

SB discuss land deal

Public comment rules and survey fatigue explored

By Melina Bourdeau
Correspondent

BELCHERTOWN – The Select Board’s advanced land conservation, tightened public comment rules and weighed community engagement challenges Monday night, as members moved through a packed agenda ahead of next week’s Town Meeting and the town’s spring schedule.

The May 4 meeting featured endorsement of a 127-acre land purchase to be funded largely by grants, appointment of a planning board alternate, a Pride Month proclamation and a lengthy discussion on how to manage public comment and resident surveys. Officials also reviewed a proposed dog training facility, town meeting accessibility plans and ongoing infrastructure projects.

The board unanimously endorsed a purchase-and-sale agreement for roughly 127 acres known as the Lawton and Hale property, a deal structured so that state and conservation funding will ultimately cover the cost.

Town Planner Doug Albertson told the board the town had just received word it was awarded a state Forest Reserve grant. “We have an opportunity to buy 127 acres of land, ultimately, at no cost to the town,” he said.

Select Board member Nicole Miner asked that the financial details be clearly explained at Town Meeting, so residents are not alarmed by large dollar figures on the warrant.

Please see **LAND DEAL**, page 4



TURLEY PHOTO BY BEN HERNANDEZ

Senator Jake Oliveira, Granby Select Board members, and Town Moderator Lynn Mercier toss ceremonial dirt representing the new soil unearthed for the new municipal building.

New life breathed into former West Street School

By Ben Hernandez
Correspondent

GRANBY - West Street School is being transformed into municipal office buildings. The once beloved elementary school, which has been left in status since 2018, will now have new

life as the main office for the town’s building inspector and local municipal offices. State senator Jake Oliveira and select Board members shoveled ceremonial dirt on April 28th in a dedication ceremony that honored the memory of the school while also explaining its future

to the community. “While its role is changing, its importance in the community remains as strong as ever,” said Town Moderator Lynn Snopek Mercier during the commemoration speech. “Today we begin an exciting new chapter. We are transforming this former school

into municipal offices and we are breathing new life into a space that has always served the public.”

The project began in earnest in August 2022, when a group of concerned citizens went to

Please see **WEST ST.**, page 7

Granby officials warn of looming ‘financial cliff’ ahead of ATM

By Melina Bourdeau
Correspondent

GRANBY – Residents heading into town meeting face a budget shaped by rising health insurance costs, shrinking free cash and decisions on schools, trash collection and infrastructure that could redefine the services the town can afford.

At an April 21 Finance Committee meeting, members described a town budget that technically balances for the coming fiscal year but relies heavily on one-time

money, faces pressure from runaway health insurance and trash costs and leaves big unanswered questions about school spending, infrastructure like the Forge Pond dam and whether Granby can continue to fund the same level of services without tax increases or cuts.

Finance Committee Chair John Libera told colleagues, the town is edging toward a point where difficult choices on taxes and services can no longer be delayed.

“As we basically said last year, you’re either going to have to raise taxes or else

“As we basically said last year, you’re either going to have to raise taxes or else somebody is going to get hurt.”

- John Libera

somebody is going to get hurt,” Libera said of the com-

ing years of budgeting pressure. He added that “some departments are going to get hurt. Some operations are going to get hurt. Some services people have been used to are going to get hurt” if revenues don’t keep up.

Committee members did a walk through how the budget is built, why this year feels different and what big stress points to watch for in the warrant and budget booklet.

How the budget is built — and what “the budget” really means

By town bylaw, the town administrator assembles

a balanced draft budget by meeting with departments and crunching revenue projections. That draft is then handed to the Finance Committee, which has the legal authority to present the final budget to voters.

“By the bylaws of the town, it’s the Finance Committee that determines what the final budget is to go to the voters at the town meeting,” Libera said. “It’s the Finance Committee’s budget, it goes to town meeting.”

That budget covers operating expenses like salaries,

routine supplies and recurring costs for departments ranging from police and fire to highway, buildings and the library. But it is only part of what the town spends in a year.

All the big, infrequent purchases and projects — police cruisers, dump trucks, major capital work — are funded through warrant articles, not the operating budget.

“The budget people think of as all the money we spend. That’s not the budget,” Libera

Please see **GRANBY ATM**, page 3

MHC Votes! hosts voting advocacy event

By Ben Hernandez
Correspondent

SOUTH HADLEY – State representatives gathered at the Village Green in South Hadley on Apr. 26 to speak on community voting engagement and voter empowerment. Through the two-hour event, Massachusetts Senator Jake Oliveira and State Representative Homar Gomez spoke on the country’s voting history, the proposed SAVE act, and the importance of voting in local elections.

Partnered with the League of Women Voters Amherst, the first MHC Votes! event was created to bridge the gap between local government and the community. State government officials made



TURLEY PHOTO BY BEN HERNANDEZ

MHC Votes representatives before the event.

speeches, educated the public on local government roles and responsibilities, and fielded questions from the

public. “We really wanted to create a place where we could combine our student popu-

lation with the local community,” said Bailey Dillon, the senator for MHC Votes; a student advocacy group run from Mount Holyoke College created with the express purpose of “bringing voting accessibility to all levels.”

Voter accessibility was in the minds of all the speakers attending. Oliveira’s speech highlighted how equal voting is a recent invention, taking over one hundred years to include women and minorities in the voting process. He also mentioned that one hundred years ago, non-land-owners wouldn’t be able to serve in office, a stipulation that he mentioned that would disqualify him from his current position.

Please see **MHC**, page 8



Belchertown resident Tracy Cayo recently submitted a photo of a bird she said she did not recognize. It was on George Hannum St. If anyone recognizes what kind of bird this is, please contact sentinel@turley.com

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Learn to grow edible mushrooms



BELCHERTOWN – The New England Small Farm Institute, located at 275 Jackson Rd. in Belchertown, will host a workshop teaching people how to grow edible mushrooms on Saturday, May 30 from 2 to 5 p.m. Hosted by NEFSI and Forestopia, come enjoy a hands-on workshop that explores all dimensions of shiitake mushroom cultivation on home and commercial levels. The workshop will provide an introduction to the agroforestry practice Forest Farming, cover the fundamentals of mushroom cul-

tivations, and review basic considerations of those interested in growing commercially. Participants will also have the opportunity to take home an inoculated shiitake log. The event has a suggested donation of \$20 to \$30 (add \$15 for participants wishing to take home one inoculated shiitake log). All are welcome. To register, please contact Sara Weil at info@smallfarm.org or call 413-323-4531.

BHS 2019 files to be destroyed

BELCHERTOWN – Informal BHS 2019 graduate student files that may contain results of standardized tests including college boards, reports by teachers, attendance and health records are scheduled to be destroyed on Sept. 8. If you wish to have your records, please come to Central

Office, 14 Maple Street with picture identification between the hours of 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday-Friday, excluding holidays. High School transcripts that contain course titles and grades will continue to be stored at the BHS Counseling Office for sixty (60) years after graduation.

Roundtable draws great turnout

BELCHERTOWN – On Saturday, April 18, Belchertown residents and friends from neighboring communities gathered for the Belchertown Democratic Town Committee’s Healthcare Roundtable to learn how US healthcare policies have led to the current crisis in our ability to access affordable, quality healthcare for all.

Belchertown Select Board Chair Lesa Lessard Pearson served as moderator and guided the panel, which consisted of State Senator Jacob Oliveira; Dr. Michal Horný, a UMass professor of health policy and management; and Dr. Chris Flory, a retired physician and healthcare advocate.

During the roundtable, Senator Oliveira provided sobering statistics on the proposed Massachusetts budget for healthcare coverage and the potential menacing burden of federal funding cuts. Dr. Horný broke down healthcare costs and discussed areas



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The roundtable was held on April 18 and led by Belchertown’s Democratic Town Committee

for improvement, noting that healthcare is a human service rather than a commodity in the marketplace. Finally, Dr. Flory, a family physician who retired after practicing in Northampton for 31 years, spoke about how the current system has

forfeited the patient-physician relationship—which used to be based on continuity of care and trust—in favor of a formulaic approach that is dominated by cost analytics.

The program closed on a reflective note, with each

panelist responding to an audience member who felt abandoned by the healthcare system.

For those who were unable to attend, the full televised program is available for viewing at www.belchertowndemocrats.org.

GRANBY ATM from page 1

said. “All the money we spend is a combination of the budget and what we spend in the warrant articles.”

Residents will see both pieces in the green budget book handed out at town meeting: the departmental operating budget pages and the list of warrant articles with their individual dollar amounts.

Health insurance shocks and trash costs double

The single biggest immediate pressure point is health insurance. Last year, Granby was hit with roughly a 50% increase in premiums through the Hampshire County group health plan. A further double-digit jump followed.

“We had a 50% increase in our health care costs last year. That was totally unexpected,” committee member Joseph Furnia said, pointing out the difference from private industry, where employers may shift more cost to employees.

Committee members said the regional health collaborative had kept rates arti-

cially low by drawing down reserves, only to be forced into steep increases when that cushion disappeared.

“They built up a fund, and they started using it to keep the premiums lower... but the fund just kept going down,” Libera said [1:05:31]. “They got to the point where they couldn’t do it anymore.”

Trash collection is another long-running strain. When the town moved from a landfill to curbside collection, an override covered an initial cost of about \$300,000 a year. But the contract has escalated.

“We’re now up to \$600,000 a year,” Libera said. “The override doesn’t keep up with the increase in the contract... that, to me, is an example of one of the major things that the town would be looking at for a tax increase.”

Free cash is being used to balance operations

Beyond rising fixed costs, the committee expressed increasing concern about how Granby is using free cash, which is surplus money from prior years to prop up

the operating budget rather than fund one-time items.

In the current and upcoming fiscal years, hundreds of thousands of dollars in local receipts are being projected more aggressively, which means less of any surplus will fall into free cash in the future.

“The extra \$500,000 that we’re including in income for next year... that money would just flow to free cash” if it were not built into the revenue estimate, Libera explained. Using it up front, he said, “is the same thing as taking a half million dollars out of free cash that we would have gotten next year.”

Later in the meeting, as the committee discussed their written message to voters, Libera signaled they intend to be blunter this year.

“I’m tempted to make these last couple sections just very, very short,” he said of their “considerations for the future” section. “The conclusion is, we’ve really run out of time.”

Schools, state mandates and regionalization questions

School spending is another major piece of the picture. Granby must meet a state-set minimum contribution for education, plus an extra burden of about \$600,000 in retired teachers’ health insurance that most towns can count differently.

“For this coming year, the schools are asking for the required minimum, plus that \$600,000 that we have to pay, plus... an additional \$700,000 or \$800,000,” Libera said. “That’s a lot of money.”

The committee discussed regionalization of schools as a potential long-term strategy but noted there is no article on the warrant this year to fund the outside expertise the state recommends.

“They suggested that the proper way to go about regionalization is to hire someone to do the legwork for you,” member Robert Glesmann said of advice from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. “There’s nothing in the annual town warrant that deals with that particular issue.”

Forge Pond dam and other big-ticket risks

Committee members also flagged the aging Forge Pond dam as a high-stakes liability. Cost estimates have risen into the multimillion-dollar range and removing the dam could lower the water table enough to dry out shallow wells near the pond.

