrests/summons and 43 citations.

ARRESTS/SUMMONS

Thursday, March 21

3:32 p.m. – An 18-year-old Billerica man was arrested on domestic assault and battery.

Friday, March 23

6:20 p.m. – A 48-year-old Ware woman was placed into protective custody. An officer responded to an area for a well-being check. There was a person with no shoes or coat walking along the road. They claimed an acquaintance made them leave a vehicle. They smelled like an alcoholic beverage. They were having a hard time recalling events. Someone present told the officer about a road rage incident that turned into a physical altercation. The person reported they were pushed out of a car. Belchertown Fire Department was contacted to evaluate the person. The person was later transported to the hospital.

A 64-year-old Ware man was arrested on domestic assault and battery.

Saturday, March 23

2:35 a.m. – A 27-year-old Wilbraham woman was issued a summons for operating with a suspended license. An officer saw a parked vehicle with two people inside. The officer contacted the occupants. They provided their license, and it was determined the person had a suspended license. The operator said they would have thought that would have been corrected. A citation was issued.

10:12 p.m. – John B. Drake, 23, 10 Highmoor Drive, Wilbraham, was arrested on charges of operating under the influence of alcohol, negligent operation of a motor vehicle and a marked lanes violation. An officer went to the area of Mill Valley Road

after multiple reports of a two-vehicle head on collision. Upon their arrival, the officer saw two damaged vehicles it was consistent with slightly head on collision. All three people in the second vehicle were trapped and needed to be rescued by Belchertown Fire Department. Non-life-threatening injuries were reported. The operator of the first vehicle didn't know what happened. They had bloodshot, glassy eyes and strong odor of alcohol. A field sobriety test was administered. The person was charged accordingly.

ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS

Wednesday, March 20

8:43 p.m. – An officer spoke with person about child a custody agreement.

Thursday, March 21

6:14 a.m. – An officer responded to Stebbins Street for a report of an injured deer that was struck by a motor vehicle. The deer attempted to cross Stebbins Street when it was struck by a vehicle. The deer needed to be euthanized. The DPW was contacted to remove the deer.

Thursday, March 22

7:21 p.m. – An officer took a report of fraud. A resident reported their bank account showed transactions they didn't make. Their cell phone was linked to the account through Apple Pay. The bank is investigating the matter.

Friday, March 23

10:22 a.m. – A Jabish Street business owner reported their solar lights on their sign were stolen. The person noticed them missing the other day. There are no suspects at this time.

8:05 p.m. – An officer responded to an accident. A vehicle traveling through rows of parking spots at a George Hannum Road business. The vehicle drove straight into a tree that was at the border of the parking lot. No injuries were reported and no tow was needed.

Saturday, March 24

2:35 a.m. – A vehicle traveling south on Franklin Street around Depot Street struck a guard rail. The operator said they didn't see the curve due to the rainy conditions. There was damage to the right-side fender of the vehicle, and it was unable to be driven from the scene, it was towed. No injuries were reported.

4:19 a.m. – An officer responded to a Federal Street apartment complex for a report of a vehicle stuck in the mud. There were three people attempting to remove the vehicle, they said they were driving the vehicle on the lawn when it was stuck. The matter was documented due to property damage.

Saturday, March 23

9:24 a.m. – An officer responded to an accident on George Hannum Road. A vehicle traveling east on George Hannum Road lost control on a large patch of ice. The vehicle got stuck in a ditch. The vehicle remained operational and was able to be driven from the scene.

Monday, March 25

1:10 p.m. – An officer responded to an accident on Warren Wright Road and Orchard Road. An operator was backing up to a house and due to a trailer was unable to have clear view and struck a second vehicle.

5:38 p.m. – An officer responded to Chauncey Walker Road for a report of a rabid raccoon in a resident's yard. The animal appeared drunk. Belchertown Animal Control was contacted and advised the animal was euthanized.

5:54 p.m. – Belchertown emergency communications got multiple 911 calls reporting a vehicle engulfed in flames. While in route, officers were updated that the fire spread to embankment and melted wires attached to a house. A brush fire was also ignited. Belchertown Fire Department began to extinguish the vehicle, which was a converted camper van. The owner said they were working on the engine when it exploded into flames. The vehicle was extinguished and there was no noticeable damage to the residence.

Tuesday, March 26

4:41 p.m. – An officer on patrol on Gulf Street around Knight Street met a person to recover a vehicle. Belchertown Police contacted by Hadley Police who took a report stolen car from British Columbia, Canada. The person would meet in an agreed location to turn the car over. They located the vehicle, and a tow company was contacted. An inventory of the vehicle was done, and Hadley Police were contacted.

Granby Police Log

Editor's Note: The Granby Police Department responded to 130 calls for the week of March 22 through March 28. Those arrested are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. The Granby Police Department provides all information.

Saturday, March 23

1:32 a.m. – While on patrol, an officer performed a random registration query. It was discovered that the registered owner of the vehicle had a suspended Massachusetts driver's license. The vehicle was stopped and the registered owner was operating. The operator was issued a criminal citation for operating with a suspended driver's license.

Sunday, March 24

9:58 a.m. – A motorist reported striking a deer. There were no injuries.

