

## Student artists showcased at HIGH SCHOOL

By Ben Hernandez  
Correspondent

GRANBY – The second annual Granby High School Art Show took place at the Junior Senior High School on May 14. Prizes were given out for first, second and third place, with first earning \$100, second at \$75 and \$50 for third place. The event was run by the Granby Cultural Council, a non-profit organization devoted to spotlighting and funding local creative endeavors.

“We’re big fans of Beth Staper,” said Granby Cultural Council Chair Joanne Delphia, when asked about what inspired the event. “She is running the school program here in Granby Junior Senior High School. We heard about the art program and we wanted a way to recognize students but also draw more attention from the community into what’s happening at the schools in Granby.”

The goal, according to Delphia, was to not only put a spotlight on student artists but to help the community recognize art’s importance to developing students. The art awards ceremony judged art submissions across multiple



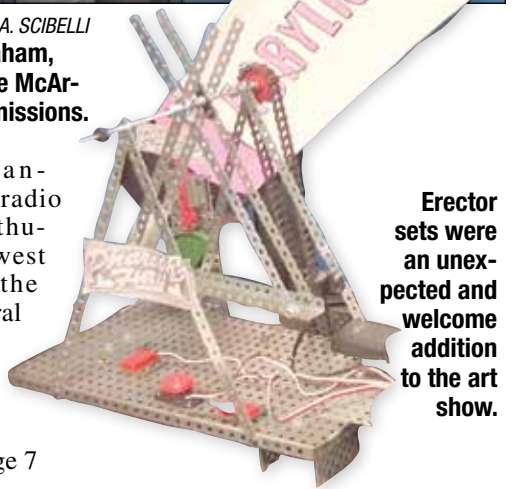
PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI  
Granby Cultural Council members Mariann Ingraham, Lila Wolan-Jedziniak, Joanne Delphia and Janice McArdle pose for the camera after reviewing art submissions.

mediums, from traditional painting to small-scale metal reproductions of amusement park rides.

“I think that we were looking for originality,” Delphia said when asked what criteria that influenced their award assignment decisions. “We’re also looking for expression.”

Lila Wolan-Jedziniak, a radio host, art enthusiast and newest member of the Granby Cultural Council, stated that

Please see **ARTISTS**, page 7



Erector sets were an unexpected and welcome addition to the art show.

## Office move reserves additional funds

By Ben Hernandez  
Correspondent

GRANBY – The motion to move existing municipal offices into the former

“So, we need \$30,000 to drive three miles. I mean that sounds expensive to me to move equipment.”

– Joe Furnia

West Street School location was brought to annual town meeting for review. The additional request was an appropriation of \$30,000, which would be distributed for the initiative should all other approved project funding become exhausted. The fund request had its detractors from the audience, who questioned the need for additional expenses.

“So, we need \$30,000 to drive three miles,” said concerned citizen Joe Furnia. “I mean, that sounds expensive to me to move equipment three miles.”

Jeremy Carrier, the Maintenance Supervisor, explained that the requested operating costs would cover

more than just the move itself. The costs would include the transfer of office items from the second to the ground level of the existing buildings, as well as covering the logistics of the move itself.

“The moving company would have the appropriate equipment and personnel, knowledge

how to move the items, and then also the vehicles to do so,” said Carrier. “We do have only open trailers and a van to do so.”

The move itself is expected to take multiple days, with the Annex alone expected to take up to two weeks to clear. Carrier stated the delays are in part due to office desks, which will need to be disassembled and reassembled at the new location.

“If you’ve gone into our town office and seen the clerk’s office, we have one that is the size of a whole wall,” Carrier said. “We don’t have the means to move such an item safely.”

Please see **FUNDS**, page 4

## Selectboard candidate secures re-election

By Melina Bourdeau  
Correspondent

BELCHERTOWN – The town saw close contested races in the annual town election on Monday.

Lesla Lessard Pearson won re-election to the Select Board as did Heidi

Gutkenst to the School Committee according to the unofficial results from the Belchertown Town Clerk’s office.

Lessard Pearson received 921 votes to Michael McMorrow’s 800.

On the School Committee, Hope Guardianier received

1,106 votes, Gutkenst received 977 votes and candidate Joshua Wallace received 799 votes.

Daniel Beaudette received 1,369 votes for reelection to the Planning Board. Benjamin Farrell received the same number of votes for the moderator position.

Loring Michael Caney Jr. received 1,348 votes for a position on the Board of Assessors. Jean Marie Leone received 1,331 votes for another seat on the Board of Assessors.

For the Board of Health, Kenneth Elstein received 1,303 votes and David

Gottsegen received 1,335 votes.

There were write-in candidates for the open position on the Housing Authority, which have yet to be determined by the Town Clerk prior to the Sentinel’s deadline.

## Funding for veterans memorial sought

By Ben Hernandez  
Correspondent

GRANBY – A motion to fund the Granby Veterans Memorial was brought to the town meeting that took place on May 11. The proposition, which asked for \$40,000 in borrowed funds, was to construct a pavilion at the site.

“We appreciate all the help and support from the town and its citizens.”

– Thomas Russell  
Vietnam Veteran and Army Sergeant

“We need help with this pavilion because we can only raise approximately \$10,000 per year with our picnic and our golf outing, and this is an ongoing job with future sidewalks, benches, garden areas and this pavilion will be a cen-

terpiece of the park,” said Granby Police Sergeant Jason Richard.

The initial bid for the park project rose over the past year due to increases in lumber costs and diesel fuel transportation, among other “kinds of things,” which has risen the operating costs an additional \$2,000. The project began 14 years

ago, according to Vietnam Veteran and Army Sergeant Thomas Russell, who was in the audience to comment on the project’s status during the annual town meeting.

“We appreciate all the help and support from the town and its citizens,” said Russell during open discussion. “Seven years ago, a bid was submitted to us for \$650,000 to build what had



The Granby Veterans Memorial needs funding to construct a pavilion at the state. It was brought to town meeting.

been designed. We did not have anywhere near that type of money. We have raised and spent \$170,000 by doing it ourselves with

donated, skilled labor and material and there was no shoddy workmanship so far. We need help with this pavilion.”

The Friends of Granby Veterans, the non-prof-

Please see **MEMORIAL**, page 4

## Monsters lurk in CML

By Ben Hernandez  
Staff Writer

BELCHERTOWN – Monsters line the walls of the Clapp Memorial Library. Swift River Elementary School collaborated with art students at Belchertown High School to bring their drawings to life.

Elizabeth Teixeira, the Department Chair of Fine and Applied Arts at Belchertown High School, stated the idea was to make a collaborative project to connect the high school students to the second grade classes in an effort to foster school community, mentorship, and the opportunity for universal bonds that art offers.

“I think the great thing about monsters is that you can’t be wrong about your monster,” said Youth Services Librarian Jennifer Whitehead. “I think that’s what so cool about a monster is that you can just use your imagination and not be wrong, right?”

Jillian Mejka, the art teacher for Swift River Elementary School, stated that the project’s idea originated from the student teachers working for her department. Mejka has worked for the district for 10 years as an art teacher and mentioned that her students are quite active in the community. As a result, it was a natural fit for them to per-

Please see **MONSTERS**, page 11



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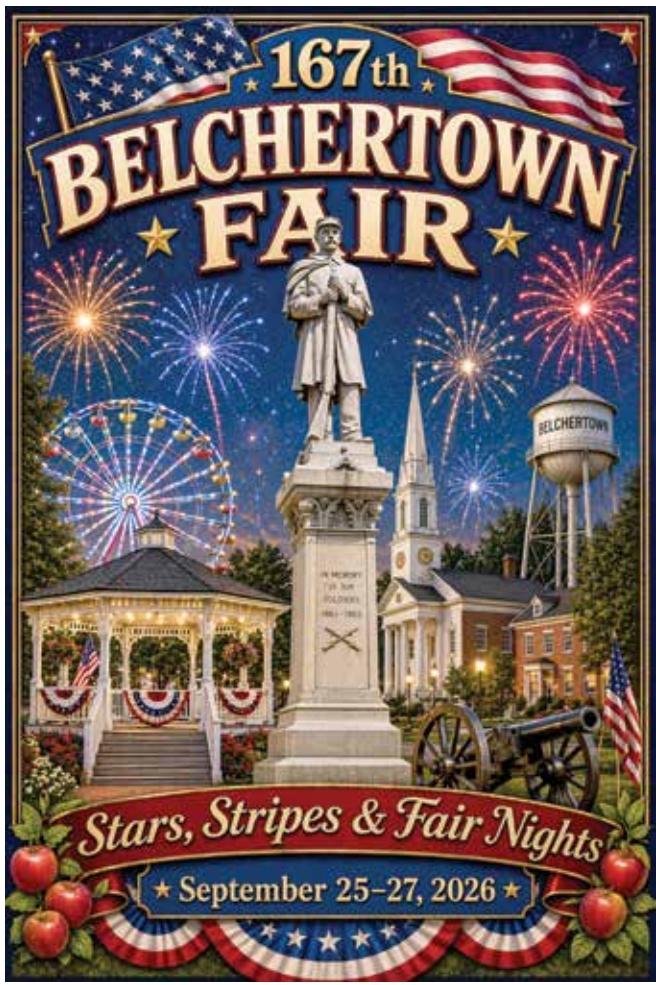
# HUMC holding event on May 24 for Pentecost

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.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

## Fair logo chosen

Thank you to Tim McConnell for submitting the logo chosen by the Fair committee to represent the 167th Belchertown Fair, which will be held Sept. 25 to 27.

