

School leaders outline \$847K budget deficit

Warn of 'painful choices' ahead

By Melina Bourdeau
Correspondent

GRANBY — Facing rising special education, health insurance and transportation costs amid stagnant state aid, Granby school officials told residents this week the district is staring down an \$847,772 budget deficit for fiscal 2027 and may need to cut staff and services if new funding doesn't materialize.

The finance presentation to the School Committee on March 31 framed the district's situation as part of a broader statewide funding crisis, particularly for small, rural and "minimum aid" districts that rely heavily on local taxpayers while lagging behind inflation. Administrators said they are trying to protect classroom services but warned they are "really at the bare bones" and running out of places to cut.

Superintendent Mary Jane Rickson opened the hearing by stressing that the spending plan remains in flux as town officials work to stabilize municipal finances and hire a new town administrator.

"This budget is not a final budget. This is a hearing to talk about what our projections are," Rickson said, noting the schools are operating with "preliminary" figures while the town sorts through months of backlogged financial work.

Using the state's Chapter 70 aid projections and conservative assumptions about the town's contribution, Rickson said the district's FY27 operating budget of about \$12 million is currently short by nearly \$848,000, even after accounting for grants, school choice revenue and other offsets.

The School Committee's initial budget request to the town represents a 2.11% increase over the current year, roughly \$336,000, a figure Rickson argued is modest compared to neighboring districts contemplating far larger overrides and cuts.

Even with that restrained request, however, the district is squeezed by what officials described as structural state-level problems: slow-growing Chapter 70 aid for "minimum aid" districts like Granby and sharp increases in required local spending, health insurance

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See more Easter Egg Hunt photos on page 4.

Easter Bunny came to town

By Ben Hernandez
Correspondent

BELCHERTOWN — Waves of residents scrambled for treats at the annual Easter egg hunt, which took place at The Belchertown Town Common. The festivities started

at 11AM on April 4th and included a dozen eggs for the participating children, an appearance by the Springfield Thunderbirds mascot, and a photo opportunity with the Easter bunny inside the Old Town Hall. The event was hosted by the Belchertown Recreation staff.

Children smile as they have their picture taken with the Easter bunny.

Town meeting warrant refined

Borrowing and bylaws weighed

By Melina Bourdeau
Correspondent

BELCHERTOWN — Voters will confront a 43-article annual town meeting warrant next month that bundles routine budgets with new borrowing, land conservation deals and bylaw changes that drew extended debate from the Select Board Monday night.

The warrant for the May 11 annual town meeting at Belchertown High School's auditorium includes the town's operating budget, capital spending from free cash and new debt, multiple bylaw revisions and several Community Preservation and land conservation measures. Board members discussed probing how far the town should borrow, how to structure new reserve funds and which policy articles are ready for the floor.

Budgets and borrowing dominate

Town Manager Steve Williams said the proposed capital borrowing — expected to be between \$2 million and \$3 million — is designed to keep debt payments roughly level as older bonds are retired.

"We're trying to do all of this within existing parameters...all within our existing budgets. We're not asking for not asking for the exclusion. We are being very careful how we various things," Williams said.

Selectboard Chair Lesa Lessard Pearson said she wants residents to understand the town does not intend to stretch its finances too far.

The board also endorsed using override-funded capital money within the operating budget and a separate free cash-funded capital article, with a third piece being the new borrowing for large projects such as boilers and school building systems.

New capital stabilization fund

A proposed capital stabilization fund drew extended explanation. The fund would act as a dedicated savings account for major future projects, separate from the town's general stabilization account.

Williams said the article this year simply creates the account, and future policy would determine how much free cash is deposited.

Pearson said she supports the idea but asked for clear parameters and a formal policy, which Williams said would be developed with the Capital Improvement Planning Committee once the fund is established.

Routine articles and bylaw changes

Early articles cover standard business such as town reports, budget transfers and the main operating budget. Several articles adjust the personnel bylaw, including cost-of-living updates, longevity pay for non-union

Please see **WARRANT**, page 3

CREDIT for Life

Students participated in financial literacy fair

By Paula Ouimette
pouimette@turley.com

WARE — Over 250 students from Ware, Palmer and Belchertown high schools participated in Country Bank's annual financial literacy fair, Credit for Life.

This event was held in the gymnasium of Ware Jr./Sr. High School last Thursday morning, giving seniors valuable tools and information to make healthy financial choices in early adulthood.

Jodie Gerulaitis, First Vice President of Community Relations at Country Bank, welcomed the students to Credit for Life, and explained what each booth at the fair represented, and how the



Belchertown High School seniors Evan Perkins, Adam O'Rourke and Thomas Normandeau all chose careers to match their future plans at Credit for Life.

students could benefit from the experience. Each booth is manned by Country Bank employees and other community volunteers.

"Take the opportunity to

talk to the volunteers and get the most out of this," she said.

Gerulaitis has been a strong supporter in teaching financial literacy through her role at Country Bank, especially to young people. She has been active in supporting a bill that would make financial literacy a mandatory graduation requirement for high school students.

After receiving their careers, salaries and student loan debt, the students visited the Credit booth to get their randomly assigned credit scores. A low credit score can prevent the students from qualifying for purchases at the other booths.

"You're going to see the challenges and some of the restrictions," Gerulaitis said.

Luckily, at Credit for Life, students can visit a booth to answer financial literacy questions to help raise their credit score.

Please see **CREDIT**, page 8

BFD receives major overhaul to top floor

By Ben Hernandez
Staff Writer

BELCHERTOWN — The Belchertown Fire Department unveiled the new renovations of the fire department with a ribbon cutting ceremony and a tour open to the public. The new fixtures include a complete overhaul of the top floor, including bedrooms for the residing firefighters as well as plans for a kitchen that will see construction starting April 14.

"Working with the chief here in Belchertown as well as the town manager Steve Williams, we're always trying to look at highlighting some of the

deficiencies that you see in a town," said state senator Jake Oliveira. Oliveira represents the Hampden, Hampshire and Worcester districts in Massachusetts. "We need to ensure that folks in Belchertown if, God forbid, they have to call 911 for a medical emergency or fire, that there's going to be a quick response."

"It was just a lot of open space," reflected fire department chief John Ingram. "There was no heat. So in the winter-time, it was freezing. So having staff on 24/7, we needed a space for the firefighters to be during

Please see **BFD**, page 5



With the ribbon cut, the facility was opened for viewing to the public last Tuesday morning

TURLEY PHOTO BY BEN HERNANDEZ



Country Bank volunteer Caroline Awebwa assists students at the Credit booth.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA OUIMETTE

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Granby Free Public Library announces upcoming adult activities for April

Adult Book Group

Thursday, April 9 at 6 p.m.

The book group will be discussing *All the Little Bird Hearts* by Viktoria Lloyd-Barlow. Grab a copy and join us! This group meets on the second Thursday of each month.

Urban Sketching Techniques

Saturday, April 11 at 11 a.m.

Join local artist Jaime Bohorquez, for a two-hour hands-on workshop on the principles and techniques of urban sketching. All skill levels are welcome. All materials provided. Sign-up is required.

Lakes and Rivers Talk: Using Barley Straw to Nip Harmful Cyanobacteria Blooms in the Bud!

Thursday, April 23

at 5:30 p.m.

Cyanobacteria are nor-

mal, essential components of healthy ecosystems. But when they grow explosively, they can seriously disrupt ecosystems, often releasing potent toxins and causing major adverse health effects. HCBs are dramatically increasing globally and locally in the context of climate change and excess nutrients in both marine and freshwater bodies. Our local consortium is now in its fifth season of a project aimed at preventing these harmful blooms in selected Connecticut River watershed ponds using barley straw. Join Dr. Allison Ryan at the Granby Free Public Library to hear all about the project.

Tabletop Games Club

Saturday, April 25 from

10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

The Granby Library Tabletop Games Club invites players of all ages 8 and up to gather and enjoy a variety of board, card, dice, tile,

and other in-person tabletop games in a welcoming, social environment. This group typically meets on the third Saturday of each month.

Knitting Group

Every Wednesday

afternoon at 2 p.m.

Bring your latest project and join us for conversation, tips and tricks!

Friends of the Granby Library Meeting

Thursday, April 16

at 4:30 p.m.

Love your Library? Show your love by joining the Friends of the Granby Library! Join us for meetings to see what's new.

Upcoming Events:

Friends of the Granby Library Annual Plant Sale – Saturday, May 9 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Foraging Walk – Saturday, May 30 at 11 a.m.

Lions Club holding April Meatball Sub Sale

BELCHERTOWN – April's Meatball Sub Sale will return to the grounds of the Belchertown United Church of Christ on Park St. on Saturday, Apr. 18. The sale will be hosted by the Belchertown Lions Club. Our food wagon will be set up right along the sidewalk--allowing customers to drive up, place an order, and have a freshly prepared meatball grinder/mozzarella cheese and sauce, a bag of chips, and a beverage in their hands

within a couple of minutes for only \$10. Still holding our pricing steady for the past several years.

Serving begins at 11 a.m. and continues until sell-out (which is usually about 2-1/2 hours)

No prep and no dishes for you to clean up. Let us do the lunchtime cooking for you.

All proceeds from these grinder sales, as always, will go to local charities. Thanks to the support of folks like you in all of our

fundraising endeavors, the club is proud to announce that we set a new charitable donation record this past year of \$57,900.

We hope to see you again on Apr. 18.



Quabbin Art Association announces new exhibit

BELCHERTOWN – The Quabbin Art Association (QAA) is pleased to announce the second show in its year-round series of rotating art exhibits hosted at North Brookfield Savings Bank, 4 Daniel Shays Highway, Belchertown.

Featured works by QAA member artists Katherine

Brunza, Rosemary Chaban, and Rochelle Shicoff will be on display in the bank lobby now through June 25 during regular business hours.

Approaching 100 members, QAA takes pride in cultivating an inclusive, supportive community for artists of all skill levels. The organization offers year-

round exhibition opportunities, a Plein Air group, community events, artisan markets, and more.