4:17 p.m. – Several callers reported a two-car accident. Granby Police and Fire responded. There were no injuries.

Tuesday, March 26

10:03 a.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 60 mph in 35 mph zone. The vehicle was stopped and the operator was issued a civil citation for speeding.

Wednesday, March 27

12:18 p.m. – Detail officers reported a two-car accident. Granby Police and Fire responded. There were no injuries.

Thursday, March 28

1:27 p.m. – A motorist reported a minor two-car accident in the parking lot. There were no injuries or damage to either vehicle.

CONTEST from page 7

of the Belchertown Fair, Inc., 18 Wilson Road, Belchertown MA 01007 and become the property of Friends of the Belchertown Fair.

Winners will receive a cash prize, a wristband for Friday night, and a copy of their poster. For questions, please email friendsobtownfair@gmail.com.



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ARMSTRONG from page 1

away in 2009 at the age of 52.

Prior to the performance of the tribute piece, there was a time for a few people who had been close to Armstrong to share memories of him.

Mike Bauer, retired Belchertown High School Band Director, pointed out that not all of the student performers that night had even been born when Armstrong passed. Nevertheless, "he had a hand in all these people being onstage because of the program he helped build," Bauer said.

He recalled seeing the impact Armstrong was having on the town from his very first year as BHS band director in 1985.

"On the high school level where I was, I saw all these wonderful saxophone players who just loved music and were really good musicians," he said. "Even though I didn't have much to do with Lloyd that first year, it was evident what kind of teacher he was."

That next summer, Bauer recalled, "we had the inaugural rehearsal of the Belchertown Community Band, and 18 people showed up; three of them were Eleanor, Glenn and Lloyd Armstrong," illustrating that Lloyd's love for music and for the community were nurtured and shared by his mother and brother.

"Lloyd came to that first rehearsal, and he was absolutely hooked," Bauer said, and went on to share how that passion drove him to constantly volunteer for the group and eventually become its president. "He just put so many hours into community band, he wouldn't even ask people for help," Bauer said.

He also praised Armstrong's humility, "If he would see this, he'd probably say, 'Why are you making this fuss about me?'" Bauer said. "That's the type of person Lloyd Armstrong was."

Mary Ellen Miller also shared about her close friendship with Armstrong and their shared appreciation for Japanese music. She related how Armstrong had played a key role in organizing a visit of Japanese musicians to Belchertown in the early 1990s, a trip that would help to form a life-long bond across continents.



Band Director Corrie Smith addresses the audience between performances.



Belchertown High School alumnus Jason Krol shares memories of the late Lloyd Armstrong.

She said it had been Armstrong's generosity that stood out most to a visiting teacher, so much so that they "wanted to create a piece that he could play" on the traditional shakuhachi flute, she said. That sparked a passion in Armstrong: Before the visiting teacher left, Armstrong "had his first lesson in my house, and that was it, he just became the most dedicated shakuhachi student," Miller said.

Somehow, the ever-giving educator continued to make time for this new musical instrument, and the human connections that came with it.

"It was just magic. A delegation came from Hokkaido, we played at the State House, we played every Japanese festival, any time there were dignitaries or musicians...he would be there, playing with them," Miller said.

This passion culminated in an opportunity for Armstrong to travel to Japan with Miller. "That's when I was really moved by how much Lloyd felt so at home," she said. "They just loved him. The musicians loved him. Our teacher's mother called him her American son."

When they came back, Miller said, Armstrong aided an effort to found a local chapter of the global Shakuhachi Society, deciding to name the group "Long River," after the English translation of "Connecticut" from its native Algonquian language. "We're all connected by rivers and water,"



The Seventh Grade Percussion Ensemble opened the night with a performance of "Crazy Train".

Miller recalled Armstrong saying of the name.

"He made a big impression on the musicians in Hokkaido as well as the students here," she said.

BHS alumnus Jason Krol also spoke to his memories of his former teacher and friend. He started by recognizing the significance of the evening's focus on Armstrong. "This is a long time coming and I'm glad that we're finally doing it," he said.

"Lloyd was an extremely talented musician, as I think you can gather from hearing from Mike and from Mary Ellen," Krol said, highlighting the fact that Armstrong had received

his degree from the prestigious Berkley College of Music in Boston.

"It was clear to anyone who knew him that he loved music," he said. "He truly enjoyed sharing that love with his students."

Krol recalled once being asked by Armstrong to fill in as a drummer for a band he had been involved with. "Very humbling to be asked," Krol said. "Meant a lot to think that he felt that I had what it took."

Krol also spoke to some of the things that made Armstrong the unique individual that he was. "He was a seeker of knowledge. He was also an avid photographer."

He said that this passion, like his many others, was indicative of his dedication in all walks of life. "It wouldn't be out of character for Lloyd to get up at 2 a.m., if necessary, to photograph an astronomical event...and he'd still come in bright and early the next morning at 7 a.m."

JBMS Band Director Corrie Smith shared that Armstrong continued to have an impact on the program to this day.

"I didn't know Lloyd Armstrong, but I do feel his presence in my band room," she said.

WestMass ElderCare
50th ANNIVERSARY

VOLUNTEER NEEDED!

WestMass ElderCare is seeking a volunteer from Belchertown to serve on our Board of Directors.

