

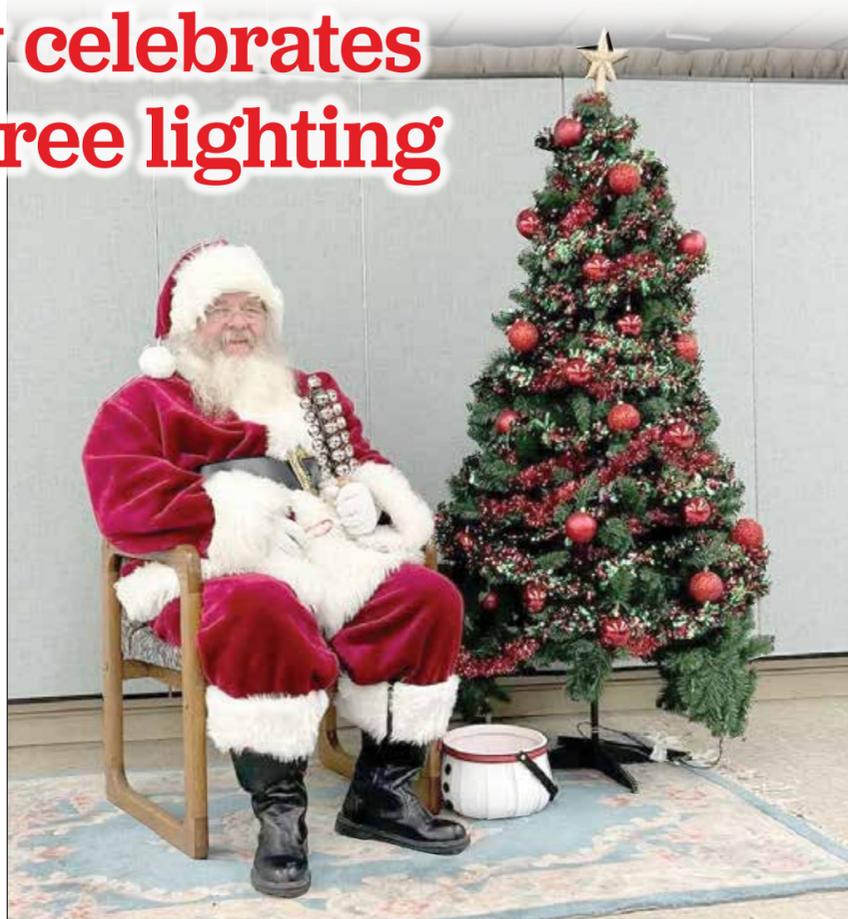
Granby celebrates with a tree lighting

By Emily-Rose Pappas
 Staff Writer
 epappas@turley.com

GRANBY – The town came together over the weekend to celebrate the holiday tradition of lighting up the tree at the Granby Public Safety Complex.

The evening was full of fun and laughter as people got together to watch the tree light up, listen to the band of talented students, enjoy cocoa and cookies, and, of course, take a photo with Santa Claus.

“I truly enjoy bringing our community together to celebrate the holiday season. We have been lighting the Granby Town Tree every year for the last 41 years. The turnout this year was one of the best we’ve had in a long time,” said Ginny Hajdamowicz. “The tree lighting was originally start-



Grab your photo with Santa!

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Please see **GRANBY**, page 9

Red Fire Farm gets site plan approval

By Melina Bourdeau
 Correspondent

GRANBY—A divided and sometimes passionate crowd packed the Granby Planning Board meeting, as residents sparred over Red Fire Farm’s planned market, raising traffic, safety, and community questions before the board’s unanimous site plan approval.

The Planning Board spent more than an hour fielding strong public input and navigating both the technical and personal stakes of Red Fire Farm’s proposed market at 34 Carver St. The final vote to approve included conditions on traffic safety and signage.

“This is not a hearing, but I will take any comments from the public. Just raise your hand,” board chair James Trompke said as the floor opened to residents at setting the tone for community participation.

A central concern was traffic congestion and safety at the farm’s new entrance,

particularly because Carver Street features a significant curve.

Resident Brian Aldrich said, “I live at 47 Carver Street, and I’m worried about traffic and mess.” Several neighbors echoed the sentiment, citing decades of accidents near the property.

Public health and food access advocates also weighed in.

Susan Knightly, a neighbor and retired chef, recited community impact statistics: “The Farm reaches 7,000 people every week through CSA farm shares... Their farm shares go out to 101,200 households in the town of Granby, Montague, Springfield, Northampton, Amherst, Boston, Jamaica Plains, Cambridge, and downtown Boston.”

She also emphasized that “20 to 35% of their total sales come from SNAP. That’s incredible for a farm-

Please see **RED FIRE**, page 5

Family Center seeks permanent home in town-owned building

By Melina Bourdeau
 Correspondent

BELCHERTOWN— The Belchertown Family Center, a longstanding provider of programming and support for local children and families, appealed for a dedicated space in a town-owned building during Monday night’s Selectboard meeting. Town officials, residents, and Family Center representatives weighed the center’s vital role and considered logistical hurdles.

The deliberation over the Family Center’s future reflects broader community debates about resource allocation, equity, and evolving needs. For over 30 years, the center has offered programming, playgroups, and social support without a stable facility, forcing organizers and families to carry

“I think it’s also an overview of the history of the good work that they’ve done for over 30 years in town, the community outreach, survey programming they’ve done, and how they’ve touched the community in many ways.”

– Jennifer Whitehead

supplies between temporary sites. The Selectboard’s task: balancing demands for dedicated community space with competing requests for after-school, recreation, and veterans’ services amid limited town real estate.

Jennifer Whitehead, a Family Center committee member, opened the segment by underscoring the proposal and the center’s deep ties to the community.

“The family center is coming tonight because they have a—it’s not just a proposal. I think it’s also an overview of the history of the good work that they’ve done for over 30 years in town, the community outreach, survey programming they’ve done, and how they’ve touched the community in many ways,” Whitehead said.

Whitehead described the center’s adaptive approach since losing its former space and outlined hopes to reclaim a room in the old

Please see **FAMILY CENTER**, page 4

CML launches reading program

By Emily-Rose Pappas
 Staff Writer
 epappas@turley.com

BELCHERTOWN – The days have only gotten colder here, and with dropping temperatures lead to people wanting to spend more time indoors rather than out.

The Clapp Memorial Library is offering a wonderful opportunity for people to find something to do, and that is in the form of a Winter Reading Program.

From Dec. 20 to Feb. 20, 2026, the library will be hosting the program for teens and adults to find something to do during these cold days that don’t involve screens.

“Any excuse to read is a good one,” said Teen Services Coordinator Ruthie Sterling. “Reading is a year-round activity. I hope this program inspires a little more reading during the school year.”

For the teens, grades seven through 12, they can participate by filling in a BINGO sheet by completing various activities in the squares. Five in a row gets the owner of the card five tickets, but a full card gets 10. The first two teens to show their completed cards will receive a \$10 gift certificate to use in the Friends of the Library spring book sale in April. The fully-completed sheets must be shown in person, and all other raffle prizes can be found online through Beanstack.

The adult program, Cozy Up with a Good Book, is also done through a BINGO sheet, and can be found on the website, <https://clapplibrary.beanstack.com/>, for both the teen and adult programs.

“One of the activities is recommending a book to a librarian - I am excited to hear what our patrons enjoy reading,” said Marcin

Marszalek.

The BINGO sheet is open for you to complete whatever and however many activities on the sheet, and get the chance to win many different prizes, from themed baskets to gift cards.

Not all of the items on the BINGO sheet relate to reading, and some are to learn about a holiday you don’t celebrate, and to visit a museum or stop by to look at the art on display at the library.

“Over the summer, teens can earn a raffle ticket for doing a random act of kindness. I love hearing what teens do to fulfill their non-reading activities just as much as I love to hear what books they’re enjoying,” said Sterling.

There are many different recommendations and books the library and librarians

Please see **READING**, page 2

Turning clutter into visual peace this season

By Emily-Rose Pappas
 Staff Writer
 epappas@turley.com

BELCHERTOWN – With the holidays coming up and gifts are purchased for friends and family, it’s important to also consider how much room you have for these new items in your homes. Oftentimes, the idea of decluttering or organizing a home can be daunting or stressful, especially when one does not know where to begin.

For Allegra Haupt, decluttering became a source of real peace as she looked at the reduction of clutter as a reduction of visible stressors.

“With the holidays approaching, and the potential onslaught of new material items in the house, there is often a frenzied tucking away of things and preparing guest rooms. Fine. Don’t sweat it or worry about the “big decluttering.” Instead, and more importantly, focus on ‘soul

decluttering.’ Take a moment to sit down in the room that your family or guests will be inhabiting,” said Haupt.

Paying attention to one’s physical environment is important, as it allows you to consider your space and what you already have, and how it can ultimately affect your inward peace and, for many, their anxiety or other mental health-related struggles.

Haupt explained that the positioning of an object can portray a message to the people who see it, right down to the placement of a vase of flowers, a childhood toy, or something else. She took this, and her experiences growing up in a chaotic environment to create a space that creates peace.