# Relay for Life set for May 30

BELCHERTOWN – The Quaboag 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.acevents.org/go/to/eleanorgray>

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 com-

mon, 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 [stellie@juno.com](mailto:stellie@juno.com)

Thank you and see you on May 30.

# Local original tag sale to return

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 collectibles. 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.

# Learn to grow edible mushrooms on May 30



BELCHERTOWN – The New England Small Farm Institute, located at 275 Jackson Rd. in Belchertown, will host a workshop teaching people how to grow edible mushrooms on Saturday, May 30 from 2 to 5 p.m. Hosted by NEFSI and Forestopia, come enjoy a hands-on workshop that explores all dimensions of shiitake mushroom cul-

tivation on home and commercial levels. The workshop will provide an introduction to the agroforestry practice Forest Farming, cover the fundamentals of mushroom cultivations, and review basic considerations of those interested in growing commercially. Participants will also have the opportunity to take home an inoculated shiitake log. The event has a sug-

gested donation of \$20 to \$30 (add \$15 for participants wishing to take home one inoculated shiitake log). All are welcome. To register, please contact Sara Weil at [info@smallfarm.org](mailto:info@smallfarm.org) or call 413-323-4531.

# Actors sought for Living History Cemetery tour

BRIMFIELD—As part of Brimfield’s 250th celebration of the American Revolution, a living history cemetery tour is being planned for June 13, 2026. The tour includes powerful stories of the men who left home to serve in the patriot cause and the families they left behind. Registration details to follow.

Organizers are seek-

ing a male actor to portray a notable Brimfield resident whose family sent fourteen men to fight for freedom. Narrators, who will read short graveside scripts, are also needed. Contact Sue DeBruin through the Friends of Historic Brimfield at 413-239-0288 to lend your talents and make history come alive!

## NOTICE

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SUBMITTED PHOTOS

## Lions Club announces prize winners

Spring Raffle Committee members Victor Robidoux and Morgan Kimball readied the winners' board for the 2026 drawing at the club's May 13 meeting at the Villa Rose Restaurant in Ludlow. District 33-Y governor, Mary Swift, pulls the \$5000 top prize-winning number. 12 prizes were awarded for a total giveaway of \$12,250.00.



## Friends of Quabbin to celebrate Memorial Day

BELCHERTOWN – The Friends of Quabbin, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), and the Veterans Councils of Belchertown and Ware invite the public to attend the annual Memorial Day Commemoration at Quabbin Park Cemetery on Sunday, May 24, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon.

The ceremony will feature a performance by the Belchertown Community Band and will include a special focus on the upcoming 250th anniversary of the Revolutionary War, honoring the enduring legacy of American military



service from the nation's founding to the present day. Since 1947, Quabbin Park Cemetery has served as the gathering place for Memorial Day services honoring the four lost towns of the Swift River Valley.

**Schedule of Events**  
**Sunday, May 24**  
**10 a.m.** — Refreshments served at the Quabbin Park Cemetery Building  
**11 a.m.** — March Step-off  
 Following the march — Services at the Quabbin Town Monuments in the Quabbin Cemetery

The public is welcomed

to attend, and please note that dogs are not permitted. Quabbin Park Cemetery is located off Belchertown Road (Route 9) in Ware, Massachusetts, across from the East Entrance to the Quabbin Reservoir Park.

The Friends of Quabbin ([www.friendsofquabbin.org](http://www.friendsofquabbin.org)) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the natural, cultural, and historical significance of the Quabbin Region. Through advocacy, education, and community partnerships, the organization works to protect the watershed and share its stories with future generations.

## Lions Club seeks sponsorship for August car show event

BELCHERTOWN – In an effort to defray the costs (trophies, permits, entertainment, flyer printing, and distribution, etc.), the Belchertown Lions Club is appealing to our local businesses to have an 18" x 24" weather-resistant sign with ground stake custom-printed and prominently displayed on the Town Common during the event on Aug. 8. We will handle the set-up design and printing for a donation of \$100. All proceeds from this year's car show will stay locally as we support our Senior Center, Fuel Assistance Programs, Veterans' Organizations, Scouting America, Girl Scouts, Relay For Life, Aaron's Day, local Food Pantries, Belchertown

Little League, College and Continuing Ed. Scholarships for seniors at BHS and Pathfinder, as well as emergency requests regarding sight and hearing concerns.

Alternately, or in addition to the sponsor sign, businesses can opt to submit an item or gift certificate in any amount to be displayed for a Pick-A-Prize raffle -- where attendees can purchase a sheet of 25 tickets...and place as many of their tickets into whichever gift bags they desire.

If you are the owner or representative of a local business and would like to sponsor a ground sign, kindly email Lion Mike Mathras at [mmathras@charter.net](mailto:mmathras@charter.net), and you will promptly receive the necessary infor-

mation to do so.

If you would like to donate a gift certificate or prize for our raffle table, please get in touch with Barb Greene at [br123199@charter.net](mailto:br123199@charter.net)

As you consider your donation, please keep in mind that all profits from the sale of food, raffle tickets, and sponsor signage at this event will go directly to the local charities mentioned above.

Stay tuned for upcoming information regarding the "Cruisin' the Common" Car Show in the Sentinel, by visiting our website at [www.belchertownlionsclub.com](http://www.belchertownlionsclub.com), or by checking out our Facebook page: Belchertown Lions Club.

## Plant Sale at the Holyoke Senior Center

HOLYOKE— The Holyoke Senior Center Garden Club will hold its second annual plant sale on Saturday, June 6, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Senior Center, 291 Pine St., Holyoke. Shoppers will find a selection of sun or shade loving perennials, plus herbs and annuals that do well in our local gardens. Members will be available to answer questions about the plants they enjoy. The sale will be held rain or shine.

Proceeds from the sale are used for projects that beautify and support the Senior Center's gardens. Come and visit our beautiful life-enhancing gardens.

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## OPINION

SOCIAL SECURITY  
*Matters*

By Russell Gloor

## Social Security's 'First Year Rule' and withdrawing from SS

## Dear Rusty:

I am 63 years old, and about to apply for my Social Security benefits.

I am self-employed but only working part time. I know about Social Security's annual earnings limit but recently I learned I must also be concerned about a monthly earnings limit of \$2,040. My questions are:

1) How do I find out if I will be subject to a monthly earning limit of \$2,040 per month? I thought it was only evaluated annually.

2) If I choose to cancel Social Security within the first year or after, what are the penalties? Would I have to pay them back for the whole amount for the whole time that they paid me? Which makes no sense, since I have been paid into SS since I was 13 years old.

Can you help me understand this?

**Signed: Claiming Early and Still Working**

## Dear Claiming Early:

It can get tricky if you are still working after claiming your Social Security before your SS Full Retirement Age, especially during your first year collecting. I'm happy to answer your specific questions:

1. There is a special rule which applies during your first year collecting early Social Security benefits (e.g., before your Full Retirement Age or "FRA," which for you is age 67). What will happen is this: when the IRS provides SSA with your 2026 earnings (in 2027), SSA will review to see if your total 2026 net earnings from self-employment exceeded the 2026 annual limit of \$24,480.

If not, no further action is necessary. But if you did exceed the full year 2026 earnings limit, SSA will contact you and ask you to provide them with details about your monthly 2026 net earnings. If you have exceeded the monthly limit in any 2026 month after your SS benefit started, you will not be entitled to SS benefits for that month.

Essentially, if you have exceeded the annual limit, you cannot exceed the monthly earnings limit in any remaining month during your first year of collecting. If you exceeded the annual limit and also any monthly limit, SSA will send you an overpayment notice saying you exceeded the monthly earnings limit.

2. You can, within 12 months of applying for Social Security, ask SSA to withdraw your application for SS retirement benefits. They will do that for you, but you will also be required to repay them

all SS benefits that they have already paid to (or for) you.

This essentially would "wipe the slate clean" and enable your SS benefit to continue growing, allowing you to apply for a larger monthly benefit later. But if you wait longer than 12 months after you first apply for SS benefits, you can no longer withdraw your application for Social Security. Thereafter, you would be subject to the annual earnings limit (the monthly earnings limit would no longer apply).