Our Board of Directors is the group who guides the governance of WMEC and represents the diversity of our local communities.

This is a great opportunity to provide support to WMEC in this leadership position.

Meetings are held on the second Monday of the month from 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. at our office in Holyoke.

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EDUCATION

KofC 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.

Golsa Rajaei named to Ohio University's Dean's List

ATHENS, OH – Ohio University College of Fine Arts student Golsa Rajaei of Amherst has been named to the fall 2023 Dean's List.

The Dean's List recognizes undergraduate students who complete a particular semester with a GPA between 3.5 and 3.999 with a minimum of 12 credit hours attempted for letter grades that are used to calculate GPA.

MARATHON from page 1

never walk again, could never run in the Boston Marathon. Ten years later he did his first marathon, and now he's upwards over 30 marathons."

Williams received a message from Ripley, who he knows through Team Hoyt, asking if he would serve as his guide runner for this year's marathon only days before being interviewed for this article on March 11.

"I jumped on it immediately," Williams said. "Being that it's his race, it's not my race, so being able to be there to help him and be his support is incredible." Williams also shared that, after his last Boston Marathon in 2017, he had decided that he would not run the race again unless he was running in a support capacity with someone else.

Williams' own path to being a guide runner this year is itself an inspiring one. Similarly to Ripley, a car accident changed Williams' life when he was 21, cutting short what had looked at the time to be a burgeoning hockey career.

But seeing the perseverance of Dick and

Rick Hoyt inspired Williams to take up running less than a year after his injury. Despite not considering himself a talented runner, Williams has since completed over 20 marathons and eight Ironman triathlons, fueled by a desire to support causes like Team Hoyt and demonstrate to others that they too can overcome adversity.

"I don't do it for myself, I don't do it to go out and win, I don't do it to get personal bests," Williams said of his running endeavors. "All the big events that I take part in are either fundraisers, they're for a cause, they're for a charity."

Gabrielle Cook - A family legacy

For Gabrielle Cook of South Hadley, this year's Boston Marathon marks both a personal milestone and a family legacy. Cook is the youngest of 12 children in a family of runners, with a number of her siblings having completed the Boston Marathon previously; at the same time, she has only just begun her own family, welcoming her son Oliver into the world within the past year.

"It's kind of like a pivotal moment for me to also be running the Boston Marathon, so it's very exciting," Cook said.

This year's Boston Marathon will be Cook's third marathon overall. She originally qualified for the 2023 race but deferred her entry until 2024 after becoming pregnant.

"Last year was the first year they were letting people who are pregnant defer just for that reason alone," Cook said. "I was able to defer it either for this year or next year, and I was just like, let's just do it."

When it comes to running, Cook admits "it's definitely a love-hate relationship" with the sport at times. Despite not feeling a strong love for it at first, she came to find over time that she preferred longer distances over the five kilometer races she would run as a high schooler.

"It's been kind of an interesting journey, getting back into shape for it," Cook said of her preparations since having her son. She's even found ways to get him involved in the process, saying, "I've done a lot of my training runs with the stroller, pushing my son."

Ultimately, one of the things Cook is looking forward to most is simply being a part of the grand event. "I've never even been to the Boston Marathon," Cook said. "I'm very excited just to experience the crowd and things like that."

week at peak levels before tapering down as the marathon nears. He is no stranger to Western Massachusetts road races, frequently participating in events like Thursday night races at Ashley Reservoir in Holyoke and the SnowStorm Classics at Forest Park in Springfield.

"I was thinking Boston was going to be OK for me to do," said the quietly confident Shea.

Lindsay Smith - Community connection

For South Hadley resident Lindsay Smith, the community aspect of running has been always been the primary spark behind a running career stretching back over a decade.

Smith, who was born and raised in Rhode Island before coming to Boston for college, first caught the running bug in 2012 when his wife challenged him to join her on a half marathon shortly after graduating.

Thomas Shea - Chasing a qualifier

This year's Boston Marathon will also be the first for South Hadley's Thomas Shea. Now 62, Shea began running relatively late in life at age 55, after his kids graduated from high school.

"Both of my kids ran track in high school, and my youngest daughter was graduating, so I figured it'd be a good chance to run with them one time," he said. "My son had been doing the St. Patrick's Day race [in Holyoke] for a few years at that point, and I wanted to give it a shot."

From that point on, Shea came to love running, and got involved with the local running groups Run Your Health and Empire One Running Club. He said these groups had been important to him, not only in terms of the friendships he had formed, but also in opening the door to run in the marathon this year.

"They're the ones that actually got me the bib for the Boston Marathon" Shea said of Empire One, explaining that they were able to secure an invitational entry for him. "My hope is to run a qualifying time in Boston, and qualify for Boston."

Shea, who has completed one previous marathon, has been diligently training since December on an 18-week plan that has had him running up to 44 miles per

"I remember feeling extremely uncomfortable physically in that race," Smith recalled. "I'm not sure what her own impetus was for running the half marathon was, but she was definitely an inspiration."

Despite the physical challenge of running, Smith stuck with it, drawn in by the social aspects of being part of run clubs and participating in the general culture of being a runner. Now, Smith has completed multiple Boston Marathons, and qualified with a time that will see him running with one of the first waves of the day in this year's race.