And thus came an inspiration to begin her own business that teaches people how to organize and declutter spac-

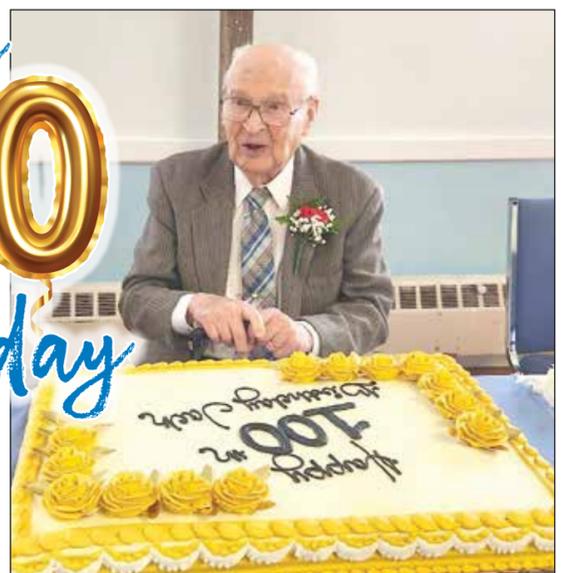
Please see **DECLUTTER**, page 2

Congregation hosts special celebration

BELCHERTOWN – Hope United Methodist Church recently had a joyous celebration of the 100th birthday of Reverend John (Jack) Moss. Rev. Moss’s family surprised him by travelling from various parts of New England to be with him and his church family for the big day. He was celebrated and prayed over during the church worship service followed by a luncheon in his honor.

Rev. Moss and his wife, Hatsumi were missionaries in Japan for forty years. They met when young Jack was on a short-term missionary assignment in Japan. After returning to the states and finishing their studies, the couple married and then returned to Japan to follow a calling to missionary work. After years of working in the church in Japan, they were instrumental in starting the Keiwa Gakuen High School, a private Christian school. Their daughters, Patricia Nozomi

Happy
100
 Birthday



Jack with his special birthday cake.

and Carolyn Megumi were raised there.

In 1994, the Mosses retired to South Hadley to live near their daughters and grandchildren. They began attending Hope United Methodist Church at that time. They quickly became involved in church activities and fit right into this mission-minded faith community. Jack always kept the congregation apprised

of mission opportunities and concerns. His prayer requests often end with a prayer for Peace with Justice in our world. His wisdom, kindness and strong faith

have been shining examples for many.

At 100 years young, Jack enjoys a vigor that defies his

Please see **BIRTHDAY**, page 4

COMMUNITY

Animal Control provides info about Ollie's Law

BELCHERTOWN – Thank you to our friends at Dedham Animal Control for this great explanation of Ollie's Law and our responsibilities to the community in keeping our four-legged friends safe.

As we near the start of the holiday season, we are already seeing an increase via social media of inquiries for, and responses to dog owners and service offerings for dog boarding/keeping within caretaker's homes.

Please be reminded that you cannot keep for the day or overnight, in your home or on your property, if you are, then you are operating as a business without a kennel license-even for just one dog.

Those who are offering dog boarding or dog care services out of their homes, under app-based companies, which are designed 'to connect' dog owners with dog care providers, such as Rover, Wag, PetSitter.com, Care.com, etc., are NOT exempt from needing a kennel license.

Rover, Wag, PetSitter.com, Care.com, etc. are NOT employers of these pet caretakers – Rover, Wag, PetSitter.com, Care.com, etc. are platform applications, and those who use these apps to offer dog care services are independent contractors, running their OWN dog care businesses. These caretakers determine their own fees, schedules and are responsible for being familiar with and adhering to their local laws.

This means the platforms, such as Rover, Wag, PetSitter.com, Care.com, etc., do NOT provide their app users with insurance for any potential harm to pets, people, or property, nor do

these platforms provide training, ensure qualifications, oversee concepts, visit the properties, contact community officials, or assume liability.

And while these platforms may conduct some form of background check and/or vetting process for their platform users, these are simply screening measures.

If we see or have verified that unlawful dog care services are being offered and/or provided out of a caretaker's home, we will take action.

Kennel license requirements, regardless of which community you reside in, fall under the Massachusetts General Laws. Service providers may be heavily fined, and/or issued cease & desist orders, under the municipality, which may not only bring existing dog boarding/keeping services to a halt, but such action may also result in dog owners needing to return from their trips to pick up their pets, if alternative 'keeping' arrangements are not able to be accommodated over the phone.

Unlawful boarding, keeping, daycare, and dog training services have been a major focus for Massachusetts state officials, Animal Control Officers, and Town/City Clerks, since the passing of Ollie's Law in 2024. <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/ollies-law-information>

Belchertown has our own bylaws regulating doggy day care with parameters that must be met. Dog owners – please know that Ollie's Law legislation's introduction stemmed from numerous incidents of dogs becoming injured, lost, and even killed, while being 'kept' by (even legitimate) pet service providers,

as a result of unsafe properties and conditions, untrained staff/caretakers, insufficient or absent emergency plans, incident reporting, and accountability.

Ollie's Law was enacted to provide oversight to increase safety in pet boarding and pet daycare services, by establishing statewide regulations, ensuring all home boarding/residential and commercial kennels are licensed and inspected, requiring injury reporting, and creating a pathway for developing future kennel standards.

[In Massachusetts, a kennel is defined as a collection of dogs on a single property for commercial boarding, breeding, training, or a private collection of a certain number of dogs...]

[Commercial boarding is the business of providing temporary lodging, meals, and care for pets for profit]

Dog care providers – please know that while we appreciate your desire to provide dog care services out of your homes, amidst an explosive, ceaseless, and lucrative pet care industry, we have little tolerance, nor does the state provide margins, when these practices are being conducted unlawfully.

If you are providing or considering providing such services out of your home or establishing a business, we advise you to contact your local officials to ascertain the requirements, inspections, and licenses needed to provide such services -before offering them to anyone.

[Dog service providers are free to care for other people's dogs in the homes in which the dog(s) reside, without kennel licenses.]

Dog owners - please know that while your dog walker may be running a legitimate and trustworthy dog walking business, and our communities have plenty of these wonderful dog walkers, just remember that dog walking does not roll over to include dog overnight care.

Dog owners -please also know that Belchertown has only four (4) lawful dog boarding options –Belchertown Boarding Kennel, Shady Glen Boarding Kennel, Panarico Farm, and Barking Bubbles. Belchertown has only 1 doggy day care facility, Panarico Farm.

Belchertown does NOT have ANY licensed in-home dog care providers at this time. Please advise us if such a service is offered to you.

We view pets as just as much a member of your families as you do, and the fact that we oversee and inspect lawful and lawfully-pursued service provision properties, to ensure they are humanely sound, safe, secured, sanitary, licensed, and prepared- to 'keep' your pets -should be of great value to you.

This should also be of great value to pet care providers, as we want to work with you so that your business interests are protected and lawful, and so that we can be a positive resource for you, if you need one, while caring for other people's pets.

Folks who care for a family or friends' pet(s) are not required to get a kennel license as long as there is no exchange of money for the provision of services, as in a business of caring for people's dogs and charging fees.

Rec Dept to host 3rd annual Drive-By Holiday Contest

BELCHERTOWN – The Belchertown Recreation Department will be hosting its 3rd annual Drive-By Holiday Contest for Christmas Lights.

The deadline to register is Friday, Dec. 19, by noon, and judging will take place on Sunday, Dec. 21 between 5 and 8 p.m.

In order to participate, you must be a resident of

Belchertown, and lights and décor must be visible from the street. Every registration will be judged based on creative use of lights, display, placement of décor, and overall presentation.

The Drive-By is sponsored by Belchertown Overcoming Adversity Together, and registration is free. First, second, and third place prizes will be awarded.

DECLUTTER from page 1

es, called Creating Joyful Spaces.

"As I got older, I continued to pay attention to physical environments and beauty, and the ways in which many people have dreams, yet are stuck in the process of creating spaces that reflect them," said Haupt. "I started the business because I know that I can help other people transform their spaces, and doing so brings me tremendous joy."

Haupt works in a Montessori classroom, and also as a campus chaplain, and through her time in college, where she learned in her anthropology class, which focused on setting up physical spaces to maximize human interactions, and how to show the most information with the least amount of visual clutter. Decluttering became a way for her to help people.

"It is a means to an end, and the end is Joy and Lightness. What I really love is people. As we work together to remove layers of "stuff," my hope is that individuals find space to become 'their truest selves.' The work of taking things away and then highlighting the important items often allows people to see themselves more clearly," said Haupt.

While not all of the stuff in your home is considered clutter, Haupt's first step to any decluttering journey is to "step into a room in your house and consider how you feel," and decide if that item still serves you, whether for aesthetics, usefulness, or for the memories it holds. Decluttering can be hard for these reasons, but as you remove it, Haupt encourages people to think of how it will make someone else feel.

Following Marie Kondo, a well-known author teaching people how to declutter, starting with categories makes decluttering less daunting and a lot easier. Clothing is the

easiest to declutter, as we can easily remove clothes that no longer fit us. Special items can be dealt with separately.

"Also, categories aside, if a specific pile is really weighing on you, start there. The energy you will gain from dealing with it will likely fuel more decluttering," said Haupt.

On your decluttering journey, you may even find repeats of items like a random fifth set of nail clippers. Whatever you find, decluttering your home and living simply can greatly improve your life and mental health.

"I strongly believe that a simpler life, in which we spend less time managing 'stuff' and more time enjoying people, leads to greater happiness. The time spent – and the stress involved – getting the house ready for guests could actually be spent with friends," said Haupt.

