

# Chicopee Register

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

June 19, 2026 Vol 32 No. 52 | FREE

www.chicopeeregister.turley.com



TURLEY PHOTOS BY BRENDAN ROONEY

The 2026 CQC Gay Valentine's Prom Court assembled before the parade stepped off.

## Chicopee celebrates LGBTQIA+ community

By Kristin Rivers and Brendan Rooney

CHICOPEE — A historic event unfolded as over 30 organizations and 200 marchers took to the streets and partook in the first-ever Chicopee Pride Parade.

It should also be noted that in 2022, the Chicopee Cultural Council also held a parade going from city hall to the venue, and this parade here is the very first hosted by the CQC.

As the police department provided an escort, some of the names that traversed the two-mile route were the Food Bank of Western Mass,

First Congregational Church U.C.C., the CQC Gay Valentine's Prom and the Haloqueen Courts, along with countless others that drew the attention of many along the route and saw residents follow the parade for some time.

The parade marked a new addition for the Chicopee Queer Consortium's (CQC) annual Pride celebration, something CQC Director Ray Hoess-Brooks touched upon.

"This was a step forward we always wanted to take, and to see it here, it's just special, and we truly couldn't have asked for better," Hoess-Brooks said. "From the gorgeous weather to the energy and excitement present, I genuinely feel this only going

Please see **PRIDE**, page 12



Emcee Ruby Monroe and Parade Marshal Jeffrey Hoess-Brooks lead the sash.



TURLEY PHOTO BY KRISTIN RIVERS

Chicopee Fire Chief Daniel Stamborski has retired after 29 years.

## Stamborski retires from CFD

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
krivers@turley.com

CHICOPEE - Fire Chief Daniel Stamborski has retired from the fire department after 29 years of service.

Stamborski retired on June 16 and, on that same day, Deputy Chief Matthew Cross was sworn in as his successor.

The Chicopee Register will have more on Cross's swearing-in in next week's edition.

### Stamborski Reflects

Sitting down with the Chicopee Register on June 8, Stamborski decided to retire for several reasons, including spending more time with family and friends and go on new adventures. He credited his father, who was with the fire department for about 25 years, for his start as a firefighter.

"I always admired him and never really dug super deep into what he did, but at some point, we were having a heart-to-heart conversation and he said, 'Hey, you should take the exam,' and I was a

little apprehensive," Stamborski said. "I did. I took the test three times, actually, and once I got appointed, I came here and I just said, 'Wow, this job is for me. I wish I started a lot earlier here.' He's the one that spurred me to come and work here and ended up loving it ever since day one."

Stamborski recalled after the Worcester Six tragedy in December 1999, several members volunteered to help on missions and work shifts so members of the Worcester Fire Department could attend funerals and wakes, which gave him and the members a deep perspective.

"It made it pretty real for us. This job is dangerous," Stamborski said.

He also remembers the good that comes with the job.

"You see a lot of tragic things, but on a day-to-day basis, people thank you because you're helping them on their worst possible day and what we do around here is problem solve, mitigate hazards. It's a very fulfilling job in that regard," Stamborski said.

Please see **RETIREES**, page 6

## City Council approves tax relief; Attorney Reilly gets another term

By Dalton Zbierski  
Correspondent

CHICOPEE - Chicopee residents who attended or tuned into Tuesday's City Council meeting learned that much-needed tax relief is on its way.

The board unanimously approved an order from May-

or John Vieau to appropriate \$3 million from the city's Free Cash account to reduce the Fiscal Year 2027 tax levy.

Vieau expressed that Chicopee is fortunate to be in solid financial standing. He credited all those who make monetary decisions on behalf of the city.

"We talk about the fi-

nances of our city, and the great news is that we're able to take Free Cash and use that as tax relief," Vieau said.

"We're looking to reduce our taxes. People are having a hard time right now making ends meet with inflation, shrinkflation. All your bills are going up. Expenses are high, and I couldn't see a bet-

ter way [to help]."

Vieau pointed out that many communities are suffering as they look for Proposition 2½ overrides. He emphasized that Chicopee isn't taking this action to balance its budget.

"We are below the levy limit here as a city," Vieau said. "What we're doing is

actual tax relief for our taxpayers, whether it be residential, commercial or industrial. This is a \$3 million transfer from Free Cash to be levied. The goal is to lower tax increases coming up."

Several councilors responded that they were ecstatic to learn that \$3 million in tax relief will benefit the res-

idents of the city, and Ward 2 Councilor Shane Brooks was among them.

However, he warned about "the reality of what's going to happen," as he predicted property evaluations will soon go up, which will

Please see **TAX RELIEF**, page 3

## 'Battle for a Cure'

Supports Blood Cancer United

By Brendan Rooney  
Correspondent

CHICOPEE — The fire and police departments faced off in the first-ever 'Battle for a Cure' softball game, which held a more significant meeting beyond the diamond at Szot Park on May 30.

The game was organized and put into reality by Ofc. Crystal Conroy and Sgt. Alan Blankenship, who dedicated the event in memory of her son Ashton Conroy, a local toddler who, last year before his second birthday, lost his battle to a rare form of pediatric leukemia in Feb 2025.

The event raised over \$2,000 for the non-profit Blood Cancer United (BCU),

which is a non-profit dedicated to fighting all types of blood cancer worldwide, and a charity close to Conroy's heart.

"This game means everything because it's in honor of my son, and the reason I'm here today is to help raise money for Blood Cancer United, to ensure that no other family will ever have to go through what I experienced," Conroy said. "Our mission with Blood Cancer United is to ensure that the funds raised will help fund clinical trials, give families a lift financially, especially those who are currently in the fight with childhood cancer, because at the end of the day, I understand what they

Please see **BATTLE**, page 9

## Longtime resident holds photography reception

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
krivers@turley.com

CHICOPEE - Marc Schuerfeld, a longtime resident of Chicopee, debuted his Wildlife Photography Exhibition at the library on June 11.

The photography will be on display in the Bazan Community Room through the end of this month.

Schuerfeld graduated from Chicopee High School in 1982 and after getting his degree from Westfield State University in 1987, he worked as a social studies teacher at Chicopee Comp for 33 years and also coached football. He retired in 2024.

Schuerfeld explained he's an amateur hobbyist photographer and was always interested in photography since high school and got more into it as an adult when he had ac-



TURLEY PHOTO BY KRISTIN RIVERS

Evaly Candon and her grandfather, Marc Schuerfeld, with the hummingbird photo.

cess to a vehicle and was able to travel into the woods, hike

and experience nature "with a camera."

"It wasn't until Judy Chelte—very good friend of mine who I'd like to thank very much—very supportive and encouraging to have me display my art publicly. She's actually responsible for this," Schuerfeld said. "I'd also like to thank my granddaughter, Evaly Candon, for helping me put it together. My wife who encouraged me to do all these things."

Schuerfeld said as he became more educated on taking photos of wildlife and getting other equipment, "my subjects went from large mammals like white-tailed deer to birds."

"Hummingbirds, I'm always fascinated with how aerodynamic they are and quick. Started to attract them to the backyard with hum-

Please see **PHOTO DISPLAY**, page 6

# IN THE CITY

## Retiring special ed director gives final School Comm. presentation

Dr. Andrea Stolar helped retool Chicopee's special ed department.

By Dalton Zbierski  
Correspondent

CHICOPEE – A nationally distinguished Chicopee Public Schools employee gave her final presentation in City Hall on Wednesday ahead of her upcoming retirement.

Dr. Andrea Stolar, the school district's director of Special Education since July 2016, has worked in the field of special education for 35 years. She has been a CPS staff member for approximately three decades.

Before being named director of the department, Stolar worked in Chicopee as a supervisor and coordinator.

Her efforts have been recognized across the country.

The published author has earned a stellar reputation for her prioritization of educational equity, strong leadership and proven track record for empowering both educators and the students she guides.

In 2024, Stolar was named one of District Administration's Women of Distinction. The influential program awards educators throughout the United States.

That year, Stolar also advanced to the final stage of the prestigious District Administration National Awards of Distinction Program. The honor was a testament to her dedication, innovation and excellence.

That's why when Stolar stepped to the podium on June 17, the School Committee

gave her its full attention.

She captured the moment and delivered one last progress report regarding the district's Special Education Department.

"I want you to open your hearts and minds. Two themes are going to come out from what I say today. That is remembering that we're all human and also gratitude," Stolar said.

Stolar noted that she has worked under eight superintendents during her career and has seen a lot of leaders.

With this experience, she confidently stated that Mayor John Vieau and Superintendent Dr. Marcus Ware are setting a strong example with their collaborative efforts. She is proud to see the needs of Chicopee's students and educators put first.

"We truly are a team," Stolar said. "I feel like for the first time in a long time, special education has really gotten a whole bunch of attention. I can't thank you all enough for being part of the team together."

When Stolar began working in Chicopee in the 1990s, she said there were 950 special education students. Today, there are 1,433 special education students in the district.

"We have 404 autism students and 309 special education students. That's a change in what's happening in special education today," Stolar said.

According to Stolar, there are "needier kids coming into our district every day," which makes it critical to plan. Parents play an important role in the process.

"It's really important for parents out there, if you're listening, if you have a student

who's coming into preschool or kindergarten, we want you to enroll early so that we have teachers and classrooms ready for you," Stolar said.

Even though Stolar is leaving the district, she still is committed to the future of the department and believes its growth will continue.

That said, she warned that the "leaky bucket of burnout" is a real thing. She stressed the need to be healthy and stay positive while working the job.

"The definition of burnout is a condition caused by exhaustion due to a demanding job. That could be every single one of us because we all can make ourselves burn out in some ways," Stolar said. "So, say 'thank you' because it goes a long way for the person, and it builds relationships and friendships. They say 'thank you's' are contagious. They're really important."

Before stepping down, Stolar reminded the members of the School Committee that the city is counting on them to "drive us forward."

"You are all superheroes. Every single one of you School Committee members," Stolar said.

Stolar also praised her "replacement," Jen Ramsdell, who was in attendance during Wednesday's meeting.

"She is going to be a steady, calm force. You guys are going to be in really good hands; I'm very happy," Stolar said.

Ramsdell, who previously served as director of Pupil Services for the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District in Massachusetts, will begin her new role in Chicopee on July 1.

## Veteran Al Picard honored at Military Apprecial Day

BOSTON – State Senator Jake Oliveira (D-Ludlow) proudly honored Al Picard of Chicopee at the 2nd Annual Military Appreciation Day ceremony held in the Massachusetts State House's historic House Chamber.

Hosted by the Executive Office of Veterans Services (EOVS) in collaboration with the Massachusetts Legislature, the event recognized the contributions of veterans, active-duty service members, and military families from across Massachusetts.

Al Picard served the nation in the United States Army, including a tour of duty in Korea during the Vietnam War. Following his military service, he dedicated himself to ensuring veterans are recognized, supported, and remembered throughout the Chicopee community and across the region.

Picard founded Chicopee's Vietnam Veterans Day Ceremony, creating an important opportunity for veterans and families to gather in recognition, reflection, and healing. He also served as Chair of Lorraine's Soup Kitchen and Pantry, where he volunteered for many years,



Senator Jake Oliveira honors Chicopee Veteran Al Picard at Military Appreciation Day Ceremony.

supporting individuals and families in need. Today, he continues his service as Chair of Chicopee's Veterans Services Advisory Board.