"There was a huge community running scene in downtown Boston," Smith reminisced, adding that he has found a similar sense of community in Western Massachusetts. "The 'recreational runner' I call it, which to me is not at all an insult... that, I have found, lives in most places in the world."

He said that connection was the thing that kept him involved when he first started, and that he has made sure he has stayed connected with groups as he has moved from place to place.

"For me the most stable and consistent relationship I've had with running has been through your typical run club," he said, naming City Sports and Marathon Sports as two such clubs he has been involved with.

"I can't really call myself a true recreational runner anymore," Smith said, "but that was how my running was born."

Now, Smith wants to be able to lift up the community that has lifted him up so much. "Hopefully I've given a little back," he said.

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Medical Transportation Drivers Needed

The Belchertown Senior Center is looking for drivers for their Medical Transportation Program. This program transports older adult residents to their medical appointments within the town as well as surrounding communities. Drivers use their own vehicle and are paid \$13.50/hour plus mileage.

A valid driver's license, reliable vehicle, a good driving record and reliability are required. If you would like to join our team, please complete an application online at www.belchertown.org/human_resources or email jobs@belchertown.org for more information. Applications will be accepted until positions are filled. An EEO employer.

SPORTS

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TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

Abdel Talabi settles the ball for the Pioneers.

Pioneers look to keep adding

LUDLOW – With about a month remaining until the regular season begins, the Western Mass. Pioneers got a look at their potential 2024 team in the Open Cup match, a loss, held two weeks ago. Now, the Pioneers will continue practice at Lusitano Stadium until they have a “friendly game” exhibition contest on May 10 against Third Eye FC. The home opener for the Pioneers will be on Thursday, May 18 against Pathfinder FC, a familiar opponent for the Pioneers.



Tomas Duben looks to get through an opponent during an Open Cup match.



Ben Awashie works on the offensive side of the field.

Orioles get through weather in scrimmage

CHICOPEE – Last Thursday in the rain, Belchertown girls lacrosse visited the turf at Chicopee High School for a scrimmage. The Orioles and Chicopee braved the rain. The Orioles are scheduled to open the season on the road on April 4 at Wahconah at 4 p.m. Their home opener is on Wednesday, April 10 against Westfield at 4 p.m.



Veronica Dymkowski works on offense for the Orioles. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM



Izzy Haggerty winds up to throw on the run.



Lia Pikul makes a pass on the run.



Madysen LePage is pursued by the opposition.

Rams outlast Holyoke in opener

BY TIM PETERSON
Sports Correspondent

HOLYOKE—The season opening boys' varsity volleyball match between the Granby Rams and the Holyoke Purple Knights was a very close affair from start to finish.

With the score tied 6-6 in the fifth set, the Rams reeled off nine unanswered points giving them a hard fought 3-2 victory at John “Jinx” O’Connor Gymnasium, last Thursday night.

“We lost eight players from last year’s team, so it’s pretty exciting to win our season opener with some new players,” said Granby senior co-captain Michael Swanigan. “I’m very happy with the way we played in tonight’s match.”

The Rams, who captured the West League title with a perfect 8-0 record a year ago, only have eight players listed on this year’s varsity roster. They won the first set, 25-14, the third set, 25-15, and the deciding set 15-6 in their season opening victory.

“I thought we played very well in our first match of the season,” said Granby head coach Chad

Gagnon. “We’ve had some very good matches against Holyoke during the past couple of years. It’s a friendly rivalry.”

The Purple Knights won the second and fourth sets. The score of those two sets were 25-15.

“We did start off a little bit slowly, but we managed to battle back in the second and fourth sets,” said Holyoke assistant varsity coach Josh Abrams. “We still have some things we need to improve on, but I’m pleased with our overall effort. We’re hoping to have a very good season.”

The Purple Knights boys' varsity volleyball coach is Paula Conway.

While Holyoke High School has been playing volleyball for many years, this is Granby’s third season competing at the varsity level.

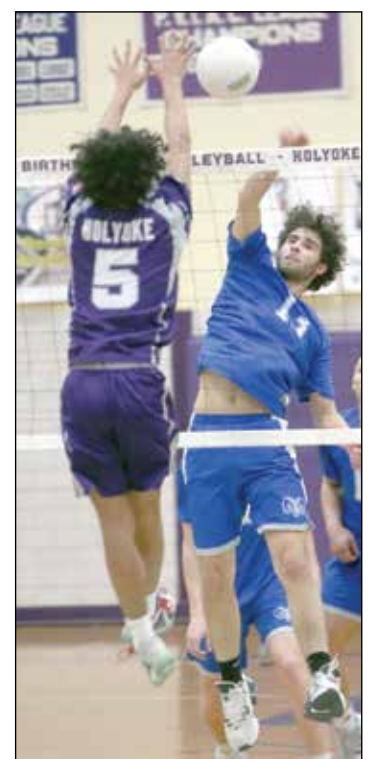
The two teams split the season series a year ago.

Granby celebrated a 3-1 win on their senior night before losing, 3-0, on Holyoke’s senior night a week later. The Purple Knights also won the only meeting of the 2022 campaign between the two squads by the final score of 3-1.