“With the cost of a new well, who’s going to burden these individual homeowners now [who] can’t use their well?” Furnia asked. “They have to now have a deep well drilled... and they’re \$8,000 to \$10,000, all in all by the time we’re done today.”

The question of whether to repair, replace or remove the dam is not fully resolved in this year’s warrant, but the committee intends to highlight the financial risk in its written commentary.

A community choice, not just a numbers exercise

Several members stressed that the coming decisions are about more than spreadsheets.

“This isn’t just a Select Board problem, a Finance problem, a department problem,” committee member Jennifer Mallette said. “This is our actual community... our expectation when we move here is we like certain things” about Granby, from public safety to rural character.

Another member boiled down the options facing residents and officials alike.

“You either need to raise revenue through taxes, or you need to cut expenses,” Libera said, adding that any real savings will mean changing services or sharing them with neighboring towns.

As town meeting approaches, Finance Committee members say they will again urge the Select Board to convene a group to examine what level of services Granby can sustain, and how to pay for them, before the town reaches a true financial cliff.

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TOWN OF BELCHERTOWN Economic Development and Industrial Corporation – Industrial/Real Estate/or Government Full Member:

The Town wishes to fill a full member seat (industrial, real estate, OR government) on the EDIC. If you are interested in being considered, please submit a letter of interest indicating your expertise to the Select Board’s Office. Letters can be sent via email to selectboard@belchertown.org or physically to the Office of the Select Board, One South Main Street, PO Box 670, Belchertown, MA 01007. The EDIC was formed under Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 121C, with the mission to develop and implement a development plan on the former Belchertown State School property.

TOWN OF BELCHERTOWN FINANCE COMMITTEE VACANCY

Belchertown is looking for a volunteer to fill an anticipated vacancy on the Town Finance Committee. The Finance Committee consists of five members, each with a three-year term. The primary duties of the Committee are to advise and make recommendations for the Annual Town Meeting and any Special Town Meeting regarding the budget and other areas of finance. Members are required to attend regularly scheduled public meetings and any special meetings as needed.

If you are interested in an appointment to the Finance Committee, please send a letter of interest to the Select Board’s Office outlining your background in finance and reasons for wanting to join the committee. Letters can be sent via email to selectboard@belchertown.org or physically to the Office of the Select Board, One South Main Street, PO Box 670, Belchertown, MA 01007.

BELCHERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM 2026-2027 SCHOOL YEAR

The Belchertown Public School District is now accepting applications for the following School Choice openings for the 2026-2027 school year:

Grade	Openings	Grade	Openings
Grade K	3	Grade 6	1
Grade 1	3	Grade 7	7
Grade 2	3	Grade 8	7
Grade 3	1	Grade 9	14
Grade 4	2	Grade 10	14
Grade 5	1		

The Belchertown Public Schools combine innovation and tradition to provide positive educational experiences for all of our students through quality programs, dynamic teaching and healthy relationships

The deadline for submitting a complete application is 4:00 p.m. on Friday, May 29, 2026.

The selection of non-resident students for admission will be in the form of a random drawing when the number of requests exceeds the number of available spaces. There will be two drawings for this purpose. The first will take place on **May 29, 2026**, and in the event of unexpected additional openings, a second drawing will be conducted on **August 15, 2026.**

The application and guidelines can be downloaded at www.belchertownps.org or picked up at 14 Maple St., Belchertown, MA 01007.

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COMMUNITY

Stone House holding living history event

BELCHERTOWN – The sights, smells, and sounds of the period come alive as we celebrate the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution.

The Stone House Museum is hosting an 18th century living history on Saturday, May 16 from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Our event highlights The Green Valley Homestead Reenactment Group. Immerse yourself in history while engaging with the living historians as they demonstrate 18th century life during one of the most important periods in American history.

Engage with a master tinsmith as he demonstrates and discusses the making of military items for the militia during the siege of Boston. Learn about militia groups, who alongside the “regulars” fought for American Independence from Great Britain. There will be musket demonstrations during the day.

Meet an herbalist apothecary as she discusses plants for healing. Healers and apothecaries were able to brew medicinal teas, make poultices, and provide soothing remedies for a variety of ailments and injuries of the

period.

Textile production was an important part of life in the 18th century. Visit the stations and participate in hands-on activities of wool production including carding, spinning, and dyeing.

Visit the ladies in the house who will discuss fashion, sewing, and clothing production.

This is a family focused event. Children will have fun playing games, visiting small farm animals, and making copy books for school. Visit the friendly heritage breed farm animals including sheep and discuss their economic importance in the dominantly agrarian colonial economy.

The Stone House is open for guided tours including their special exhibit featuring their American Revolutionary War artifacts. There is a small entrance fee of \$5 for adults, free to children under 18.

Parking will be located at Center School, Beers and Story Funeral Home if available, and the Belchertown Common. For more information please contact: Caren Harrington 413-484-6146, sallyshattuck54@gmail.com or 413-230-2022.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The Stone House Museum will hold a living history event on Saturday, May 16 from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sullivan to speak at 5th Annual Umbrella of Wellness Fair

BELCHERTOWN – The Belchertown Overcoming Adversity Together (BOAT) coalition proudly announces the 5th Annual Umbrella of Wellness Fair, taking place on May 16 at Chestnut Hill Community School. This free, family-friendly event continues to grow as a cornerstone of community health, bringing together education, resources, and interactive experiences under one powerful mission: to support healthier, safer, and more connected lives.

The event will run from 12 to 4 p.m.

The Umbrella of Wellness Fair is dedicated to promoting health and wellness through education, engagement, and empowerment. By uniting local organizations, service providers, and community members, the event raises awareness, encourages informed decision-making, and fosters a safe, inclusive environment where individuals and families can connect, learn, and thrive.

This year's fair will feature Chris Sullivan, founder of Not in the Playbook and former New England Patriots player, as the keynote speaker. Sullivan will deliver a compelling presentation on decision-making, substance use awareness, and real-life consequences—an especially impactful message for high school students as prom and graduation season

approach.

Attendees will have access to 70 community resource tables, offering valuable information and support services across all areas of wellness. Educational opportunities will include Narcan training and CPR/First Aid overviews led by local EMTs, as well as interactive exhibits like the Hidden in Plain Sight Trailer from the Alex Fisher Foundation.

Designed with all ages in mind, the event offers a wide variety of engaging activities:

Kids' Corner (during the speaker): Hosted by Helping Hands students, featuring Kaptain Kraw's magic show, balloon art, face painting, and henna tattoos

Interactive experiences: Comfort dogs, touch-a-fire-truck, ambulance display with CPR/First Aid demonstrations, Smiley from the WooSox, and Boomer from the Thunderbirds

Special attraction: Barrows Family Pulling Team “Pulling for a Cause” truck

Food and fun: Free raffles and a \$10 food truck token for attendees

With over 450 attendees expected, the Umbrella of Wellness Fair continues to strengthen community connections while making vital health and wellness resources accessible and engaging for all.

HUMC holding celebration for Pentecost on May 24

BELCHERTOWN – You are invited to join together for worship and celebration as we welcome, by membership, three new people into the HUMC family on Sunday, May 24 at 10 a.m.

This is also a time for each of us to worship and celebrate together with other church family members. A fellowship time will follow the worship service for refreshments and visiting

with family. Join us on this special day as we “Welcome Home Again” each other on this day of Pentecost.

And, be sure to wear something red representing the fire of the Holy Spirit.

Please join us on this most special day for an entire HUMC family reunion. No reservations needed, just come on home.

Select Board announces recent openings for town boards, committees

BELCHERTOWN – The Belchertown Select Board is looking for citizens interested in sharing their expertise by serving on a Town Board/Committee. If you have time and are interested in getting involved in your Town's activities, please submit a letter of interest to: Select Board, The Finnerty House, One South Main Street, P.O. Box 670, Belchertown, MA 01007 or by email to selectboard@belchertown.org (unless otherwise indicated below). You may also submit a volunteer form on our website: <https://www.belchertown.org/374/Volunteer>

All vacancies are posted until filled. The Town wishes to fill the following vacancies:

Agricultural Commission: The Town wishes to fill one (1) associate member seat on the Agricultural Commission. This commission promotes agricultur-

al-based economic opportunities; preserves, revitalizes and sustains the Belchertown agricultural industries, and encourages the pursuit of agriculture as a career opportunity and lifestyle.

Board of Assessors: The Town of Belchertown is looking to fill a vacancy on the Board of Assessors. This position has a stipend of \$1,000 per year. This recently vacated position will be appointed in accordance with the provisions outlined in MGL Chapter 41, Section 11 by a joint appointment of the Board of Assessors and Select Board. The appointed individual will fill the seat's remaining term and shall perform duties of the office until the next annual election in May 2026. The applicant must be a registered voter in the Town of Belchertown.

In accordance with MCL Chapter 59, Section 21, the Assessors shall assess all taxes duly certified to them

and perform all necessary duties as defined in MGL Chapter 59. Some of the duties include the classification and valuation of all real and personal property along with setting the tax rate each fiscal year.

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

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

Communications Committee: The Belchertown Communications Committee is looking for two (2) associate members to help shape how our town shares news and stays connected.

This group has supported projects like the Belchertown.org upgrade, Carriagetown Chronicles, and installing a broader social media strategy. We're seeking residents with everyday skills in communications, document preparation, accessibility, social media, or technology — especially individuals with practical experience using AI in workplace or business settings, to support the careful and responsible adoption of these tools in town government.

Conservation Commission: The Town of Belchertown is currently seeking to fill a vacancy on the Conservation Commission. The Commission is a volunteer board that reviews projects that fall under jurisdiction of the Wetlands Protection Act and local Bylaw. The position requires attending meetings every second and fourth Monday of the month, a basic comprehension of the local, state, and federal wetlands regulations, and occasional site visits. Qualified candidates have also demonstrated an interest, expertise, or experience in environmental protection. Commissioners must also have a willingness to attend training sessions, gain the relevant knowledge in a timely fashion, remain current, and

generally make the necessary time commitment. If interested, please send a letter of interest to the Conservation Department at conservation@belchertown.org. Any questions call the office at 413-323-0405

There are also two vacancies for associate members, who although are not voting members, they can gain knowledge and experience and could be elevated to a voting member in the future

Economic Development and Industrial Corporation – Industrial/Real Estate/Government Full Member: The Town wishes to fill a full member seat (industrial, real estate, OR government) on the EDIC. If you are interested in being considered, please submit a letter of interest indicating your expertise to the Select Board's Office. The EDIC was formed under Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 121C, with the mission to develop and implement a development plan on the former Belchertown State School property.

Energy and Sustainability Committee: The Town wishes to fill a full member vacancy on the Energy and Sustainability Committee. Its purpose is to develop and recommend sound energy and sustainability programs and policies

for the Town. Energy relates to the fuel choices we make for buildings, vehicles, and industry. Sustainability means meeting our own needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Visit their webpage at www.belchertown.org.

Historical Commission: The Town wishes to fill an unexpired term on the Historical Commission. The Commission's basic goal is the preservation of historic places and is completing an inventory of Belchertown's historic assets and structures that are more than 50 years old.

Veteran's Graves Officer (VGO): The Town is seeking a Veteran's Grave Officer beginning June 1, 2026. The VGO is responsible for ensuring that all veterans' graves within Belchertown are properly maintained and kept in a respectful condition. This includes tasks such as clearing weeds, repairing or resetting headstones, and maintaining grave surroundings and fencing as needed. They also coordinate placing flags on graves for observances such as Memorial Day.