For more information about the exhibit or the Quabbin Art Association, please visit <http://www.quabbinartorganization.com> or contact: info@quabbinartassociation.com

WARRANT from page 1

staff after 25 years of service and clarifications on personal leave.

Williams noted that unlike union contracts, changes for non-union employees must go through town meeting because they are embedded in town bylaw.

The warrant also adds a new chapter on boards, commissions and committees, drafted by Town Clerk Terry Camerlin, requiring boards to elect officers annually and standardizing expectations for minutes and record-keeping.

Williams responded that requiring a yearly vote is meant to prompt that conversation.

Revolving funds and Board of Health questions

Two new revolving funds are proposed: one for Board of Health enforcement revenues, and one to capture receipts from new electric vehicle charging stations for maintenance and electricity costs.

The Board of Health article would direct fines from tobacco regulation violations into a dedicated account for education and enforcement rather than the general fund. Several board members questioned both the budget impact and why only tobacco-related violations would be covered.

Ritter said the approach could unfairly single out one type of business.

"I don't think that's fair for the retailer, because that

makes it depends on people. We're only going to issue a sign of tobacco violation or food violation," he said.

Selectboard member Nicole Miner said she wants more information on current fines and practices before the article advances.

The board asked Williams to bring back clarification from the Board of Health and the town accountant by its April 21 meeting and left the article on the warrant as a placeholder for now.

Animal control bylaw revisions

The warrant also includes a substantial update to animal control regulations, including new definitions of nuisance dogs and limits on noisy roosters and other birds.

Ritter objected that drafting enforcement around barking and crowing may be too subjective and could be at odds with Belchertown's "right to farm" identity.

Pearson questioned how to define excessive barking under the new nuisance dog standard.

Miner noted that residents already have an avenue for appeals through the Animal Control Advisory Board.

The board requested that Quabbin Health Director Andrea Crete attend a future meeting to explain the changes and to add a clear fine schedule for dog waste and other violations.

Open space purchases and park grant match

Several articles authorize

borrowing to acquire conservation land, including the Voice property on Bay Road and the Walker/Mahal property off Kendall Street, in partnership with Kestrel Land Trust and state grant programs. Williams said this is a familiar structure in Belchertown.

The board also backed an article to borrow \$70,000 as the local match or "earnest money" for a state park grant being pursued by the Recreation Department.

EDIC land and CPC housing article questioned

An article that would add about 10 acres of town land to the Economic Development and Industrial Corporation's holdings near the Dwight Industrial Park may be delayed. Williams

said EDIC still lacks a finalized plan and Planning Board endorsement.

Another potentially contentious item is a Community Preservation Committee recommendation to allocate \$400,000 toward an affordable housing project at the former Hopewell House. Miner said she is not comfortable advancing the article without a signed purchase-and-sale agreement between the developer and the property owner.

Williams said he will confirm whether the CPC can insist the article stay on the warrant or whether the Select Board can remove it.

Saturday town meeting article pulled

The board agreed to drop an article that would have

moved town meeting to a Saturday, citing timing and lack of public discussion.

Ritter said the idea merits more work but not this year.

Board members also backed the concept of scheduling a second regular town meeting each year, likely in the fall, to reduce the size of the spring warrant and give departments another predictable opportunity for bylaw and planning articles.

Selectboard member Whitney Jorns-Kuhlennz said the single long annual meeting has become unwieldy.

"There needs to be a mid-year annual town meeting to get through your articles, it's just getting so long," she said.

Williams said he would bring back options for a

standard fall meeting date so departments and residents can plan ahead.

Special town meeting and next steps

The board voted to hold both the special and annual town meetings on May 11 in the Belchertown High School auditorium, citing better acoustics and technical support than the gym and an expected turnout small enough to fit the 600-person capacity.

The Select Board will see final legal language for all warrant articles, plus answers on several outstanding questions, at its April 21 meeting before signing the final warrant for posting.

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Belchertown's Annual Easter Egg Hunt



A sizable crowd gathered for the morning's festivities.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY BEN HERNANDEZ



Children hunted for Easter eggs throughout the morning.



Smiling staff presided over the popular town event.



The event is a big hit across all ages.



The Springfield Thunderbirds mascot makes a surprise appearance at the event.



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BFD from page 1

the evening.”

The fire fighter building itself has been in operation for over thirty years. The upstairs was originally used for physical agility tests to determine candidate fitness, with firefighters operating out of the old EMS building. By consolidating the living quarters and vehicle access under one roof, the department expects to significantly cut response times.

“It’s safer for them,” said Ingram. “We get out the door quicker for our community for any type of emergency that’s happening. So it’s great in all aspects.”

The concept of tapping young tradespeople for the project arose as both a result of budgetary concerns and as a means of connecting back to the community. Many of the firefighters on staff were alumni of the trade school, which sparked incentive to work with their alma mater. The initial project figure, which was projected to cost a whopping \$1.7 million, was performed under careful teacher supervision for a fifth of the expected cost.

“We’re so thrilled to have been given an opportunity with our students to embrace a project like this,” said Duda in his renovation reveal speech. “I honestly think projects like these show that we can make things happen.”

“It’s an incredible project,” said state representative Aaron Saunders. “And the folks at Pathfinder have really wonderful instructors who are masters of their trades.”

Saunders went on to applaud the efforts of the students and teachers, calling their work “outstanding.” Under teacher supervision the high school, students built bedroom and bathroom walls, ran electrical lines, and even set up plumbing throughout the top floor. The results are fully operational bathrooms and living quarters for the resident firefighters. Initially, the top floor was an open space that contained no facilities. The contrast, according to project overseers, is staggering.

“That’s what really costs a lot,” said Oliveira as he



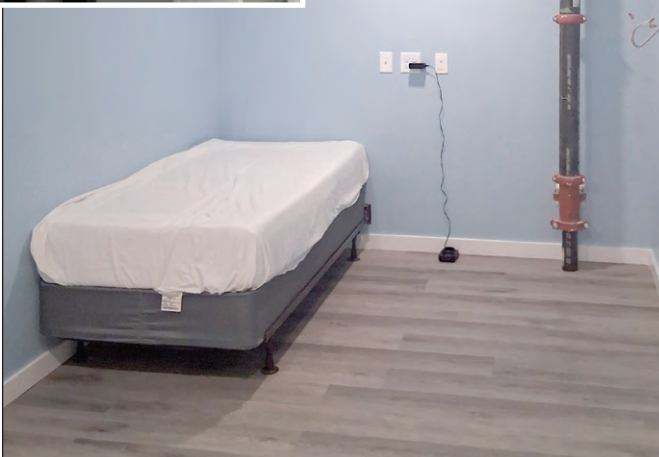
TURLEY PHOTOS BY BEN HERNANDEZ

ABOVE: State Representative Aaron Saunders, Pathfinder Tech superintendent Eric Duda, Fire Chief John Ingram, Town Manager Steve Williams, and State Senator Jake Oliveira give a speech before a tour of the building.



The new bathroom contains working plumbing, complete with a shower.

reflected on construction costs and praised the student’s work. “And that’s what the students can work on. So it’s not just your carpentry students; it’s your electricians, it’s your plumbers and bringing that together is hands-on learning. So it’s my hope that we can continue to build upon these and work with other communities.”



The new furnished bedrooms offer a place for the resident firefighters to reside on campus.

BUDGET from page 1

and out-of-district special education tuition.

“The FY27 chapter 70 state funding increased by less than a percent but required local spending increased by 4.46%” Rickson said. “The state funding formula is not working for us.”

Health insurance alone has become a major budget driver.

“Our health insurance cost increased dramatically after the FY26 budget was put in place last year, and it will continue to go up,” Rickson said, explaining that the district assumed a 16% rate increase when building next year’s proposal.

Special education and out-of-district placements, whose tuition rates are set by the state’s Operational Services

Division and can rise mid-year, are another major pressure point.

“We’re kind of at a loss to some of these out-of-district placements,” Rickson said, because while they are “truly in the best places for” high-needs students, “what they charge us for tuition for the students is beyond our control in many, many cases.”

Despite those challenges, administrators said they have already implemented a first round of cuts, trimming athletics, technology, professional development and facilities spending to reduce the deficit from roughly \$847,000 to about \$594,000.

“We reduced our budget with the first round of budget cuts to \$253,000 ... we brought our deficit to \$594,000,” Rickson said, but added, “We still have another

\$594,000” to close.

Additional reductions, they warned, could mean eliminating positions and eroding services to a level that jeopardizes the district’s ability to meet required “maintenance of effort” for key federal grants like IDEA and Title I.

“If we’re required to eliminate the deficit, the district may need to reduce the budget by cutting staff,” Rickson said. “Not what we want to do, but it may be something we have to do.”

School Committee members and residents repeatedly situated Granby’s struggles within a larger regional picture, pointing to South Hadley and Belchertown, where leaders are weighing multimillion-dollar overrides and deep cuts.

Rickson and committee members said they plan to

continue pressing state lawmakers on revising the foundation budget formula and expanding rural aid, while working with town leaders to determine how much above the state-required minimum Granby can afford to contribute. Historically, the town has provided about \$600,000 above its minimum, but this draft uses a \$400,000 placeholder.

“There’s still a lot of variables that we have to consider,” Rickson said, promising to update residents once firmer municipal numbers arrive. “Our main goal ... we want to maintain the services we have for students” she said, even as the district confronts what she called “some difficult decisions” in the weeks ahead.

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OPINION

SOCIAL SECURITY

Matters

By Russell Gloor

I'll be 65 soon and am working. Must I enroll in Medicare?

Dear Rusty:

I will be 65 in October and I am working full-time. My goal is to work until age 67, which is my Full Retirement Age or until age 70.

I heard I have to apply for Medicare Part A only. Is this true or will I be penalized? And do I have to go to the Social Security office to do this or can I do it online? And then will they be still giving me my Medicare through the next five years of working or do I have to pay for something? I will have my own healthcare insurance. Thank you for your help.