FYI, after you reach your FRA, there is no limit on your earnings and you could choose to suspend your benefit payments and earn Delayed Retirement Credits (DRCs) to get a higher monthly benefit. Also at your FRA, if SSA withheld any of your benefits because you exceeded the earnings limit before reaching your FRA, you would get time credit for the number of months your benefits were withheld. Essentially, they would advance your benefit-start month by the number of months your benefits were withheld, yielding a slightly higher monthly amount after your FRA.

Finally, it's important to know that the contributions you made to Social Security from payroll taxes (FICA/SECA) over your lifetime are not what determines your monthly SS benefit amount. Your monthly SS benefit is based on two main factors: a) your average monthly earnings (indexed for inflation) for the highest earning 35 years over your lifetime as reported to the IRS, and b) the age at which you claim your SS benefits.

Your contributions to Social Security while working only provide you with eligibility to collect SS benefits; the contributions aren't put into a separate account for you and are not used to calculate your monthly SS benefit.

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



## Why do we wait until Memorial Day to plant?

For as long as I can remember, the "safe date" for planting tender crops was always Memorial Day.

This year in particular the holiday is on the early side, the 25th of May, as opposed to the 30th or 31st. Here in New England, five or six days can make all the difference in the world.

Sure, as I write, the mercury is set to rise well into the high eighties for three or four days, then become more seasonable again. It's a wonder the plants know what to do.

Anyhow, read on to learn about some tender plants and how they respond better when soil or air temperatures have warmed.

Although cool loving peas and warmth loving beans are both legumes, bean seeds in particular crave seventy to eighty degree soil in which to germinate. This is particularly evident with white seeded bean varieties, since the white seeds reflect the heat instead of holding on to it like dark seeds do.

Oftentimes, white seeds will rot before they sprout if planted too soon. If you are in the mood to gamble and desire an early sowing of beans, use a dark seeded variety.

Untreated corn seeds will not germinate in soil below 60 degrees. We are advised to be patient and trust that seed planted in warm soil will make up for lost time, and they typically will, in no time flat.

Those of us who plant only a small plot have luck starting corn seeds indoors then transplanting the seedlings outside. I sowed my corn two seeds per six pack a few days back and have it on heat along with a sowing of winter squash and melons and all are popping up nicely.

of warmth and protect plants from the wind.

Tomatoes are planted outside after all danger of frost has passed. Typically on Memorial Day! In fact, I think the whole "safe date" theory came to be because of tomatoes! When I was just getting started in horticulture I remember all sorts of contraptions people used to use to try and get the first ripe tomato in the neighborhood.

By planting tomatoes earlier you could get earlier fruiting. Cloches or wall-o-waters were popular before the floating row covers became the rage.

I typically wait to transplant my tomatoes. Mine are huge this year.

Remember, if your plants get big and your are still a few weeks away from getting them from the six pack into the ground, "pot them up." It's a term for going up a size, say from a cell to a four inch pot, so roots don't get bound before they get the chance to live happily ever after in the garden.

Soon enough, for sure!

*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](mailto:pouimette@turley.com) with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.*



A Western Massachusetts resident spotted this brown thrasher in the Berkshire foothills.

Sometimes they visit feeders like the one in the attached photo. Brown thrashers blend in with their surrounding and are tricky to spot.

They are fairly large, slender songbirds with long proportions: the legs are long and sturdy, the bill is long and slightly down curved and the tail is long.

They often cock the tail upward in the manner of wrens. A bright yellow eye, gray brown face and black and white wings bars are other identifying features.

Thrashers are reddish brown on the head, back, tail and wings. They have a white breast and belly with darker



Brown thrasher

PHOTO BY CONNIE SCHWAIGER

speckling. They are 9.1 to 11.8 inches long or slightly smaller than a blue jay. The brown thrasher is the only thrasher species found east of Texas.

Thrashers have one of the largest repertoires of any North American songbird over 1,000 different songs. Since they rarely venture far from thick undergrowth, there singing give their location away especially when perched in a treetop or shrubs.

Their songs are a complex string of many musical phrases, many copied from other birds' songs with each phrase typically sung twice. They also make a distinctive,

harsh" tsuck" note.

They imitate other birds including Chuck-will's-widows, wood thrushes and northern flickers.

Both males and females incubate the eggs and feed the young. Nestlings sometimes leave the nest fully feathered within nine days of hatching, earlier than either of their smaller relatives, the northern mockingbird and gray catbird.

An aggressive defender of its nest, the Brown Thrasher is known to strike people and dogs hard enough to draw blood.

Please see **BACKYARD**, page 7

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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](mailto: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 fundraisers.

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

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**ARTISTS** from page 1

uniqueness was the most important criteria for her. For her, art pieces that capture her attention “right off the bat” and artistic consistency are crucial to what she considered as prize-worthy.

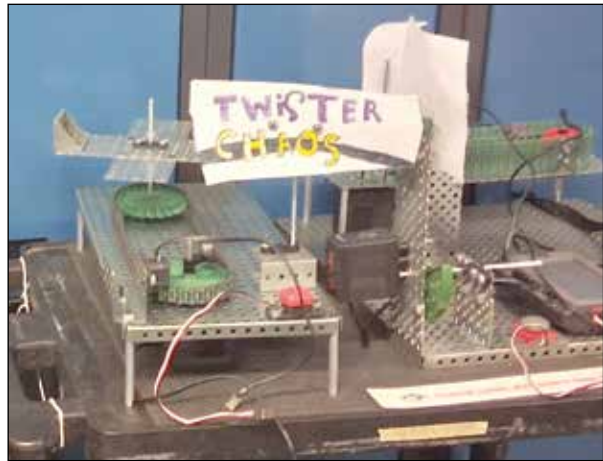
“There were a lot of good ones,” said Wolan-Jedziniak. “But if it’s just one good use and the rest didn’t stand out, I mean that’s how we ended up judging. We want to acknowledge a person who’s able to constantly repeat, express themselves through their art.”

Mariann Ingraham, a local crafter specializing in wreaths and seashell work and fellow Granby Cultural Council member, stated that the most important criteria for her was the expression of color and “what the work represents.” Her work can be seen on Facebook at Simple Sensations.

“For me, I really like the different colors that people are choosing,” Ingraham said. “Some go very soft. Some go very deep.”

The Granby Cultural Council works on limited funds with an annual budget of \$7,500, which is used to create various cultural events in town, all with the express purpose to support and uphold the arts within town boundaries. As cultural ambassadors for the town, the Council intends to increase regional awareness for Granby.

“A lot of people may see this as a way to drive through Ludlow or to get to Chicopee,” Delphia said when asked about the driving force behind events like the



Students were very creative with erector sets.



AT RIGHT: Ceramics presented for the event came in many different shapes and sizes.



Even cardboard was repurposed into artistic displays.

## Student artists showcased



The art show showcased a number of different art mediums including traditional painting, ceramics, cardboard constructions and clay relief tiles.

PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

high school art show. “But we really want people to stop and take a look at our town and spend some time here.”

Standout artists includ-

ed first prize winner Addie Gardner, whose work was described by the judges as “excellent.” Second place went to Peyton Laflamme,

with third place going to Kaylin Slapski. Honorable mentions included Morgan Justin, Benjamin French, Jacob Fuller, Richard

Sweet, Milley Son and Liam McKinnon.

“Everybody did a great job,” said Wolan-Jedziniak. “So hurrah for the partici-

pants. And hopefully, next year, we can do a little bit more.”

**BACKYARD** from page 6

Shrubby habitats are popular hideouts for nest predators, which may explain why the thrashers fledge so quickly for birds of their size. Brown Thrashers are the largest common host of parasitic brown-headed cowbirds.

The oldest Brown Thrasher on record was at least 10 years, 11 months old. It was found in Florida in 1978 where it was banded in 1967.

**Rose-breasted grosbeak**

A Worthington resident saw a rose-breasted grosbeak showed up at his feeder earlier than usual on May 1. He said they always arrive the first week of May. Last year it was not until May 7.

**Belchertown birds**

A Belchertown resident sent an email reporting birds seen and heard on his property. They included Baltimore oriole, grey catbirds, a Blackburnian warbler in the maple tree, and he heard, but not seen, a northern parula. He also has a pair of eastern phoebes nesting under an eave of the house.

At nearby Lake Wallace, he took photos of yellow warblers and a green heron catching fish.

**Red-shouldered hawk**

A Montgomery resident saw a red-shouldered hawk recently.

**Nesting sparrows**

A Belchertown resident said she had sparrows using a nest box in her yard. She found a few of their babies on the ground. At first, I thought something got into the nest, but today a found another one. I think the nestling had died and the parents got them out. She said she may remove the nest box and replace it with a new one in case the sparrows succumbed to disease.

**Brimfield birds**

A Brimfield resident said he put up the hummingbird feeders in late April when he learned of a ruby-throated hummingbird in Ware. A couple days later he had an adult male ruby-throated hummingbird and a few days later he saw a female.