Zoning Board of Appeals: The Town wishes to fill two

Please see **VACANCIES**, page 5

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.

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■ POLICE LOG

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 April 17, through April 23. 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

ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS

Friday, April 24
7:37 a.m. – An officer responded to assist Belchertown Fire and paramedics.

11:55 a.m. – An officer spoke with a parent concerning an incident with their child.

4:13 p.m. – An officer responded to Federal Street or a report of a dog chasing someone. The person fell and sustained injuries. The person was delivering something when they went towards the property and the dog ran up to them. The person ran away from the dog towards the vehicle, tripping and falling in the process. The person was evaluated by Belchertown Fire paramedics but was not transported from the scene. The Animal Control officer was advised of the incident.

5:14 p.m. – An officer took a report of fraudulent activity on a person's credit card account. They got a notice there were cards opened in their name that they didn't open. They froze their credit and requested the matter be documented.

Saturday, April 25

9:48 p.m. – An officer took a report of suspicious activity. A person viewed video footage from their cameras at their residence. The video depicted a vehicle pulled into the driveway. A person got out of the vehicle, walked to the front door and rang the doorbell. There were several people in the vehicle, and they were concerned what they were doing.

11:50 p.m. – An officer responded to an accident on Ware Road. A vehicle rolled over and one person was identified and couldn't remember how the crash happened. They were disoriented and didn't know the time of day. Belchertown Fire paramedics responded to the scene. The person was transported to the hospital. The crash was due to medical reasons. The vehicle was towed.

Monday, April 27

10:03 a.m. – An officer responded to an accident on Bay Road. A vehicle traveling east on Bay Road got dust and small rocks blown at the passenger's side window. A resident was mowing their lawn as the driver passed, causing dents to the side of the vehicle. The person was gone prior to the officer's arrival.

11:53 a.m. – An officer took a call from a person who had concerns about their neighbor's children.

7:59 p.m. – An officer took a report of vandalism at a residence. There was a damaged window facing a private drive. The person thought it was a rock that caused the broken glass and located they were able to find a matching rock inside of the residence. They also alleged someone vandalized their vehicle. They were advised how to

obtain a harassment prevention order.

Tuesday, April 28

10:14 a.m. – A person was walking on Mill Valley Road and found a wallet and turned it into the station. It was placed into property.

1:10 p.m. – An officer responded to assist Animal Control with euthanizing a sick skunk.

Wednesday, April 29

11:51 a.m. – An officer received a found wallet and tried to find the owner. It was entered into property for safe keeping.

4:39 p.m. – An officer got information about someone going to the closed snack bar at the basketball courts. It was unlocked and nothing appeared to be out of place. The officer was able to secure the door. The officer spoke with the juveniles in the area they said they saw someone in there. The officer later found the person who said they did go into the snack bar but did not take anything.

8:32 p.m. – An officer responded to North Main Street for a report of a woman arguing with a small child, possibly their son. The officer approached the two people and the person said they were having difficulties with their son. They were emotional and too tired to drive home and coordinated for a ride. A 51A was filed.

Thursday, April 30

1:17 p.m. – An officer responded to George Hannum Road business for a report of a hit and run in the parking lot. A witness provided the registration plates from the involved vehicle. The officer is getting video footage on the matter.

Granby Police Log

Editor's Note: The Granby Police Department responded to 95 calls for the week of April 24, through April 30. Those arrested are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. The Granby Police Department provides all information.

Friday, April 24

1:48 a.m. – While on patrol an officer observed a dresser that had been dumped on the side of the road. The Highway Department was notified to remove it.

Tuesday, April 28

11:51 p.m. – While on patrol, an officer observed a vehicle traveling at a high rate of speed. Radar confirmed the vehicle was traveling at 56MPH in a posted 35MPH zone. The vehicle was stopped and the operator was issued a written warning for speeding.

Wednesday, April 29

6:25 a.m. – A State Trooper reported that a vehicle struck a utility pole. Granby Police and Fire responded. There were no injuries.

5:36 p.m. – A resident reported that they were bit by a dog earlier in the afternoon. The Animal Control Officer was notified.

Thursday, April 30

7:19 p.m. – While on patrol, an officer observed a vehicle traveling at a high rate of speed. Radar confirmed the vehicle was traveling at 51MPH in a posted 35MPH zone. The vehicle was stopped and the operator was issued a written warning for speeding.

Library book sales looking forward

BELCHERTOWN – With the Library's basement not available at this time, the Friends of the Clapp Memorial Library are searching for a new location to hold future book sales. Finding a different space to hold book sales is a real challenge. The space needed would have to be safe for public use and include enough area where books could be stored, sorted and displayed. Also, the matter of how and where books could be donated requires resolution, as the library is currently unable to accept or store any donations.

Be assured, that the Friends are trying their best to find solutions, both temporary and long term. There are not a lot of options, but they have not given up and thank you for patience while this gets sorted out.

VACANCIES from page 4

(2) openings for associate member seats on the Zoning Board of Appeals. The ZBA is responsible for hearing and deciding on applications for Special Permits, Variances and Appeals from decisions of the Zoning Enforcement Officer/Building Inspector.

LAND DEAL from page 1

"It makes it look like we're spending millions and millions of dollars ... I just can we make sure that we make it super extra clear at town meeting that we're not paying for this out of our operating budget," she said.

The board also received an update on the online "Master Plan Matrix," which will track progress on community plan priorities. The work is being supported by the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission at no cost to Belchertown.

Albertson said a web designer is cleaning and organizing the database after earlier work fell short.

"What you have right now is a clean database of the items that are contained in the community plan with a basic website front end that can navigate through them," he said.

He added that the consultant is now "working on cleaning up the data around active grants and noting how they connect to potential projects," with a hoped-for completion by the end of the summer.

The board also approved a series of signs on town property for the upcoming Belchertown Overcoming Adversity Together (BOAT) umbrella wellness fair on May 16. Organizer Khris

Hoag said this year's event will be significantly larger.

"We have 70 organizations tabling this year, so it is going to be really insane," Hoag told the board.

Members agreed to allow BOAT's directional and thematic signs at key locations from May 6 through May 16.

In other business, the board opened a broad discussion on revising its public comment policy. Currently, 15 minutes are reserved at the top of each agenda, even though comments are infrequent. A draft change would cap comment at 10 minutes, allowing five speakers two minutes each, while leaving the chair discretion to extend the period.

Miner said she prefers to keep public comment early in the meeting so resident input can inform later deliberations.

"The few times that the public has spoken, I appreciate hearing them first, because it allows me to kind of absorb what they're saying and take it into consideration before whatever item that comes up on the agenda," she said.

While no vote was taken to finalize the policy, Town Administrator Steve Williams emphasized that any time limit would still be flexible.

"It does state in there that the chair may permit extensions on time. By lowering any amount of time, we still can hear additional people," he said.

The board also began what it described as the first step toward a formal policy governing townwide surveys, citing "survey burn-out" and overlapping questionnaires tied to grants. Member Whitney Jorns-Kuhnlenz said she wants a more deliberate approach. "I'd like a little more planning in advance. I don't know if that includes us having an annual survey ... but I do think there should be some limit on how many surveys are going out a year," she said.

Williams said he will ask departments to coordinate any new surveys through his office and the town's communications director. "We can do a rough litmus test whether or not it's necessary," he said.

The meeting also included a Pride Month proclamation, approval to raise the Pride flag on June 1, review of a proposed canine training facility special permit and updates on health insurance changes, infrastructure projects and preparations for the May 13 Town Meeting.

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SAMPLE

OPINION

SOCIAL SECURITY

Matters

By Russell Gloor

I want to do everything right when I claim Social Security

Dear Rusty:

I will be 62 in two years. I plan on signing up for SS at age 62, but I have heard there are details that are important when signing up. When it comes time, I want to make sure I do everything right. Can you help me understand?

Signed: Claiming Soon

Dear Claiming Soon:

Deciding when to claim your Social Security benefit is a decision you should make only after careful consideration of your personal circumstances. And details are, indeed, important. For example, if you claim at age 62 (when you first become eligible), your monthly SS benefit will be only 70% of the amount you would get by waiting until age 67 to claim. And there are other considerations as well, including:

If you are still working and claim at 62, you will be subject to Social Security's Annual Earnings Test (AET) which limits how much you can earn from working while collecting early SS benefits. The earnings limit changes each year, and for 2026 it is \$24,480. If the annual limit after you claim early is exceeded, SS will take back \$1 in benefits for every \$2 you are over the limit. And, if your work earnings substantially exceed the annual limit, you may even be temporarily ineligible for early SS benefits (until you either stop working full time or reach your SS full retirement age). FYI, the AET lasts until you reach your FRA (age 67).

The benefit reduction for claiming SS early is permanent. After you claim, you will only get increases for Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA) which occur annually according to inflation. FYI, the average annual COLA adjustment is about 2.5%.

If you are married, the reduced benefit you get by claiming early will potentially be the basis of your spouse's survivor benefit if you pass first. Surviving spouse benefits are based on the amount you are receiving at your death, thus waiting longer for a higher personal ben-

efit may also provide your spouse with a larger survivor benefit as your widow.

If you wait longer than age 62, your monthly benefit will continue to increase (by approximately 6% per year) until you reach your FRA, when you get 100% of the amount you are entitled to from a lifetime of working. FYI, you can even wait longer - up to age 70 - to claim an even higher monthly amount (8% more for each year of delay after FRA). At age 70, your SS benefit would be about 75% more than your age 62 benefit amount.

If you haven't already done so, I suggest setting up your personal online "my Social Security" account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount to see what your SS benefits are estimated to be at various ages. Then, when you are closer to age 62, contact us again to talk about your specific personal circumstances at the time, and we can provide you with everything you need to know about applying for Social Security.

In the end, when claiming your Social Security benefits, you should consider your financial need, your health and life expectancy, your plans for working, and your marital status. We commend you for exploring this well in advance of becoming eligible and we will be here to assist when it is time for you to apply.

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.



LETTERS

Support encouraged for Guardenier for school committee

Dear Editor:

I am writing to urge our community to vote for Hope Guardenier for the Belchertown School Committee. Over the years, I have witnessed Hope's unwavering dedication to our community and the values that matter most to our students and families.

In everything Hope does, she brings people together. Hope doesn't just attend events; she builds bridges and fosters genuine relationships. This ability to unite people around shared goals is invaluable for a school committee member who must work collaboratively toward what's best for our students.

Hope's community

involvement speaks volumes about her character and commitment. She has consistently volunteered her time at local events, school functions, and community initiatives, including the Belchertown Education Committee and the Belchertown Board of Health. Hope demonstrates the kind of genuine care and engagement that our schools need.

Hope cares deeply about the Belchertown School system and she will work tirelessly to support our schools and our students. Hope has two children in the Belchertown School system, so she is invested in strengthening our schools.

She understands many of the

difficult challenges that our schools face. Hope doesn't shy away from difficult conversations or tough decisions; instead, she faces them head-on with thoughtfulness, fairness, and integrity.

As a parent and community member, I am confident that Hope will bring thoughtful leadership and integrity to the school committee. She will listen to all stakeholders, make informed decisions based on what's best for our students, and work collaboratively to address challenges facing our schools. I urge you to vote for Hope Guardenier for the Belchertown School Committee.

