

Electrical aggregation plan moving forward

BY NICK BOONSTRA
Staff Writer
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BELCHERTOWN – The Select Board discussed the next steps for the town's Community Energy Choice Program at their meeting on Feb. 20.

The program, which was first authorized at town meeting in 2021 and approved by the state's Department of Public Utilities this past January, is set to involve switching customers receiving basic service from National Grid over to a new product that includes more renewable energy than is required by the state. Town Administrator Steve Williams said at the meeting that he hoped the program would be able to roll out this coming June.

The program is set up under the Massachusetts municipal aggregation process, which is "the process by which a municipality (meaning a town or city) purchases electricity in bulk from a competitive supplier on behalf of the residents and businesses within the community," according to the state's official website.

In addition to a larger renewable energy footprint, participation in Community Energy Choice would offer customers the possibility of more stable pricing compared to basic service. However, the program's plan document specifies that "The

Please see **PLAN**, page 4



Amelia "Millie" Dominik celebrates 100th birthday

BY PAULA OUIMETTE
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BELCHERTOWN – Family and friends came from coast to coast to raise their glass and say "na zdrowie" to Amelia "Millie" Dominik as she celebrated her 100th birthday last week at Christopher Heights of Belchertown.

On Feb. 21, Millie was joined by 18 family members, her lifelong friend Dottie, and her new friends and staff at Christopher Heights of Belchertown, where she has resided since January of this year.

"They came from all over to be here to celebrate today," said Lorna Stone, Director of Marketing/Admissions

at Christopher Heights of Belchertown.

Millie was born in Three Rivers on Feb. 21, 1924, graduating from Palmer High School. She lived all of her life in Three Rivers before moving to Belchertown this year.

Millie was also a real life "Rosie the Riveter," working

Please see **MILLIE**, page 16

EDIC discusses next steps for Carriage Grove

BY NICK BOONSTRA
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BELCHERTOWN – During their regular monthly meeting on Feb. 21, the Economic Development and Industrial Corporation applauded the work of the Planning Board in their consideration and approval of the Carriage Grove site plan for the former site of the Belchertown State School.

Discussions were also held during the meeting on the next steps for the location, including the potential subsequent phases for development beyond the planned residential development. Additionally, the news was shared that a commercial real estate agent had been identified to aid the town in attracting businesses to the EDIC parcels.

Planning Board Chair Dan Beaudette and Planning Director Doug Albertson were both in attendance at the meeting, with Albertson joining virtually. EDIC Chair Jonathan Spiegel took a moment at the beginning of the meeting to "Thank them both for the heavy load they carried and the diligence with which they reviewed" the Carriage Grove site plan, which was submitted by developers Brisa Ventures.

Robert Jenkins of MassDevelopment was also present virtually for the meeting, and spoke hopefully of the work to be done at Carriage Grove. "Right now, they're at first base, and headed for second and third," he

Please see **EDIC**, page 4



TURLEY PHOTO BY NICK BOONSTRA

This photo shows the aftermath of the Feb. 17 fire at Red Fire Farm that destroyed the barn and farm store.

Red Fire Farm begins recovery efforts after fire

BY NICK BOONSTRA
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GRANBY – Ryan and Sarah Voiland of Red Fire Farm are still reeling from the tragic fire that took their barn and farm store on Feb. 17.

Fortunately, nobody was hurt in the blaze, and the farm's fields and greenhouses were also kept safe thanks to the response of the Granby Fire Department with assistance from a number of surrounding communities. A

Please see **FIRE**, page 4

Local cancer survivor shares story

BY NICK BOONSTRA
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BELCHERTOWN – Vicki McAndrew shared the story of her battle with breast cancer at the Quaboag Valley Relay for Life team's Kick-Off event on Saturday, using the example of her experience to urge everyone to get screened regularly and to support the work of searching for a cure to cancer.

The event marked the formal start to the team's fundraising season ahead of the annual Relay for Life charity walk to be held on the Town Common in June. The event featured flamingo decorations in keeping with the "Flock Towards a Cure" theme that was selected for this year's walk.

McAndrew told attendees



TURLEY PHOTO BY NICK BOONSTRA

Vicki McAndrew, standing center in a pink shirt, poses with other cancer survivors at the Relay for Life Kick-Off event.

that her cancer was detected as part of a regular mammogram, something she encouraged all women to have performed regularly for just that reason. She was

surprised at how quickly things moved after the initial screening came back with a suspicious

Please see **SURVIVOR**, page 2

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COMMUNITY

Giving Day and call for grants

Belchertown Education Foundation seeks donations

BELCHERTOWN – Wednesday, March 13 is Giving Day for the Belchertown Education Foundation.