"Al's life has been defined by service, both in uniform and in our community," said Senator Jake Oliveira. "From his military service during the Vietnam War to his continued advocacy for veterans here in Chicopee, Al has made a lasting impact on countless lives. I was proud to recognize him at this year's Military Appreciation Day and thank him for his contin-

ued commitment to veterans and our communities across the region."

The Healey-Driscoll Administration created Military Appreciation Day in 2025 to honor those who proudly serve both the nation and their communities. Each legislator was invited to nominate a member of their local military community to be recognized during the ceremony. This year's honorees received an official Governor's citation and a challenge coin in appreciation for their service.

## Chicopee Public Library hosts programs for kids and families

CHICOPEE - Each month the Chicopee Public Library hosts a variety of free programs for children, teens, and families. The Youth Services Department provides opportunities for entertainment and enrichment that promote literacy and explore creativity. Here is the slate of events for June 2026.

Chicopee, Did You Read Today? The annual Summer Reading Challenge is back! Read every day from June 24 - August 14. Read anything and everything, track your reading progress with Beanstack or on paper or both, and come to the library for creative activities and exciting performances!

Saturday Playgroup will be held on Saturdays at 1 p.m. in June. We'll put out some extra toys in the play-space. It's a great time for families with kids of all

ages to meet up and play, no registration required.

Summer Reading Kickoff Party will be on Wednesday, June 24 from 3 to 5 p.m. Join us in the library's backyard to sign up for summer reading, meet community partners, and do fun activities. ChicopeeFRESH and friends will be there with the food truck!

Summer Storytime will be on Tuesday, June 30 at 10:30 a.m. Listen to some read-aloud books, do some rhymes and songs and enjoy a craft or activity. This mixed-age storytime is geared towards 0-8 and should have something for everyone to enjoy.

The Chicopee FRESH Community Kitchen food truck will be in the library parking lot distributing free meals to kids 18 and under every weekday from 1:30-2:00 June 29-August 14. Grab your lunch and come inside for a place to eat and maybe some activities at Lunch Club, weekdays 1:30-2ish in the Children's Room Activity Room.

Can you find the key to the library's hidden treasure? Celebrate 250 years of US history with our National Treasure Scavenger Hunt happening Thursday, June 25 and Friday, June 26. Learn about the library, Chicopee, and the country's history to find the answers you need! This event is designed for kids ages 8+, teens, and their adults. Please visit our website or contact the Children's Room to sign up for a time to participate.

### Teens

Teens can stop by for an evening of art at our Scribble & Sip event with Crayon Marie on Monday, June 29 at 6:30 p.m.! Learn to create your own version of O'Keefe's Lake George while enjoying some mocktails. Space is limited and not guaranteed. Doors will close 15min after the start time.

Visit the library website for more info about all of the library's events! [www.chicopeepubliclibrary.org](http://www.chicopeepubliclibrary.org)

## Join us for the Reese Fund: Day of Compassion

REGION - On June 24, we are coming together, online and in person, for a powerful 24hour fundraiser supporting the Reese Fund, created in honor of sweet Reese, a dog who endured unimaginable cruelty at the hands of a human. Today, the fund provides emergency medical and recovery care for animals who have experienced severe neglect, cruelty, or abuse.

Your generosity also helps support the Reese Pet Food Initiative, a new partnership with Lorraine's Soup Kitchen in Chicopee. This program provides pet food

and supplies, both onsite and through their mobile delivery service, to families who need extra support to keep their pets healthy, safe, and at home where they belong.

A Day of Giving & Community Support: From midnight to midnight, we will be raising funds online, and from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., we invite you to stop by the Thomas J O'Connor Animal Control and Adoption Center at 627 Cottage Street in Springfield for an inperson Pet Food Drive.

### We Will Be Collecting:

Dog & Cat Food (wet

and dry); treats - no raw hides please; new toys.

Enjoy lunch from our friends at Wandering Waffles and check out our exclusive Reese Day tshirt, available both online and onsite at TJO for one day only!

Please consider making a gift on June 24 to the Reese Fund: Day of Compassion. We have a goal to raise \$10,000 for the Reese Fund and to collect 400lbs of pet food for Lorraine's. Together, we can give animals a second chance, keep pets fed, and strengthen the bond between people and their animals.

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# IN THE CITY

## Chicopee's 250th Celebration set

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Featuring food trucks, live music, craft vendors and a family movie, it promises to be an extraordinary evening.

**June 26, 2026**

Rain Date July 2, 2026

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## Swing into Spring at OHANA's Clubhouse

CHICOPEE – Groovy Baby Music and Music and Movement! Bring your little one to enjoy a class of music, movement, story time and play time.

Join us on Friday, with only one week left, from 10 to 11 a.m. on June 26.

It is never too early to begin your child's music education. Ages three months to 18 months Siblings are welcome.

No cost to families.

Where: OHANA Clubhouse, 43 Sheridan St., Chicopee; information with Mrs. Silvia; cell: 413-505-9053; e-mail: DurandS@headstart.org

Funded by the Coordinated Family & Community Engagement Grant from the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care.

## Rotary Club presents scholarships to grads

By **Brendan Rooney**  
Correspondent

CHICOPEE — The Rotary Club of Chicopee presented two recent Chicopee Class of 2026 Graduates with a \$1,000 scholarship on June 11.

The two recipients were Chicopee residents Jordan Spears and Anna Jacques, both from Chicopee Comprehensive High School, who recently left a lasting impression as Colts as they each finished in the top percentage of their class in terms of academic excellence, something the organization's Scholarship Chair, John Arthur, touched upon.

"I first want to say that both of these students showed a great deal of conviction, and they truly went above and beyond what we [The Rotary Club] were looking for," Arthur said. "I really look for someone who does things for others not when it's convenient, but when it's right."

Both students shared they are now looking to advance their educational journey this upcoming fall, and that this achievement will go a long way.

"It truly means a lot to me," Jacques said. "I can confirm this is going to help with all types of costs across the board, and will help alleviate



TURLEY PHOTO BY BRENDAN ROONEY

From left to right: Veteran Rotarian Linda Januszkiewicz, Jordan Spears, John Arthur, Rotary Club Scholarship Chair, Anna Jacques, and fellow Rotarian Jason Ouellette.

some stress."

Jacques recently graduated with a 102 GPA and is set to attend Roger Williams University to study Marine Biology, outlining the scholarship process and how she got wind of the opportunity.

"The application was quite easy; it was presented

to us from our school's college and career center, and the premise was to write a personal essay centered around the topic of serving and assisting others within the community," Jacques said.

Echoing similar sentiments was Spears, who capped off her high school career with

a 4.0 GPA, along with being the class of 2026 secretary, and now looks to major in Nursing this upcoming fall at Westfield State University.

"I feel winning this scholarship gave me a sense of confidence, especially as I head

Please see **ROTARY**, page 9

## Banning named to Spring 2026 Dean's List

EASTON - Savannah Banning, a member of Stonehill College's Class of 2029 from Chicopee, MA, has been named to the Spring 2026 Dean's List.

To qualify for this honor, undergraduate students must have achieved a semester grade point average of 3.50 or higher with a minimum of 12 credits from courses graded with standard letter grades.

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### TAX RELIEF from page 1

likely change the equation entirely.

"So, I don't want homeowners taking away from this meeting that they're going to see reduction in their annual property tax because that's likely not the case," Brooks said.

The longtime board member added that this should serve as a learning opportunity for the council.

According to Brooks, it is incumbent for the group to promote residential and business development to generate more tax revenue. He said that's the best way for Chicopee to keep its tax rates at a lower premium than surrounding communities.

"It really is important

for us to look at ways to try to develop new business and new residential growth," Brooks reiterated.

Ward 9 Councilor Mary Beth Costello thanked Vieau and the city's financial team for their hard work and due diligence. She agreed with Brooks' advisement but didn't let it lower her enthusiasm about the order.

"This is a great, great move to address their needs. Councilor Brooks is right. The property values go up, so that means the taxes are going up, but at least the mayor and the city are trying to help some major financial concerns for people throughout [Chicopee]. This is a big deal," Costello said.

City Council President/Councilor-at-Large Frank

Laflamme was permitted to offer his opinion on the matter. He also thanked Vieau and the city's financial team before reminding the councilors that they too play a key role.

"I especially want to thank the City Council, who monitors this and everything we pass on the mayor's orders on the financials because we are part of the financial team here in the city. Thank you, councilors, for looking out for the residents of Chicopee too," Laflamme said.

During Tuesday's meeting, the council also unanimously voted to reappoint Timothy Reilly, of Northampton, as its official legal counsel.

Reilly has worked in the role for years and will contin-

ue until at least Jan. 1, 2027. Several elected officials spoke positively about Reilly, including Vieau.

"I think you're all very familiar with the attorney that represents the City Council, Tim Reilly," Vieau said to the board.

The mayor voiced his gratitude for Reilly's performance and reliability.

"Tim, I want to say publicly, thank you for your service and guiding the City Council. I'm excited that you're willing to stay on and continue to do so," Vieau added.

Costello praised Reilly as well for all his hard work. She said he is consistently available to the council to provide guidance on a range of issues.

"Any time that you have a question, he's always there to help," Costello said.

When Laflamme requested to speak, the board consented, and he used the opportunity to thank Reilly for his guidance. He said the assistance Reilly has offered him during his time as board president has been invaluable.

"Being the president, working with Tim on a lot of [different items], Tim's been doing a great job," Laflamme said. "For example, we meet once a week now to go over stuff to make sure we're ready to go with whatever we need to do to keep up with the Open Meeting Laws and other things we need to do."

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## OPINION

## A 320-mile hike on the Appalachian Trail

By Julie Midura

When we stepped onto the Appalachian Trail for a 26 day, 310-mile backpacking trip from Fontana Dam, North Carolina to Damascus, Virginia, we had no idea what adventures-and misadventures-lay ahead.

We had no idea that on our very first night in the Great Smoky Mountains, we would come face to face with a large black bear, who would lunge forward, clamp his enormous jaws around another hiker's backpack – which happened to be lying by my feet – and lumber off into the woods with it.

We never imagined that the same fearless bear would return to the campsite a half a dozen times throughout the night while we were snuggled in our two-person sleeping bag. Or that we would be standing outside of our tent at midnight blowing whistles as the bear slowly approached us – the beam of light from our headlamps igniting the bear's eyes a golden yellow.

3 months old when he was recaptured and rereleased during banding operations in Ohio in 2013.

**Other birds**

Besides seeing an indigo bunting, the reader also has several Baltimore orioles, rose breasted grosbeaks and goldfinches.

She stated, "Around the corner at the Brook Road pond in West Warren, there was a lone swan. There was a lone swan there for a couple years about six years ago and it made me wonder if it was the same one."

**Pileated woodpecker**

I received another email on June 6 from a Belcher-town resident.

She stated, "My husband and I witnessed a beautiful pileated woodpecker mating ritual in our backyard this morning... They jumped around the tree on opposite sides going around several times before then jumping to other trees moving farther back into the woods during the process."