Signed: Confused

Dear Confused:

There are two things you should be aware of:

You do not need to claim Social Security benefits when you enroll in Medicare

You do not need to enroll in Medicare at age 65 if you have "creditable" healthcare coverage from your employer, "creditable" is a group plan with at least 20 participants.

Thus, it is perfectly okay for you to delay taking your Social Security benefits until age 67 (your SS full retirement age) or even until age 70 when you will get the maximum SS benefit you are entitled to. And if you now have "creditable" healthcare coverage from your employer, you can delay enrolling in Medicare until such time as your employer's healthcare coverage ends. When you stop working, you will enter a Medicare Special Enrollment Period, during which you can enroll in Medicare without incurring a Late Enrollment Penalty.

Whenever you decide to enroll in Medicare or Social Security, you will not need to visit your local SSA office to do so. You can enroll in Medicare either online at www.ssa.gov/medicare/sign-up or you can call SSA at 1-800-772-1213 to make an appointment to enroll in Medicare on the telephone.

Similarly, when you are ready to claim Social Security, you can do so online at www.ssa.gov/ apply or you can call 1-800-772-1213 to make an appointment to apply for SS over the phone. To apply online, however, you should first create your personal "my Social Security" online account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount. Creating your online SS account now at age 65 will facilitate later online enrollment and will also provide you with an estimate of your SS benefit amounts at various ages – e.g., now at age 65, at your FRA of 67 or at age 70. And that should help you decide when it is best for you to claim Social Security.

A few final points:

You should verify with your employer's health insurance provider that they don't require you to enroll in Medicare at age 65. Most employer plans don't, but some do.

You don't need to enroll in Medicare Part A or Part B now as long as your employer's coverage is creditable. And it's okay to enroll in Medicare a couple of months prior to your employer's creditable healthcare coverage ending when you stop working, requesting that your Medicare coverage starts when your employer's healthcare ends. This will ensure that there is no gap in your healthcare coverage. If your employer coverage is creditable, you will not suffer a Medicare Late Enrollment Penalty for enrolling after age 65.

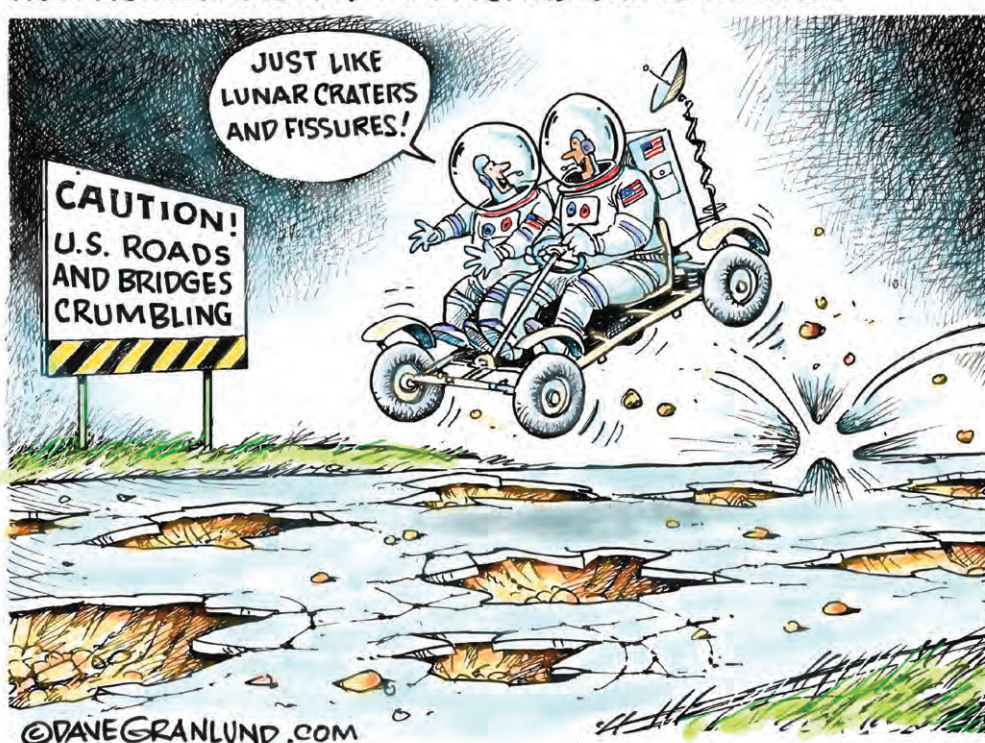
If you claim Social Security benefits at any time prior to your FRA and are still working, you will be subject to Social Security's Annual Earnings Test, which limits how much you can earn before they take away some of your benefits. The AET lasts until you reach your FRA (67), after which you can earn as much as you like without your SS benefits being affected.

Whenever you claim your Social Security benefits, you will be required to take Medicare Part A, which is coverage for inpatient hospitalization services. Medicare Part A is free because you are also eligible for Social Security. But you don't need to enroll in Part A at age 65 unless you also claim Social Security.

Medicare Part B, which is coverage for outpatient healthcare services (doctors, medical tests, etc.), is optional if you have creditable employer coverage as explained above. You do not need to enroll in Medicare Part B, for which there is a monthly premium of \$202.90 in 2026 until your employer's creditable healthcare coverage ends, even if you claim Social Security earlier.

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.

HOW ASTRONAUTS WILL TRAIN FOR RETURN TO MOON...



The ins and outs of forsythia

Each year as forsythia burst into bloom, I am reminded of my dad.

You see, this spring binger always blooms right around his birthday. This year would've been a monumental one, as he would have celebrated 100 years!

Although most landscape professionals aren't all that fond of forsythia, it holds a special place in my heart. When it is in full bloom our eyes are lifted away from the still drab lawn and the bare borders to bask at its branches of yellow flowers.

If you are lucky enough to have forsythia growing in your yard, perhaps you will find the following facts interesting, straight from the archives.

Forsythia can be forced into bloom indoors. While it is a little late in the season to fully appreciate this technique, it can easily be achieved now.

As long as temperatures are above freezing, you can harvest the branches. Simply prepare them as you would any other cut flower by removing side shoots that would be under water in the vase. Fill the vase with hot water and just prior to insertion recut the end of the stem on a 45 degree angle to expose as much surface area as possible.

We use hot water because it will move through the plant's vascular system quickly, hydrating it fully.

Place the vase in indirect, bright light, and change the water a couple of times a week. Expect blooms in a matter of days this time of

year; if you harvest stems in early March it will take a bit longer to enjoy the flowers.



by Roberta McQuaid

Forsythia buds are tender. While the shrub itself is hardy to Zone 4, the buds are reliably hardy to only Zone 5.

After an especially cold winter you may see forsythia in half-bloom! The tops of the shrub may be devoid of blossoms, but the bottom chock-full. This generally happens because the lower portion of the shrub was insulated under a snow bank or leaf mound.

Likewise, the blossoms are also tender – sometimes reduced to mush the morning after a hard freeze.

Forsythia flowers are borne on the previous year's wood. With that in mind, prune as soon as possible after flowering.

Simply cut the oldest stems all the way down to the ground. You can safely remove up to one-third of the bush in a single pruning session. New growth will emerge over the summer and provide blossoms for next season.

While some books recommend cutting overgrown forsythias down to the ground completely, in my experience, this advice is drastic. The plant will need a couple of years to recover from that

approach.

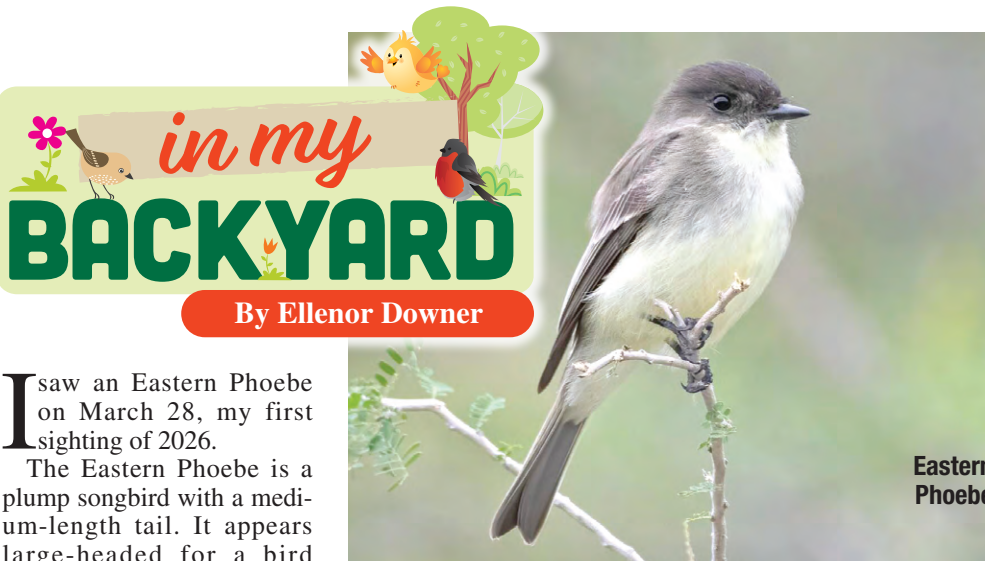
Sometimes you see forsythia pruned into balls or stiff hedges. While some homeowners consider this look appealing, I like to see the bush a little less tame. It's also hard to guarantee flowers throughout such a manicured shape; sometimes part will bloom and the rest will be just foliage. Kind of a weird look.

Propagating forsythias is easy! Do you want more of a good thing? Try layering your forsythias. Take a long, pliable branch and bend it to the ground a foot or so from the main plant. Cover the bend with soil and secure it with a brick or heavy stone. In a few months' time it will root, and by the following spring the new plant can easily be separated from its mother.

Forsythia is easily grown. Perhaps this is why we see so many forsythias in the landscape.

