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The Journal Register

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com June 26, 2025 | Vol. CLXXIV, No. 22 | \$1.00 www.journalregister.turley.com

MONSON

School Committee approves Summerfest

By Abigail McCoy
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MONSON – The Monson School Committee met on June 11 for a full session that addressed leadership reorganization, a significant preschool restructuring proposal, community concerns about financial transparency, and highlights from a recent international student trip. The meeting, the first since the town’s annual election, demonstrated both the Committee’s internal focus on educational improvement and the community’s demand for greater fiscal accountability.

Leadership reorganization

The Committee began with its annual leadership elections. Allison Morgan was unanimously re-elected as Chair, with members offering praise for her steady guidance over the past year. Colleen Flynn voiced her support, stating that Morgan had done “a fantastic job,” while Morgan accepted the role with humor, joking that she wasn’t even given the chance to decline. Karen Nothe-Valley was unanimously elected Vice Chair, and Peter Wiggins was appointed Secretary, agreeing to finalize meeting minutes he had been managing. Due to the full agenda, the Committee postponed assigning liaisons, though Wiggins suggested relying on last year’s appointments for the time being.

Mission and Vision affirmed

Committee member Jamie Murphy read aloud the school district’s mission and vision statements. The mission focuses on maximizing learning and maintaining high standards to develop responsible, productive global

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PALMER

Movie night kicks off SUMMER

By Abigail McCoy
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PALMER – This summer, the Palmer Public Library’s Youth Advisory Board is bringing a new kind of community outreach to neighborhoods across town with its Summer Movie Nights in the Park series, featuring free outdoor film screenings at different parks throughout Palmer. The first screening, Barbie, kicked off Friday, June 20 at Legion Field, behind the old Converse Middle School, with the movie starting at dusk.

The idea began with Olivia Chartrand, Youth Services Librarian and director of the Youth Advisory Board, who was looking for creative ways to bring the library to residents who may not regularly make the trip to Main Street. “Palmer tends to kind



Turley photo by Abigail McCoy
Director of the Youth Advisory Board Olivia Chartrand with the various members of the board running the concession stand.

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HOLLAND

Water ski collective hosts adaptive ski event

By Abigail McCoy
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HOLLAND – With bright skies above and the calm waters of Hamilton Reservoir shimmering be-

low, more than 20 individuals with physical and cognitive disabilities gathered on Thursday, June 19, for a day they would not soon forget. The Webster Water Ski Collective (WWSC), in

partnership with Team Hoyt New England and the Aqua Riders of Holland, hosted the 3rd Annual Team Hoyt New England Adaptive Ski Day, kicking off the group’s sixth season of adaptive wa-

ter skiing.

Held at the private ski site of the Aqua Riders in Holland, the all-day event brought together participants, families, and over two dozen volunteers to deliver not just recreation, but freedom, empowerment, and community.

“Every event brings new smiles, new breakthroughs, and reinforces our commitment to providing life-changing recreational opportunities for people of all abilities,” said Ryan Desroches, Director of Adaptive Skiing at WWSC and one of the organization’s founding members.

WWSC was formed in 2019 by a small group of recreational skiers who met on the waters of Webster Lake. By 2020, inspired by a visit

to the Leaps of Faith Adaptive Skiers in Connecticut, they had launched their own adaptive skiing program and incorporated as a nonprofit. For Linda Candela, also a founding member and director, the journey has been deeply personal.

“Water skiing is a sport that demands you to be completely present,” Candela said. “All your cares and worries go out of your head. And I’ve learned in life that the only thing better than having a passion is sharing it.”

Candela describes the program as a purpose-driven labor of love, one that combines the exhilaration of water sports with the power of inclusion. “To be able to al-

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Turley photo by Abigail McCoy

Two trained skiers ride alongside a participant to make sure if anything happens on the water they are able to help as soon as possible.

MONSON

First Church hosts ‘bike blessing’

By Abigail McCoy
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MONSON – The morning air was filled with the rumble of engines and the spirit of fellowship as First

Church of Monson welcomed bikers from across the region to its inaugural Bike Blessing and Ride. With chrome shining in the sun and riders gathering in leather and denim, the event offered a unique

mix of community, faith, and motorcycle culture, marking what church leaders hope will become an annual tradition.

Led by Reverend Doctor Holly Norwick, First Church has been working to connect with residents of all backgrounds through events like Coffee with Clergy, community meals, and now, a celebration that speaks directly to the town’s growing biker community.

“This is the kind of event that reminds people that the church can meet them wherever they are, on a pew or a motorcycle,” Norwick said.

The idea for the event came from Rev. Norwick herself; she worked in conjunction with local biker clubs to help organize the ride and blessings. A newcomer to riding herself, Norwick has found inspiration in the camaraderie and spirit of the biker community, and saw an opportunity to bring those val-



Turley photo by Abigail McCoy

Rev. Holly Norwick joined in on the ride to Westview Creamery after the blessings to the bikes.

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MONSON



Turley photo by Abigail McCoy

The Monson Lion’s Club showed up with a tent selling snow cones and cotton candy.

Town rings in summer with fireworks

By Abigail McCoy
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MONSON – The skies over Monson lit up once again as the town’s Mini Summerfest Fireworks event launched the summer celebration season in spectacular fashion. Held on a sweltering June 21 evening with

parking opening at 5 p.m., the event featured live music, food vendors, and a robust community turnout; the result of months of planning by the all-volunteer Summerfest Committee. At the heart of it all is Steve Slozak, who has served as the chairman of the Summerfest Committee since 2010 and has been

involved since 2001. His long-standing dedication to the event, and to the community, is evident in every detail, from logistics to legacy.

SUMMER | page 9



Maestro in our Midst: Francesco ‘Cicci’ Santucci

By Patricia Sullivan
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - At age 86, trumpet player Francesco “Cicci” Santucci still plays the music he loves for four hours every day in the Wilbraham home he shares with his wife, Susele Luzi.

“With the trumpet the most important thing is the muscles here,” he says, gesturing toward his mouth. “I have to do it to keep in shape.”

“He rarely misses a day,” confirms Luzi.

It’s this dedication and his passion for music that gave Santucci a spectacularly long and successful career as a trumpeter in his native Italy. He’s played with many all-time jazz greats, recorded extensively for film and television and performed all over the world—even in Siberia.

He’s now rehearsing for two performances with the Old Post Road Orchestra of Western Massachusetts. OPRO will play music from the top 100 films of all time at June shows in Monson and Springfield.

Santucci, who studied composition for seven years, arranged music from “The Godfather” for the upcoming shows. He has a personal connection to the score, having played for “Godfather” composer Nino Rota on several film scores in Italy.

OPRO Conductor Alexandria Black was enthralled by Santucci’s take. “He presented it in a jazzy way I’ve never heard before,” Black said.

“In our first rehearsal, Cicci was ready to go and ripping the most amazing ad libs

and runs,” Black continued. “As an ensemble musician he’s been incredible to work with and brought a lot of pizzazz to the orchestra. As a soloist, he blew me away.”

After the June performances with OPRO, Santucci will return to Italy to play with his musician friends, as he does several times a year. This summer he’ll perform in and around Rome with jazz pianist Luca Jacovella.

An Early Ear for Jazz

Santucci’s lifelong love of jazz began when he was a toddler. After World War II, the American Army had an encampment on his family’s property in the Abruzzo.

The soldiers would come to the family’s home every night to play records on the Santucci’s wind-up gramophone.

Jazz was a little-known in Italy then. Sitting on his mother’s knee, four-year-old Cicci was enraptured by Glenn Miller, Benny Goodman and Louis Armstrong.

“I started my life hearing this kind of music,” he says, and hums a few notes of Miller’s “Moonlight Serenade.”

At age 12, after watching back-to-back screenings of Kirk Douglas in the film “Young Man with a Horn,” Santucci asked his father to buy him a trumpet.



Turley photos by Patricia Sullivan
Cicci Santucci with the trumpet he once loaned to his friend, American jazz legend Chet Baker. Inset, pins from Italy adorn Santucci’s lapel.

“It was a horrible instrument,” he recalls. “When I began to play seriously I sold it to a guy who made a lamp out of it.”

He was soon playing with a group of boys in his hometown of Lanciano. The young musicians piled into a hearse owned by one of their fathers to get to a gig in a neighboring town.

Cicci Goes Pro

At age 17, Santucci per-

formed in Rome’s first jazz festival; his professional career took off quickly. He played in many festivals and recorded records with The Modern Jazz Gang. He recorded and toured the world with musician Romano Mussolini—yes, the dictator’s son.

“He was a wonderful pianist,” recalls Santucci.

Through the years, Santucci’s talent also brought him work with jazz greats Li-

onel Hampton, Archie Shepp, Dexter Gordon and many others.

In 1970, Santucci became the trumpet soloist for the Italian broadcasting network RAI, where he worked for 22 years.

“In those days, I was very, very busy,” he recalls. “I was on the radio every day from 10 am to 2 pm. After that we’d go to the studio and record for movies, television or pop songs, everything.”

And in the evening he’d often jam with friends, among them jazz legend Chet Baker.

Santucci remembers the time Baker asked to borrow his Martin trumpet. Baker promised to return the instrument in a couple of months, but kept it for three years.

“The only satisfaction was that Chet Baker was playing my horn,” Santucci says. He still plays that trumpet today.

Movie Music

Santucci’s versatility and skill at improvisation brought him decades of work on movie scores. He worked with his friend, Ennio Morricone, one of the world’s greatest film composers, on several projects, including “The Legend of 1900” and “The Mission.” He has a haunting flugelhorn solo in Morricone’s score for “Bugsy.”

Santucci recalled that on one film, “I arrived in the studio and Morricone gave music to everyone but not to me. He said ‘Look at the screen. Play what you want!’ And I did. It was all improvising.”

His trumpet can be heard on “Life is Beautiful,” “Tie

Me Up! Tie Me Down!” “Malena,” and more films than he can name.

Life in America

Santucci met his wife, Wilbraham native Susele Luzi, in 1997 at a jazz club while she was teaching English in Rome.

“He asked me for a lesson and since I had a crush on him I said I’d do it in exchange for dinner,” Luzi recalls. “He took me out to dinner every night for three months and that was it.”

They moved to Western Massachusetts to be near Luzi’s family shortly after they married 20 years ago.

Santucci is happy to split his time between their apartment in Rome and home in Wilbraham. “For us musicians the United States was a dream,” he says.

He’s also content when he reflects on his long career. “The music gave me a lot of satisfaction and even the esteem of the top conductors in Italy,” he says. “I feel like I never worked.”

You can hear Santucci on the trumpet at two upcoming free family-friendly OPRO performances: June 20, 7:30 pm, at Memorial Hall on Main Street in Monson and June 22, 3 p.m., at Loomis-Lakeside at Reed’s Landing in Springfield.

The Monson concert is supported in part by a grant from the Monson Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency. The Loomis-Lakeside concert is supported in part by Loomis-Lakeside at Reeds Landing.

Keep hosts ice cream social on July 6

MONSON – Plan to visit to the Keep Homestead Museum on July 6 from 1 to 3:30 p.m. for the Ice Cream Social. Come and enjoy making a sundae with Rondeau’s ice cream and various toppings.

While enjoying your sundae creation, enjoy the musical entertainment featuring FROZEN RED – Rose Higgins, Fred Higgins, Finlay Higgins (guitar) and Camille

Collins Lovell (fiddle). They will be playing traditional folk music.

Then tour the museum to view new exhibits. Plan to visit the gift shop where handmade note cards featuring buttons are for sale.

All are welcome to this FREE event though donations are welcome. A fun way to end your Independence Day celebration.

Conservation, Land Management info session July 9

STURBRIDGE – Are you a landowner that is worried about what will happen to your land in the future? Are you unsure of how to care for and manage your land now? Determining how to best care for and protect your land can be overwhelming. But there are resources available to

help chart your course! MassConn Sustainable Forest Partnership, Town of Sturbridge, and Department of Conservation and Recreation presents Your Land, Your Legacy: Planning for the Future of Your Land, a conservation and land management information session happening July 9th at 12:30 PM at the Sturbridge Senior Center, 480 Main St, Sturbridge.

Landowners are invited to this free forum to learn about tools that can help you accomplish your goals and care for your land now and in the future. This workshop, presented

with support from Opacum Land Trust, will answer all of your conservation and land management questions in one place. There will be opportunities to hear from local experts including the Sturbridge conservation agent, a DCR service forester, the town assessor, an experienced conservation landowner, Open Space Committee members, and more.

RSVP by June 30 to reserve your spot by emailing

AAdams@OpacumLT.org or by calling 508-347-9144. More information can also be found at www.opacumlt.org/events/.

The MassConn Sustainable Forest Partnership is a voluntary association of land trusts, conservation organizations, municipal, state and federal agencies, and foresters serving a region of 38 towns spanning the border of South-Central Massachusetts and North-eastern Connecticut.