“We’ve been playing Holyoke since I was a sophomore and



TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM
Jake Gagnon sets up a spike.



Nicolas Grandmont sails a spike through a Holyoke defender.

they’ve always been a very good volleyball team,” Swanigan said. “It was another exciting match tonight.”

Swanigan is planning to become a member of the first men’s vol-

leyball team at Curry College next fall.

“I’m very excited about having the opportunity to continue playing volleyball in college next

Please see **RAMS**, page 12

SPORTS



The Pioneers practice their outfield work Monday afternoon.



A Pathfinder player makes a throw back to the infield after making a play.



A Pathfinder outfielder comes up throwing with the ball.

Bonsignore picks up win ahead of Thompson Speedway return

RICHMOND, Va. – For the 41st time in his NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour career, Justin Bonsignore was celebrating in Victory Lane on Friday night.

Bonsignore bested defending series champion Ron Silk in a final dash to the finish to score his second career Richmond Raceway victory and first of the 2024 season driving the No. 51 Modified for Kenneth Massa Motorsports.

Bonsignore started from the second spot, and swapped the lead back and forth with Silk for most of the race. But, the real battle started on the final restart, with just three laps to go, when Silk restarted first and Bonsignore second.

Bonsignore got behind Silk coming off turn two coming to the white flag and crossed underneath him going into turn three. The two drivers raced side-by-side for the final lap with Bonsignore on the bottom of Silk coming to the checkered flag, edging out for the win.

The victory - his 41st career - all driving for Kenneth Massa Motorsports - places Bonsignore just one win away from tying the late Ted Christopher for third all-time on the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour wins list. He is

also just three away from tying Reggie Ruggerio for second on the all-time list as the series heads for Thompson Speedway next weekend.

“The last restart went pretty smooth, it was a wild finish,” Bonsignore said. “Ron and I have had a rivalry going and tonight was some good, hard racing. For 150 laps, we just battled our guts out. Anytime our series gets to run at a NASCAR Cup Series venue - it’s huge. These facilities are unbelievable and we’ve been able to win at a handful of them. The trophies definitely stay out front and center when you get home.”

The win came with Coastal Fiber LLC on the side of the Kenneth Massa Motorsports machine. Coastal Fiber, LLC, a local Virginia business that is a full service fiber optic construction and splicing company, is owned by Mark Langevin, the owner of Phoenix Communications Inc. – Bonsignore’s normal primary sponsor.

Justin will return to the track at Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park for the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour Icebreaker 150 on Sunday, April 7.

Pioneers getting set to face Sci-Tech

PALMER – Earlier this week, the Pioneers baseball team continued its preparation for the

upcoming regular season. The Pioneers are scheduled to travel to Sci-Tech on Monday, April 1 at

4 p.m., then return home to face Smith Vocation on Friday, April 5 at 3:30 p.m.



Pathfinder’s baseball team gathers at the start of practice.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

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.

Worcester Railers suffer loss to Newfoundland

WORCESTER – Newfoundland beat Worcester, 9-3, to pile more logs into the jam that has become the North Division play-off race. After Saturday night’s various scores there are three teams tied for third place with 66 points. They are Worcester, Trois-Rivieres and Newfoundland.

Maine has 65 points but games in hand. Reading has 61 points.

“It was the worst game we’ve played all year, by far,” coach Jordan Smotherman said.

Isaac Johnson, just down from the AHL, registered a hat trick by scoring with five seconds left in the third period. He also had an assist. Neil Shea scored two goals for the Growlers.

The Railers got single goals from Brendan Robbins, Connor Welsh and Jake Pivonka. Robbins’ was his first since Jan.

5. Pivonka’s was his 20th. He is the first rookie in Railers history with a 20-goal season.

Newfoundland’s first eight goals were scored against John Muse, who faced a relentless onslaught of breakaways and 2 on 1 rushes. After the eighth goal, which came at 4:44 of the third period, Smotherman pulled the veteran in favor of emergency backup Joe Spagnoli.

Until this season, the Railers had never used an EBUG in a game. It has happened twice this year with Joel Eisenhower taking over for Tristan Lennox in Reading on Dec. 15 after Lennox suffered what turned out to be a season-ending injury.

Spagnoli has served as a Railers, and opposition, EBUG

Please see **RAILERS**, page 14



TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM
Braeden Gallagher goes for the spike.

RAMS from page 11

year,” Swanigan said. “I’m going to be the first boys’ volleyball player from Granby High School to play volleyball at the college level.”

A couple of the Purple Knights standouts are senior co-captain Jeduar Colon, senior Adrain Centeno-Feliciano, and junior Michael Melendez.

Holyoke junior Nathan Jusino, who’s a setter, didn’t play in the season opening match because of an injury.

Granby sophomore Jake Gagnon, who’s also a co-captain, handled the serving duties at the end of the final set. Senior Nicolas Grandmont had a couple of blocks during that stretch and sophomore Braeden Gallagher added a kill, which helped the visiting team seal the deal.

“I’m very proud of my team,” coach Gagnon said. “All of them are hard workers and they play volleyball all year long.”

A Gagnon kill in the opening set gave his team an 8-4 advantage.