While it will undoubtedly bloom best in full sun, once established, it can tolerate all but the driest of soils and adapts to a range in pH. Also, it is bothered by few pests or diseases.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 34 years, she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.



Eastern Phoebe

I saw an Eastern Phoebe on March 28, my first sighting of 2026.

The Eastern Phoebe is a plump songbird with a medium-length tail. It appears large-headed for a bird of its size. The head often appears flat on top, but phoebes sometimes raise the feathers up into a peak. Like most small flycatchers, they have short, thin bills used for catching insects. The Eastern Phoebe slightly larger than a tufted titmouse.

The Eastern Phoebe is brownish-gray above and off-white below, with a dusky wash to the sides of the breast. The head is typically the darkest part of the upper parts. Birds in fresh fall plumage show faint yellow

low on the belly and whitish edging on the folded wing feathers.

The Eastern Phoebe generally perches low in trees or on fence lines. Phoebes are very active, making short flights to capture insects and very often returning to the same perch. They make sharp "peep" calls in addition to their familiar "Phoebe" vocalizations. When perched, Eastern Phoebes wag their tails down and up frequently. These birds favor open

woods such as yards, parks, woodlands and woodland edges. Phoebes usually breed around buildings or bridges on which they construct their nests under the protection of an eave or ledge.

Bring in bird feeders

The Allen Bird Club of Springfield reminds area residents that early spring means hungry bears. If people enjoy

Please see **BACKYARD**,

page 8

Turley Publications Letters to the Editor Policy

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

Turley Election Policy

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

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

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Water District announces hydrant flushing

BELCHERTOWN – The Belchertown Water District will be conducting the annual hydrant flushing program Apr. 21 to May 2 from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Flushing will begin in the northern end of the District and proceed south. Rusty colored water and low pressure may occur during this program.

Clapp Memorial Library's upcoming programs and events

What's going on at the Library? Check it out!

FOR GENERAL AUDIENCES:

Classical Music with Kalos Trio

Saturday, April 18 · 4-5 p.m.
Join the library for an evening of classical music with Kalos Trio. Kalos Trio is comprised of Rebecca Hartka on cello, Julia Liao on violin, and Barbara Lysakowski on piano. Ms. Lysakowski will be performing on the Library's 1877 Steinway piano. This concert will be held at Belchertown United Church of Christ in Belchertown. This program is funded in part by a grant from the Belchertown Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Astral Evening: Star Party with the Library
Location: Foley Field, Belchertown

Wednesday, April 22, 8-10 p.m.
Members of Springfield STARS Astronomy Club will be setting up telescopes to lead us on a tour of the night sky. Witness some of the most impressive sights! We'll be outside, so please wear comfortable shoes and warm clothing. Foley Field is located behind the Police Station off route 202 in Belchertown. In the case of poor weather conditions, an announcement will be made on our FaceBook page. *Raindate: Thurs, April 23.*

Our "Tote Bags for Good!" donation drive is going strong!

Show your support for the library AND help our Belchertown community all at the same time. Buy a 2025 Summer Reading Program Tote Bag for \$20 and \$5 will be donated to

the local organization of your choice: 1) Belchertown Meals on Wheels for Seniors, 2) Belchertown's three Food Pantries, or 3) the Sensory Trail at Lake Wallace! Tote bags showcase the 10 years' worth of Summer Reading logos designed and donated by local fantasy artist, Scott Fischer. Visit the display in the Library near the circulation desk for more information and to purchase your bag. A huge thank you to those who have purchased and made their choice of donation!

FOR ADULTS:

Ditch the Plastic! Soil Blocking Workshop

Tuesday, April 21, 4:30 - 6 p.m.

Soil blocking is a method of creating cubes of soil to hold and germinate seeds. Learn about the benefits of soil blocking and make some soil blocks to take home. Presented by

Paulina Borrego of the Mass Aggie Seed Library. Space is limited and registration is required to attend. Register online at clapplibrary.org or call 413-323-4017. Potting soil generously donated by Gardener's Supply Company in Hadley. This program is funded by the Friends of the Clapp Memorial Library.

Call for Volunteers!

Volunteers needed for "Knotweed Knockdown"

First Work Day: Saturday, April 25, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (Rain Date: Sunday, April 26)

Many of you are familiar with the large patch of Knotweed located behind the library. Knotweed is one of the most difficult invasive plants to remove. We would like to take back the space behind the library, so this April through October, we'll be working to clear it during Knotweed Knockdown. Chemicals will not be used, so we're recruiting volun-

teers to help with the physical removal of the plants. No gardening experience is necessary. Volunteers will be asked to register, complete a CORI check, and sign a waiver. If you're interested in getting involved or learning more, please contact Cyndi Harbeson at charbeson@cwmsars.org. More details to follow!

FOR TEENS:

Teen Book Club

Wednesday, April 29, 3-4 p.m.

The Clapp Memorial Library has a book club for teens in grades 7-12! On Wednesday, April 29th, teens will discuss *The Wilderness of Girls* by Madeline Claire Franklin. Copies of the book are available for checkout at the library's circulation desk and on the Libby and hoopla apps. Snacks will be provided at the meeting. Email clapplibrarytab@gmail.com with any questions. New members are always wel-

come!

FOR CHILDREN:

Children's Scavenger Hunt April's Theme: SPACE!

Prize: Space Facts and Fun Book Bundles - Two winners this month!

We're inviting children to participate in April's Scavenger Hunt! Pick up a clue sheet and look for the pictures hidden in the children's area. Write down the word you find with each picture and figure out this month's saying. One raffle ticket per child each month.

Clapp Memorial Library Hours:

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



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BACKYARD from page 6
feeding birds during the winter, it's now time to bring feeders in at night or to put them away entirely until next December. Black bears have an excellent memory and will return to feeders where they find easy meals. When that happens, bears can become a nuisance. FYI, over 50 million Americans purchase more than one billion pounds of bird seed and suet annually.

An excellent way to feed birds year-round is by planting native fruit and seed bearing plants that provide food for wildlife. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology's new citizen science initiative, Garden for Birds, offers regionally-tailored tips on the best plants to choose to help struggling wildlife to thrive. This program is free and participation can be cancelled at any time. Information on how to turn a yard into a bird-supporting habitat can be found by visiting gardenforbirds.org.

Common mergansers

My husband and I saw the male and female Common Merganser diving in cedar Lake Sturbridge in between the ice on Thursday, March 19. They were beautiful.

Brimfield birds

I received an email from a Brimfield resident. He said, "In my last email I had reported a broad-winged hawk seen in the yard. I later was looking at some photographs I had taken of the bird and discovered I was wrong, the bird was a red-shouldered hawk. Also it would have been very early for a broad-wing."

He saw crows, blue jays and a red-shouldered hawk on his trail camera as well as raccoons and an opossum.

He also has eight goldfinch visiting regularly. He said, "For most of the winter we have only seen one or two at the feeders. One was starting to show some yellow plumage."

He puts out a coffee can of whole peanuts every day in a tray. He said, "Blue jays, titmice and an occasional red-bellied woodpecker take the peanuts that are usually gone within a couple of hours. Lately the peanuts have been lasting two or three days and I haven't seen any blue jays." He

also noted it is "A sign of spring, the chipmunks are out and about and the daffodil leaves have started to emerge, hooray."

Goldfinches

I received an email from a Worthington resident. He said, "Around mid-February each year my bird feeders are inundated by a flock or maybe flocks of goldfinches in their drab winter colorations. It's amazing how many flit in and out of my feeders. And, when the goldfinches come, they are joined by an equally large flock of pine siskins. They must travel together and they look somewhat similar since the goldfinches aren't yet sporting their bright yellow colors. They usually hang around for a month or so and then move on further North." He said, "I enjoy watching them at the feeders, the few who decide to spend the summer in Western Massachusetts."

Bluebirds

I received an email from a Hampden resident, who shared video from a blink camera she installed inside her bluebird house in 2025. She placed the camera in the birdhouse to keep track of activity and this resulted in two broods of bluebirds successfully hatching and fledging a total of eight young. She said, "The camera helped to keep the sparrows from establishing a nest and gave us close ups of the bluebird families." She also said, "Once September rolled around, it was time to clean and sanitize the birdhouse. However, a downy woodpecker found it was a fine place to spend the night. He has continued arriving at sundown and leaving at sunrise the next day. The bluebirds sometimes stop by during the day possibly checking it out for their future nest." She said, "Our hope is the bluebirds return this spring and don't have issues with the woodpecker as well as the sparrows."

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

CREDIT for Life

CREDIT from page 1

Belchertown High School seniors Evan Perkins, Adam O'Rourke and Thomas Normandeau learned that a good credit store can help when financing the purchase of a car, or finding a place to live.

"Credit score mattered more than I thought," Perkins said.

After finding housing, transportation and insurance, Perkins realized his salary left him with a small budget to purchase other essentials, such as clothing.

"I should spend less money on clothes," he said.

Perkins selected a career as a video production editor, which is something he already has experience with in real life, working with a friend to shoot and edit music videos.

O'Rourke and Normandeau also chose careers similar to what they will be pursuing after graduation, as a linesman and plumber, respectively.

"You've got to really figure out your expenses," O'Rourke said. "Try to save as much money as you can."

O'Rourke added that food cost a lot of money, and was a greater expense than he expected.

Normandeau said his budget was impacted by the vehicle he choose to purchase, which was a less cost-efficient truck.

Students were given opportunities for "Fun, Fun, Fun," where they could spend their money on "wants" versus "needs," allowing them the chance to budget for the exciting extras in life, while still maintaining their financial health.

The "Reality Check" wheel of fortune had students spinning to receive an unexpected financial burden, or blessing. They also had chances to work part-time jobs to help boost their income and pay for their debts and expenses.

Other booths handled housing, transportation, insurance, furniture, utilities, savings and retirement, food and nutrition and clothing.

Ware High School seniors Sophia Rheume, Damian Brace and Daniel Ramirez all selected careers in healthcare, with Rheume as a psychologist, Brace as an occupational therapist and Ramirez as a pharmacist.