He said, “One each gray

catbirds, male Baltimore oriole and males rose-breasted grosbeak showed up last week. This week a second male oriole and two more grosbeaks show up, another male and a female. He also has a male eastern towhee in his yard. He said, “A couple of years ago we had two male towhees in the yard and one spent the summer attacking its reflection in the many windows despite best efforts to dissuade it.”

He said elsewhere, in Warren on South Street there are three occupied great blue

heron nest and two others he was not sure if they were being used. The osprey pair has been around for awhile. The nest has gotten deeper over the years and on a recent visit he could only see the tail or maybe wing feathers barely showing above the nest. I think incubation has started, but can’t be sure.

He also has a male common yellowthroat and house wren in his yard.

He said, “House wrens have nested in nesting boxes in the yard several times and I saw feathers near the

entrance hole on a box they have used before. The wrens have a habit of building false nests in a couple of boxes that they never use.”

He also said, “A male yellow-bellied sapsucker spent some time on a native dogwood and today a sapsucker, probably the same one, spent several hours tapping away at the same tree.”

**Geese in a pavilion**

On May 12, I drove by Camp Putnam in New Braintree and saw four geese under their pavilion near the

pond. I see many Canada geese in fields or ponds, but I have never seen them in a pavilion.

**Other birds**

On May 8 I received an email reporting a scarlet tanager, grosbeaks and hummingbirds.

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by emailing mybackyard88@aol.com or edown-er@turley.com or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005.

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**EDUCATION**

# Belchertown High School announces its Third Quarter Honor Roll

**Grade 12 High Honors**

Olivia Bailey, Mackenzie Burch, Canyon Charron, Lydia Edds, Zoe Eyer-Pelletier, Lila Goodrich, Ryan Gould, Laila Hurlburt, Jordan Kalish, Collin Laragy, Hannah Mandeville, Miles McNamara, Isabel Moreau, Brandon O'Connor, Aleksandra Randall, Gia Ronkese, Sofia Santos, Camryn Scoon, Sam Smolinski, Kiera Struzziero, Gabriella Vazquez

**Grade 12 Honors**

Edith Audette, Zane Auger, Rachel Baltazar, Jaden Bean, Lucas Bermudez, Brian Burns, Mya Carpin, Lily Carr, Sofia Cofone, Josalyn Currier, Luke Dudek, Logan Duke, Jack Forton, Graham Guardenfield, Izabella Haggerty, Allison Harris, Avigail Heroux, Brooklyn Keeler, Emma Kornbluth, Clara Lambert, Layla Liminski, Nathan Marino, Molly Mazzaferro, Michael Murray, Thomas Normandeau, Mya Philpott, Lily Potter, Destiny Ranzie, Austin

Raymer, Ava Rodrigues, Donald Rogers, Ryan Shea, Ashleigh Thayer, Lyla-Rae Williams, Paityn Zina

**Grade 11 High Honors**

Jonathan Alves, Hayden Bressette, Avery Cooper, Claire Corbin, Avery Cote, Grace Duchon, Ryleigh Fine, Madison Howes, Sokaltida Kan, Dory Keefe, Alexander Land-Kazlauskas, Cian Lindsay, Sean Lindsay, Charlotte MacKenzie, Isaiah Matthey, Sophia Mitus, Jezelle Morisseau, Ifeanyichukwu Nebedum, Tahlia Nesbitt, Jocelyn Patten, Piper Patten, Madelynn Perry, Alexa Radner, Troy Robinson, Elise Roggie, Lily Tellier, Payton Tucker

**Grade 11 Honors**

Naveen Berryhill, Tyler Boisjolie, Kaiya Cavanaugh, Cooper Chianciola, Gavin Couchon, Mason DeStefano, Addison-Rose DiBona, Paige Dias, Drake Dragon, Maria Fahmy, Charles Fisher, Delaney

Floyd, Jacob Gladu, Oliver Hellyar, Emmett Howard, Andre Jarry, Brandon Johannes, Natalie Jordan, Owen Laurenzo, Aubrey McCain, William Mitus, Joshua O'Connor, Kali Pacunas, Lia Pikul, Aiden Plant, Matthew Plant, Racquel Pogoda, Julia Rainaud, Zachary Restucci, Lila Roy, Miles Schneider, Klara Shaink, Fatiom Siri, Benjamin Smolinski, Lelia VanBuren, Emily Waller, Henry Walter, Maya Whitney, Gianna Zenon

**Grade 10 High Honors**

Ethan Davis, Peyton Dias, Kylie Ferreira, Brennan Griffin, Matthew Harrington, Sakura Hartsfield, Salem Hubbard, Aubrey Klingensmith, Ryan Lacroix, Andrew Lambert, Joy Lian, Quinn McNamara, Grace Perron, Niko Pisano, Kina Roy, Ava Swiatlowski, William Verrochi, Margaret Wheeler, Madeline Williams

**Grade 10 Honors**

Myra Ablicki, Camilla

Adamczyk, Ameyo Ampiah-Bonney, Harper Bean, William Bordenca, Ashlyn Carey, Jason Carlson, Thomas Chien, Tucker Cordle, Rachel Dorman, Benjamin Dudek, Charlie Goldman, Lucas Haluch, Landon Honeywell, Serena Jones, Grayden Kendall, Owen Kurzeski, Nathan Leblond, Samantha Letzeisen, Braedan Longe, Cassidy MacLean, Sokoldara Mao, Nick McArdle, Jocelyn McMahon, Ronan Mosher, Lily Moyer-Wilkes, Addison Piedade, Brody Pope, Alexa Raymer, Christian Reda, Justin Roman, Adryan Roy, Kian Roy, Evan Sherwood, Owen Wallace, John Yoon

**Grade 9 High Honors**

Cecilia Bermudez, Jillian Currier, Tovah DelPrete, Mary DiBona, Zoey Hale, Greta Kristensen, Madison Lacroix, Harper Laurenzo, Piper Laurenzo, Josephine Lian, Amalie Martins, Jada Okyere Baffour, Janice Okyere Baffour,

Annalie Roggie, Kamila Santiago, Ashley Siri, Ava Stelmokas, Ella Stelmokas Shay Teixeira, Noah Turgeon, Lukas Versace, Jordan Winfield, Bradford Yacek

**Grade 9 Honors**

Matthew Almeida, Evan Beaulieu, Adilyn Bottari, Ashlynn Brunell, Kylee Burnham, Quinten Chen, Nolan Chianciola, Lucy Cofone, Connor Cormier, Charles Cozine, Raiden Drouin, Hannah Fillion, Michael Fontaine, Shannon Fuller, Patrick Gibson, Jackson Goodsell, Helaine Holt, Asher Johnson-Jones, MaryRose Johnson-Jones, Nathaniel Lewis, Ryan Longe, Diana Lopes, Lily Mann, Charles Maurer, Aliyah Mega, Annabelle Morra, Hunter Neiford, Joshua Page, Natalie Parent, Charlotte Perry, Blake Piedra, Cora Podraza, Logan Ridenour, Kyla Riley, Brayden Slattery, Tyler Stahl, Lucy Toner, Gianna Viens



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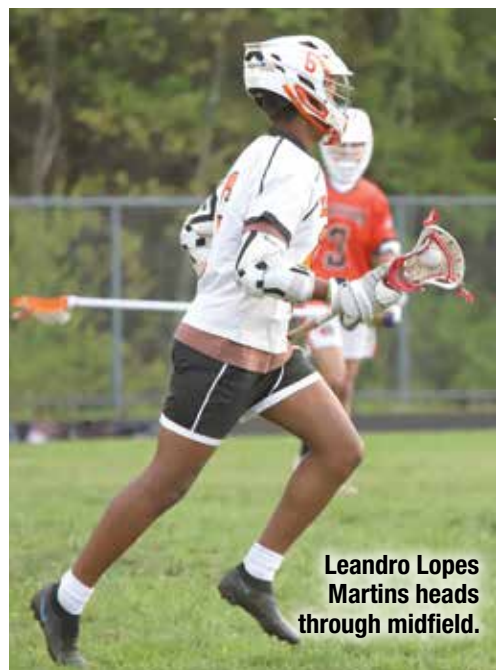
# SPORTS

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## Orioles need win to make tourney



Leandro Lopes Martins heads through midfield.



Tabari Mann receives a pass.



Steven Ryan reaches up to catch the ball.

**BELCHERTOWN** – Last Friday evening gave Belchertown High School boys lacrosse a big blow to their state playoff hosts

as the Orioles lost to Agawam 16-6. The loss put the Orioles in a tough spot at 8-9. Belchertown is well below the top 32

in Division 3, and need a win in non-playoff action this week in order to have a chance at .500 and to sneak into the state tournament

with a potential preliminary round game. As of press time, Belchertown's next game had not been scheduled.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Grayden Kendall holds the stick wide ready to shoot.



