

Selectboard hopefuls split on regionalization

Stress budget pressures ahead of May 18 vote

By Melina Bourdeau
Correspondent

GRANBY – Granby Selectboard candidates Rosemarie Rosen and Jeff

Lawson outlined contrasting approaches to school regionalization and town finances during a recent forum, each arguing their experience makes them best positioned to guide the town through challenges.

Speaking to voters ahead of the May 18 town election, Rosen and Lawson agreed Granby faces mount-

ing financial pressures, from health insurance to school and infrastructure costs. But they drew sharp distinctions on whether regionalizing the schools should be on the table and how best to protect core services without overburdening taxpayers.

Candidates for other positions include:

Richard Bombardier and

Mael Walkowiak are running for one seat on the Board of Health

Gregg A. Leonard is running uncontested for a three-year seat on the Board of Assessors

Nita Abbott is running uncontested for a five-year seat on the Planning Board

Travor Augustino is running uncontested for a three-

year seat on the School Committee

Matthew Skipton is running uncontested for a three-year seat at the Commissioner of Burial Grounds

Nita Abbott, Paula Beaulieu, Candace Ribeiro and Angela Chagnon are running three seats for three-year terms as Library Trustees

Louisa Davis-Freeman is running unopposed for a one year seat as a Library Trustee

Rosen leans on state finance, education experience in bid for Granby Selectboard seat

Rosen, a relative newcomer to Granby with decades of

Please see **GRANBY**, page 11



The Belchertown Community Band about to perform on the Common.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

The band has been a great summer tradition

By Ben Hernandez
Correspondent

BELCHERTOWN – The Belchertown Community Band has been a town staple for 40 years. Established in 1986, the band was formed by Michael Bauer; the Belchertown High School band director at the time and Pennsylvania transplant with a background in community bands.

"The group of citizens realized that there was a

need for the love of music to continue in our town," said Melissa Hurst, the president of the board of directors for the BCB. Hurst is a public interest lawyer, public legal services attorney and French horn player for the band.

"It started off quite small, kind of a ragtag bag of musicians, bundle of musicians," Hurst said. "We skipped 2020 and came back with an abbreviated schedule in 2021 but we love being a part of this town."

Passion was the key takeaway as Hurst described the BCB and mentioned that band players come from all walks of life, from different age brackets and even from

different states. Hurst mentioned that there are active members from places as far as Connecticut and Worcester that contribute their talents. Practice is comprehensive over the eight-week season, four weeks of rehearsal twice a week with Tuesday rehearsals and Thursday concerts on the Common.

"If there's bad weather for those Thursday concerts, we go into Belchertown High School," said Hurst. "And then we have a Sunday concert...if the weather doesn't cooperate with us, then it's canceled. But it's a nice way to kind of bring our community together."

The BCB plays only one

event during the season, the Memorial Day service at the Quabbin Cemetery; a commemoration ceremony that Hurst described as a service "which recognizes not just the lost war debt from the four towns, but also what those four towns gave to support the water needs of our Commonwealth."

Unlike many community bands, the BCB doesn't have a direct affiliation with the town. The band is a nonprofit that receives grant funding from the Belchertown Cultural Council, which in part receives their funds from the Massachusetts Cultural

Please see **BCB**, page 5

Pathfinder receives record-breaking grant

By Marcelo Gusmão
Staff Writer
mgusmao@turley.com

PALMER – Pathfinder Regional School District has been awarded a monumental \$3.5 million grant from the state.

Last week, Superintendent Eric Duda attended the official announcement event and press conference in Marlborough that was hosted by Governor Maura Healey to announce the funds being awarded to Pathfinder. The funding will support the expansion of 150 Career Technical Education seats, and the repurposing of the former Cold Spring School in Belchertown as an expanded campus.

Superintendent Eric Duda described the award as a transformational moment for the district.

"This \$3.5 million award is truly game changing for Pathfinder Tech," Duda said. "We are about to embark on the largest expansion in the history of our school district, and we are honored to receive the largest grant award ever awarded to Pathfinder Tech."

The new campus in Belchertown is scheduled to open in September of this year. The school promised additional updates and announcements regarding the project in the coming months, as the district prepares the campus for students.

"This is a tremendous opportunity not only for Pathfinder Tech but for the entire region," said Duda. "We are ensuring that a former school building remains an active, thriving educational space while giving more students the chance to pursue rewarding career pathways. This expansion is a milestone for career technical education in Western Massachusetts,

building on decades of success at Pathfinder Tech and opening new doors for students."

To ensure that the new campus preserves its local roots and maintains a strong connection to the community, Pathfinder will invite Belchertown residents to help select a name for the new campus through a community survey.

In addition to creating new educational opportunities, The Cold Spring location is expected to create new educational opportunities, generate local job growth, and strengthen community partnerships by preserving a valuable community asset and addressing the increased need for skilled career training.

"This is truly a win-win," added Duda. "We're expanding opportunities for students, creating jobs, and keeping an important school building in Belchertown alive with purpose. The excitement will only continue to build as we move closer to opening our doors in 2026."

Duda emphasized that the expansion is intended to significantly increase access to career technical education opportunities for students throughout the district's nine member communities.

"If a student from Palmer, Monson, Belchertown, Granby, Ware, Warren, Oakham, Hardwick, or New Braintree wants a Career Technical Education, now is the time to apply," Duda said. "Pathfinder Tech will have a seat and space available for you next school year beginning in September. We are ready to prepare students for direct entry into a high-wage career, college, military service, or any other aspirations they may have."

Please see **GRANT**, page 7

MEET THE CANDIDATES

BELCHERTOWN

Lesa Lessard Pearson

Candidate for Re-Election

I am seeking re-election to the Belchertown Select Board. As a long-time public leader and community advocate, I have spent more than 30 years bringing people together, solving problems collaboratively and working to strengthen communities while protecting the qualities that make them special.

Why are you running for this position? If you are seeking reelection what qualifies you to continue in this role?

I love Belchertown and believe deeply in this community. Communities across Massachusetts are dealing with rising costs, housing pressures, aging infrastruc-

ture, and growing demand for services, while also feeling the impact of higher taxes. Belchertown is not immune, and we need steady, experienced leadership that plans ahead rather than reacts.

Belchertown has a strong roadmap in its Master Plan, which calls for village-centered development, housing diversification and targeted economic growth that strengthens the tax base while preserving community character. I will continue to work on turning that plan into action in a disciplined, practical way.

During my time on the

Please see **LESSARD PEARSON**, page 4



Mike McMorrow

Candidate

I've called Belchertown home since I was a child, and now I'm raising my own family here with my wife, Emily and our four children. This community has shaped so much of my life, and I care deeply about preserving the strong sense of community, responsibility and pride that makes Belchertown special.

Why are you running for this position? If you are seeking reelection what qualifies you to continue in this role?

I'm running because Belchertown is home, and decisions made here directly impact my family, neighbors and taxpayers. As Vice Chair of the Finance Committee and a senior

financial manager, I bring experience in budgeting, long-term planning and responsible decision making while understanding the real-life impact those decisions have on residents, families and town employees.

I believe the people making decisions for the town should be connected to the community and understand what those decisions mean at the kitchen table for working families.

My goals are to bring thoughtful leadership that focuses on practical solutions, long-term stability and keeping Belchertown a

Please see **McMORROW**, page 5



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Superintendent Eric Duda (left) met with Governor Maura Healey to accept the grant of \$3.5 million.

MEET THE CANDIDATES

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Heidi Gutekenst

I am the current School Committee Chair and have served on the committee for nine years. I am seeking reelection to continue supporting the students, families and educators of Belchertown.

Why are you running for this position? If you are seeking reelection what qualifies you to continue in this role?

I am running for reelection because I care deeply about the children of Belchertown and want to continue improving their educational experience. Over the past nine years, I have worked closely with educators, parents, administrators and town officials to help move the district forward. While every group has different perspectives and priorities, I believe one of my strengths is being able to listen, collaborate and balance those needs in a way that best supports students. During my time on the committee, we have faced difficult financial decisions, changes in leadership and districtwide challenges. I believe my experience and knowledge of the district help provide stability and consistency during times of transition. The most rewarding part of serving on the School Committee is seeing the positive impact our work can have on students. Not every part of the role is easy, but seeing students grow, succeed and find opportunities makes the challenges worthwhile.

What is the biggest challenge the board/committee is facing? How will you address it?

One of the biggest challenges facing the School Committee is the ongoing transition related to the closing of Cold Spring School. While these conversations have been taking place for over a year, some families are only now learning about the changes and understandably have concerns. Moving forward, it is important that the School Committee con-

tinue supporting the administration, educators, students and families to ensure a smooth and successful realignment of schools within the district. Another constant challenge is helping stakeholders understand the perspectives and concerns of other groups within the community. In the end, everyone involved wants what is best for students, and helping people stay focused on that shared goal is key to moving the district forward.