Brace and Ramirez decided to become roommates in order to share living expenses.



Volunteers Amie Mirecki, Kathy Radisic and Donna Holden helped staff the Clothing booth.

Ware High School senior Maia Lamothe selected a career as an electrical engineer, as it was the closest to her future career as a chemical engineer.

Palmer High School seniors Dylan Doherty, Matthew Kirby and Gavin Smola all selected careers as accountants.

Smola said food and housing were both large expenses in his budget, and Doherty said having a roommate saved him a lot of money.

Kirby put his financial literacy to the test to raise his 575 credit score up to over 700.

This marks the 15th year Country Bank has offered Credit for Life to area seniors, and the first year for interim Superintendent Michael Wood.

"It's really important," Wood said.

Wood said the temptation of spending can have a negative impact on many young people, especially those on their own for the first time.

"We have to understand what they [the temptations] are and how they impact our credit for life," he said.

About Country Bank

Established in 1850, Country Bank has a rich history of supporting personal and business banking customers through financial solutions with FDIC and DIF insurance for added security.

Country Bank is a full-service \$2.2 billion mutual community bank serving Central and Western Massachusetts



Jodie Gerulaitis, First Vice President of Community Relations at Country Bank, welcomed students to Credit for Life.

with 16 banking centers and two business offices in Ware, Palmer, West Brookfield, Brimfield, Belchertown, Wilbraham, Longmeadow, Ludlow, Leicester, Paxton, Charlton, Springfield, Uxbridge and Worcester. With a commitment to personalized service and community involvement, Country Bank offers individuals, businesses, and municipalities a comprehensive range of banking products and services.

Country Bank is a member of FDIC, DIF, and the SUM network. Country Bank can be reached at 800-322-8233 or online at countrybank.com.



Country Bank volunteer David Micka helped students at his booth.



The "Fun, Fun, Fun" booth tempted students to spend money on fun purchases.



Ware High School seniors Damian Brace and Daniel Ramirez worked together to make living more affordable.

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TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI
Canyon Charron delivers a pitch for the Orioles.

Pitching, defense lead Orioles past Colts

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

CHICOPEE— The baseball field at Rivers Park in Chicopee will be rededicated on the last day of April in honor of Dan Dulchinos, who won 639 games during the fifty years that he was the varsity baseball coach at Chicopee Comp.

Evan Berneche and Justin Franczek, who are former members of the Comp baseball team, have followed in Dulchinos's footsteps as varsity coaches.

Using a little bit of small ball, which was the style that Dulchinos also used, Berneche guided the Belchertown Orioles to a 3-1 road win over the

Chicopee Comp Colts, who are coached by Franczek, last Monday afternoon (March 30). Dulchinos watched the Valley East match-up from behind the backstop.

"We don't have a bunch of guys who are going to crush the ball. We're going to be playing a lot of small ball this year. We bunted six or seven times in today's game," said Berneche, who was inducted into the Chicopee Athletic Hall of Fame in 2019. "I learned a lot about baseball from coach Dulchinos and he also played a lot of small ball. I didn't get the opportunity to speak with coach before today's



Please see **ORIOLES**, page 10
Nate Marino shuffles, then makes a throw to first.

Pioneers edged by rival Panthers

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

PALMER— Tyler Wilson, Connor Roche, and Zach Handzal were the starting pitchers for the Palmer Panthers the last time that they began the high school baseball season with consecutive victories.

For the first time since 2014, the Panthers had a 2-0 record following an 11-9 victory over cross-town rival Pathfinder Tech before a large crowd at historic Legion Field, last Friday afternoon.

"Everyone played a key role in today's victory," said Handzal, who's beginning his second season as the Panthers varsity baseball coach. "We finished the week with a 2-0 record, and we now move on to next week. You always want to go undefeated each week."

The 2014 Palmer squad won its first five games and finished the regular season with a 17-3 overall record before losing to Athol in a Western Mass. Division 3 quarterfinal game.

The Panthers, who are first year members of the Tri-County League, lost both games that they played against the Pioneers a year ago.

While Palmer began the 2026 season with a 10-2 win at Westfield Tech on March 31, Pathfinder Tech (0-2) fell to Tri-County League rival McCann Tech, 13-2, in their season opener at Legion Field.

"Seven of the 13 players listed on our roster are new players, and I'm also a first-year varsity coach," said Pathfinder Tech head coach Dan Szostek. "We're still getting to know each other. I



Durant Garden makes a serve.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI
Jake Gagnon gets a set.

LEFT: Richard Sweet sends a hit over the net.



Vitaly Gavel gets a bump from the back line.



Nathan Walsh sends a hit over the net.



Daniel Santiago gets a bump.

Granby gets third win of season

GRANBY – Last Wednesday, Ludlow High School boys volleyball engaged in three tough battles with Granby, but the Rams pulled away in the third set, and then had a decided advantage in the fourth set, winning 25-16 and taking the match 3-1 over the Lions. Ludlow fell to 0-2 on the season. Granby improved to 3-1, with 12 kills from Braeden Gallagher and 11 kills from Jake Gagnon, who also achieved 16 assists, including the 1,000th for his career.

B-Town not able to come back against Ludlow

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW—Holding a six-run lead entering the top of the seventh inning was almost not enough for the Ludlow varsity softball team.

The Belchertown Lady Orioles rallied for three runs in their final at-bats, but the Lady Lions managed to hang on for a 9-6 victory in a Bi-County League contest held at the Paul R. Baird Middle School softball field in Ludlow, last Wednesday afternoon.

"We were able to score some runs early in the game, which gave us a little bit of a cushion," said Ludlow head coach Missy Rocker. "I was a little bit worried in the final inning, but I went out and visited with my pitcher. I tried to settle her down and we were finally able to end the game."

Ludlow has now won the last five games against Belchertown.

The two teams entered the first meeting of this season, which was played in the rain, with 1-0 records.

The Lady Lions, who played their home opener, began the season with a 15-9 road win over league rival Monson.

"We now have a 2-0 record, which is huge for us," Rocker said. "We finished tied for the league title a couple of years ago. We don't have any seniors, and it would be very nice to win the league title this year."

The Lady Orioles, who defeated Springfield Central, 18-9 in their opener, committed four errors in their first meeting of the season against the Lady Lions.

"We struggled during the first six innings," said Belchertown head coach Mike Lafayette. "We just need to work on a few different things. It'll probably be a different

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Please see **PIONEERS**, page 10

T-Birds close in on playoff spot with win

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds (29-29-6-2) withstood multiple comeback bids from the Syracuse Crunch (39-21-3-4) en route to a 4-3 shootout win on Saturday night inside the MassMutual Center.

The T-Birds forced veteran goaltender Brandon Halverson into early work as Springfield generated two power play chances in the first period, along with 12 total shots on the target. While the Crunch held the fort shorthanded, they could not keep Springfield off the board, as Alek Kaskimaki whistled a high-rising wrist shot over Halverson's glove at 10:34 to give the T-Birds a 1-0 lead. Akil Thomas picked up a point for a

third straight game on the lone assist.

At the other end, the T-Birds made life easy for their starter, Will Cranley, who needed to make just five saves in 20 minutes to begin his evening. Syracuse had difficulty generating a high quantity of shots through the course of the evening, but they were opportunistic as Ethan Samson slipped down the slot, received a pass from Ethan Gauthier, and wristed it past Cranley at 8:07 of the second to tie the score.

Less than two minutes later, the T-Birds' special teams rose to the occasion again, killing off 1:15 of 5-on-3 Crunch power play

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ORIOLES from page 9

game, but I'm hoping that he's proud of the way my team played."

Prior to becoming the varsity baseball coach at Belchertown High School, Berneche was an assistant coach at his alma mater under Franczek, who entered the 2026 regular season with 97 career victories.

"Evan was a very good baseball and football player in high school," said Franczek, who likes to play small ball. "We're good friends and our families are close. It's like playing a chess match whenever we face against each other."

Franczek replaced Dulchinos as the Comp varsity baseball coach in 2013.

"Coach Dulchinos comes to a lot of our home games, and we love having him around," Franczek added. "My father (Dan) also played baseball for him. Other than my dad, coach Dulchinos has made the greatest impact in my life. He's an incredible

person and I've learned so many life lessons from him. We'll be rededicating the field to him before our game against Minnechaug on April 30."

The baseball field was originally dedicated to Dulchinos in 1994.

The road victory evened the Orioles early season record at 1-1. They began the regular season with a 2-1 home loss to East Longmeadow on March 26. Senior Ryan Gould pitched well enough to win that game, but he didn't receive very much support offensively.

Comp (0-1) took a 1-0 lead in the first meeting of this spring against the Orioles without the benefit of a base hit.

Comp junior righthander Jacoby Haney set down the side in order in the top of the first inning.

Senior centerfielder Jaylen Gonzales led off the bottom half of the opening frame with a walk before stealing second base. Belchertown



Jon Perron takes his lead off first.

senior righty Canyon Charron struck out the next two batters before senior first baseman Justin Lafontaine reached first base following a fielding error by the short-stop putting runners at the corners. Then senior third baseman Tanner Martell was hit-by-a-pitch loading the bases. Gonzales scored on a wild pitch, but the home team left the bases loaded.

It was the only run allowed by Charron during the five innings that he was on the mound. He gave up just three hits with three walks and ten strikeouts.

The Colts didn't keep the 1-0 lead for very long.

Senior Brennan Real, who began the game in left field, drew a walk leading off the top of second inning. He advanced to second base on a passed ball and a wild pitch moved him to third base. Real scored the tying run when sophomore third baseman Alex Ryczek hit a sacrifice fly to left with one out.

Just like in the second inning, Belchertown senior

catcher Joey Minton began the third inning with a walk. He scored the go-ahead run on a wild pitch with two outs.

The Orioles also had the leadoff hitter on base in the final four innings but could only score one more run.

Charron singled leading off the top of the fourth, which was the only base hit allowed by Haney.