She stated, "After looking them up, I realized that I have heard their calls and rapid pecking sounds in my backyard for the past two years, but never saw them until now. What a joy to watch and video. They are beautiful birds."

She also stated her home has semi dense woods immediately behind that is a haven for several bird species, robins, yellow finch, bluebirds and blue jays. The property also borders some wetlands that attract a variety of species from time to time, including hawks, owls and ducks.

**Mute swans**

My brother, who lives in Sutton, has a pond bordering his property. For several years, a pair of mute swans have raised their family on the pond. They are back this year.

**Bluebirds**

I often see a pair of bluebirds in my yard. After seeing them, I put out dried mealworms for them. I don't feed the birds in summer because of the black bears. Hopefully, bears are not interested in a few mealworms and the birds will eat the mealworms before the bear.

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by emailing [mybackyard88@aol.com](mailto:mybackyard88@aol.com) or [edowner@turley.com](mailto:edowner@turley.com) or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005. The Palmer office has a new phone system and I will be getting an extension where messages may be left. I will publish the number as soon as it is set up.



Dome. Played "who's going to blink first" with a five-foot long snake.

We've stood atop mountains looking at views that have taken our breath away, and we've sat side-by-side on the ground in the middle of the forest, our legs stretched out on the dirt and our heads leaning back against our backpacks, simply watching the clouds dance across the sky.

Tonight, we have pitched our tent on a bed of pine needles under a tree, not far from the summit of Big Bald. We are surrounded by twisted, gnarled trees and rocks the size of mobile homes.

It feels as though we are in a cloak and dagger mystery novel.

After eating our freeze-dried dinner of beef and pasta, we walked 150 feet up the trail to a small viewpoint, where

we sat down on a large flat rock for almost an hour while waiting for the sun to meet the horizon.

We talked about everything. And nothing. Important things and nonsensical things. We relived our days out here so far. Reminisced about past adventures and future plans. Talked about family. Life. Dreams.

I snuggled in closer to Tom as the air chilled. And we waited.

The sun hung low. Clouds caught the fading sunlight and the golden orb blazed through them with such intensity that we briefly looked away. But when the sun drifted lower, we watched the world catch fire in shades of crimson, orange and gold.

Like strokes on canvas, Please see **HIKING**, page 11



By Ellenor Downer

Reader emailed she saw an indigo bunting at her feeder.

The indigo bunting is sometimes called the "blue canary."

However, the indigo bunting like all blue colored birds, lack blue pigment. Their color comes instead from microscopic structures in the feathers that refract and reflect blue light, much like the airborne particles that cause the sky to look blue.

Bunting plumage contains the pigment melanin, whose dull brown-black hue is seen when holding a blue feather up so the light comes from behind it, instead of toward it.

The bunting is sparrow size and about 4.7-5.5 inches long. The adult male Indigo Bunting is dark blue in the spring and summer. Females are brown, usually with fine streaks on the chest and a blue tinge on the tail. A one-year-old male in summer may be blue with a white belly.

Males are often seen singing from a perch in a tall tree. For years, a male indigo bunting sang from a dead limb on a tall tree. Rarely, I spotted the female usually in a brushy area.

They inhabit brushy pastures and bushy wood edges. For nesting, the indigo bunting favors roadsides, old fields growing up to bushes, edges of woodlands and other edge habitats such as along rights-of-way for power lines or railroads.

The male indigo bunting establishes territory in the spring and defends it with song. A male may have more than one mate at a time living on his territory.

The nest site is usually one to three feet above ground, rarely up to 30 feet or more, in dense shrub or low trees.

The female lays three to four white to bluish-white eggs with brown or purple spot. Females incubate the eggs and feed the young.

Males will help feed young when they are nearly old enough to fly. Young usually leave nest 9-12 days after hatching.

The male sometimes takes over feeding of fledged young while the female begins second nesting attempt as she has two broods per year.

Indigo buntings forage at all levels from the ground up into shrubs and trees. They take insects from leaves, seeds from the ground or stems and berries from shrubs.

They eat mostly seeds and insects. In breeding season, the indigo bunting feeds mainly on insects and spiders and also some seeds and berries.

Young in the nest are fed mostly insects at first. In winter, they eat many seeds and also some insects.

Indigo buntings migrate at night, using the stars for guidance.

The oldest recorded wild indigo bunting was a male and at least 13 years,



Indigo bunting

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## Chicopee Register

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The Chicopee Register is published every Friday by Turley Publications, Inc., 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069. Telephone (413) 283-8393, Fax (413) 289-1977.



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The deadline for submissions is Tuesday at noon.

## WE CARE ABOUT YOUR NEWS!

The Chicopee Register welcomes submissions of news in or related to Chicopee and its residents. Our "People News," is filled with submitted engagement announcements, wedding announcements, birth announcements, your new baby or news about your 25th or 50th anniversary celebrations. Please e-mail correspondence along with a photo to [chicopeeregister@turley.com](mailto:chicopeeregister@turley.com) or send it to: Chicopee Register, c/o Turley Publications, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069.

## Election letters to the editor

The Chicopee Register welcomes readers to participate in this year's election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to Chicopee Register care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to [journalregister@turley.com](mailto:journalregister@turley.com). Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by noon Monday to be considered for that Thursday's newspaper. No attack letters will be printed. No letters written by candidates supporting their own candidacy will be printed. If the volume of letters received is larger than the space available in the newspaper, or if the letters become repetitive, the newspaper reserves the right to print a representative sample. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last edition before the election.

For more information, call the editor at 413-283-8393.

## Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the newspaper plans to print stories about contested races for Congress, state Senate, state House, district attorney and Governor's Council during the weeks leading up to the election, as well as a question-and-answer voters guide. In order to ensure fairness to all candidates, no political press releases will be printed, nor will reporters cover political rallies or fundraisers.

Candidates who wish to further publicize their candidacy, beliefs and events may contact advertising, 413-283-8393 about paid advertising in Chicopee Register.

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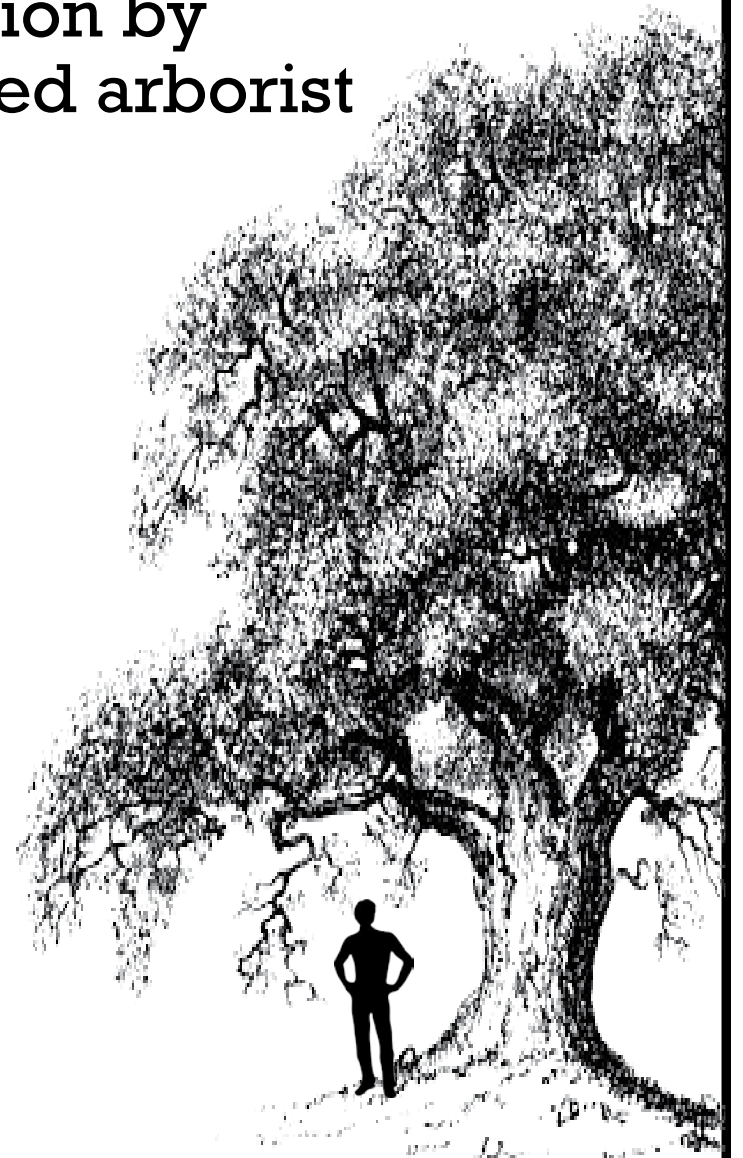


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Alan Dion and Marc Schuerfeld pose for a photo.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY KRISTIN RIVERS

PHOTO DISPLAY

from page 1

mingbird feeders and then began to take photographs of them. It wasn't easy at first because of their quickness and agility, but again, with the equipment improvement and my improvement in photography, I was able to start learning how to capture them," Schuerfeld said. "I became fascinated with not just hummingbirds, but all birds and when the opportunities arose, like the snowy owls that were in Northampton this past winter, they were drawing attention from far and wide."

To get the snowy owls, he added, he got up early in the day and drove to Northampton to capture their photos.

Schuerfeld was excited to showcase his photos to the community.

"I think it's great. I didn't realize that there would be a demand from people. Mostly it's just family and friends that I show pictures to on my phone or I just send them a copy of a photograph through email or a text message," Schuerfeld said. "But, to actually see people actually interested in kind of makes me feel good."

On his favorite photograph, he noted the three coyotes.

"I never expected to see three coyotes come out of the woods like that and give me the opportunity to take the pictures that I took, which came out pretty good," Schuerfeld said. "I kind of have a feeling that they knew I was there taking pictures of them and they didn't seem to be too alarmed. Usually they run away, but they kind of hung around for a while."

On what he finds most fulfilling, he said it "allows me



The Piping Plover was taken in Hampton Beach, New Hampshire.



This baby black sheep was one of the photos on display, taken in Hillsdale, New York.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MARC SCHUERFELD

to give other people the experience that I just witnessed in the wild where they can actually see a moment in time that I've captured."

"Seeing is believing. You come out of the woods and you say you saw three coyotes or you saw a white-tailed buck or you saw an eagle, 'I mean, yeah, sure you did.' But when you have the photograph and you can show it them and say, 'Yes I did and now I can share that with you.' I like sharing the experience," Schuerfeld said.

Schuerfeld again credited Chelte and many other friends who were supportive and encouraging during this endeavor. Also, expressing gratitude for everyone coming out to check out the photos.

"Especially with the owls because I was sending pictures to her as they were happening and I would develop them at home on the computer and I'd send it to them," Schuerfeld said. "She's like, 'These are spectacular and you need to start showing them, not just to me.' So, I'm very grateful for



A white-tailed deer, which was taken in Alexandria, Virginia.

her for encouraging me to do this and giving me the opportunity to use this wonderful facility to show these pictures."

His advice for future or aspiring photographers was to go out there and immerse themselves in nature.

"If you want to take pictures of the wildlife, you have to be out there to do it," Schuerfeld said.

His message was this.