This day of celebration invites individuals and businesses to make a donation to the nonprofit Belchertown Education Foundation.

“By making a splash on March 13 we remind the community of what we do and ask for your continued financial support. We also celebrate the extraordinary \$86,000 in grants that are already enriching the student experience. We can’t do this without donors and therefore ask community members to make a tax-deductible donation or to get involved to ensure our future success,” said Jennifer Faulkner, Belchertown Education Foundation Board Member, in a press

release.

She added, “It’s quite unique for a town our size to have a vibrant, charitable organization that provides annual grants to enrich education. We support innovative projects that would otherwise go unfunded by the school budget due to financial constraints. We are thrilled to help great ideas that distinguish our schools, take flight.”

Recent projects funded include outdoor classrooms, musical equipment, student scientific research and symposiums, creation of calming spaces and purchasing furniture and supports for social-emotional learning. Donations can be made on Giving Day or right now through BelchertownEducationFoundation.org.

A call for grant submissions is open from now until May 1 for teachers, administrators and other school staff of Belchertown Schools who wish to apply. Find more information on the grants page at BelchertownEducationFoundation.org.

Advanced Processing of ballots held Feb. 27 to March 2

BELCHERTOWN – Belchertown will be doing Advanced Processing of ballots received by mail for the March 5 Presidential Primary Election.

The dates reserved for this process are Feb. 27 through March 2. Each day the process will begin at 9 a.m. and will finish when all ballots have been processed for the day.

Advanced processing is being held in the Select Board Meeting room at Town Hall, 2 Jabish St. This process is open to the public and the public is invited to observe.

Before the start of each day, a decision will be made on if the Advanced Processing will commence, based on the number of ballots received the day before.

Logo designs sought for 165th Belchertown Fair

BELCHERTOWN – The Friends of the Belchertown Fair are looking for potential logos to represent the theme of this year’s Fair, “Barn in the USA.”

Selected logos may appear on the cover of the Exhibit Hall booklet, the volunteer reusable bags, and T-shirt designs. Artwork should be created digitally, in color, with a minimum of 300 dpi.

Additionally, but not required, the following text can be included in the design: “165th Belchertown Fair,” “September 20-22, 2024,” and “Barn in the USA.”

All submissions will become the property of the Friends of the Belchertown Fair. The winning artist will receive recognition and a token of appreciation in the amount of \$50.

There are no age limits.

Please submit artwork for consideration to belchertownfair@gmail.com by Saturday, March 30.

Friends group seeks donations of used books

BELCHERTOWN – The Friends of Clapp Memorial Library are holding their semi-annual book sale this coming April 22-27 and they need your help to reach their goal of having 50,000 new and used books available.

Now is the time to start spring cleaning by bringing your used books, movies, and music to the Clapp Memorial Library at 19 South Main St. during normal library hours. The Friends need fiction or non-fiction books, hardback or paperback, DVDs, vinyl LPs, and CDs.

They cannot take magazines, Readers Digest Condensed Books, encyclopedias, VHS tapes, or older cassettes and 8-track tapes. The sooner you bring the donations in the sooner they can sort, appraise, and value these items before they go on the shelves.

All proceeds from the book sale directly support the Clapp Memorial Library. For more information go to www.friendsofclapplibrary.org or call the library at 413-323-0417.

SURVIVOR from page 1

area, and applauded the team at the Mass General Cancer Center at Cooley Dickinson Hospital for their efforts throughout her treatment.

“Let me put it this way: If you have cancer, I would highly recommend them,” she said with a laugh. “But I hope you never have to hear the words, ‘You have cancer.’”

She made clear that the process of her treatment came with many challenges and dark days, but she was also to find bright spots throughout it all. Speaking of her time going through chemotherapy, for instance, she said, “I learned how to knit while I was there.”

From the initial screening in June of 2015, McAndrew progressed through treatment and was declared cancer-free in March of 2016, expressing her gratitude that she has remained that way ever since.

Reflecting on her journey, she said, “I’m okay now. I’m okay with all the outcomes because it showed me how strong I was.” She later added, “Every day is a good day.”

She closed her remarks by reiterating the importance of regular cancer screenings for all people, and strongly encouraged anyone with suspicions about their health not to let anything linger.