Discuss your commitment to communication, transparency and openness in Belchertown municipal government. Do you have suggestions for improvement?

Communication and transparency within the district have improved greatly over the past six years. I am proud that our partnership with BCTC allows public meetings to be recorded and aired so residents can stay informed, even if they cannot attend in person. I also regularly speak with parents, educators and community members about their concerns and perspectives. I believe transparency is more than simply making information public. It also means being accessible, listening respectfully to concerns, and helping residents understand the reasoning behind decisions, even when opinions differ. Open communication and accessibility are important parts of effective leadership and I believe continuing to strengthen those connections will help build trust within the community.

What should the School Committee be doing in the next three years to address the district's most important capital needs?

Without a doubt, the district's greatest capital need is Jabish Brook Middle

Please see **GUTEKENST**, page 5



Hope Guardianier

As an educator, who works in multiple districts

around the valley and a consultant, who has assisted schools around the state, I have a unique perspective on how schools operate. With a graduating senior and an eighth grader in the district, I am personally invested in the success of our schools, and I would like to bring my skills and expertise to the school committee.

Why are you running for this position?

I am running for School Committee because I believe that I have the skills and experience needed on the board right now and because I want to serve my community. I have a strong record of service in Belchertown as a former Board of Health member, Agricultural Commission member, former BPS substitute and volunteer, current Belchertown Education Foundation member and current Belchertown Fair Exhibit Hall Committee member.

What is the biggest challenge the board/committee is facing? How will you address it?

School funding is a perennial problem due to increasing costs for education and limited funding for rural communities in western Massachusetts at the state level. This is not a problem that is unique to Belchertown and addressing funding challenges has no easy answer. I will, first, gain a comprehensive understanding of all that we are already doing to address funding challenges.

Then, I will help find creative solutions at the national, state and local level to ensure Belchertown continues to be known as a community that values educa-



Discuss your commitment to communication, transparency and openness in Belchertown municipal government. Do you have suggestions for improvement?

I believe that open communication between elected officials and residents allows for understanding on both sides. I am a thoughtful communicator who is interested in hearing differing views so that we can work together for Belchertown schools. I would like to see more information provided to the public about the school budget process. Especially after last year's override, I think residents should be able to access the information about how their tax dollars are being spent and I am interested in finding ways to share that information in a clear and helpful manner.

What should the School Committee be doing in the next three years to address the district's most important capital needs?

As a member of the BPS Strategic Planning Committee, I appreciated being part of the visioning process for our district for the next five years. Community members on the planning committee brought clarifying questions and new ideas to the process. I would like to engage more of the community in those conversations. Whether or not you want to serve on a committee, I think everyone has thoughts, opinions and ideas about our schools - especially if they are a parent, teacher or student. If elected, I will find more ways to hear from the community and bring those ideas to the school committee.

Josh Wallace

I have lived in Belchertown for 18 years and have two children in the schools in town. My family and I have loved every part of living in this big little town.

Why are you running for this position?

I was on the school committee several years ago and enjoyed/respected every minute of it. The trust the community put in me to make decisions for their child's education was and honor for me to be a part of.

I'm running for School Committee again because I feel the school committee has forgotten that its focus is on the children, school community and community impact that schools have.

Schools create our next wave of citizens in this great country, and we need to remember that. The staff at the schools work hard to educate, encourage and support our kids in becoming the next generation of community members and also deserve to be recognized for that.

What is the biggest challenge the committee is facing?

Money is tight in every community, but we should work to make every dollar count and in some way work back to benefiting our students.

The schools could work on modernizing their commitment to mental health as an increasing number of students are diagnosed with a mental illness every year.

The safety and wellbeing of each student matters and should be cared for in every way.

Discuss your commitment to communication, transparency and openness in Belchertown municipal government. Do you have suggestions for improvement?

Town government is always scrutinized for not being transparent enough. I feel like collaboration amongst committees would make town government work together and make things run easier.

What should the School Committee be doing in the next three years to address the district's most important capital needs?

Schools should be looking to bring their facilities into the next level. Sports fields are

An example of this and the delay in allowing sponsorships and lack of turf facilities that the community could use for their events is far behind other schools in the area.

The middle school is a travesty of epic proportions and as a former member of the middle school building committee we did not do enough to highlight the inadequacy of this building and the atmosphere it has.


Student support services need to be increased as guidance counselors are left proctoring exams, teaching classes and that makes them unavailable to students who need them.

I look forward to bringing common sense decisions and real-world experience in mental health, school safety and child engagement.

Thank you again for your time and look forward to serving my community again.



✓ Annual Town Election May 18, 2026



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Highway Department, 110 West Brookfield Road, New Braintree MA 01531.

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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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Kianna Ripley shows her two pieces.



Helen Bierly shows her diamond art.



Lucy Gray takes a sushi break.



Jena Rose Zawalski enjoys some sushi.



They also provided the sushi for teens to have during the art event.



The sushi is served.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

An example of Diamond Art.

SUSHI DIAMOND-PAINTING PROGRAM

BELCHERTOWN – Last week, Clapp Memorial Library hosted a unique vent called Sushi Diamond-Painting. The program was a collaboration with Kansai Asian Bistro to celebrate AAPI Heritage Month. The library would like to thank Kansai for donating free sushi and gyoza for teens to enjoy during the program.

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 books 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.

LESSARD PEARSON

from page 1

Select Board, I listen carefully, bring people together, and make decisions grounded in facts, fiscal responsibility and community input. I have supported stronger town communications, expanded grant capacity and economic development strategies that focus on long-term stability rather than short-term fixes. My background in healthcare, nonprofit leadership, communications and public policy has taught me how to navigate complex issues, build consensus, and focus on practical solutions. My public service experience reinforces my belief that local government works best when people feel respected, heard and included.

What is the biggest challenge the board/committee is facing? How will you address it?

One of the biggest chal-

lenges is balancing rising costs with the need to maintain and improve town services while keeping taxes affordable. The recent Proposition 2½ override, which passed by a very narrow margin, underscored how closely residents are watching every dollar and how important fiscal discipline is to this community. Moving forward, the town must continue disciplined budgeting, clear prioritization of needs versus wants and aggressive pursuit of grants and outside funding. That means being more strategic about how we invest in infrastructure, services and staffing so that we protect essential services without overburdening taxpayers. We must also manage growth in a way that does not compromise Belchertown’s rural character. We need to continue aligning development decisions with the Master Plan so growth happens in targeted areas, sup-

ports infrastructure capacity and strengthens the tax base without eroding what makes Belchertown unique.

Describe your vision for economic development in Belchertown.

Belchertown needs economic development that balances growth, strengthens the tax base, supports local businesses, and improves quality of life while preserving Belchertown’s identity. It must focus on small-scale, community-appropriate development: locally owned businesses, restaurants and cafés, health and wellness services, professional offices and carefully designed mixed-use projects—investments that bring activity without changing the fundamental character of our town. Housing diversification is also essential. We need more options like townhouses and condominiums so seniors can downsize and younger families can stay in Belchertown.

I supported the Belchertown Housing Trust and programs that benefit seniors and veterans, including tax work-off opportunities.

Belchertown’s farms, open space and natural beauty are important economic assets. Supporting agritourism, recreation and small-scale local enterprise helps strengthen both our economy and our community identity.

I will continue working closely with the EDIC, Capital Planning Committee, and Land Use Committee to ensure we are planning strategically for long-term infrastructure and financial needs. I will also work with the Planning Board and Historical Commission to ensure that that development decisions align with the Master Plan and preserve Belchertown’s historic character while guiding responsible growth.

Discuss your commitment to communication,

transparency and openness in Belchertown municipal government. Do you have suggestions for improvement?

Communication and transparency are essential to effective local government. Before joining the Select Board, Belchertown didn’t have a Communications Manager or dedicated grant-writing resource. With them and the Communications Committee, the town website was redesigned for better access, meeting information is easier to find, town events are visible and new tools like Carriage House Chronicles and Town Manager’s blog further improve ongoing communication. New ideas include: benefits, responsibilities, time limits and spotlights on volunteers, an EDIC At-a-Glance page and a Master Plan for Beginners.

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Relay for Life set for May 30

BELCHERTOWN – The Quabog Valley Relay for Life is on May 30 on the Belchertown Common from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

We are looking for more teams, more participants and more survivors for our event. If you wish to form a team in memory or honor of someone, please call 800-227-2345 and get your team registered. If you wish to join a team already formed you can join Team Lynn - Peach Pedestrians by going to the following link <http://main.acsevents.org/go/to/eleanoregray>

Scroll down to where it says "Join Eleanore's team". You can also donate on this link too.

If you are a cancer survivor, we want you to join

us on May 30 so we can honor you. You need to be



registered for our event and you can do so by calling the above 800# or going to the above link. Registered survivors will get a free Survivor shirt, a free luncheon at the relay plus a goodie bag. If you aren't able to walk the Survivor Lap, just come and hang out with us and enjoy the activities.

