



Belchertown High graduates singing the class song 'Landslide' by Fleetwood Mac.

CLASS OF

Belchertown High celebrates 2026

The class featured 137 graduates

By Brendan Rooney
Correspondent

BELCHERTOWN — This past Thursday, the Belchertown High School Class of 2026, consisting of 137 seniors adorned in black caps and gowns with patent orange tassels, celebrated graduation in style on June 4, as hundreds of family and friends watched on.

The ceremony included performances from the high school band and a live, unified, and uplifting performance of "Landslide" by Fleetwood Mac, all acting in service to the emotion of closure, taking center stage.

First to address the class and crowd was Principal Christine Vigneux, who confessed that this is the end of the road for the class's "social and educational marathon."

"The road has not always been easy, nor the path clear, but you have run it anyways



Belchertown High Class President Alexandra Randall takes the podium.

for more than 26 miles," Vigneux admitted to the 137 graduates seated in the stadium bleachers as they were about to receive their diplomas. "The road has not always been easy nor the path clear, but it was clear no matter the odds put in front of you, you kept pushing forward, and now the end has arrived, and now you are all moving forward into new arenas, venues, and new



Valedictorian Mackenzie Burch reflects on her tenure at BHS and talks to her classmates and everyone in attendance.

endeavors, and so I congratulate you Class of 2026 as it has been my pleasure to cheer you on as you ran."

Vigneux then pivoted her ode of gratitude as she thanked the staff, faculty, and administrators for devoting their lives to education, as their love has shaped the graduates' experiences since kindergarten.

"Every note you handed in at the office, every lunch



TURLEY PHOTOS BY BRENDAN ROONEY
Belchertown High Salutatorian Ryan Gould delivers remarks.

you ever ate, every bit of extra support you sought, and every clean hallway you walked was a silent reminder of the role these important people have played in your time in the Belchertown Public Schools," she said.

In addition to the wealth of gratitude being bestowed, Vigneux spotlighted and recognized the 83 seniors who received scholarships from Tuesday's senior award

night, which culminated in more than \$70K in scholarships and awards that were granted.

Next to the podium for one last time was salutatorian Ryan Gould, who, in his farewell to his classmates, explained the importance of the messages given in Dr. Seuss's "Oh, the Place You'll Go!"

"Perhaps the most poignant concept Seuss introduces is the waiting place, where everyone is simply lingering for a fish to bite, a wind to blow, or a better chance to arrive," he said. "It may not seem inherently dangerous, but its real threat lies in its absolute stagnation."

Gould then encouraged his classmates to not allow uncertainty to make their decisions for them, as he cited this class has already been through a global pandemic, remote learning, years of schooling, and are now navigating an era of "unprecedented technologi-

Please see **CLASS OF 2026**, page 3

FinCom shifts legal costs

State aid windfall eyed for stabilization fund

By Melina Bourdeau
Correspondent

BELCHERTOWN — The Finance Committee approved sweeping mid-year budget transfers, emptying its reserve fund to cover soaring legal bills while positioning the town to steer a potential \$366,000 bump in state aid into long-term savings.

The Finance Committee used its recent meeting to plug unexpected legal and benefit costs, reorganize its leadership for fiscal 2027 and begin charting how to handle a sizeable, but still uncertain, increase in state aid.

In a series of unanimous votes, the committee transferred nearly all remaining contingency dollars to the town's law account and moved money among several budget lines under the state's Municipal Relief Act. At the same time, town officials signaled a strong preference to send any final boost in state aid to the town's stabilization fund, rather than fold it into day-to-day spending.

Leadership set for FY27

Members then reorganized for the coming fiscal year, re-electing Brian Gibbons as chair, keeping Mike McMorro as vice

Please see **FINCOM**, page 7

School Committee keeps officers

Review ordered of middle school language cut after parent outcry

By Melina Bourdeau
Correspondent

BELCHERTOWN — After an emotional public comment session dominated by concerns over cuts to middle school world language, the Belchertown School Committee on May 26 voted to keep its current leadership team and directed the superintendent to explore ways to restore language offerings without new budget cuts.

Committee keeps leadership, reassigns subcommittees

The meeting opened with the annual reorganization of the School Committee.

Members voted unanimously to re-elect Heidi Gutekenst as chair, after a brief discussion initiated by new member Hope Gaurdenier about rotating leadership.

The committee then elected Hope Gaurdenier as vice chair and Jacob Hulseberg as secretary, both on unanimous voice

votes.

Gutekenst recapped the new subcommittee lineup for the coming year:

Personnel and Policy: Gutekenst and Hulseberg
Curriculum and Instruction: Ruby Bansal and Gaurdenier

Property and Transportation: Hulseberg and Amy LaMothe

Finance and Budget: Bansal and Gaurdenier

Accounts payable warrant signers: Hulseberg, Gaurdenier and Gutekenst (officers), with Bansal or LaMothe as backups

Healthy and Safer Schools: Gaurdenier

Collaborative representative: Gutekenst

Scholarship Committee representative: LaMothe

The committee also confirmed that the three officers would be the designated signers on accounts payable warrants, formalizing a practice Superintendent Brian Cameron said would streamline approvals.

Residents pack public comment over world language cuts

The committee's decision came as parents, educators

Please see **SCHOOL COMMITTEE**, page 9



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The anniversary mass celebrated 75 years of community and was attended by the local bishop.

Local church celebrates 75 years of community

By Ben Hernandez
Correspondent

GRANBY — Immaculate Heart of Mary celebrated its 75th anniversary in the town of Granby. A native of Wilbraham, Father Michael Goodreau has been the resident pastor for the church since Jan. 1, 2023 and commented on his time

servicing the local parish.

"It's a small town-type parish you know," said Goodreau. "I came from a bigger parish before I got here. It's a smaller parish but it was, like, very active."

The idea to build the Granby church began in the early 1920s, when local Catholics found it diffi-

Please see **CHURCH**, page 9

TURLEY PHOTO BY BEN HERNANDEZ
The on-campus signpost proudly declares the church's 75th anniversary.

All the Right Pieces

Holyoke Community College celebrates 79th Commencement

HOLYOKE – Some people say, life is like a bowl of cherries; others, like a box of chocolates. To Yasmari Cardenales, though, student orator at Holyoke Community College's 79th Commencement, it's more like a jigsaw puzzle.

At first, you're drawn to the image on the front of the box. "That picture becomes your vision, the person you hope to become, the life you're working toward," she said.

You start around the edges, building a foundation. Some pieces fit easily together, others seemingly not at all, leaving you frustrated and uncertain.

"Sometimes," she said, "you don't even realize you've been holding onto all the right pieces until they suddenly come together."

"Standing here today," she said from the Commencement stage in the

MassMutual Center arena, "I realize just how powerful that moment truly is. It is an incredible honor to be part of the Class of 2026 and an even greater honor to speak in front of you, a room full of people who have all been building their own puzzles, piece by piece, in their own, unique ways."

The event was both a moment of reflection and celebration for the graduates, their families, and HCC faculty and staff who filled the arena on Saturday, May 30.

This year, the college conferred a total of 849 associate degrees and certificates to 765 graduates, who range in age from 17 to 69 and hail from 71 different Massachusetts cities and towns, as well as California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, New York, Vermont, Brazil, Cambodia, Colombia, China, Congo, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Spain, Sri Lanka, Turkey, and Ukraine.

"At HCC, you have learned alongside people whose life experiences may have been very different from your own," said President George



HCC's commencement ceremony took place on Saturday, May 30.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Timmons. "You have worked with classmates from different cultures, languages, identities, beliefs, and perspectives. Those experiences matter because they teach us one of the most important lessons any college can offer: that our differences do not weaken us; they strengthen us."

Faculty speaker Patricia Sullivan, HCC professor of English and an HCC alum from the class of 1976, opened her remarks by asking all the graduates to stand, along with all the other people in the arena with a direct connection to the college.

"Graduates," she said. "Look around and see that you are a part of our HCC community. HCC will always be part of your story, and HCC is lucky you chose us as the place to further your education."

As the recipient of the 2026 Elaine Marieb Faculty Chair for Teaching Excellence Award, Sullivan, a lifelong Holyoke resident and teacher at the college since

1981, led the procession of graduates into the arena and gave the keynote address.

"Attending HCC was one of the best decisions I have ever made in my life, and years later, I was offered a job to teach here," she said. "It was the thrill of a lifetime. HCC is my second home, and the people here my second family. I could have retired many years ago but have chosen to stay because I love my work here, the institution, and its people. My students have given me so much. You are the real heroes today."

Cardenales talked about how she had left high school 26 years ago without any idea where her life would take her. Over the years she worked multiple jobs, taking opportunities as they came.

"I stayed involved in my community and kept searching for where my purpose fit," she said. "Over the years, I built a life I was proud of. I met my wife – my greatest supporter. We built a home together and welcomed

our daughter Sofia into the world."

Working for the American Red Cross for 20 years taught her compassion, resilience, and the importance of serving others she said. But after COVID, something shifted, the world felt uncertain and so did she.

"I realized there were pieces missing from my puzzle," she said, "pieces I had been searching for without even knowing their shape."

She took the leap and enrolled at HCC. Saturday, she graduated with high honors and her associate degree and will attend the Elms College bachelor's degree program in nursing on a Presidential Scholarship.

"To every adult learner here," she said in closing, "it's never too late to begin again. Never stop searching for your missing pieces. Never stop learning. Never stop growing. And never underestimate the power of a community that supports you, challenges you, and

believes in your vision. Even when you're still trying to figure out the picture on the box."

Graduates from Belchertown include: Joseph Baltazar, Coralys Benitez Lopez, Laura Elizabeth Cote, Natalie Layne Daigle, Ana Clara De Carvalho Mota, Sophia Elizabeth Grazioso, Brianna Jaiden Hauschild, Josephine Rae Jacobsen, Tania Linares, Elias Jeter Marques, Brandon Thomas Morra, Emily Darya O'Donnell, Matthew J. Paquette, Kaitlyn Louise Park, Abigail Rose Potter, Jennifer Shaink, Hailey Marie Smith, Adison Mae St. Germaine, Mackenzie Stanton, Taylor Dean Sudyka, Christina Sylvia Sumner, Hannah Elizabeth Rayne Teixeira, AJ Horgan Terry.

Granby: Adam J. Amidon, Erik Andrew Joseph Hauschild, Megan Noelle Lawson, Kevin Joseph Longo, Wisdom Salters, Ariana Elizabeth Sheehan.



The graduation took place at the MassMutual Center.

Nomination forms sought for local recognition

BELCHERTOWN - The Belchertown Select Board has reopened nominations for the Town's yearly awards, extending the submission period through August 1, 2026. The decision to reopen nominations provides additional opportunity for residents to recognize outstanding members of the community.

Award recipients will be honored for their contributions and invited to march in the Belchertown Fair Parade

on Saturday, Sept. 26, as part of the 167th Belchertown Fair.

Nominations are being accepted in three categories:

Citizen of the Year honors any community member who has made a positive difference in Belchertown, whether through one defining moment or ongoing contributions to the community. Nominations can be submitted at <https://www.belchertown.org/FormCenter/Awards-14/Nomination->

Form-Citizen-of-the-Year-80

Employee of the Year recognizes a Town employee who has gone above and beyond in service to residents. Nominations can be submitted at <https://www.belchertown.org/FormCenter/Awards-14/Nomination-Form-Employee-of-the-Year-78>

Volunteer of the Year honors a volunteer whose dedication has made a lasting difference in Belchertown. Nominations can be submit-

ted at <https://www.belchertown.org/FormCenter/Awards-14/Nomination-Form-Volunteer-of-the-Year-79>


Or you may scan the QR codes to access the form.

The deadline for all submissions is Aug. 1. For questions, contact Melissa Shattuck in the Select Board / Town Manager's Office at mshattuck@belchertown.org or 413-323-0403.

Cemetery hosted America 250 event

SOUTH HADLEY – As our nation is celebrating the 250th Anniversary of the Revolutionary War and our Independence, a special event was held recently at the Village Cemetery in South Hadley Falls. The American Legion, under the direction of Brian Willette, honored the eight Revolutionary War soldiers who are interred in the Old Village grounds. A Revolutionary War plaque was placed on the flagpole

in the Veteran's Memorial Area and each soldier had a bronze plaque placed at his grave. Troop 303 Boy Scouts and a large contingent of Cub Scouts, under the direction of Brian Regan, attended the ceremony and helped reflag the veterans graves. There was also a reenactor detailing and firing his musket in support of the Veterans. We thank Brian Willette and the American Legion for honoring all the veterans.



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CLASS OF 2026
from page 1

cal change and political tension,” offering a reminder to remain resilient, no matter the odds, sharing, “Today does not simply celebrate the accomplishments of our past; it challenges us to pursue the unknowns of our future—a world filled with lows, highs, and everything in between,” Gould said. He then thanked all the members of his family, including his mother, who was the BHS salutatorian of 1998.