Decluttering is a freeing process that changes the focus on the items in your home from a clutter point of view to something that reflects you as a person, and your inner thoughts. A tidy space can help a racing mind.

"I have never had anyone say, 'I regret doing that project.'" Most say the work has continued to have very significant ramifications: a feeling of lightness, the ability to make decisions, decreased family stress, and energy and motivation to continue the work," said Haupt.

You can learn more about her business, Creating Joyful Spaces, at www.creatingjoyfulspaces.com, where she teaches people how to beautify, downsize, and stage their homes, supporting them in whatever project they are undertaking.

Consider looking at decluttering this season and consider it alongside the real meaning of the holiday season: gratefulness and time meant to be spent with loved ones, not how much more "stuff" you may receive or gift.

Town hall holiday closures

BELCHERTOWN – The Belchertown Town Hall and the Select Board's Office at the Finnerty House will be closing at noon on Wednesday, Dec. 24, 2025, for the holiday. Offices will reopen at 8 a.m. on Monday, Dec. 29,

2025. Additionally, the Belchertown Town Hall and the Select Board's Office at the Finnerty House will be closing at noon on Wednesday, Dec. 31, 2025, for the holiday. Offices will reopen at 8 a.m. on Monday, Jan. 5, 2026.

AgComm invites community to event

BELCHERTOWN – The Belchertown Agricultural Commission invites all interested parties to our winter informational event on January 24, 2026, from 1 to 3 p.m. in the auditorium located at Lawrence Memorial Hall.

Presentation will be provided on the following topics.

Mill Valley Veterinary Clinic will provide updates on Livestock Health, the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service will provide updates on their programs and services, as well as discuss climate change, and the Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (CISA) will provide information on their programs and services. Refreshments will be served.



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2026 QUABBIN HISTORY CALENDAR
by J.R. Greene

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Ware
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READING from page 1

have to offer- just stop by the front desk and ask, or check out the rotating displays at the library.

"What I like about the winter reading program is its variety - reading is an important part of it, as you'd expect, but there are many cozy activities you can com-

plete like enjoying a sumptuous treat, trying a new taste of tea, or reading while wrapped in a blanket," said Marszalek.

Take a break, and stop by the library to pick up your BINGO sheet, and get ready for another fun season of reading, with a fun challenge to go with it.



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COMMUNITY

Warm up this December at the library

BELCHERTOWN – Warm up at the Clapp Memorial Library this December with a variety of events and programs for every age. We hope to see you soon!

Christmas holiday schedule: The Library will close at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 24, and remain closed on Thursday, Dec. 25. Regular hours resume Friday, Dec. 26.

For General Audiences: Community Wellness

Friday, Dec. 19, 3 to 5 p.m.

Clapp Memorial Library and BOAT welcome anyone in the community needing access to health care, mental health/substance use resources to the library on the 3rd Friday of every month from 3 to 5 p.m. Free refreshments will be available.

For Adults: Adult Winter Reading Program

Dec. 20, 2025 - Feb. 20, 2026

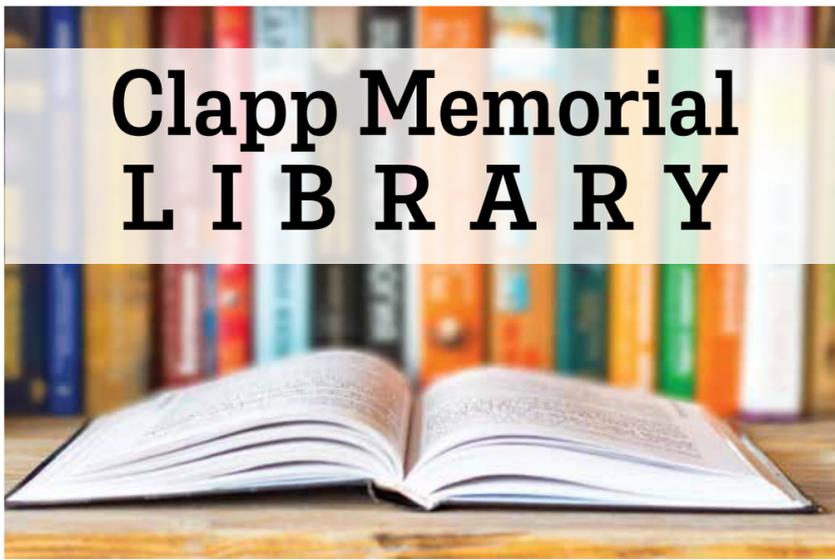
Adults are invited to participate in “Cozy Up with a Good Book”, our Winter Reading Program. Enjoy books and fun, cozy activities as you complete the squares. Earn chances to win some great prize bundles. Sign up at clapplibrary.beanstack.org or on the Beanstack app. Physical Bingo cards are also available for pick-up at the library. Get all the details when you sign up. For adults age 18 and over. See below for our Teen Winter Reading Bingo. This program is funded by the Friends of the Clapp Memorial Library.

For Teens:

Teen Winter Reading Bingo

Dec. 20, 2025 - Feb. 20, 2026

For the first time ever, the Clapp Memorial Library is running a Teen Winter Reading Program! Teens in grades 7-12 are invited to sign up for Teen Winter Reading Bingo at clapplibrary.beanstack.org or on the Beanstack app! Physical Bingo cards are also available for pick-up at the library. Participating is easy - and, of course, there are prizes! Get all the details when you sign up. Save the date, and start earning tickets on December 20th! This program is funded by the Friends of the Clapp Memorial Library.



For Children: Magic: The Gathering

Saturdays now through Jan. 10,

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

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. Check the Library website or Facebook page if there is inclement weather.

Winter Story Times -

Stories and fun for children and their caregivers! We'll tell stories, sing, dance, have finger plays, do crafts, and play instruments. Registration is required. Emails will be sent to confirm enrollment. When sessions are full, children will be put on a waitlist. Register online at clapplibrary.org/story-hour or call the library at 413-323-0417.

Babytime Story Time

(for ages 3-12 months)

9 to 9:45 a.m., Mondays, Jan. 5, 12, 26, and Feb. 2, 9

First Steps Story Time

(for ages 13-24 months)

10 to 10:45 a.m., Mondays, Jan. 5, 12, 26, and Feb. 2, 9

Toddler Time
(for ages 2-3 years)
9:30 to 10:30 a.m., Tuesdays, Jan. 6, 13, 27, and Feb. 3, 10

Preschool Story Time
(for ages 3-6 years)
9:30 to 10:30 a.m., Thursdays, Jan. 8, 15, 29, and Feb. 5, 12

**The Library will close at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, December 24, and remain closed on Thursday, December 25, for the Christmas holiday. Regular hours resume Friday, December 26.*

The Clapp Memorial Library is open:
Monday 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Tuesday 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Wednesday 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.*
Thursday 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.*
Friday 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Saturday 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

NOTICE

ERRORS: Each advertiser is requested to check their advertisement the first time it appears. This paper will not be responsible for more than one corrected insertion, nor will be liable for any error in an advertisement to a greater extent than the cost of the space occupied by the item in the advertisement.

Do you need sand? We have sand

BELCHERTOWN – With winter already making itself known after this week's snow and ice, residents are reminded that free winter sand is available for household use. The sand (no salt mix) is provided for Belchertown residents only; contractors are not permitted to take sand. Sand may be picked up at the “Green Shed” located at the DPW Highway Garage, 290 Jackson Street. Residents should bring their own bucket or container, along with a shovel, for loading the sand. There is no fee for this service. For full details, visit the Town of Belchertown website or contact the Department of Public Works at 413-323-0415.

‘Thank You’ from our Boy Scouts

BELCHERTOWN – Belchertown Boy Scout Troop 507 would like to thank the local community for supporting their recent Can & Bottle Drive. Folks from Belchertown and the surrounding towns donated thousands and thousands of returnables. The Scouts and adult volunteers spent most of the day collecting, sorting, counting, and bagging cans and bottles to be turned in at the redemption center. Troop 507 extends their gratitude to everyone who donated. Mark your calendars - our next Can & Bottle Drive is January 24. If you have questions, please email BelchertownTroop507@gmail.com.

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Aug 308-Day Nova Scotia Cruisefrom \$1699
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USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS HOLIDAY ROAST PORK LOIN		USDA INSP. FRESH BONE-IN RIB EYE or STANDING ROAST	\$1277 lb	USDA INSP. FROZEN WHOLE GOOSE	\$1299 lb
STORE MADE STUFFED WITH HAM, CHEESE, PEPPERS, ONIONS, SPICES.....	\$449 lb	USDA INSP. HILLSHIRE FARMS POLSKA KIELBASA	\$299 lb	HOLIDAY APPETIZERS	
USDA INSP. FRESH PORK WHOLE HAM.....	\$199 lb	USDA INSP. BONELESS KAYEM BUDABALL	\$366 lb	USDA INSP. FROZEN CHEFS TOGETHER PIGS IN A BLANKET 24 PC BOX...	\$399 ea
USDA INSP. FROZEN HAM PORTION BUTT or SHANK.....	\$155 lb	USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF TOP SIRLOIN SPOON ROAST	\$777 lb	USDA INSP. FROZEN CHICKEN PARMESAN MINI SPRING ROLLS 8 PAK.....	\$399 ea
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COMMUNITY

Public input sought for community events calendar policy

BELCHERTOWN — The Belchertown Communications Committee is issuing a call for public comment to help shape a new policy that will define what types of events are included on the Town's Community Events Calendar going forward. This is not a survey; it is an open request for direction and perspective from the community as the Committee establishes clear, consistent guidelines for the future of the calendar.