"Just come in and enjoy it. If you don't get a chance to get out into the wilderness and see what's out there, a lot of the pictures that are on display are local. Some of them are right here in Chicopee you wouldn't even think this type of wildlife exists around here, but it does," Schuerfeld said. "It's right in your own backyard. Just have to be aware of it and look for it."



An attendee checks out one of the photographs.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARC SCHUERFELD  
This California Sea Lion was taken on a trip to Monterey Bay California.

RETIRES from page 1

The COVID-19 pandemic also stayed with him, praising the fire department for continuing to show up to work every day.

"We had some good safety protocols in place and we navigated that," Stamborski said. "We had 9/11 too, that was another tough one. That really hit home. Those were some pretty monumental things over the years."

Seeing many promotions over the years and new re-

cruits coming in has also been inspiring.

"It's new and eager firefighters coming on the job. Guys that have put their heart and soul into the job are retiring...We're a good-sized department, we have 143 members," Stamborski said. "The men and women here work very hard to study and get promoted and it's nice to be able to be part of those ceremonies and promotions and new hires. We have three third-generation firefighters here. Those are the exciting

times to watch those things happen. Happy for their families, happy for them."

The Emergency First Response (EFR) certification back in April, which helped upgrade the fire apparatuses, was another item of note, with Stamborski, Mayor John Vieau and the fire union working to get that together.

"It's putting on all that equipment—EpiPens and Benadryl and diabetic medications and stuff as quickly as we possibly can while we're waiting for transport—it was

exciting to be part of that as well," Stamborski said.

Stamborski expressed gratitude for the support from Vieau, the City Council and former Mayor Richard Kos from approving funding the fire department needed to get Station Seven back online to the WestComm Regional Dispatch and other initiatives.

"We're fortunate to have a good working relationship with the council and the mayor in backing up our public safety initiatives," Stamborski said.

On Cross, Stamborski shared he "had a good influence on people that worked around him."

"I worked with him off and on for years. He was my captain for a couple of years, then he was deputy for a couple of years. Then he helped when I took over as chief. He volunteered to be the executive officer of the department. So, we've been friends for 29 years. He's well-respected, well-educated. I have complete confidence he's going to do a great job for the city moving forward," Stamborski said.

On what he'll miss most, he said, "100% the people."

"There's so much compassion here. It's hard to explain, but especially on the medical calls or we've had fires where somebody's injured, just the level of compassion that all of the people here have for their friends, neighbors, relatives—a lot of them live in Chicopee—but no matter who it is, these are perfect strangers we are meeting and we try our best to fix their bad day," Stamborski said. "The staff here too, they're awesome. They come to work every day, work hard. Our mechanics work their butts off downstairs trying to keep 26 apparatus working and it's kind of cool to watch it all gel together."

As for the lessons, patience, perspective and supporting the men and women in red when they need it most.

On his legacy, Stamborski said this.

"I hope that I made an impact here and left things better than I found it. I hope I have improved some things for the better," Stamborski said. "I hope I had a positive impact on the department."

His advice for future firefighters was to do it.

"It's a very, very rewarding career. Definitely recommend it to anybody. If you want to go home at the end of the day, end of the week, feeling like you've accomplished something in this world that we live in, that's the job for you," Stamborski said.

His message to Cross was this.

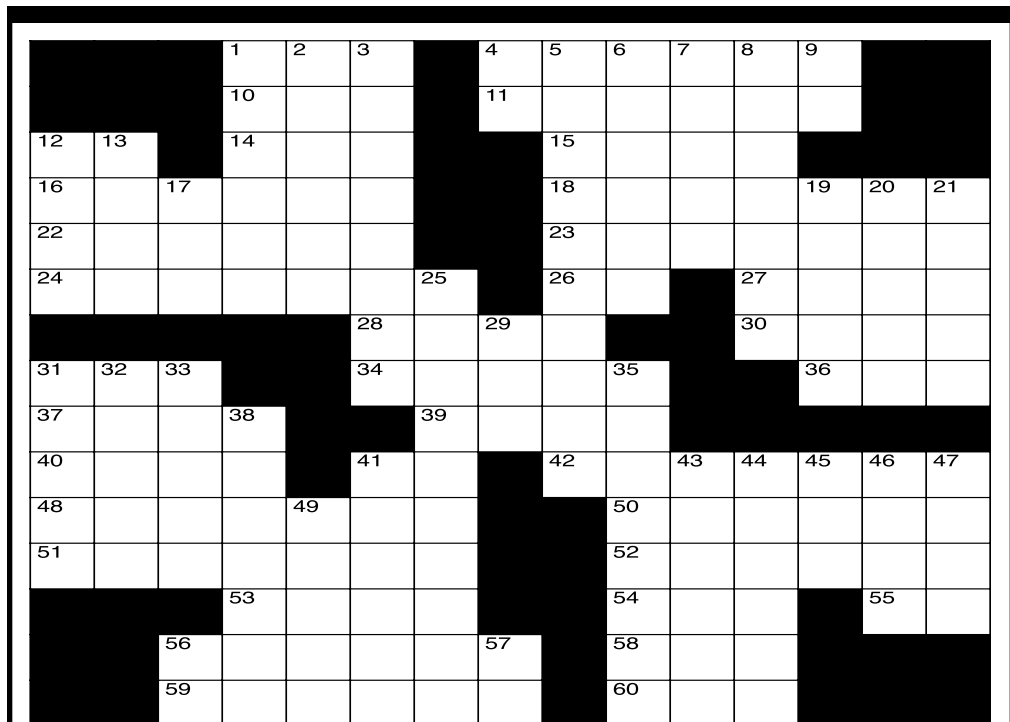
"Keep on being the leader you've been for the last 30 years and keep being a role model," Stamborski said.

As for the team?

"I have so much respect for what they do every day. They're the ones out in the trenches doing the work. Just keep doing what you're doing for the citizens of Chicopee and I respect you and thank you," Stamborski said.

To the community...

"Thank you for the opportunity. I really appreciated having the opportunity to be the leader of this department and I'll say with confidence that the mayor and the chiefs, their focus is to keep them safe and I'm confident that that will continue," Stamborski said.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Similar
4. Have an ambitious plan or a lofty goal
10. No (Scottish)
11. \_\_\_ Aires, city
12. Morning
14. Senior's son (abbr.)
15. A notable achievement
16. European nation
18. Endings
22. Puts into place
23. Former
24. Grenadier
26. Sea patrol
27. Algerian port
28. Norwegian river
30. Precipitation
31. Screenshot rating
34. New York is one
36. Patti Hearst's

- captors
37. Soft mineral with greasy feel
39. Retired Brazilian footballer
40. An Indian nursemaid
41. Atomic #24
42. Immobile
48. Insignia of royalty
50. Seeds from which chocolate is made
51. Begin again
52. Round root
53. Beginning to end (alt. sp.)
54. What newlyweds just said
55. Empire State
56. Give back
58. College hoops tournament
59. Unstable situations

- 60. Young women's association
CLUES DOWN
1. Administer a drug
2. Holy places
3. Contrary opinions
4. Blood type
5. Gags
6. Micturating
7. Silly
8. A type of "cuff"
9. Spanish be
12. Austrian river
13. Messenger
17. Consume food
19. California supermarket
20. Electronic communication
21. Cassia tree
25. Written works

- 29. Cool!
31. Noteworthy 90s lawyer Kenneth
32. One who was compensated
33. National symbols
35. Raising
38. A type of talk
41. Cloud
43. Middle Eastern peoples
44. Pouches
45. 007's creator
46. A cut of meat
47. Sports entertainment award
49. Christine \_\_, actress
56. Relief organization (abbr.)
57. Canadian province (abbr.)

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# SPORTS

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## Aldenville Legion falls to visiting Northampton

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

CHICOPEE— Matt Sutton, a right-handed pitcher for the Aldenville (Chicopee) Post

337 Legion baseball team, was the starter in last Friday night's home opener against Northampton Post 28.

Sutton should've gotten out of the top of the first inning

without allowing any runs.

However, Northampton wound up scoring five unearned runs during their first at-bats of the game en route to an 11-3 victory at Szot Park.

"We made three costly errors in the first inning, which changed the complexity of the entire game," said Aldenville assistant coach Ray Carillon. "We have a bunch of talented ballplayers on this year's team and we're going to clean things up."

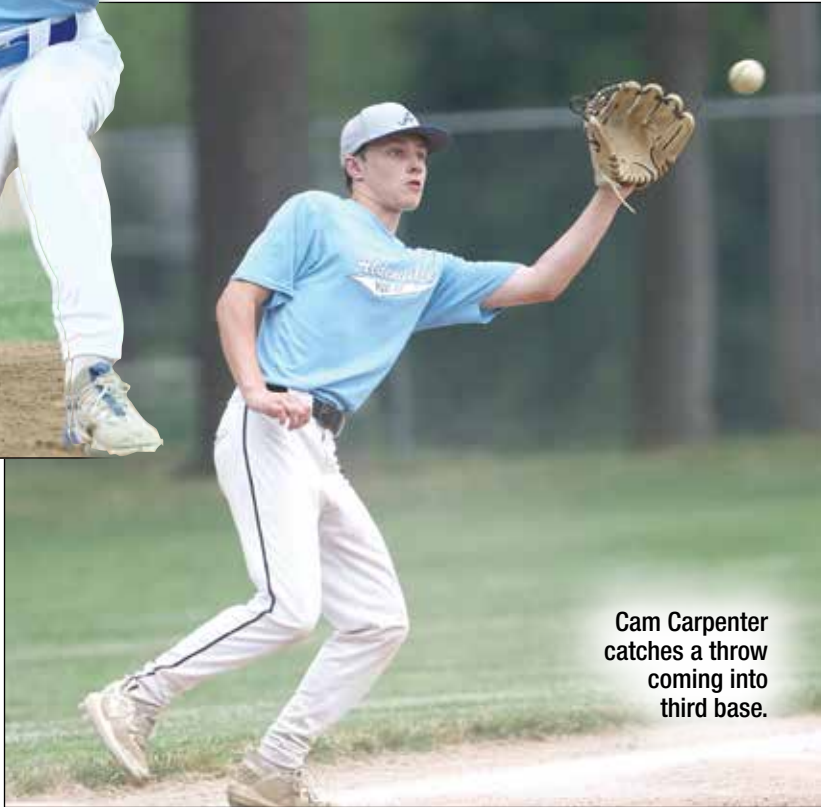
Nate Carillon, who's the Aldenville manager, couldn't attend last Friday's Legion game because he was playing in a Tri-County League game for St. Joe's.

Sutton, who was a sophomore on the Chicopee Comp varsity baseball team this past spring, pitched the first three innings against Northampton.

Please see **LEGION**, page 9

Matt Sutton, from Chicopee Comprehensive, pitches for Aldenville Post 337.