Adam O'Rourke is pressured by the Agawam defense.



John DeMento tries to get around a defender.

## Orioles boys volleyball get win over Ludlow

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

**LUDLOW**— One of the boys' volleyball teams expected to compete in the upcoming Division 2 state tournament is the Belchertown Orioles.

The Orioles closed out the regular season with a 3-1 (15-25, 25-17, 29-27, 25-20) non-league victory against the Ludlow Lions at Mullins Gymnasium, last Wednesday.

"This has always been a difficult gym to play in, and it was their senior night," said Belchertown head coach Chris Shea. "We also lost the first set. We had a lot of things stacked against us, but my guys kept battling out there. It was a very exciting rivalry match."

Belchertown (9-10), who were ranked 26th in the Division 2 state power rankings, also defeated Ludlow (4-13) in a home match a year ago after losing the previous four meetings.

The last time that the Orioles played in the state tournament was three years ago.

Back in 2023, the Orioles, who were the 28th-seed, suffered a 3-0 loss at fifth-seeded West Springfield in a round of 32 match.

The only remaining players from that squad are seniors Brian Burns and Shea MacLean.

The other senior listed on this year's Orioles roster is Ryan Shea, who's planning to join the men's swimming and diving team at

Springfield College. "We have three incredible senior leaders this year," coach Shea said. "We're looking forward to playing in both the Western Mass. and state tournaments this year."

MacLean gave his thoughts on the regular season finale.

"We definitely didn't want to lose tonight's match," he said. "We lost the first set, but we fought very hard to win the match in the final three sets."

Belchertown qualified for the Western Mass. Class B tournament as the third seed.

"We're a very close team this year," said Belchertown junior Gavin Couchon. "I'm very glad that I was able to be a part of a successful team. It has been a lot of fun this season."

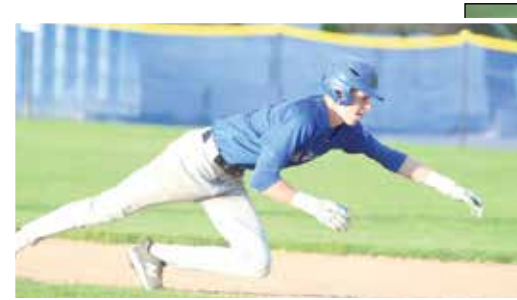
The Orioles were scheduled to play at second-seeded Sci-Tech (15-3) in a semifinal match on Tuesday night.

"We played Sci-Tech twice during the regular season and they beat us both times," Shea added. "We're hoping that the third time will be the charm."

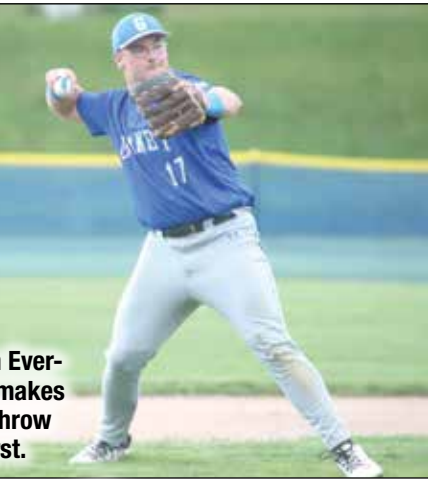
The winner of the semifinal match-up will either face top-seeded Longmeadow or fourth-seeded East Longmeadow in the Class B finals.

Ludlow didn't qualify for the Class B tournament, but the Lions players are

Please see **VOLLEYBALL**, page 10



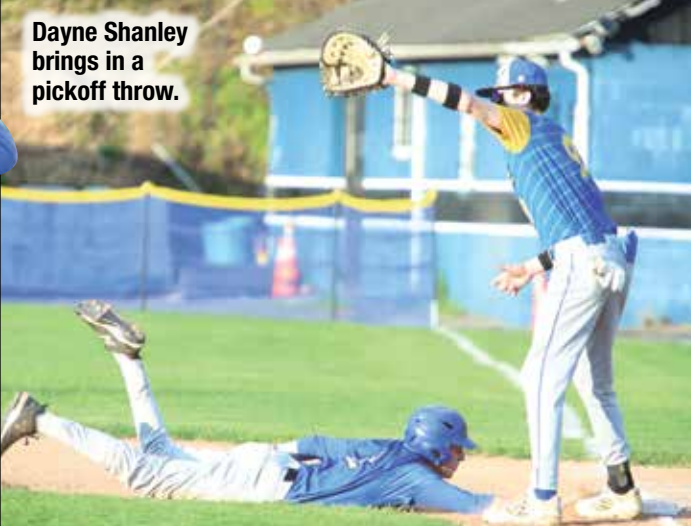
Brodie Funk slides back to first safely.



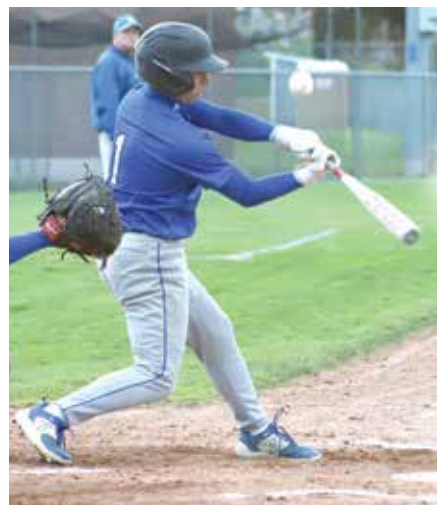
Liam Everson makes the throw to first.



Brandon Carillon sends a pitch home.



Dayne Shanley brings in a pickoff throw.



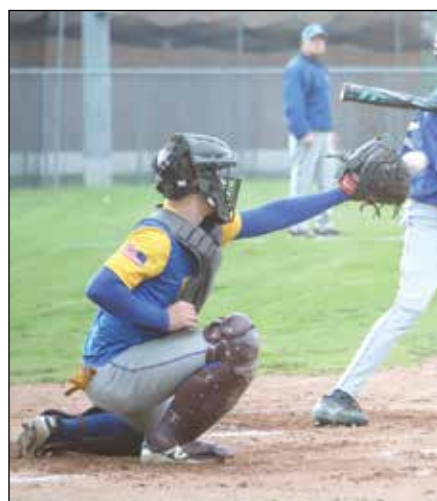
Samuel Moure fouls off a pitch.

## Granby scores win over Pathfinder

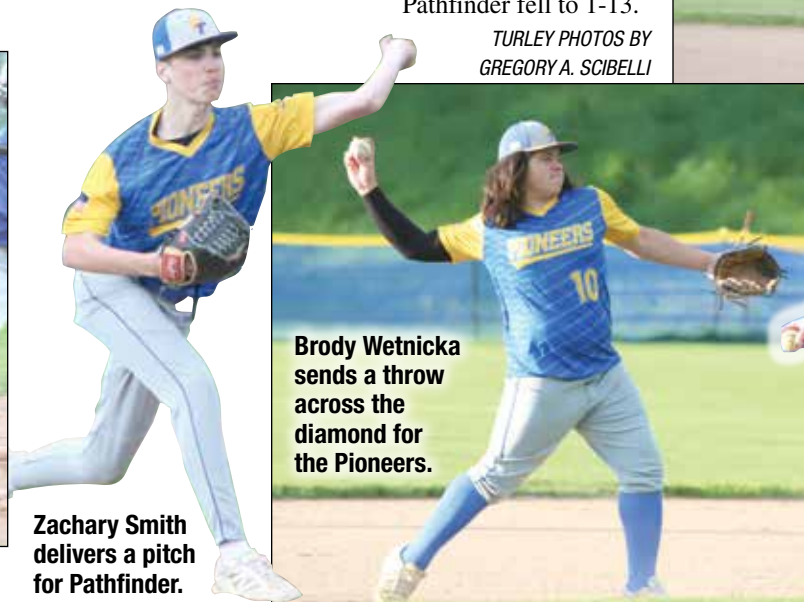
**PALMER** – Last Monday under the lights of Legion Field, the Granby High School baseball team had a 10-run third inning and it powered the Rams to a 17-4 win over Pathfinder

that ended after five innings because of the mercy rule. Brandon Carillon and Anthony Santiago had three hits each. Carillon had five RBI. The Rams are just 4-12 on the season while Pathfinder fell to 1-13.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Joseph Szostek tries to frame a strike.