"The committee recognizes the importance of the balance required by local government in supporting the community while not becoming more noise and advertising," said Chris Martin, Chair of the Communications Committee. "Our aim with this policy is to find that balance and provide guidance to those who manage the community events calendar on the Belchertown website. This call for submissions is to expand our committee's

knowledge beyond its individual's and to allow community leaders and organizations the opportunity to provide their own."

The Community Events Calendar currently features a broad mix of town-related and community-focused programming, including examples such as seasonal events ("Holiday Cookie Sale"), local fundraisers ("Tri-Lakes Association Fundraiser"), recreational offerings ("Tai Chi Indoors"), youth and family-oriented programs ("Music for Littles"), and community-run gatherings such as the "Kids' Winter Party" and "Winter Market." The Committee is seeking input on the types of events that should be included or excluded under a formalized policy.

The forthcoming policy will guide the Town's approach to determining what constitutes an appropriate community event for public posting — balancing



transparency, accessibility, civic engagement, and the need to avoid excessive promotional or commercial content. Once the Committee has finalized the guidelines, they will be presented to the Select Board for adoption as the official policy governing the Events Calendar.

Community members, organizations, and stakeholders are invited to submit comments via the online form at: www.belchertown.org/Calendar_Comments

Comments may also be submitted by email to: commcomm@belchertown.org

Anonymous submissions will not be considered. Comments will be accepted until the end of business on January 21, 2026.

Lotto calendars now available

PALMER — Baystate Wing Gift Shop Annual January Lotto Calendars are now available through Jan. 30, 2026. The drawing will be held Feb. 3, 2026.

The price is \$5 for one calendar with 31 chances to win and \$10 for three calendars with 93 chance to win. The winner need not be present.

Funds are used for scholarship awards for seven local high school graduates and

towards the gift shop's pledge of \$200,000 (in installments) to Baystate Wing to a specific department.

These make great stocking stuffers/gifts or recognition of someone in your daily life.

FAMILY CENTER

from page 1

American Legion building, now attached to the Senior Center. "We approached the recreation department a few months ago to ask... how much use is [the Legion space] getting," Whitehead said. "At the time, we were told that it was only used once a week for a square-dancing group... and then a Girl Scout troop meets in there from time to time. These were exactly the things that the family service is already doing when we had usage of the space at 51 State

Street, we were already sharing with 4H and scouts."

The center's proposition was shared, but primarily "dedicated" use of the room for hosting playgroups and partnerships with the region's playgroup collaborative.

"If they could move in and be part of us... that would be bringing some money into our community that would provide services for families and young children, but not cost our taxpayers anything... It's already heated," said Whitehead. "There's already electricity. The bathrooms are already bathrooms that other people in the build-

ing are using on a regular basis."

In response to Selectboard member Nicole Miner's question about bathroom facilities, Whitehead was candid about challenges.

"One of the bathrooms has quite a bit of storage space, so we might actually try to store a potty seat that we go on top. But it's no different than families using the library toilet," she said.

Beth Crosby, a founding member of the Family Center, traced its roots back nearly three decades. "Primarily women... mostly mothers who didn't have a

Happy 100 Birthday



Jack celebrating with his loving family.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

BIRTHDAY

from page 9

age. He drives himself to church most Sundays from the Lathrop Community in Easthampton. He has a great knack for storytelling and engaged the crowd at his party with a couple of his stories and tunes on the Shepherd's flute that he made as a boy. And he never misses an opportunity to step out with friends from Lathrop to protest and stand up for his beliefs! Happy birthday Jack!



Jack being prayed over during the service.

connection, got together, and it started with a Friday play group at the Old Town Hall," she said. The center soon outgrew its original space, moving through churches and school buildings before ultimately losing its stable home.

Crosby emphasized the center's scale and inclusivity, especially when facilities matched needs. "When we were active, we were serving over 100 kids a week," Crosby said.

All of these are little steps for children to be successful," she said, advocating for both social-emotional and academic readiness fostered through Family Center programs.

The lack of a dedicated, child-ready space has forced the committee into logistical gymnastics.

"It means that we have to bring all the toys and supplies. It means that we are setting up our arts and crafts on the floor for children, because there are not tables that are the appropriate height for kids, and we can't have children kneeling and standing on chairs," a committee member explained.

Whitehead echoed that sentiment, pressing the need for a more permanent home: "What we are asking for is dedicated space that we are happy to share, but we need to be able to leave some supplies setup," she said.

Town Administrator Steve

Williams recognized the Family Center's value but noted competition for finite town property.

"Dedicated space is a little bit more complicated, and we run into competing interests... before school and after school programs. All of these could require dedicated space," Williams said. "What I can tell you is... if we had a building that we were heating and ensuring and it didn't matter, then, yeah, I would say that's an easy decision," he added.

Selectboard member Jen Turner suggested a practical pilot.

"I would personally much rather that we say, 'Yes, I see your phase one, phase two, phase three approach.' Let's try phase one for a little while," Turner said. "Share the space, still allow the scouts to come and still do the four squares and then in a year and a half... we re-evaluate."

But safety and privacy surfaced as counterpoints.

Selectboard member Jonathan Ritter expressed concern about sharing the space with veterans.

"There's a lot of privacy that goes on with veterans. They come in with PTSD. They come in with human arrangements with kids running around that space. It's not going to be good for our veteran agents... for our veterans in that program-

ing," he said. "Never mind if seniors are coming down the hallway and they trip and fall over a kid or something, because that program is there... That's my concern for safety."

Williams acknowledged the logistical puzzle of balancing the available spaces as well as future building-related capital projects.

"We are wrapping up the living quarters for the firefighters, and the fact that they're currently occupying is going to be renovated for our IT department. So, the wing at the [recreation] building [was] going to be the teen center. So again, it goes back to, are we going to have before and after school programs, or are we going to have a family center?" Williams said.

Committee members and town officials debated the feasibility of alternate spaces, including the back room at the Recreation Department, proximity to the playground and even underused school properties, though concerns remained about access and suitability.

"Our ideal room would be that back room at the recreation department, because the parking would be more accessible," Whitehead said.

Turner indicated a way forward, asking Williams to work with family center committee members to develop a plan.



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- Country Journal • The Register • Wilbraham-Hampden Times
- Agawam Advertiser News

Monday, December 29 at 2 PM for January 1 issue

- Sentinel • The Journal Register
- Ware River News • Barre Gazette

Tuesday, December 30 at 2 PM for January 2 issue

- Quaboag Current • Town Reminder
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The kids got to do a group photo with Santa.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY BRENDAN ROONEY

Polish National Alliance Lodge 711 hosts Christmas party

By **Brendan Rooney**
Correspondent

CHICOPEE - The Polish National Alliance Lodge 711 of Chicopee hosted a Children's Holiday Party at the Chicopee Falls Polish Home, comprised of families of all ages, on Dec. 7.

The party comprised attendees such as members of the PNA and their families—enjoying raffle prizes, arts and crafts, games, a hot cocoa station, making holiday cards for elders in nursing homes in Chicopee, along with a classic Polish dinner consisting of fresh kielbasa donated by Blue Seal Kielbasa, homemade kapusta courtesy of PNA Lodge 711 President Joanne Cebula, and pierogies from an anonymous resident in the city, which garnered unanimous praise from everyone in attendance.

Also among the volunteers were members from the National Honor Society at Minnechaug Regional High School in Wilbraham, along with members of the Wilbraham PNA Lodge 3276, taking part in the festivities.

In addition to families from Chicopee and Wilbraham and Hampden, families from Ludlow and Belchertown and other surrounding communities also were in attendance at the event.

Reflecting on the overall success of the gathering was Teresa Sherman, financial secretary, treasurer, and sales representative for the PNA Lodge 711.

"This event is a great way of getting people together, and we look forward to having the party because I have been coming since I was three years old, and it's always been a great memory," Sherman said. "It's also heartwarming to see familiar faces such as my granddaughter, who continues to keep the Polish tradition alive, and it truly means a lot, and she just enjoys volunteering, and we're very happy to have the volunteers from all parts of the community."

Her granddaughter, Alexa, felt it was a full circle moment, as she explained the times of her childhood, going to the party and helping her grandmother any way she could. Also, what this opportunity means to the Minnechaug kids.

"Being here and helping coordinate all elements showcases what the values of our school truly embody, which are challenge, honor, adapt, understanding and grow, and it's a great platform to help those in need, while keeping the Christmas Spirit alive," she said.

The biggest takeaway of



From the left, Isabella Strand, Alexa Sherman, Alyssa Nogueira, Aezlin Rost, Teresa Sherman and PNA Lodge 711 President Joanne Cebula in a group photo.

the afternoon was when good ole St. Nick, Santa Claus, entered the room, to everyone in attendance singing "Jingle Bells," before all the children in attendance lined up for a group photo, and waited patiently for their name to be called.

Mr. Claus then handed out presents, which warmed the hearts of all, before he made it clear he had to get back to the North Pole, as Christmas was only a few weeks away; however, before he left, he discussed the importance of these events along with shedding some light on what some kids are asking for this holiday season.