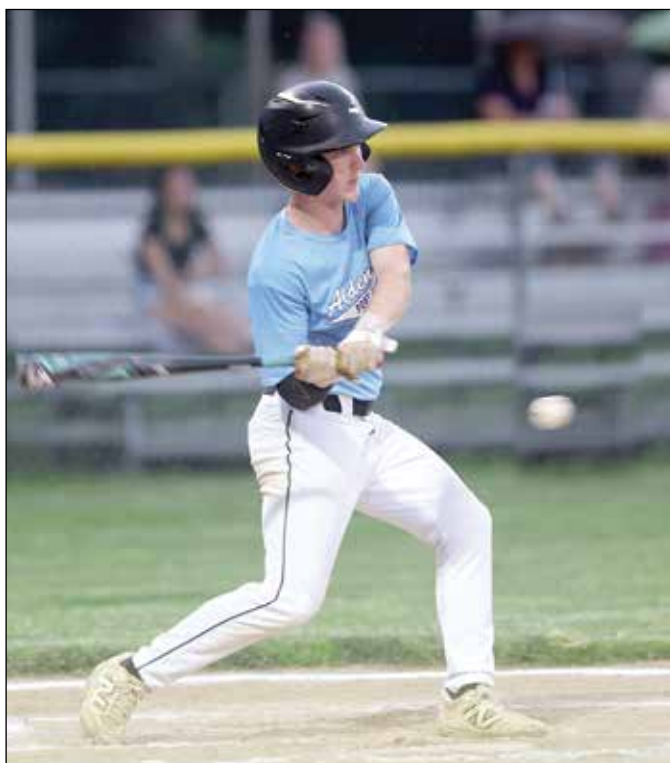
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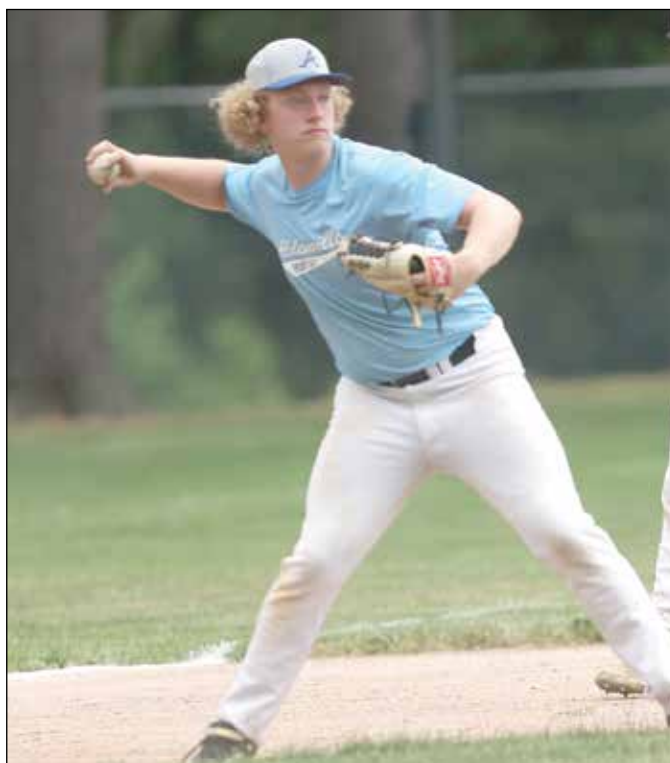
Cam Carpenter catches a throw coming into third base.



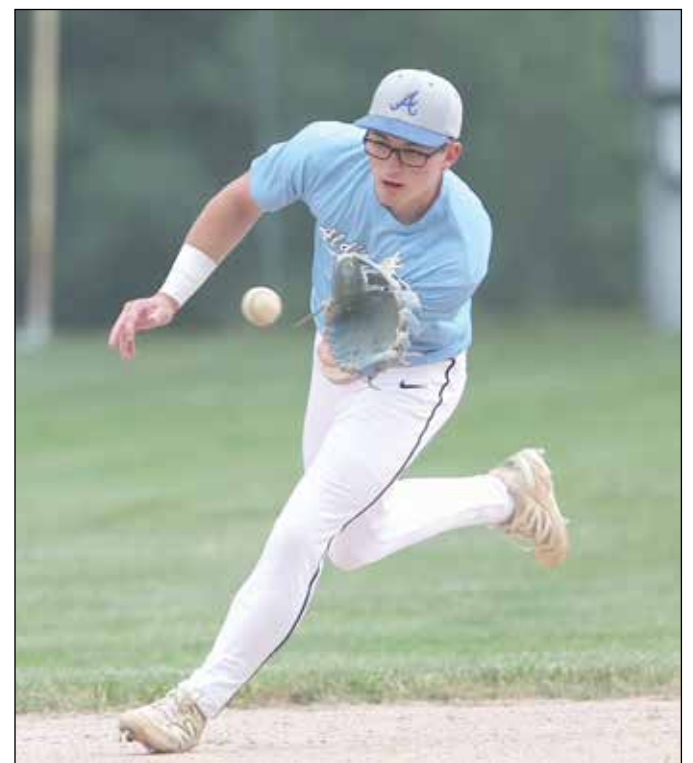
Memphis Huertas tries to corral a pitch in the dirt.



Ryan Netkovich gets ready for contact.



Aiden Robinson makes a throw to second.



Noah Carillon makes a play on a bouncing ball.

## Thunderbirds agree to bring back head coach Ott; contract extended for two years

SPRINGFIELD – St. Louis Blues President of Hockey Operations and General Manager Doug Armstrong announced today that the team has signed Steve Ott to a

two-year contract extension as head coach of the Blues' AHL affiliate, the Springfield Thunderbirds.

Ott, 43, took over as Springfield's head coach on January 19, 2026. In the

club's final 34 regular-season games, he led the team to an 18-14-2 record, clinching a berth as the sixth seed in the Atlantic Division for the 2026 Calder Cup Playoffs. Ott then guid-

ed the Thunderbirds to the Division Finals following a first-round series win over the third-seeded Charlotte Checkers and a historic victory over the Macgregor Kilpatrick Trophy-winning

Providence Bruins (the regular-season champions) in the Division Semifinals. Springfield's win over Providence marked the single biggest upset in AHL history, as the two teams were

separated by 38 points in the regular season.

Ott originally joined the Blues' coaching staff on May 25, 2017, spending

Please see **T-BIRDS**, page 8



See more story & more photos on page 8.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

## Mutiny defeats Maine Footy

Milla Lee starts up the field to defeat the Maine Footy.

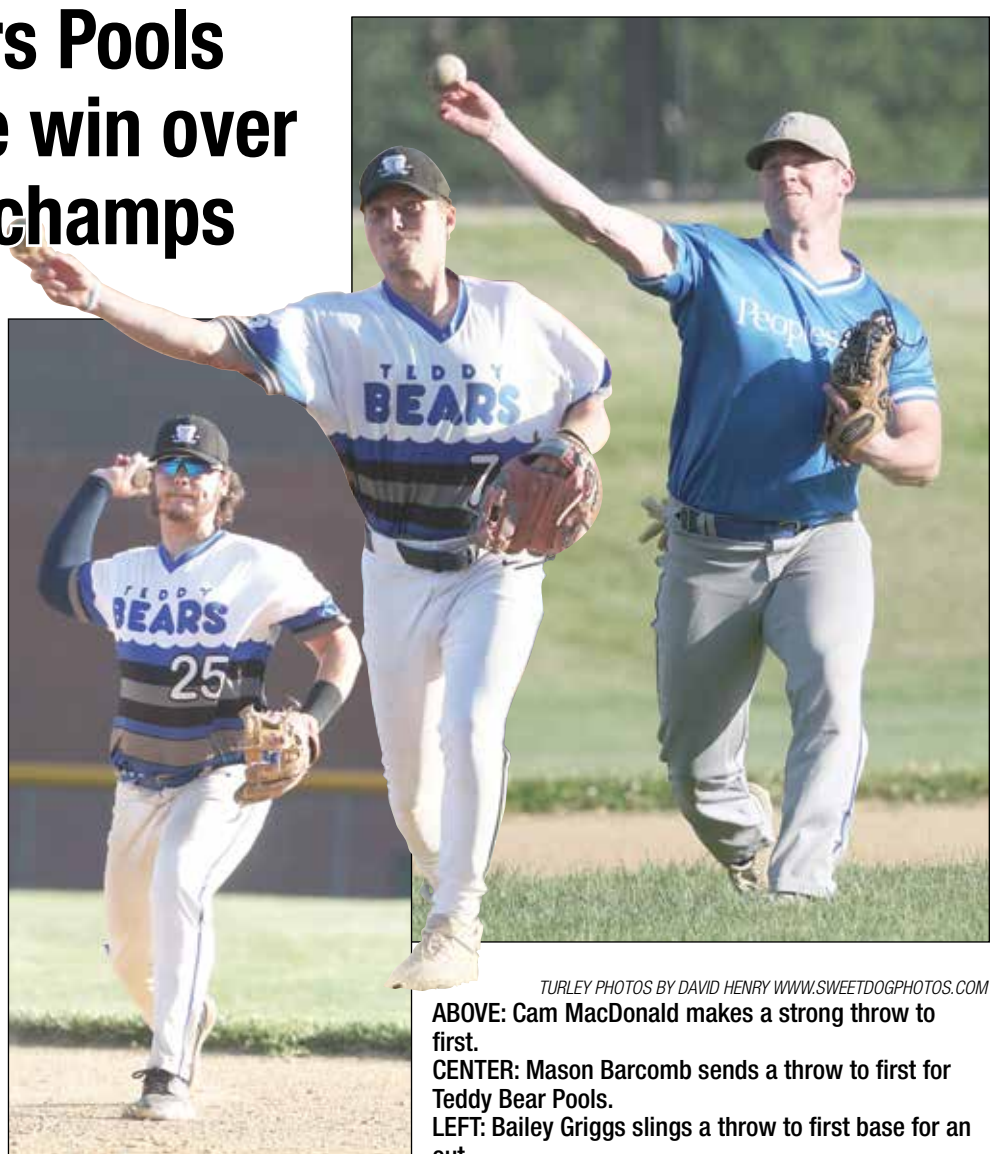
## Teddy Bears Pools scores rare win over defending champs

SOUTH HADLEY – Teddy Bear Pools and Spas wasted no time last Monday evening at South Hadley High School, sending eight men to the plate in the bottom of the first and not looking back en route to a 15-0 blanking of PeoplesBank. The margin was never in question.

The first inning established the tone with swift and relentless efficiency. Bailey Griggs drew a walk that scored a run, Xavion Maldonado doubled to bring home two more, a PeoplesBank error allowed another pair to score, Sean Rosemond drew a walk to push across yet another, and Alex Gochinski grounded out with enough to score one more. Six runs — before PeoplesBank could exhale.

The scoring resumed in the second when Travis Ka-

Please see **TRI-COUNTY**, page 8



TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

ABOVE: Cam MacDonald makes a strong throw to first. CENTER: Mason Barcomb sends a throw to first for Teddy Bear Pools. LEFT: Bailey Griggs slings a throw to first base for an out.

# SPORTS

## Mutiny defeats Maine Footy



LUDLOW – Last Sunday afternoon, June 7, Maine Footy made their annual visit to Luistano Stadium. The New England Mutiny continued their success against the Footy, defeating Maine 4-0. The UWS win was followed by a win at the Worcester Wanderers 3-0. The Mutiny did suffer a USL-W loss against Hudson Valley 2-1 last Tuesday. The Mutiny will face Hudson Valley against on Saturday, June 20 at Luistano Stadium.

Gabby Williams goes after a loose ball.

Valentina Molinari looks to get around an opposing player.



Darcy Dwyer winds up for a long kick.



Eva Blatz sends a free kick away.