Following Gould was Class President Aleksandra Randall, who highlighted that what set the Class of 2026 apart was its willingness to support one another.

“We celebrated each other’s accomplishments, supported each other through challenges, pushed each other to be better, and created memories that we’ll carry for the rest of our lives. And even though we’re all heading in different directions after tonight, the experiences we have shared will always connect us,” Randall said. “Because Years from now, we may not remember every test score, assignment or grade, but we will remember the people who encouraged us, challenged us, and helped us become who we are,” she said.

Randall then reflected on the confession that her four years at BHS had helped nurture her in ways she never would’ve expected. Citing the level of support she built from the various friends and teachers who helped her during a rough chapter in her life, when she lost her mother, along with the first time she entered the high school during her early days of freshman year.

“Losing her impacted my life forever, and there are still moments where I wish I could tell her everything happening in my life right now, and even through her loss, I admit I still feel her influence on the person I’ve become,” Randall said. “She taught me important lessons about kindness, resilience, and how important it is to care deeply about people. Those lessons guide me even when life feels difficult,” she said.

“I know if it weren’t for my support of family, friends, teachers, and this community, I wouldn’t be standing here today,” Randall added, before sharing, “those people showed up for me”,



The Class of 2026.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY BRENDAN ROONEY



Belchertown High Principal Christine Vigneux opens the ceremony.

and helped in more ways than one.

She then touched upon the beginning of starting her freshman year, recalling she remembered being much quieter, unsure of herself and who she would become, and now she’s changed completely, and can’t wait to see what her class will achieve post-BHS.

“I remember wandering into the halls of Belchertown High School, nervous about fitting in, making friends, and figuring out who I wanted to become,” she told the crowd. “However standing here now, I know this chapter of my life is coming to an end, and I’m better off from it, and with that said, I know each of us will leave an impact on the world through the ways we choose to show

up for others, and I truly cannot wait to see all of the incredible things that our class will not only achieve but accomplish.”

Closing out the ceremony was

Valedictorian Mackenzie Burch, who made her way to the podium to congratulate her classmates on graduation, whether they have been counting down the days or wishing for more time. “We finally made it across the finish line that once seemed so far away,” she said. “This day does not mark the end of the years we’ve spent growing up at the Nest and moving through Belchertown schools, but our arrival at one of the many new horizons of life.”

Burch then capped off her high school career by declaring she is confident her classmates can pursue whatever paths they choose because the foundation they built at BHS is strong.

“Success will look different for all of us, and it



Belchertown High Band Seniors joined in for one last performance.

should never be measured by comparison, but know our individual experiences and obstacles we’ve overcome will continue to shape our unique perspectives, allowing us to build the futures we envision and strive for, ones filled with passion, dreams, and circumstance.”



Belchertown High administration.



Belchertown Superintendent Brian Cameron at the podium as School Committee Chair Heidi Guteken watches on, getting the diplomas ready.



Belchertown Class of 2026 graduates start to pile in.



The graduates join together for one last song.

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Belchertown SB elevates Jorns-Kuhnlenz to chair, Miner to vice chair; clerk vote delayed

By Melina Bourdeau
Correspondent

BELCHERTOWN – Select Board unanimously elected Whitney Jorns-Kuhnlenz as chair and Nicole Miner as vice chair Thursday, while postponing a decision on the clerk’s post until June 15 to confirm the nominee’s acceptance first.

In a brief, single-issue reorganization meeting, the

board reset its leadership for the coming year but held off on confirming a new clerk, opting instead for an additional vote later this month to ensure Select Board member Jonathan Ritter agrees to serve.

The meeting opened with the sole agenda item of reorganizing the board. Member Miner moved to nominate Jorns-Kuhnlenz as chair, a motion seconded by Jen

Turner. After a roll-call vote, the nomination passed, 4 to 0.

Shortly after, Lesa Lessard Pearson nominated Miner as vice chair, with Turner again providing the second. Miner formally accepted the role during the roll call, saying,

“That motion also passed on a 4 to 0 vote.”

The only point of extended discussion came on the clerk position. Miner moved to nominate Ritter as clerk,

seconded by Turner, but board members noted Ritter was not present to accept the nomination.

Lessard Pearson suggested the board delay acting on the role, saying they should wait until the next meeting “so that we can understand if Jon accepts” before finalizing the appointment. The board then voted 4 to 0 to table the clerk decision until its June 15 meeting.

Aaron's Race 2026
this Saturday

Come join us on the Belchertown Town Common on June 13 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. as we celebrate Aaron's Race 2026. The Belchertown Lions Club will once again be providing the food and beverage for this event, with all proceeds going directly to the Aaron's Race foundation. Chicken tenders, hamburgers, cheeseburgers, hot dogs, fries, and soft drinks will be on the menu...so please come out to support this terrific family fun day to raise awareness through education for the prevention of teen suicide!

Town receives grant funding for fiber optics

BOSTON — The Healey-Driscoll Administration today announced \$10.1 million in grants to Massachusetts municipalities through the Community Compact Cabinet’s Municipal Fiber Grant Program. These grants will help cities and towns build or complete municipal fiber networks, enabling modern, efficient technology infrastructure and stronger cybersecurity capabilities.

“Our Municipal Fiber grants are helping cities and towns across Massachusetts build the modern technology infrastructure they need to better serve residents,” said Governor Maura Healey. “These investments will help communities strengthen cybersecurity, improve emergency preparedness, modernize local government operations, and make it easier for people to access services online. We’re proud to partner with municipalities across our state to support more efficient, reliable, and secure local government.”

Belchertown was among the recipients, receiving \$487,313 in grant funding.

The Municipal Fiber Grant Program helps communities to develop local fiber networks and fill gaps in existing municipal fiber networks to support more secure and reliable technology systems. These networks can improve cybersecurity protections, enable more responsive disaster recovery, and make it easier for residents to access local government services online. A shared municipal network can also help communities save money by combining internet service and cybersecurity needs across multiple public facilities, rather than managing them separately.

These grants can be especially meaningful for small and rural municipalities that lack the resources to meet their communities’ IT needs. Here is the full list of FY26 awards.

“Building and upgrading technology infrastruc-

ture can be difficult for communities with limited resources, and this program is one way that our Administration helps to fill those gaps,” said Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll. “Congratulations to the communities receiving municipal fiber grants this fiscal year, and we look forward to seeing these important projects deliver lasting benefits for residents.”

“Investments in municipal fiber networks improve the efficiency and cost effectiveness of local governments,” said Administration and Finance Secretary Matthew J. Gorzkowicz. “These FY26 grants will help Massachusetts communities close critical infrastructure gaps, gain economies of scale, and upgrade to more modern and resilient technology.”

“Municipally owned fiber networks are critical to help cities and towns modernize operations, strengthen cybersecurity, and deliver more

reliable public services,” said Technology Services and Security Secretary Jason Snyder. “Through the Municipal Fiber Grant Program, we are helping cities and towns close critical connectivity gaps, improve the resiliency of local government technology systems, and build scalable networks that will support municipal operations for years to come.”

Including these FY26 grants, since FY22, the Municipal Fiber grant program has provided 221 grants to support 176 municipalities or school district projects, totaling \$43.8 million in funding.

The Municipal Fiber Grant is one of two grants (along with Information Technology, or IT) that the Healey-Driscoll Administration is offering through the Community Compact program in Fiscal Year 2026 to support communities across Massachusetts.

Controlling mosquitoes without harming pollinators

Summer is just around the corner, and along with warmer weather and fun outdoor activities, it also means that mosquito season is beginning. There are a variety of methods that people use to try and control mosquitoes. Unfortunately, many of these methods do not target mosquitoes specifically and can end up killing a wide variety of other insects, many of which are beneficial to our local ecosystems.

According to the nonprofit Homegrown National Park, the most effective way to control mosquito populations without inadvertently harming other beneficial insects is by using a “mosquito dunk”. This involves placing a mosquito dunk (small dissolvable tablet) in a bucket of water which the female mosquitoes then lay their eggs in. These dunks specifically kill mosquito larvae without killing other insects. By giving the female mosquitoes, a targeted place to lay their eggs, you can effectively cut off

the mosquitoes at the source, rather than them laying their eggs in other standing water that does not contain the larvae-killing dunks. The mosquito dunks are inexpensive, low maintenance, and can be easily found online or at many hardware/garden stores, making them a great option for significantly reducing mosquito popula-

tions in a safe and effective way.

In addition to using mosquito dunks, you can help control mosquito populations by dumping standing water on your property that you are not treating with the mosquito dunks; making it more likely that the mosquitoes will choose to lay their eggs in the treated water

which will then kill their larvae. You can also plant native plants and avoid using pesticides to help support populations of birds, dragonflies, and bats which eat mosquitoes.

Homegrown National Park is hosting a “Mosquito

Please see **MOSQUITOS**, page 15

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OPINION

SOCIAL SECURITY

Matters

By Russell Gloor

Why can't I get a lump sum death benefit from my wife?

Dear Rusty:

My wife passed away in September 2025 at age 64.

We had been married for 43 years and started collecting benefits when I turned 62 and she was 63. She did not have enough work credits to claim her own SS and thus collected on my record. SSA told me that I was not entitled to receive the lousy \$255 death benefit because my wife was collecting on my work record. Is this correct?

Signed: Grieving Widower

Dear Grieving:

We extend our sincere condolences on your wife's passing.

But I must tell you that what the Social Security Administration told you is correct.

Although we often see assertions that the so-called "one-time lump sum death benefit" is always paid, there are specific rules for when that admittedly small SS benefit is available. And there are also specific rules regarding who is eligible to receive it.

Essentially, the lump sum death benefit is paid when the deceased person was collecting Social Security retirement benefits or at least entitled to SS retirement benefits. And that one-time lump sum death benefit usually goes to the deceased person's surviving spouse, more on that later.

But for the death benefit to be paid, the deceased person must have been collecting Social Security retirement benefits or was at least entitled to SS retirement benefits.

In your specific case, because your wife was not eligible for her own SS retirement benefit and was, instead, just collecting a spousal benefit from your SS record, you unfortunately are not able to collect the lump-sum death benefit as your wife's surviving spouse. So, what you were told by Social Security about this special survivor benefit is, indeed, correct.

For information, here is a bit more on who can collect the SS death benefit: the one-time lump

sum death benefit is normally paid to the eligible surviving spouse of a deceased person, who was collecting Social Security.

But if there is no surviving spouse to receive the onetime payment, the death benefit may be paid to someone else who was also a dependent of the deceased. That might be a minor surviving child or a surviving adult disabled child, who was collecting dependent benefits from the deceased person's SS record. In rare cases, a dependent parent may be paid if no other surviving dependents are eligible. FYI, ex-spouses are not eligible for a death benefit from a former spouse.

The lump-sum death benefit must be applied for by contacting Social Security and the benefit must be claimed within two years of the person's death. You will need to verify your identity and confirm your eligibility for this survivor benefit and you will need to provide other information about the deceased also including a death certificate.

There is an SSA form to apply for the lump sum death benefit (SSA-8), but calling your local SS office or 1-800-772-1213 to make an appointment to apply for the one-time lump-sum death benefit in person is usually all that is needed.

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.



Foxgloves take the stage in June

I came around the corner of the house and to my surprise, the purple foxglove was in flower! Yippee!

This is just the start of a wonderful sequence of blooms lasting the rest of the month and then some. Read on, straight from the archives to learn more about these unique plants.

Those of us who favor romantic, old-fashioned flowers have likely devoted some space in our gardens to the common purple foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*) or one of its cultivars.

This is for good reason, as there are few plants more breathtaking than a foxglove in full bloom. Imagine three to five-foot tall spires of uniquely marked bell-shaped flowers in shades of white, pink, and rose.

One well-grown plant may yield five or more stalks! Group several plants together for a show stopping display come the end of June.

Native to western Europe, the common foxglove has had a place in North American gardens since its introduction during colonial times.

There has always been a mysterious side to foxgloves, due in part to an unusual name and the potent medicine that is obtained from the plant.

Legend has it that foxglove was derived from "folk's glove," folks referring to the elves and fairies of country lore. Another legend tells that the fox needed magical gloves to steal a chicken or two.

A less fanciful explanation traces glove to gleow in Old English; a gleow was an ancient musical instrument made of bells suspended from a curved frame.

In 1785 William Withering, an English physician, published a decade's worth of studies devoted to the use of foxglove as a

heart medicine. Although far too dangerous to be used by amateur herbalists, the drug digitalis was studied at length in the early years of the 20th century and is still prescribed by doctors today for those suffering with certain types of heart disease.

markings of the flowers especially easy.

There are other more subtle species of foxglove worthy of placement in your garden.

One of my favorites is the Rusty Foxglove (*Digitalis ferruginea*). Small flowers the color of liquid gold bloom up three to six-foot stems late in the summer.

Although touted as being a biennial this species has returned for several years in my part shade, moisture retentive location.