"They don't really request a whole lot, and the committee puts packages togeth-

er for them, along with my elves' supervision, and I want to add that I have never met more polite and engaging young people, and it's just an honor for me to come down from the North Pole every year to do this," he said. "I also want to add that this partnership all started with the Chicopee Rotary Club, and we were honored to give back, and I just want to note that being here gives me a feeling of self-worth."

The event was a resounding success, exemplifying what the true meaning of the holidays entails: a sense of community, giving back, and keeping societal and family traditions alive and well in an ever-changing reality.

RED FIRE from page 1

er to be able to say that."

Red Fire Farm co-owner Sarah Voiland said, "We are just trying to replace what we lost in the fire, which is the place where we sell our produce, where we welcome families to come out for activities on the farm...And all of that is vital to the viability of our farm."

Technical back-and-forth intensified as the discussion turned to site logistics and safety. The town's police and highway departments weighed in via letters, flagging sight lines, emergency access, and right-of-way safety.

Reading from the review, board consultant Ken Kamiya summarized: "Adequate sight lines must be maintained for traffic safety. No roadside signs,

temporary banners, or vegetation should be placed along the road in areas that could adversely impact sight distances."

Both town and farm representatives acknowledged disagreement over additional entranceways for emergencies.

Speaking as the project's architect, Ray Mann, of Ko-LAB Architecture, explained that the proposed driveway "meets all the standards that are required for two-lane traffic...in my opinion, it's really the safest place."

The board deliberated openly on potential conditions.

"I'm not going to speak for the board, but my guess is we're going to say that there can't be any on-street parking, especially on that curve," Trompke said, with the farm

confirming plans for overflow parking in the fields if needed.

Signage and lighting also drew scrutiny.

"The sign bylaw is quite interesting. I think that's one of the reasons why the town is going to update where this particular business is located," Kamiya said, detailing size and illumination restrictions. Multiple board members suggested the possibility of a special permit for signage if needed.

Vice Chair Melissa St. Germain Martel moved to approve the site plan as presented.

"The only additions that I would like to add is no vegetation, no banners along Carver Street," she said. The motion and carried unanimously.

The officially imposed conditions, read into the

record, state: "No roadside signs, temporary banners or vegetation should be placed along the road in areas that adversely impact sight distances for vehicles entering and exiting." The farm must "ensure no vegetation, no banners within 10 feet of the driveway or Carver Street in accordance with highway and police recommendations."

The conclusion brought relief to farm supporters and set the stage for Red Fire Farm's next phase—on the books and with community concerns formally addressed.

As the board prepared to adjourn, Trompke summarized the balancing act: "Again, I think, if there's enough parking places there for the day-to-day operation...I'm in favor of approving it as presented, including the signage as presented."

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OPINION

Holiday meals and protecting your pets

By Nancy Alpers
Correspondent

I was pretty excited to spend Thanksgiving with good friends. We've known each other since our oldest kids were babies. For as long we have known them, my house was the one that had all of the pets, and their house was pet-free and fur-free. That is until their kids grew up. Then they got a very cute, perfectly-sized, little goldendoodle. This year however that goldendoodle is still cute and perfectly-sized but no longer little. In fact, her perfect height placed her nose at exactly the same height as the tables. Of course we were sitting at the main table, so she could not walk up to that without us noticing. However, she was able to approach the table with cheese and crackers that we thought were human snacks but that she thought were dog snacks. Although less perfectly placed for her height, standing on her hind limbs also placed the counters that were covered in tasty dishes and the sink with morsels of leftovers within her reach as well. She thus demonstrated an interest in pursuing human food that our friends had previously not seen.

The dog has always been sweet and quiet before this Thanksgiving, but she also demonstrated other new behaviors that led our friends to believe she must be sick. She was barking at everyone and cowering.

No matter how much we love the holiday season, it can be stressful. If you think it is just you, go on pretty much any online forum about families or flip through any magazine at the grocery



A silly dog stealing some pizza.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

store, and you will see articles or posts about holiday stress. There's a lot of hustle and bustle. There are different foods and a much larger quantity of them. There are packages coming in from online stores. On top of it, there may be guests coming to your house. If humans find it stressful, and we know what is happening and why, it's not that surprising that our pets may find it stressful too. In addition, depending on your household's holiday traditions, there may even be a large wooden object that looks and smells like the same tree that dogs would normally pee on in the yard.

So how do we help a dog who is no longer a tiny puppy sleeping through her first holiday season but is now struggling with the stress and responsibilities that come with new sensations, temptations, and unexpected guests? There's no one magic answer, but following your pets' nor-

mal routines can be one of the best ways to keep their behaviors closer to being routine. Make sure that you are feeding your pets on their regular schedules. Make sure water is available. Give them their regular potty breaks. If you have a cat make sure they have access to their litterbox.

There are also several tricks that may not be routine. If you know you are going to have guests over and you have a young energetic dog, make sure the dog gets extra exercise before your guests arrive. Invest in some good toys like Kongs or puzzle toys that will keep them distracted for a little while. If sounds like doorbells set your dog or cat off, ask your guests to send you a text when they get there. You may also want to put a note on your door to remind them. If you were to walk by a counter with free candy, would you stop and take some? I certainly would.

Counters and tables with food are the pet equivalent of a free candy counter. Your life will be much easier if those dishes are put up high and away from nose level.

Some people want to keep their pets away from their guests, particularly if they feel like a pet will find the company stressful. Don't set your dog up for failure. Find a quiet room that is either dog-proof or has their crate. The idea is to let them stay in a room that is just theirs. Make this room off-limits to guests. A white noisemaker can also help protect the room and therefore your pet from the stressful sounds coming from the rest of the house. There are products that can help keep pets calm, like Feliway for cats and Adaptil for dogs. There are also Thundershirts, which are special shirts that basically make your pets feel like they are getting a big hug.

Some people do want their pets to interact with their guests. If this is what you want, don't overwhelm your pet with too many people at once. Think about how you feel when you walk into a crowded room. It can be overwhelming and scary. That can also be the case for pets. Have one or two people meet your pet at once. If your pet is good with receiving treats, meaning they don't snap at human fingers, consider providing your guests with some treats to help jumpstart their friendship with your pet. Just make sure your pet only ends up getting a small number of treats.

Some people want their dogs with them the whole time. That's fair as well, but it is important to remember that the dog will not magi-

cally know how you expect them to behave. For example, if you want your dog to stay snuggled at your feet, particularly when surrounded by strange people and tasty-smelling foods, you will probably need to work with a dog trainer. A dog trainer can help you set and achieve appropriate goals with your dog. Your vet may have some recommendations for dog trainers in your area.

Even when you do everything right, some pets are just more stressed out than others, just like some people are more anxious than others. If your pet seems particularly prone to anxiety, you may want to find out from your vet whether your pet is a candidate for medication to handle stressful events.

Just like people can find holidays a mixture of good food, company and stress so can our pets. Make sure to plan ahead and think about how you want your pets to participate in the holidays with you this season.

Dr. Nancy Alpers is a small animal veterinarian and Belchertown Veterinary Hospital in MA. She sees dogs, cats, birds, reptiles and small exotic companion mammals. She and her husband live with many pets including two golden retrievers who are champions at counter surfing and raiding the garbage can if given the chance.

Susan Stevens-Blackshear is a certified veterinary technician at VCA Plainfield in CT. She has a special interest in behavior cases. She and her husband also own a variety of pets including a cat named Mr. Peeps who is always delighted to partake in any tasty dishes.

Two holiday plants suited for gift giving

Are you in need of a plant for a hostess gift this holiday season but poinsettias aren't your cup of tea? Look no further! I will give you my top two non-poinsettia picks, and share my experiences growing these plants.

going dormant.

With the cyclamen's bloom time during the winter, it has a period of dormancy mid spring through the end of summer when its leaves will yellow and shed and it will demand next to no water. This time frame is opposite of what we are used to with our perennial flowers that bloom during the summer and go dormant during the winter.

In late August, we can begin watering again and leaves will sprout anew before the blooming cycle begins during the fall.

Another favorite holiday plant by the name of Paperwhites start out as a bulb. The bulbs are available now by mail and from local nurseries and garden centers.

Sometimes you can "fill a bag" with the exact number you want, which is really neat. Upon inspection of the bulb and the picture on the label, you'll note that Paperwhites look very much like our outdoor daffodils.

Paperwhites are cousins to these spring harbingers and bloom easily inside with little more than light, something to anchor the developing roots (soil or rocks) and water to get them growing. They don't need to go through a period of cold in order to bloom like outdoor narcissus do.

In just about four weeks after planting you'll be delighted with flowers galore!

Decide for yourself if you like the fragrance or you find it a little overpowering. Prevent leaves and stems from stretching by placing

Please see **GARDEN**, page 11



Purple finch

An Oakham resident saw a purple finch in her yard recently.

The purple finch is about six inches long. It has a sturdy body, short tail and a conical bill designed to crack seed. The male has raspberry red covering its head, chest and back. The color fades into a lighter pink tone on the belly. The wings and tail are brown with red highlights. The female has no red coloring and is brown and white with heavy streaking. It has a white eyebrow stripe.

The purple finch and house finch are often confused. The purple finch as a more uniform raspberry color and the house finch is more orange red color. The house finches color is limited to the head and upper chest. The purple finch also has notch at the base of its tail and is larger.