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Brimfield Winery hosts *Friday night car show*

By Abigail McCoy
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BRIMFIELD – On Friday nights throughout the summer, the fields at Brimfield Winery come alive not with grapes, but with gleaming chrome, revving engines, and the unmistakable soundtrack of the '50s and '60s. Hosted at 35 Main Street, these Friday Night Car Cruises have become a beloved local tradition; part show, part social gathering, and all heart.

“This isn’t about trophies or competitions,” said Bruce Marshall, known around the region through his show Cruisin’ with Bruce. “It’s a casual night where car lovers can hang out, share stories, grab something to eat, and maybe take home a bottle of wine.”

Marshall, owner and general manager of Valley’s Classic Hits 97.7 FM, has been running car shows for over 21 years. The Friday Cruise Nights at Brimfield Winery started just before the pandemic and have grown steadily ever since. “We’re here every Friday night, weather permitting. It’s about people coming together to share their passion for cars and connect with each other.”

And come together they do, from seasoned collectors to new enthusiasts proudly displaying their rides.

Josh Morin brought his 1930 Chevrolet, a car he’s maintained since his retirement 15 years ago. “I’ve been into cars since I was a child,” he said, standing proudly beside his vintage vehicle.

Ryan Hughes, just 22, rolled in with his 1982 Chevy Camaro Indy Race Car. “I’ve been into cars my whole life. My first word was ‘car,’” he laughed. “This is my first time bringing one of my own to a cruise night like this. It’s a great feeling.”

Mark Stanikmas, another regular, showed off his 1971 Buick GS. “I’ve had it for five years,” he said. “Always been into cars...as long as I’ve known.”

For Marshall, the setting is as much a draw as the vehicles. “The wine slushies are a big hit,” Marshall said. “People come out, unwind after a long week, talk about their cars, and listen to great music. It’s a relaxing kickoff to the weekend.”

The Brimfield Winery itself adds a special charm to the experience. Founded by Kate and Rusty Corriveau, the winery has been open for seven seasons and continues to grow. “We started with six wines, now we’re up to eight,” said Kate Corriveau. “The grapes are from Suisun Valley in California, so it’s like drinking California wine, made here in Massachusetts.”

In addition to wine, the Corriveaus produce ciders from locally sourced apples and have recently added a brewery license, allowing them to offer local beer as well.

“Every year, we try to build on what we’re doing; more events and more offerings,” Corriveau explained. “We host tribute band concerts, fundraisers, and special

events. This year, we’re especially excited to finally open our historic barn for guest seating.”

The barn, dating back to the mid-1800s, has been painstakingly restored and re-faced with original barn board inside. “It’s been a labor of love,” said Corriveau.

That spirit of community and collaboration carries over into the Friday cruises, which serve as a warm-up to the winery’s biggest event of the year: the massive October Car Show, held annually on the second Saturday of the month. With over 800 cars and thousands of spectators, the show raises funds for Hitchcock Free Academy and the Brimfield Fire Department.

“The fall show is huge,” said Corriveau. “But nights like these: laid-back, fun, and full of connection, are what make this place special.”

The Friday Cruise Nights continue throughout the summer, with food trucks like Cote’s Cooks at the June 20 show and Off the Hook Roadside Eatery (June 27) offering local fare. There will be no cruises on July 4 or July 11, but the lineup resumes after that.

Guests are welcome to bring their own food, though supporting on-site food vendors is encouraged. No outside alcohol is permitted, but the winery’s tasting room and bottle sales are open for those looking to sip something special while strolling the rows of muscle cars, hot rods, and vintage classics.

Whether you’re a lifelong gearhead or just looking for a good time on a summer evening, Brimfield’s Friday Night Car Cruises promise nostalgia, good music, and even better company.



Fancy vintage cars are lined up in the field behind the Brimfield Winery as their owners drink wine and converse with fellow car people.



Tom Briatta with his 1970 Scarlett Buick.



Car enthusiasts gather together with food, alcohol, and music at the Brimfield Winery Auction Acres.



Josh Morin with his 1930 Chevrolet, bought 15 years ago when he retired.



Ryan Hughes at his first car meet as a participant with the 1982 Chevy Camaro Indie Race car he got a year ago.



Mark Stanikmas with his 1971 Buick GS.

Turley photos by Abigail McCoy

Monson Public Schools - School Choice

Grade Level	Number of Slots Available
Pre-K	0
Kindergarten	6
1st Grade	6
2nd Grade	2
3rd Grade	6
4th Grade	3
5th Grad	5
6th Grade	0
7th Grade	3
8th Grade	6
9th Grade	10
10th Grade	0
11th Grade	0
12th Grade	0

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Visit our website to learn more about Monson Schools' dedication to continuous improvement at <http://www.monsonschools.com>



Belchertown Public Schools School Choice PROGRAM 2025-2026 School Year

The Belchertown Public School District is now accepting applications for the following School Choice openings for the 2025-2026 school year:

Grade K	2	Grade 7	10
		Grade 8	10
		Grade 9	5
		Grade 10	5

The Belchertown Public Schools combine innovation and tradition to provide positive educational experiences for all of our students through quality programs, dynamic teaching and healthy relationships.

The deadline for submitting a **complete** application is 4:00 p.m. **on Friday, July 18, 2025.**

The selection of non-resident students for admission will be in the form of a random drawing when the number of requests exceeds the number of available spaces. There will be two drawings for this purpose. The first will take place on July 18, 2025, and in the event of unexpected additional openings, a second drawing will be conducted on August 22, 2025.

The application and guidelines can be downloaded at www.belchertownps.org or picked up at 14 Maple St., Belchertown, MA 01007.

The Belchertown School District does not discriminate in the admission of any child on the basis of age, sex, gender identity, race, religion, color, national origin, sexual orientation or ancestry, athletic performance, physical handicap, special need, academic performance, disability or proficiency in the English language in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Viewpoints

SOCIAL SECURITY Matters

By Russell Gloor

What about non-career Veterans and their VA healthcare?

Dear Rusty:

In your answer to the retired U.S. Navy veteran about why he is forced to enroll in Medicare, you focused on military TriCare's requirement for the member to enroll in Medicare. But you said nothing about regular VA health care. If a non-career veteran is eligible for VA health care, couldn't that be used in place of Medicare?

Signed: Veteran Advocate

Dear Veteran Advocate:

Thank you for your feedback. FYI, I have previously explained numerous times that veterans who rely on the VA for 100% of their healthcare can, indeed, disenroll from Medicare Part B (thus saving the monthly Part B premium). I don't personally recommend it because of my personal experience, but it certainly is possible to do so.

Personally, I use the VA for some of my healthcare needs usually an annual checkup and optometry services at my local VA clinic, which is only a mile away from where I live. But for any extensive treatment needs medical tests, etc., I must travel about 40 miles to the nearest VA hospital facility.

For contrast, I have numerous private healthcare services, specialists and hospitals very near where I live, but to use them under the VA I must get VA preapproval and use only certain VA approved providers, which is inconvenient for me.

Personally, I prefer the freedom to go to any healthcare service provider I choose, without restriction, at any time I need to. So, I use my VA coverage when it is convenient for me, but rely also on non-VA, Medicare-approved specialists who I can choose to use or not at will. For me, it's a matter of convenience and the freedom to use whichever healthcare provider I want.

That said, I fully understand that some veterans rely exclusively on the VA for their healthcare

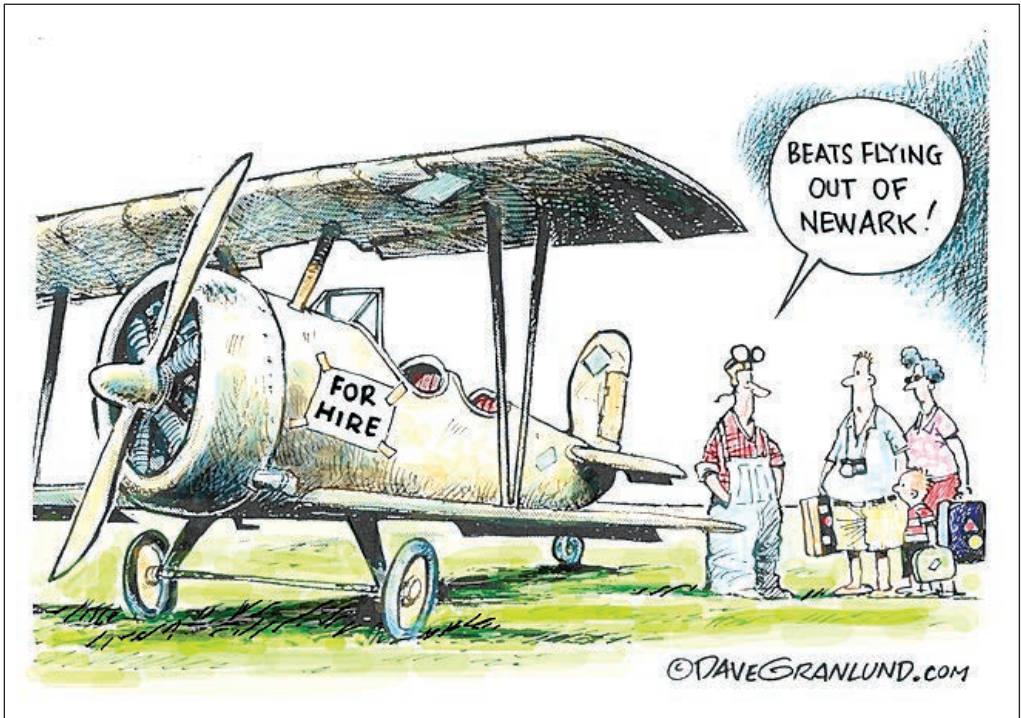
needs, and I have explained to many who have written to me that they have that option. I have also published several public articles about this as well. Here is one such article:

https://socialsecurityreport.org/ask-rusty-why-should-a-veteran-pay-for-medicare/

So, please rest assured that we regularly advise our veterans about their healthcare options under Medicare, including the ability to decline Medicare Part B coverage if they have full VA healthcare coverage. FYI, free Medicare Part A (inpatient hospitalization coverage) is mandatory to collect Social Security after age 65, but Medicare Part B coverage is always optional because there is a premium associated with Part B.

A veteran can decline Medicare Part B coverage and save that monthly premium, but they would need to contact Social Security to do so. Social Security will want to interview the veteran to ensure they are aware of the potential financial consequences of not having Medicare Part B. And they may need to file form CMS-1763 Request for Termination. But a non-career veteran can opt out of Medicare Part B if they get all of their healthcare services through the Veterans Administration.

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



Renovate your strawberry patch and divide those irises, too

I started over with new strawberry plants this year, but for those of you who are completing your harvest, it's high time to renovate your patch so that it will remain productive.

Sure, it will be hard work, but it's absolutely necessary if you want to keep the berries coming!

First, get up the courage to run the lawnmower over your row of strawberries. Yes, you heard correctly. This will give you an opportunity to see what you have to work with in a dense planting, as well as cut down on foliar diseases.

Set the mower at a height of two and a half to three inches and use the bagger attachment if you have one. Small plantings can be clipped away by hand. Compost the leaves away from your patch.

Now, assess your surroundings and think back to when you were doing all that picking. Was your back sore from reaching in to a very wide row? Were most of your berries on the small side? If you answered yes to both of these questions, then serious renovation is in order.

Use the tiller or a shovel to shrink your row back to a manageable width. Fourteen inches is about as wide as the experts recommend. Choose the healthiest part of your row and measure out fourteen inches. Then, remove all the runners that have emerged outside of the boundaries.

Those of us in the business of growing things usually find this part difficult. "Can't just this one stay?" Ease your guilt by giving away the extras; or, use them to start another patch.

Next, get rid of any "mother" plants that are four

years or older. Unfortunately, they have aged beyond their productivity. Simply dig them up and send them off to the compost pile.

Finally, remove daughter plants that are spaced closer than four inches from one another- another difficult task, but one that must be accomplished if we want large, healthy berries. As you work within the row, be sure to eradicate any and all weeds that you come upon, since these will compete with your strawberry plants for moisture and nutrients.

Now that your patch has been renovated, it's time to reinvigorate. Add an inch or two of compost or aged manure to the row, along with a sprinkling of balance organic fertilizer.

Water at least every other day for the next couple of weeks or until a healthy stand of leaves has returned to the plants. Keep up with weeding, and continue to pinch back runners until frost hits.

Managed in this fashion, a strawberry patch can remain productive for five years or more.

Another favorite plant that may be in need of reinvigoration is your iris. If once upon a time they bloomed strong and now there is barely a blossom to be seen, chances are they are overcrowded. It's time to divide them and replenish their soil.

In our climate, this should be accomplished every three or four years. Surprisingly, and unlike most

other perennials, division of irises should take place no later than July or August.

This will give them ample time to take hold in their new location prior to the ground freezing.