The yellow foxglove is a reliable perennial, shorter than most, only 24-30 inches tall and blooming a soft yellow in early June. This species also prefers part shade and adequate moisture.

The Grecian foxglove, a true biennial, has grayish flowers, blooming in July up three-foot stems.

The straw foxglove is relatively new to my garden, blooming happily for the first time last summer. It is the most diminutive flower-wise of any mentioned thus far and it tops off about two and a half feet tall.

Whether you plant the common foxglove for a show stopping display or settle on one of its more subtle cousins, do give these old-fashioned beauties a place in your garden.

J.L. Hudson, Seedsman, of Star Route 2, Box 337, La Honda CA, 94020 offers an extensive collection of foxglove seed for sale. Send along \$1 for a very interesting catalog.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 33 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.



Foxglove are easy to grow in full sun or part shade as long as they are provided with fertile, well-drained soil rich in organic matter. Most species tend to be biennials or short-lived perennials.

In my garden all types self-sow; leave a few seed heads to ripen if you appreciate volunteers as much as I do. When purchasing foxgloves from garden centers start with a first year plant, nourish it well and enjoy blooms the following year.

Steer clear of plants already in flower, it is likely they will perish after blooming.

Of the 10 or so species of foxglove grown today, the most popular are the cultivars of the common foxglove.

"Foxy" flowers a mere five months from sowing; it is often grown as an annual. Even taller and denser clumps of rose, white or yellow flowers may return in following years. "Giant Shirley" can grow to a whopping nine feet, sporting tightly packed, spotted flowers in rich hues of pink.

Other cultivars include the all white "Alba," the unusual "Apricot Beauty," and the widely available "Excelsior Hybrids" whose placement of florets horizontally around the five-foot stem makes the viewing the unique inner

In health coverage, the details matter

When it comes to your health insurance, whether private or government-provided, not paying attention to the details can be costly. Patient advocates like me do more than help clients in the hospital. We also spend a lot of time unraveling health insurance mysteries that can leave clients with thousands of dollars in medical bills.

You may have seen a recent article about a Florida woman whose health insurance, which she purchased through the federal exchange, was canceled because she



By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN
Guest Column

was late with her premiums – a total of five cents.

Yes, for want of a nickel, she lost her insurance and began receiving large medical bills.

Her premium had been \$0, but when she dropped her mother from the family policy because she had become eligible for Medicare, the premium became one cent per month. She figured it was a rounding error and didn't pay much attention to the

letters saying she might lose her coverage because premium payments weren't met.

After five months, her insurer dropped her. Was it legal for them to do that? Yes. Did it make sense? Hardly. Her insurance has been restored now, but she's still disputing the bills she received while it was inactive. Stay tuned.

I find that a lot of clients, and people in general, don't really understand the terms of their policies, which leads to insurance denials, insurance appeals or, in this case, loss of coverage.

No matter if your health coverage comes through an

employer, an ACA exchange, Medicare or Medicare Advantage, you have to pay attention or risk large medical bills.

What do I mean by paying attention? Here are some tips that may keep you out of hot water.

Read and understand your policy

This means understanding what medical services are (and are not) covered, what premiums are due each month, what your deductibles and copays are, and what your annual out-of-pocket maximums are.

Insurance companies must use "clear and unambiguous" language in their policies, and any ambiguity is typically interpreted in favor of the policyholder. However, insurance policies often contain complex and ambiguous

language that can be difficult for you to understand, which may lead to disputes over coverage.

If you have questions about your policy, talk to your human resources department or call the company directly. Keep notes about who you spoke to and when and what they said.

Open the mail!

Pay attention to what your insurance company is sending you, even if you think you know what's in the envelope. It may be an explanation of benefits (EOB), a bill or even, in the case of the Florida woman, a notice that her premiums weren't up to date.

There's a reason the companies print "important insurance information" on the out-

Please see **HEALTH**, page 8

Turley Publications Letters to the Editor Policy

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

Turley Election Policy

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

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

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COMMUNITY



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The Zonta Club will hold a day on the court Sept. 12 at Cold Spring Country Club.

Zonta Club to hold fun day of golf

BELCHERTOWN – Join members of the Zonta Club of Quabog Valley on Sept. 12 for a fun day on the links at Cold Spring Country Club in Belchertown and be a champion for women and girls. The \$120 registration includes golf, cart, pastries/coffee, snacks, box lunch, beverages, prizes and more.

If you aren't a golfer, you can donate a raffle prize or sponsor a hole.

Registration starts at 7:30 a.m., with a shotgun starts at 8:30 a.m. Registration form and link are at www.ZontaQV.org/golf. Questions can be directed to Mary Knight at 413-219-8260. Your support directly funds

scholarships and grants that empower women and girls to overcome challenges and achieve their full potential. We're working to end child marriage, domestic violence, and human trafficking, while also supporting climate justice, education equality, and women in decision-making positions.

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. 8 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 con-

sider 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.

FINCOM from page 1

chair and confirming Katie Longley as clerk. "Going into fiscal year 27 the chair will be myself again. The vice chair will be Mike McMorrow, and the clerk will remain with Katie," Gibbons said.

State aid could grow by \$366K, town urged to save it

Town Accountant Jill Rossi briefed the committee on the latest "cherry sheet" figures comparing the governor's budget with the Senate's version. Belchertown's operating budget for the year was built on the governor's lower proposal.

Rossi said the Senate numbers point to a net increase in state aid of \$366,191 if they are ultimately adopted.

"The overall increase in revenues is \$149,140, the offsets have decreased by \$112,000 and the assessments have decreased by \$105,051... so the net increase in state aid... is \$366,191," Rossi said.

Town Manager Steve Williams recommended that, if the higher aid survives conference committee negotiations, the town should use a fall or winter special town meeting to send that windfall directly into stabilization.

"The best bet for this money would be to move it directly into our stabilization, unless there's some emergency we did not account for in our budgets," Williams said. "I would just assume put it into stabilization, get stabilization to where we've been trying to get up to that 5% mark."

Williams noted the town has already repaid prior withdrawals from stabilization that were used to cover health insurance costs and is now near 4% of operating revenues in reserves.

He added that historically, smaller year-end increases in state aid have been allowed to "just let that roll into free cash." This year's potential bump is large enough to warrant a more deliberate policy choice, he said.

Williams also cautioned

residents that the numbers are not final. "The Senate and the House are going to have a conference committee... and then the governor will need to sign off on whatever they come up with," he said.

Reserve fund drained to cover legal costs

The most immediate decision of the night involved legal spending.

The committee unanimously approved a \$45,400 transfer from the reserve fund to the town's law account, depleting the reserve fund for the rest of the fiscal year.

Gibbons emphasized the size of the move.

"The 45,400 is 100% of the remaining funds in the reserve account, so that'll bring us down to zero," he said.

The money will pay labor and general counsel for May and June, expenditures described in the transfer request as "extraordinary and unforeseen."

Rossi and Williams said the spike in legal costs this

year stems from investigations, personnel matters and town meeting-related work. Williams told the committee that one investigation alone cost "well over \$22,000" and that "this law account this year has been exceptional."

He said he expects fewer HR-related cases going forward. "The good news is a lot of the HR issues that we've been dealing with are behind us. You don't see that going forward. This has been a tough, tough year for us," Williams said.

Any portion of the \$45,400 that is not ultimately billed will return to free cash for next year, Gibbons noted.

Municipal Relief Act transfers balance year-end accounts

Using their authority under the Municipal Relief Act, the committee also approved several intra-budget transfers, all on 4-0 votes:

\$14,600 from professional engineering to the law account to help cover "two months of labor and general council invoices" amid "mul-

multiple investigation situations requiring advice from council."

\$944 from general insurance to hydrants, to address cost increases for hydrants.

\$7,000 from health insurance (town share) to the fire station building account for higher-than-expected electricity costs and an "unexpected heating repair" at the station.

\$5,000 from health insurance (town share) to unemployment, after a hearing granted unemployment compensation to a former employee.

\$4,400 from professional engineering to Medicare (town share) to cover added Medicare costs as long-term employees retire and new hires subject to Medicare come on the payroll.

Williams told the committee these kinds of year-end adjustments are routine.

"There's about four different ways that we balance our budgets every year... Those four ways are utilized annually to balance these budgets," he said, listing special

town meetings, municipal relief transfers, reserve fund transfers and certain accounting moves among related line items.

Looking ahead: Long-term planning and open seat

Late in the meeting, Gibbons pushed again for multi-year fiscal planning, saying he has "been kind of paying attention to this language for a number of years" and wants the town to move away from strictly "reactive single year budgeting."

Rossi and committee members supported the concept but warned about forecasting much beyond two years, given recent overrides, health insurance volatility and pandemic-era disruptions.

Williams said he expects to schedule regular tri-board meetings with the Select Board and School Committee to coordinate budgeting.

The committee also briefly discussed an open seat that has been advertised. Williams said the town has been seeking letters of interest for months.

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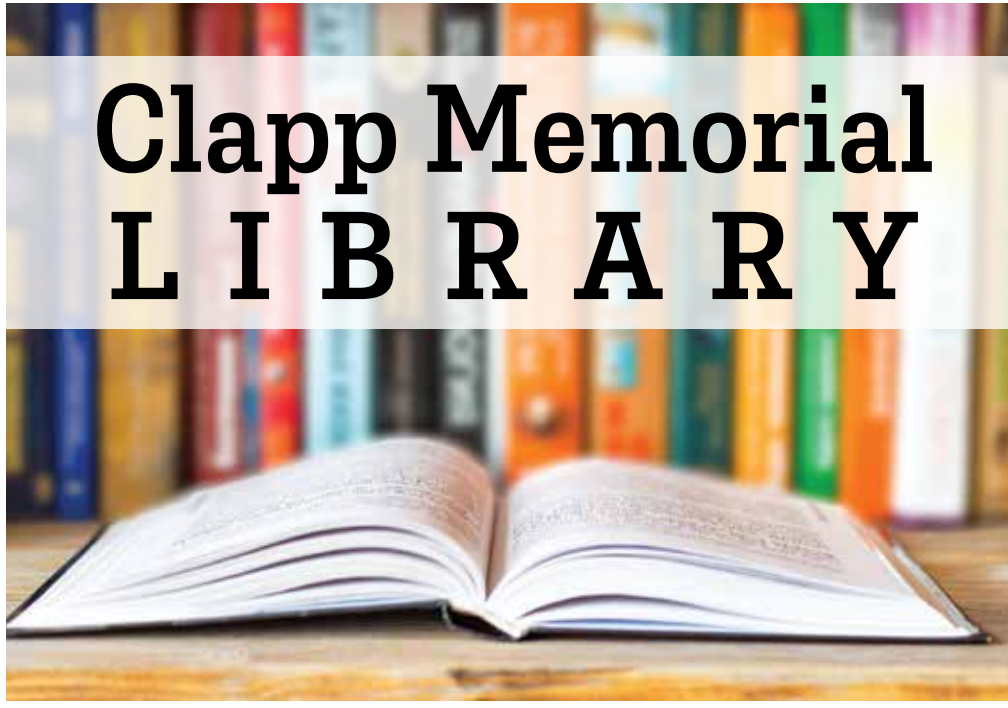
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What's going on at the Library? Check it out!

The Clapp Memorial Library's Summer Reading Program begins June 20th! This year's theme is "Plant a Seed...Read!" We have programs for kids ages 0-11, teens ages 12-18, and adults ages 18 and up! Keep track of what you read, take part in exciting challenges, attend special summer programs, and earn chances to win great prizes! For more information, stop by the library or visit our website: clapplibrary.org/summer-reading-programs



For General Audiences:

Plant Swap

Tuesday, June 16th, 6:00 - 7:00 pm

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.

LibraryBEATS!

Drum and Rhythm Circle with Otha Day

Thursday, June 18th, 5:30 - 6:45 pm

Celebrate Juneteenth at the Clapp Memorial Library! LibraryBEATS! Drum and Rhythm with Otha Day is a fun and lively drumming circle. Otha believes that rhythm has the power to build community, promote well-being, and create joy. Let's share this experience together! The drumming circle will be on the Library's front lawn. Bring chairs or blankets but no experience in percussion is needed. Recommended for ages 3-103! In case of inclement weather, we will meet in

the Town Hall Auditorium. Children under the age of 10 must have a caregiver at least 14 years old on the Library property. This program is funded in part by a grant from the Belchertown Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Pamela Means Presents: Black, Brown & Beige

Saturday, June 20th, 5:00 - 6:00 pm

Join us as we welcome jazz artist Pamela Means for a concert on the Library's front lawn. This new program celebrates the artistry and cultural contributions of Black, Brown and Beige musicians; a nod to Duke Ellington in title and celebration. This concert honors artists who have used their voices, their lives, and their art to call out injustice, inspire compassion, and prove possibilities of a just and loving world. Highlighted artists include Bessie Smith, Leadbelly, Nina Simone, Louis Armstrong, Billie Holiday, Marvin Gaye, Tracy Chapman, Prince, and more!