Sophia Scyocurka tries to overcome an opponent.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

## Blue Sox out to great start this summer

HOLYOKE – The Valley Blue Sox (6-1-1) took down the Danbury Westerners (3-5) by a score of 4-2 June 13, driven heavily by strong pitching performances from RHP Jackson Hinchliffe (Richmond) and RHP Jake LeFrancois (UMass Lowell).

It was the second night in a row where the Blue Sox's starter pitched at least five complete innings and was relieved by one pitcher who finished the rest of the game.

The ability of Valley's starters to consistently work efficiently through the fifth inning as well as head coach John Raiola's willingness to keep his starters in the game seemingly have a correlation to the team's early success. Opponents in 2026 have not left a starting pitcher in more than 3.2 innings against the Blue Sox. Valley has done so in all but one game this season.

"It's all them and their ability to throw strikes and to get off the field," Raiola said. "We talk a lot about trying to get length in five or six innings, whatever it is. But the reality is, it's pitch count more than anything. And if we have quick, efficient innings, then they can keep going."

Hinchliffe did exactly that on Saturday night. His final line from June 13 was six innings pitched, four hits, zero earned runs, three strikeouts, and zero walks, all on 70 pitches. LeFrancois, who earned the nine out save, pitched three innings, allowing one hit, one earned run, striking out two and walking none.

"100 percent," Hinch-

liffe said when asked if his performance showcased the kind of pitcher he's built himself to be. "With the two-seam sinker thing, just getting weak contact early in counts allows you to get deep in games, save the bullpen and let the defense work."

As of the morning of June 14, Hinchliffe and RHP Dylan Reid (Brown) lead the NECBL in innings pitched, each with 11.0.

Hinchliffe's second start was a nice recovery after his first start of the season where he lasted five innings, but allowed five earned runs and five hits. For LeFrancois, it was his fourth appearance of the season and his second in three days.

With the Blue Sox still waiting on select arms to join the team for the summer, the bullpen has stepped up in a major fashion with relievers recording longer outings in order to preserve other pitcher's arms.

"When you play every single day you can't just go 1-1-1 and not have guys available," Raiola said. "You need some length at times and you have in this case, [LeFrancois] down for a couple days. We have the off day on Tuesday, and we'll get him back on Wednesday. And so, it sets us up nicely for Sunday and Monday."

With the Blue Sox off to one of the hottest starts in the NECBL, the team mentality will not change.

"We talk about it all the time, it is: short memory, show up, continue to get better every single day," Raiola said. "Let the process dictate what the results are going to be."

## Obie wins rain shortened Winchester 101 Modified

WINCHESTER, N.H. - Modified superstar Brian Robie added to his legacy at the great race place Saturday, topping the \$5,000-to-win Open Modified Winchester 101 at Monadnock Speedway.

The reigning and multi-time speedway 604 Modified champion set fast time in qualifying and then outran a stout 18-car field to earn the big payday at his home track, the site of scores of feature victories by the Sunapee speedster over the last decade.

In other events Saturday on the high banks, Hillary Renaud survived a wild one to notch her first Limited Late Model victory of the season, Eric Pomasko ended a long drought by topping the Mini Stocks, and Young Guns sensation Dylan Stati won for the sixth week in a row.

The start of Saturday's main event was postponed earlier for one hour, ten minute rain delay but when the night's top show went green, nobody was more ready than Kimball, except maybe Robie, who started back in row four.

In qualifying Robie set fast time with a lap of 11.713 around the high banked quarter-mile. He, Meservey, and Joey Jarvis each eclipsed the 12-second mark. With Kimball second and Meservey third in the main event, current weekly 604 Modified top points man Tyler Leary was fourth, and NASCAR Whelen Modified series regular Kyle Bonsignore was fifth.

Kimball, from row two, took the lead from Bleau on lap one, with Robie quickly up to third on lap six and

blasting into second a lap later. Kimball then held an eight-length advantage.

With reigning MRS champ Brett Meservey storming into Robie's shadow, Kimball rode all alone at the front, but his advantage vanished when a Chris Pasteryak spun that brought out the caution flag and, with it, brought Robie to the leader's door on lap 29.

Robie was quick to cash in on the opportunity, taking charge on lap 30 and holding Kimball and Meservey at his bumper until heavy rain swept in mid-race, effectively ending the show. After a meeting of track management and the racing teams, the race was declared official.

Hillary Renaud was jostled backward early in the night's Twin States Truck Services Limited Late Model main event but when the chips were on the line, the Vernon, VT star was in the right place at the right time to score her first win of the summer.

Wesley Stedt powered into the early lead, with Renaud and previous winner Robert Hagar close behind. With Renaud shuffled back in the top groove, Hagar held the point, just ahead of Stedt and Daniel Petrowicz, who, like Hagar, had trophied the night before at Claremont.

Petrowicz rubbed past Hagar on lap 28, but a caution flag put Hagar back at the top. Three laps later, with the checkered flag high in chief starter Chris Horton's hand, Petrowicz again tried to muscle his way to the front, this time sending the top three cars spinning wildly across

Please see **MODIFIED**, page 11

### T-BIRDS from page 7

seven seasons as an assistant coach before being elevated to associate coach ahead of the 2024-25 season. During his tenure, the Summerside, Prince Edward Island, native

helped the Blues compile a 350-244-74 regular-season record and make five post-season appearances, including 2019, when he played an instrumental role in helping the organization capture its first Stanley Cup champion-

ship. As a player, Ott put together a 14-year NHL career, including 122 regular-season games and 21 postseason games with the Blues after the team acquired him via trade

from the Buffalo Sabres on February 28, 2014.

Overall, he appeared in 848 career regular-season games, totaling 288 points (109 goals, 179 assists) and 1,555 penalty minutes.

### TRI-COUNTY from page 7

gan singled to plate one, and the third inning became an exercise in patience and plate coverage. Ray Toth hit a sacrifice fly, Willie Landman singled to center, Griggs singled to right, Kagan grounded into a fielder's choice, Ty Evans doubled to center, Rosemond singled down the right-field line, and Ryan Magni singled down the left-field line — each driving in a run. Seven different players contributed to that inning. Kagan finished the night with four RBI on a single hit, the most efficient line on the card.

Nate Kelleher-Mochak was untouchable on the mound. The starter worked five innings without allowing a run, giving up just two hits, striking out four, and walking one. It was the kind of outing that makes a winning pitcher's night feel almost anticlimactic — he threw strikes, got outs, and watched his offense do the rest.

Jackson Lavalley absorbed the loss for PeoplesBank, lasting just one inning and allowing one run on one hit. The final score reflected a difficult evening for the visitors, who managed only two hits on the night — one apiece from Hogan G and Macdonald.

Teddy Bear collected 10 hits as a club, with Magni, Rosemond, and Maldonado each going 2-for-the-night. Equally notable was the team's discipline at the plate: eight walks drawn, with



Tyler Evans makes a catch at first.



Dave Clark picks up a grounder for PeoplesBank.

Griggs and Gochinski each earning two. Teddy Bear also played a clean game in the field — no errors, with Evans handling the most chances at five. On this Monday, everything worked.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

Danny Gaines pitches for the Bankers.



**BATTLE** from page 1

are going through, and I want to ensure that no family ever has to go through what I did."

Conroy also wants to spread the word about her son's story to help others.

"Because I just want to spread my son's story to as many people as I can, and I hope by doing so, offer a helping hand to let you know you're not alone, and support is always available to all," Conroy said.

She shared how life shifted after Ashton was diagnosed, detailing the year-long process from being housed at Boston Children's Hospital.

"It all happened six weeks before Ashton's second birthday; he was diagnosed when he was 10 and a 1/2 months, and from there we were in-patient at Boston Children's Hospital for the next six months," Conroy said.

"He was in remission for three months; he then relapsed after another three months, and then over the next four months, while still being there, the cancer became too aggressive, and he then passed away."

Conroy shared that during the process, multiple organizations stepped up to help her out financially in this time of need.

"I can confirm that the Chicopee Police were one of them who assisted and reached out, even though I was working for the Holyoke PD, but because I was a Chicopee resident, they went out of their way to raise funds and build awareness for Ashton's battle, and then they came to Boston where they presented me a check, and in that moment, our family felt their generosity, as they went above and beyond, more than what we could have ever imagined, and it allowed us to keep moving forward despite the odds," Conroy said.

Echoing similar sentiments was Blankenship, who touched upon how he got the idea started.

"Crystal came to me and explained her involvement with Blood Cancer United, and pitched the thought of doing some sort of fundraiser, and I said, 'Why not? Let's do

a softball game', because we used to do it, and so I thought let's bring it back, because that could be a ton of fun," Blankenship said. "So, we kind of just got a group of guys together. I called over the fire department, got ahold of Lt. John Jebb, and he got his team; we got our team, ended up putting out the event via social media, and the rest was history."

Both Jebb and Blankenship shared they felt the night was an overall success and were extremely pleased with the outcome, interest from the community and the funds raised, which returned to the non-profit and charity.

Blankenship noted that the interest in making this a yearly tradition remains high.

"We're going to try and do this every year," Blankenship said. "So hopefully next year we'll have more planning



The Chicopee Fire Department stands assembled as a team.



The Chicopee Police Department stands assembled as a team along the third base side.



Volunteers helping out at the concession stand.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY BRENDAN ROONEY

AT LEFT: Signature and licensed sign outside the Szot Park gate designed and made by Pynchon Press.



and make it even bigger and better."

This year's friendly victory went to the fire department, which took home the victory with a 24-9 win over the police department and was the first since the 90's.

After the game concluded, both teams and their families met up at the Rumbleseat Bar & Grille, where pizzas and drinks were donated by the restaurant.

**ROTARY** from page 3

into college, knowing that I have a strong foundation in myself, and that I'm excited for what this new chapter holds, and it's definitely going to help financially for nursing school because it's not cheap, so it's going to help there, along with other spots," Spears said.

After the presentation concluded, Arthur shared that moments like this exemplify why the Rotary Club exists.

"Today is an example of the strength and leadership that Rotary can not only produce, but offer," Arthur said. "We are here to help, and that means by any stature, as all Rotarians stand by our mission statement, which is service above self, meaning we are dedicated to bettering our community and having the ability and chance to give back, as you saw today, while helping to spotlight the growth and foundation that continues to thrive within Chicopee."

He added that even though the organization has been lifted by a wave of recent

success, a pursuit of increased membership continues to be a common trend.

"We are looking to increase membership, across the board, but most recently, as of late, we are looking towards our youth," Arthur said. "And the reason is that we believe they can help yield and produce fresh and innovative ideas, and I feel that because of the work we continue to do and advocate for, it will help us keep the current momentum going and pass the baton onto the next generation."

To note, the Rotary Club of Chicopee has donated over \$250,000 to local charities and non-profits, including: Lorraine's Soup Kitchen, Boys and Girls Club of Chicopee, RiverMills Senior Center, For The Love of Good Foundation, Chicopee High/Chicopee Comp Music Programs, Boy Scouts Troop #1849 of Chicopee, Scholarships, USO of the Pioneer Valley, Sunshine Village, and more.

The club meets the second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 5 p.m. at the View Street Tavern.