Meanwhile, the Colts, who haven't defeated the Orioles since the second meeting of the 2024 regular season, stranded a total of eight runners in scoring position.

"We just didn't do a very good job of putting the ball in play with less than two outs," Franczek said. "We left too many runners in scoring position."

The Orioles took a 3-0 lead in the fifth inning following a safety squeeze bunt by senior DH Austin Raymer which plated junior right fielder Jonathan Perron, who was hit-by-a-pitch.

Real, who's a righty, replaced Charron in the sixth and struck out the side.

Comp put a little bit of pressure on Real in their final at-bats.

Senior second baseman Zach Bajgier drew a leadoff walk. After Real retired the next two batters on a pop-up and a flyball, an infield hit by Martell kept the Colts comeback hopes alive. He advanced to second base on a throwing error. Real then ended the game with a strikeout.

Austin Raymer lays down a bunt.



Ryan Gould checks his swing.



PIONEERS from page 9

thought we kept battling back in today's game."

The winning pitcher in last Friday's contest was Brendan Hess, who's one of the five seniors listed on the Panthers varsity roster. The righthander allowed five runs (3 earned) on only four base hits with five walks and nine strikeouts during the first five innings. He threw 101 pitches.

The Pioneers took a 2-0 lead against Hess in the top

of the first inning.

Senior right fielder Dayne Shanley, who drew a lead-off walk, stole second base and scored the first run of the game on a passed ball. Senior centerfielder Edward Szostek drove home the other run with a cue shot that rolled past first base for a single.

The Panthers, who were the home team, responded by scoring four runs against senior righty Andrew Sullivan in the bottom half of the opening frame. Sullivan only pitched in a couple of games as a junior before suffering a season ending injury.

"Andrew was a pitcher for the varsity team as a sophomore," said coach Szostek, who was an assistant coach a year ago. "He missed most of last season with an arm injury. It's nice having him back on the mound again this year."

With one-out, Hess blasted a run scoring triple to center field before scoring the tying run on a wild pitch that skipped to the backstop. Eighth grade second baseman Josiel Ortiz and sophomore leftfielder Liam McKee also contributed with RBI singles which gave the Panthers a

4-2 lead.

Both teams scored a run in the third inning.

The Pioneers closed the gap to 5-4 with two outs in the fourth when junior short-stop Brody Wetnicka crossed the plate on a wild pitch.

It didn't remain a one run game for very long, as the Panthers put four runs on the left field scoreboard in their next at-bats. Two runs scored on bases loaded walks by senior third baseman Theo Haley and senior catcher Sebastian Mayberry, who had two hits in the home opener. Another run scored when Hess hit a pop-up single to center.

Sullivan, who threw a total of 80 pitches, was replaced by freshman lefthander Zach Smith with no outs.

He retired junior first baseman Dylan Holbrook on a ground ball out which scored Haley making the score 9-4.

"We've been hitting the ball very well so far this season," Handzel said. "We scored four runs in the fourth inning, which gave us a little breathing room."

The Panthers scored two more runs in their next at-bats.

Pathfinder Tech, who added an unearned run in the fifth, was trailing 11-5 entering the top of the seventh inning.

The Pioneers put together a rally against Palmer senior right-hander Matt Santos, who had pitched a scoreless sixth inning.

Freshman Anthony Elliott began the seventh inning with a double to left field. Junior left fielder Emerson Boronski also doubled to left field scoring Elliott. Then back-to-back walks by Edward Szostek and freshman DH Zach Latourelle loaded the bases.

At that point, Handzel decided to make a pitching change. Ortiz, who's a righty, replaced Santos on the mound. The Pioneers scored two more runs before Ortiz ended the game with a strikeout.

"Josiel came in with the bases loaded and got the job done," Handzel said. "It was his first appearance on the mound this season."

The two baseball teams are scheduled to meet again under the lights at Legion Field on May 14.

B-TOWN from page 9

outcome the next time that we face Ludlow. We battled back in the final inning, and we were a base hit away from tying the game."

The last time that Belchertown celebrated a victory on the softball diamond against Ludlow was on May 22, 2019, by the final score of 10-6.

In last Wednesday's game, the Lady Orioles were trailing the Lady Orioles, 9-3, entering the top of the seventh inning.

Junior shortstop Emily Waller and junior leftfielder Sophia Mitus (2-for-3) began the Lady Orioles comeback rally with back-to-back walks against sophomore righthander Olivia Slatton. Sophomore catcher Kina Roy was then hit-by-a-pitch, which loaded the bases.

After Slatton struck out the next batter, senior third baseman Abigail Almeida hit a pop-up single into left field bringing home the first run of the frame.

Almeida, who had two hits in the game, was the Lady Orioles only senior starter.

The Lady Orioles rally continued with sophomore centerfielder Cassidy MacLean drawing a walk scoring another run, which sliced Belchertown's deficit to 9-5. An infield hit by junior first baseman Kaiya Cavanaugh made the score 9-6.

Following a visit by her head coach, Slatton quickly regrouped and struck out the next two batters with the bases loaded, which ended the game.

Slatton was the winning pitcher despite allowing six runs on ten hits. She walked

four and had nine strikeouts.

Belchertown took a 1-0 lead with two outs in the first inning on an infield hit by Almeida.

With two outs in the home half of the inning, Slatton (4-for-5) hit a hard ground ball into left field. After stealing second base, sophomore catcher Madelyn Goncalves-Korny (3-4) knocked her home with a double down the left field line.

The Lady Lions, who banded out a total of 15 hits against junior righty Lila Roy, took a 3-1 lead for the first time in the second inning. Sophomore first baseman Khloe Davis (2-for-4) brought home the go-ahead run with a double to right and Slatton also had an RBI single.

The top four Ludlow batters went 12-for-18.

Both teams scored a run in the third inning.

Ludlow built an 8-2 advantage after scoring four runs in the fourth inning. Two more runs crossed the plate on RBI singles by Korny and freshman first baseman Madison Goncalves. The other two runs came home on a throwing error by the catcher.

After the Lady Orioles scored an unearned run in the sixth, the Lady Lions answered right back with a run scoring single by junior Caitlyn Peczkka (3-for-5) in the bottom half of the inning.

The Lady Lions, who almost watched their lead slip away in the seventh inning, will be looking to sweep the season series when they make the short trip to Belchertown High School on April 22.

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Grades 7-12 open.

Water District meeting set for Apr. 21

BELCHERTOWN – The Annual Meeting of the Belchertown Water District will be held on Tuesday Apr. 21 at 6 p.m. at the Belchertown Water District, 206 Jabish Street, Belchertown, Massachusetts.

Polls are open from 6 to 8 p.m. One Commissioner will be elected for a term of three years. The Annual Meeting will begin at 6:05 p.m. The Warrant containing the articles to be acted upon has been posted on the

official bulletin board of the Town of Belchertown, in Lawrence Memorial Hall and at the Belchertown Water District. All registered voters of Belchertown residing in the Water District are eligible to vote in District affairs.

POLICE LOGS

Belchertown Police Log

Editor's note: The following are brief explanations of select entries in the Belchertown Police log and arrests for the weeks of March 20, through April 2. The information was provided by a member of the police department based on the review of the detailed log summary. This feature is designed to provide context and explanation to some of the calls police respond to every day.

ARRESTS/SUMMONS

Tuesday, March 24
 10:37 a.m. – A 25-year-old Holyoke resident was issued a summons for uninsured motor vehicle, unregistered motor vehicle and no inspection sticker. An officer performed return traffic check on a vehicle. It showed the registration was revoked for insurance and the officer stopped the vehicle. The vehicle was towed from the scene, and the person was charged accordingly.
 12:03 p.m. – A 24-year-old Springfield woman was issued a summons for an unregistered motor vehicle, an uninsured motor vehicle, a number plate violation and attaching plates. An officer on patrol ran a plate which came back as cancelled they said they bought the vehicle and had an appointment with the registry. They were advised the plate was canceled and they were charged accordingly. The vehicle was towed.
 7:41 p.m. – A 41-year-old Holyoke summons charged with improper storage of a firearm. An officer responded to a State Street business for a report of a firearm left in a restroom. The firearm was loaded and then was secured and unloaded by the officer. The public had full access to the bathroom. The serial number was run. The item was placed into security. They were charged accordingly.

Wednesday, March 25
 10:41 a.m. – A 37-year-old Belchertown woman was issued a summons for assault and battery. An officer responded to a residence

for an allegation of a person throwing an item at another person.
 5:19 p.m. – Craig B. Wilder, 36, of 121 North Main Street Apt. I3 was arrested on charges of a fugitive from justice, assault and battery and threat to commit a crime. An officer responded to a North Main Street for a report of man with a gun disturbing the area. It was reported the person was threatening with a firearm. A check of the area was done. An officer went to the apartment and contacted the person. They saw the person who fit the description, and it was an extraditable warrant out of Arkansas for the person. Bail was denied and the person was transported to the regional lock up
 6:04 p.m. – A juvenile summons for assault and battery.

Thursday, April 2
 2:45 p.m. – A 17-year-old juvenile was issued a summons speeding and operating a motor vehicle in violation of a license restriction.

ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS

Friday, March 20
 3:41 p.m. – An officer spoke with a person about damage to a vehicle parked at one of the schools. Someone wrote words in the dirt on the vehicle.
 7:34 p.m. – An officer responded to an accident on Warren Wright Road. An unknown vehicle middle of lane when a second vehicle moved to right to avoid getting struck when doing so struck a fire hydrant. The first vehicle left the scene. No tow was needed and no injuries were reported.

Saturday, March 21
 12:05 a.m. – An officer responded to an accident on George Hannum Road. A vehicle traveling north on George Hannum Road struck a deer that ran in front of the vehicle. The vehicle was disabled. No injuries were reported and the vehicle was towed.
 9:46 a.m. – The officer spoke with a person about a relative who fell for a scam and a person posing as a US Marshall wanted a payment in the form of gift cards. They

were accused of fraud and were told to pay the scammer in gift cards. The person paid the money. A report was filed with elder services. No other information is available.