At first glance the act of dividing irises may appear to be difficult. An overgrown iris patch does look like a maze of thick roots, but take heart, the rhizomes are shallow rooted and come out of the ground with relative ease.

Start digging at the outer edge of the clump, lifting as you go. Once the entire clump is removed, rhizomes can be pried apart by hand. The healthiest "fans" of foliage are those the furthest from the center. Leave about two inches of rhizome attached to each fan for replanting.

If you are changing your site altogether, keep in mind that irises need at least six hours of full sun a day for optimal flowering. They despise "wet feet," so plant where drainage is good.

If your soil is lean, compost can be added to richen it up. While you're at it, add a sprinkling of lime as well; irises prefer a soil near neutral. Dig a shallow hole wide enough to fit the rhizome. Make a ridge of soil in the hole for it to sit on so that its fibrous roots can hang down.

The top of the rhizome should be level with the soil surface and exposed, not buried. This goes for bark mulch as well, keep it clear or blooms may be sacrificed. If your irises hardly flower but aren't overcrowded and are planted where they receive enough sun, assess your planting depth and adjust if necessary.

Examine your rhizomes



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The Journal Register (USPS 418-940) is published every Thursday by Turley Publications, Inc., 24 Water St., Palmer, Mass. 01069. Telephone (413) 283-8393, Fax (413) 289-1977. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Journal Register, 24 Water St., Palmer, Mass. 01069.



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Letters to the editor should be 250 words or less in length, and guest columns between 500-800 words. No unsigned or anonymous opinions will be published. We require that the person submitting the opinion also include his or her town of residence and home telephone number. We must confirm authorship prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions deemed to be libelous, unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks, or defamation of character.

Please send opinions to:
The Journal Register
Letter to the Editor
24 Water St., Palmer MA 01069,
or by e-mail to:
journalregister@turley.com

The submission deadline for consideration is Monday at noon.

Election letters to the editor welcome

The Journal 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 The Journal Register, care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to 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 The Journal Register.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Where is the small town funding

Letter to the Editor:

As the state's FY26 budget limps its way to the finish line, I worry. With 8,150 residents, according to the 2020 Census, my hometown of Monson registers as #207 out of the Commonwealth's 351 municipalities. Monson is a rural community renowned for its granite and 2011 tornado. When challenged, its citizens generally help each other. Travelers headed south to Connecticut needing directions are more often than not provided to such by our walkers and joggers.

Like many, if not most, rural towns in Massachusetts, Monson has very limited revenue streams. Experiences with federal stimulus or other windfall allocations, as well as previous state formula awards, have been appreciated yet temporary subsidies. Unfortunately, they created unsustainable dependencies when applied without regard for their non-reoccurring sources.

Inflationary reality conflicts with likely future revenues and expenses. Unless significant new tech-

niques are introduced, Monson will find itself more underwater than Dana, Enfield, Greenwich, and Prescott. Proposition 2 and 1/2 limitations will simply not cover the ledger. The general public has its own cash spending restrictions and seldom encourages override or significant debt exemptions. Ignoring the anticipated consequences is foolhardy. New brainstorming, creative strategies, and greater efficiencies will be required.

When former Governor Charlie Baker assumed office, he in-

troduced practical co-operation partnerships, which led to shared endeavors. For example, where the major secretariats for labor, education, housing, and finance had traditionally functioned independently of each other, Baker blended them with practitioners on various working subcommittees. These cross-pollinated specialists identified new approaches to long-standing issues. Local boards might consider such collaboration.

How might that look at the local lev-

el? For example, the Chairs of the Finance, School Committee, Conservation Commission, and Board of Assessors would convene to shape a forward-focused blueprint. After first re-examining the 2021 comprehensive Department of Revenue Local Services Financial Management Review Report, these key leaders could explore their ability to build a proposal. Such a plan would need to be sensitive to the ecological, environmental, and overall rustic nature of the community yet address the realities of

sorely needed new revenue streams.

My previous letter to the editor recommended the pursuit of earmarks via the FY 25 Surtax Supplemental [Millionaires Tax] source. Statehouse reports indicate the Governor is expected to sign this \$1.4 billion spending as I write this message. Unfortunately, Monson does not appear to be included in this alternative local tax funding. Hopefully, it will be in the next cycle

Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick
Monson

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

E-mail items to journalregister@turley.com or mail to Calendar Editor, Journal Register, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, for receipt by Monday of week for publication.

The Journal Register encourages readers to contact event coordinators and organizers for updated event times. Have an event to promote? Email the information (in sentence form and as a Word doc or plain email text – no PDFs or flyers, please – to journalregister@turley.com.

UPCOMING

WING MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
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JUNE VENDOR SALES
June 26 Thera Feet
June 30 Generations of Cookies

JULY VENDOR SALES
July 8 K and H Jewelry
July 14 Generations of Cookies
July 15 Wicked Good Treats
July 16 How Charming

AUGUST VENDOR SALES
August 5 K and H Jewelry
August 7 Sweets and Treats
August 12 Wicked Good Treats
August 18 Generations of Cookes
August 19 Hobbit Hollow Herbs
August 20 How Charming

ONGOING

THURSDAYS - WESTERN BRIM LINE DANCE
CLASSES 6:30 - 7:30 & 7:30 -8:30, \$10 for one lesson or both!
location: Brimfield Winery 35 Main Street. Brimfield. Check brimfieldwinery.com for any variations. (no classes July 10)

Fridays: - FRIDAY NIGHT CAR CRUISES with Bruce Marshall 4 pm - 9 p.m., come check out the amazing car collection. Brimfield Winery 35 main st. Brimfield.

UPCOMING:

June 29 & July 27, 11 am - noon. Barre class at Brimfield Winery by Rebecca Lehman - reserve on facebook- brimfield winery/events.

JULY 17, Guided Wine & French Macaron Pairing Experience at Brimfield Winery, 6-8 p.m. Tickets online:<https://brimfieldwineandmacaron.eventbrite.com/>.

July 19 10 - 4:00 PM PAWS 4 BLUE K-9 3rd ANNUAL FUNDRAISER & CRAFT FAIR

July 26 - 4 p.m. - St. Christopher's Chicken BBQ at Old Home Day- Brimfield Winery 35 Main St Brimfield. Ticket info at St.Christopher's 413-245-7274 or online brimfieldwinery.com/events.

July 31: Southern Rain plays at Western Brim, Brimfield Winery 35, Main Street, Brimfield.

ONGOING

CRAFTERNOONS: Drop in 2-4 p.m. daily at the Holland Public Library, 23 Sturbridge Road to learn or practice different crafts. There are new crafts every Wednesday. For more information, call 413-245-3607.

KEEP HOMESTEAD MUSEUM: Located at 35 Ely Rd., Monson, nature trails are open daily until dusk for hiking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. Trail maps can be found in the parking lot. The Phillips Sculpture Garden is open year-round (handouts in box on one of the signposts). For more information call 413-267-4137, email khn@keephomesteadmuseum.org or visit keephomesteadmuseum.org.

QUABOAG VALLEY QUILTERS GUILD: Members meet at 1 p.m. on the first and third Thursdays of the month in the Amvets post at 2150 Main St., Three Rivers. The Guild is a no-pressure group with varying degrees of accomplishments,

from novice to Big E “Best In Show” winners. Dues are \$55 a year. For more information, contact Barbara Beaulieu at 267-4044 or Merry Mombourquette at 283-7577. Follow them on Facebook for more.

LINE DANCING CLASS: 3-5 p.m. and/or 6:30-8:30 p.m., every Thursday at the Monson Polish Club, 7 Bliss St, Monson. Rose's line dancing classes include absolute beginners and beginners, and participants get to dance to all types of music. \$10 per class. Please wear comfortable footwear, no sandals.

GAME NIGHT: 6-7:45 p.m. the second Tuesday of every month at Top Floor Learning (third floor of the Palmer Library at 1455 N. Main St.). Free and open to the public. Play available board and card games or bring your own. Must be 16 or older unless accompanied by an adult. No Registration Required – just show up! Questions? Call 283-2329, or 283-3691, or email palewis19@yahoo.com.

NOTCH VISITOR CENTER OPEN FOR WINTER SEASON: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Thursday-Monday. The center is located on Rt 116, at the center of the Holyoke Range State Park. DCR Interpretive staff will be available for visitors. Coming in January, programs will also be offered to highlight the Range's special nature in winter, see the park web site for details.

QI GONG: Qi Gong at Monson Free Library with Randy Emerson. Every Tuesday from 5:45 to 6:45 p.m.

WALES CHURCH FARMER'S MARKET - Located in the church pavilion across from the post office on the corner of Route 19 and Monson Road. Every Saturday morning from 9 a.m - noon. It will run throughout the summer until Labor Day. We offer homemade baked goods, local honey, crafts, flea market items, antiques, and fruits and vegetables when in season. Vendors welcome and there is no charge to set up a table.

Viewpoints

The Pemi Loop at sixty

By Julie Midura
Guest Columnist

Last December, I got this harebrained idea to do something CRAZY for my birthday this June. It would be my way of proving to myself that ‘60’ isn’t as old as it sounds in my head.

The Pemi Loop-called “the 2nd hardest day hike in the United States” by Backpacker Magazine-is a 32-mile hike that encircles the largest wilderness area in the White Mountains of NH. With 10 summits and 10,500 feet of elevation gain-along with technical climbs and descents-completing this rugged hike in one day would be the hardest endurance challenge I had ever attempted. As such, it would require significant training.

But in January, just one month after the idea took hold, life took a turn when our 1-year-old granddaughter, Charlotte, was diagnosed with inoperable brain cancer. Three months later, in April, our middle daughter's high risk pregnancy with twins became more serious when both babies were diagnosed with heart issues. The nail in the coffin came in May, when our 160-mile backpacking trip on the A.T. through NJ and NY-my one and final opportunity to train for the Pemi Loop-ended just 6 days in. Our youngest daughter had been rushed to the ER with a life-threatening pregnancy complication and was forced to deliver the baby five weeks early. (Mom and baby are now doing well.)

Over the last 6 months,

our family has needed us, and my time has been better spent being there for the people I love, rather than spending my weekends training for an epic endurance hike. So I shelved the idea of a solo, single-day Pemi Loop in favor of completing a ‘leisurely’ three-day Pemi Loop backpacking trip with my husband instead. After all, we wouldn’t really need to TRAIN for it... would we?

The short answer, as we discovered last weekend, is “Yes, you DID need to train for it, you fools!”

Although our bodies most definitely took a beating, weary legs and several falls were a small price to pay for admission.

Because I have no desire to carefully preserve this now sixty-year-old body. I prefer to use it up until there is nothing left. To wring out every last bit of my youth on adventures and experiences such as this. You see, although our bodies most assuredly have a shelf life, there are parts of us that will forever remain ageless. And I plan to carry the best parts of my younger self into my older years. I plan to worry less about ‘acting my age’ and spend more time celebrating it. I plan to scramble up steep rock ledges. Watch the sun rise and set from mountaintops. Sleep in the wilderness. Slow dance on summits. Kiss... even when someone is watching.

I plan to slide into the next decade, battered, bruised and bandaged, all while yelling, “Dang, what an amazing ride!”

So on our final day of the trip, I was disappointed to hear Tom say, “I hate to tell you this, but this will be my last Pemi Loop.”

However, he said the same exact thing two years ago when we completed our FOURTH Pemi Loop. I’m secretly hoping that hiker amnesia kicks in again in two years when he turns 70. Because don’t you agree that there’s no

better place to become a septuagenarian than on a walk around the largest wilderness area in New Hampshire?

See you in the wild places, my friends!



Submitted photos

GARDEN | from page 4

closely when replanting. If you notice a lot of soft, rotten tissue, your iris patch could be infected with the iris borer.

Usually by midsummer, one to one and a half inch larvae have made their way from the leaves into the rhizomes. They hollow out the fleshy roots causing foliage to collapse and rot to take over. Control this pest by proper sanitation.

In the fall, after a hard frost, cut iris foliage back to the ground as low as possible. Throw it and any nearby debris or mulch away. With any luck, overwintering eggs will be removed by your efforts.

In the spring, about the time that the tulips are blooming, inspect iris foliage for chewn edges, small holes, or tan colored water marks running down the leaf. If these are present, tiny larvae can be crushed inside the leaf before they burrow into the rhizome.

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.

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Eagle Scouts offer to improve access at conservation area

By Abigail McCoy
amccoy@turley.com

PALMER – At its June 17 meeting, the Palmer Conservation Commission tackled a wide-ranging agenda that included vegetation management along CSX rail lines, community-led conservation projects, and a controversial 24-lot subdivision proposal. The commission, chaired by Donald Blais Jr., met with all members present except Commissioner Guidry.

CSX Vegetation Plan approved with environmental safeguards

The evening opened with a public hearing on CSX Transportation’s five-year Vegetation Management Plan, a routine environmental review along the railroad right-of-way. Due to scheduling challenges, a site visit could not be arranged, but the applicant provided photo documentation showing clearly marked treatment zones: yellow for “No Spray,” blue for one-year

limited spray areas (especially near wellheads), and purple for two-year surface spraying.