On the front lawn of the library, inside Town Hall in case of rain. This program is funded by the Friends of Clapp Memorial Library.

For Adults:

Fabric of a Revolution: Dye your own Washington Standard Flag!

Saturday, June 13th, 10:00 - 11:00 am

Local fiber artist Holly Field will host a fabric dyeing activity to make your own copy of George Washington's headquarters flag, the Washington Standard. This flag was flown during the Revolutionary War to mark Washington's position in camp and on the battlefield. Participants will dye a Washington Standard of their own using a natural Indigo blue dye bath. The dyeing process can be messy so please dress appropriately. This activity is limited to 18 participants, ages 10 to adult, and will take place on the front lawn of the library. Kids under 13 need to be accompanied by an adult. Register online at

clapplibrary.org/event/fabric-of-the-revolution-workshop or call the library at 413-323-0417. This program is funded in part by a grant from the Belchertown Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Pride Month Movie Matinees

Tuesday afternoons in June, showings at 3:00 pm

Grab your popcorn for this program series! Tuesdays in June we're showing a series of films for Pride Month in our Activity Room!

Tuesday, June 16th: We'll be showing a movie from 1962 based on a play by Lillian Hellman which tells the story of two women who start a boarding school and have their lives ruined by a lie. Starring Audrey Hepburn & Shirley MacLaine. Rated PG, 1 hour, 47 minutes. Public performance rights provided through SWANK.

For Teens:

Teen Book Club

Wednesday, June 24th,

3:00 - 4:00 pm

Are you a tween or teen age 12-18? The library has a Teen Book Club 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 nominee list. On Wednesday, June 24th, teens will discuss *The Dead of Summer* by Ryan La Sala. Copies of the book are available for checkout at the library's circulation desk and on the Libby and hoopla apps. Snacks will be provided at the meeting. Email clapplibrarytab@gmail.com with any questions. All attendees will earn a raffle ticket for the Teen Summer Reading Program!

Teen Crafternoon: Diamond-Painting Pollinators

Wednesday, June 24th, 4:30 - 6:00 pm

Tweens and teens ages 12-18 are invited to diamond-paint a pollinator garden stake! All materials will be provided, but space is limited; email clapplibrarytab@gmail.com or call the library at 413-323-4017 to register. All attendees will earn a raffle ticket for the Teen Summer Reading Program. Teens must be registered for the Teen Summer Reading Program to attend. This program is funded by the Friends of the Clapp Memorial Library.

Summer Dungeons & Dragons for Teens

Mondays: July 6, 13, 20, & 27, August 3 & 10, 1:00 - 2:20 pm

Calling all Belchertown Teens for Summer D&D! Space is limited, please email tmannino@cwmares.org with any questions and to register. Confirmations will be sent out to teens confirming enrollment or waitlist status.

For Children:

Children's Scavenger Hunt Every Month in 2026!

June's Theme: **Jory John, author of The Bad Seed**
Prize: **Jory John Book Bundle**

We're inviting children to participate in June's Scavenger Hunt! Look for book illustrations hidden in the children's area and write down the word you find with them. When you have all of the words, figure out the saying and enter to win this month's prize! One raffle ticket per child each month.

Magic: the Gathering

Saturdays: June 6th, 13th, 20th, July 11th, 18th, 25th, August 1st, 10:30 am to 1:30 pm

Join us for Magic the Gathering in the Activity Room. Bring your own deck or use one of our learning decks. Everyone is welcome, however players must be fluent readers. Players under the age of 10 must have a caregiver who is at least 14 years old on the Library premises. Join us for every session or just one - it's up to you! We will have two instructors to help get games started and assist with the rules of the game. No registration is required. We will not be meeting on June 27th or July 4th. Join the email list so if the group needs to be postponed, we can notify you, by sending an email to Jennifer at jwhitehead@cwmares.org.

Clapp Memorial Library Hours:

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

GRANBY

Multiple events coming up at Granby Free Public Library

Join Summer reading for all ages

Plant a Seed, Read!

Summer Reading Programs for all ages start on June 23. Stop in to the Library to sign up and get your reading logs and raffle tickets. Join us for some amazing programming all summer long.

Sci-Fi and Fantasy Book Club

Thursday, June 4 at 5 p.m. "A book club for all who enjoy reading tales of the paranormal, the extraterrestrial, the magical, and the fantastical!" Join our discussions on the first Thursday of every month! *Lord of Light* by Robert Zelazny. Copies are available now!

Adult Book Group

Thursday, June 11 at 6 p.m.

The book group will be discussing *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haigh. Grab a copy and join us! This group meets on the second Thursday of each month.

Storytelling in Urban Sketching

Saturday, June 20 at 11 a.m.

Join returning local artist Jaime Bohorquez to learn about storytelling through the art of urban sketching. Sign-up is required for this event.

Tabletop Games Club

Saturday, June 20 from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

The Granby Library invites players of all ages 8 and up to gather and enjoy a variety of board, card, dice, tile, and other in-per-

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

Knitting Group

Every Wednesday afternoon at 2 p.m.

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

Friends of the Granby Library Meeting

Thursday, June 18 at 4:30 p.m.

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

Upcoming Events:

The Lost Gem: A Dungeons & Dragons inspired event with Jonah Knight! Wednesday, July 29 at 2 p.m.

Granby Lions sponsoring bus trip to Boston

GRANBY – The Granby Lions Club will be sponsoring a bus trip to Boston on Tuesday, July 14, 2026. The chartered bus will be leaving the East Meadow School Parking Lot at 8 a.m. and dropping us off in the Seaport District at approximately 10 a.m.

Come help us celebrate the 250th anniversary of the United States at SailBoston 2026, an international maritime event that brings tall

ships and naval vessels from around the world to Boston Harbor. You will be on your own to visit the ships and the bus will depart Boston at 4 p.m.

The cost per person is \$75. Please make your checks payable to the Granby Lions Club, and mail to Granby Lions Club, c/o Jim Pietras, 280 East State St, Granby, MA. 01033. Questions – email Jim at jpieras@comcast.net

Crafters wanted

LUDLOW—Crafters Wanted for the Rosary Sodality's St. Nicholas Craft Fair and Raffle on Saturday, Nov. 14, 2026, at Christ the King Church located at 41 Warsaw Avenue in Ludlow from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The cost is a non-refundable \$40. fee for an 8-ft table, which will be provided by the church.

To reserve a table or for more information contact Debbie Martell at 413-547-8739 or Lorraine Bernier at 413-519-7658.

HEALTH from page 6

side of the envelope.

Use the insurance company portal

You don't have to wait for mail. Your policy is available to read in the customer portal, and claims usually show up pretty quickly. It will tell you if your premiums are up to date, how your claim was paid (or not) and what the appeals process is. Check in with the portal regularly.

Is the doc in your network?

Medicare Advantage plans, which are HMOs, keep a network of approved providers. If your primary doctor is referring you to a specialist, your first stop is the list of network providers on the insurance website.

If the info on the website is wrong or outdated, you'll be on the hook for payment. Call the doctor's office to make sure they accept your insurance.

Pay attention to prior authorizations and referrals

Some insurers require a referral from the primary provider if you have to see a specialist. Original Medicare doesn't have this requirement. Prior authorization may also be required for certain procedures or tests, or for certain medications. Missing a prior authorization is a major reason claims are denied and patients end up with full liability.

If a claim is denied, don't panic

A claim may be denied because the person who submitted the claim misspelled your name, gave a wrong member ID number or used the incorrect diagnostic code. You won't be able to review the claim submission, but if you do get a denial or the coverage isn't what you expected, call the doctor's office and ask them to review

the claim for errors. You can also call on the services of a patient advocate.

A popular phrase since the late 1800s is "the devil is in the details." And those details can make or break your insurance coverage.

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.

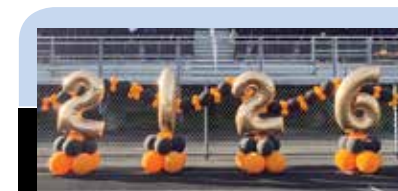
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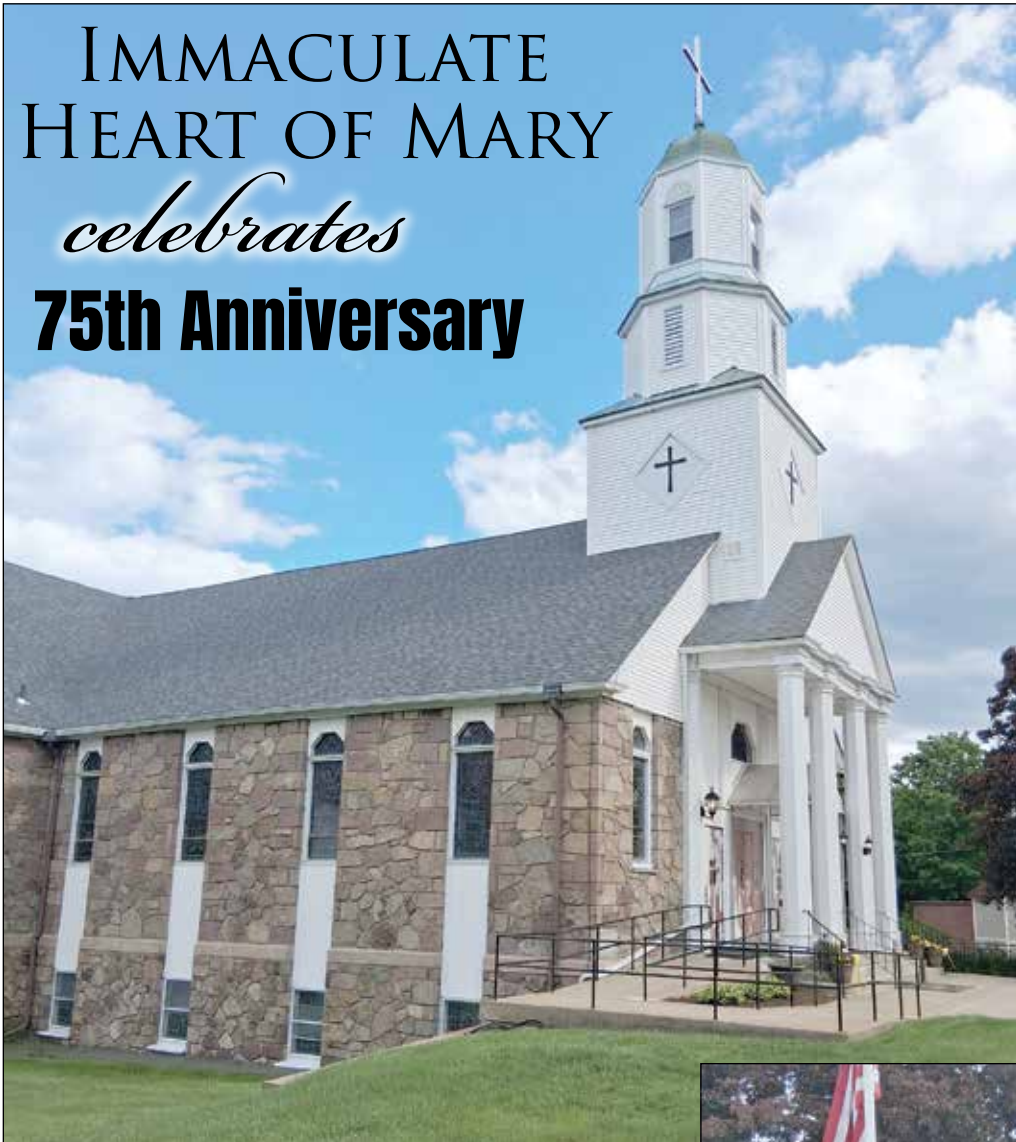
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IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY celebrates 75th Anniversary



TURLEY PHOTO BY BEN HERNANDEZ

Immaculate Heart of Mary continues to remain part of town since its creation in 1951.



The commemoration cake shared by the congregation included a screen print of the church.



The Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish sits in the heart of Granby.

CHURCH from page 1

cult to conduct weekly worship in town. Horse buggies proved to be difficult transportation as residents traveled to Holyoke, Amherst and South Hadley to observe mass. In the late 1920s, residents used Kellogg Hall to conduct their Sunday services, though the building proved unsatisfactory to the town worshippers.

The plan to build a church on the current parish grounds began in October 24, 1930, when 14 town residents gathered in Attorney Thomas F. Bradley's office to create a corporation for the project. The corporation, named "The Granby Welcome Society Inc.," was made for the purposes of fundraising to buy the required land needed to build the chapel.

The Welcome Society eventually went away in favor of the Catholic Women's Club and Catholic Men's Club, which became the foundation for the early

church. The church was built from crowd sourced materials donated by future parishioners, their families and friends from the larger community. Additional needed stone was gathered from the surrounding fields, given away by area residents and local farmers; a collaboration Goodreau called an "all hands on deck" initiative.