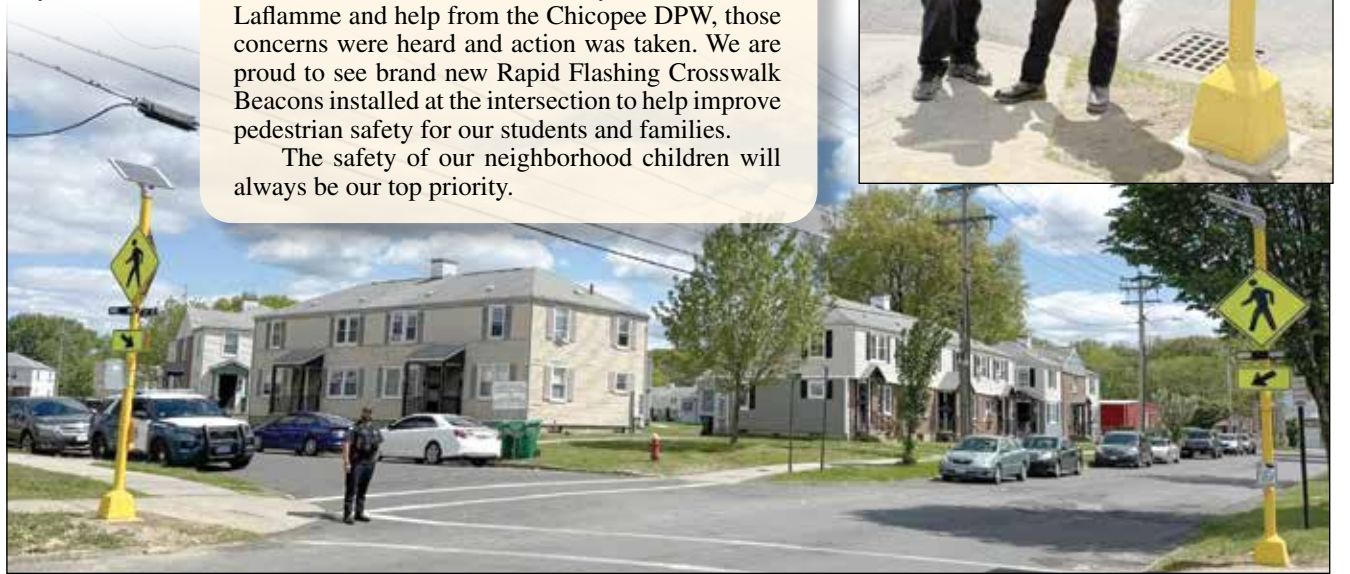
**New crosswalk beacons installed in Willimansett**

Photos and caption courtesy of Chicopee Police Department

CHICOPEE - This project began with concerns raised by residents and members of our Willimansett C3 Unit at their weekly community meeting regarding the safety of Stefanik School students crossing at Elcon Drive and Meetinghouse Road.

With the support of Ward 3 City Councilor Susan Goff, President of the City Council Frank Laflamme and help from the Chicopee DPW, those concerns were heard and action was taken. We are proud to see brand new Rapid Flashing Crosswalk Beacons installed at the intersection to help improve pedestrian safety for our students and families.

The safety of our neighborhood children will always be our top priority.



**LEGION** from page 7

He allowed eight runs (three earned) on seven hits. He walked three and struck out three. It was Sutton's third appearance on the mound during the first week of the Legion season

"Matt recorded a save in our season opener against Westfield on Monday. He also pitched an inning in relief at Sheffield the other night," Carillon said. "I liked the way that he pitched in tonight's game. He threw more than 70 pitches."

Aldenville entered this week's action with a 1-1-1 record. They defeated Westfield

Post 124, 6-3, and tied Sheffield 6-6, in a game called due to darkness.

"We were a young team last year and we didn't make the Legion playoffs," Carillon added. "We have about 13 returning players this year and we're hoping to have a winning season."

Ten of the 18 players listed on the Aldenville roster played baseball for the South Hadley varsity team.

Sutton struck out two of the first three batters that he faced in the opening frame. He walked the other hitter before his defense let him down.

Following another walk, Northampton (2-1) scored a pair of runs on back-to-back

fielding errors by the first baseman. Then DH James Lavelle, who graduated from Smith Voc-Tech in 2025, belted a two-run triple to right field giving the visiting team an early 4-0 lead. Northampton's fifth run crossed the plate on a throwing error by the third baseman.

Aldenville starting centerfielder Justin Rivera, who recently graduated from Holyoke High School, led off the bottom of the first inning with an infield base hit against lefthander Andrew Gagne, who was a senior on the Pope Francis baseball team.

After stealing second base, Rivera advanced to third base on a groundout by DH

Lincoln Belsky, who's one of the South Hadley players, before scoring on a wild pitch.

Northampton retook a five run lead in the second inning when second baseman Matt Vassillo (Hopkins Academy) hit a sacrifice fly to right field.

The home team answered back an unearned run in the second inning.

Alex Savlick (Minnechaug Regional) reached first base leading off the inning on a throwing error by the third baseman. A wild pitch moved him to second and he went to third on a balk. Another balk by Gagne scored Savlick, who played three different positions in the game.

He started at third baseman before moving to left field. Savlick finished the contest on the mound.

Sutton gave up two more runs in the third, which gave Northampton an 8-2 advantage.

Savlick took over on the mound at the start of the fourth inning. He struck out the first two batters before issuing back-to-back walks. Both baserunners scored on a triple by centerfielder Carter Styspeck (Hopkins).

Trailing 10-2, Aldenville shortstop Brandon Carillon drew a walk with one out in the bottom of the fifth inning. After stealing second and third, Carillon scored on Gagne's

third balk of the game.

Gagne, who was replaced by righty Thomas Moore at the start of the sixth inning, had more balks than base hits (one) in the first five innings.

Aldenville loaded the bases in the sixth inning, but they failed to score.

Savlick finished his outing by striking out the side looking in the top of the seventh inning.

Rivera (2-for-4) smacked a double to the gap in left center against Vassallo, who's a righty, leading off the bottom of the seventh. Vassallo retired the next three batters ending the ballgame, which almost took almost three hours to complete.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-7758 Docket No. HD25P1576EA Estate of: Kenneth P. Dawley Date of Death: 03/17/2025 CITATION ON PETITION FOR ORDER OF COMPLETE SETTLEMENT

A Petition for Order of Complete Settlement has been filed by Robert E. Dawley of Uncasville, CT requesting that the court enter a formal Decree of Complete Settlement including the allowance of a final account, a determination of testacy and heirs at law and other such relief as may be requested in the Petition.

IMPORTANT NOTICE You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 07/07/2026.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

WITNESS, Hon. Claudine T. Stoudemire, First Justice of this Court. Date: June 01, 2026 Rosemary A. Saccomani Register of Probate 06/19/2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-7758 Docket No. HD26P1240EA Estate of: Richard G Hartling Also known as: Richard Hartling Date of Death: 03/18/2023 CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons: A Petition for Late and Limited Formal Testacy and/or Appointment has been filed by Christopher Hartling of Granby, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that

Christopher Hartling of Granby, MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration.

IMPORTANT NOTICE You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 07/06/2026. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC) A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Claudine T. Stoudemire, First Justice of this Court. Date: June 08, 2026 Rosemary A Saccomani, Register of Probate 06/19/2026

SALE OF MOTOR VEHICLES UNDER G.L. c.255 Sec. 39A Notice is hereby given by Interstate Towing, Inc. pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 255, section 39A, that on June 26th, 2026 at Interstate Towing, Inc the following Motor Vehicles will be sold at private sale to satisfy our garage keeper's lien thereon for storage, towing charges, care and expenses of notices and sale of said vehicles.

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2003 Ford F250 vin: 1ftmx21173ecc47707 Joseph Breton 95 Dayton St. Chicopee, MA 01013
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2009 Jeep Grand Cherokee VIN: 1J8GR48K79C537759 Zana Carter 215 Pearl St. Enfield, CT 06082
2000 Jeep Grand Cherokee VIN: 1J4GW48SXYC413882 Marishalee Perez 300 Wildermere St. Chicopee, MA 01020
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2010 Honda Pilot VIN: 5FNYP4H68AB007217 Kristy Reim 222 Gage St. Bennington, VT 05201
2004 Infiniti G35 VIN: JNKC5V1FX4M713922 Karissa Booska 45 Silas St. Springfield, MA 01109
2019 Hyundai Translead VIN: 3H3V532L0LR441764 Amazon Logistics Inc. 4255 Anson Blvd. Whitestown, IN 46075 06/12, 06/19, 06/26/2026

SALE OF MOTOR VEHICLES UNDER G.L. c.255 Sec. 39A Notice is hereby given by Interstate Towing, Inc. pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 255, section 39A, that on July 3rd, 2026 at Interstate Towing, Inc the following Motor Vehicles will be sold at private sale to satisfy our garage keeper's lien thereon for storage, towing charges, care and expenses of notices and sale of said vehicles.

2005 Honda Accord VIN: 1HGCM568X5A172180 Savannah Sanchez 89 Bonner St. Chicopee, MA 01020
2007 Honda CRV VIN: JHLRE38537C006655 Maria Caal Arana 17 Crosby St., Apt. 3 Lawrence, MA 01843
2012 Nissan Altima VIN: 1N4AL2AP3CN537655 Angie Colon 90 Cochran St. #1R Chicopee, Ma 01020
1998 Suzuki VIN: JS1GR7DAXW2104479 Jermaine Mitchell 102 Wollaston Street Springfield, MA 01108
2012 Chevrolet Equinox VIN: 2GNFLEE51C6234993 Geraldyn R Pereznavia 466 Lakeside Ave., Fl. 2 Ornage, NJ 07050
2004 Nissan Altima VIN: 1N4AL11D44C153686

2008 Chevrolet Malibu VIN: 1G1ZH57B584243417 Elias Lopez 47 Cambridge Dr. Cincinnati, OH 45241
2006 Mercedes CLS 500 VIN: WDDDJ75X66A038905 Priscilla Amparo Perez Nunez 179 Longhill St., Apt. 31 Springfield, MA 01108
2006 Honda Odyssey vin: 5fnr138496b102513 Jose Vicente-Figueroa 8 Forest St., Apt. 3 Chicopee, MA 01013
2012 Chevrolet Impala VIN: 2G1WC5E32C1222221 Cameron Murphy 6 Apple Hill Rd. Sturbridge, MA 01566
2006 Honda Pilot VIN: 2HKYF18576H502829 Tiffany Adon 257 Jasper St. Springfield, MA 01109
2003 Toyota Camry VIN: 4T1BE32K43U127840 Vinod G Vazirani 3249 Jordan St. Flushing, NY 11358
2016 Toyota Camry VIN: 4T1BD1FK8GU192911 David Causby 108 Old Mill Rd., Unit 2 Shrewbury, MA 01545
2003 Chevrolet Suburban VIN: 1GNFK16T13J225044 Keith Compher 3 Central St., Apt. 2 North Brookfield, MA 01535
2007 Jeep Grand Cherokee VIN: 1J8GR48K67C597304 Buckets Used Cars Inc. 19 Riverboat Village Rd. South Hadley, MA 01075
2010 Honda Civic VIN: 2HGFA1F80AH504508 Jessica Ashton 211 College Ln. Norwich, NY 13815

Stephanie Brown 17 Saab Ct., Apt. 501 Springfield, Ma 01104
2007 Honda Pilot VIN: 2HKYF18107H521849 Patricia Jones and Brian Jones 40 Avon St. #1 Wakefield, MA 01880

2014 Jeep Cherokee VIN: 1C4PJMB0E0EW156531 Douglas Berton Brown 51 Meadow Brook Rd., Apt 119 Ellington, CT 06029
2008 Honda Civic VIN: 1HGCG1654YAQ73381 Unknown Owner 06/05, 06/12, 06/19/2026

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2007 Jeep Grand Cherokee VIN: 1J8GR48K67C597304 Buckets Used Cars Inc. 19 Riverboat Village Rd. South Hadley, MA 01075

2010 Honda Civic VIN: 2HGFA1F80AH504508 Jessica Ashton 211 College Ln. Norwich, NY 13815

2020 Toyota Sienna VIN: 5TDXZ3DC1LS043032 Wenrui Wu 12 Woodland Rd. Westfield, MA 01085 06/19, 06/26, 07/03/2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-7758 Docket No. HD26P1308EA Estate of: Michael Joseph Soja, Jr. Also known as: Michael J Soja, Jr., Michael J Soja Date of Death: 05/01/2026 CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons: A Petition for Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Michael J Murphy of Chicopee, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that Michael J Murphy of Chicopee, MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration.