Purple finches breed primarily in Canada and the northeastern United States including New England and the Great Lakes region. The purple finch is the state bird of New Hampshire. A typical clutch consists of four or five pale blue eggs with small dark speckles. The female incubates the eggs for about 12-14 days while the male provides food. Once hatched, both parents feed the nestlings a mixture of regurgitated seeds and insects to ensure proper nutrition. The fledglings leave the nest roughly two weeks after hatching, though parents continue feeding and protecting them for another week or two.

They are fond of black oil sunflower seeds, safflower seeds, and millet offered in tube or platform feeders. In summer they supplement their diet with insects and caterpillars as well as blackberries and cherries.

Birds during snow storm
A Brimfield resident emailed, "During the recent snow storm (Tuesday, Dec. 2) there were 30 plus dark-eyed juncos in the yard and one white-throated sparrow.

Bird bath visitors
The Brimfield resident said he went looking for his bird bath heater and could not find it.

He said, "Eventually I did find it, in the bird bath. It wasn't connected and grass had grown over the cord so I couldn't see it, but dug around and eventually found the cord, got it plugged in and now the bath isn't freezing."

He has a trail camera near the bird bath. Lots of birds are using the bird bath, mostly to get a drink. Birds coming to the bird bath include blue jay, Carolina wren, cardinal, cedar waxwing (six), chickadee, goldfinch, mourning dove, robin (three), titmouse and white-throated sparrow.

He said, "Robins took a bath but when it was warmer, temperature in the upper 40s. Junco are the only cold weather bathers." Mammals

seen at the bird bath are opossum, raccoon, mouse at least two and a mole.

He thinks the tub he uses for the bird bath has a leak because the water level goes down and he has to refill it ever couple of day. He said, "The local pond are now frozen. We did a few trips around the area and never saw any migrating ducks, just mallards and Canada geese.

Helping birds

Birds are attracted to water during winter months. They do not bath when temperatures are below freezing, but they do take a drink. A source of unfrozen water will attract birds.

Providing wild birds with clean drinking water is helpful. However, providing a roomy bathing area that stays thawed even in severely-cold weather can be harmful in some cases. Before heating devices kept birdbaths ice free, birds could bathe in naturally-melted water and be able to fly off without their feathers freezing. According to the blog Cool Green Science-Stories of The Nature Conservancy, birds bathing while air temperatures are frigid risk harm due to frozen feathers: <https://blog.nature.org/2022/01/31/should-you-provide-birds-water-in-winter/>.

Please see **BIRDS**, page 11

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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Orioles fall to South Hadley



TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

Aubrey McCain looks to make a pass.



Kina Roy gets a shot off.



Aubrey Klingensmith goes for the jump ball.

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

AMHERST—The South Hadley girls' basketball team has played in the last two Division 4 state finals at Tsongas Center located on the UMass-Lowell campus.

With only one senior listed on their roster, South Hadley is hoping to make another trip to Lowell in the middle of March.

The Lady Tigers began their 2025-26 journey with a 64-30 victory over the Belchertown Lady Orioles at the annual Pioneer Valley Tip-Off, which was held inside the Mullins Center located on the UMass-Amherst campus, last Friday night.

"This was our first game of the season, and we played a great first half," said South Hadley head coach Paul Dubuc. "The girls played very hard and it was an outstanding all around team effort."

Junior guard Cara Dean led the way offensively for the Lady Tigers with a game-high 18 points. She also pulled down seven rebounds and was credited with four assists.

"We got off to a quick start in tonight's game, which was great" said Dean, who was selected as the Player of the Game. "We're looking forward to seeing what we can do during the rest of the season."

Dean made eight field goals, including a 3-pointer, and a foul shot in the season opening victory.

South Hadley sophomore guard Olivia Athas, who made her first varsity start, finished with 15 points with the help of two 3-pointers. Junior forward Kate Phillips posted a double-double with 11 points and 12 rebounds. Junior guard Taylor Bullough chipped in with 9 points and junior forward Ryley McMahon added 8 points. Bullough also made a pair of 3-pointers.

The only South Hadley senior is Sofie Quinn, who's a forward.

Things will probably be a lot more difficult this winter for South Hadley, who were moved from the Suburban League into the Valley



Morgan Litz moves the ball across midcourt.

League during the offseason.

The Lady Tigers, who have lost to Cathedral High School of Boston in the state finals the past two seasons, are the only Division 4 team in the Valley League. Their other new league opponents are Springfield Central, who's a Division 1 team, Minnechaug Regional, Northampton, Longmeadow, and Pittsfield.

The Lady Tigers also defeated Granby in the 2022 Pioneer Valley Tip-Off.

It was the Lady Orioles first appearance in the season opening event.

"We're a young team and the outcome of this game won't define our season," said Belchertown head coach Jay Woodcock. "We haven't played here before and I thought the girls were a little bit nervous in the first half. We played a lot better in the second half."

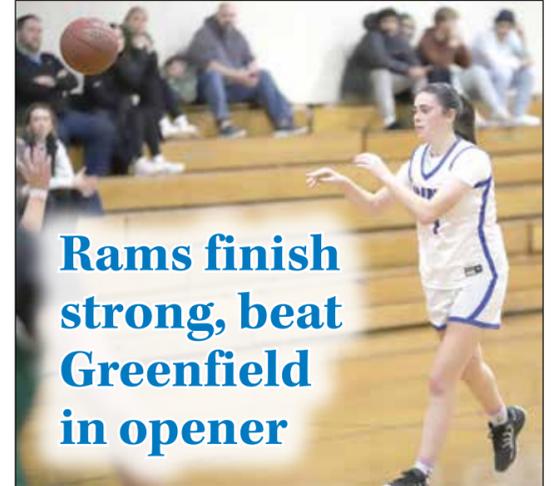
The duo of sophomore guard Kina Roy (11 points) and junior guard Morghan Litz (9 points) combined to score 20 points. Sophomore forward Aubrey Klingensmith added 5 points.

A little more than three minutes into the opening quarter, Roy buried a 3-pointer, which tied the score at 5-5.

The Lady Tigers then finished the first quarter with an impressive 16-3 run.

Dean scored half of those points on lay-ups.

Please see **ORIOLES**, page 8



Brenna Moreno passes on the run.

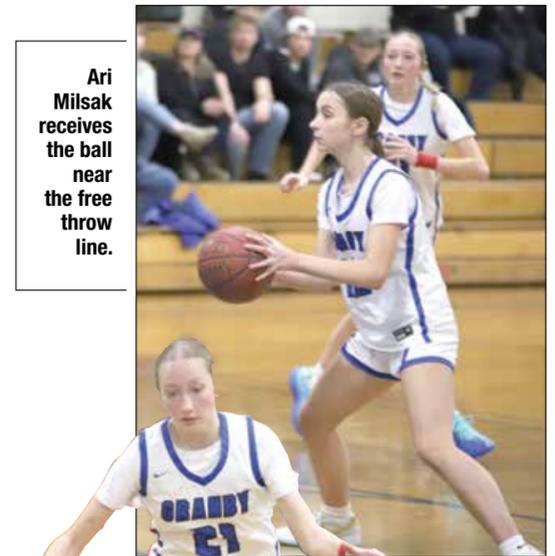
TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

Rams finish strong, beat Greenfield in opener



GRANBY – The Granby High School girls basketball team defeated Greenfield last Thursday night in the season opener for both teams. After some lower scoring quarters, the Rams finished strong with 15 points in the fourth frame for a 43-22 win. Kalli White finished leading all scorers with 16 points. Ellie Szlosek had seven points and Meredith Bartosz had six points. Granby will host Palmer on Friday, Dec. 19 at 7 p.m.

Rowan Cook makes a three-point shot.



Ari Milsak receives the ball near the free throw line.



Ellie Szlosek heads for the hoop.



Kaitlyn Curran is pursued by the opposition.

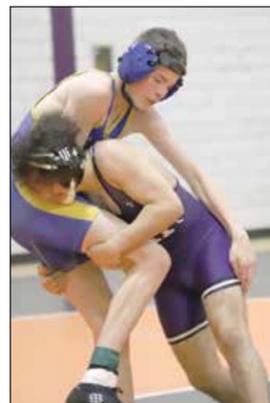
Kalli White makes her way down the court.



Jayden Rodrigues locks up with an opponent in a consolation match.



Thomas Barrett locks up at 138 pounds.



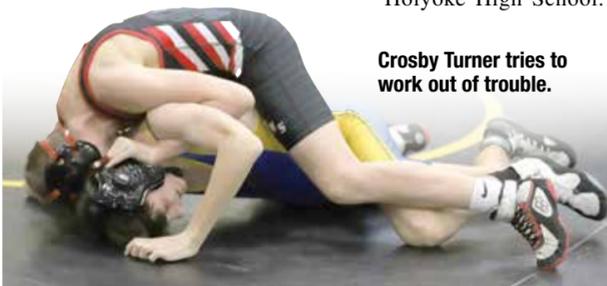
Jose Soto tries to avoid a takedown.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

Pioneers open 2025-'26 season

HOLYOKE – The Pathfinder Regional wrestling team took part in the Knight-Hawk Classic last Saturday at Holyoke High School.

Pathfinder produced 39 points in the meet and will next wrestle a home meet against Ludlow on Monday, Dec. 22 at 7 p.m.