The first mass conducted on the grounds was held before the church's construction in a downstairs "Pine Room" on Christmas Eve in 1949. The project completed on May 6, 1951, an Easter Sunday, and consecrated as a Catholic church on the same day. Goodreau stated the goal for the future was to "get more people" to become members of the church. He described the local parish as "very close-knit, very prayerful" and mentioned each mass time had its own personality.

"The eight o'clock in the morning mass, for example, is more of a lower-key quieter mass. The 10:45 is

very boisterous," Goodreau said. "The four o'clocks like a mix of people working different shifts and a lot of the older folks...so it has energy but it's a different energy."

Goodreau stated the church's roof was fixed last summer and the front doors were recently painted. He reported the main concern for him was the many ongoing maintenance projects at the church. He cited the need to repave the parking lot as a major project but identified the pavilion as the current concern, as the structure either needs to be stabilized or torn down.

"It's a beloved thing," Goodreau said. "But to fix it, it's going to cost well over \$100,000. So that's something we have to really study and fundraise for, so maybe if we get a miracle donor out there, that would be a great thing to fix that pavilion 'cause then you could open that outdoor space to not only just our parishioners, but for the greater community to use."



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Father Goodreau oversees the anniversary ceremony.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE from page 1

and recent graduates pressed members to reconsider eliminating eighth grade Spanish at Jabish Brook Middle School, warning the move would weaken college readiness, diversity and the district's reputation.

While administrators said the adopted budget and schedule limit options for next year, the committee unanimously instructed Superintendent Brian Cameron to convene staff and report back on any feasible alternatives that do not reduce existing specialists to part-time.

Public comment — limited by policy to 10 speakers at three minutes each — was dominated by concerns over the loss of middle school world language, particularly eighth grade Spanish at Jabish.

Spanish teacher Monica Landrio, spoke on behalf of the World Language Department at BHS and as a parent of sixth and eighth graders, said the district had quietly dropped the seventh-grade exploratory language program this year and plans to eliminate the eighth-grade offering next year.

"This is deeply disappointing and unacceptable, especially when this decision was made due to scheduling challenges rather than budget constraints," Landrio said, urging the committee to reinstate and expand middle school language options.

High school counselor Deborah Davidson warned removing middle school language makes it harder for students to earn the Massachusetts Seal of Biliteracy, which can translate into nine to 15 college credits.

"Omitting world language programs at the middle school level can limit a student's ability to achieve the seal of biliteracy," Davidson said, noting that those credits

can save families "both time and tuition costs."

Several parents described watching elective and enrichment offerings erode over time.

"We have seen programs and classes slowly trickle away over the years," said Mel Donovan, a parent of two, who linked the loss of world language with earlier reductions in chorus and other creative courses.

Lillian Gordon, the current middle school Spanish teacher, said seventh graders are "so excited" to take her class and that ending the program sends the wrong signal.

"They're getting culture, they're learning to be global citizens. It's not just about the language," Gordon said, adding that Belchertown is "one of the best districts" she has taught in.

Physical education teacher and alumna Casey Kibbe compared language exposure to introducing children to new foods, saying both broaden students' horizons in a relatively homogeneous town.

"Cutting off the world language program is cutting off more diversity from this already very non-diverse town," Kibbe said, also asking what message the move sends to English language learners whose home languages are only valued "if it's in the budget."

High school Spanish teacher and department chair Christine Holesovsky presented a detailed challenge to the administration's reasoning for moving all world language instruction to the high school.

She said high school language teachers had not been included in the decision-making and argued that the district's hiring problems at Jabish were tied to a single difficult-to-fill position and timing, not to chronic unfilled language jobs.

Holesovsky also shared five years of comparative data on AP calculus and the Seal of Biliteracy:

"During that five-year peri-

od, 40 Belchertown High School students earned a score of a four or a five on AP calculus... Also, during that time, 72 Belchertown High School seniors earned the Massachusetts Seal of Biliteracy," she said. Those seal recipients, she noted, received the equivalent of "a total semester of college credit" at some state institutions.

She pointed out that the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) recommends a six-year language sequence to reach the "intermediate high" level tied to the seal, while Belchertown has achieved unusually strong results with five years. Dropping to four years by ending middle school language, she said, will make earning the seal significantly harder.

Holesovsky added that 228 of 306 Massachusetts middle schools offer world language, citing DESE's world language specialist.

Cameron said he has been hearing concerns about the middle school language program "since I became superintendent" and pointed to recent instability in that position.

He told the committee that for roughly two years Jabish relied heavily on substitutes for Spanish, prompting complaints that the class had become "really a babysitting service" and that students were arriving at the high school unprepared for Spanish I.

Principal Thomas Ruscio said the shift of Jabish to a

three-term, six-period fixed schedule aligned with elementary schedules was driven largely by the need to share specialists districtwide as buildings are reconfigured.

"We are going from four terms to three, we are going from seven periods to six," Ruscio said, explaining that the new structure allows specialists from the elementary schools to cover Jabish throughout the day.

Ruscio cautioned that sharing staff with the high school is now harder because the high school runs a seven-period rotating schedule, while the middle school's six periods are fixed.

Cameron said he has tried to avoid reducing any current specialists to 0.8 full-time equivalent (FTE), a step he called unfair and difficult this late in the year. He told the committee he is willing to explore after-school programs or pulling students from specials to attend Spanish but said any solution must respect those staffing commitments.

Committee orders review of options, without cutting staff to part-time

Following the presentation and extended discussion, the School Committee voted unanimously to direct Cameron to meet with staff and explore alternatives for preserving middle school world language for next year.

Hulseberg framed the motion to have the superintendent "have a meeting with staff to see if a solution can be reached that doesn't

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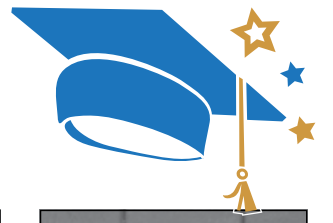
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Rams move into quarterfinals

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

GRANBY—Staying Alive' by the Bee Gees was played over the loudspeaker before the start of the bottom of the seventh inning in the Division 5 state tournament softball game.

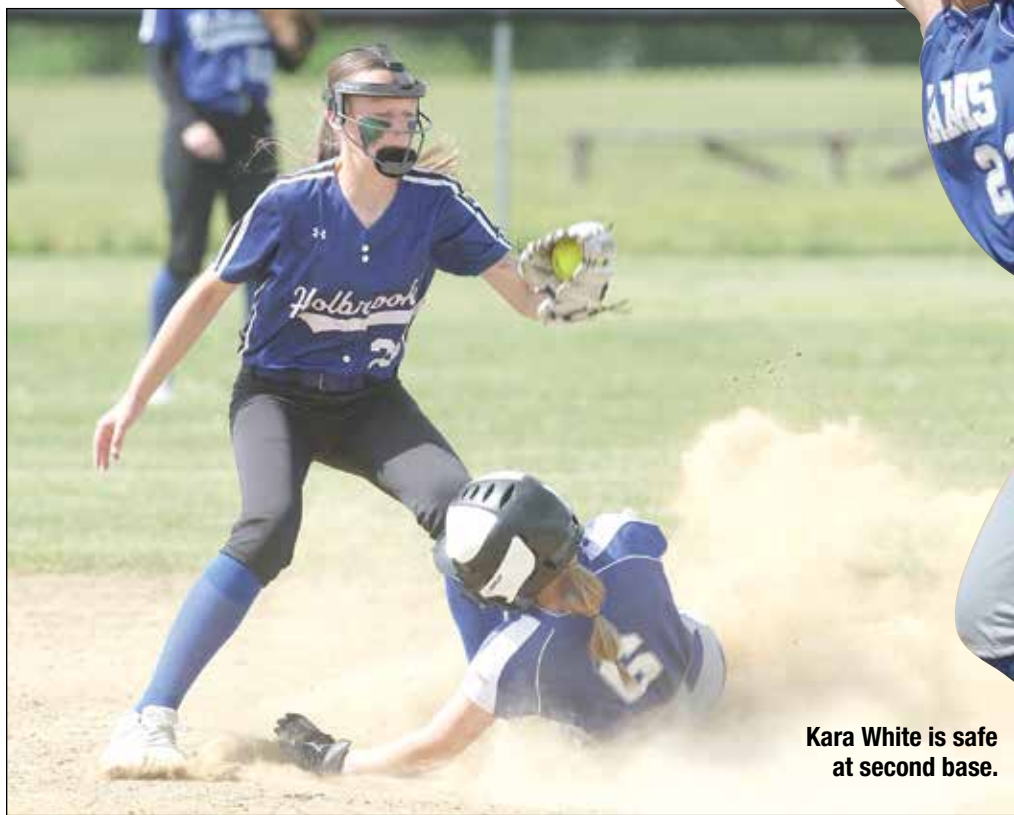
The sixth-seeded Granby Lady Rams kept their season alive with an exciting 3-2 walk off home victory over the 27th-seeded Whitinsville Christian Crusaders in a round of 32 contest held last Monday afternoon (June 1).

"I'm very grateful that I'll be playing at least one more game with this team,"

said second baseman Kaitlyn Curran, who's the only senior listed on the Lady Rams varsity softball roster. "Scoring the game winning run was also the best feeling ever in the world."

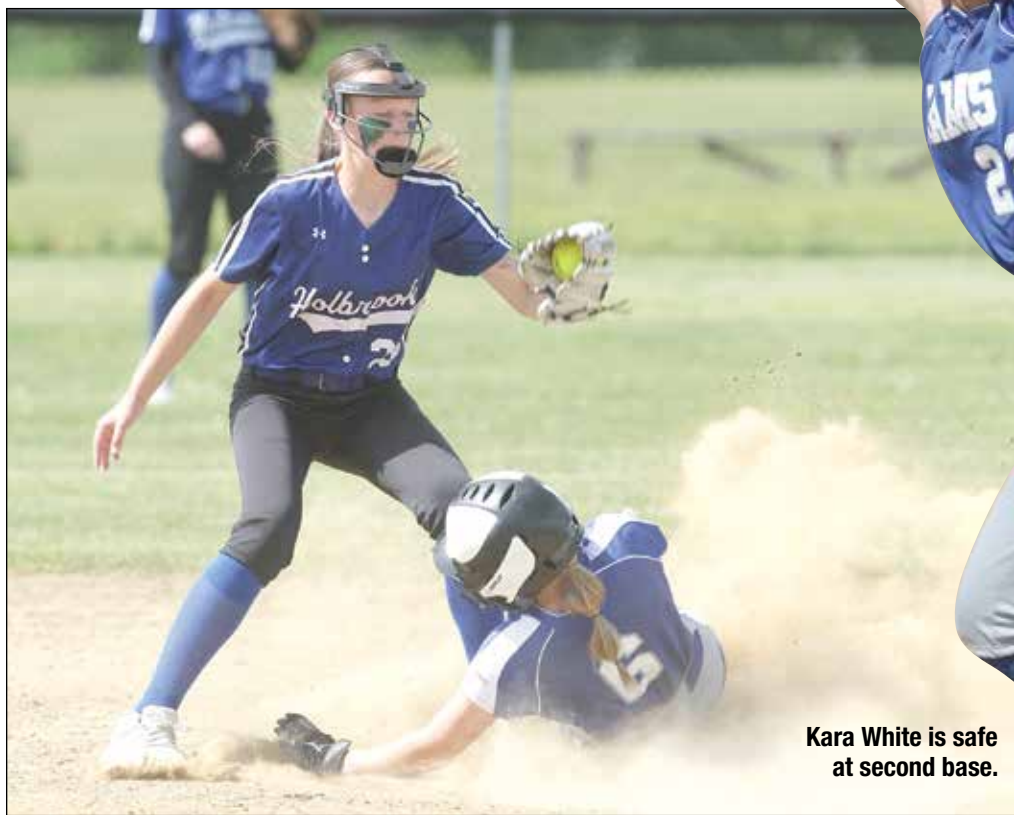
With one-out in the bottom of the seventh, Curran hit a flyball single into right field before advancing to second base on a wild pitch. Then junior shortstop Ellie Szlosek swung at a strike three pitch. She reached first base following a passed ball putting runners at the corners. Freshman catcher Rowan Cook followed with a ground ball

Please see **RAMS**, page 12



Meredith Bartosz sends a pitch home.