Wetland expansion due to beaver activity was noted along the corridor. A representative reassured the commission that “wellhead areas were the most protected,” a practice consistent with previous plans. The hearing was promptly closed at 6:34 p.m., and the commission unanimously issued a Positive 2A Determination (confirming the delineated resource areas) and a Negative Determination (indicating no further permitting required due to the project’s exemption).

Skyline Terrace projects continued pending state review

Two projects on Skyline Terrace, both submitted by Engineering & Land Solutions on behalf of Jeffrey Zabel, were continued to July 15 due to pending Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) comments. The projects involve replacing

existing trailers within the 200-foot riverfront area at 61 and 67 Skyline Terrace. Commissioners noted the similarity of both filings and opted to delay final action until all state materials were received.

Eagle Scout candidates offer conservation solutions

Two local Boy Scouts approached the commission with project proposals to satisfy their Eagle Scout requirements.

A young man named Steven, of Palmer Troop 264, expressed interest in improving public access at the Barker Street Conservation Area (also known as Red Bridge or Sunset Acres). The commission suggested he build two sets of “earth stairs” to stabilize steep slopes and potentially add handrails for safety. Another possible site was the First Street trail. “It’s a really good project,” one commissioner said. “You could just head up the project, and we could work with you on it too.”

A second scout, whose

name was not recorded, had already built bat houses and was advised to install them on poles near the Town Hall’s pollinator garden, rather than affixing them to trees.

Access obstructed near Bondsville Mill

Commissioner Dave reported on a resident’s concern that large trees had been felled and deliberately placed to block access to a town-owned parcel near the old Bondsville Mill bridge. The obstruction appears to stem from Northern Tree Service’s work for the railroad and seems intended to discourage ATV traffic. However, it also raises concerns about emergency vehicle access. “It’s definitely a pile of intentionally piled logs,” Dave said. “Nowhere else is there anything like that.” The issue remains under review.

Transmission line upgrade public hearing announced

The commission discussed the upcoming June 25 public hearing for the Palm-

er-to-Ware transmission line upgrade project, which involves replacing 147 utility poles with 112 steel structures over a 10.35-mile stretch through Palmer, West Brookfield, and Ware. Commissioners were encouraged to attend, review potential site impacts, and consider a field visit. The public comment period runs through July 11.

Community garden effort seeks fresh start

Residents have revived interest in establishing a community garden in Palmer. While previous efforts stalled due to poor soil conditions, lack of water access, and site limitations, the commission expressed cautious optimism. Chase Field, a previously discussed site, is still under consideration. “Without public support, we can’t really do any of these projects,” said one member. “But it’s a great opportunity, so we’ll do it.” Further discussion is expected at future meetings, with residents encouraged to attend.

Subdivision proposal met with passion, pushback

The meeting’s most emotionally charged topic came during a hearing for a proposed 24-lot open space residential subdivision on State Street, within both buffer zones and a 50-foot no-disturb wetland area. Applicant Brenda Videnkewitz, representing developers Shervin and Frederick, expressed frustration with her engineering firm’s delays and overbilling. “This project was almost stolen from me,” she said. “My grandfather’s name is on this. I told him I’d do this.”

Concerns arose over a newly identified vernal pool and the ecological impact of developing the sensitive area. One abutter, who owns 2,000 feet of frontage, voiced significant concerns. Videnkewitz plans to hire a new firm and resubmit materials, with the commission suggesting a site visit ahead of the continued hearing on July 15.



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Event Name _____

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Contact name & phone number for more information _____



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*Be sure to indicate "Autumn Event" in the subject line of your email.



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Rethreading the past: Vintage sewing machine meet brings community together

By Abigail McCoy
amccoy@turley.com

MONSON – On the sweltering afternoon of Sunday, June 22, the quiet halls of the Unitarian Universalist Parish in Monson, Massachusetts came to life with the gentle hum of antique sewing machines and the warm camaraderie of kindred spirits. At the heart of it is a growing collective dedicated to the preservation, restoration, and celebration of vintage sewing machines, and the stories they carry.

The Monthly Vintage Sewing Machine Meet, co-founded by Danielle McCauley and Mary Gelezunas in March 2023, has quickly become a vibrant grassroots effort to revive the art of sewing and reconnect people to craftsmanship, sustainability, and heritage.

"I've collected antique sewing machines for many years," said Gelezunas, a longtime parish member. "When I met Danielle through Facebook Marketplace over a Singer cabinet, we immediately connected. Now we've built a whole community."

In a world increasingly defined by disposable goods and digital disconnection, the Monthly Vintage Sewing Machine Meet-up offers something refreshingly different: a hands-on, heartfelt return to the values of durability, creativity, and community.

"We're not just fixing machines," said McCauley. "We're fixing the thread between generations."

What began with a single shared passion has evolved into an intergenerational network of collectors, tinkers, artists, and everyday makers. The meets routinely draw attendees from across the region, from Rhode Island to Vermont, who come to trade knowledge, repair machines, and foster friendships over a shared love for these enduring tools.

"We probably have 50 machines here today," McCauley said, gesturing to rows of tables with iron-framed Singers, Wheeler & Wilsons, and Montgomery Wards. "Some of them date back to the 1870s. They were going to be trashed, literally headed to the landfill, and we saved them."

For both women, res-

cuing and restoring these machines is a deeply meaningful act. McCauley often receives donations of unwanted or broken machines, fixes them in her garage, and redistributes them often for free, to schools, community centers, or new sewists just getting started. Schools like Northampton High and local Montessori programs now use her machines in their classrooms.

"These are lifetime machines," McCauley said. "With a little oil and maintenance, they run forever. And they're much better made than most plastic machines today."

Both women speak passionately about the quiet loss of domestic arts, especially among younger generations, and how the Monthly Meets are helping to reverse that tide. With the decline of home economics programs and the rise of disposable fashion, many have grown up without learning basic skills like sewing, mending, or tailoring clothes to fit their bodies.

"The knowledge is being lost," said Gelezunas. "But at these events, we're seeing younger people, some in their 20s, coming in to learn. Some of them are in design school or just curious makers. And we're happy to pass the knowledge on."

In addition to their own Monson group, the pair's efforts have inspired offshoots in Northampton and Ashfield, where others have taken up the mantle and started their own local meets. "We started this in March 2023," McCauley said. "And already, there are little offshoots sprouting up everywhere. The movement is growing."

The machines on display often carry rich personal histories. Gelezunas shared a story about a Singer 115 from Canada, part of a production batch from January 1919. "What are the chances of finding another machine from the same production run? It's like a miracle," she said, eyes sparkling. "I can tell you the story behind every machine here."

Other members bring deep expertise. Sue, another regular, specializes in chain-stitch machines and their repairs. "We all have our niches," said McCauley. "Mary is the encyclopedia. Sue knows

everything about chain stitching. It's a collective knowledge base."

But beyond the machines, the meetups offer something rarer: a genuine sense of community. In many ways, they revive the spirit of the old-fashioned "Tuesday clubs"; informal gatherings where housewives would swap skills and socialize. "We've lost that," said Gelezunas. "Today, you have to seek out a community. But when you do, like here, it's powerful."

The group maintains a public Facebook page under "Iron Lady Sewing," where McCauley shares event information and accepts inquiries from people looking to donate machines or get involved. "Almost everyone we buy a machine from, we invite them to the meet," she said. "Some come once, some become regulars. But we're all connected now."

As McCauley balances full-time work and family life, she and Gelezunas coordinate the meets flexibly, typically on the third weekend of each month. The welcoming space,



A 1954 Featherweight, owned by Laura Shotwell is a well-preserved gem in its restored case, easy to maintain, and a joy to use, with parts simple enough to oil or lube for long-lasting function.



This is another Singer model sewing machine, but has a distinct floral patterning along it.



Submitted photos

People can bring their own personal sewing machines or use one of the ones McCauley brings, they fix and take care of the machines and work on their own projects while being a part of a community.

generously offered by the Unitarian Universalist Parish, a small congregation of just 12 members, has become a haven for those looking to unplug, repair, and remember.

"There's something special about touching a machine your grandmother used, or one like it," Gelezunas said, nodding toward a beautifully restored treadle that had once belonged to her own family. "It connects you to the past in a way that's tactile, real."



The Hoover 99 Clone (left) is a lightweight aluminum version, half the weight of the original 38-pound model (right), delivering the same dependable performance.



A Singer 115 Hand Crank; a rare, transitional model featuring red with gold wings decals, produced in Canada, blending technology from Wheeler & Wilson after their buyout.



This restored Singer Model 66 Red Eye is one of the most enduring sewing machines ever made, engineered like a watch, still working flawlessly after millions were produced.

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COLLEGE NOTES

President's List honors at Nichols College for spring 2025

DUDLEY – Nichols College is proud to recognize the academic accomplishments of students on the spring 2025 President's List. President's List recognizes those students who achieve high grades during a single semester. Students whose semester grade point average is 3.85 or higher for at least 12 undergraduate credit-hours and no grades below B- will receive President's List honors. The following local students have achieved President's List honors: **Lydia Julian** of Holland **Michael Pelozo** of Brimfield **Karissa Wood** of Three Rivers

Spring 2025 President's List at Dean College

FRANKLIN – **Elizabeth Perreault** of Palmer has earned a place on the President's List for the Spring 2025 semester. Students named to the President's List have demonstrated a serious commitment to their studies while at Dean College.

Elms College Spring 2025 Graduates

CHICOPEE – Elms College congratulates 279 students who graduated in Spring 2025. **Amanda Barrett** of Monson (01057) **Joseph Chartier** of Palmer (01069) **Brandyn Costa** of Palmer (01069) **Hannah Duggan** of Palmer (01069) **Reilly Sauve** of Palmer (01069)

Elms College announces Dean's List for Spring 2025

CHICOPEE – The College of Our Lady of the Elms has named the following students to the dean's list for the spring 2025 semester. Congratulations to all the students who are named to the list! **Amanda Barrett** of Monson **Joseph Chartier** of Palmer **Jennifer Dejoinville** of Palmer **Ava Denault** of Palmer **Sarina Johnson** of Holland **Camrynn Lemon** of Monson **Krista Misischia** of Bondsville **Olivia Morin** of Wales

Elms College is a co-educational Catholic college offering a liberal arts curriculum that prepares students holistically for a purposeful life in a diverse and interconnected world. Founded in 1928 by the Sisters of St. Joseph, Elms College has a tradition of educating reflective, principled and creative learners, who are rooted in faith, educated in mind, compassionate in heart, responsive to civic and social obligations, and capable of adjusting to change without compromising principle.

Palmer resident receives degree from Quinnipiac University

HAMDEN, CT – **Tori Edwards** of Palmer, MA received a Bachelor of Science in Biomedical from Quinnipiac University during a commencement ceremony held in May.

Dean's List honors for spring 2025 semester at Nichols College

DUDLEY – **Michael Bachand** of Three Rivers, MA, has achieved Dean's List honors for the spring 2025 semester at Nichols College. Dean's List recognizes those students who achieve high grades during a single semester. To be included on the Dean's List, a student must have a minimum grade point average of 3.5 for at least 12 undergraduate credit-hours and must have received no grades below B- during the semester.

AIC Students Named to Spring 2025 Dean's List

SPRINGFIELD – American International College (AIC) in Springfield, MA, is proud to announce that 468 students have earned a place on the Dean's List for the spring 2025 semester. These full-time students have attained GPAs ranging from 3.3 to 4.0. AIC applauds the dedication and achievements of these enterprising students. **Jason Angelica** of Monson **Frances Hayden** of Monson **Ryan Nodell** of Monson **Tanner Wenzel** of Palmer **Gabriel Zippin** of Monson

Mancini Named to Dean's List at Univ. of Maryland Global Campus

ADELPHI, MD – Lucas Mancini of Palmer was named to the Dean's List for the spring 2025 term at University of Maryland Global Campus. To be eligible for the honor, a student must complete at least six credits during the term, earned a grade point average of at least 3.5 for the term, and maintained a cumulative GPA of 3.5 at UMGC.

AIC Celebrates 2025 Graduates

SPRINGFIELD – American International College (AIC) held its 140th Commencement Ceremony on May 4, 2025, at the MassMutual Center in Springfield, honoring the graduates in the Class of 2025. AIC extends its congratulations to the Class of 2025 and wishes all graduates continued success in their future endeavors. **Ryan Nodell** of Monson with a Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science **Joseph Nowak** of Palmer with a Bachelor of Science in Educational Studies **Gabriel Zippin** of Monson with a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice **Frances Hayden** of Monson with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing in Nursing **Megan Mitchell** of Monson with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing in Nursing

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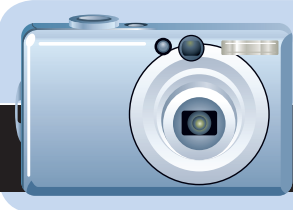
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The entrance to the Beer Garden where people of age can buy alcohol while waiting for the fireworks.