Crosby Turner tries to work out of trouble.



Jake Parker-Gregory goes for the pinfall.

SPORTS

Lions offense scores big in first win

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

WEST SPRING-FIELD — A year ago, Sean Kefalas recorded a hat-trick leading the Ludlow hockey team to an overtime win against Agawam in the season opener.

Kefalas began his senior season with two more goals, as the Lions coasted to an 8-1 win over the Brownies at the Olympia Ice Center in West Springfield, last Saturday afternoon.

"It feels great to win another season opening game," said Kefalas, who's been a member of the Lions varsity hockey team since he was a freshman. "We won the Western Mass. Class B title when I was a freshman. We had a lot of statement wins that season. This was another big statement win for us."

Kefalas, who's a starting defenseman, has scored 28 career goals.

Ludlow sophomore goalie Jack Benda (6 saves) made his first varsity start in this year's season opener.

Benda was replaced in goal by senior Ethan Steigmeyer (8 saves) in the middle of the second period.

"Jack played his heart out

in his first varsity start. Then Ethan came in and he also played very well," Kefalas said. "I'm very proud of both goalies."

Kefalas is one of the Lions captains, along with junior Evan Dias, senior Tannar Severyn, and senior Nick Deroin.

Agawam freshman Thomas Christopher and Kefalas are cousins.

"My cousin plays for Agawam, and it was a lot of fun playing against him for the first time," Kefalas said. "I told my cousin that we were going to beat his team today, but I didn't think we would score that many goals."

Agawam senior goalie Joe Wilkinson (15 saves) also made his first varsity start.

Wilkinson was replaced by senior Brady Blanchette (10 saves) before the start of the third period.

"Neither one of our goalies had played in a varsity game before," said Agawam head coach Todd Rowley. "We have about 15 new players on the varsity roster. Making the jump up to this level is extremely difficult."

Ludlow took a 1-0 lead at the 2:37 mark when freshman Teddy Iwasinski netted

his first career goal, which was unassisted.

With three minutes left in the opening period, Kefalas scored his first goal of the season, which was assisted by senior AJ Stupak.

The Lions scored another goal by freshman Nathan Ribeiro less than twenty seconds into the second period, but it was disallowed by the referee.

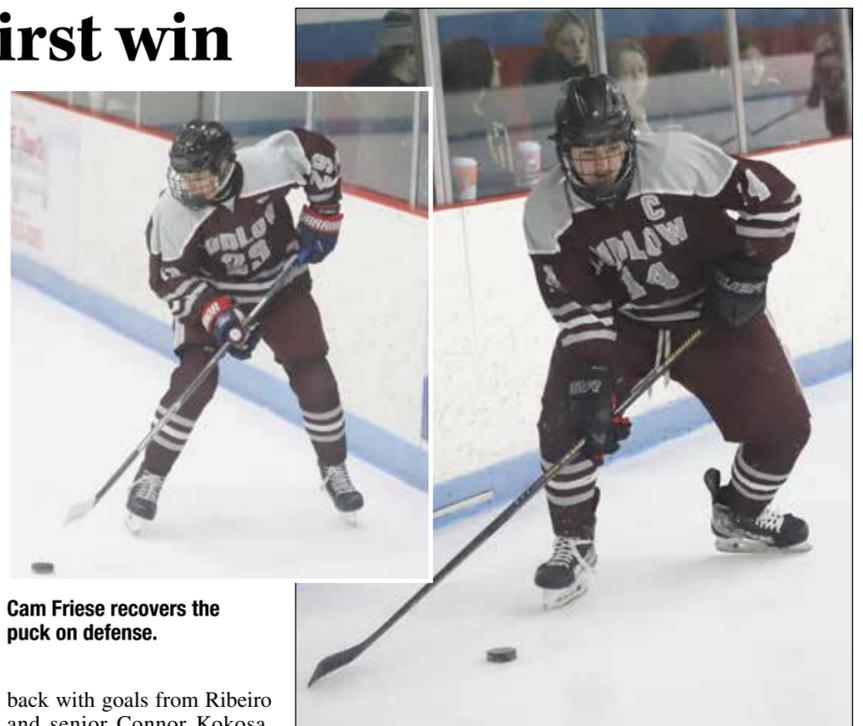
Sophomore Andrew Lambert did score a power-play goal two minutes later, which was unassisted, giving the Lions a 3-0 lead.

Lambert is one of the six players from Belchertown High School listed on the Lions varsity roster.

The other five Belchertown players, who play hockey for Ludlow as part of a co-op, are junior Will Mitus, senior Gavin Harrington, freshman Nolan Chianciola, freshman Luke DeStafano, and senior Donald Rogers.

The Brownies supporters had something to cheer for following a tap-in goal from senior Andrew Holton, who's an alternate captain, along with senior Casey Thomas. Senior captain Anthony Barbarini was credited with the assist.

Ludlow quickly answered



Cam Friese recovers the puck on defense.

back with goals from Ribeiro and senior Connor Kokosa. Iwasinski assisted on Kokosa's goal.

With the Lions holding a 5-1 lead, Ludlow head coach Paul Rivest decided to change goalies.

"I told Jack and Ethan that they would be splitting playing time in today's game," Rivest said. "I wouldn't have changed goalies if Jack still had a shutout going."

Rogers and junior Peter LeBorgne are also goalies for

Nick Deroin possesses the puck near the corner.

the Lions.

"We have four very good goalies, who could probably start for any other team in Western Mass.," Rivest added. "We didn't have a goalie a couple of years ago. I wish a couple of them were defensemen."

Stupak scored a pair of goals during the final two

minutes of the second period giving the Lions a 7-1 lead entering the final period.

Kefalas scored the Lions final goal on a wrist shot less than two minutes into the third period.

It was the only regular season match-up between the two squads.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Teddy Iwasinski crosses the ice looking to shoot in traffic.



Andrew Lambert shoots for the Lions.



Sean Kefalas is pressured with the puck.

Thunderbirds get clutch goals for win over Utica

UTICA, N.Y. - The Springfield Thunderbirds (7-11-3-2) received a pair of clutch, tie-breaking goals in the final period en route to a 3-2 win over the Utica Comets (5-14-3-1) on Saturday night inside Adirondack Bank Center.

For a second straight road contest, the T-Birds had to lean on their goaltender in the opening period, as Georgi Romanov was a frequently-tested goalie, making 14 saves in the opening period, including a flashy left pad save on an in-tight chance from Utica captain Ryan Schmelzer on the first shift of the night.

Springfield had the lone power play in the first, but instead, Romanov was pressed into duty again, to which the Russian backstop answered the bell with a 2-on-1 denial on Nathan

Legare.

The Comets' efforts finally led to a breakthrough at 6:14 of the second as Dylan Wendt slid a pass to a streaking Jonathan Gruden, who threw a forehander over Romanov's shoulder from the left side to give Utica the 1-0 advantage.

Just over six minutes later, Springfield equalized as Chris Wagner drove the puck down the left wing to the

goal before stuffing a forehander through Nico Daws to make it 1-1 at 12:39. The goal was Wagner's fifth in his last six games.

As the game entered the third, the T-Birds were about to receive two clutch connections from a pair of rookies. First, Nikita Susuev netted his first AHL goal, as he swooped to a rebound behind Daws' net before wrapping it around to the

right post and behind the Comet netminder to give Springfield a 2-1 lead just 1:48 into the third.

Lenni Hameenaho swiftly got Utica back to a tie score at 4:09, as he unleashed a wicked one-time slapper through Romanov's stick side, bringing the game to a 2-2 deadlock.

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

ORIOLES from page 7

South Hadley, who out-scored Belchertown 20-8 in the second quarter, held a commanding 41-16 halftime lead. Phillips scored eight of her points during the second stanza.

Both teams scored eleven points in the third quarter before the Lady Tigers put together a 12-3 run over the final eight minutes of the contest.

It was the only meeting of the regular season between the two squads.



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GRANBY from page 1

ed by the Evening Division of the Women's Club of Granby, and when the club disbanded 9 years ago, the town took it over."

Santa Claus came to the lighting in a fire truck, waving as he arrived on the stage before everyone headed across the street to the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church to enjoy some hot chocolate, cookies, and more.

"Seeing the joy on everyone's faces is truly heartwarming," said Hajdamowicz. "It fills me with joy to be able to assist, plan, and execute these events that bring our small community together."

Historically, the Tree Lighting was put on and coordinated by the Evening Division of the Women's Club of Granby 41 years ago, and although the club has now disbanded, the town took on the tree lighting and

kept it going, adding to it and making it into what it is today.

"Our community is small and tight-knit and there is a significant need for our townspeople to be more involved within our community. Our community wants to get together and celebrate each other when they can," said Hajdamowicz. "From Dinofest to the tree lighting to our Veterans' Day service and parade to Charter Days."

The tree lighting was a great success, and the town is looking forward to many more to come in the future.



What kind of cookies would you choose?



The beautiful tree lit up and ready for the Christmas season.



Many students came to play some classic Christmas songs for those gathered on a freezing cold evening.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Granby Police Logs

Editor's Note: The Granby Police Department responded to 131 calls for the week of Dec. 5 through Dec. 11. Those arrested are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. The Granby Police Department provides all information.

Friday, Dec.

9:17 a.m. – A motorist reported a minor single car accident. There were no injuries.