Sunday, March 22
 8:43 a.m. – An officer responded to a State Street business report of an elderly person who seemed lost. It was determined they needed to be transported to the hospital for an evaluation.

Monday, March 23
 8:18 a.m. – An officer spoke with a victim of a phone scam. They thought it was a representative from their bank and convinced the person to provide the user-name to keep the account open. The person was requested to send funds, and they sent them to the scammer.

5:30 p.m. – An officer responded to an accident on Granby Road. A vehicle going west on Granby Road failed to negotiate a turn and left the road, striking a bus sign. It was driven from the scene. No injuries were reported.

Tuesday, March 24
 10:53 a.m. – An officer responded to Mill Valley Road for a report of a well-being check. The person had not been seen by their neighbors in significant amount of time. The fire department was contact to gain entry into the residence. The person was later contacted, and they told the officer they were in the hospital.
 1:18 p.m. – An officer spoke with a person about an ongoing fraud incident where money collected from a person for a business transaction. They were no longer able to be reached and had no contact information.
 3:53 p.m. – An officer took a report of fraud. A people noticed the values were off in their income taxes and there was money being taken out by the small business administration. Someone was using their social security number for a paycheck protection program loan and they filed for an identity fraud report.
 4:53 p.m. – An officer took a report of fraud. They fell

later, and 10 seconds onto the ensuing power play, Dillon Dube crashed the blue paint to jam a rebound past Halverson to restore the lead, 3-2, at 2:34. Kaskimaki picked up his second assist and third point on Dube's 14th goal of the season.
 The visitors still refused to go away quietly, and Nick Abruzzese again tied matters at 8:38 when he cleaned up a

victim to a scam they got a phone call from someone saying they were a lawyer. The person was told a relative was in a car accident and needed money for bail. They sent a courier to get the money they got the registration for the vehicle but that didn't come back as suspicious. The caller requested to get additional funds. They were advised to discontinue giving the person information.

Thursday, March 26
 4:34 p.m. – An officer spoke with a parent about materials they child encountered.

5:39 p.m. – An officer spoke with a resident about issues with a former acquaintance. The acquaintance made threats against a resident.

Friday, March 27
 12:53 p.m. – An officer received a Ware resident's license found by someone, and it was turned into property.
 7:25 p.m. – A program manager came into the station to report a student that was missing. They were later located.

Tuesday, March 31
 8:02 a.m. – An officer did a follow up on a report of a past vandalism.
 8:06 a.m. – An officer took a report of stolen bicycle from a Maple Street resident. Nothing was turned in and the matter was documented.
 10:01 a.m. – An officer spoke with a resident about issues with their neighbor and property line issues.
 6:17 p.m. – An officer took a report of harassment issues between neighbors.

Saturday, March 28
 8:01 a.m. – An officer took a report of a stolen vehicle on Depot Street. It was later discovered the vehicle was repossessed.
 9:37 a.m. – An officer assisted a West Springfield resident when they retrieved a locked firearm box in a vehicle.
 12:48 p.m. – An officer conducted a wellbeing check. A person called about a neighbor for a wellbeing check for safety purposes.
 7:53 p.m. – An officer assisting Belchertown Fire and paramedics.

Wednesday, April 1
 10:09 a.m. – An officer responded to North Main Street for a report of suspicious vehicle. They were advised to call back if the vehicle returned.
 1:10 p.m. – An officer to George Hannum Road business for a report of a vehicle in the lot since the previous day, the vehicle was occupied but no suspicious activity. They said the vehicle was inoperable and he lives out of the vehicle. The vehicle was towed and found to be unregistered. An inventory was completed.
 4:32 p.m. – An officer took a report of a group of juveniles who were having issues.

Sunday, March 29
 12:22 a.m. – An officer assisted Belchertown Fire and paramedics with a person who have mental health issues.
 6:43 p.m. – An officer took a report of a missing person. There was a disturbance between a juvenile and a parent. The child left. They were located and the parents were told.

Monday, March 30
 10:12 a.m. – A resident found a spent round of ammo on their property. it was taken and placed into property
 11:28 a.m. – An officer took a report of illegal dumping at Barwell Road and River Street. There were three trash bags on the side of the road. They were able to find the person's name and do a records check on the person. The matter is under investigation
 4:17 p.m. – An officer responded to an accident on Maple Street. A vehicle traveling east on Maple Street was struck in the rear by another vehicle traveling behind it. No injuries were reported and no tows were needed.

Thursday, April 2
 8:39 a.m. – An officer took a report of fraud. A person was concerned about a stolen eBay package. When they got the package, it was empty and then was advised by eBay they needed a report.
 11:32 p.m. – An officer conducted a wellbeing check.

Friday, March 27
 12:53 p.m. – An officer received a Ware resident's license found by someone, and it was turned into property.
 7:25 p.m. – A program manager came into the station to report a student that was missing. They were later located.

Saturday, March 28
 9:35 p.m. – The owner of Joy Travel Agency, called to report suspected fraudulent activity. An incident report was completed.

Sunday, March 29
 10:12 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 51 in a posted 35MPH. Additionally, the vehicle had not been inspected in a year. The operator was issued a civil citation for speed and failure to inspect.

Tuesday, March 31
 9:46 p.m. – A resident reported that fireworks were being set off in the area. An officer responded and did not locate anything.

Thursday, April 2
 3:49 p.m. – A motorist reported a minor 2-car accident in the parking lot. There were no injuries.
 5:12 p.m. – While on patrol, an officer observed a motor vehicle traveling at a high rate of speed. Radar confirmed the vehicle was traveling 55MPH in a posted 40MPH zone. The vehicle was stopped and the operator was issued a civil citation for speeding.

Friday, March 27
 12:53 p.m. – An officer received a Ware resident's license found by someone, and it was turned into property.
 7:25 p.m. – A program manager came into the station to report a student that was missing. They were later located.

Saturday, March 28
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PLAYOFFS from page 10
 time en route to a perfect 4-for-4 penalty killing effort in the period.
 As the period entered its closing minutes, Springfield earned its own two-man advantage opportunity, and Thomas Bordeleau took full advantage, ripping a shot past Halverson's blocker at 18:20 to send the game to the third

with the T-Birds holding the 2-1 lead.
 The T-Birds' power play began the third period seeking an insurance goal, but instead relented a shorthanded tally to AHL points leader Jakob Pelletier just 1:55 into the frame, which tied the score, 2-2.
 However, Syracuse committed a high-sticking infraction less than half a minute

later, and 10 seconds onto the ensuing power play, Dillon Dube crashed the blue paint to jam a rebound past Halverson to restore the lead, 3-2, at 2:34. Kaskimaki picked up his second assist and third point on Dube's 14th goal of the season.
 The visitors still refused to go away quietly, and Nick Abruzzese again tied matters at 8:38 when he cleaned up a

bouncing puck off Cranley's pad to equalize the game, 3-3.
 Neither team could solve the other through the closing minutes, setting the stage for 3-on-3 overtime. Cranley and Halverson both stood tall on four combined shots in the extra frame, and the shootout's first three rounds also produced no offensive successes.

Finally, in the top of round four, Akil Thomas calmly slipped a forehand shot through Halverson's legs, and when Dylan Duke missed the net on his attempt, Springfield secured its fourth consecutive win.
 By virtue of Springfield's win and Lehigh Valley's regulation loss, the T-Birds' magic number to clinch a Calder Cup Playoff spot

now sits at 6. That number decreases with every point the T-Birds earn in the standings, as well as every point the Phantoms fail to earn.
 The T-Birds continue their four-game homestand on Friday, April 10 when they host the Rochester Americans inside the Thunderdome for a 7:05 p.m. puck drop.



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Holyoke Wilds, a licensed cannabis cultivation facility in Holyoke, MA, is seeking reliable individuals for general cultivation and product manufacturing positions. Duties include assisting with plant care, trimming, cleaning, product manufacturing and other general tasks within the facility.
Start Date: Within the next few weeks to months
Pay: Varies based on experience. Ranges from \$16 to \$20 per hour.
Requirements: Applicants must be 21 or older and eligible to work in the United States. Background checks are required under state cannabis regulations.

Interested candidates should email **holyokewilds9@gmail.com** with their contact information and brief work history.

Holyoke Wilds is an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, or veteran status.

SEASONAL FACILITIES CREW wanted at Norcross Wildlife Foundation. For a full job description, please visit **www.norcrosswildlife.org** or email **info@norcrosswildlife.org**

The Town of North Brookfield is looking for a **part-time Program Assistant** for the Council on Aging. Please submit a resume with a letter of interest to the **Selectmen's Office, 215 Main St., North Brookfield, MA 01535;** or by email to **selectmen@northbrookfield.net.**

WANT TO WORK THIS SUMMER part or full-time? Help wanted for assisting in landscape maintenance and installation projects. Liberty Orchards Landscape, **413-283-6408.**

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

AGAWAM APT. FOR RENT. 2 bed, 2 bath, gas heat, private basement washer/dryer hookup. \$1600 mo. No utilities. No pets. Call **413-789-6206.**

LAND WANTED

Seeking 8-20 peaceful acres in Central MA for pet memorial sanctuary. Especially interested in lease-option, phased sale, or seller financing. Respectful, serious inquiry. Patrick | **508-735-3232** | **founder@rainbow-meadow.org**

2026 TAX TIME

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MAIL TO: Classifieds, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069 DEADLINES: FRIDAY AT NOON
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5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28
29	30	31	32
33	34	35	36
37	38	39	40

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Circulation: 59,000

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Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Number of Weeks: _____ X per week rate = \$ _____
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Card #: _____ Exp. Date _____ CVV _____
Amount of charge: _____ Date: _____

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Relay hosting concert fundraiser

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

The featured performer is Ray Guillemette, Jr. the 10-time international award-winning Elvis tribute artist.

The event is being held to help cancer patients, fund more research to help with the government cutbacks, and to honor those we’ve lost too soon to cancer.