Food and dessert vendors line the main Quarry Hill driveway while people run around enjoying the amenities.



Batch Ice Cream, a Western Mass based Ice Cream shop and company also brought their truck to the festival.



Local Teen Band Ultraviolet as the festival's opening musical group.



Parents and guardians outside the bounce houses looking in at their kids jumping around.



The fireworks company set up the pyrotechnics in a cordoned off field away from citizens.



Residents spread out in the field, already claiming their spots for that night's firework spectacle.



Local food truck, Dog Eat Dog World, selling hotdogs and lobster rolls.



A few kids play a pickup game of baseball while waiting for the fireworks.

Turley photos by Abigail McCoy

SUMMER | from page 1

“Each year, we try to build a little bit more,” said Slozak. “We’re always looking at what worked, what didn’t, and how we can improve the next one.” This year’s Mini Summerfest featured a two-band lineup, beginning with a young local group, UltraViolet who are a group of musicians just 14 and 15 years old, followed by the featured act, The Town Ramblers, who played before and after the fireworks display at 9:30 p.m. Vendors and the beer garden remained open until 11 p.m., giving attendees plenty of reasons to linger after the pyrotechnics. Organizers have made adjustments in recent years to preserve the grounds and streamline operations. For example, food vendors were relocated from the lower field to paved areas to avoid damaging the grass and to make cleanup easier. “There’s more trash on concrete, but it’s easier to see and pick up,” Slozak explained. “We always try to improve on the previous year.”

The June event is just a warm-up for the main Summerfest celebration held on July 4, which Slozak describes as a “much bigger scale” festival. That event features multiple bands including: Flagpole Sitta and the returning crowd favorite Sarah the Fiddler, plus a larger vendor and crafter presence, and Monson’s traditional Fourth of July parade. The parade, which lasts over an hour, has grown steadily each year. This year’s grand marshals will be local veterans, a nod to Monson’s deep respect for service members. “We can’t thank our vets enough,” Slozak said.

The parade runs rain or shine, unless the Fourth falls on a Sunday which in that case it’s moved out of respect

for the churches, many of which actively participate in the event and its history. “The whole thing really started back in ’76, right out of one of the churches downtown,” said Slozak. “It was small, then it spilled out into the street and grew into what it is today.” The fireworks, now a fixture of the Mini Summerfest, used to be part of the main July 4 celebration until state regulations and logistical challenges forced organizers to relocate the show to Veterans Field around 2008 or 2009 and then Quarry Hill in more recent years. The change brought benefits: better visibility, improved safety, and the ability to raise donations more effectively.

A common misconception, according to Slozak, is that Summerfest is a town-funded event. “It’s not. Everything is privately funded by the Summerfest Committee,” Slozak emphasized. Funding comes from an ad book, booth fees, donations, and sales from areas like the beer garden. The annual fireworks alone cost between \$12,000 and \$14,000; if they were held on July 4 itself, the price would double due to premium holiday rates charged by fireworks companies.

“By holding them outside the premium date, we’re able to stretch our donated funds further and still give the community a great show,” Slozak explained.

As the years pass, the Summerfest Committee is eager to bring in new energy and fresh ideas. “The average age of our committee members is about 65,” said Slozak, with a laugh. “We’re always looking for new members. Hint, hint.” Slozak’s own grandson pitches in, delivering water to volunteers managing traffic and assisting with setup.

“It’s these behind-the-scenes volunteers who make

this festival possible,” Slozak said. “They don’t ask for recognition, but they’re crucial. I can’t thank them enough.” All of the names of the various volunteers are included in the annual ad book, a small gesture of gratitude for the hours of work they contribute without fanfare.

Looking ahead, the committee is already planning for 2026, which will mark the 25th anniversary of Summerfest. “We’re hoping to do something a little extra special,” Slozak said. One of their current goals is a fundraiser to replace the American flags that line Main Street during key holidays. “The flags you see along the roads? Those are put up by us, not the town,” he said. “They go up before Memorial Day, come down after July 4, go up again for Labor Day, and come down after 9/11.” The current batch of flags is nearly five years old, and while that lifespan is impressive, the wear and tear is showing. “People say, ‘You should replace those,’ and I say, ‘Help us do it!’” Slozak said, encouraging residents to donate if they can. “It’s part of keeping the town looking great.”

Despite the effort it takes to organize these events: equipment storage, setup, breakdown, traffic planning, and volunteer coordination; Slozak remains enthusiastic. “It’s a lot of work, but it all comes together. It always does,” Slozak said. “We just want to keep it going, and we need the community’s help to do that.” From humble beginnings in the 1970s to the bustling summer tradition it is today, Summerfest continues to reflect Monson’s strong sense of community and civic pride. Thanks to the hard work of volunteers and a dedicated committee, the tradition shows no signs of slowing down.

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Computer manufacturer
5. Noted space station
8. Kurt Russell film “Captain”
11. Automaton
13. Everyone has one
14. Incline from the vertical
15. Fights
16. Dunn & Bradstreet (abbr.)
17. Finishes off
18. Places to store things
20. Dutch painter Gerard ____
21. Smaller quantity
22. There’s a North, South and Central of these
25. In an early way
30. More spacious
31. Short-term memory
32. One who possesses
33. Sesame
38. Forbid
41. A way to explain
43. Not around
45. Evoke or suggest
47. Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea
49. Dekameter
50. Fencing sword
55. “Luther” actor Idris
56. Affirmative (slang)
57. Afflicted
59. One point north of northeast
60. Born of
61. Arabic name
62. Hong Kong food stall: ____ pai dong
63. Not the start
64. Post
2. Fiber from the outer husk of a coconut
3. City in ancient Syria
4. College army
5. More disturbed
6. Pays no attention to
7. Restored
8. Competitions
9. Lyric poems
10. Famed American lawyer
12. Expression of disappointment
14. Scars
19. Satisfy
23. Central European river
24. Brass instrument
25. One who gets paid to perform
26. Propel with oars
27. Long period of time
28. Woman (French)
29. Type of plane
34. Pitching stat
35. Pointed end of a pen
36. Pro sports league
37. Body part
39. Inoffensive
40. Yellowish cotton cloth
41. Feline
42. Does not tell the truth
44. Set out to attract
45. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation
46. Abba ____, Israeli politician
47. Repair
48. Genus of flowering plants
51. Tributary of the High Rhine
52. Prejudice
53. C. European river
54. Restrain
58. Father

CLUES DOWN

1. Creative expression

BIKE | from page 1

ues into the life of the church.

“I’m in my second year of riding, and we have a strong group of bikers in the congregation,” Norwick said, proudly showing off her bright pink custom Harley-Davidson Dyna Trike. “We wanted to do something different that invited the whole community in. Mixing faith with the freedom of riding just made sense.”

Each rider received a traditional “gremlin bell,” a small metal charm believed to ward off mechanical trouble and protect riders from bad luck. After blessing each bike individually, Norwick shared the overarching message of the day: “Blessed are the bikers, for the road is their prayer.”

“This bell is a symbol of love and safety,” Norwick explained. “They can keep it on their bike or carry it as a reminder of this community and today’s blessing.”

Though the event was hosted by First Church, it welcomed riders of all affiliations. Some were seasoned veterans, others new to the road. Among them was Keith Obert, who served as the ride’s road captain and is deeply involved with Bikers Against Child Abuse (BACA).

“Our mission is to make sure children who’ve suffered abuse feel safe again,” Obert said. “We give them a vest, we ride with them to court, we sit beside them when they testify...because too many

people in their lives have said they don’t believe them. We say, ‘We do believe you. We’re here for you.’”

Obert led the 30-minute-long group ride through scenic back roads, joined by blockers Dylan Mann and Tony Ciciano, who helped guide the group safely through intersections. Miss Jeanne Dill took the rear position as the sweeper, ensuring that no rider was left behind and that communication stayed open throughout. Once

leaving the parking lot of the FCC the group followed the predetermined path towards Westview Creamery where any rider could get a free ice cream for participating in the blessing and ride.

“We have some brand-new riders here and some very experienced ones,” Obert noted before the ride began. “Today’s not about speed. It’s about staying together and riding safely.”

The bikes ranged from Kawasaki Vulcan Classics to

BMW 1250 GSs, with riders eager to share their machines and the stories behind them. One rider affectionately named her bike after a Star Trek character, while another likened his BMW to “a horse...it’ll go anywhere.”

While motorcycles may have taken center stage, the event’s deeper message was about inclusion, connection, and building community. Rev. Norwick emphasized that welcoming events like this reflect the church’s broader

mission.

“We want to remind the people of Monson that First Church is everybody’s home,” she said. “Whether you come for a bike blessing, a picnic, or Sunday worship...just come as you are. You’re always welcome.”

With plans already underway to host next year’s event earlier in the riding season, First Church hopes the Bike Blessing and Ride will become a cherished local tradition; one that continues to ride on the open road between faith and fellowship.



Road Captain and B.A.C.A member Kieth Obert with his BMW 1250 GS.



Turley Photos by Abigail McCoy
Bikers congregating with the First Church of Monson in the background on a sunny Saturday.



Reverend Doctor Holly Norwick with her custom-built Pink Harley-Davidson Dyna Trike.



Jeanne Dill with her Kawasaki Vulcan Classic LT 900 she named after the Vulcan T'Pol from Star Trek.



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SPORTS

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BASEBALL

Legion has tough stretch

MONSON – After a win to start the summer season. Monson Legion Baseball Post 241 has had four straight losses.

Monson Legion, which includes players this season

from Monson, Palmer, Pathfinder, Ware, and this season, Quaboag high schools, suffered a close 8-7 defeat against Wilbraham, then lost 7-1 to Belchertown and 7-3 to Sheffield. This week, Monson

legion is on the road in the Berkshires. Their games this week are at Pittsfield, Greenfield, and North Adams.

They return home and host Longmeadow next Monday, June 30.



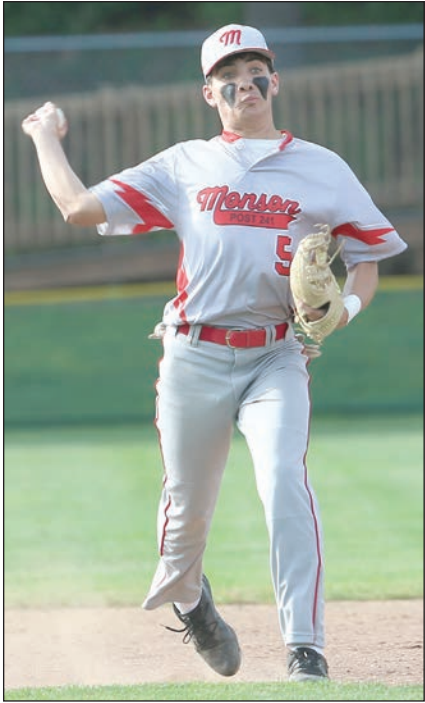
Miguel Velasquez makes the play at second.



Hunter Griswold fields a grounder.
Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com



Brayden Mega got the start for Monson Legion against Wilbraham last Monday evening.



Matthew Santos sends a throw across to first base.

SOCCER

Pioneers suffer rare loss

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

BURLINGTON, VT. – Not very much went the right way for the Western Mass. Pioneers against Vermont Green FC in the first match-up of the regular season between the USL League-Two rivals.

Vermont Green scored a goal at the end of both halves leading to a 2-0 shutout over the Pioneers before 2,500 enthusiastic soccer fans at Virtue Field, which is located on the University of Vermont campus, last Tuesday night.

“I thought we played well, but we just couldn’t put our chances away,” said Pioneers head coach Federico Molinari. “They did put their chances away.”

The Pioneers had a 5-1-2 record following the road loss.

Vermont Green (6-0-1) took over sole possession of first place in the Northeast

PIONEERS | page 12

BASEBALL

Gaines shines for PeoplesBank in win over rival St. Joe’s

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

THORNDIKE – People’s Bank, who captured the last eleven Tri-County League championship titles, and the St. Joseph’s Baseball Club are scheduled to face each other four times during the regular season.

The first two meetings on the baseball diamond were won by People’s Bank without very much trouble.

A week after defeating St. Joe’s, 13-3 at Mackenzie Stadium in Holyoke, People’s Bank celebrated a 6-1 road victory at St. Joe’s Park in Thorndike, last Friday night.

“This is a very big win early season win for us against St. Joe’s, who’s currently in first place,” said People’s Bank player/manager Joe Ferry. “I thought our pitching and defense was the difference in tonight’s game. We also had some timely base hits.”

People’s Bank, who had two games postponed last week, had a perfect 4-0 record following the road win, while St. Joe’s had a 5-2 record.

Each of the five Tri-County League teams gets two points for a victory and one for a tie.