With Swanigan handling the serving

duties, the Rams then rattled off the next eight points giving them a comfortable 16-4 lead and they took a 1-0 lead in the match.

Just like Granby did in the first set, Holyoke served first in the second set and they raced out to an early 5-2 lead following a Colon kill.

The home team kept the lead until the Rams went ahead for the only time at 15-14 with the help of a 4-0 spurt.

The Purple Knights ended the second set with an impressive 11-0 run. Centeno-Feliciano did the serving while Colon had a couple of kills.

With freshman Nate Walsh doing the serving, the Rams scored the final seven points of the third set which gave his team a 2-1 overall lead in the match.

The Purple Knights never trailed in the fourth set, and they forced the outcome of the season opening match to be decided in the fifth set.

The second meeting of the regular season between the two teams is scheduled to take place at Granby High School on May 6.



Nate Walsh reaches out for the bump.

Late power-play goal sinks Thunderbirds

UTICA, N.Y. – The Springfield Thunderbirds (29-30-3-2) battled back from an early two-goal deficit, but a late power-play goal from the Utica Comets (29-26-4-5) resulted in a 4-3 Comets win on Saturday night at Adirondack Bank Center.

For a second straight evening, the T-Birds relented a goal to their opposition in the opening half of the first period. Just 4:00 into the action, Shane Bowers skated the puck across the T-Birds blue line, creating a 2-on-1. Bowers opted to take it himself, beating Colten Ellis on the glove side and making it 1-0 for Utica.

Springfield's power play had two chances in short order to try to equalize, but the man-advantage came up empty each time. Utica made the T-Birds pay for that at 12:26 when Will MacKinnon let go a

seeing-eye wrist shot from the blue line that nicked the inside of the post and beat Ellis to give the Comets a 2-0 lead.

The Comets continued to have penalty troubles, though, and at 16:28, Tanner Dickinson got Springfield's power play on the board with a perfectly placed wrist shot over the glove of Akira Schmid, and the lead was cut to 2-1.

The Comets, though, were undeterred, and they restored the two-goal cushion just 1:29 later when Erik Middendorf crashed the net from the right-wing side. Ellis made the first save, but the rebound sat in the crease, and Middendorf polished it off to give Utica a 3-1 advantage at 17:57, a lead that carried through to the break.

The T-Birds' power play again had a chance to turn the tide of the game when

a pair of Utica penalties gave Springfield some time on both 4-on-3 and 5-on-3 advantages. Unlike the night before, though, the T-Birds came up empty, and the 3-1 score carried past the midpoint of the game.

With Utica on a power play at 12:15 of the period, Springfield used its shorthanded unit to claw back into the game when Will Bitten won a footrace to a loose puck at the Utica blue line, storming in on Schmid and roofing a shot over the goaltender's trapper to make it a 3-2 game on Bitten's 17th goal of the season.

Bitten's goal got the T-Birds' mojo back, and 3:12 later, Ryan Suzuki tied the game on his second point of the night. After Adam Gaudette narrowly missed the top corner, the T-Birds' leading scorer retrieved

the puck in the left corner and laid it off to Hugh McGing. With little space available, McGing slid a perfect pass through the top of the blue paint to Suzuki, who one-timed it through Schmid to tie the score.

The stalemate carried to the second intermission, and the two teams cautiously played the opening 15 minutes of the third scoreless. Unfortunately for the T-Birds, a Bitten minor penalty opened the door for Utica's power play, and after a Justin Dowling shot rang off the post, Bowers was in the right place to lift the loose change into the twine with 3:18 to play. Bowers' fourth point of the night and eighth goal of the season proved to be the dagger, and for the fourth straight time in the season series between Springfield and Utica, the home team came away victorious.

RAILERS from page 12

often through the years and practices with Worcester if needed. Smotherman had hoped to get him into a regulation game at some point.

"But not like that," the coach added.

Spagnoli is a 40-year-old Rhode Islander, a professional goalie coach. He replaced the 35-year-old Muse, which might be some kind of ECHL record. Spagnoli stopped 11

of 12 shots, only allowing Johnson's late goal.

He played sparingly in the Federal League into 2014-15, his most recent appearance a four-minute stint for the Watertown Wolves. Since then Spagnoli has served as an EBUG for, he guessed, about 40 to 45 games.

"He is the ultimate EBUG," Smotherman said.

Spagnoli knows the job description.

"Usually something pretty bad has to happen for an EBUG to come in," he said. He was not the EBUG for the Lennox injury, but joined the Railers in Glens Falls the next day.

Nine years after his last pro appearance, Spagnoli was in a game against a high-powered team. He did not appear to be nervous.

"Honestly, I thought I would be," he said, "at least a little more than I was. I felt like I settled in pretty quickly. A couple touches

of the puck and you're right into it." The cities of St. John's and Worcester have had a lot of similarities.

Both had two different AHL franchises. Worcester had the IceCats and Sharks. St. John's had the Maple Leafs and IceCaps. Both have an ECHL team. Worcester leads the all-time series by 45-43-12. The American Hockey League teams were 29-18-9. The Growlers prevailed in this league, 25-16-3.

PUBLIC NOTICES

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.