Saturday, Dec. 6

8:47 a.m. – A motorist reported a two-car crash. Granby Police and Fire responded. One operator was transported to the hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

1:46 p.m. – A motorist reported backing into a car that was parked in a drive-

way. There were no injuries. 2:36 p.m. – A motorist reported backing into a parked vehicle in the parking lot. There were no injuries.

Sunday, Dec. 7

7:58 p.m. – While on patrol, an officer observed a motor vehicle travel through the stop sign, without stopping at approximately 30MPH. The vehicle was stopped and the operator was issued a civil citation for speeding.

Wednesday, Dec. 10

2:21 p.m. – Our SRO noticed that another vehicle struck the front end of the marked cruiser, causing minor damage.

2:38 p.m. – A resident called to state that someone from Apple called him stating there was a problem with his account. The caller wanted their bank information to correct the issue. The caller was advised it is a scam.

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OBITUARY

Herbert Charles Wood, 98

Herbert Charles Wood, age 98, of Westwood, MA, passed away peacefully on December 6, 2025.



Born in Providence, RI, Herb graduated from Brown University with a chemistry major and mathematics minor in 1951 and began a long and varied career. He worked for Monsanto as a chemical engineer in the plastics division and went on to become the manager of the company's IBM computer programming team working on one of the world's first computers. He later served as Manager of Information Systems for the graphics division of Scott Paper Company, then as Chief Operations Officer at Stone Marketing, one of the earliest direct-mail marketing companies. In the later years of his professional life, he worked as an insurance agent with Farm Family Insurance.

After settling in Belchertown in 1952, Herb purchased a lot in an old apple orchard and undertook

the remarkable task of building the family home with his former wife, Jan Wood. He cleared the land, laid the foundation by hand with Jan, and spent countless evenings after work bringing the house to life. His determination and craftsmanship impressed even seasoned builders, and the home he created became the heart of his life in Belchertown, where he raised his family and welcomed friends for many years.

Herbert's dedication to service was a defining thread throughout his life. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II from December 1945 to December 1946 achieving the rank of Corporal. Beginning in 1952, he devoted more than six decades to the Belchertown Fire Department, serving as a firefighter, teaching essential firefighting skills, and later-after his retirement-developing a computer program that provided directions to more than 10,000 local addresses, long before the era of Google

Maps. Herbert and Jan, also served as youth group leaders for six years, and he generously offered his time and wisdom to multiple committees at the Belchertown Congregational Church.

At age 89, Herbert moved to Fox Hill Village in Westwood to be closer to family. There, he delighted in making new friends, sharing stories, and becoming an active member of The Dover Church. In his later years he became affectionately known as "Grandpa" to many- a gracious, funny, and wise presence whose warmth drew people together.

Herb's favorite place in the world was his beloved red house in Pocasset, MA on Cape Cod. There he kept busy with renovation projects, tending his rose garden, walking the one-mile island loop along the water, and sitting on the porch watching boat traffic. He brought the whole family together there every summer creating a lifetime of cherished memories. Herbert is survived by his daughters, Beth Karlson (Steve Karlson) of Dover, MA and Cindy Kerr (David Kerr) of Scarborough,

DEATH NOTICE

Herbert Charles Wood
Died December 6
Services Eaton
Funeral Home

ME. He is also survived by his beloved grandchildren: Jonathan, Christopher, and Rebecca Karlson; Kristin (Gil Brady Hagovsky), Brian (Megan Brewster), and Jamie Kerr. Herb leaves behind newborn twin great-grandsons-Caleb and Elliot Kerr -who brought him immense joy in the last months of his life.

He was predeceased by his sisters, Eleanor Bradbury and Dorothy Hamblett; his brother, Albert Wood; and his son, Steven Wood.

A memorial service will be held on Sunday, December 21, at 3:00 p.m. at The Dover Church, 17 Springdale Avenue, Dover, MA.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Belchertown Firefighters Association, P.O. Box 1043, Belchertown, MA 01007, or to The Dover Church, 17 Springdale Avenue, Dover, MA 02030.

To share a memory or to send a note of condolence to his family, visit www.eatonfuneralhomes.com.

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Email:jamie@turley.com

GARDEN from page 6

your container in a cool spot in your home during the night and enjoy the flowers in your living spaces during the day.

After flowering is done, throw the bulbs out free of guilt; they won't bloom again consistently. One year you may remember that I did try to regrow the bulbs by allowing them to dry out within the container I had first grown them in. Of the four bulbs, two had life left in them a year later.

I watered and waited and leaves did grow, but no flowers ever came. I ended up chalking it up to an

experience and starting over with new bulbs the following winter.

Have fun experimenting with these plants or any number of beauties worthy of a good home for the holidays.

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.

PUBLIC NOTICES

Town Of Belchertown Notice of Planning Board Hearing Legal Notice

Relative to a Definitive Subdivision Plan
In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 41, Sections 81-T and 81-U, M.G.L., the Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing as follows:

Place: 2 Jabish Street, Belchertown, MA
Date: January 13, 2026
Time: 7:00 PM

This application is for a Definitive Subdivision Plan by applicant Jason Lafleur, 44 Mercier Drive, Belchertown, MA 01007. The plan is entitled "Definitive Subdivision Plan of Meeshie

Moon Path," Belchertown, MA, October 24, 2025; the surveyor/engineers Sherman & Frydryk, 3 Converse St., Suite 203, Palmer, MA 01069

The location and description: Jason's Way & Aldrich Street, Assessors Map 248, Lot 2 and Map 248, Lot 45.

The plan is available for inspection during regular business hours at the Town Clerk and Planning Board Office, 2 Jabish St., Belchertown, MA 01007

This meeting will be available online for the public: <https://meet.goto.com/173538941>

Daniel Beaudette, Chair
Belchertown Planning Board
12/18, 12/25/2025

SALE OF MOTOR VEHICLE

This ad is pursuant to MA Gen. Law Ch.255, Sec. 39A as of December 19, 2025 the following motor vehicle will be for sale to satisfy a garage keepers lien:

Vehicle: 2009 Honda Odyssey
VIN: 5FNRL387X9B050498

Color: Blue
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413-530-3804
12/04, 12/11, 12/18/2025

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.

BIRDS from page 6

The article suggests modifying heated birdbaths so that birds can safely drink, but not bathe. A metal heating element that keeps a small section of the birdbath thawed works well. People, who have bird feeders or simple feeding stations may add shallow unbreakable container around the area. Yes, it can be labor-intensive, but they can easily pour water into them (hot water when it's below freezing) and provide fresh water for at least a short period of time. As a source of drinking water, the containers can be filled with pebbles that will form small pockets of water where birds can get a drink of water.

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by calling me at 413-967-3505, leaving a message at extension 100, emailing mybackyard88@aol.com or edowner@turley.com or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005.

down the hatches from there, killing off a Utica power play and receiving numerous shot blocks in the closing minutes, including a clutch denial by Alek Kaskimaki in the dying seconds. Romanov improved to 2-0 for the season against Utica, stopping 65 of 67 Comets shots over his two victories.

T-BIRDS from page 8

One more time, though, the T-Birds had a rebuttal, this time from Marc-Andre Gaudet, who uncorked a slap shot that ricocheted off a Utica defender before bouncing behind Daws at 8:47 for the go-ahead goal, 3-2. Romanov and the Springfield defense batted

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The Sentinel
OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

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

PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

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

Public notice deadlines are Friday at 3 p.m.

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

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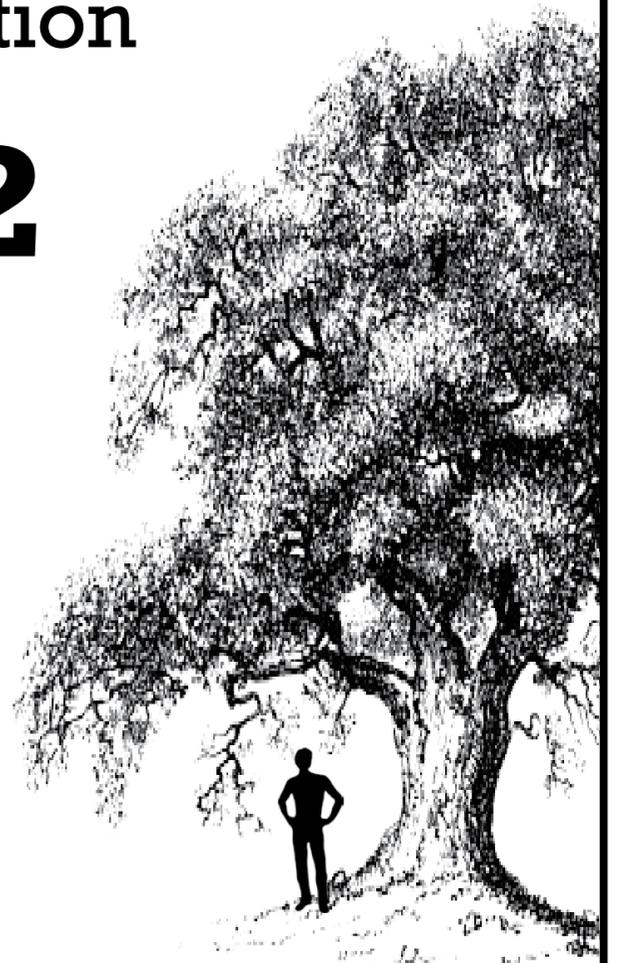
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