Tickets are \$20 and are available at <https://buccsangels.ticketspice.com/rays-of-elvis-relay-fundraiser>.

Refreshments will be available for purchase.

OBITUARIES

Dawn Frances (McKenzie) Diloreto

1957-2026

BELCHERTOWN – It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing of Dawn Frances (McKenzie) Diloreto, age 68, at her home in Belchertown on March 30, 2026.



Born on April 3, 1957, in Marlborough, Massachusetts, she was the beloved daughter of the late Donald and Lorraine (Mahoney) McKenzie.

Dawn’s life was beautifully woven with love and family. She cherished 48 wonderful years of marriage to Fred “Skip” Diloreto, with whom she built a life filled with laughter and warmth. Together, they were blessed with two daughters, Jennifer Barkyoub and her husband, Eric, and Amanda Staples and her husband, Mark, who brought her

immense joy and pride. Dawn was also a doting Nonni to Cooper, Cameron, Clara, and Emerson, further enriching her legacy of love.

Dawn grew up in Marlborough and later lived in Spencerport, New York, before settling in Belchertown to raise her family 35 years ago. She embraced her role as a homemaker with grace and dedication. While she took on part-time roles at CVS and as a receptionist at a hair salon, her most fulfilling work was caring for her own family as well as being a nanny, where she nurtured and cared for the children of the Hulmes and Cote families. A remarkable cook, Dawn possessed an extraordinary ability to craft meals both from scratch and by following recipes. Her specialties included “Nonni

bread” and pasta sauce, creating unforgettable meals that drew family and friends together for delicious Sunday dinners.

Dawn is survived by her husband, “Skip”; her daughters; her siblings, Maureen Margraf, Donna Callahan, James McKenzie, and Gary McKenzie; and was predeceased by her siblings, Renee Boutwell and Kevin McKenzie. Her life touched many, and she will be profoundly missed by all who had the privilege of knowing her.

A graveside service will be held at South Cemetery on Monday, April 13, at 11 a.m. to honor Dawn’s memory and celebrate her beautiful life.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests that donations be made to the D’Amour Cancer Center, supporting those battling the disease she faced with courage.

DEATH NOTICES

Diloreto, Dawn Frances (McKenzie)
Died March 30, 2026
Graveside service
April 13, 11 a.m.
at South Cemetery,
Belchertown.

Hennessey, Joan M.
Died Feb. 27, 2026
Celebration of Life
graveside Saturday,
April 18 at 10 a.m.,
South Cemetery,
Belchertown

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.

The Sentinel OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries. One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place. The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice (with a word limit of up to 500 words) and may include a photograph.

Death Notices & Paid Obituaries should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

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

PUBLIC NOTICES

Public Hearing Special Permit Legal Notice

Belchertown Planning Board

In accordance with the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40A, Sections 9 and 11, and pursuant to the Town of Belchertown Chapter 145-27 and 145-69, the Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing to discuss a site plan proposed by 50 Federal Operating Company, LLC, P.O. Box 326, Belchertown, MA 01007 for site plan approval for a Multiple Dwelling Development at Pelham Road, Belchertown, MA 01007, Map 238, Lot 62 & 63, owner: 50 Federal Operating Company, LLC.

Place: Belchertown Town Hall, 2 Jabish Street, Belchertown, MA

Date: **April 28, 2026**
Time: **7:15 pm**

Remote access information:
<https://meet.goto.com/173538941>

Access Code: 173-538-941

The application is available for inspection during regular business hours at the Town Clerk and Planning Board office, 2 Jabish Street

Daniel Beaudette, Chair
Belchertown Planning Board
04/02, 04/09/2026

TOWN OF BELCHERTOWN REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) SALE OF 6 BERKSHIRE AVENUE AND 8 BERKSHIRE AVENUE, BELCHERTOWN MASSACHUSETTS

The Town of Belchertown (the “Town”) is seeking proposals to sell the following two (2) parcels of Town-owned property (individually or together, the “Property”): (a) the 1.022-acre parcel of land with the building and other improvements thereon located at 6 Berkshire Avenue, Belchertown, Massachusetts, and identified on Assessor’s 243 as 243A (the “6 Berkshire Property”), and (2) the 1.028-acre parcel of land with the building and other improvements thereon located at 8 Berkshire Avenue, Belchertown, Massachusetts, and identified on Assessor’s 243 as 244 (the “8 Berkshire Property”). Proposers may submit proposals for the purchase of the 6 Berk-

shire Property, the 8 Berkshire Property, or both, provided that a separate proposal is submitted for each Property. The property record cards are attached as **Exhibit A** and the Assessor’s map is attached as **Exhibit B**, which exhibits are incorporated herein.

Copies of the full Request for Proposals may be obtained from the Town Manager’s Office located at Finnerty House, 1 South Main Street, Belchertown MA 01007. Copies may also be obtained by contacting Steve Williams, the Town Manager, by email at swilliams@belchertown.org.

Proposers are advised that the deed by which the Commonwealth conveyed the Property to the Town, recorded with the Hampshire Registry of Deeds in Book 5341, Page 34 (the “Deed”), states that the Property is to be used for those uses set forth in the Belchertown Economic Development Industrial Corporation Economic Development Plan of 1993 (as such plan may be changed from time to time, the “Plans”). Attached to and incorporated into the RFP as Exhibit C are the 1993 Plan, the 2001 Plan, the 2009 Plan, and the 2014 Plan. The following is a list of some, but not all, of the uses set forth in the Plans: offices, commercial, business, light industrial, and retail; research, and/or development, assisted living facilities and/or services in support thereof; education; hospital and/or geriatric center; recreation; tourism; and other uses that support the economic development of the Town. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Town will consider all proposed uses of the Property, even if not listed on the Plans, and may seek all approvals required to allow such use, including demolition and redevelopment of the land.

All questions must be submitted in writing to Steve Williams, Town Manager, email: swilliams@belchertown.org and facsimile: (413) 323-0403, and received by the Town on or before 3:00 p.m. on April 21, 2026. Questions that the Town, in its sole discretion, deems appropriate for a response will be answered in writing and sent to all proposers on record as having requested the RFP. It is the Town’s preference to use email

to respond to questions and to send future addendums to potential proposers who have provided their contact information to the Town.

Proposals must be sent or delivered to the Town Manager’s Office, Finnerty House, 1 South Main Street, Belchertown MA 01007 on or before **11:00 a.m. on April 28, 2026** at which time and place the proposals will be publicly opened. Proposals become public information when opened. Late proposals will not be considered.

The successful proposer must enter into a purchase and sale agreement, substantially similar to the Purchase and Sale Agreement attached hereto as Exhibit D and incorporated herein (the “P&S”), within thirty (30) days from the date the sale of the Property is awarded to the proposer. The terms and conditions applicable to the sale of the Property are more fully set forth in Section K and Exhibit D of the RFP.

No proposer may withdraw his or her proposal for a period of one hundred twenty (120) days after the date set for the opening thereof. The awarding authority is the Belchertown Select Board.

The Town of Belchertown, acting through its Select Board, reserves the right to waive any informality, to negotiate sale terms with the successful proposer, to award the sale of the Property to the proposal deemed in the best interest of the Town, and/or to reject any or all proposals if it is in the public interest to do so. 04/09, 04/16/2026

BELCHERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGET PRESENTATION PUBLIC HEARING

The Belchertown School Committee will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, April 14, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.**, to present the FY27 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.org under the School Committee link at the top of the page beside the Agenda for this meeting. 04/02, 04/09/2026

Notice of Meeting Board Hearing Relative to Proposed Zoning By-law Amendments

Pursuant to MGL c.40A, §5. The Belchertown Planning Board will hold a public hearing to discuss proposed amendments to the town’s zoning by-laws. The public hearing will be held both remotely and in person:

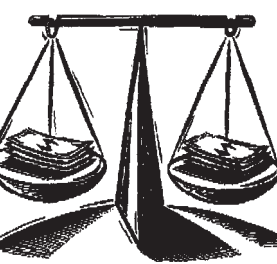
Select Board Meeting Room, Lawrence Memorial Hall 2 Jabish Street, Belchertown April 28, 2026 at 7:05 p.m.
Remote access information: <https://meet.goto.com/173538941>
Access Code: 173-538-941

The subject matter of the proposed amendments is:

1. To amend §145-68, Board of Appeals, to delete the words “Select Board” and replace them with “Town Manager”.
2. To amend §145-69, Special

Permits, Subsection B, to delete the words “Select Board” and replace them with “Town Manager”.

The complete text relative to the proposed amendments are available for inspection during regular business hours at the Town Clerk’s office and the Planning Board office and at masspublicnotices.org 04/02, 04/09/2026



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Job Connection

HELPING YOU FIND HELP

Highway Dept. Skilled Laborer / Truck Driver

The Town of New Braintree Highway Dept. is seeking qualified applicants for the immediate full-time position of Skilled Laborer / Truck Driver. Applicants must have a valid Massachusetts Driver’s License, Class B (CDL) with DOT Medical Examination Certification and a Hoisting Engineer License Class 2B with DOT Medical Examination Certification. Interested applicants should submit a letter of interest and an employment application to:
Highway Department, 110 West Brookfield Road, New Braintree MA 01531.

Highway Dept. Seasonal Laborer

The Town of New Braintree is seeking a qualified candidate to perform seasonal work in the maintenance of town commons, roadways, grounds and cemeteries. Applicants must have a valid Massachusetts Driver’s License (Class D). This is a seasonal position for 20 hours per week with a flexible schedule, May through October. Interested applicants should submit a letter of interest and employment application to: Highway Department, 110 West Brookfield Road, New Braintree MA 01531.

**For further information, please contact
Richard Ayer, Highway Superintendent, at 508-867-2451,
or via email at Highway@newbraintree.gov.**

A.A./E.O.E.

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

PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

- 1 Email all notices to notices@turley.com
- 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 Friday at 3 p.m.

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

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