Sincerely,

Caralyn Zehnder

Resident endorses Lessard Pearson for Select Board

Dear Editor:

As a long-time Belchertown resident and a retired Belchertown teacher, I am endorsing Lesa Lessard Pearson for re-election to the Belchertown Select Board.

Lesa brings a steady hand and balance to our Select Board. I appreciate that she listens to all sides, looking at the whole picture, before making decisions for our

community. She brings experience from her three decades of work in public policy and healthcare. Lesa is not afraid to take on hard or difficult issues. Whether addressing complex challenges or everyday concerns, Lesa leads with care and a clear commitment to doing what's best for Belchertown.

Over the years, I have seen firsthand the value of thoughtful, dedicated lead-

ership, and Lesa embodies those qualities. She has made a meaningful difference, and I believe she is exactly the kind of person we need to continue to move our town forward.

Please join me in voting to re-elect Lesa Lessard Pearson to our Belchertown Select Board.

Diane Otten Brown

Vote for Lessard Pearson for Select Board

Dear Editor:

I'm proud to support Lesa Lessard Pearson for Select Board. I've watched as Lesa has worked hard during her first term to balance addressing the recent financial issues facing Belchertown with maintaining the quality of life we enjoy in our town. She's shown that she researches issues, listens to all sides, considers long-term impacts, and carefully weighs options before making decisions-- necessary qualities as we consider future challenges.

Lesa's work has focused on improving and strengthening Belchertown. For example, she championed creating town positions for a Communication Manager and a Grants Manager to keep us informed and raise funds for future projects. We're already starting to see the benefits of these positions. I love seeing the additional information about what's happening in Belchertown, and I'm excited to hear about grant proposals in the works such as for a much-needed all-ages community center.

I've come to know Lesa as a dedicated public servant, passionate about Belchertown and what makes it special. I know Lesa will continue to research and seek out views from all sides as she helps lead Belchertown to a more secure future that continues to provide business, entertainment, cultural, and community opportunities for its residents. Please vote for Lesa Lessard Pearson for Select Board.

Cindy Loiselle



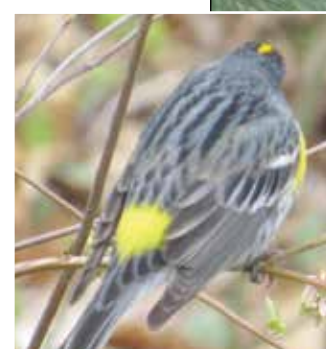
This photo shows a side view of a yellow-rumped warbler.

INSET: This is a back view of a yellow-rumped warbler recently seen in Belchertown.

These yellow-rumped warblers, also known as Myrtle warblers, flitted around the edges of Lake Wallace in Belchertown, on April 22.

A Belchertown resident sent an email reporting he saw two yellow-rumped. He attached the above photos. The second photo a rear view of the warbler clearly shows the yellow rump of this aptly named warbler.

These warblers are about the size of black-capped



chickadee and have a long bill and narrow tail

They are gray with yellow

on their sides, a small patch on the head and of course, the large patch on the rump. They have white on wings, throat and underneath. They have black and white streaking on the breast Males have

a large black patch around the eye. The female is duller.

In summer, yellow-rumped warblers inhabit open coniferous forests and edges and not as often deciduous forests. They primarily feed on insects in the summer. On migration and winter they eat fruit and berries particularly bayberry and wax myrtle. Their song is a series of high-pitched notes often described as "chewy" or "chip-chip."

When males court females, they fluff their feathers, raise their wings and the feathers of the crown and hop from perch to perch, chipping. They may also make display flights in which they glide back and forth or fly slowly with exaggerated wingbeats. The yellow-rumped Warbler's flight is agile and swift and the birds often call as they change direction.

The female builds the nest and sometimes uses material the male brings to her. The nest is a cup of twigs, pine needles, grasses and rootlets. The female also may use moose, horse and deer hair, moss and lichens. The nest takes about ten days to complete. She lays a clutch of one to six eggs speckled with brown or reddish gray.

Bluebirds

A Rutland couple say two bluebirds in their yard on April 25. They hope they will nest in the yard.

Great blue heron

I finally saw a great blue heron perched in a tree at the beaver pond, which abuts my hayfield. Every year, one or two are frequent visitors and even nested there.

Please see **BIRDS**, page 7

Turley Publications Letters to the Editor Policy

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

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

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The Garden Lady takes on spring bulb woes

Debi, who gardens in Hardwick, reached out to the Garden Lady with concerns over her daffodils.

They didn't bloom well this year, and she wonders if they need fertilizer.

"Dear Garden Lady, sorry to bother you in this busy season but our daffodils aren't doing well. I'm guessing they need food. What would you suggest?"

I am happy to answer your question! There are typically four reasons why daffodils don't bloom.

Probably the first mistake gardeners make is removing

the foliage too soon after the flowers go by. Foliage needs about six-eight weeks of ripening before it can be removed.

It is ready when it comes off with a gentle tug. Some gardeners get strategic with nearby plants so that the eye moves away from the foliage and to another plant taking the stage in full bloom.

Another reason why daffodils may be stingy with their flowers is that the clumps are overgrown and need to be divided.

Wait until the foliage has turned brown, then dig up the bulbs, pry them apart and replant them twice their width from one another and about two to three times their height deep.

I recommend using a pointed shovel, not a trow-

el. Sometimes they can be down deep and you want to make sure you get the bulb out intact.

Do this while the brown foliage is there so that you can find them. While it may feel "off" to be replanting in early summer, it is a perfectly fine time to do it.

Debi's bulbs could also need fertilizer, like she suggested. A sprinkling of granular fertilizer with low nitrogen, but sufficient phosphorus and potassium for blooming and rooting, respectively, would be ideal.

The two best times to feed are when the bulbs are up a few inches and now, just past bloom. Daffodils do require less fertilizer than tulips and hyacinths, and sometimes bloom for years without the addition of fertilizer.

I am wondering if the trees or the ground cover adjacent to Debi's daffodils were fertilized with a high nitrogen blend and it affected the bulbs? I have a few daffodils near an apple tree that is close to my compost pile, where I mix chicken bedding with vegetable scraps, etc.

I think the high nitrogen run-off from the pile affected my blooming, just as an example. Of five possible clumps I had a measly two flowers. Bone meal, high in phosphorus, is in order to rebalance the soil.

Knowing Debi's sun exposure, I don't think this is an issue, but it is worth the mention for other readers who may struggle with sparse blooms. Daffodils won't bloom in deep shade. Dappled sunlight is fine.

Planting under deciduous trees is also fine. If you think shade is the culprit, wait until the foliage ripens and move them using the guidelines I provided for bulbs that are overcrowded.

I sure hope one of these suggestions will help your daffodils regain their former glory!

Rose, who reads the column in the Ware River News, was concerned that a number of her hyacinths were broken off at ground level when just buds, and she wondered what or who could the culprit be.

"This is so disheartening, I don't want to even grow them any more."

I was astounded to hear this, because the same thing

Please see **GARDEN**, page 8



by Roberta McQuaid

While it is still green, it is photosynthesizing and making energy for next year's flowers.

It can get unsightly as it starts to yellow and finally turn brown and dry up, but we must be patient.

BIRDS from page 6

Purple martins

A purple martin watcher spotted the first purple martins in Massachusetts for 2026 in Rehoboth on April 4. The largest species of swallow in North America, they wintered in Brazil and flew 7,000 miles to the United States and Canada.

Hummingbirds

Soon the ruby-throated hummingbirds will be back. It is time to get out the nectar feeders. Instead of purchasing prepared nectar in powder or liquid form, avoid the harmful dyes and boil a one to four ration of sugar to water. I preferred to mix small batches, ¼ cup white sugar to 1 cup water on a more frequent basis to avoid spoilage. It can be stored in the refrigerator for about one week if making larger amounts.

Tom turkeys

In my travels, I spotted in three different locations Tom turkeys displaying their tail feathers for one or more hen turkeys. I noticed one Tom with two hens strutting about as the females kept on eating near him.

Bird fact

Annually, over 50 million Americans purchased more than one billion pounds of bird seed and suet.

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.



Citizens gathered to honor the former West Street School and to learn about its future within the community.

WEST ST. from page 1

the Granby Select Board with the express purpose of finding a use for the existing West Street School building. A previous recommendation was made back in 2018, where the recommendation was to remove the existing structure and build two new town buildings at the location. The proposed buildings would have been a Town Hall and a Council on Aging building.

As the project didn't go through, the former school remained vacant, which became a major issue. As West Street School was still being heated and maintained by the town, the building became a significant financial drain. The Select Board created the West State Building Committee in January 2023 to determine the fate of the former school. The result, after an attempt to renovate the school failed due to budget constraints,

was to rebuild a third of the existing structure to create new municipal offices for the town.

"Did somebody ask you where town hall is? It shouldn't be a multiple choice answer," said police chief and interim town administrator Kevin O'Grady, when speaking on the current state of government building structure in town. "This will be nice that it's just one place, one-stop shopping, and people can come in and conduct their business."

The first phase of the new restructuring will put all municipal offices under the same roof, a notable improvement over the three offices currently being in three separate locations. Granby Select Board Chair Mark Bail stated that he would not only like to see the municipal buildings consolidated into the new location, but the senior center as well. Fellow Select Board member

David Labonte agreed with his sentiments.

"Our seniors, they have a nice space, but if we can incorporate them into this building at some point, that would be wonderful for everything and everyone," Labonte said.

"The senior center here would be awesome," echoed Chief O'Grady. "We could hopefully use the old gymnasium and have elections here instead of using it at the school where either they have to close school or we have to put more officers into school for protection of the kids. It's a security risk when there's school going on and people are going to vote."

For now, the former elementary school will be used to house the municipal buildings once the first phase of the project is complete. Gratitude was also on the forefront of the Select Board members, thankful that the former school has renewed



Granby Select Board Chair Mark Bail, Select Board member David A. Labonte, Town Moderator Lynn Mercier, and Police Chief and Interim Town Administrator Kevin O'Grady smile for the camera.



Mark Bail gives a few thoughts during Lynn Mercier's speech.

purpose in the greater community.

"I just want to make sure Lynn Mercer gets the credit she deserves," concluded

Bail. "She really has kept this project alive. There's been a lot of ups and downs and she's been there every step of the way."

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MHC from page 1

“One hundred years ago, it required you not just to be a white male, but also to be a landowner in order to be a member of the state Senate,” he mentioned during his impassioned speech to protect voter rights. “I’m one of the two renters in the state Senate, so I wouldn’t even be eligible to be a member of my body one hundred years ago.”

Oliveira mentioned the 19th Amendment, which guarantees all American women the right to vote, as well as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which outlawed literacy tests, poll taxes, and established federal oversight to regulate discriminatory practices during public elections. The Senator called attention to the SAVE act being debated in Congress, calling the measure a “fee and a violation of the 24th Amendment.”

Gomez took the stand after, detailing his history as a Puerto Rican and his father’s reluctance to teach him English. “He didn’t want me, my sister, and my brother to come to the mainland because of his life experience,” Gomez expressed during his address. He stated that his father felt isolated on the mainland, unable to integrate with greater society due to segregation laws. “My dad is Puerto Rican. So he was not allowed to go to the white clubs or he wasn’t allowed to go to the African-American clubs either because he was Puerto Rican, right?”