There will be many things to do on May 30. There will be a big craft fair with

more than 60 vendors, A Touch A Truck display at the McCarthys end of the common, a Gift Basket Sale in the Old Town Hall where there will be Lots of baskets for you to win, K9 demonstrations, Face Painting, Photographer will take your picture and you can get it right away, Food Trucks and more. Come and check this out.

This is a fundraiser for the American Cancer Society and we hope to be able to donate a lot of money to ACS from this event and we are hoping for your help.

If you wish more information on this event, please email ctellie@juno.com

Thank you and see you on May 30.

HUMC holding celebration for Pentecost

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.

BCB from page 1

Council. The band also partners with the schools to use their space, compensate the custodians for their time, and also rent space on the Common.

"It really is a community," said Hurst. "I'm there with retired folks, with college students, with middle school students, nurses, directors, accountants, farmers, really anyone and everyone who loves music and loves performing and building something together can participate."

Legacy is an essential part of the BCB. Multiple generations have contributed to the band, with current members brought into the fold that were once children of former players and concert attendees. Hurst mentioned that three generations of players once played in the same section, all trumpeters by her recollection. She also stated one of the most satisfying



The Belchertown Community Band performs on the Common.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

aspects of being a member is seeing the children connect to music and learn about historical pieces.

"It spirals into them wanting to learn about other things," Hurst said. "They're like 'oh, well, this person wrote that song.' My nephew, Jack, was telling me how 'Mancini wrote this one. He also wrote this one' and it's really cute...it's really sweet and it's nice."

The band serves as common ground for the entire community, a means of connecting people regardless of their age, ethnicity, education, orientation or other forms of identity. To Hurst, that essential element is the key factor to not only the BCB's continued success but the success of Belchertown overall.

"I'm really hoping that it continues to bring our com-

munity together in times that are so divisive, where the tenor of the national conversation is so angry and aggressive, that we can recognize that there's things that much more brings us together than divides us." Hurst said. "Yes it's hard. It's also community. And for us, that's kind of everything...you have a home here."

McMORROW from page 1

community people are proud to call home.

What is the biggest challenge the board/committee is facing? How will you address it?

The biggest challenges facing the town is balancing rising costs while maintaining the services residents rely on every day. I will focus on collaboration, accountability and building stronger partnerships at the state level while making sure taxpayer dollars are spent responsibly and priorities are communicated clearly to the public.

I also believe we need to improve long-term planning so the town can be more pro-

active instead of constantly reacting to financial challenges year after year.

Residents deserve leaders who are willing to ask tough questions, look at the full picture and make decisions based on what is best for the town as a whole.

Describe your vision for economic development in Belchertown.

My vision for smart economic development is to strengthen the tax base while preserving Belchertown's character and sense of community. I support responsible growth that helps local businesses succeed, attracts new opportunities and keeps Belchertown a place families want to live without overde-

veloping the town we all care about.

Economic growth should ease the burden on taxpayers while still protecting the small-town feel that makes Belchertown special.

I would also like to see stronger communications and collaboration with local businesses so the town can better understand their needs and encourage sustainable growth.

Discuss your commitment to communication, transparency and openness in Belchertown municipal government. Do you have suggestions for improvement?

Residents deserve a government that is transparent,

accessible, and responsive to the community. I support clearer communication, greater public engagement and more timely updates on budgets, projects and major town decisions so residents feel informed, heard and included in the process. Even when residents may disagree on issues, they deserve honesty, respect and leadership that listens to concerns and communicates openly.

I also believe town boards and committees should work harder to make information easier to access so residents can stay informed and involved in decisions that affect their everyday lives.

GUTEKENST from page 2

School. While the proposal for a new middle school was not approved, the need to improve the building has not gone away. Over the next three years, the School Committee should work collaboratively with town leaders and the community to identify realistic

ways to improve the learning environment and support the academic needs of middle school students. The district must continue evaluating both short-term improvements and long-term solutions for the building. Students and staff deserve a safe, functional and modern learning environment that supports academic success.

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SAMPLE

Love, Mom & Dad

OPINION

SOCIAL SECURITY Matters

By Russell Gloor

I'm still working; why didn't I get a higher Social Security benefit?

Dear Rusty:

I began collecting benefits at age 72 and am now 78.

Since that time, I have continued to work and have contributed over \$40,000 to Social Security over the last six years. At the time of my retirement, I was informed that the Social Security Administration would review my contributions annually and replace lower-earning years from my 35-year record with my current higher-earning years.

Despite my current annual income exceeding \$100,000, I have not seen an increase in my benefit amount over the past six years. I recently met with an SSA representative, who confirmed that my benefits are being reviewed annually but did not provide specific details or evidence of these adjustments. Could you please advise me on how to formally verify that my benefits are being accurately reviewed and updated to reflect my continued contributions?

Signed: Collecting and Still Working

Dear Collecting:

For information, your contributions from Federal Insurance Contributions Act payroll taxes to Social Security over the last six years are not what determines if you get an increase to your monthly SS benefit.

Although you contributed to SS since you started receiving SS benefits, those contributions do not affect your monthly SS benefit. Your monthly SS benefit is based only the highest inflation-adjusted 35 years of earnings over your lifetime. And for your monthly benefit to change, your current earnings each year would need to replace at least one of those 35 historical, inflation-adjusted year earnings.

We regularly hear from those who do benefit from SSA's regular review of work earnings after they start receiving monthly SS benefits, and our Advisory staff includes two individuals with a combined 70 years of service with the Social Security Administration. Thus, we are comfortable saying that SSA does, in fact, review your earnings annually to see if your monthly SS payment should be higher.

From a process standpoint, SSA receives your annual earnings information from the IRS (i.e., directly from your annual tax return) by mid-year annually, after which SSA evaluates your recent earnings to see if an increase in your monthly SS benefit is warranted. If so, that increase is automatically applied, usually around October each year and you are paid the extra amount retroactively to the beginning of the year.

What you may not realize is that your lifetime earnings (your historical earnings) are adjusted for inflation.

This is a good thing, because that means your current monthly SS benefit is calculated using today's dollar values for your past earnings, rather than the actual money amounts you originally earned and received.

For example, \$50,000 of 1990 earnings would be worth about \$125,000 today. Which also means that those 1990 earnings would only yield a higher current Social Security benefit if your recent earnings were more than \$125,000. And this is true for all 35 years of lifetime earnings used to calculate your current monthly Social Security benefit.

The best way for you to ensure that you are getting the right monthly benefit amount is to first obtain your lifetime earnings history from Social Security. This is most easily obtained through your online "my Social Security" account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount. If you don't have an online account set up, you can also request an "Earnings Statement" by calling Social Security at 1.800.772.1213 (or call your local SS field office to request it). Next, I suggest you use Social Security's "Online Benefits Calculator" explained and available at this link: <https://www.ssa.gov/benefits/retirement/planner/AnypiaApplet.html>

If, after this, you believe you should be getting a higher monthly SS benefit because of your recent earnings, you can again contact SSA and tell them you believe they did not properly adjust your current SS benefit for your most recent earnings. Following that, you can submit a "Request for Reconsideration" (form SSA-561) which will result in a full separate review of your case by an independent SSA person, followed (some months later) by a formal written determination on your assertion. If you received a letter from SSA because of your previous meeting with them, include a copy of that letter with your "Request for Reconsideration."

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 ssadvisory@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

This summer...



Rhubarb, a perennial fruit worth growing

Recently I was chatting with a coworker who has a dozen varieties of rhubarb.

Yes, rhubarb. He asked if I wanted a division or two.

Although I love all things old, and this fruit (yes, fruit) is considered about as old-fashioned as they come, I politely declined. Rhubarb and I don't particularly get along.

But, that doesn't mean I'll knock anyone who can eat it and not visit the bathroom. All the more power to them.

Read on for some rhubarb trivia that just may earn you a prize on your next cruise.

Back in the day when everyone made time for baking, or baked out of necessity, rhubarb was indispensable in the garden. Today, most folks figure they can buy what they need when they long to make a strawberry-rhubarb pie or some preserves.

I say, "Why buy it, when it is so easy to grow?" And, as an added bonus, it may just out live you!

Rhubarb was featured on a cooking show and a lengthy discussion evolved between the celebrity cooks about whether it was a fruit or a vegetable. I never did hear the resolution, but did a little research of my own.

Apparently, rhubarb is a vegetable but after a court decision in 1947 it is legally a fruit and was not subject to taxation of the time.

The best time for planting rhubarb is early through mid-spring. If you are lucky enough to know someone with an established patch, it is very likely they will give you all of the divisions you need and then some.

You can also purchase roots or small potted plants from local nurseries. For an average family of four, plan on two or three divisions.

Rhubarb will do best in a spot in the yard that is in full sun or light shade. Most gardeners locate it separately from or at one end of the main vegetable garden.

When it's time for your plants to make their way to a permanent spot, dig holes two to three feet apart. The depth of the holes will depend on the size of the divisions you have and how big their roots are.