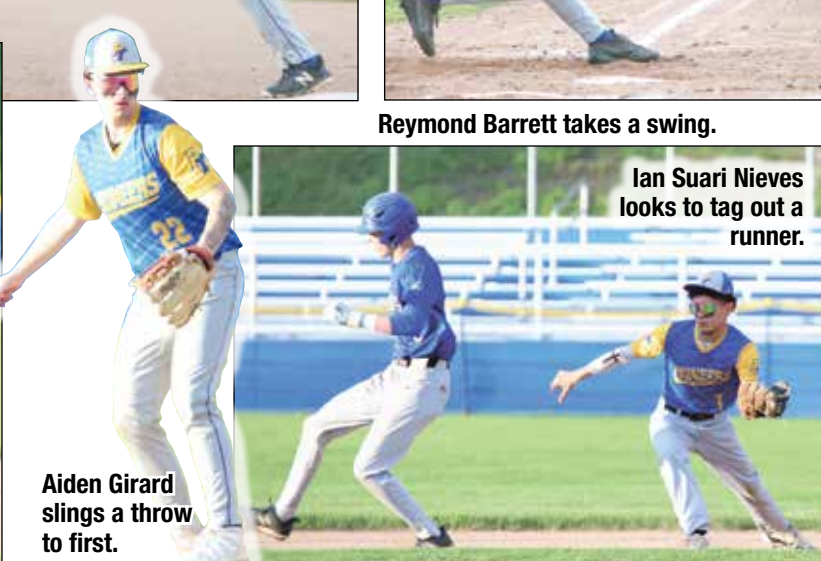
Zachary Smith delivers a pitch for Pathfinder.



Anthony Misiaszek catches the out at first base.



Reymond Barrett takes a swing.



Ian Suari Nieves looks to tag out a runner.

Aiden Girard slings a throw to first.

Brody Wetnicka sends a throw across the diamond for the Pioneers.

SPORTS



## Stafford Speedway racing now underway

STAFFORD SPRINGS, CT – Stafford Speedway returned to action with its first Friday night weekly racing program of the 2026 season on Friday, May 8. Feature winners on the night included Keith Rocco in the SK Modified feature, Adam Gray in the Late Model feature, Robert Blossom, III in the SK Light feature, Gary Patnode in the Limited Late Model feature, and Brandon Warren in the Street Stock feature.

In the 40-lap SK Modified® feature, Troy Talman took the lead at the drop of the green flag with Dylan Kopec, Keith Rocco, Dylan Izzo, and Matt Vassar all lined up behind him. Kopec took the lead from Talman coming out of turn 4 on lap-3 before the caution came out for Chase Cook, who spun and came to a stop in turn 2.

Talman took the lead back on the restart with Kopec in second. Rocco and Izzo were side by side for a lap fighting for third placed before Izzo got loose in turn 2 and slid back several spots. Vassar was fourth with Mikey Flynn in fifth. Flynn took fourth from Vassar on lap-6 while Kopec took the lead before surrendering the lead to Rocco on lap-9. Talman was now third behind Rocco and Kopec with Flynn fourth and Glen Reen up to fifth.

Marcello Rufrano was on the charge as he took fourth place from Talman on lap-12 as Rocco continued to lead Kopec and Flynn. Anthony Flannery

was now sixth with Reen, Alexander Pearl, Izzo, and Jon Puleo making up the top-10. Rufrano charged his way past Flynn on lap-15 to move into third and now he was challenging Kopec for second place.

Rufrano took second from Kopec on lap-19 and now set his sights on Rocco in the lead. The caution flew with 24 laps complete as Meghan Fuller spun in turn 2 with Chase Cook. Cook was black flagged by Stafford officials for making contact with Fuller.

Rocco took the lead back under green with Rufrano taking second. Kopec was third with Flannery fourth and Flynn fifth. Pearl was sixth with Izzo, Talman, Michael Christopher, Jr. and Puleo making up the top-10. Rufrano nearly took the lead from Rocco on lap-28, but Rocco was able to fend off his challenge. With five laps to go Rocco was still leading Rufrano with Kopec, Flannery, and Pearl making up the top-5.

Rocco led Rufrano to the checkered flag to pick up his first win of the 2026 season. Kopec finished third with Flannery and Pearl rounding out the top-5. Following post-race inspection, the car of Kopec failed to meet the minimum ride height requirement and the car of Flannery exceeded the maximum allowable left side weight and both cars were disqualified from the feature finish. This moves Pearl into third with Christopher and Flynn rounding out the new top-5 behind Rocco and Rufrano.

# Pioneers get 2026 campaign underway with win

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW— Since joining USL League Two in 2019, the Western Mass. Pioneers have qualified for the league playoffs each season. A new group of Pioneers players are hoping to continue the post-season tradition this spring.

In front of a large crowd at historic Lusitano Stadium in Ludlow, the Pioneers began the 2026 campaign with a 4-2 victory over the Albany Rush, last Friday night.

“Most of the players on last year’s team graduated from college, so we do have a lot of first-year players this season,” said Pioneers head coach Federico Molinari. “I thought we played well in tonight’s game. We had a lot of opportunities, especially in the first half.”

The Pioneers posted a 10-1-3 regular season record a year ago. They lost to FC Motown STA, 2-1, in the Eastern Conference quarterfinals.

A couple of the Pioneers players from last year’s squad have signed with professional soccer teams.

“It’s really nice to see your players playing soccer at a high level,” said Molinari, who’s been leading the Pioneers since 2012. “That’s our main goal every year.”

One of the local players listed on the 2026 Pioneers roster is Thomas Wadas, who’s played soccer for the Ludlow Lions and is currently a member of the UMass-Amherst men’s soccer team.

Wadas has been listed on the Pioneers roster for the past several years. He made his first start for the Pioneers in the season opening match.

“I used to watch the Pioneers games from the stands, so I’ve been looking forward to this moment for a long time,” said Wadas, who’s a midfielder. “Being a starter in the season opener is a very special thing to me. We played hard for the whole 90 minutes of tonight’s game.”

When we come together as a cohesive team, we can look forward to another strong season. Anything less than making the playoffs seems like a failure.”

Wadas was a starter in ten of the 15 games that he played in for the Minutemen as a freshman last fall. He finished the 2025 season with two goals and three assists.

“It was a big adjustment going from the high school level to the collegiate level,” Wadas said. “All of the players are bigger and stronger in college. The game is also a lot more physical. I’m just glad that I was able to contribute as a freshman. Playing for the Pioneers is only going to help me prepare for my sophomore season at UMass.”

A first-year player member of the Pioneers is Michael Gouvin, who’s from Monson. His older sister, Laura, played for the New England Mutiny several years ago.

Gouvin, who comes from a soccer family, attended Avon Old Farms before playing two seasons for the men’s soccer team at the University of New Hampshire. He decided to transfer to Bentley University before the start of last season.

“I used to play youth soccer games on this field. It feels awesome to be back here playing again,” said Gouvin, who’s a starting defender. “I’ve never played a game in this type of environment before. Winning our first game of the season feels incredible.”

The Pioneers have won every match that they’ve played against the Rush since 2022. They outscored them, 11-0, in both matches last season.

Prior to the start of the match, third grader Brooke Lamothe did an outstanding job of performing the National Anthem.

The Rush ended their scoreless spell against the Pioneers when Lucas Horja fired a shot into the back of the net past Western Mass.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM  
Michael Gouvin, of Monson, sends a pass away.

goalie Ben Alexander for an unassisted goal during the 11th minute of the opening half.

The Pioneers quickly took over the momentum.

The home side had five corner kicks before scoring the equalizer in the 37th minute.

An Albany player fouled Wadas, which gave the Pioneers a free kick. Pearse O’Brien booted the ball into the box and Matiws Rumley managed to score the tying goal.

Two minutes later, an Albany player fouled O’Brien inside the box resulting in a penalty kick.

O’Brien, who’s from West Hartford Conn., stepped up to the spot and lined a shot into the back of the net giving the Pioneers the lead for the first time.