Gomez echoed many of his companion’s statements and advocated same-day voting registration. He brought attention to polling locations, a logistic controlled by local government, and motivated citizens to engage in both regional and national elections. One major bullet point of his speech was the concept of polling locations, a measure controlled by the city counselors. Gomez expressed concern that some towns didn’t have enough locations.

“It’s your local elected officials who establish where you’re going to vote,” said Gomez as he encouraged attendees to reach out to ensure their area had proper



MHC Votes organizational members pose with local and state government officials after the event.



League of Women Voters representatives greet government officials and interested citizens.



MHC Votes Events Coordinator Keira Gillin presides over the event.



Governor's Council Tara Jacobs emphasizes the role of local government in citizens' lives.



Senator Jake Oliveira makes an impassioned speech about protecting voting rights.



South Hadley Select Board member Rene Sweeney talks about getting involved in local politics.



Representative Homar Gomez discusses his upbringing and the importance of local government.

coverage. “That’s why it’s really important for you to be in touch with your local elected officials, because they make so many decisions that can change your life.”

Tara Jacobs, the Massachusetts Governor’s Council, brought attention to her own position as well as the responsibilities that come with it. Jacobs mentioned that most citizens had no idea that her position even exists, let alone what she does in the position. Throughout her speech she enumerated her responsibilities, which include “judicial nominations,” “to provide advice and consent to the govern-

nor,” and to “give advice and consent on the parole board members when they’re nominated.”

Jacobs also mentioned that she was a key member in the Truth campaign prior to her current role, a \$5 billion advertising campaign designed to “shift teen attitudes towards tobacco and smoking.” She finds that much of her public outreach revolves around informing the public about the existence of her position, educating them on its impact and importance within the state. Jacobs stated that her position is important because it “matters who are judges are.”

“It matters the kinds of

people who are serving on our parole board,” Jacobs said during her speech. “Who those people are directly affects the kinds of results we get from our courts, the kinds of sentences that happen, whether people get diverted or incarcerated or a creative solution that affects them and the root causes of why they’re in court.”

South Hadley Select Board member Rene Sweeney was the last speaker for the event. Sweeney reflected on the other speakers’ comments and emphasized getting involved with the local community. They stated the importance of local government work and mentioned

the role doesn’t always involve what the populous expects.

“People are surprisingly passionate about trash pick-up,” Sweeney commented. “But I’m proud every time I’m able to help a resident see and connect with the infrastructure of the community.”

Sweeney concluded their time by encouraging interested citizens to run for local positions so that they can be the person that upholds the values they want to see in the community. They mentioned that location positions were the “nuts and bolts of government” and that such service is “a great experience.”

Community questions fielded by representatives concerned mail-in voting rights and state funding initiatives given recent funding deficits. The event is hoped to be the first of many public forum offerings by MHC Votes, as reported by organization senator Bailey Dillon. “I really hope to continue having conversations with the community and the school,” said Dillon. “I think putting direct energy towards bringing the students off campus into our communities to have these conversations, to have those discussions with our local community members is really, really important.”

Let's Garden
Get your green thumbs in gear right here!

GARDEN from page 7

happened to me in one of my gardens at Old Sturbridge Village where I have a multi red, white and blue planting of hyacinths and tulips. Grooming last week yielded at least 10 hyacinth buds that looked as if they were but off at ground level.

Although the experts say rodents could be the cause, the cut was almost perfect, not gnawed in any way, plus hyacinths contain natural deterrents making them rodent proof, typically. I did

cultivate the bed awhile back, my thought being that I may have cut a few of them off under ground.

As the stems elongated, they could have forced the bud above ground even though it was already dislodged, but the mystery remains. I’m sorry this happened, Rose, and I wish I had a definite answer for you, but at least know you are in good company with your hyacinth woes.

If anyone has any answers I would love to hear them!

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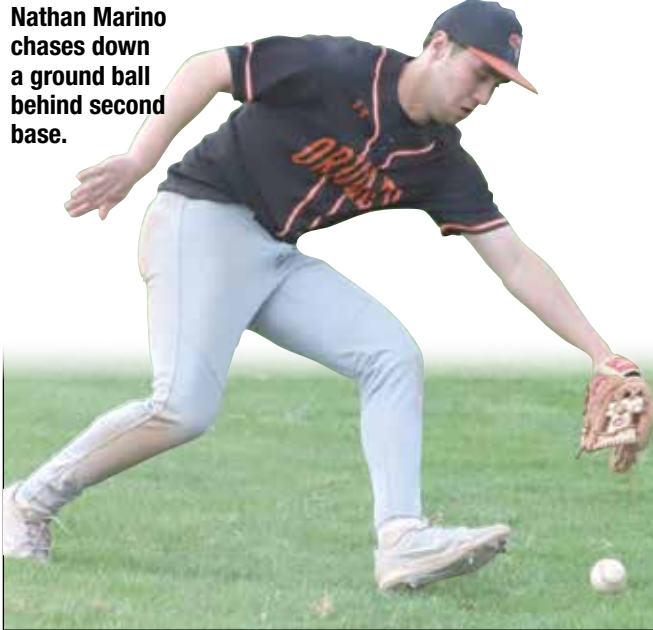
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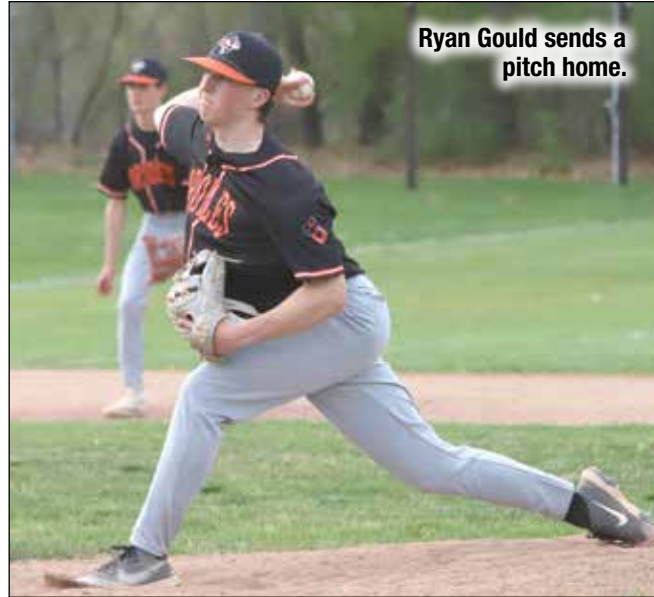
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Nathan Marino chases down a ground ball behind second base.



Ryan Gould sends a pitch home.



SEE MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE 10.



Addison Doktor sends a grounder to the infield.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

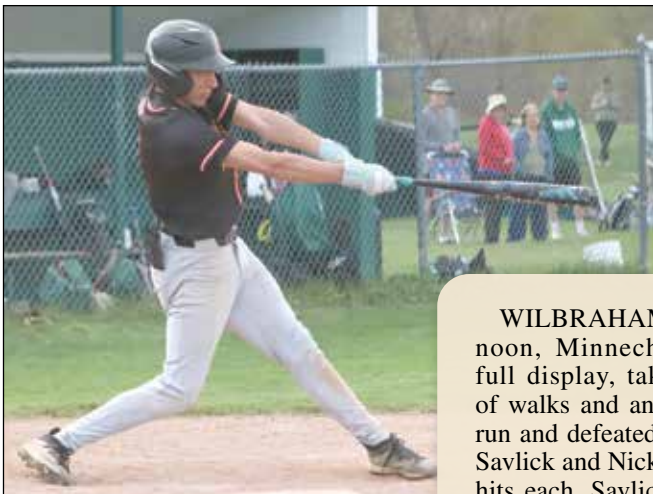
Pioneers suffer shutout loss

CHICOPEE – Last Friday afternoon, Pathfinder softball was shut out on the road by host Chicopee High School at Snot Park 12-0. The game ended in the fifth inning due to the mercy rule. Sam Prouty and Addison Doktor had hits for the Pioneers while Adeline Olbrych had three hits for the Pacers. Raelyn Loud pitched a five-inning shutout for the Pacers. Pathfinder fell to 1-10 for the season while Chicopee High is a perfect 13-0 on the season.

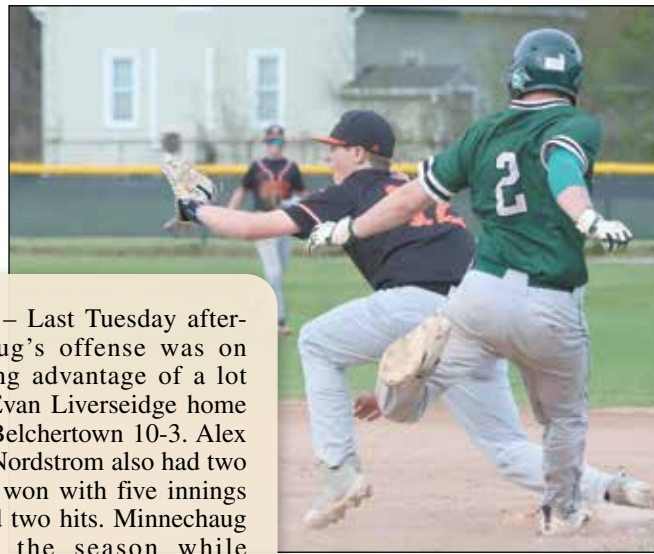


Emily McNeaney makes solid contact.

Orioles baseball takes road loss



TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI
Austin Raymer takes a swing.



Patrick Gibson attempts to catch the out at first.

WILBRAHAM – Last Tuesday afternoon, Minnechaug's offense was on full display, taking advantage of a lot of walks and an Evan Liverseidge home run and defeated Belchertown 10-3. Alex Savlick and Nick Nordstrom also had two hits each. Savlick won with five innings allowing a run and two hits. Minnechaug is now 7-6 on the season while Belchertown fell to 4-7. Ryan Gould went 3-for-3 for the Orioles with two doubles. Nathan Marino went 1-for-4.