Plant them at the same depth they were growing in your friend's garden or in the pot you bought them in. If you are planting roots, go by the buds – they should be planted about two inches below the soil surface.

During the first growing season our emphasis should be on root building. For that reason be sure that you water well and keep weeds at bay.

Do not pick stalks until the following spring, but do break off any flower buds that form. Once your patch has established itself there is no stopping it! All you'll need to do to maintain it is provide a topdressing of compost or rotted manure each spring and weed as needed.

Of course, you will also want to pick as much as you can! No knife is needed: simply hold the stem near the base and give it a quick pull along with a gentle twist.

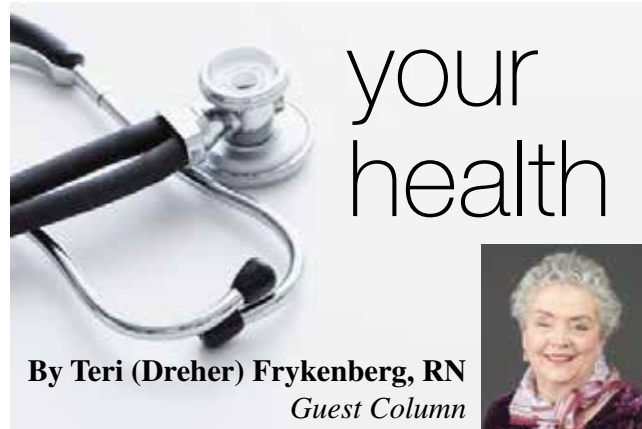
Use only the stem since the foliage is known to be toxic.

The patch will need dividing every 5-10 years; the perfect time to offer up divisions to your friends!

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



Getting hip to joint replacement surgery



By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN
Guest Column

A few weeks ago, I underwent my second total hip replacement. I had already replaced my left hip, and now it was time for the right one.

About 10 years ago, I

also had both of my knees replaced. After nearly four decades as an ICU nurse, the physical toll of caring for patients, some weighing up to 300 or 400 pounds, had caught up with me. This is a

common story among nurses: We prioritize others' needs and often ignore our own warning signs.

Obviously, I'm not alone. Around 7 million Americans are living with hip or knee replacements, allowing them to maintain mobility despite severe arthritis. Annually in the U.S., there are about 700,000 knee and 400,000 hip replacements, with studies showing many replacements lasting 25 years or more.

We're just not as healthy as we used to be. Arthritis inflammation in the joints can actually destroy the cartilage, and when you hit bone-on-bone, it causes not

Please see **SURGERY**, page 13

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

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

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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SUBMITTED PHOTO

Governor Maura Healey spoke about how Career and Technical Education provides students with hands-on learning for skilled jobs and great careers.

GRANT from page 1

This 150-seat expansion is possible thanks to the Cold Spring expanded campus in Belchertown, and represents the single largest student expansion in the district's history. Duda reported that this initiative is being completed without incurring debt to the nine member towns, as well as without major capital requests, and without immediate impacts to local taxpayers assessments.

This strategic initiative is being accomplished solely through strategic financial planning, along with grant funding secured from the commonwealth.

"Support for this planned expansion has been comprehensive and widespread," Duda said. "Senators, state representatives, and elected officials from all nine member communities have signed on in support of this creative, forward-thinking, and affordable approach to increasing access to career and technical education opportunities for students throughout the region."

Now in his fifth year as superintendent and his 20th year serving the district, Duda has made strategic long-term planning into a strength of his leadership. In recent years, the district has received record levels of grant funding. These include over \$5 million in competitive grant funding to increase

student access, purchase equipment, renovate facilities, and add square footage to support expansion efforts, and an additional \$1.5 million to support new adult and continue education programming, and to help keep the campus active and vibrant during the evenings and weekends when it's used by adult learners.

Compared to other school districts in the region that are struggling with budget cuts, declining enrollment, and closures, Pathfinder is a notable exception, with its record levels of enrollment, carrying no debt, and requesting no major capital funding from its nine member towns.

Duda described Pathfinder as a model for what's possible in education throughout the region. As a graduate from Pathfinder himself, Duda said he understands firsthand the life-changing opportunities this model of education can provide students. While some districts in the region are attempting to replicate aspects of Pathfinder Tech's programming, Duda emphasized that Pathfinder already belongs to the nine member communities and exists to serve their students.

"Pathfinder Tech is already your school," Duda noted. "It belongs to the students and families of our nine member towns."

"There's no need for mem-

ber school districts to waste money, time, and resources on introductory elective type career courses like the ones occurring in the towns of Palmer and Monson," Duda said. "You don't need to try to duplicate with an introductory version of what we offer. Instead, remember that Pathfinder Tech is already the town's school, and students are now guaranteed to have a seat available for them to attend."

Duda recommended that the towns "encourage students to apply and take advantage of the career and technical education already available to them, should that be the desired educational model they want to pursue."

In addition to Governor Healey, the event was attended by Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll, Secretary of Education Stephen Zrike, and Commissioner of Education Pedro Martinez, as well as several additional cabinet members, mayors, and state and local officials.

Pathfinder Tech plans to continue pursuing funding sources to support the expansion, including the recently announced \$100 million CTE Capacity Expansion Grant Initiative from the Healey-Driscoll Administration.

Pathfinder Tech is currently accepting applications for the 2026-2027 school year. Prospective students can apply at PathfinderTech.org.

Clapp Memorial LIBRARY



Upcoming Programs and Events

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:
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:
Teen Advisory Board Meeting
Friday, May 15,
4:30 - 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 clapplibrary-tab@gmail.com to register.

Please see **LIBRARY**, page 8

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■ POLICE LOGS

Belchertown Police Log

Editor's note: The following are brief explanations of select entries in the Belchertown Police log and arrests for the weeks of May 1, through May 7. The information was provided by a member of the police department based on the review of the detailed log summary. This feature is designed to provide context and explanation to some of the calls police respond to every day.



ARRESTS/SUMMONS
Tuesday, May 5

9:05 p.m. – Ricara D. Pryce, 32, of 265 Breckwood Blvd, Springfield was arrested on charges of disorderly conduct, assault and battery on police officer, resisting arrest and a warrant. An officer responded to a Main Street residence for a report of a car honking in a parking lot and a person yelling. Several people reported the incident. The person was identified. Another officer could hear another person yelling and approached the vehicle. The person was yelling outside and was identified. They were having issues with one another. One person reversed the vehicle and then eventually put it in park. Then the operator unexpectedly opened and struck an officer with the door. They never mentioned they wanted to exit the vehicle. The officer advised they were going to be arrested and began to resist arrest. The person began to engage with the other person and then resisted again. They were transported from the scene and there was a warrant for their arrest. The person was later released.

ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS
Friday, May 1

12:25 a.m. – An officer responded for a report of vandalism to a building. There was video footage and descriptive information was obtained.

8:41 a.m. – An officer responded Ware Road and Enoch Sanford Road for an accident. A vehicle at a stop sign turning left onto Ware Road and another vehicle going eastbound struck the first. One person was transported from the scene. Both vehicles were towed. The person driving the first vehicle said they thought the operator of the second vehicle was going slower than it was traveling.

2:01 p.m. – An officer responded to North Main Street for an accident. A vehicle traveling through a parking lot was struck on the passenger side by another vehicle. The second vehicle was backing up from a parking space. There was minor damage to both vehicles. No injuries were reported.

5:27 p.m. – An officer responded to an accident on George Hannum Road. A vehicle traveling east on George Hannum Road when a second vehicle traveling westbound came into the first vehicle's lane of travel. The second vehicle struck the trailer of the first. Both drivers' exchanged information.

9:20 p.m. – An officer viewed a juvenile at the lobby door. The person had a disagreement with their parent, and they were contacted to pick up the juvenile. The report forwarded to the school resource officer.

Saturday, May 2

12:17 p.m. – An officer responded to a Stebbins Street

residence for a report of a past assault. One person was transported to the hospital.

3:37 p.m. – An officer responded to an accident on Ware Road. Two vehicles traveling east on Ware Road when the operator of the front vehicle pulled out of a lane to go into a driveway. The vehicle took a wide turn and then the second vehicle struck the first. There as damage to both vehicles. One vehicle was towed from the scene. No injuries were reported.

Sunday, May 3

7:32 p.m. – An officer on patrol saw a white Jeep with an expired registration sticker. The officer ran the plate, and the registration came back as nonrenewable since August 2025. The officer spoke with the operator and the vehicle needed to be towed. A warning was issued to the person for unregistered motor vehicle.

10:09 p.m. – An officer responded to an accident on Federal Street. A vehicle traveling north on Federal Street went off the roadway and struck a mailbox. No injuries were reported and no tows were needed.

Monday, May 4

9:39 a.m. – An officer responded to an accident North Liberty Street. A vehicle traveling south on North Liberty Street stopped in front of a house due to a work zone. The flagger stopped the traffic. A second vehicle behind the first couldn't stop

in time. The second vehicle was towed from the scene. No injuries were reported.