Horja scored the tying goal nine minutes into the

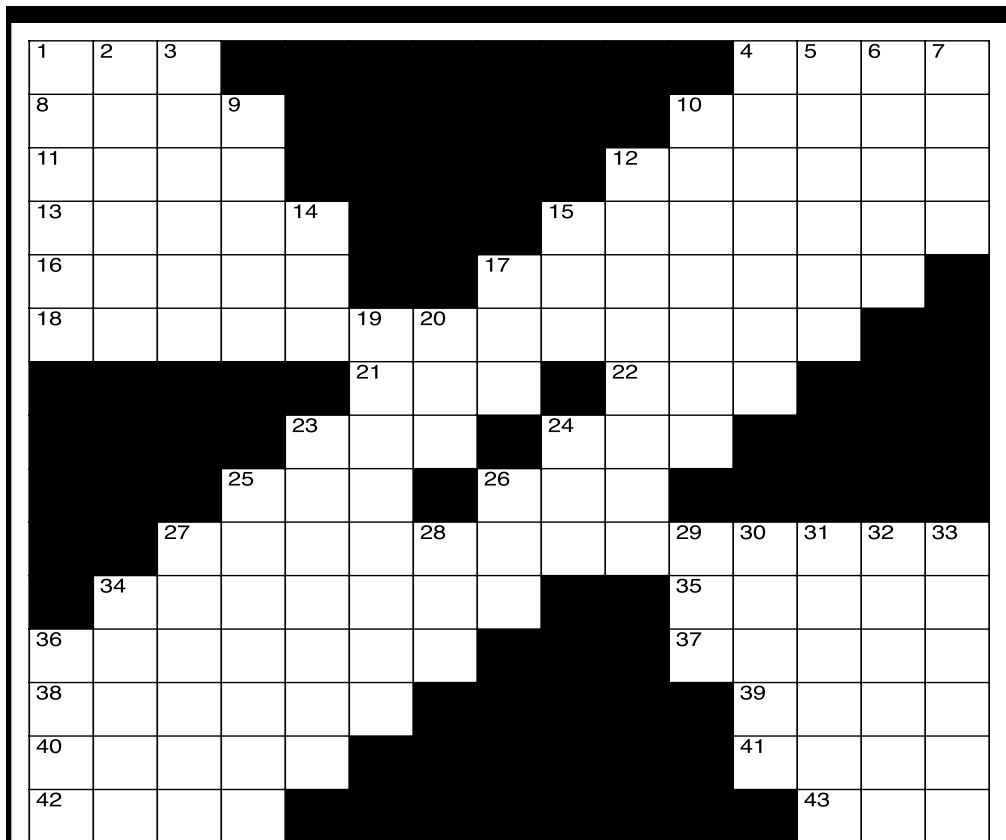
second half.

Five minutes later, Gouvin sent a pass into the box from the right wing where Felipe De Andrade, who had just entered the match as a sub, headed the ball into the net.

“I saw that Felipe was open and I just sent him the ball,” Gouvin said. “It was a perfect play. My main goal in every game is to make an impact.”

The duo of Alfred Baafi and Martin Echarren, who also came off the bench, hooked up on the Pioneers final goal during the 82nd minute. Echarren flicked a shot into the net for his first goal as a Pioneers player.

The Pioneers are scheduled to play a road game against the Seacoast United Phantoms on Wednesday night before returning home to face NEFC at 7:30 on Saturday night.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Government lawyers
4. The back of a person’s neck
8. Mild yellow Dutch cheese
10. In a less flashy way
11. Living room piece
12. Shepherd dog
13. A citizen of Iran
15. Moved slowly
16. Small finch
17. Previously
18. What a kid does on Halloween
21. Monetary unit
22. Using dry humor
23. Ocean

CLUES DOWN

24. Greek goddess of the dawn
25. Not close
26. NHL legend Bobby
27. A ballplayer would love to do this
34. Charity
35. City in Finland
36. Loomed over
37. Vaccine developer
38. Avoids capture
39. We all need it
40. Openwork fabrics
41. Get away
42. Something you might hit
43. Soviet Socialist Republic

CLUES DOWN

1. Abstain from
2. Admirer
3. Expedition to observe animals
4. Act that is legally void
5. WW2 combatants
6. A tool
7. Looked at
9. Showing wild excitement
10. Banknotes
12. Tired
14. Printers need it
15. Women’s patriotic group
17. When you anticipate getting somewhere

CLUES DOWN

19. Functions
20. Breed of sheep
23. Mocking pieces
24. A major division of geological time
25. Andiron
26. Many not ands
27. Cuban city
28. He voiced “Olaf”
29. Criticize
30. “Thundercats” character
31. Markings
32. Gets up
33. MLB lefty reliever A.J.
34. An assembly of witches
36. High energy lasers (abbr.)



Jaiden Williams, of Belchertown, competes with an opponent.



Fernando Delgado dribbles up the field.

VOLLEYBALL from page 9

still hoping to sneak into the Division 2 state tournament. The Lions were ranked 33rd and were slated to face Athol in a non-playoff home match on Tuesday.

“We’re still hoping to qualify for the state tournament,” said Ludlow head coach Ethan Campbell. “We’ve made a big improvement this season after not winning any games last year.”

The last time that the Lions played in the post-season tournament was two years ago.

The Ludlow seniors, who were honored in a ceremony before the start of last Wednesday’s match, are Cameron Dakers, Cooper Champigny, Jordan Gray,

Ben Sanches, Damien Martinez, Nick Deroine, and Aaron Landers.

“All of the seniors are great guys,” Campbell said. “They always play very hard in every match. I enjoyed watching them improve on the court.”

There were several ties in the first set before the Lions built a 15-9 lead with the help of a 9-2 run.

Back-to-back aces by Martinez increased the Lions lead into double digits (23-12).

The home team had a 9-2 lead at the start of the second set before the momentum changes sides.

The Orioles battled back with the help of a 7-0 run.

After taking a 13-12 lead following an ace from sophomore Dara Mao, the visit-

ing team never looked back.

With the match tied 1-1, the third set was very close from start to finish.

“We’re two evenly matched teams,” Shea said. “We stepped up and were finally able to win that set.”

The score was tied for the last time at 27-27 before the Orioles managed to win the final two points.

Maclean recorded a kill before the duo of Couchon and junior Drake Dragon combined for a block giving the visiting squad a 2-1 lead in the match.

The Lions held a slim 14-13 advantage in the four set before the Orioles pulled away with the help of an 8-1 run.

The Orioles players made a stop for ice cream on their way home.

# Monsters lurking at CML

**MONSTERS** from page 1  
form a project such as this for the town.

“By doing the 3D sculpture, it kind of brought that monster to life,” said Teixeira. “It made it three dimensional. You could see all around the outside of it. You could see where this monster lived.”

“It’s really just about the art,” Mejka said. “Which is wonderful.”

Elementary school students from Meaghan Otto’s and Melissa Roy’s classes were given a worksheet that included an area to draw their monsters and were asked questions about the monster they drew. Questions included its name, where the monster lives and what sort of food the monster prefers.

After they received the worksheets from the lower class, high school students were tasked with creating ceramic sculptures for their assigned monster, which are now on display in the Clapp Memorial Library. The art installment includes the model and the worksheet that inspired it as a side-by-side reference.

“We just thought that that was something that the second graders would enjoy and the high schoolers as well,” said Teixeira, when asked about why she believed the project was successful. “When they saw these monster drawings, they were into it. They loved it. They were super inspired.”

“We’ve been featuring the art of the high school students in different ways for several years now,” said Library Director Cindy Harbinson. “And so we’ve been doing receptions for them. At the last reception we did, Liz Texiera, the art teacher, mentioned this project. And I was like ‘we’ve got to have this at the library. This is so cool.’”

The exhibit’s public reveal occurred on May 5th between the hours of 6pm and 7pm. Refreshments were included during the unveiling, which included monster themed cupcakes. The monsters will remain on display across bookshelves in

the Clapp Memorial Library until the end of May.

“When you see them, it’s like a whole other experience,” said Whitehead. “So, it would be really neat of a lot of the community could come in and see them while they’re here.”



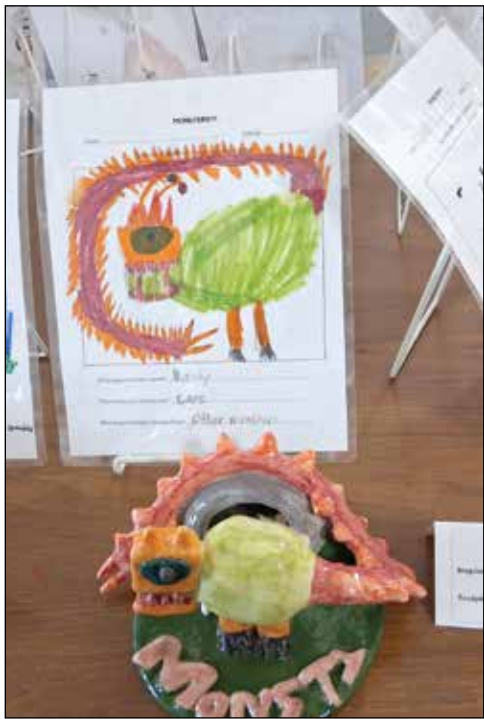
Creatures of all shapes and sizes line the tables.



Not all are monsters are scary, though. Some just live in Disney World.



A close-up of a monster created by grade two student Lyla.



The collaborative efforts between two classes are on display.



Even the bookshelves aren't safe from the monsters.



Monsters creep inside the library.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY BEN HERNANDEZ

## Pioneer Valey Financial Group welcomes Daniel Meyers

BELCHERTOWN – PV Financial Group is pleased to welcome Daniel Meyers to the firm as an Operations Support Specialist, having joined the team in April 2026.

Meyers joins PV Financial Group while continuing the legacy of founding partner Charles “Chuck” Meyers. He is a graduate of the University of Vermont, where he earned a degree in Political Science and Psychology.

He brings valuable experience in coordinating planning appointments, organizing schedules, and guiding workflow to help oper-

ations run efficiently and effectively. His attention to detail and organizational skills will support both the advisory team and clients alike.