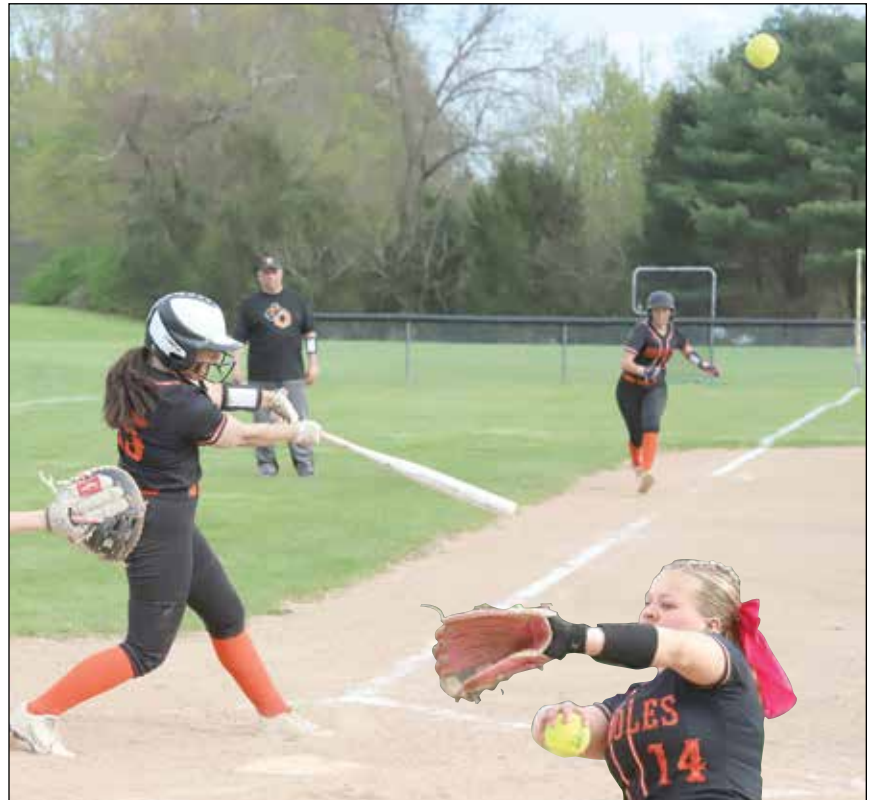
Sophia Mitus sends a throw to first.



Kina Roy leads off third.



Abigail Alemeida lifts a fly ball.



Lila Roy gets ready to fire a pitch.

Mustangs get by Orioles

MONSON – Last Tuesday afternoon, Monson High School softball defeated visiting Belchertown 8-5 in a good battle between the two schools. Monson did more of its scoring early in the game, getting out to a 7-2 lead. Belchertown made a push in the fifth inning, scoring three runs, but Monson was able to prevent any further damage to get the win. Belchertown got a hit and two RBI from Kina Roy. Sophia Mitus scored a pair of runs and had a hit. Monson was led by starting pitcher Chelsea Hull, who had a three-hit, four runs scored game. She also pitched a complete game. Monson is now 10-5 on the season while Belchertown fell to 9-4.

Wenzel opens up season with win at Monadnock Speedway

WINCHESTER, N.H. - Open-wheel ace Nathan Wenzel strutted the stuff that made him both a speedway and New Hampshire state Modified champion Saturday at Monadnock Speedway, topping the season opening main event at the high-banked speedplant.

And even though Saturday marked the first event of the new season, reigning Limited

Late Model track champion Dylan Zullo is already in the running for what may be the summer's most exciting victory at the historic quarter-mile oval.

With a huge crowd braving the chilly April temperatures, six drivers started their season with a flourish, each earning the first victory lap of the new season in their respective division. Along with Wenzel

and Zullo, long-ago Mini Stock champ Kevin Clayton, Pure Stock hot shoe Jimmy Zellman, Pro V8 Sportsman pilot Chris Kingsley and Young Gun speedster Sofia Rego each went home victorious.

Colton Martin and JT Cloutier led the All States Materials Group 604 Modifieds to the green Saturday, with Martin jump-

ing all over the opening lead. Cloutier rode second in his shadow, with Kimmy Rivet a close third, and Wenzel, from row three, quickly on the charge.

Wenzel had third on lap three and took second from Rivet on the tenth go-round. He and Martin then raced under a blanket until light contact on lap 28 sent Martin tumbling off turn two, then

moving Wenzel and Rivet to row one, with Tyler Leary now up to third.

Leary powered up to second on lap 36, quickly gluing his ride to Wenzel's as the two former speedway champions squared off. They rubbed in the final turn, with Wenzel wobbling but still holding the point to score his first win of the season.

With Leary an airtight

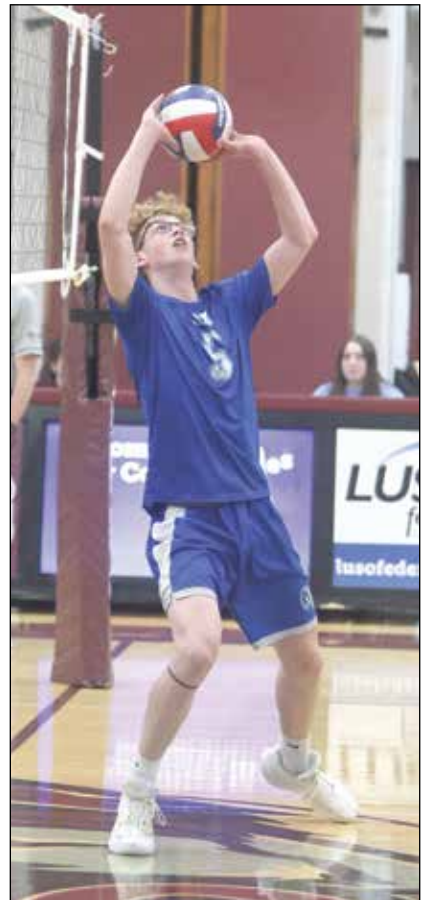
second, Martin charged back through the field to snatch third from Rivet, and Cloutier's strong night's work netted him fifth. Leary set fast time in qualifying, scorching his way around the high banks in 12.127 seconds.

Hillary Renaud led early in the Twin State Truck Services Limited Late Model feature.

Please see **RACE**, page 10

Rams win again, near end of regular season

LUDLOW – May has only just begun, but the Granby High School boys volleyball team has gotten through most of its schedule, improving to 10-5 on the season with a 3-0 sweep of Ludlow last Thursday. The Rams have just three regular season games remaining. The Rams will travel to Southwick Regional on Thursday, May 7 at 5:15 p.m.



Nathan Walsh sets up a spike near the net.



Jonas Fresch gets the back line set.



A pair of Rams go for a block.



Daniel Santiago keeps the ball in play.



Jake Gagnon sends a hit away.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

Thunderbirds defeated in series opener with Bruins

PROVIDENCE, R.I. - The Springfield Thunderbirds and Providence Bruins fought tooth and nail in another stingy contest, with the Bruins prevailing 2-1 in Game 2 of the Atlantic Division Semifinals on Sunday night inside Amica Mutual Pavilion. With that, the series shifts back to Springfield tied at one game apiece in the best-of-five set.

All of the scoring in the game came in a window of less than six minutes' time in the opening period. For a fifth straight game in these playoffs, Springfield succumbed to a 1-0 deficit

within the opening half of period one. Frederic Brunet geared a slapper toward Georgi Romanov, who made the initial save. However, the rebound bounced over to a waiting Matej Blumel on the right wing, and the 2024-25 AHL goal scoring leader rifled it into an empty cage to make it a 1-0 game at 8:34 of the opening period.

The T-Birds were granted a power play and an opportunity to tie the score quickly, and at 11:30, Dillon Dube did just that, parking himself along the left post and guiding a Hugh McGing



pass behind Michael DiPietro to even the slate, 1-1. Alek Kaskimaki picked up his second assist in as many games to round out the scoring play.

The Bruins showed they, too, could answer in a hurry, as Brunet gathered a rolling puck along the right wing and geared a back-hand pass across the slot

Please see **T-BIRDS**, page 11



Emily Forcier takes a swing.

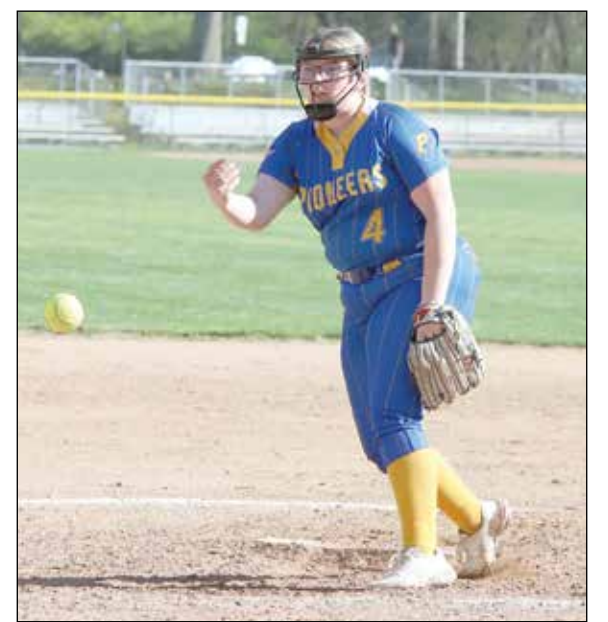


Ellisyn Gelinias makes a throw to first.

PIONEERS SUFFER LOSS

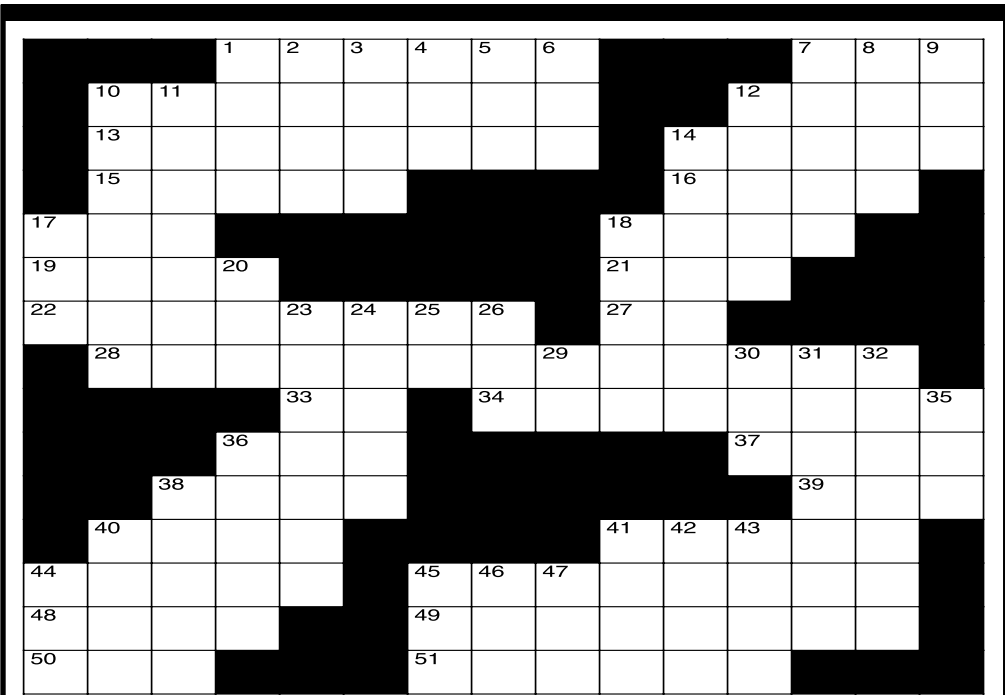


Julieta Tweedell takes a lead off first base.