Tuesday, May 5

12:27 p.m. – An officer responded to a Chauncey Walker Road residence for a report of a person breaking and entering at the end of last year. They were away when the incident occurred. There was a water incident at the residence in September 2025 that was repaired by a contractor. There was specialized equipment taken from the residence.

7:59 p.m. – An officer responded to a Summit Street residence regarding a property line dispute. Officers spoke with the involved people. One person said when the first dispute happened, they had the property surveyed and the lines were written on them. The person said the survey was inaccurate and they had larger property. They were told they could have it surveyed as well.

11:18 p.m. – An officer responded to assist Belchertown fire paramedics.

Wednesday, May 6

9:33 a.m. – An officer took a report of a person's adult son was missing. The person had concerns about their well-being. The person left the residence and didn't take their phone with them. The officer reached out to area hospitals and then checked the person's registration plate, which hadn't been run recently. A be on the lookout alert was issued for the person's vehicle. The person then called the reporting person and said they were okay. They didn't want to give their location to the person. They reported they were not a danger to themselves or others. A BOLO was cancelled.

10:57 p.m. – An officer responded to an accident on Stebbins Street. A vehicle traveling north on Stebbins Street stopped at a stop sign and went to make a left turn onto Bay Road. Another vehicle traveling east on Bay

Road didn't have enough time to stop and struck the first vehicle. There was damage to both vehicles. No injuries were reported and no tows were needed.

Thursday, May 7

8:53 a.m. – An officer and Belchertown Fire paramedics responded to a two-vehicle accident on State Street. No injuries were reported and no tows were needed.

11:59 a.m. – An officer spoke with a person on the phone about a male party posting videos on social media. Person threatened to post videos of the person without their consent. The matter is being documented.

12:24 p.m. – An officer investigated a report of a violation of an abuse prevention order and subsequently a Pittsfield resident will be issued a summons for violation of an abuse prevention order.

6:01 p.m. – An officer took a report of an identity fraud incident. A resident sent documents to a person with tax information on it via the mail. While in route, the envelope opened and stole the information before it got to its destination. The person hasn't had an issue with identity theft at this time but wanted it documented.

Granby Police Log

Editor's Note: The Granby Police Department responded to 89 calls for the week May 1, through May 7. Those arrested are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. The Granby Police Department provides all information.

Friday, May 1

12:02 a.m. – A motorist reported striking a tree and later reported that the vehicle was on fire. Granby Police and Fire responded. The vehicle was fully engulfed on arrival. The fire was extinguished and there were no

injuries.

Saturday, May 2

6:45 p.m. – A motorist reported striking a utility pole. There was no damage to the pole and there were no injuries.

Monday, May 4

10:46 a.m. – A motorist reported striking a low hanging wire with their vehicle. Officers responded to the area and found a low hanging cable line. The utility company was contacted and raised the wire.

Tuesday, May 5

5:54 a.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 civil citation for speeding.

Wednesday, May 6

7:04 a.m. – A motorist reported that a vehicle drove off the road and struck a drainage culvert and a cement post. The operator left the scene prior to police arrival. Officers found the vehicle involved and later spoke with the operator. There were no injuries.

4:39 p.m. – Several callers reported a two-car accident Chicopee Street and Baggs Hill Road. Granby Police and Fire responded. Officers found that one of the vehicles crossed marked lanes and struck the other head on before going off the road and down an embankment. The operator was issued a citation for crossing marked lanes. There were no injuries.

Thursday, May 7

12:33 p.m. – A resident reported being the victim of a scam. A report was completed.

9:29 p.m. – A motorist reported a minor two-car accident Chicopee Street and East State Street. There were no injuries.

Lions Club holding another Meatball Sub Sale May 16

BELCHERTOWN – Nothing like getting caught off guard last month, when we sold out of our entire supply of meatball grinders before noon We apologize to those who were unable to grab one, and as a result, we are upping our "inventory" to prepare over 200 grinders for our Saturday, May 16th sale! As always,

we will be set up on the grounds of the Belchertown United Church of Christ on Park St. and will begin serving 12-inch meatball subs with sauce and mozzarella, a bag of chips, and beverage shortly after 10 a.m. – all for the same low price of \$10. Come on out and support



our Lions Club's fundraising efforts--knowing that all proceeds will support our charities close to home

LIBRARY from page 9

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 clapplibrar-ytab@gmail.com with any questions.

FOR CHILDREN:
Children's Scavenger Hunt
May's Theme: SPORTS!

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.

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Arda Cayan sets the ball up.



Gavin Couchon tries to get a quick tip over the net.



Ryan Shea goes for a spike.



Brian Burns sends a return hit over the net.



Grady Martin goes low for a bump.



Henry Walter goes for the serve.

Orioles defeat Holyoke, hopeful for playoff spot

BELCHERTOWN – Last Monday night, Belchertown High School boys volleyball defeated Holyoke 3-1, losing the first set of the match, then going on to sweep the next three for the victory. Arda Cayan had a huge match with 42 assists.

Gavin Couchon was also strong with 20 kills and 10 digs. Brian Burns turned in 10 kills. Belchertown is 8-9 and looking for a .500 record to make the state tournament while Holyoke fell to just 1-14 on the season.

Pacers take down host Rams

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

GRANBY—After outscoring their previous three opponents, 39-0, the Chicopee High School softball team found themselves locked in a closely contested battle with Suburban East League foe Granby.

The Lady Rams had the potential tying run at the plate with one out in the bottom of the seventh inning, but the Lady Pacers escaped with an exciting 8-6 victory on a very windy afternoon at Granby High School, last Tuesday. The road win improved the Lady Pacers overall record to a perfect 14-0. They also had a 10-0 league record.

“Granby is a very good softball team, and they put a lot of pressure on us in today’s game,” said Chicopee High varsity softball coach Mel Sasser. “This is also a very big victory for us because we clinched at least a share of the league title.”

The last time that Chicopee captured a league title on the softball diamond was in 2021. The Lady Pacers were also league champions in 2012 with a 14-6 overall record.

The Lady Rams (11-3, 8-2), who also lost to the Lady Pacers, 5-2, in the first meeting of the regular season at Szoat Park on April 10, needed to win the second meeting to keep their league title hopes alive.

“If we had won today’s game, we would’ve still had a chance to tie for the league title,” said Granby head coach Mike Afflitto. “We’re not mathematically eliminated yet, but it’s going to be a very difficult task now.”

The Lady Rams, who haven’t celebrated the league title since 2011, also lost a league game at Frontier Regional, 4-0, back in April.

The Chicopee and Granby softball teams most likely

Please see **RAMS**, page 10



Gavin Harrington winds up for a shot.

Boys lacrosse picks up pair of wins

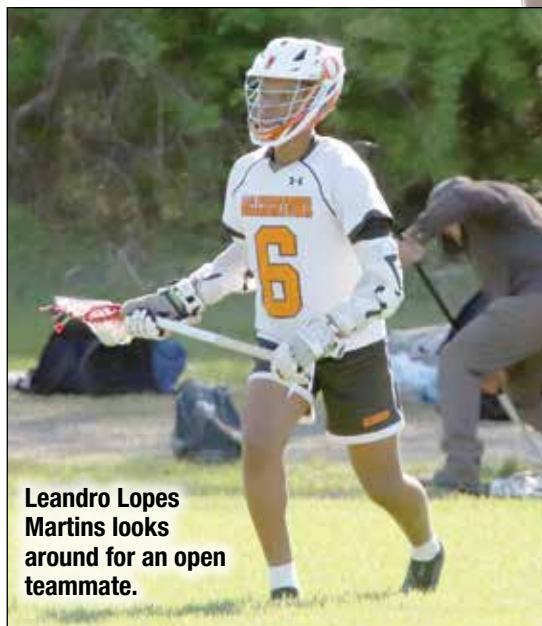
BELCHERTOWN – Last Thursday and Friday, Belchertown High School boys lacrosse grabbed a pair of wins. The Orioles would defeat Central 7-2 at home followed by a 6-3 home win against Lenox

Memorial. The Orioles are sitting at a record of 5-9 and is will below the top 32 in Division 3, meaning they will need to win out the rest of their schedule to possibly finish at .500 and get into the state playoffs.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



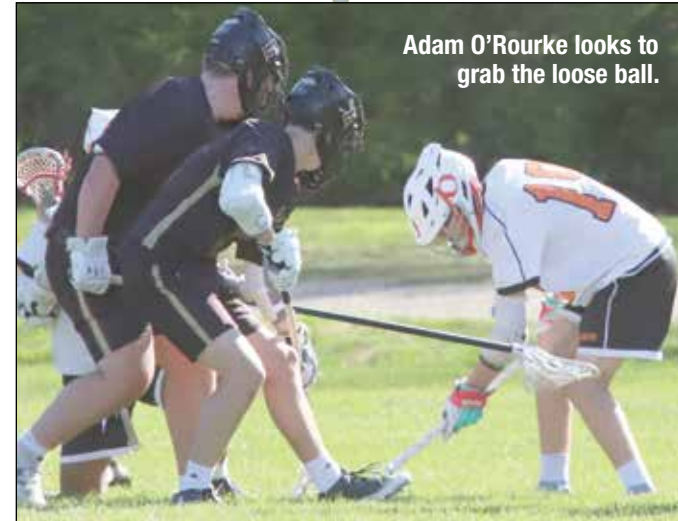
Steven Ryan fights for possession during the faceoff.