IMPORTANT NOTICE You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 07/14/2026. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC) A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Claudine T. Stoudemire, First Justice of this Court. Date: June 16, 2026

Rosemary A Saccomani, Register of Probate 06/19/2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-7758 Docket No. HD26P1142EA Estate of: Joyce Eleanor Trench Date of Death: 02/20/2026 CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons: A Petition for Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Krista Lynn Trench of Westfield MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that Krista Lynn Trench of Westfield MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration.

IMPORTANT NOTICE You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 06/30/2026. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC) A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Claudine T. Stoudemire, First Justice of this Court. Date: May 27, 2026 Rosemary A Saccomani, Register of Probate 06/19/2026

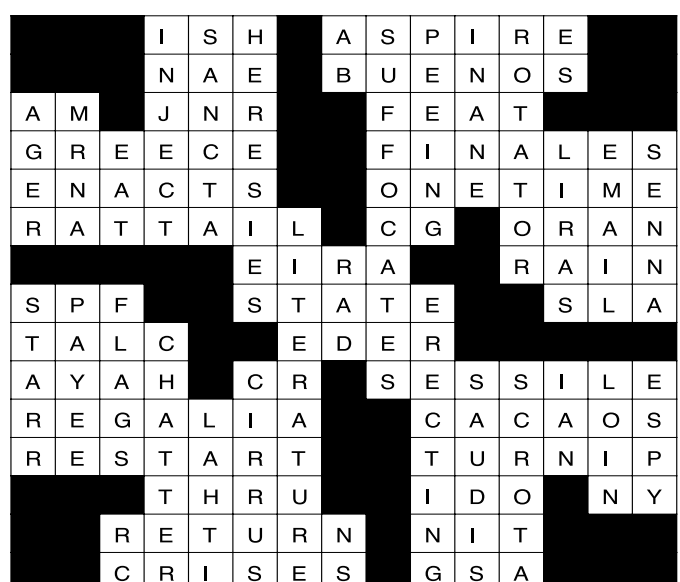
HIKING from page 4 the sky was transformed, leaving us breathless. Our conversation paused. The earth slowed. The world existed only in the present moment. Time stood still. Once the sun disappeared behind the distant ridges-leaving the lingering shades of blue and pink and purple behind - Tom and I stood, bowed our heads, and praised God for his goodness.

Then we slowly walked hand in hand back to our tent as darkness descended on the forest. Over the past eight years of backpacking, with well over a thousand miles completed, there are about five nights on trail that I will never forget. This is now one of them. Stay tuned for the second half of our backpacking trip in a future edition of the newspaper. Onward!

MODIFIED from page 8 the finish line. Renaud, whose ride ended half way to pit road, walked away with her first victory of the summer. Hagar, who was somehow able to drive away from the carnage, was second, and Erik Smith third. Petrovich, whose destroyed car had to be scrapped from the frontstretch wall, was credited with fourth, and Michael Lashua was fifth. Popular veteran Pat Houle led the first 15 laps of Saturday's Keene Towing and Recovery Mini Stock 25-lapper, with Eric Pomasko challenging until inching ahead on lap 16 and the two crafty vets - each

many moons from victory lane - went to work. When Houle's ride quickly dropped off pace, former track king Louie Maher was quickly into second. Maher tried over and over to wrest the top spot from Pomasko but the Peterborough speedster refused to budge, holding strong to earn his first win in years. With Maher a strong second, potent Craig Chaffee impressed in third, Tim Paquette finished fourth and Houle came home fifth. Pre-teen ace Dylan Statti won for the sixth week in a row Saturday, topping the Doug's Auto Body Young Guns 15-lapper with ease. Maeve Barry was second on the night.

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Matthew Gower, general board member and actor, and Julia Adamo, board member and actor, from the "Why It's Gotta Be?" Theatre Group were amongst the vendors.



Lorina Kalajian shows off her booth.



A butterfly showing off their Pride was found on the sashay route.

# PRIDE Parade and Festival

## PRIDE from page 1

to get bigger and better from here on out; this is just the beginning, and I can't wait to see where we go from here."

Echoing similar thoughts was his husband Jeffrey Hoess-Brooks, who was the inaugural Pride Parade Marshal.

"It's truly just an amazing day to be here, and just to take in the scope and magnitude of the parade, of when I look back, and see how far the parade goes, it just provides this sense and overwhelming moment of pride, that brings tears to my eyes, and I couldn't be more proud," Hoess-Brooks said, as he marched down Academy Street.

He then pivoted to the vision he and the rest of the CQC see for the future, which his husband, Ray, also highlighted.

"I feel we just want to continue to grow and make this one of the largest Pride parades in Western Mass and Hampden County, and the entire Pioneer Valley," he said.

Also marching alongside the array of contingents were local and state dignitaries, including Ward 1, Ward 2 and At-Large City Councilors Abigail Arriaga, Shane Brooks and Jessica Avery, along with State Sen. Jake Oliveira (D-Ludlow), who highlighted the magnitude and importance of Pride in Chicopee.

"I represent 12 communities, and each one of them celebrates Pride Month in a unique way," Oliveira said. "And here in the city of Chicopee, I'm just so glad that they're having a parade like this, and it really shows that the community comes together to support love and freedom."

Oliveira also took a moment to offer further insight into how the state legislature continues to implement efforts to protect the LGBTQ community.

"Right now, here in the Massachusetts legislature, we've been working very hard to make sure that we preserve and protect anybody that's a member of the LGBTQ community," Oliveira said. "We've taken efforts on the last couple of sessions to insulate ourselves from some changes in policies at the federal level, and we'll continue to do that."

The Parade finished at Szot Park just a little before 11 a.m. where upon arrival, countless vendors from Chicopee and beyond stood ready to welcome participants for an afternoon of activities.

### Pride Fest

After the parade concluded, the community gathered at Szot Park for a variety of festivities, which included



Members of the Hartford Gay Men's Chorus in a group photo.



Members of the community standing united holding the Pride flag.

remarks from Hoess-Brooks, Emcee Ruby Monroe, drag performances, the annual sashay, Dancing Witches – Shadows and Fire, Poet Liya Akoury, performances by the Queer Joy Collaborative Chorus, many vendors, food trucks including local staple Island Spice, a create your own flag station to create a Pride flag that matches your sexuality and/or gender identity and many more.

Amongst the vendors were the Hartford Gay Men's Chorus, with Robert Reader, the co-founder and executive director, explaining they got involved when the Hoess-Brooks's reached out to him, who have attended the concerts.

The group also has members from Western Massachusetts who perform.

Auditions will be coming up on Aug. 16 from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Unitarian Society of Hartford.

"We are just wrapping up our 14th season and next year is our 15th anniversary celebration which we are really excited about. So, the idea started at a conversation around a kitchen table in Manchester, Connecticut, with the other co-founder which was J.D. Bauer. In 2012 we announced it and we got the word out pretty much through social

media," Reader said. "Lo and behold, people showed up for auditions and we audition and sang in our first concert 24 people, and from there, the chorus has continued to grow every single year and we just performed in our spring concert. We had 55 members perform. We hope to reach 60 as we celebrate our 15th anniversary and I think we're going to get there."

Reader said being at the festival that "it means Pride, it means celebration."

"For us, one of our hashtag mottos is Chosen Family. We as a membership feel we are a chosen family," Reader said. "It also is community to us. We want to be part of the community and show our support. So, that's why we come to Pride events."

Author Penny Fox took part in the Author Stroll hosted by H.B. Real Estate back in December 2025 and was invited back to this event, showing off her gay romance novels.

"It's just been great. I come from a city that does this, but this is on a much bigger scale and it's just really amazing to be able to do this all over the state honestly," Fox said. "I have a child that's trans so I'm big on supporting him and being in the community and I just love seeing everybody in their element being



Poet Liya Akoury shares her poetry.

happy and being themselves." Fox also noted how gay romances are getting popular right now, with a variety covering all sexualities and spectrums.

"I think it's really important because I've had a lot of people tell me that they didn't expect to see books here and reading in general is important and especially now that there are other options for people to read about themselves in books, I think that's really important," Fox said.

Matthew Gower, general board member and actor, and Julia Adamo, board member and actor, are part of the "Why's It Gotta Be?" Theatre Group which started in September 2025 and held their first show in May called "LegoLand."

Their next events are "A Midsummer Night's Dream" in November and "Say Something" in July which is where people can share short-form performances including scenes and monologues.

Gower was excited to meet new people and connect with the community.

"I think that the energy here is its top tier. It's a lot of needed stuff that I think is going on too between different conversations, to have different lives to be seen, different people to be seen on stage and have everybody coming around that are genuinely excited about our space," Gower said. "We've had a lot of joy just people coming up, 'Oh that's so different, that's so new, it makes me excited to be in artistic spaces again.' That is the best feeling and I think that's what been the best about tabling the event today and other events that we've done too. It's the camaraderie and the community."

For Adamo, meeting the challenging moment and having a space for the community is important.

"I think it's important



One of the drag performers dances with an attendee.



Willow Hearth of Willow's Creatures was among the many craft vendors.



First Congregational Church U.C.C. members walking with their banner down the streets of the city.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY KRISTIN RIVERS & BRENDAN ROONEY  
Attendees show off their Pride as they take part in the sashay.

to have spaces that are about celebration and joy. Allowing different aspects of your identity—in this case, queerness—be something that we all just get together to celebrate without that outside pressure or stress," Adamo said.

Their messages were one of gratitude to the community.

"Keep going and keep doing what you're doing because it's clear that the community thrives while here in the city of Chicopee alone and just

continue spreading joy because I think everybody needs that now more than ever," Gower said.

"To everyone, keep being you and keep being your authentic self because there is space for that. There are always spaces for that and this event is proof that there's a thriving space for celebrating queer joy," Adamo said. "Keep being you and keep being authentic."



The Queer Joy Collaborative Chorus performs.