Meyers is looking forward to supporting clients as they work toward reaching their financial goals and retiring comfortably, while also contributing to a strong team environment and supporting his local community.

PV Financial Group remains committed to investing in professionals who share the firm’s vision to client experience, teamwork, and community impact.

## Registration is open for Kids’ Fun Week, June 22-26

AMHERST – Kids’ Fun Week is coming to Amherst South Church on June 22 to 26 This weeklong fun-packed summer experience is for kids completing K-5 this spring. It happens from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. daily. Local children, from all faiths and backgrounds, are welcome to attend. The \$150 per child cost includes lunch each day.

Activities will be centered around a “connection” theme, such as “connect with family or community” for example, and will include plenty of art, music, and outside play time. Each child will have the opportunity to learn and have fun, while growing in faith, and learning

about our shared humanity.

According to Rev. Dr. Susan Cartmell, who is Amherst South Church’s Pastor: “We are so grateful to be able to offer this program to our community. The week after school ends is often the hardest time of the year for working parents because many camps do not start this early. Plus, it is a wonderful opportunity to teach kids about Bible stories, ethics, and wholesome community values, and have fun together at the church!”

South Church is an open and affirming, immigrant welcoming, green congregation of the United Church of Christ. This curriculum

will have a strong peace emphasis, with experienced local teachers leading the program. Each age group also will have high-school age counselors. In addition, Rev. Cartmell is an experienced bible leader who enjoys working with kids and excels at delivering her weekly children’s message.

Amherst South Church, with both a remarkable church building and meadow behind it, is located on the historic South Amherst Common. For more details on this program, our teachers and staff, or to register, please visit our website: <https://amherstsouthchurch.org/kids-fun-week/>



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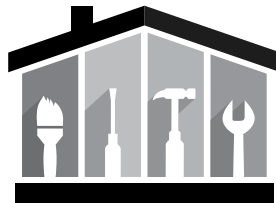
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29	Base Price \$30.50	30	Base Price \$31.00
31	Base Price \$31.50	32	Base Price \$32.00
33	Base Price \$32.50	34	Base Price \$33.00
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- Provides administrative support to Water Superintendent, Board of Water Commissioners, including word and data processing, filing, copying, scanning, and handling correspondence
- Frequently interacts with members of the general public, federal, state and/or local government officials, and Town employees
- Coordinates and assists with projects relating to personnel management, Department operations, and other areas
- Plans, coordinates, and calendars meetings and events
- Posts and attends all Board meetings; takes, prepares and distributes meeting minutes
- Acts as a liaison to other Town Departments, State Officials, Town Counsel and Engineers
- Maintains Department records
- Receives and screens visitors and telephone calls, providing information and handling issues that may require sensitivity and the use of sound independent judgment, or refer to appropriate individual(s)
- Periodic bank deposits and monthly account balancing with the Clerk/Treasurer
- Assist Water Superintendent in preparing and managing department needs
- Prepare, review and mail bi-monthly water bills
- Update and maintain utility billing database
- Process all demand bills, shut off notices and final readings
- Process and track all department payroll and accounts payable warrants
- Process, track, and file all other fees associated with the Water Department needs
- Completes periodic report required by state and federal governments and regulatory agencies
- Ability to communicate effectively and professionally with, and establish and maintain cooperative relationships with, Town officials, employees and staff, governmental representatives, state and federal agencies, contractors, vendors and/or the public
- Operates & maintains meter reading and processing equipment
- Routinely schedules jobs and keeps the daily work calendar up to date
- Performs work as required or assigned by the Superintendent or their designee

**KEY ATTRIBUTES:**

- Excellent communication skills, both oral and written
- Ability to deal tactfully, courteously, and professionally with all persons, even in stressful situations, essential
- Ability to maintain confidentiality and to exercise sound judgment and discretion
- Ability to work in high pressure situations, as necessary
- Highly organized, detail oriented, takes initiative and able to work independently and keep work area neat and clean
- Ability to handle multiple tasks, prioritize effectively, meet deadlines, and deliver high quality work
- Reliability and professional personal presentation are essential
- Operates standard office equipment, including a computer, Printers, Copier, etc.
- Working knowledge of Open Meeting Law, Public Records Law, State Ethics Law, Public Procurement laws
- Proficiency in typing, basic word processing, spreadsheet, presentation and database software (such as MS Word and Excel).
- Specialized software related to functional areas such as Water Utility Billing Software, Meter Reading Software, etc.

**EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE/OTHER REQUIREMENTS:**

- High School diploma or G.E.D. required
  - Two (2) years of experience in relevant position (i.e., administrative assistant, office manager, or similar experience), and knowledge of general office procedures (e.g., correspondence, scheduling, filing) and previous experience in municipal government preferred.
- This is a full-time position M-F from 7am to 3pm.  
Starting pay is \$24.00 an hour and is negotiable depending on experience.  
**Applications and resumes will be accepted until Friday, May 29, 2026.** Please submit to 20 Woodbridge Street, South Hadley MA 01075 ATTN: Tim Cauley or Tcauley@shdistrict2.org South Hadley Fire District No. 2 is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability or veteran status.

**OBITUARY**

**Maya Elizabeth Piercey**

2013-2026

Our sweet, precious Maya passed away on April 9, 2026, at the tender age of 12. She was an extraordinarily happy child who loved everyone she met, delighted in learning new skills, found joy in life's simplest pleasures, and eagerly shared her happiness with others.

After Maya's birth, her family learned that she had two rare syndromes, Prader-Willi Syndrome and Kabuki Syndrome. These syndromes came with many challenges and delays, but Maya was always up to the challenge. She felt pride in her accomplishments and wanted to make others proud and happy. She loved people and communicated with them through her smile, her voice and words, sign language, or her AAC device, which she used with remarkable skill. She loved her family, her dog, music, and her many doctors, nurses, therapists, teachers, and tutors. She loved her many stuffed animal toys and puppets, especially Elmo, Quack-Quack, Moo and Moo-Moo, Baa-Baa, and Llama.

Maya loved learning and developing new skills. Through her happy determination and desire to celebrate with those teaching her, she learned much more than doctors and educators thought she ever would. She loved to read, spell, make art, and count, work with Play-Doh, and ride her tricycle. While some thought she would never walk, her parents knew that Maya would prove them wrong—and she did, at six years old.

Maya loved books and had

a large, worn-out library of well-loved books. Her favorite was her sister Katelyn's creation, Quack-Quack and Maya Go to Six Flags. She had an especially close relationship with Katelyn, who would do exercise videos, make Tik-Toks, do makeup, and introduce her to the things that teens and tweens were doing.

Maya found joy in everyday life and brought that joy to everyone she interacted with. Whether laughing with her parents, stopping to hug neighbors proudly showing people at church that she finished her smoothie, or celebrating an accomplishment with her teachers or therapists, Maya taught everyone to celebrate every small happy moment together.

Maya was doing so well, her family believed they would have her for many years. However, in December 2024, she caught RSV and suddenly went into septic shock. She spent 14 of the last 16 months of her life in the ICU at Boston Children's Hospital. Despite everything, Maya continued to fight for every gain and milestone with determination and courage. She never gave up, and we never gave up on her. Unfortunately, we learned that even superheroes can lose their battles.

Maya's family will be forever grateful that Heavenly Father entrusted this precious soul to them for 12 beautiful years. Those who wish to honor Maya's life can smile more, do kind things for others, donate blood, and consider becoming an organ



**DEATH NOTICE**

**Piercey, Maya Elizabeth**  
Died April 9, 2026  
Celebration of Life  
May 30 at 11 a.m.  
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints,  
23 Brigham Lane, Amherst

*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](mailto:obits@turley.com).

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

donor. Maya is survived by her parents, David and Andrea Piercey, and her sisters, Katelyn and Lauren.

A celebration of Maya's life will be held Saturday, May 30, at 11 a.m. at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 23 Brigham Lane, Amherst. Memories and condolences can be shared on her memorial page: <https://olpinmortuary.com/obituaries/maya-piercey>.

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**PUBLIC NOTICE**

**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

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

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Complete Auto Body, Paint & Repair, auto glass, computerized paint matching, also routine car maintenance. Free estimates. Old Springfield Rd., Belchertown. 413-323-6664.

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**SWIFT RIVER GUNWORKS**  
Full service full time gunsmith. 40 Years experience. Located at 450 State St., Belchertown. 413-658-5690

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**BELL & HUDSON INSURANCE AGENCY INC.**, 19 North Main St., Belchertown, MA 01007. Tel. 413-323-9611, 800-894-9591. Fax 413-323-6117. Home, auto, life, commercial, group health.

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**ROBERTS ROOFS CO., INC.** Trusted name since 1982. Commercial, industrial, residential. Specializing in shingles, slate copper work, historical restoration, flat roofing. Snow Removal. Fully licensed. Free estimates. 413-283-4395 [www.robertsroofsinc.com](http://www.robertsroofsinc.com)

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