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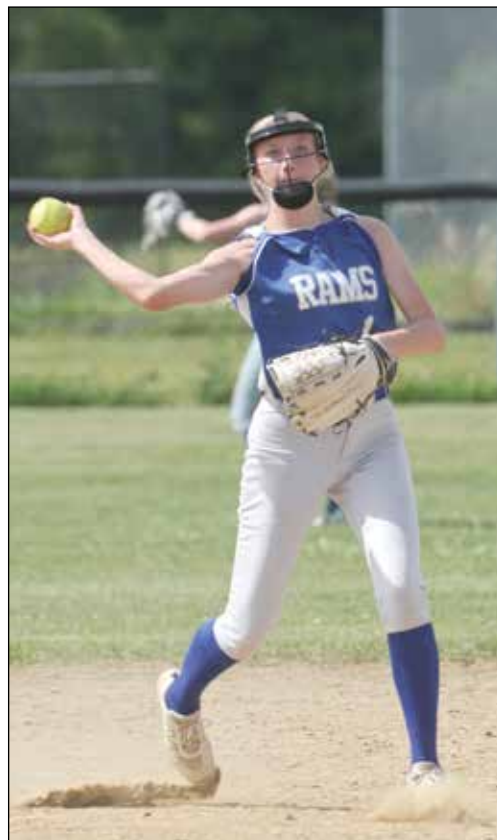
Kara White is safe at second base.



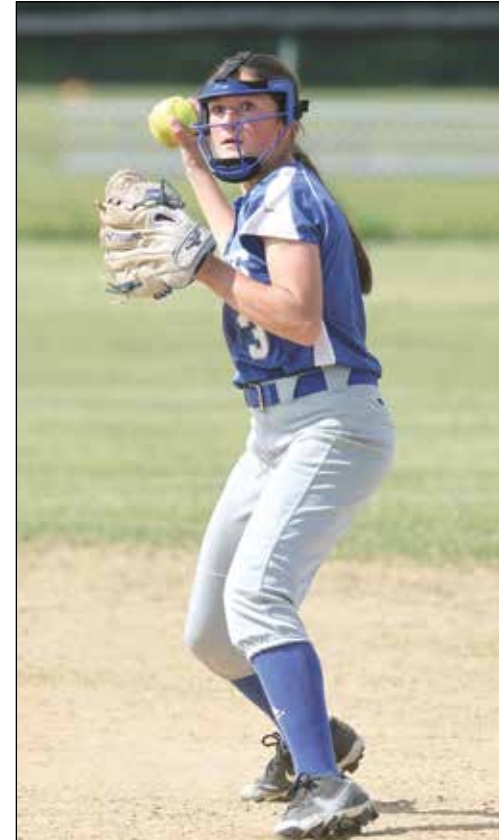
Noella Parker sends a throw back to the infield.



Kiki Gaj catches the out at first.



Ellie Szlosek slings a throw to first.



Kaitlyn Curran makes a throw.



Caleigh Foley sends a quick pass away.



Jenna Kalwa settles the ball.

Busy schedule continues for Mutiny

LUDLOW – The New England Mutiny continues double duty, playing in both the UWS and USL-W leagues. Last week, they were in action for two games, facing both the Maine Mystics in a UWS game, then followed that with a USL-W game against rival AC Connecticut. Neither final score was reported. The Mutiny were in action earlier this week against Hudson Valley and next face the Maine Footy on Saturday, June 13.



Laci Lewis turns play around.



Kendall Bodak, of Monson, tries to settle the ball.



Rachel Marchini winds up for a free kick.



Bella Meadows gets the stop.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

Kayleigh Lukasik rears back for a touch.

SPORTS

Tri-County Baseball season opens up

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

THORNDIKE — PeoplesBank has captured the Tri-County League championship title the past twelve years.

Teddy Bear Pools and Spas and the St. Joseph's Saints are two of the TCL teams looking to end the PeoplesBank dynasty this summer.

The first meeting of the regular season between the two squads was an old-fashioned slugfest.

Teddy Bear Pools pounded out 17 base hits leading to a 12-6 victory over the Saints at St. Joe's Park, last Friday night.

"It's always a lot of fun whenever we play against St. Joe's, especially at this field," said Teddy Bear Pools player/coach Ryan Magni. "We had trouble scoring runs last year, but we did the job offensively, which made the difference in tonight's game." The road win improved

Teddy Bear Pools record to 2-0.

Before moving to Teddy Bear Pools, Magni played eight seasons for St. Joe's. His brother, Brandon, is listed on the Saints roster, but he didn't play in last Friday's game.

"I played eight seasons for St. Joe's," Magni said. "I'm still friends with a lot of their players."

One of those players is St. Joe's player/coach Brian Hayes.

"Ryan and I are good friends," Hayes said. "We talked on the phone for an hour earlier today. I also have a batting cage at my house that he uses."

St. Joseph's entered the home game with a 3-0 record.

The winning pitcher was Matt Drobiak, who graduated from South Hadley High School. The righthander allowed four runs on six hits during the first four innings. He walked one and struck out one.

"In the Tri-County League, a starter only needs to go four innings to be the winning pitcher," said Magni, who pitched the final three innings to earn the save.

"Matt pitched very well in tonight's game. I also coached him at Holyoke Community College the past two years."

Magni, who began last Friday's game at second base and had two base hits, took over as the baseball coach at HCC in 2022. He isn't going to return to that position next spring.

Drobiak had a 3-0 lead to protect before throwing his first pitch in the bottom of the first inning.

Teddy Bear's first three runs against righty Jack Feltovic scored on RBI singles by catcher Willie

Maldonado, who also finished the game with three base hits.

Feltovic worked the first three innings. He was replaced on the mound by Trey Yesu, who was the

scored shortstop Devin Slattery, who leadoff with a single to left.

Slattery, who graduated from Ware High School, was named as the Tri-County League MVP last

Teddy Bear Pools, who are playing their home games at South Hadley High School, scored another run in the third giving them a 6-1 lead.

St. Joe's, who had nine base hits, answered back with an RBI single from Fitzgibbons and a sacrifice fly by first baseman Bobby Trigillo.

Both teams scored a run in the fourth inning.

Then Teddy Bear Pools pretty much put the game out of reach by scoring five more runs in the fifth inning.

Toth, who's currently a member of the Wheaton College baseball team, contributed with a two-run single. After loading the bases, right fielder Bailey Griggs cleared them with a triple to right.

Trailing, 12-4, St. Joe's could only score single runs in the fifth and sixth innings.

St. Joe's will be looking to even the season series when they host Teddy Bear Pools for the second time on June 19.

Shortstop Ray Toth, who graduated from Granby High School, doubled home the first run. He scored when Jimenez blasted a triple to right field.



Matt Drobiak delivers a pitch home.

Trey Yesu pitches for St. Joe's.

Landman (3-for-5), third baseman Ramon Jimenez (3-for-4), and centerfielder Xavion

ace of the Bridgewater State University pitching staff during the past couple of years. Yesu graduated from Monson High School.

The home team responded in the bottom half of the opening frame with a double by centerfielder Pat Fitzgibbons (2-for-4), which

year. He led his team with three base hits against Teddy Bear Pools.

The visiting team put two more runs on the right field scoreboard with two outs in the second inning.



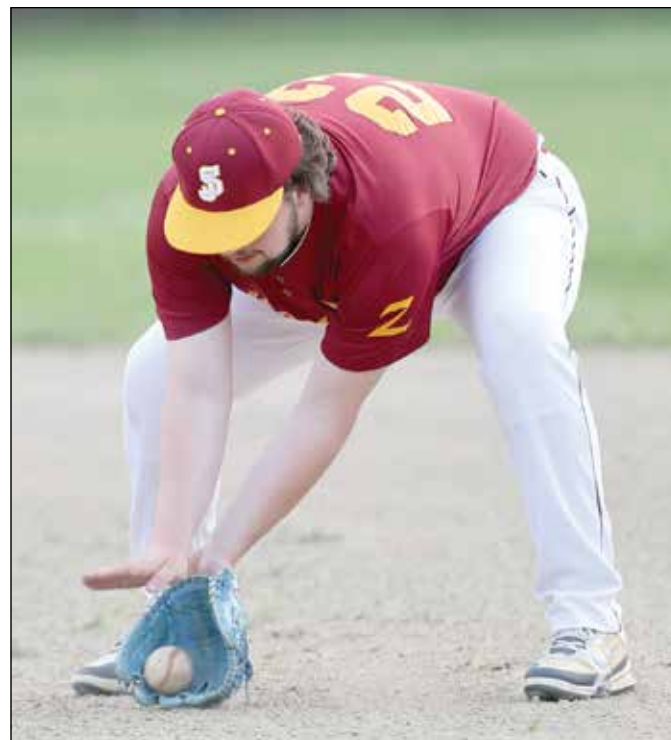
Nate Carillon catches the ball.



Ryan Magni makes an off-balance throw.



Ramon Jimenez fields a grounder.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHTOS.COM
Dillon Slattery, of Ware, picks up a ground ball.

Pioneers score shutout of Rush

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW — Ben Alexander and Martin Echarren are two of the first-year members of the Western Mass. Pioneers.

The duo played key roles in the Pioneers 1-0 shutout victory over the Connecticut Rush before a large crowd at historic Lusitano Stadium, last Friday night.

"We really needed to win tonight's game, especially after we lost our last game," said Pioneers head coach Federico Molinari. "We just need to keep up with the other teams that are ahead of us."

The home win improved the Pioneers season record to 3-1-0. Their only setback came six days earlier at home against NEFC, 4-2, who's currently sitting in first place in the USL League Two Northeast Division table.

NEFC, who's a second-year member of the USL League Two, had a perfect 6-0 record after their first six matches.

Vermont Green FC, who are the defending National

Champions, are sitting in second place with a 4-0-0 record followed by the Pioneers in third place.

The Pioneers won't be facing NEFC again during the regular season. Their only meeting versus the Vermont Green is slated to take place at Lusitano Stadium on July 10, which is the regular season finale.

The Conn. Rush are sitting in fourth place with a 2-2-1 mark.

The top two finishers in the league standings will qualify for the USL-League two playoffs in July.

The Pioneers began the regular season by playing three of the first four matches in front of their faithful supporters.

Alexander, who's the Pioneers starting goalkeeper, posted a 1-0 road shutout against the Seacoast United Phantoms on May 20. The Western Mass. squad posted a 4-2 win over the Albany Rush in the season opener.

The only goal of last Friday's match was scored on a penalty kick by Echarren during the 39th minute of the opening half.

Referee Carlos Garcia awarded the PK after Thomas Wadas, who graduated from Ludlow High School a year ago,

was fouled in the box after stealing the ball away from a Rush player. Echarren stepped up to the spot and lined a shot into the upper right corner of the net past goalie Michael Sipples. It was his third goal of the season.

"I had a lot of confidence that I would be able to make the PK," Echarren said. "I made a couple of penalty kicks for my college team."

Echarren, who's from Tandil, Argentina, was a freshman on the University



Please see **PIONEERS**, page 15

RAMS from page 11

to the shortstop and Curran crossed the plate with the winning run.

"All the credit goes to these girls," said Granby head coach Mike Afflitto. "Rowan came through in that situation, just putting the ball hard somewhere, making the defense make a play. We just need to continue to execute."

The one run home victory improved Granby's overall record to 17-4, while Whitinsville Christian finished their season with a 12-6 mark.

Because the Lady Rams senior day game had been postponed at the end of the regular season, Curran was honored before the start of the round of 32 contest.

"Kaitlyn is very special to us, and she always leads by example," Afflitto said. "She had a single in the seventh inning and wound up scoring the game winning run. It was a storybook ending."

Last fall, Curran was one of the three seniors on the girls' soccer team, which is coached by Bob Weaver. The Lady Rams defeated Hopkins Academy, 2-0, in the Western Mass. Class D championship game before losing to rival Monson, 2-1, in the Division

5 state semifinals.

Curran was also a member of the girls' basketball team, which celebrated a 64-56 victory over Pioneer Valley Christian Academy in the Western Mass. finals. Dave Padavano is the Lady Rams hoop coach.

The Lady Rams softball team couldn't complete the trifecta as they lost, 4-2, to Monson, in the Western Mass. semifinals.

The winning pitcher in the round of 32 game was junior righthander Meredith Bartosz, who allowed two runs on five hits and seven strikeouts.

Following the top of the first inning, Whitinsville Christian head coach Noreen Arpin thought Bartosz was using an illegal delivery, and she complained to the home plate umpire about it.

The Crusaders took a 1-0 lead with two outs in the opening frame when 8th grader Quinn Schadler, who was the starting pitcher for the visiting team, ripped an RBI single into right field.

The Lady Rams tied the score in the second inning.

After loading the bases with no outs, junior first baseman Kiki Gaj hit a ground ball to the third baseman. Cook, who started the rally with an infield hit, scored on the play.

Two innings later, Curran and junior leftfielder Sydney Chateaufort drew back-to-back walks. Then Gaj reached first base on a fielding error by the second baseman, which plated the go-ahead run.

With two outs in the top of the fifth inning, Whitinsville Christian junior shortstop Carrie Keeler, who had lined a single into right field, scored the tying run on a wild pitch.

Chateaufort began the bottom of the sixth inning with a single to right field, which was the Lady Rams first base hit of the game. Gaj was also hit-by-a-pitch, but the Lady Rams failed to retake the lead in that frame.