TOWN OF BELCHERTOWN SELECT BOARD Edward G. Boscher, Chairman Ronald E. Aponte,

Vice-Chairman Margaret D. Louraine, Clerk Jennifer D. Turner, Member Lesa Lessard Pearson, Member 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 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 Edward G. Boscher, Chairman Ronald E. Aponte, Vice-Chairman Margaret D. Louraine, Clerk Jennifer D. Turner, Member Lesa Lessard Pearson, Member 03/28, 04/04/2024

SALE OF MOTOR VEHICLE

This ad is pursuant to MA Gen. Law Ch.255, Sec. 39A as of April 19, 2024 the following motor vehicle will be for sale to satisfy a garage keepers lien:

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GARDEN from page 6

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etable growing right in my backyard, stinky or not.

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.

VACANCIES from page 3

Belchertown Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force

One Community Member vacancy

The Town of Belchertown is accepting letters of interest to fill a community member vacancy on the newly developed Belchertown Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force. The focus of the Task Force is to develop a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement for the Select Board to review and to consider adopting, to seek out opportunities to acknowledge and/or celebrate the diversity within our own community and to welcome the whole community to join in, and to offer suggestions on how the town addresses specific or potential acts of violence, including hate speech, should such acts arise in our community, region, or state. Efforts should be made to include

voices from the community or communities that are directly affected. Partnership opportunities with surrounding towns to strengthen regional or state efforts might also be explored. This is a seven member committee to include: A representative from law enforcement, a representative from Town Hall, and five community members representing diversity in one or more of the following areas: Racial and ethnic backgrounds, Social positions with respect to gender identity and sexual orientation, social positions with respect to disability, and Age groups and prior vocational experiences. All are encouraged to apply. Please submit a letter of interest to: Select Board, The Finnerty House, One South Main Street, P.O. Box 670, Belchertown, MA 01007 or by email to selectboard@belchertown.org. Deadline: Friday, April 26

SENIORS from page 1

When it comes to the Senior Work-Off Program, the Selectboard is still in discussion for how it will be implemented, and Martin shared how it will be open to veterans.

"I feel that the money should go to those who are struggling right now," Martin said.

Appointments

The board began the meeting with a series of appointments and discussed various working positions available for the town, both part time, and a full time position.

They reviewed a Building Commissioner

contract, which has been signed, and the Selectboard will move forward with the contract in the coming months.

Old business and information

The board accepted departmental reports and approved and signed various maintenance warrants. They also briefly discussed updates on the Massachusetts Department of Transportation project and its location.

"The only project that qualifies this year was trying to put in the public water support," Martin said of the One Stop for Growth grant. The Selectboard is continuing discussion on how to increase the town's access to fresh water.

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

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

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

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

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Spring CARE CARE & DRIVING



What to do after an auto accident

No one wants to get into an automobile accident. Even accidents that do not result in any major injuries can be traumatizing. Knowing what to do in the immediate aftermath of an accident may make such instances less stressful.

First determine if any of the involved parties suffered an injury. If

you are injured, stay put. If not, check on the condition of the other driver. Next, make a call to emergency services to request assistance from the police and an ambulance, if necessary.

If possible, pull the vehicle over to a safe, well-lit public location. If the car will cause another road hazard, it

is best to move it over to the side and use flashers to alert oncoming traffic. It is important that you don't leave the scene.

You should take pictures of the damage to your vehicle, the other vehicle, if possible, and the scene of the accident, including any skid marks, debris and/or property damage. If

there are any witnesses to the accident, get their names and contact information. Collect the names, phone numbers, addresses of other drivers and vehicle occupants and exchange insurance information with all drivers involved. That includes the insurance company name, policy number and the name of the insured.




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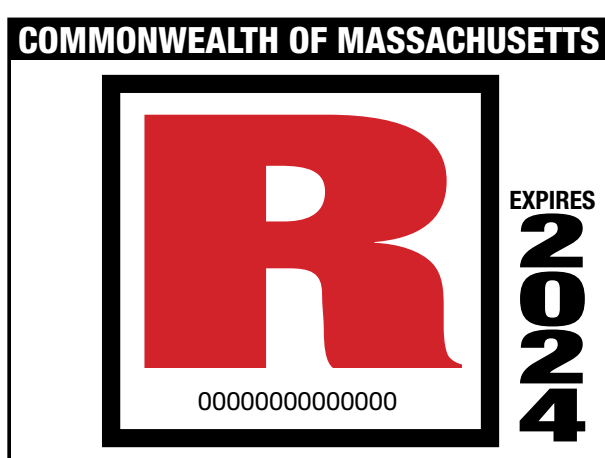




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Spring CARE CARE & DRIVING

Essential road trip packing checklist

The open road beckons millions of motorists upon the arrival of warm weather. In advance of the season's first road trip, drivers tune up their engines and plan their itineraries for the adventures that lie ahead.

While it may be tempting to get behind the wheel and see where the road takes you, those who have been around the block — or highway — a few times likely know that road trip planning involves careful packing for the voyage ahead. Bringing the right items along can go a long way toward ensuring a trip is enjoyable and runs smoothly. This list of must-haves can get anyone started on the road trip ahead.

- Proper paperwork: Don't forget to bring along a driver's licence, vehicle registration, proof of insurance, and your rental car agreement if you are renting a car. In certain instances, you may need proof of COVID-19 vaccination and/or a negative COVID test. Double-check that you have it all before leaving.