“We always want to beat People’s, but they’re a very veteran team and we have a bunch of younger players,” said St. Joe’s player/manager Brian Hayes, who shares the coaching duties with Paul Marcinek. “They don’t swing at many bad pitches. They also don’t make very many mistakes defensively.”

People’s Bank jumped out to a 2-0 lead against St. Joe’s lefthander Jackson Petrin in the top of the first inning.

Petrin, who was a senior on the Pope Francis base-

SOCCER

Mustangs beat Hopkins, tie for second place



Lucy Maziarz winds up for a pass.



Aleska Mengel controls the ball and heads up the field.



Elle Somers sends a clearing kick away.



Kaylee Fusco charges after the ball.



Lylia Ellis catches up to a pass.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

GAINES | page 12

Public notices

PALMER PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 40A, Section 11 M.G.L., the Planning Board will hold a public hearing on **Monday, July 7th, 2025 at 7:15 PM** in the Town Administration Building, 4417 Main Street, Palmer, MA.

The applicant, Justin Dias, is seeking a major amendment to Site Plan as required under section 171-29 for the installation of concrete sidewalks, employee parking spaces, and landscaping at the property located at 2022-2026 Main Street, Three Rivers MA. This parcel is also known as Assessor's Map 70 Lot 86.

A copy of the application may be inspected at the Planning Department in the Town Administrative Building from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through Thursday.

Anyone interested in more information or wishing to be heard on the application can contact the Planning Department at 413-283-2605 or appear at the time and place designated above.

This notice shall also be posted on the Massachusetts Newspaper Publishers Association's (MNPA) website (<http://mass-publicnotices.org>).

Palmer Planning Board
06/19, 06/26/2025

PALMER PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 40A, Sections 9 & 11 M.G.L., the Planning Board will hold a public hearing on **Monday, July 7th, 2025, at 7:00 PM** in the Town Administration Building, 4417 Main Street, Palmer, MA.

The applicant, Bondsville Fire & Water District, is seeking a Special Permit and Site Plan Approval as allowed under sections 171.28, 171.29, & 171.69 to construct a 600,000-gallon concrete water storage tank on the property located at L25 Jim Ash Road, Bondsville. This parcel is also known as Assessor's Map 36, Lot 25.

A copy of the application may be inspected at the Planning Department office in the Town Administration Building from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through Thursday.

Anyone interested in more information or wishing to be heard on the application can contact the Planning Department at 413-283-2605 or appear at the time and place designated above.

This notice shall also be posted on the Massachusetts Newspaper Publishers Association's (MNPA) website (<http://mass-publicnotices.org>).

Palmer Planning Board
06/19, 06/26/2025

LEGAL NOTICE

Pursuant to the provisions of MA Gen. Laws, Chap. 255, Sec. 39A, the following vehicles will be sold at public auction for tow-

ing and storage charges due:

JEEP VIN:1J4GW48S14C299569 Trevor Russell PO Box 496 West Warren, MA; CHEVROLET VIN: 1G1JC52F357144062 Dennis Daniels 97 Water ST Palmer, MA; JEEP VIN: 1J4FY-19S9WP731775 Jacqueline Oconnor 515 Burncoat ST Worcester, MA; HONDA VIN: JHLRD68404C003381 Jonathan Adorno 18 Lower Hampden RD Monson, MA; JEEP VIN: 1J4G-B39187L102655 Yairalise Rosario 3117 Main ST Bondsville, MA; FORD VIN: 1FTRX12W-16NA21042 Ian Shaw 10 Draper ST Brookfield, MA; HYUNDAI VIN:5NPEC4AC0BH080063 Jonathan Paulhus 216 Munn RD Monson, MA. This auction is to take place on July 11, 2025, 10:00 A.M. at LaBontes & Son LLC, 241 Wilbraham St., Palmer, MA 01069
06/26, 07/03, 07/10/2025

MORTGAGEE'S NOTICE OF SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue of and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain Mortgage given by James H. Loper to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Drew Mortgage Associates, Inc., its successors and assigns, dated June 21, 2006 and recorded with the Hampden County Registry of Deeds at Book 16006, Page 511, subsequently assigned to CitiMortgage, Inc., its successors and assigns by Mortgage Electronic Registration System, Inc., as nominee for Drew Mortgage Associates, Inc., a Delaware Corporation its successors and assigns by assignment recorded in said Hampden County Registry of Deeds at Book 19276, Page 432, subsequently assigned to Green Tree Servicing LLC, its successors and assigns by CitiMortgage, Inc., its successors and assigns by assignment recorded in said Hampden County Registry of Deeds at Book 20245, Page 449, subsequently assigned to New Residential Mortgage LLC, its successors and assigns by Ditech Financial LLC F/K/A Green Tree Servicing LLC by assignment recorded in said Hampden County Registry of Deeds at Book 23128, Page 393, subsequently assigned to NewRez LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing by New Residential Mortgage LLC by assignment recorded in said Hampden County Registry of Deeds at Book 25437, Page 413 for breach of the conditions of said Mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing same will be sold at Public Auction at **11:00 AM on July 17, 2025** at 84 Stafford Holland Road, Wales, MA, all and singular the premises described in said Mortgage, to wit: The land in said Wales, on the northerly side of Stafford Road, bounded and described in two parcels as follows;

PARCEL 1: Beginning at the southeasterly corner thereof, at an iron pin in the northerly line of said Stafford Road, said iron pin being 167.04 feet southwest-

erly of a county bound at station 69 + 96.11 of the 1947 layout of said Stafford Road, and running thence S. 41° 52' 50" W. by the northerly line of said Stafford Road 85 feet to an iron pin in a stone wall at land now or formerly of Julius Aarons and Ida Aarons; thence N. 45° 39' 10" W. along the stone wall by land of said Aarons 210.4 feet to an iron pin; thence N. 51° 06' 10" W., partly along said wall by land of Aarons, 189.53 feet to an iron pin and thence continuing in the same course along land of said Aarons 309 feet, more or less, to the southerly line of a brook; thence Northeasterly by the southerly line of said brook 85 feet, more or less, to land formerly of Henry Bouchard; thence S. 51° 06' 10" E. by said land formerly of Henry Bouchard 309 feet, more or less, to an iron pin and thence continuing in the same course and by said land formerly of Henry Bouchard 189.53 feet to an iron pin; and thence S. 45° 39' 10" E. along said land formerly of Henry Bouchard 210.4 feet to the iron pin at the point of beginning.

PARCEL 2: Beginning at the southwesterly corner thereof and at the southeasterly corner of land formerly of Rene H. Bouchard, at an iron pin in the northerly line of said Stafford Road, said iron pin being 167.04 feet southwesterly of a county bound of the said 1947 layout, and running thence N. 41° 52' 50" E. by the northerly line of Stafford Road 15 feet to an iron pin at land formerly of Henry Bouchard; thence N. 45° 39' 10" W. along said land formerly of Henry Bouchard 210.4 feet to an iron pin; thence N. 51° 06' 10" W. along said land formerly of Henry Bouchard 189.53 feet to a point and thence continuing in the same course along said land formerly of Henry Bouchard 309 feet, more or less, to the southerly line of a brook; thence southwesterly by the southerly line of said brook 15 feet, more or less, to land of said Rene H. Bouchard; thence S. 51° 06' 10" E. by said land of Rene H. Bouchard 309 feet, more or less, to an iron pin and thence continuing in the same course along said land of Rene H. Bouchard 189.53 feet to an iron pin; and thence S. 45° 39' 10" E. by said land of Rene H. Bouchard 210.4 feet to the iron pin at the point of beginning. Being the same premises conveyed to James H. Loper by Deed of Kenneth S. Longtin, Sr. and Cheryl L. Longtin dated September 29, 1999 and recorded in the Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book 10951, Page 360.

The premises are to be sold subject to and with the benefit of all easements, restrictions, encroachments, building and zoning laws, liens, unpaid taxes, tax titles, water bills, municipal liens and assessments, rights of tenants and parties in possession, and attorney's fees and costs.

TERMS OF SALE: A deposit of FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS AND 00 CENTS

(\$5,000.00) in the form of a certified check, bank treasurer's check or money order will be required to be delivered at or before the time the bid is offered. The successful bidder will be required to execute a Foreclosure Sale Agreement immediately after the close of the bidding. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid within thirty (30) days from the sale date in the form of a certified check, bank treasurer's check or other check satisfactory to Mortgagee's attorney. The Mortgagee reserves the right to bid at the sale, to reject any and all bids, to continue the sale and to amend the terms of the sale by written or oral announcement made before or during the foreclosure sale. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled only to a return of the deposit paid. The purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney. The description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of an error in this publication. TIME WILL BE OF THE ESSENCE.

Other terms, if any, to be announced at the sale.

NewRez LLC d/b/a
Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing
Present Holder of said
Mortgage,
By Its Attorneys,
ORLANS LAW GROUP PLLC
PO Box 540540
Waltham, MA 02454
Phone: (781) 790-7800
24-004738
06/26, 07/03, 07/10/2025

MORTGAGEE'S NOTICE OF SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue of and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain Mortgage given by Matthew A. Tulloch to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Mortgage Research Center, LLC dba Veterans United Home Loans, its successors and assigns, dated September 16, 2019 and recorded with the Hampden County Registry of Deeds at Book 22854, Page 351, subsequently assigned to CALIBER HOME LOANS, INC. by Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Mortgage Research Center, LLC dba Veterans United Home Loans, its successors and assigns by assignment recorded in said Hampden County Registry of Deeds at Book 24701, Page 352, subsequently assigned to ALLIED FIRST BANK, SB DBA SERVBANK by CALIBER HOME LOANS, INC. by assignment recorded in said Hampden County Registry of Deeds at Book 25135, Page 168 for breach of the conditions of said Mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing same will be sold at Public Auction at **11:00 AM on July 10, 2025** at 3039 Pleasant Street, Palmer, MA, all and singular the premises described in said Mortgage, to wit:

TWO CERTAIN PARCELS

OF LAND IN BONDSVILLE, PALMER, HAMPDEN COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS AS FOLLOWS:

PARCEL I: A CERTAIN TRACT OF LAND SITUATE ON THE EASTERLY SIDE OF HIGH STREET IN BONDSVILLE IN SAID PALMER, CONTAINING 24 SQUARE RODS BOUNDED AND DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: BEGINNING AT A STAKE AND STONES ON THE EAST LINE OF SAID STREET, BEING THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF THE LOT CONVEYED; THENCE EASTERLY AT RIGHT ANGLES WITH SAID STREET, SIX (6) RODS TO A STAKE AND STONES; THENCE NORTHERLY ON A LINE PARALLEL WITH SAID STREET, FOUR (4) RODS TO A STAKE AND STONES, THENCE WESTERLY IN LINE PARALLEL WITH SAID FIRST LINE, SIX (6) RODS TO A STAKE AND STONES ON LINE OF SAID STREET; THENCE SOUTHERLY ON LINE OF SAID STREET, FOUR (4) RODS TO FIRST MENTIONED BOUND. BEING THE SAME PREMISES DESCRIBED IN A DEED FROM LUTHER COLLIS TO JOHN BROWN DATED APRIL 1, 1887 AND RECORDED IN BOOK 433, PAGE 171.

PARCEL II: A CERTAIN TRACT OR PARCEL OF LAND SITUATE IN THE VILLAGE OF BONDSVILLE IN SAID PALMER AND BOUNDED AND DESCRIBE AS FOLLOWS: BEGINNING AT A STAKE AND STONES ON THE EASTERLY SIDE OF PLEASANT STREET AT CORNER OF LAND OF SAID PATRICK J. BROWN; THENCE A.P.N #86-57 EASTERLY SIX (6) RODS ON LAND OF SAID BROWN TO A STAKE AND STONES; THENCE S. 07° 45' W. ON LAND OF SAID BROWN AND LAND OF R. L. BOND, TWO HUNDRED FOURTEEN (214) FEET TO A STAKE AND STONES ON LAND OF WILLIAM TAYLOR; THENCE S. 74° 02' ON LAND OF SAID TAYLOR, ONE HUNDRED TEN (110) FEET TO A STAKE AND STONES; THENCE S. 16° 34' W. ON LAND OF SAID TAYLOR, THIRTY (30) FEET TO A STAKE AND STONES; THENCE S. 74° E. ON LAND OF JOHN CARMODY'S HEIRS, ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FIVE (125) FEET TO A PINE TREE; THENCE N. 10° 05' E. ON LAND OF THOMAS CARMODY, FOUR HUNDRED TWENTY-EIGHT (428) FEET TO A STAKE AND STONES ON LINE OF SAID CARMODY, THREE HUNDRED EIGHTY (380) FEET SOUTHWESTERLY FROM A STONE MONUMENT ON THE WARE ROAD, MARKING THE BOUNDARY LINE BETWEEN LAND OF HIRAM E. W. CLARK AND ELBRIDGE G. HASTINGS AND LAND OF SAID CARMODY; THENCE WESTERLY

THROUGH A MAPLE TREE ON LINE OF LAND OF SAID CLARK AND HASTINGS, FIFTEEN (15) RODS TO A STAKE AND STONES AT LAND OF PETER WOODS; THENCE S. 07° 45' W. NINE (9) RODS AND TWELVE (12) LINKS ON LAND OF SAID WOODS AND LAND OF DAVID FITZGERALD TO A STAKE AND STONES; THENCE WESTERLY ON LAND OF SAID FITZGERALD, SIX (6) RODS TO AN IRON PIN IN THE GROUND ON THE EASTERLY SIDE OF SAID PLEASANT STREET; THENCE SOUTHERLY ON SAID PLEASANT STREET, FIFTY-TWO (52) FEET TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING.