Bartosz retired the final seven batters that she faced, which did enable the Lady Rams to celebrate a walk-off victory.

The Lady Rams, who advanced into the round of 16 for the first time, defeated 22nd Holbrook, 8-2, in their final home game of the season last Thursday afternoon. The trio of Szlosek, Bartosz, and Cook led the way offensively with two hits apiece. Bartosz also recorded another victory in the circle. She allowed two runs on six hits with seven strikeouts.

SCHOOLS

Granby Jr-Sr. High announces its third term honor roll

7th Grade Maximum Honors – Emily Bond, Landon Brown, Gavin Guilbert, Kyla Houle, Jude Joslyn, Savannah Kraus, Leighton Ladas, Lillian Los, Abigail Schmeiding, Aubree Wonderlie

7th Grade High Honors – Zoey Cutrumbes, Emily Durham, Oliver Francis, Lily Paquin, Wallace Trafford, Avery Hendersen

7th Grade Honors – Ryan Burke, Jace Cruz, Madelynn Heroux, Olivia Heroux, Padraig Kearney, Madison Parker, Julianna Roberts, Milani Tapia, Weston Tierney

8th Grade Maximum Honors – Andrew Bond, Jeriel Gonzalez, Leely Kim, Bri-Anne Kraus, Sofia Marsh, Samantha Samonte, Ryan Smith, Henry Stewart

8th Grade High Honors – Raymond Barrett-Lorenzi, Kingston Cruz, Avery Gagnon, Caroline Koziol, Lucas LeVierge, Ella Ludkiewicz, Alexander Tetreault

8th Grade Honors – Ava Belliveau, Eloise Ciosek, Kaylannie Colon, Allison Cross, Ethan Fenn, Tage Flowers, Colten Gagne, Lilyana Gagnon, Peyton LaFlamme, William Pula, Charlotte Shewmaker, Michaela Slater, Avery Tetreault, Lauren Walker,

Sophia Wright

9th Grade Maximum Honors – Rowan Cook, Allisandra Crowley, Honor DeCarlo, Gwen LePage, Arianna Mislak, Mia Smith, Avery Tipton-Wolmart

9th Grade High Honors – Ella Clark, Jocelyn Curran, Addison Hill, Sophia Silchuk, Stella Siudak, Marley Skipton

9th Grade Honors – Nathaniel Gomez, Jack Krupski, Ruby Murdza, Raylin Paquette, Marcela Tapia, Kaylee Vincelette, Kara White

10th Grade Maximum Honors – Jaxtin Bednarski-Loughman, Gianna Capone, Emily Durham, Ralph El Aouji, Abigail Esquivel, Vitaly Gavel, Gabriel Helbok, Sophia Labonte, Abigail LaDuke, Emma Murphy, Grace Pula, Madison Scheinost, Colin Sicard, Kaelynn Slapski, Richard Sweet, Isabella Tetreault

10th Grade High Honors – Gina Auzelle Casadevall, Lauren Barlow, Amelia Gardner, Anthony Misiaszek, Sophia Press, Sophia Rodrigues, Carli Zobia

10th Grade Honors – Jacob Fuller, Jacob Weglarz, Catelynn Rivera

11th Grade Maximum – Meredith Bartosz, Madelyn LaPointe, Brenna Moreno, Lauren Piercey, Jaidyn Roberge, Gilmarie Vega Febres

11th Grade High Honors – Lyla Bergeron, Sydney Chateauf, Liam Everson, Kyrsten Gaj, Christopher Gregorio, Morgan Justin, Audrey Pleisch, Mckenna Zumburski

11th Grade Honors – Joseph Barrett-Lorenzi, Brandon Carillon, Parker Dufresne, James Duga, Ayden Kazemi, Samuel Moure, Autumn Swistak, Eleanor Szlosek, Nathan Walsh, Kalli White

12th Grade Maximum – Lea Charest, Allison Charron, Kaitlyn Curran, Leonardo Esquivel, Quinn Fuller, Brodie Funk, Braeden Gallagher, Maxwell Kennedy, Braydon LaDuke, Mylin Laliberte, Blake Lashway, Allison Maslak, Keith Patterson, Addison Scott

12th Grade High Honors – Jake Gagnon, Ava-Elizabeth Loughman, Annalise Patterson, Isabella Woods

12th Grade Honors – Emma Beaulieu, Brandon Chatel, Benjamin French, Rosalba Manduca, Anthony Santiago, Daniel Santiago, Nathaniel Valle

Current board, commission openings in Belchertown

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

All vacancies are posted until filled.

The Town wishes to fill the following vacancies:

Agricultural Commission: The Town wishes to fill one (1) associate member seat on the Agricultural Commission. This commission promotes agricultural-based economic opportunities; preserves, revitalizes and sustains the Belchertown agricultural industries, and encourages the pursuit of agriculture as a career opportunity and lifestyle.

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

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

office at 413-323-0405.

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

Belchertown Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force: The Town of Belchertown is accepting letters of interest to fill a vacancy on the Belchertown Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force. The focus of the Task Force is to develop a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement for the Select Board to review and to consider adopting, to seek out opportunities to acknowledge and/or celebrate the diversity within our own community and to welcome the whole community to join in, and to offer suggestions on how the town addresses specific or potential acts of violence, including hate speech, should such acts arise in our community, region, or state. Efforts should be made to include voices from the community or communities that are directly affected. Partnership opportunities with surrounding towns to strengthen regional or state efforts might also be explored. This is a seven (7) member committee to include: A representative from law enforcement, a representative from Town Hall, and five (5) community members representing diversity in one or more of the following areas: Racial and ethnic backgrounds, Social positions with respect to gender identity and sexual orientation, social positions with respect to disability, and Age groups and prior vocational experiences. All are encouraged to apply. Deadline: Posted until filled.

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

Energy and Sustainability Committee: The purpose is to develop and recommend sound energy and sustainability programs and policies for the Town. Energy relates to the fuel choices we make for buildings, vehicles, and industry. Sustainability means meeting our own needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Visit their webpage at www.belchertown.org.

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

Lakes Committee: The Town wishes to fill one (1) anticipated vacancy on the Lakes Committee. The Committee was established to preserve and maintain the health and wellness of the Lakes Region.

Scholarship Committee: The Town wishes to fill the Home Schooling Representative seat on the Scholarship Committee. If you are interested in serving in this capacity, please submit a letter of interest.

Taxation Aid Committee: The Town is looking to fill one (1) anticipated vacancy on the Taxation Aid Committee. This is a one-year appointed volunteer position which will consist of the Chair of the Board of Assessors, the Treasurer/Collector, and three residents from Town with the purpose of defraying the real estate taxes of elderly and disabled persons of low income and which shall be funded by voluntary donations made by taxpayers through an earmark on their real estate and motor vehicle excise tax bills.

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

Seniors need to pick up senior packets

BELCHERTOWN – Graduating seniors who were previously on an IEP are encouraged to pick up their senior packets at Central Office. Packets include; most recent IEP and testing along with a summary of performance. If you wish to obtain your records, please come to Central Office, 14 Maple Street with picture identification, between the hours of 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday-Friday, excluding holidays. High School transcripts that contain course titles, and grades received will continue to be stored at the BHS Counseling Office for sixty (60) years after graduation.

Agawam Community Artists and Artisans 'Call for Art'

AGAWAM – Agawam Community Artists and Artisans (ACAA) is inviting artists and artisans to participate in its Sixth Annual Pioneer Valley Art Festival.

The Art Festival will be held on Friday, Aug. 21, and Saturday, Aug. 22 at the Polish American Club in Feeding Hills. Show hours are from 2 to 8 p.m. on Friday, and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday.

The ACAA is encouraging artists, artisans, and writers to submit their work for review. Among the artistic mediums included are watercolor, acrylic, oil, mixed media, sculpture, photography, ceramic, stained glass, wood, fashion, textile, and jewelry.

All work must be original and handmade by the artist or artisan, of professional quality. Prints and giclees will be accepted. No kits, food, soap, candles, or

AI-generated work will be accepted.

Tent space is available on the paved parking lot for \$50.

Students from any area high school are accepted free of charge, and must have a tent set up.

The Pioneer Valley Art Festival is highly promoted through local TV stations; Agawam Media Channel 15 and 1074HD; Agawam Cultural Council website; newspapers; town forums; Mailchimp; the ACAA website, www.agawamarts.com; and the ACAA Facebook page, that has over 850 followers.

The week before the festival, there will be over 20 street signs placed around Agawam.

Further information, including registration forms, can be obtained by contacting Ceil Rossi at email: tocarefree2@hotmail.com.



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■ PUBLIC SAFETY

Belchertown Police Log

Editor's note: The following are brief explanations of select entries in the Belchertown Police Log and arrests for the weeks of May 29, through June 4. 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 Saturday, May 30

Benjamin A. Lalmica, 26, of 85 Turkey Hill Road, Belchertown, was arrested on charges of operating under the influence of alcohol and a lights violation. An officer patrolling south Turkey Hill Road near Chauncey Walker Street observed a northbound vehicle cross the center yellow line and drive without taillights. The officer stopped the vehicle and detected the odor of an alcoholic beverage. The driver had slurred speech. A field sobriety test was administered. Lalmica was placed under arrest. Alcohol was found on Lalmica's person. Lalmica was later released.

Wednesday, June 3

11:45 p.m. – Bryan Chaffee, 39, of 21 Catherine Drive, Apt. 33, Belchertown, was arrested on charges of disorderly conduct, assault and battery on a person with an intellectual disability and disturbing the peace. An officer responded to a report of an active disturbance and, upon arrival, heard a male voice yelling. Chaffee was identified and found to be uncooperative. Chaffee was arrested on the disorderly conduct charge.

2:15 p.m. – A Springfield male was issued a summons for an abuse prevention order violation.

ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS Friday, May 29

12:50 a.m. – An officer

was dispatched to an apartment complex on a report of a disturbance. One person said they were the source of the disturbance and were upset. A second person was attempting to calm them down.

9:53 p.m. – An officer took a report of a missing person. A youth in DCF custody at a group home was reported missing but was later determined to be in another town. The group home was advised to contact the school resource officer to ensure the youth was only picked up by an approved person at dismissal.

Sunday, May 31

10:15 a.m. – An officer responded to an accident. A vehicle backing out of a driveway struck a parked vehicle on the same property. No injuries were reported. No vehicles were towed.

12:46 p.m. – An officer responded to a residence for a report of a neighbor dispute. One neighbor was reported to be draining a pool toward an adjacent property. The officer did not observe water flowing from the hose upon arrival and asked the neighbor to redirect it.

12:49 p.m. – An officer responded to a residence for a report of a person having difficulty breathing. The person had lost consciousness. Amherst Fire responded for mutual aid. The person was transported to a hospital.

5:20 p.m. – Officers are investigating a report of possible weapons violation.

Monday, June 1

2:21 p.m. – An officer took a report of fraud. A person came to the station to report that after calling for a risk assessment of a bank

account, they were told the account would be closed and a check mailed with the balance. An unknown party had changed the mailing address on the account. The matter was documented.

8:55 p.m. – An officer took a report of a past disturbance. A solicitor alleged being shoved off a deck while going door to door for a nonprofit. The officer spoke with the homeowner, who said they were frustrated by the frequency of solicitors and had activated an alarm to prompt the person to leave. The homeowner had video of the incident. The matter was documented.

Tuesday, June 2

7:45 p.m. – Officers responded to a 911 call from a youth who was having a dispute with a grandparent. The youth was upset after being disciplined for stealing the grandparent's credit card. Officers were called back to the residence after the youth ran away. A relative located the youth. An officer found the youth, who walked away. The fire department was called to the scene.

Wednesday, June 3

8:35 a.m. – A two-vehicle crash was reported on Ledgewood Circle. One vehicle was traveling east on Ledgewood Circle. A second vehicle was heading south on Ledgewood, turning onto Forest Street. No stop sign was present at the intersection. Neither operator reported seeing the other before the collision. Both vehicles sustained damage. The first vehicle had extensive front-end damage.

9:20 a.m. – An officer responded to a business on Springfield Road after

employees reported hearing gunshots. The employees said they heard the shots and walked toward the street, where they observed a white van speeding away. An area search did not reveal any evidence of shots fired.

9:56 a.m. – An officer responded to an accident on Walnut Street. A vehicle backing out on Walnut Street while towing a boat on a trailer struck a mailbox. The trailer, boat and mailbox sustained damage. No injuries were reported. No vehicles were towed.

8:11 p.m. – An officer responded to a business on North Main Street after a man requested to report a crime. The man said a former acquaintance had released fish into a private pond without permission. The matter was documented.

10:51 p.m. – An officer responded to North Main Street for a well-being check after a caller reported hearing someone being threatened. The person at the address denied any abuse and said they did not feel threatened.