Leandro Lopes Martins looks around for an open teammate.



Adren Reyes makes a run up the sideline.



Killian Olszewski picks up the ground ball.

Adam O'Rourke looks to grab the loose ball.

SPORTS

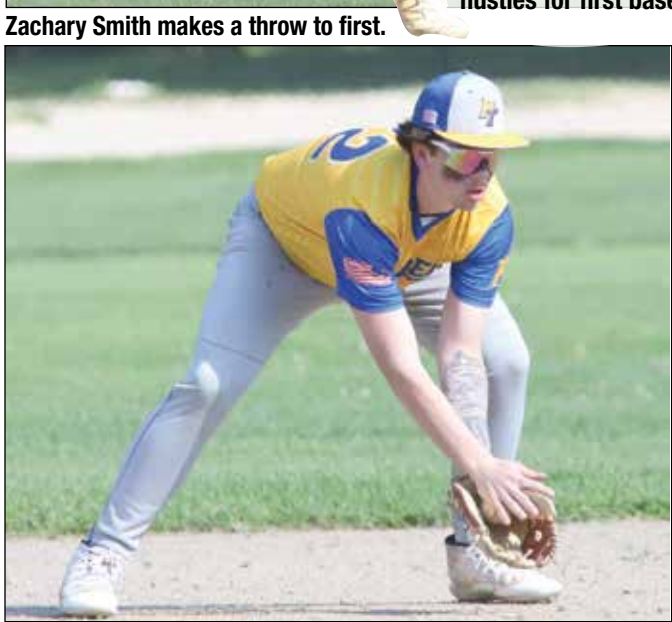
Pioneers score first win of season



Emerson Boronski connects and fouls off a pitch.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI
Ian Sauri Nieves cleanly fields a grounder to second.

Brody Wetnicka hustles for first base.



Aiden Girard smothers a grounder to third.



Dayne Shanley leads off second.

SPRINGFIELD – Last Monday afternoon at Forest Park, Pathfinder baseball defeated host Sci-Tech 14-1 for their first win of the regular season. The Pioneers are 1-12 with just a few games remaining in the regular season.

WSU softball wins conference title

WESTFIELD – After 10 trips to the Massachusetts Collegiate Athletic Conference softball championship game, the top-seeded Westfield State University Owls finally cashed in when first year RF Lyla Dwyer pulled a ball through the hole on the left side infield and sophomore 3B Allysa Slack scored with a headfirst dive across the plate in the bottom of the ninth inning as the Owls scored a 1-0 extra innings win over #2 seed Worcester State on Sunday.

With the win, the Owls improve to 38-1 on the season, and the Owls earn the league's automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament. Westfield will be making its third-ever appearance in the big dance, but first since 1983. Westfield will learn their destination and opponent in the NCAA's in a live selection show on NCAA.com slated for Monday at 11.

Worcester's season comes to a close at 25-15.

The two teams dueled through seven innings scoreless at 0-0, an old-fashioned pitchers duel between the Owls Angelina Vartuli, who was named the tournament MVP, and Worcester's Peyton Maloney.

Worcester put one runner aboard in the top of the eighth on a single by Emma LaPoint, but Vartuli invoked a pair of pop ups to Slack at third to end the threat.

Westfield appeared to catch a break in the bottom of the eighth as Hannah Wodecki singled to left with one out, and the ball slipped past the fielder to put Wodecki at second base, but Mia Alfonso popped to second and Latour lined to center to go to the ninth scoreless.

Vartuli sent the Lancers down in order in the top of the ninth, with a pair of ground outs to Slack sandwiched around one to Sarah Hough at short.

Slack doubled to right center leading off the bottom half of the inning when the ball dropped between the center and right fielder after an apparent miscommunication, and after Caroline O'Donnell popped to right, Dwyer stepped in with one out, and slashed one pitch just foul down the third base line, before finding the hole for a base hit on the game winner.

Vartuli (W, 13-0) allowed six hits over nine innings, walking just one and fanning six for her 13th win of the season.

Worcester's Maloney (L, 10-6) matched her nearly pitch for pitch, working 8.1 innings, scattering 10 hits, and walking and striking out one against an Owls lineup that entered the weekend ranked third in the country in scoring offense at almost nine runs per game.

LaTour was 2-4 with a double and O'Donnell finished 2-3 with a walk to lead the Owl bats. Carisa Andrews was the lone repeat hitter for the Lancers, finished 2-4 with a stolen base. Bailey Tammara's double in the fifth was the lone extra base hit for the Lancers.

Worcester put two runners aboard in the second before Vartuli got a pop up to end the inning. Andrews made it as far as third in the seventh, but again Vartuli got a pop out to short to end the threat.

The Owls first true scoring chance came in the second inning after a one-out single by Cassidy LaTour followed by a Lancers error put two in scoring position. O'Donnell followed and stung a line drive back up the middle, hitting Slack who had no way to avoid the ball, causing a dead ball and sending LaTour back to third base instead of scoring the first run of the game. Maloney then escaped the threat by getting a pop up in foul territory.

In the fifth inning, the Owls put two aboard with two outs after a single into left by Rylie Camacho. Hough stepped in and laced a liner back up the middle forcing pinch runner Kalisa Pomfret to duck as she narrowly avoided getting drilled. She could only advance up to third base causing Camacho to overrun the bag at second in expecting the runner to be sent, but the Lancers were able to tag her out in a rundown before Pomfret could cross home.

Westfield wins the MASCAC tournament title for the first time since the league began a post-season tournament in 2001, though the Owls had played in 10 previous finals. Westfield lost as the #1 seed in 2024 and 2025, dropping two games in the championship round to Framingham at home in 2024, and falling to Worcester in the elimination semifinal in 2025.

T-Birds complete upset of Bruins to advance in playoffs

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds outlasted the Providence Bruins, 1-0, in a goaltending duel for the ages on Thursday night inside the MassMutual Center, defeating Providence in four games to advance to the Atlantic Division Finals against the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins.

By completing the upset of the Macgregor Kilpatrick Trophy winners, Springfield, which finished 38 points behind Providence during the regular season, completed the largest upset by point differential in Calder Cup Playoff history.

Georgi Romanov's dream postseason continued rolling along in the first period for the T-Birds, as the goal-

ter made a highlight-reel stop for the second straight game in the series, stretching post-to-post to make a tremendous left pad save on Riley Tufte on a 3-on-1 Bruins rush.

Not to be outdone at the other end, AHL regular season MVP Michael DiPietro had answers for each of Springfield's eight shots on net in the first period. The Providence backstop would not be very busy at all in the second period, needing to make just five saves, but one was notable when he flashed out the glove hand to deny a broken play attempt from the left slot by Akil Thomas.

Providence had a tremendous chance presented to them with a power play in the closing minutes of period

two, but the Springfield penalty kill continued to shine, improving to 13 out of 15 for the series and 22-for-24 in the postseason.

Neither Romanov nor DiPietro showed any signs of blinking in a busy third period for both netminders, which featured a combined 23 stops between the backstops.

For a second straight game, overtime was required, and for a third straight extra session in the postseason, the T-Birds had a hero rise to the occasion. Romanov was the first hero, as he kicked out the right leg to deny a Navrin Mutter breakaway early in the session.

Then, at 4:01 of the extra session, Otto Stenberg carried the puck over the blue

line, slipped a cross-ice pass to Chris Wagner, and from there, Wagner spotted Dillon Dube crashing the left side of the crease. The veteran winger did the honors from there, beating DiPietro and completing the upset with his second goal and fourth point in the four-game series.

With the win, the T-Birds will now take on the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins in the Atlantic Division Finals, beginning on Tuesday, May 12 at Mohegan Arena at Casey Plaza for a 7:05 p.m. puck drop. Tickets for Game 3 (Tuesday, May 19) and Game 4 if necessary (Thursday, May 21) at the MassMutual Center are available now at www.SpringfieldThunderbirds.com.

Lions Club announces fundraiser winners

GRANBY – The Granby Lions Club held the drawings for our 120 Club fundraiser at our Lions meeting on April 21. The first prize winner of \$250 was Roger Jones, the second prize winner of \$100 was Conor O'Shea and the third winner of \$50 was Odette Dardenne.

In addition, there were 10 preliminary prize drawings of \$10 each and those winners

were Bob Langevin, George Knight, Brian Roberts, Denis Lafleur, Steve Labelle, Conor O'Shea, Eric Gustafson, Rite Petithory, Jim Freeman, and Carol Cote.