Taylor Thorton sends a pitch away.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Large dung beetle
- 7. Gambling game --lo
- 10. Further along
- 12. Type of tobacco
- 13. Looked for
- 14. Silk fabric
- 15. Computer method to solve equations
- 16. As fast as can be done (abbr.)
- 17. Tear
- 18. Brews
- 19. "Famous" cookie baker
- 21. Women's Army Corps
- 22. Front parts of an animal
- 27. It's causing quite a stir
- 28. Beloved March holiday

- 33. 12th letter of the Greek alphabet
- 34. More impudent
- 36. Indicates center
- 37. Young woman (French)
- 38. A cause of distress
- 39. Santa's helper
- 40. Hillside
- 41. Many wombs
- 44. Is afraid of
- 45. Popular baked goods ingredient
- 48. Popular computers
- 49. Conceiving of
- 50. Google
- 51. Sturdy

- 4. Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!
- 5. Consumed
- 6. A place to sleep
- 7. Small seeds
- 8. Legendary law man Wyatt
- 9. Female sheep
- 10. Indigenous peoples of eastern Siberia
- 11. A place ships dock
- 12. Reciprocal of sine
- 14. Discomfort
- 17. British Air Aces
- 18. Exit sleep
- 20. Solar energetic particle
- 23. Plagues characterized by starvation
- 24. Short musical composition
- 25. Trauma center

- 26. Habitual twitching
- 29. A place where checks are exchanged (abbr.)
- 30. Decameter
- 31. Hinged surface in a wing
- 32. Shouting
- 35. Sports official
- 36. Volcanic craters
- 38. Supportive device
- 40. It's part of a rosary
- 41. Two-toed sloth
- 42. Body art
- 43. Let out
- 44. Foreign medical graduate
- 45. Nonprofit journalism organization (abbr.)
- 46. Couples say it
- 47. Bird's beak

RACE from page 9

Dylan Zullo, though, was on a mission, blasting from row three as he began to pick up where he'd left off in his championship season a year ago. Taking the lead on lap two, he looked headed for an easy romp in Saturday's 30-lapper. A caution, though, on lap 24, brought JD Stockwell to his door and the action was just getting started.

Over the last three laps, they rubbed, they pushed, and they traded places, with Zullo prevailing to win by just a foot. Robert Hagar had the best view of the top-two chaos, watching from close behind as he impressed in third. Renaud was fourth on the night, and Erik Smith rounded out the first five.

Kevin Clayton won the Monadnock Speedway Mini Stock championship more than a quarter century ago, taking top honors way back in 2000. In recent summers, victory lane had been like a for-

eign nation to him. But now, the popular wheelsman has a new streak started.

Starting up front, Clayton led all the way to win by three lengths over third row starter Craig Chaffee in the night's Keene Towing and Recovery MIni Stock main event. Steady Tim Paquette came home third, Tim O'Shea was fourth, and Dick Lamotte fifth.

Jimmy Zellman won a thriller in the Brattleboro Towing and Recovery Pure Stocks, coming off a pair of runner-up finishes at Claremont, the Bay State blaster had his mind set on something a little bit better. Leading all the way, he achieved that goal Saturday.

Zellman's opening night victory didn't come easily though. He had Colton Hull and Carlos Grenier draped all over him every inch of the way. Grenier got up for second on lap18 and the potent trio raced under a blanket the rest of the way. With Hull

third, Josh Brigham impressed in fourth, and Kyle Begos was fifth.

Chris Kingsley won the spirited Beck's Automotive Pro V8 Sportsman feature. Stephen LaPlante was second and Garden State ace Scott Riggelman came home third. It was Kingsley's first career win on the high banks.

Sofia Rego had a memorable night in the Doug's Auto Body Young Guns, winning with ease in both her heat and feature races. Eleven-year-old Dylan Stati - yes, just eleven - was second in the 15-lap feature, and Maeve Barry was third.

Monadnock Speedway roars back into action next Saturday, May 2, with a special Todd Martell Memorial 75-lap Modified main event atop a full night of NASCAR Local Racing Series events, and the first visit of the season of the exciting Pro 4 Modified series. Post time is 6 p.m each Saturday.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

A frost covered tree stump sits in the foreground as the sun began to rise on a cold November morning. It is one of many photos to be featured when Jamie Malcol-Brown presents to the Quabbin Photo Group on May 18.

Photo Group to host Malcom-Brown on May 18

BELCHERTOWN – The Quabbin Photo Group (QuabbinPhotoGroup.com) will host a presentation by Western Massachusetts landscape photographer Jamie Malcol-Brown on Monday, May 18 at 7 p.m. at the Belchertown Recreation Department, 66 State Street, located behind the Belchertown Police Station.

His presentation, “Weather, Light, and Luck: The Reality Behind the Shot,” will offer an in-depth look at the decision-making process behind his images. Attendees will gain insight into how he scouts locations, uses tools such as PhotoPills, tracks weather patterns, and adapts when conditions change unexpectedly.

Rather than focusing solely on technical settings, Malcol-Brown will emphasize the realities of fieldwork that include missed opportunities, shifting plans, and the importance of flexibility. The program will highlight how learning to pivot can lead to stronger, more compelling photographs that convey a sense of place and story.

“We’re really looking forward to learning how Jamie puts together his incredible images,” said PPG President Mark Lindhult. “He has an impressive ability to capture absolutely stel-

lar images.” You can see his photographs at www.jamiemalcolmbrown.com or on Instagram at [@jamiemalcolmbrown](https://www.instagram.com/jamiemalcolmbrown).

Malcol-Brown, a self-taught photographer with more than two decades of experience, works primarily throughout the Pioneer Valley, focusing on capturing wild places shaped by fog, storms, night skies, and other fleeting natural conditions. His professional work with Cultural Survival, an Indigenous rights organization, informs his approach to land conservation and visual storytelling.

The event is open to photographers of all skill levels, as well as anyone interested in landscape photography and the natural beauty of the Quabbin region.

The Quabbin Photo Group (QuabbinPhotoGroup.com) is a community of photographers based in Belchertown with a shared interest in nature, wildlife, and landscape photography, particularly within the Quabbin Reservoir region. The group hosts regular meetings, guest speakers, workshops, and field outings designed to help photographers of all experience levels improve their skills, share their work, and connect with others who appreciate the natural environment.

T-BIRDS from page 10

to Georgii Merkulov, who beat Romanov with a quick release to put Providence ahead, 2-1, at 14:02.

Providence outshot the T-Birds 25-14 over the first 40 minutes of the game, but both DiPietro and Romanov were taxed with special teams work in a second period that featured 10 minor penalties and eight combined power plays of varying lengths.

The T-Birds finally were able to give DiPietro a steady diet of scoring

chances in the third, but the Springfield power play left two more opportunities on the table, going 0-for-6 in the final two frames after connecting on their first man advantage of the evening.

Springfield’s netminding and penalty killing did everything in its power to buy the offense time for an equalizer. Romanov, for a fourth straight contest, kept his opposition to two goals or less. The T-Birds’ backstop has now stopped 116 of 123 shots for a .943 save percentage in the Calder Cup Playoffs.

What’s going on at the Library? Check it out.

FOR GENERAL AUDIENCES:

Plant Swap Tuesday, May 19, 6-7 p.m.

Bring a plant (or not!) to the library and swap it for a new one. The program takes place on the library lawn. Monthly on the third Tuesday of the month from May to September. This program is funded by the Belchertown & Around Plant Swap

Tote Bag Drive - Update!

Our “Tote Bags for Good!” donation drive is doing great! Thank you to those who have already purchased a bag and donated their \$5. Here are the total donations so far: Belchertown Meals on Wheels: \$145; Belchertown Food Pantries: \$140; The Sensory Trail at Lake Wallace: \$125. How does it work? Buy a 2025 Summer Reading Program Tote Bag for \$20 and \$5 will be donated to your choice of these organizations. Tote bags showcase all ten Summer Reading logos designed by local fantasy artist extraordinaire, Scott Fischer. Scott is a Belchertown resident who has been donating his time and talent designing our logos for 10 years! Visit the display in the Library and purchase your bag via cash, check or online payment. Which of these local organizations will get YOUR \$5 donation?

FOR ADULTS: RPG Night

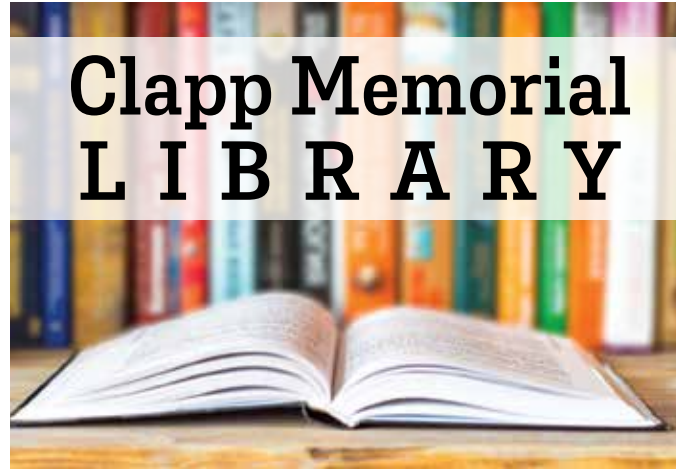
Tuesday, May 12, 6-8 p.m.

Break out your dice and join us for a monthly Role Playing Game (RPG)! Our current campaign, Vaesen: The Lost Mountain Saga & Other Tales, is a dark Gothic setting steeped in Nordic folklore and the old myths of Scandinavia! Dive into mysteries where old struggles against the new, and myths come alive. No experience necessary, email tmannino@cwars.org to join.

Book Talk with Janet Crosier

Tuesday, May 12, 7-8 p.m.

Join us for a presentation and book signing with author Janet Crosier. Her novel, *Shadows on the Heath*, imag-



ines the missing three years of Heathcliff’s life from Emily Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights*. Janet Crosier is an adjunct English Professor in Western Massachusetts and member of the Brontë Society, Modern Language Association, and Straw Dog Writers’ Guild. Copies of the book along with Janet’s latest novel, *Weymouth House*, will be available for purchase.

Transform Your Yard to Support Pollinators

Tuesday, May 19, 7 - 8 p.m.

Whether your yard is small or large, you can create a more pollinator-friendly environment! Join us to learn about a 12 Step Program to help you evaluate, plan, and implement an upgrade to your yard.

Love and Loss After Wounded Knee: Book Talk with Julie Dobrow

Wednesday, May 27 7 - 8 p.m.

Join us as we welcome Tufts University Professor, Julie Dobrow. *Love and Loss at Wounded Knee* chronicles the tumultuous and storied lives of Charles Eastman, and his wife, Elaine Goodale, former Belchertown residents. Elaine, a poet and writer, was a white woman who grew up in the remote Berkshires. Ohíye S’a, (aka Charles Eastman), was a Santee Sioux, born in Minnesota, and one of the only Native Americans educated at Dartmouth College and Boston University Medical School. Elaine and Charles met in December 1890, and fell in love. That same month, the town of Wounded Knee, South Dakota was seized by US Army troops. More than 250 Native Americans were massacred... and everything

changed. Bear witness to the remarkable story of these star crossed lovers. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing.

Postponed: “Knotweed Knockdown”

Our Knotweed project has been temporarily postponed. We will resume asking for volunteers, and reach out to current volunteers, as updated information becomes available. Thank you for your patience!

FOR TEENS: Free Food Friday

Friday, May 8, 2 - 3:30 p.m.

Join us for the last Free Food Friday of the school year! Teens in grades 7-12 are invited to the library on May 8th for free snacks (as supplies last) as they visit and use the library. This program is funded by The Friends of the Clapp Memorial Library.

Drama 101: The Finale! Wednesday, May 13, 2 - 3 p.m.

Teens in grades 7-12 are invited to the Clapp Memorial Library on Wednesday, May 13th, a BPS early release day, for Drama 101: The Finale! The library’s Teen Services Coordinator (a former theater kid herself) will lead teens and tweens in various theater games in the library’s Activity Room as well as host a theater-themed Jeopardy! game. This program is perfect for drama and theater enthusiasts and those looking to try their hand at acting. Email clapplibrarytab@gmail.com with any questions and to register.