Thursday, June 4

10:57 a.m. – An officer spoke with a person who had loaned their vehicle to an acquaintance. The owner was unable to reach the borrower, who said the vehicle was having mechanical issues and was being towed to a location agreed upon by both parties. The matter was documented.

12:01 p.m. – An officer responded to North Washington Street for a report of property damage. A person said an unknown box truck had turned around in their driveway and struck a decorative wooden wall and mailbox. Incident was documented and photographs were taken.

2:58 p.m. – An officer took a report of a property damage accident that occurred in a parking lot. The involved parties exchanged information at the scene. One party later wished to speak with an officer. The matter was documented.

7:49 p.m. – An officer responded to a crash involv-

ing a vehicle and a motorcycle at the intersection of Daniel Shays Highway and Allen Road. A vehicle slowed to make a turn. A motorcycle locked its break and laid the motorcycle down to avoid a T-bone collision. The vehicle sustained damage to the left bumper. The motorcycle sustained damage to the exhaust. No injuries were reported. No vehicles were towed.

Granby Police Log

Editor's Note: The Granby Police Department responded to 152 calls for the week of May 29, through June 4. Those arrested are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. The Granby Police Department provides all information.

Friday, May 29

12:05 a.m. – Officers investigated an incident involving harassment. The incident is under investigation.

9:46 p.m. – Officers investigate motor vehicle accident involving two vehicles on Pleasant Street at West State Street. Minor injuries were reported.

Saturday, May 30

8:46 a.m. – A criminal citation was issued to a person for motor vehicle operation with a suspended license.

Sunday, May 31

3:57 p.m. – A citation was issued to a person for uninsured motor vehicle operation.

Wednesday, June 3

12:39 p.m. – Officers investigated a motor vehicle accident on West State Street. A motor vehicle struck a bicyclist on the roadway. Injuries were reported.

Thursday, June 4

3:19 p.m. – Officers investigate motor vehicle accident on Carver Street. An operator drove off the roadway and caused damage.

PIONEERS

from page 12
of Charleston men's soccer team last fall. He was selected as the Mountain East Conference Freshmen of the Year after scoring nine goals. He also had four assists.

The Pioneers managed to hold onto the 1-0 advantage for the rest of the match.

Alexander made a total of nine saves in recording his second shutout.

"It felt really good to post another shutout," said Alexander, who's from Chilliwack, British Columbia, Canada. "During the course of the game, I did a lot of talking with my defense. I just wanted to make sure we were on the same page. I've really enjoyed playing for the Pioneers."

The Pioneers defensive unit is led by Jaiden Willes, Dylan Hunston, Vasco Teixeira, and Yigit Kilic.

Alexander began his collegiate soccer career at the University of South Carolina.

The Gamecocks are a member of the SEC in every sport, including the women's soccer team, except in men's soccer. The men's soccer team are members of the Sunbelt Conference.

"Not a lot of the SEC schools have a men's soccer team," Alexander said. "That's why the South Carolina men's soccer team compete in the Sunbelt Conference."

After two seasons playing at South Carolina, Alexander decided to transfer to Boston University.

"It was just time for a change," he said. "The B.U. soccer team has been doing very well during the past couple of years."

Alexander will be playing one more season for the Terriers before he graduates.

The Rush outshot the Pioneers, 9-8.

The Pioneers will be playing four straight road matches before returning home to face the Boston Bolts at 7:30 pm on June 19.

MOSQUITOS from page 5

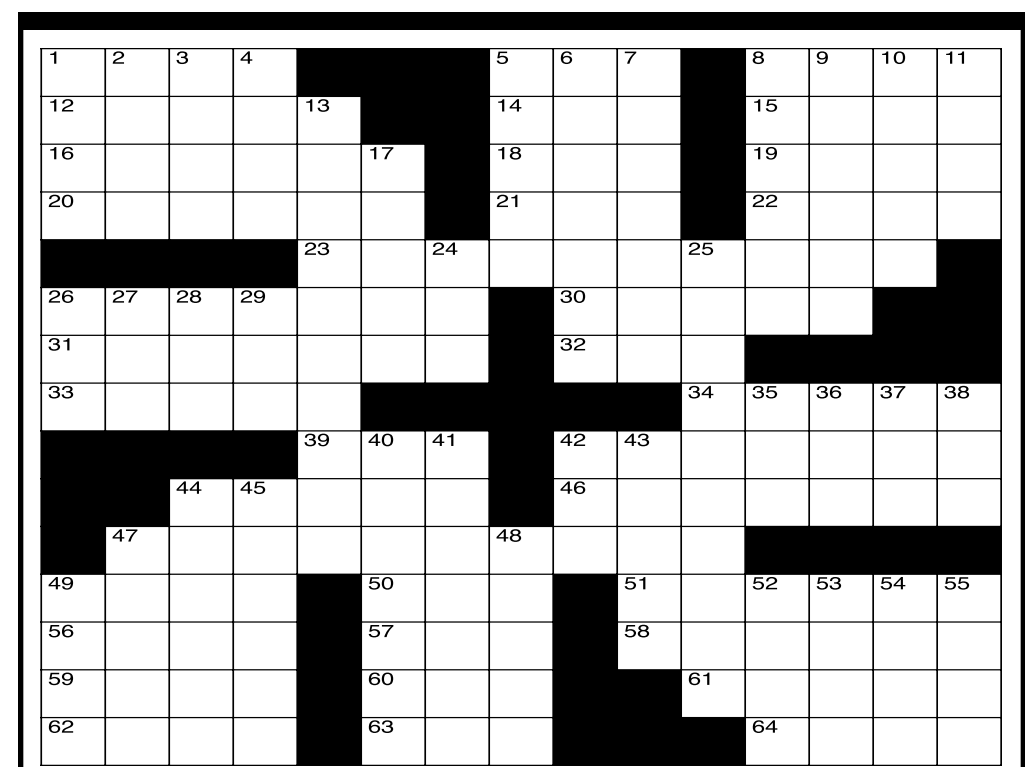
Bucket Challenge" this year, encouraging people to decorate buckets that they will use to control mosquitoes in their yards with mosquito dunks. It is a fun way to participate in supporting pollinators and local ecosystems while also being able to enjoy a mosquito-free outdoor experience. For more information on mosquito dunks and on the Mosquito Bucket Challenge, go to Homegrown National Park's website at homegrownnationalpark.org/mosquito-bucket-challenge.

■ PUBLIC NOTICE

**Granby Public Schools
Destruction of
Special Education Records**

Please be advised the Student Service Office at Granby Public Schools is set to destroy all the Special Education Records from the Granby JR. SR. High School Class of 2018, along with the records of any students in the district that were released from special education services during the 2017-2018 school year. **Records will be destroyed on July 21, 2026.** If you wish to obtain your records, please contact the Special Education office @ 413-493-5100 ext. 1024 prior to Friday July 17, 2026 in order to make arrangements for pick up at the Central Office. Please note that identification will be required at the time of record retrieval.
06/11/2026

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.



- CLUES ACROSS**
- 1. Sealed with a kiss
 - 5. Large sandwich
 - 8. Swiss city
 - 12. Japanese persimmons
 - 14. When you hope to get somewhere
 - 15. Wings
 - 16. A name of God
 - 18. Elected official (informal)
 - 19. Abnormal breathing
 - 20. "Seinfeld" character
 - 21. Yearly tonnage (abbr.)
 - 22. Something for sale
 - 23. Gets rid of
 - 26. One who touts
 - 30. Blemished
 - 31. Less than exciting
 - 32. Born of
 - 33. N. German town
 - 34. Notes
 - 39. Move away from land
 - 42. Vulcanite
 - 44. More ignoble
 - 46. Child actor Kirk
 - 47. Written works
 - 49. Sea vessel
 - 50. Residue
 - 51. Engraved
 - 56. Having sufficient skill
 - 57. One and only
 - 58. Erase
 - 59. Broad inlets
 - 60. Nightmarish street
 - 61. Play again
 - 62. Formerly (archaic)
 - 63. Add a color to change the color
 - 64. Move swiftly and lightly
 - 2. River in the Netherlands
 - 3. Asian people
 - 4. Fuzzy fruit
 - 5. Ninth month (abbr.)
 - 6. An idealistic social reformer
 - 7. What you owe
 - 8. Colorless mineral
 - 9. Overjoyed
 - 10. Rattling breaths
 - 11. Tropical Old World tree
 - 13. A citizen of Senegal
 - 17. Greek mythological beauty
 - 24. Wrath
 - 25. Instrument to measure wind speed
 - 26. Luxury carmaker
 - 27. Bitterly regret
 - 28. Not or
 - 29. Google certification
 - 35. Midway between northeast and east
 - 36. Space station
 - 37. Relating to the ears
 - 38. Congressman
 - 40. Yelled at
 - 41. Rudely assertive
 - 42. Defunct European money
 - 43. Shared one's soul
 - 44. Onion rolls
 - 45. A way to state clearly
 - 47. Relating to a lobe
 - 48. Underlying message
 - 49. Hollywood pig
 - 52. Indicates pitch
 - 53. Filament of a feather
 - 54. Small ornamental ladies' bag for small articles
 - 55. Diminish

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

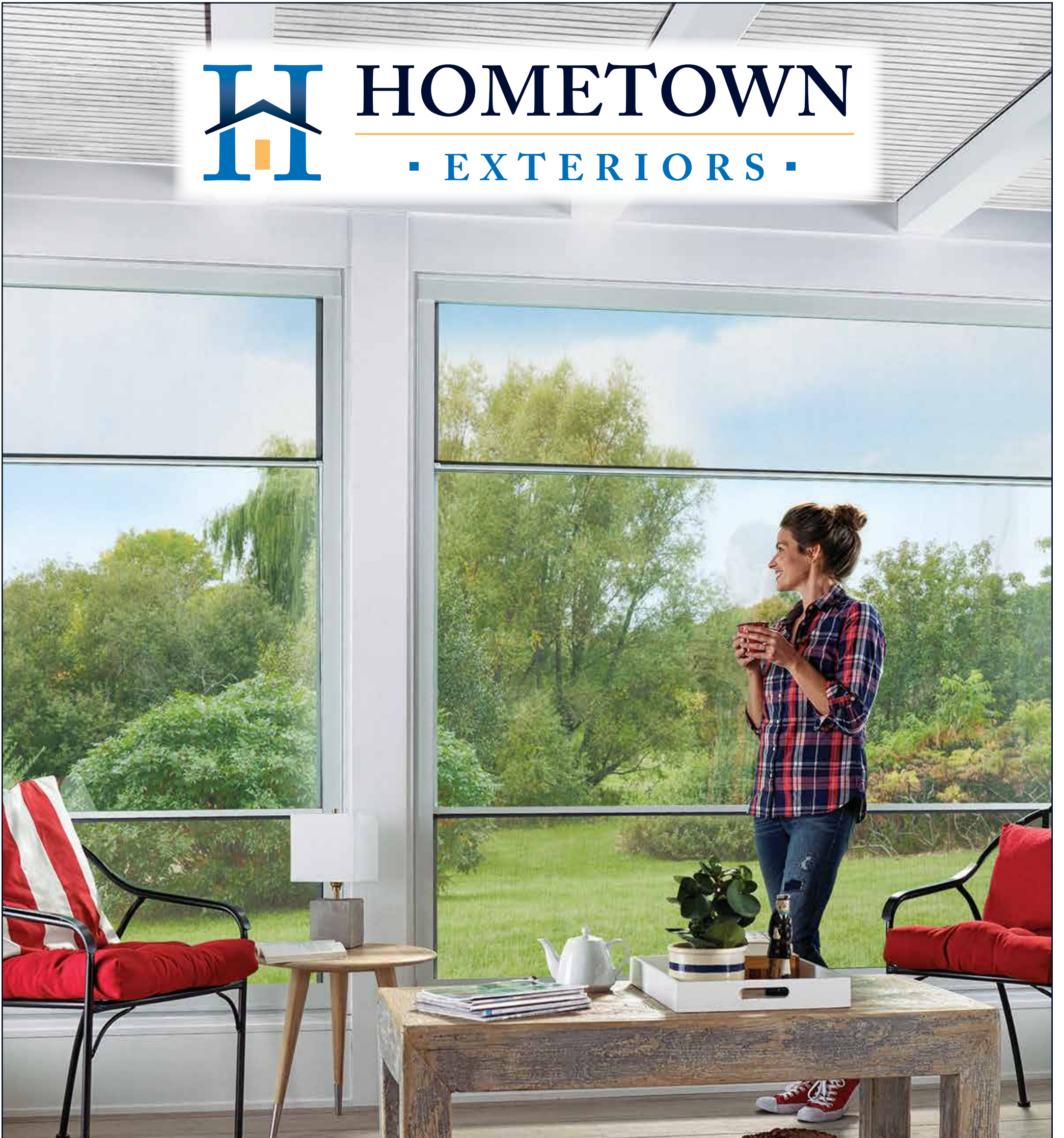
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