The Granby Lions Club appreciates the support of all who purchased tickets for this fundraiser and the proceeds will be used for the support of our vision and scholarship programs.

RAMS from page 9

won't be competing in the upcoming Western Mass. tournament, but both squads have already qualified for the state tournament.

The Lady Pacers, who have clinched a berth in the Division 3 state tournament, took a quick 2-0 lead in last Tuesday's contest without the benefit of a base hit.

Freshman catcher Adeline Olbrych was hit-by-a-pitch thrown by Granby junior righthander Meredith Bartosz leading off the first inning. Senior shortstop Lorraine Olbrych followed with a

walk. A wild pitch moved both runners into scoring position. The Olbrych's crossed the plated on back-to-back sacrifice flies by sophomore first baseman Aviah Blankenship and eighth grade starting pitcher Raelyn Loud.

Lorraine Olbrych suffered an injury in bottom half of the first inning and was forced to leave the game.

The Lady Rams, who qualified for the Division 5 state tournament, tied the score in their first at-bats of the game against Loud, who allowed six runs on eight hits.

With two outs, senior second baseman Kaitlyn Curran

beat out an infield hit to the shortstop before scoring on a double to right field by junior shortstop Ellie Szlosek, who had three of the Lady Rams hits. Szlosek also scored on the play following a throwing error.

The game remained tied until the third inning.

Adeline Olbrych walked leading off the frame before stealing second base. She advanced to third on a perfect sacrifice bunt by eighth grade designated player Megan Prendergast before scoring the go-ahead run on a groundball out by Blankenship.

Chicopee scored two more

runs during that same inning when freshman third baseman Izzabella Harper hit a groundball, which was misplayed by the shortstop for an error.

The Lady Pacers held a 6-2 advantage after scoring another run in the fourth.

Szlosek led off the bottom of the fourth inning with a flair single into left field. She proceeded to steal both second and third base before scoring on a bunt by the junior catcher Jaidyn Roberge.

After both teams failed to score in the fifth, Adeline Olbrych banged a double off the left field fence lead-

ing off the sixth inning. Blankenship, who finished game with three RBIs, drove her home with a hard groundball double into left.

Granby responded with a two run single up the middle into centerfield by freshman third baseman Kara White with two outs in the bottom half of the inning, which closed the gap to 7-5.

A sacrifice fly by Chicopee freshman Brianna Cole pushed the lead to three runs in the top of the seventh inning.

With one-out in bottom of the seventh, Szlosek, who reached on a fielding error, scored on a groundout by

junior left fielder Sydney Chateauf. Roberge also had an infield hit, and the tying run was standing in the batter's box, but Loud ended the game by recording her 14th strikeout.

"Playing a close game like this one will help us prepare for the postseason tournament," Sasser said. "We played very well defensively in today's game."

Bartosz, who gave up eight runs on seven hits against Chicopee, recorded her 200th career strikeout in the Lady Rams 10-6 road win against the Springfield International Charter School two days later.

Local original tag sale returns

BELCHERTOWN – St. Francis Parish of Belchertown is excited to announce that the original annual St. Francis Giant Tag Sale returns to the Belchertown Town Common on Saturday, Aug. from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. This nearly 40-year-old sale is the parish's major fundraiser for the Capital Campaign for the New Parish Center on the Jabish Street campus. The parish is focused on replacing the aging, 100-plus-year-old former church which now operates as the St. Francis Parish Center on the Belchertown Common with a new, efficient, comprehensive structure.

In contrast to the scheduled Town Wide Tag Sale, all items will be on sale through the categorized display on the Town Common. The St. Francis Giant Tag Sale is truly one-stop-shopping for perusing over 16 departments of goods - all in one location! Buyers will also be able to purchase a delicious grilled burger, hot dog, or grab a thirst-quenching beverage at the open-air food booth under the maple trees.

After volunteers spend hundreds of hours sorting and boxing, the many donated items become the treasured inventory of the well-organized and departmentalized St. Francis Parish Giant Tag Sale that will occupy nearly half



of the Town Common and the interior of the existing Parish Center on Aug. 22. This giant tag sale experience resembles the large well thought out department stores of days gone by.

When interested donors are searching their personal treasures for donation possibilities, the Tag Sale Team encourages donors to consider the following items: bed and table linens, craft items, hardware, kitchenware, luggage, backpacks, handbags, children's clothes up to 2T, small working appliances, working lamps, toys, pictures, frames, holiday decorations, hand tools, yard tools, jewelry, shoes, boots, sporting goods, children's books, baby gear, small but not-upholstered furniture, knick-knacks, and col-

lectibles. The following items are not accepted: partially used candles, cookbooks and books, clothing, pillows, cribs, car seats, and large furniture items. All items from the acceptable list that are donated will only be received if they are clean and in working condition. The Team requests that donors clear all donated items of storage dust, bugs, mold, and critter residue. All donors and their donations will be greeted by a volunteer worker. As they have every year for nearly 40 years, the dedicated volunteer "army" looks forward to joyfully serving their customer clients.

Collection dates and time will be released soon.

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.

Sullivan to speak at 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 individ-

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GRANBY from page 1

state and municipal experience, pitched herself as the candidate best prepared to navigate complex budgets and labor negotiations.

She told voters she once managed a \$300 million budget and 10,000 employees in Boston, negotiating with 26 bargaining units "mostly on television and in the newspaper." She later served as assistant deputy comptroller in New York's Division of Municipal Affairs, working with both the smallest towns and large municipalities on "the costs of trash collection, paving, snow removal, unlicensed dogs, problems that beset towns and villages."

Rosen also pointed to her local service as a volunteer and elected library trustee since moving to town to be closer to her daughter.

She said Granby "really felt the most comfortable and really inviting" when she chose a new home.

The town, she cautioned, is entering a period of tough choices as the cost of maintaining basic services rises faster than revenues.

"I'm experiencing personally that the cost of maintaining the services in this town are going to go up, and they're going to go up dramatically," Rosen said. Health insurance, energy and other "fixed costs," she added, will force decisions about what Granby can continue to provide.

She cited a recent letter from the Finance Committee warning of "difficult decisions ahead" and said voters should not assume "all the services that we've come to rely on in this town may continue without other decisions."

Rosen praised the schools' performance and called them "a large part of what this community provides," representing more than half of the town budget.

But she said large-ticket items such as repairs to the Forge Pond Dam and school building needs will test the town's finances, especially after the fiscal 2027 budget relied on reserves to stay balanced. "I am not sure if that's even available for the future," she said of using reserves again.

Rosen framed her candidacy around process as much as policy, emphasizing listening and consensus-building.

"One of the big lessons that I learned was that people have to be involved. Government only works if it is accomplishing the things

that citizens, voters rely on to accomplish and in a way that makes them feel involved and heard," she said.

"There are no simple answers to this," Rosen added later. "I will work as the Select Board has worked to bring people together in as many different settings, in as many different ways as possible to talk about the choices that have to be made."

On regionalization, Rosen took a cautious, exploratory stance. Drawing on her work with the New York State Education Department and the Board of Regents, she called it "a really, really sensitive and complicated issue" tied to deeply held beliefs about local schools.

"It's a word that's fraught with emotion, but it's something that can be looked at thoughtfully," Rosen said. Regionalization does not automatically save money, she warned, but in the face of potential cuts to sports, arts and other programs, "you might consider partnering with other districts ... if you want to protect your curriculum, if you want to protect your program." Any move, she stressed, must involve parents and residents and "is not the right answer in all cases."

In her closing, Rosen praised Lawson personally but argued her background fits the moment.

"I have the exact kind of experience and expertise — finance and human resources were my areas of specialty," she said. "I'm the right candidate for this moment in time for Granby, the better candidate."

Lawson leans on decades of local public safety service, rejects regionalization

Lawson, a 31-year resident of Granby, framed his campaign around long-standing local ties and hands-on public service in town.

"My name is Jeff Lawson, 56 years old," he said, noting both his children attended Granby schools from kindergarten through 12th grade and "received an excellent education." A retired Connecticut correction officer, he also served as a part-time Granby police officer for 10 years and now works as a 911 dispatcher on the evening shift.

"Public service is nothing new to me," Lawson said. "I've served the community for many years. I've lived here. I love the town, and I want to continue serving as your next Select Board member."

Lawson said he does not

view himself as a politician.

"My intention is to serve the town as a leader," he said. "The Select Board should be a board made of leaders, and I feel that's what I bring to the community."

On the budget, Lawson said Granby is in better shape than some nearby communities, citing South Hadley's recent fiscal turmoil, but warned that state aid "is not covering basic needs in the town's fixed costs."

"We have to address that. We have to also put more pressure on Beacon Hill, the governor, to get us more state funding out in this part of the state," he said.