Teen Advisory Board Meeting Friday, May 15, 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.

The Clapp Memorial

Library’s Teen Advisory Board will have its last meeting of the school year on Friday, May 15th in the library’s Activity Room. Free pizza will be provided as we celebrate this year’s accomplishments and talk about opportunities for summer programming and volunteering. Teens who have attended any TAB meetings during the past school year are invited and can email clapplibrarytab@gmail.com to register.

Teen Book Club Wednesday, May 20, 3 - 4 p.m.

The Clapp Memorial Library has a book club for teens in grades 7-12! This Teen Book Club is in conjunction with the MA Teen Choice Book Awards (MTCBA), the only book award in the state selected by teens. Each month teens will read and meet to discuss one book from the 2026 Nominee List. On Wednesday, May 20th from 3:00-4:00PM, teens will meet to discuss *Fable for the End of the World* by Ava Reid. 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.

FOR CHILDREN:

Children’s Scavenger Hunt May’s Theme: SPORTS! Prize: Sports-Themed Book Bundle

We’re inviting children to participate in May’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 am – 7:00 pm
- Friday**
9:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.
- Saturday**
9:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.

MassSave helps local residents save money

GRANBY – The Mass Save 2025 Annual Impact Report is out, and it shows that Eversource electric and gas customers in Granby received more than \$1M in energy efficiency incentives in a single year.

Delivered through Mass Save programs supported by Eversource, these incen-

tives helped Granby residents invest in home energy upgrades that improve efficiency and manage electricity and natural gas use, demonstrating how even small towns can achieve outsized energy savings through efficiency upgrades and rebates.

Statewide in 2025, Mass Save programs delivered

more than \$3.6 billion in total benefits, including weatherizing 52,000 homes, installing heat pumps in nearly 32,000 households, and investing \$450 million to expand program access and reduce participation barriers.

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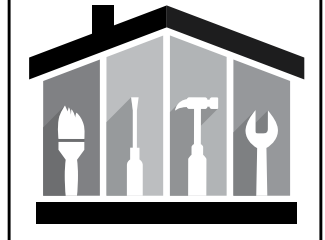
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PUBLIC NOTICES

Belchertown Zoning Board of Appeals Public Hearing Legal Notice

In accordance with the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40A, Section 11 the Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing on **May 20, 2026 at 6:00 PM.**

This hearing will be held in the Planning Board's meeting room of Lawrence Memorial Hall, 2 Jabish Street, Belchertown, MA on the application from Denise Cook seeking a special permit §145-69; for the creation of a building to be used as a commercial training facility/kennel at 213 Stebbins Street (Map 240 Lot 49, Zoned AGA/AGB); §145-11 Business Use (#25 and #26). A copy of the application may be inspected at the Town Clerk's office (Room 201) 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday, Lawrence Memorial Hall, 2 Jabish Street, Belchertown, MA. or at website https://www.belchertown.org/committees/zoning_board_of_appeals/index.php

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

Jennifer Sharrow, Chair
Zoning Board of Appeals
05/07, 05/14/2026

Hop Brook Culvert Replacement
Warren Wright Road
Belchertown, Massachusetts

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

The Town of Belchertown is requesting Bids for the construction of the following Project:

HOP BROOK CULVERT REPLACEMENT WARREN WRIGHT ROAD

Sealed bids for the project will be received electronically at www.projectdog.com (Project Code # 874482) not later than **3:00 PM** local time on **June 4, 2026** at which time the bids will be opened publicly online. It is the sole responsibility of the bidder to ensure that the bid is submitted online prior to the bid opening time.

The Work for this Project includes, but is not limited to: replacement of the existing Warren Wright Road culvert crossing of Hop Brook (Bridge No. B-05-028), raising of Warren Wright Road, and the addition of a terrestrial organism passage. Work items include excavation and off-site disposal; installation of a bridge crossing and culvert; construction of gabion basket retaining walls; removal, raising, and reconstruction of Warren Wright Road; and restoration of the site.

Bid Forms and Contract Documents shall be available online at www.projectdog.com at project code # 874482. Please see the Projectdog E-Bidding Instructions to Bidders for additional details. Neither Owner nor Engineer will be responsible for full or partial sets of Bidding Documents, including Addenda if any, obtained from sources other than Projectdog, Inc.

Attendance at the pre-bid meeting is strongly recommended but is not mandatory. The **voluntary pre-bid conference** and site visit will be held at **11:00 AM** local time on **May 14, 2026**. Bidders should meet at the southwest corner of Orchard Road and Warren Wright Road, Belchertown, MA 01007.

Bidders requiring clarification or interpretation of the contract documents shall make a written request to the Akta Patel, at akta.patel@fando.com, prior to **4:00 PM** local time on **May 21, 2026**. Clarifications will be provided by **4:00 PM** local time on **May 28,**

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.

2026.

Bids will be received for a single prime Contract. Bids shall be on a unit price basis as indicated in the Bid Form. For all further requirements regarding bid submittal, questions, qualifications, procedures, and contract award, refer to the Instructions to Bidders that are included in the Bidding Documents. Telephone inquiries are unacceptable.

The minimum wages to be paid for all labor on the project are established in a schedule issued by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, in accordance with Section 26A-27D, or Chapter 149 of the M.G.L., as amended. Said schedule(s) are included in the bid package.

It is the responsibility of the Contractor, before Bid opening, to request, if necessary, any additional information on Minimum Wage Rates for those trades people who may be employed for the proposed Work under this Contract. Materials, equipment and supplies to be used on this project are exempt from sales tax to the extent provided by M.G.L. Chapter 64H, Section 6 (f). 05/07/2026

Belchertown Conservation Commission LEGAL NOTICE

Pursuant to the authority of the Wetlands Protection Act (M.G.L. Ch. 131, Sec. 40, its Regulations (310 CMR 10.00) and the Belchertown Wetlands Protection Bylaw (Chapter 139), the Belchertown Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on **Monday, May 18, 2026 at 7:00 PM in the Lawrence Memorial Hall Auditorium, located at 2 Jabish Street in Belchertown, MA 01007** to review a **Notice of Intent** permit application submitted by Roman Anisimov for the proposed **work to construct a single family home and associated facilities at Lot C Old Sawmill Road (Assessor's Map 244-156.32) in Belchertown.** Work is proposed to occur within the 100-foot Buffer Zone to Bordering Vegetated Wetlands. Anyone interested in this matter should appear at the time and place designated. 05/07/2026



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- 3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts' public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

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OBITUARY

Joseph R. White, 1941-2026



LUDLOW – Joseph R. White, Esq., 84, passed away peacefully with his family by his side at Baystate Medical Center on April 24, 2026. Born on September 4, 1941, in Worcester, Massachusetts, he was the son of the late Joseph V. and Kathryn M. (Ziamba) White. Joe was raised in Palmer and went on to build a life defined by service, dedication, and leadership.

Joe was a proud and distinguished veteran of the United States Army, serving during the Gulf War era. His final active-duty assignment was during Operation Desert Shield, where he worked at the Pentagon. A counterintelligence officer, Joe attained the rank of Colonel in the U.S. Army Reserves and retired as the Commander of a Massachusetts Army Reserve unit. He also shared his expertise as an instructor at the US Army Judge Advocate General school in Charlottesville, Virginia. Joe was also honored to serve as a member of the adjunct faculty of the US Army Command and General Staff College at Leavenworth, Kansas, and the faculty of the First Army Intelligence School at Ft. Meade, Maryland.

Joe earned his Bachelor of Business Administration from the University of Massachusetts Amherst in 1970. He graduated from Suffolk University Law School in 1973

and was admitted to the Massachusetts Bar that same year. He began his legal career practicing with Attorney Jim Rooney in Palmer, Massachusetts, before opening his own private practice, Law Offices of Joseph R. White in Palmer. He was joined by his daughter, Elizabeth, in 2007 and together they created White Law Offices, P.C. Joe proudly owned and operated the practice for 50 years.

Throughout his legal career, Joe was a member of the Massachusetts Bar Association and the Hampden County Bar Association. He was admitted to practice before the Massachusetts Federal District Court, the Court of Military Appeals, and the United States Supreme Court. He also served as Assistant Register of the Hampshire Division of Probate and Family Court in Northampton, and as a law clerk to Justices of the Massachusetts Superior Court.

Deeply committed to civic service, Joe served as Town Moderator for the Town of Belchertown for 20 years. Outside of his professional life, he held a private pilot's license and enjoyed reading, listening to music, spending time with his grandchildren, and proudly attending their sporting events.

Joe recalls many significant memories during his life with his late wife Phyllis and treasures the

many accomplishments of his children, especially when he was honored to administer to Peter the oath of induction into the military service; to make the motion to the US Supreme Court to admit Elizabeth to the bar of that court; and to witness Susan receive the Greenspoon Foundation award for excellence in teaching.

Joe was predeceased by his beloved wife, Phyllis A. (Hoffman) White, in 2025; his sister, Beverly Sherman; and his nephew, Eric Sherman.

He is survived by his son, Peter White; his daughter, Elizabeth Chouinard and her husband Robert of South Hadley; and his stepdaughter, Susan Murphy and her husband Daniel of Belchertown. He is also survived by his eight cherished grandchildren.

Joe will be remembered for his unwavering integrity, dedication to service, love of family, and the many lives he touched throughout his distinguished career.

Calling hours will be held on Thursday, May 14 from 4 to 7 p.m. at the Beers & Story Belchertown Funeral Home. Funeral service will be held on Friday, May 15 at 12 p.m. at the funeral home followed by burial at 2:00pm with military honors at the Massachusetts Veterans' Cemetery in Agawam.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in Joes memory to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

DEATH NOTICE

Joseph R. White
Died April 24, 2026
Calling hours May 14, 4 to 7 p.m.
Funeral May 15, 12 p.m.
Beers & Story
Belchertown
Funeral Home

The Sentinel
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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.

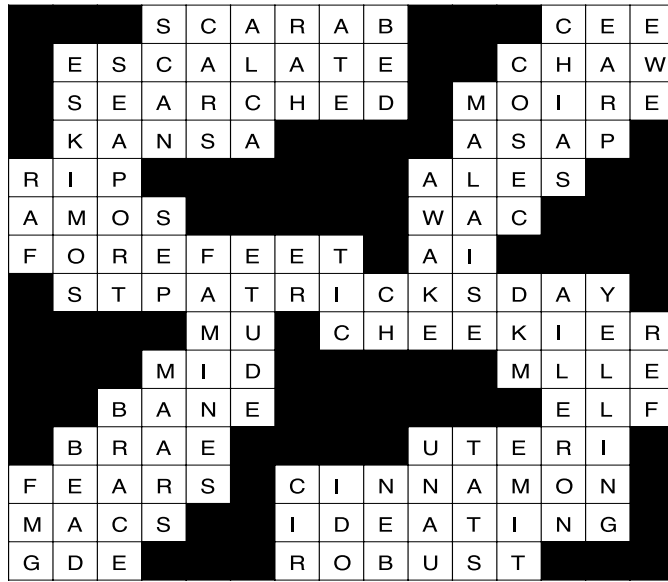
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