BEING THE SAME PREMISES CONVEYED TO THE MORTGAGOR HEREIN BY DEED OF MARY C. CHRABSZCZ TO BERECORDED IN HAMPDEN COUNTY REGISTRY OF DEEDS IMMEDIATELY PRIOR HERETO.

The premises are to be sold subject to and with the benefit of all easements, restrictions, encroachments, building and zoning laws, liens, unpaid taxes, tax titles, water bills, municipal liens and assessments, rights of tenants and parties in possession, and attorney's fees and costs.

TERMS OF SALE: A deposit of FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS AND 00 CENTS (\$5,000.00) in the form of a certified check, bank treasurer's check or money order will be required to be delivered at or before the time the bid is offered. The successful bidder will be required to execute a Foreclosure Sale Agreement immediately after the close of the bidding. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid within thirty (30) days from the sale date in the form of a certified check, bank treasurer's check or other check satisfactory to Mortgagee's attorney. The Mortgagee reserves the right to bid at the sale, to reject any and all bids, to continue the sale and to amend the terms of the sale by written or oral announcement made before or during the foreclosure sale. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled only to a return of the deposit paid. The purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney. The description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of an error in this publication. TIME WILL BE OF THE ESSENCE.

Other terms, if any, to be announced at the sale.

Servbank SB, f/k/a Allied Bank
SB d/b/a Servbank
Present Holder of said
Mortgage, By Its Attorneys,
ORLANS LAW GROUP PLLC
PO Box 540540
Waltham, MA 02454
Phone: (781) 790-7800 22-009322
06/19, 06/26, 07/03/2025

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MOVIE | from page 1

of group into neighborhoods, and a lot of folks don't make their way down to the library...it's pretty far away for them," she said. "So I wanted to bring some sort of library activity out to them. A movie at each of the parks, where local families can walk over, felt like the right fit."

The Youth Advisory Board, a group of teens who work with Chartrand to help shape library programming for young people, immediately embraced the idea. "When I brought the idea to them, they went nuts for it," said Chartrand. "It turned into a fundraiser and outreach opportunity for the library. The kids sell snacks, the library provides the movie, and the community gets to enjoy a fun evening outside. It's a win-win."

While the library provides the technical setup for the screenings, the youth board handles concessions and helps promote the events. Proceeds from snack sales go directly back into youth programming. Last year, the board used fundraising money to put on a Halloween party for teens and tweens, and they're already planning to go



The movie night is a form of community outreach for the library.

even bigger this fall thanks to the revenue expected from the summer series.

The film lineup was selected by the Youth Advisory Board themselves. Chartrand gave them a few ground rules: stick to movies rated PG-13 or below and try to include a variety of genres, but let the students drive the selection process. "They really were the driving force," she said. "They wanted something current, something animated, something action, and something anime, so we could appeal to a wide audience." The

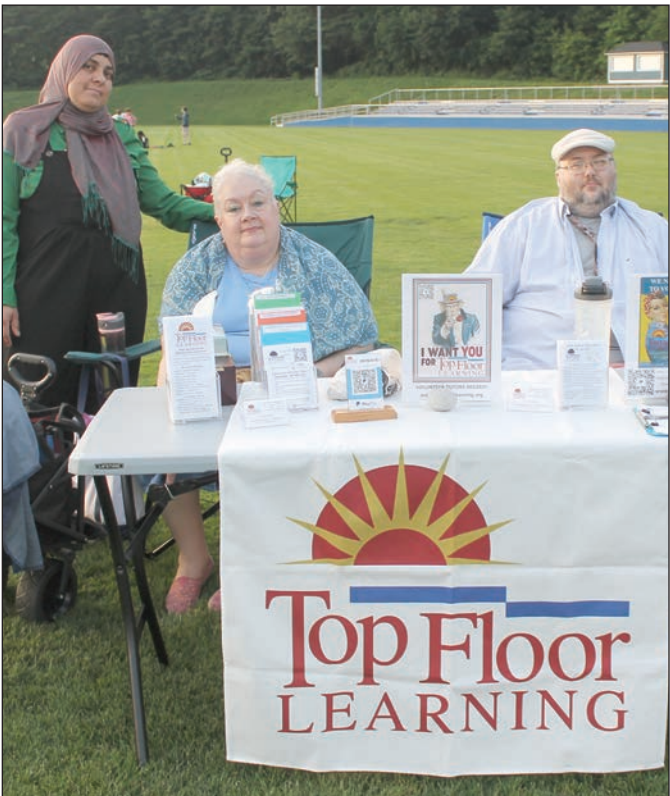
result is a mix of titles ranging from Barbie and Lilo & Stitch to Dungeons and Dragons: Honor Among Thieves and Howl's Moving Castle.

Each movie night also features opportunities for other community organizations to participate. At the first event, representatives from Top Floor Learning, an adult education nonprofit located on the library's third floor, were on hand to share information about their services. "They're not a library organization, but they use space in our building," Chartrand ex-

Turley photos by Abigail McCoy

plained. "So when I let them know about the movie nights, they said they'd love to come out. It's a great chance to give them exposure and bring some of these groups together."

Chartrand emphasized that the events are intentionally kept simple. All snacks are prepackaged to avoid permitting issues, and the setup is designed to be as low-maintenance and welcoming as possible. "I would love to do things like fresh popcorn or other made-on-site food, but I don't want to have to deal



Members of Top Floor Learning: Mouna Almasri, Donna Kimball the Director of TPL, and her son Alex Kimball.

with food permits or kids trying to cook," she said, laughing. "There are already too many cooks in the kitchen, and they're not even cooking anything."

As families laid out blankets and kids ran through the grass at Legion Field, Chartrand looked around with sat-

isfaction. "If this goes well, I'd love to do it again next summer," she said. "We got really lucky with a break in the rain tonight. I was worried that if this one didn't happen, it would tank the whole experiment. But people are here, they're excited, and that's really what it's all about."



A group of volunteers waiting on the dock waiting for the skiers to come back so they can safely help them out of the water island onto solid ground or into their mobility device.



Matthew Czernicki, being strapped into a sit-ski and waiting for his turn on the water.



Two trained skiers ride alongside a participant to make sure if anything happens on the water they are able to help as soon as possible.

Turley photos by Abigail McCoy

SKI | from page 1

low any person at any ability the opportunity to enjoy a day on the water...it's the best thing I do. It's one of the most fulfilling purposes in my life."

The day's activities revolved around adaptive sit-skis, specialized rigs that allow individuals with limited mobility to ski while seated, supported by outriggers. Participants are carefully fitted with life jackets and skis, then guided onto the water by a team that includes side skiers, boat drivers, and jet ski spotters; all volunteers are trained to ensure safety and support.

"This is very labor intensive," Candela explained. "To get one adaptive skier on the lake takes at least 12 people, a boat, and a jet ski. But it's worth every bit of effort."

Each skier receives personalized instruction and, for returning participants, opportunities to advance their skills. Some who started in a basic sit-ski are now skiing independently without outriggers. "It's not just a one-time experience," Candela said. "This is something they can improve at. And watching them grow and gain confidence is incredible."

One key piece of adaptive equipment used at the event is the "Seahorse," a supportive seat mounted to a training boom that helps skiers with balance challenges learn how to start skiing from the water. Originally designed in Australia for barefoot skiing, the device has become a cornerstone of WWSC's adaptive instruction.

WWSC's adaptive skiing

program has grown rapidly. In 2025, the organization plans to host events across Massachusetts, including sites at Lake Quinsigamond, Lake Lashaway, Webster Lake, and Long Pond in Tyngsboro, as well as weekly adaptive practice sessions every Sunday at Glen Echo Lake in Charlton. A special clinic for veterans is also in the works.

Participants travel from across the state, and some even as far as Maine, to join in. With a maximum capacity of 24 participants per event, demand remains high.

WWSC has now served an estimated 300 to 400 participants since the program began. Many are returning faces, forming friendships and bonds that last well beyond the water.

From equipment prep to

water safety and lunch service, the day could not happen without an army of volunteers; all unpaid, driven by the mission. The Aqua Riders of Holland, a competitive show ski team composed of youth and adults, not only host the event at their private site but also assist in the instruction and safety efforts.

"A lot of our volunteers started out just loving to ski," said Heather Jackman, a WWSC volunteer. "Now we get to give that gift to people who may have never imagined this was possible for them."

For the Aqua Riders, the event fits seamlessly into a summer filled with performance and competition. The team is preparing for the NSSA Eastern Regional Show Ski Tournament in Sco-



Volunteers checking in participants and keeping track of gear while participants strap into their gear and get ready for their turn.



Originally designed in Australia for barefoot skiing, the "Seahorse" is a supportive seat mounted to a training boom that helps skiers with balance challenges learn how to start skiing from the water.

tia, NY this July. They'll also host a series of free Friday night ski shows in Holland, showcasing acrobatics, pyramids, jumps, and barefoot skiing on June 17, July 11, July 18, Aug. 9, and a special home show on Aug. 16.

WWSC welcomes new volunteers of all backgrounds and abilities, both on land and in water. Whether it's registering participants, fitting life jackets, assisting with logistics, or side-skiing on the water, there's a role for everyone. Volunteers must sign a waiver through USA Water Ski for insurance pur-

poses and can receive training through the club.

More information on volunteering, upcoming events, and adaptive programming can be found at www.WebsterWaterSki.org.

For those inspired to witness what adaptive water skiing looks like in action, or simply curious about what community, courage, and joy look like when they meet; it's as simple as standing on the shore of Hamilton Reservoir on a summer morning, watching a skier rise up on the water, arms outstretched, laughter carried on the breeze.

Obituary

Ronald A. Bigda

It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing of Ronald A. Bigda, who departed this life on June 20, 2025, at the age of 82. Born on October 8, 1942, in Palmer, Massachusetts, Ronald was a lifelong resident of this community.



grandchildren; they were his greatest treasures and the lights of his life.

Ronald is survived by his three children, Ronald J. Bigda, Terri Bigda and Gregg Bigda. He also leaves his six grandchildren

Ronald dedicated his career to the trucking industry, working as a truck driver throughout his life. He started his journey as a truck driver and eventually establishing his own trucking company, RA Bigda Trucking.

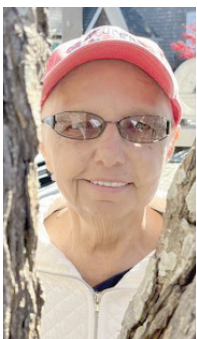
Beyond his professional pursuits, Ronald was a man of many interests. In his younger years, he enjoyed adventures outdoors, including hunting, target shooting, and quadding. His passion for old country music and black and white cowboy movies added joy to his everyday life. Most importantly, he adored his

which he found immense pleasure in spending time with, Tyler and his wife Laura, Alexa, Madison, Nathan, Michael, and Jordan, cherishing every moment shared with them. He will also be missed by his loyal dog, Mack.

Family and friends are invited to pay their respects during a graveside service on July 3 at 10 a.m. at Sts. Peter & Paul Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests that donations be made to Shriners Hospital for Children. Beers & Story Palmer Funeral Home was entrusted with the arrangements.

Felicia M. (Kapinos) Royea

PALMER – Felicia M. (Kapinos) Royea, passed away peacefully June 19, 2025 at her home with the love of her family surrounding her. Born December 14, 1952 in Palmer, she was the daughter of Martin E. and Angela-Nellie C. (Strychaz) Kapinos.