Lawson also called on residents to engage more fully in town meeting. "It's unfortunate when you only see 100, 150 people at town meeting," he said. "We have a very unique form of government

here in Granby ... and people need to take advantage of it, where every vote literally counts."

A major plank of Lawson's platform is tackling health care costs, which he described as "absolutely killing us" after a nearly 13% increase.

"I work for the town. I see what the costs are. I see what my co-workers pay, and it's not sustainable. It's also not sustainable for the town. They pay the lion's share of health care," he said. Still, he added, "I'm cautiously optimistic that we will be able to solve this problem."

Lawson devoted substantial time to the future of Granby Junior-Senior High School, which he called a "challenge" but defended as academically strong despite its aging building.

"Don't judge a book by its

cover," he said. "Get past the brick and mortar, get past the facade, and once you enter the front doors of that school, you're going to find yourself in an excellent district that provides a quality education."

He outlined four broad options: doing nothing, regionalizing, renovating or demolishing and building a new school.

On regionalization, Lawson was firmly opposed based on what he knows today.

"Currently, I'm not in favor of regionalizing. I think learning should be local," he said, pointing to his children's "top tier education at this school."

He added later that he worries regionalization would "disconnect ourselves from our child's learning," weaken relationships between parents and teachers, and risk using

students "as bargaining tools to what I feel is address a financial crisis".

"We need to make education a priority with the schools and dollars and cents secondary," he said.

Lawson said he is open to information about potential partners and models but insisted any regionalization discussion cannot be "just dollar signs and decimal points" and must consider host community, class size and teacher-student ratios.

A full rebuild of the high school, he said, appears out of reach at an estimated \$80 million to \$100 million without a "big windfall revenue." If that ever became feasible, he argued it should include vocational programs so the town could "bring vocational back to Granby" rather than paying to send students to regional vocational schools.

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REAL ESTATE

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15 MAPLE ST., BROOKFIELD. Available June 1. Unit 2, 2 bedroom, 1 bath, fenced yard, washer/dryer/dishwasher. Country style kitchen cabinets, quiet location. \$1500/mo. First/last/security. Good credit 700+.
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ALL REAL ESTATE advertised herein is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act, which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation, or discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, or intention to make any such preference, limitation, or discrimination." We will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. All persons are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised are available on an equal opportunity basis.

FOR RENT



All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status (number of children and or pregnancy), national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, or any intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination.

This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain about discrimination call The Department of Housing and Urban Development "HUD" toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. For the N.E. area, call HUD at 617-565-5308. The toll free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.



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Holyoke Community College celebrates Phi Theta Kappa inductees for 2026

Holyoke Community College is proud to announce that 169 HCC students have been accepted for membership into the Alpha Xi Omega chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa national honor society for 2026.

Students are invited to join Phi Theta Kappa when they have completed 15 college credits while maintaining a GPA of 3.5 or higher. HCC's 2026 inductees were recognized during a campus celebration on

Thursday, May 7.

Belchertown:

Gabriel Ibekilo, Christian Jean, Vivienne Pelletier, Jennifer Shaink, Christina Sumner, AJ Terry.

SURGERY from page 6

only significant pain but also disability. The increase in hip replacements is attributed to the aging baby boomer population, rising life expectancies and the obesity epidemic. Sports injuries and accidents are additional factors.

I've learned a lot about joint replacement, as a nurse, a patient advocate and a patient. If you're facing a joint replacement, here are some considerations:

Hospital or surgery center?

All four of my joint replacements took place at outpatient surgery centers, which I consider much cleaner environments than hospitals. After early morning surgery, I was home by noon and received home health care, so I never went to rehab.

A 2023 study by University of Pennsylvania researchers found that the rates of revisits and complications for surgery center patients were lower than for similar patients who had surgery in a hospital. However, that could have something to do with healthier patients choosing surgery centers and those with other health conditions, heart failure for example, going to hospitals.

That said, this is a topic for you and your doctor to discuss. In the end, you will decide where to have your joint replacement, so go where you are most comfortable.

Choosing a doctor

Look for a surgeon who is affiliated with professional organizations and has completed fellowships in the

surgery you're having. You should also prioritize their experience, asking how many times they've performed this particular surgery.

Studies have found that surgeons who have performed more than 50 procedures have lower rates of complication and revision. You can ask the doctor directly how many times they've performed the surgery and what their complication rate is. Also ask whether you can speak with other patients the doctor has treated.

Second opinions

Joint replacement is a major medical undertaking, so if you're feeling at all unsure about it - or the doctor isn't all you had hoped - Medicare covers second opinions subject to the 20% co-insurance. Medicare Advantage plans also generally cover second opinions, but check with your plan for details.

Robots or no robots?

Robot-assisted joint replacement is becoming more common. A study published in the Journal of Arthroplasty reported an increase in surgeons who have adopted robotics, from 10% in 2018 to 35% in 2023. Nearly half of partial knee replacements were robotically assisted. Fewer total knee and hip replacements were reported.

The study noted that further research is needed on outcomes, but surgeons who use robotic assisted systems say that the robot is simply the navigation system while the doctor is in the driver's seat.

Rehab in a facility or at home?

With my surgeries, I want-

ed to avoid a rehab facility because that's another name for nursing home, where there are a lot of germs, more patients with compromised immune systems and generally higher infection rates.

Today, in fact, most joint replacement patients do recuperate at home. A project by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services found that patients who can safely recover at home heal faster, have fewer complications and have a greater sense of ownership in their own recovery.

Not everyone can come home immediately, though, if they lack family support or access to home health care. Be sure to have this conversation with your doctor before your surgery.

Chances are your joint replacement will get you back to doing the things you enjoy, especially with a little bit of education and preparation.

Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, R.N., a registered nurse and board-certified patient advocate, is the founder of www.NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com, which trains medical professionals to become successful private patient advocates. A Monson, MA resident, she is the author of "How to Be a Healthcare Advocate for Yourself & Your Loved Ones" and her new book, "Advocating Well: Strategies for Finding Strength and Understanding in Health Care," available at Amazon.com. Contact her at Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com to set up a free phone consultation.

OBITUARY

Lynn Ann Guertin, 68

Lynn Ann Guertin, age 68, passed away on May 3, 2026. Born on May 20, 1957, Lynn was the cherished daughter of the late George and Barbara (Casey) Robert. A proud graduate of Granby High School's class of 1975, Lynn dedicated many years of her professional life to the Family Resource Center at BHN, where she served as the Director before retiring.



In addition to her parents, Lynn is predeceased by her two beloved sons, George and Charles Rock, and her brother, William Robert. She leaves behind her loving partner, John Panzetti, her dear sister, Nancy Archambault, and her three treasured grandchildren, Tyler, Christian, and Charlie Rock, all of whom she loved dearly.

Visitation will be held on Monday, May 18, 2026, from 9 to 11 a.m., followed by a Catholic service at 11 a.m. at the Beers & Story Belchertown Funeral Home. The family will hold a private burial at their convenience. Lynn's memory will live on in the hearts of those who knew her and loved her.

FAIR from page 11

uuals 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 Captain 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:

DEATH NOTICE

Guertin, Lynn Ann
Died May 3, 2026
Services May 18, 2026
9 to 11 a.m.
Beers & Story
Belchertown Funeral
Home

The Sentinel
OBITUARY POLICY

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

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

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

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.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

Belchertown Public Schools Destruction of Records

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 September 8, 2026.

If you wish to have your records, please come to Central Office, 14 Maple Street with picture identification between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 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. 05/14/2026

SALE OF MOTOR VEHICLE

This ad is pursuant to MA Gen. Law Ch. 255, Sec. 39A as of May 29, 2026 the following motor vehicle will be for sale to satisfy a garage keeper's lien:

Vehicle: 2011 Kia Sorento
Vin #: 5XYKT3A12BG112000
Color: Gray
LKO: Sugelis Reyes

Address: 83 Pleasant Street
Ware, MA 01082
Relentless Towing
Belchertown, MA
413-530-3804
05/14, 05/21, 05/28/2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampshire Division Docket No. HS26P0275EA Estate of: Fay Mary Flanary Also Known As: Fay M. Flanary Date of Death: February 14, 2026 INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Micha F. Flanery of Belchertown, MA** a Will has been admitted to informal probate.

Micha F. Flanery of Belchertown, MA has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve **without surety** on the bond. The estate is being adminis-

tered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner. 05/14/2026

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

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You must be a self-starter with excellent communication and organizational skills. Basic computer skills are required. Previous print sales experience is preferred but we will train the right candidate.

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Email: jamie@turley.com

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Public notice deadlines are Friday at 3 p.m.

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

EARLY DEADLINES

In observance of Memorial Day, there will be an **EARLY AD DEADLINE** To advertise, place your ad no later than **NOON Thursday, May 21**

- Thank you!

EARLY DEADLINES

In observance of Memorial Day, there will be an **EARLY AD DEADLINE** To advertise, place your ad no later than **NOON Thursday, May 21**

- Thank you!

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