- Vehicle manual: Even the most well-maintained car may suffer a breakdown on the road. Bring along the vehicle manual, which can help you diagnose minor problems. Keep your roadside assistance membership card at the ready in the event you need extra help.

- America the Beautiful Pass: If you plan to

visit various national parks across America, an investment in the America the Beautiful Pass for \$80 provides access to the pass holder and three other adults to more than 2,000 recreation areas managed by five federal agencies. It's available by visiting store.usgs.gov/pass/index.html.

- Important phone numbers: Bring a written list of important phone numbers in case your phone dies or gets lost.

- Cash: Credit and debit cards are a reliable form of payment, but cash is king. Having cash on hand is a smart move in the event bank cards get lost. Cash also is especially useful when patronizing smaller establishments that might not take credit.

- Roadside emergency kit: Keep a tire changing kit, flares, tools, jumper cables, duct tape, and work gloves in the vehicle for emergencies.

- GPS and maps: GPS systems on phones and other devices provide step-by-step directions and can alert to traffic jams. But GPS can be compromised in areas where cellular or satellite service is interrupted by mountain ranges or buildings. The Maps.Me app enables you to download detailed maps that can be accessed while offline. Paper maps can serve as backups as well.

- Entertainment: Long road trips are full of opportunities to visit roadside attractions. For the times when the highway is a long stretch of nothing new, bring along movies, music, books, handheld games, and even trivia or mind puzzles to pass the time.

- Cooler with refreshments: Dining out is a great way to sample local cuisine from various regions of the country. But having snacks at the ready can save time and money.

The list of road trip essentials continues, but this is a good start. The list can be customized based on drivers' interests and their destinations.



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How to maintain an older vehicle

New cars have been costly for quite some time, but those costs have spiked considerably since the onset of the pandemic. That unprecedented rise has led many motorists to wonder how they can get more mileage out of their existing vehicles.

According to data from Kelley Blue Book and Cox Automotive, the average cost of a new car in September 2021 was just over \$45,000. That marked a \$3,000 increase from June 2021 and a \$5,000 increase from the end of 2020.

Drivers who can't afford to keep up with the rising cost of new vehicles can take these steps to keep their existing cars running smoothly.

- Take care of the timing belt. Engines may get all the glory, but they cannot run smoothly without a fully functional timing belt. Engines need various components to do their job, and those components must do so at the right time for the engine to run smoothly. Fully functional timing belts help to synchronize movements, but belts must be replaced every so often.

Owner's manuals may note when to replace the timing belt, but they generally must be replaced every 60,000 to 105,000 miles.

- Take care of the brakes and associated components. The experts at Popular Mechanics urge drivers of older vehicles to replace their brake fluid every two years. Also drivers whose cars are more than seven years old to replace the rubber brake lines when major brake work is required.
- Pay attention to oil levels. The older engines get, the more oil

they're going to burn. So drivers of older vehicles should check their oil levels more often than they would if their vehicles were brand new. This also is a great way to discover leaks before they lead to significant issues.

- Don't skip maintenance appointments. Even if you're driving less, it's best not to skip recommended maintenance intervals. Routine tune-ups and oil changes, which may need to become more frequent the older the vehicle gets, can keep cars running smoothly and protect the engine.

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AMHERST

Amherst students inducted into Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society

BATON ROUGE, LA – The following Amherst residents recently were initiated into The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, the nation’s oldest and most selective collegiate honor society for all academic disciplines.

Students include Molly Gallagher, Katelyn Murray and Ozel Yilmazel, all attending the University of Massachusetts.

They are among approximately 25,000 students, faculty, professional staff and alumni to be

initiated into Phi Kappa Phi each year. Membership is by invitation only and requires nomination and approval by a chapter.

Only the top 10% of seniors and 7.5% of juniors are eligible for membership. Graduate students in the top 10% of the number of candidates for graduate degrees may also qualify, as do faculty, professional staff and alumni who have achieved scholarly distinction.

Bread & Puppet Theater comes to Amherst

AMHERST – Bread & Puppet Theater is excited to return to Massachusetts with a brand-new show created for this exact moment: “The Hope Principle Show: Citizens’ Shame and Hope in the Time of Genocide” on Friday, April 19 at UMass Amherst.

Of the show, Director Peter Schumann said, “With mother dirt prologue, citizen despair gymnastics, mass murder victim’s traditional dance of death

celebration, absentee humanity and absentee humanity dance. Featuring a flock of disaster ravens and hope principle caribou and exorcism rites for the genociders.”

After the show Bread & Puppet will serve its famous sourdough rye bread with aioli, and Bread & Puppet’s “Cheap Art” - books, posters, postcards, pamphlets and banners from the Bread & Puppet Press will be for sale.

Tickets vary by location but

as with all Bread and Puppet shows, no one will be turned away for lack of funds. The full tour schedule available at BreadAndPuppet.org/Tour.

Founded in 1963 by Peter Schumann on New York City’s Lower East Side, the theater has been based in the North East Kingdom of Vermont since the early 1970s and is one of the oldest, nonprofit, self-supporting theatrical companies in the country.



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