White, and Hunter White as well as great grandchildren, Gabriel, Elliana, Malani Columbus. Her son, David Lane of Bondsville and grandchildren Devin Register, Autumn Maritato, and Alex Lane as well at great grandchildren Magnolia Morgan and

Felicia worked at Monson Developmental Center and then was the owner of Family Video in Palm Bay, FL. She went on to work at Taco Bell in Melbourne, FL as the team manager and went on to be the president of Premier Towing Inc for 7 years. Most recently, she worked at O’Connells Convenience Store in Bondsville. Felicia’s memory will forever be cherished by her husband of 40 years, Bryan L. Royea. They celebrated their anniversary together on May 17. Her love will continue with her daughter, Melanie Pariseau of Bondsville, grandchildren, Matthew and London Daniels, Brittany Pariseau, and Megan Pariseau and great grandchildren Avery and Israel Daniels. Her daughter, Rachel Lane of Bondsville and grandchildren Stephanie Witt, Ethan

Nico Maritato will also fondly share her love. Her step daughter, Wendy and Pat Nichols of Warren and grandchildren Amber Ocasio, Rusty Shephard, Allysa Shepard also survive her. Step daughter, Heather and Nicholas Thomas and grandchildren, Collin, Owen, Mason, Addisyn, Adreeyan Thomas will also fondly share her love. Felicia also leaves her sisters, Marcia Ducharme of Cape Cod and May Henry and Bob of New Hampshire. Felicia was predeceased by her sister, Grace Jarrett and grandson, Elliott Thomas. Funeral services were held Tuesday, June 24 at 11 a.m. at Crossway Christian Church with burial that followed at Sts. Peter & Paul Cemetery. Beers & Story Palmer Funeral Home has been entrusted with the arrangements.

Ronald N. Weston

BRIMFIELD – Ronald N. Weston, 83, passed away on June 17, 2025 at JGS Lifecare in Longmeadow, MA. Born in Springfield, MA on September 15, 1941, he was the son of the late Stanley and Doris (Collins) Weston.



and her husband John; his grandchildren Devin Dickinson, Cassidy, Alaina, and Nathan Weston and Hayden and Kayla Stetson; his great grandchild Raegan Wagner as well as his brothers Donald Weston and Jerry

For over 50 years, Ronald owned and operated Hollow Brook Farm in Brimfield, specializing in horse-drawn carriage rides for weddings, sleigh rides during the winter, and sales of Christmas trees and holiday gifts. When not working on the farm, Ronald enjoyed sailing on his 28 ft. sailboat named “Wave Dancer”.

To cherish his memory, Ronald leaves his wife of 58 years, Linda (Davis) Weston; his children Heather Casey and her husband Ted, Shawn Weston and his wife Janis and Amber Stetson

Weston and his wife Linda. Family and friends are invited to gather on Thursday, June 26, 2025 from 4 to 6 p.m. at Forastiere Smith Funeral & Cremation, 220 North Main Street, East Longmeadow followed by a service at 6 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Alzheimer’s Association, 320 Nevada St, Suite 201, Newton MA 02460. For more information or to leave an online condolence, please visit www.forastiere.com

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SCHOOL | from page 1

citizens. The vision speaks to creating a high-performing, nurturing, and dynamic educational environment that fosters lifelong learners. These guiding principles would echo through the evening’s discussions on curriculum enrichment and special education needs.

Superintendent commends community engagement

Interim Superintendent Roland Joyell offered remarks acknowledging student efforts and community contributions. He commended high school students from the VIP program for their creative and successful bake sale, which even featured handmade dog treats. He also praised the district’s PTSA for their consistent involvement and strong advocacy, particularly during recent town meetings. Joyell noted the PTSA’s impact extended well beyond fundraising, calling them a vital part of Monson’s educational community.

Public Comment: Calls for fiscal oversight

State Avenue resident Bob Lamb delivered a detailed and impassioned critique of the School Committee’s handling of recent budget developments. Lamb criticized the Committee for not opposing a \$300,000 budget amendment that was added during the Town Meeting by a group of parents, a move he felt violated the tri-board agreement. He emphasized the need for budget transparency, line-by-line scrutiny of appropriations, and more rigorous oversight of school finances. Lamb warned that

continued financial uncertainty could affect the town’s ability to borrow in the future and might trigger the need for a Proposition 2 1/2 override. He also raised concerns about facility use, such as administrative vehicle access and the repurposing of classroom space into private offices, arguing that better collaboration with other town departments could lead to more efficient use of resources. He urged the Committee to rebuild public trust, noting the high number of blank ballots in recent elections as a sign of community disengagement.

Summerfest 2025 approved

Steve Slozak, representing the Summerfest Planning Committee, joined the meeting via Zoom to request use of school facilities for the upcoming Summerfest event scheduled for June 21, with a rain date of June 22. He outlined the logistics, including food trucks that would remain on pavement, entertainment by a teen band and headline act “The Town Ramblers,” and planned coordination for dumpsters, parking, and tear-down. The Committee unanimously approved the request, along with a contingency that Superintendent Joyell and Facilities Director Paul DeMeo could approve any necessary extensions if weather delays pushed the event beyond the weekend. Slozak emphasized that the group takes pride in its stewardship of the facilities, stating, “We will leave the school better than we get it.”

Ecuador and Galápagos student trip inspires future travel

Teachers Michael Tremblay and Señora Canning presented a detailed report on the

recent high school student trip to Ecuador and the Galápagos Islands. Through EF Tours, students participated in a range of cultural, scientific, and experiential learning activities. Highlights included visits to Quito, the equator line, the Cotopaxi volcano, and the Galápagos, where students snorkeled with sea turtles and reef sharks, explored lava tubes, and interacted with local communities. Tremblay described the experience as “a dream come true,” while Canning emphasized the importance of global exposure in education, calling the trip “the best way to show them the world firsthand.” Building on the trip’s success, the district is planning future excursions to Spain in 2026 and to Latin America in 2027, with countries like Puerto Rico or Panama under consideration. Another Galápagos trip is tentatively being considered for 2028 or 2029, depending on affordability and student interest.

Early kindergarten admissions approved, with caution

The Committee reviewed five parent requests for early kindergarten admission for children whose birthdays fell shortly after the September 1 cutoff. All five requests were approved, including one student with an October birthday, Lilith Edwin, whose approval passed on a 4–2 vote. Students were evaluated for academic readiness and social-emotional development by the Early Childhood team, and several were already enrolled in the district’s preschool programs. While the students were found to be ready for kindergarten, some Committee members expressed concern about set-

ting a precedent without clear guidelines. Jamie Murphy warned that although students may present minimal social-emotional concerns now, increased academic demands could pose challenges later. Allison Morgan voiced discomfort with the October approval, saying, “October birthdays scares me.” The Committee agreed that a formal early admissions policy needs to be developed to provide structure and consistency in future decisions.

Preschool Restructuring Plan Addresses Growing Special Education Needs

A proposed restructuring of the district’s preschool program was presented by Principal Joe Marciniak, SPED Director Colette Marcinkiewicz, and Early Childhood Coordinator Lauren Bryn. The proposal aims to better serve the increasing number of students requiring Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services due to autism and developmental delays. Under the current model, the district operates five integrated preschool classrooms. The proposed plan for the 2025–26 school year would convert one of those classrooms into a dedicated special education classroom focused on ABA support, while maintaining four integrated classrooms. Marcinkiewicz emphasized that the need is both immediate and growing, noting that 12 students currently require ABA and another 12 are expected to transition from Early Intervention services, with a significant portion likely to need similar support. Bryn added that without a dedicated ABA setting, the district is setting its staff and students up for limited success, stating, “We want them to be supported and successful... not just managed.” The plan does not require new staffing, as existing personnel will be reallocated. While the shift will slightly reduce tuition revenue from general education students, it allows the district to meet service obligations more effectively. Committee members supported the proposal and praised the proactive approach, noting that early and targeted interventions can improve long-term outcomes and reduce the need for more intensive support later in a child’s education.

DEATH NOTICES

Bigda, Ronald A.

Died June 20, 2025
Services July 3, 2025
Beers & Story Funeral Home

Royea, Felicia M. (Kapinos)

Died June 19, 2025
Services June 24, 2025
Beers & Story Funeral Home

Desmond Sr., Daniel E. 100

Died April 24, 2025
Celebration of Life June 28
Scout Hall, 47 Pleasant St., Rockport, MA

Weston, Ronald N.

Died June 17, 2025
Service June 26, 2025
Forastiere Funeral Home

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- Stump Grinding
- Bobcat Work
- Lot Clearing • Storm work
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The Journal Register

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Monson Police Logs

The Monson Police Department reported 77 incidents and arrests on its logs from Sunday, June 8 through Saturday, June 14.

Sunday, June 8

6:07 a.m. – An officer responded to a medical emergency.

12:41 p.m. – An officer responded to a report of a juvenile complaint.

1:52 p.m. – An officer performed a motor vehicle stop. Ronal Lawrence, 68, of 1138 Dunhamtown Road, Brimfield, was arrested on charges of operating under

the influence of drugs, failure to signal, failure to stop for police, a marked lanes violation, unsafe/impaired operation of a motor vehicle, negligent operation of a motor vehicle, possession with the intent to distribute cocaine, resisting arrest, disorderly conduct and interfering with a police officer.

2:50 p.m. – An officer responded to a medical emergency.

Monday, June 9

2:47 a.m. – An officer responded to a medical emergency.

Tuesday, June 10

7:38 a.m. – An officer responded to a medical emergency.

10:35 a.m. – An officer responded to a report of an animal complaint.

3:43 p.m. – An officer responded to a report of an animal complaint.

Wednesday, June 11

3:19 a.m. – An officer responded to a medical emergency.

6:07 p.m. – An officer responded to a report of an animal complaint.

Thursday, June 12

10:06 p.m. – An officer responded to a medical emergency.

Friday, June 13

9:21 a.m. – An officer responded to a report of damage/vandalism.

10:09 a.m. – An officer responded to a medical emergency.

10:53 p.m. – An officer responded to a medical emergency.

2:41 p.m. – An officer took a report of a past assault.

3:29 p.m. – An officer responded to a traffic incident/

crash.

4:15 p.m. – An officer responded to a medical emergency.

10 p.m. – An officer responded to a mental health emergency.

Saturday, June 14

11:07 a.m. – An officer responded to a traffic incident/crash.

4:35 p.m. – An officer responded to a medical emergency.

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Business

Phish Phriends Coffee Shop gaining quick popularity

By Abigail McCoy
amccoy@turley.com

PALMER – A new coffee shop in town is quickly becoming a favorite gathering place; not just for its specialty drinks and laid-back atmosphere, but for the musical inspiration behind its name and menu.

Phish Phriends, which opened its doors on June 1, is the creation of Lisa and Matthew Burke, longtime Palmer residents who wanted to blend their love of coffee with their deep appreciation for the band Phish. Every drink on the menu is named after a Phish song, a detail that will delight fans of the jam band while sparking curiosity for newcomers.

“We’ve traveled all over seeing them,” Lisa Burke said. “Most of the posters on the walls are from shows

we’ve been to, or someone we know has. We just thought it would be fun to create a place that brings people together the same way the band does.”

That sense of community is central to both the coffee shop and the band that inspired it. Phish, formed in 1983 in Burlington, Vermont, is known for its genre-blending sound and extended live improvisations. The lineup: Trey Anastasio, Mike Gordon, Jon Fishman, and Page McConnell; has remained intact since 1986 and has cultivated a loyal following through word-of-mouth, live recordings, and a vibrant touring culture. Their music mixes funk, jazz, rock, bluegrass, and more, attracting fans who value both musicianship and a strong sense of community; values the Burkes hope to mirror in their shop.

Originally from just

south of Boston, Lisa met her husband Matthew, a Berkshires native, and the two decided to make Palmer their home in 2009. “We met in the middle,” she said. After raising their three children here, they found themselves in their first true empty-nest year and decided it was time to start something new.

“We just wanted to do something fun to fill the void,” Lisa said. “And honestly, who doesn’t love coffee?”

While the heart of the business is coffee, the Burkes have made sure to offer something for everyone. The menu features not just coffee and espresso drinks but also Philadelphia water ice, boba tea, bagels, and a rotating selection of fun surprises. Their goal is to make Phish Phriends a space that welcomes all ages and tastes. Lisa added that if a customer doesn’t see some-



Owners Matthew and Lisa Burke in front of their new coffee shop Phish Phriends.

Turley photo by Abigail McCoy

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thing they’re looking for, they’re open to feedback and willing to customize. “We’re here to reflect the people who come in,” she said.

The location, just steps away from local soccer fields and a popular dog park, adds to the shop’s growing popularity. “We love seeing people walk over after games,” Lisa said. “And we absolutely love when they bring their dogs... we’ve got treats ready.” The relaxed, music-filled space already feels like a neighborhood staple, with customers popping in to chat, sip coffee, and enjoy the creative, Phish-themed menu.

Phish Phriends is current-

ly open Wednesday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. The shop is closed on Mondays and Tuesdays, though Lisa noted that hours may shift based on customer needs and activity at the nearby fields. For now, the business is a family affair. With two of their three kids home for the summer and helping out behind the counter, the Burkes are focused on getting into a rhythm before considering hiring any additional staff.

Lisa said they’re still learning as they go, but the early response from the community has been overwhelm-

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Corrections

The Journal Register will gladly correct factual errors that appear in this paper. Corrections or clarifications will always appear on Page 2 or 3. To request a correction, send information to Editor at journalregister@turley.com, or call 283-8393, extension 236. Corrections may also be requested in writing at: Journal Register, Attn: Editor 24 Water St., Palmer, MA, 01069.

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