The Kick-Off event also provided volunteers the opportunity to connect, have fun and celebrate both survivors and caregivers in the community. Raffles and giveaways supported by donations from local businesses were also held, along with a flamingo-themed trivia game.

This year’s Relay for Life walk will be held on June 1 from 10 a.m.-10 p.m. on the Town Common. Information can be found on Facebook under “Quaboag Valley Relay for Life.”

Friends of the Belchertown Fair announce poster contest

BELCHERTOWN – The Friends of the Belchertown Fair are kicking off the annual poster contest.

The theme of the 165th Fair is “Barn in the USA” Selected artwork will be used on posters advertising this year’s fair.

Anyone 18 years and younger is welcome to enter.

Entries should be submitted on an 8 ½ by 11 inch sheet of paper and artwork must include the following information: “165th Belchertown Fair”, “Barn in the USA” and “September 20-22, 2024.” On the back of the poster, please include: name, address, phone number, age, grade level, and if applicable your school or organization.

Deadline for submission is April 28. Entries can be mailed to: Friends of the Belchertown Fair, Inc., 18 Wilson Road, Belchertown MA 01007 and become the property of Friends of the Belchertown Fair.

Winners will receive a cash prize, a wristband for Friday night, and a copy of their poster. For questions, please email friendsoftownfair@gmail.com.

Early In-Person voting hours listed for Belchertown

BELCHERTOWN – Early In-Person voting for the March 5 Presidential Primary Election, will be held in the auditorium at Town Hall, 2 Jabish St.

The dates and hours are Feb. 24 from 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Feb. 26 through March 1 from 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

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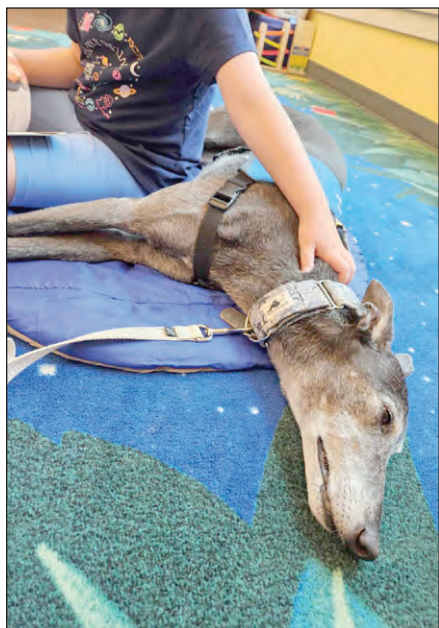
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COMMUNITY



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Reading Buddy, Gwen, a Bright Spot Therapy Dog, will be at the Granby Free Public Library on March 7, 21, April 4 and 18.

Read to a dog at the Granby Free Public Library

GRANBY – Read to a dog at the Granby Free Public Library, 297 East State St., on Thursdays after school on March 7, 21, April 4 and 18.

Children can enjoy reading aloud to a gentle, comforting Reading Buddy, Gwen, a trained Bright Spot Therapy Dog, as they practice their fluency and strengthen their confidence in reading.

Children in kindergarten and up can sign up to reserve a 20 minute spot to read to Gwen. Time slots are available between 3:30-5 p.m.

Call 413-467-3320 or stop in the library during open hours to sign up. The library is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., Thursday from 10:30 a.m.-7 p.m. and Saturday from 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

All library programs are free of charge and open to the public. For more information, visit granbylibrary.com.

FIRE from page 1

GoFundMe emergency fundraiser has been set up to help the farm begin the process of rebuilding.

Speaking at the farm in an interview on Feb. 21, the Voilands said they hoped to reopen in April or May selling garden plants, blueberries, strawberries and other products, but would be closed for the remainder of the winter outside of farmers' markets.

Ryan spoke of the beautiful barn's Amish construction out of chestnut wood, calling it an "ode to the history" of the farm, but said that he knew it would be almost impossible to truly replace it.

"It's probably going to be hard to rebuild a building of the size," the Voilands said.

Red Fire Farm's name is not only an allusion to a favorite kind of lettuce of Ryan's, but also a reference to a previous barn fire over 100 years ago caused by a lightning strike. He said he never thought another fire would have happened at the farm.

Red Fire Farm is a participant in Community Supported Agriculture, a program that allows community members to pay a bulk rate for produce early in the year and pick up products weekly throughout the season. Sarah said that this system helped in an industry where the costs mostly come up front at the start of the season.

Ryan has been involved in farming for most of his life, and said there were "so many reasons it's important to me."

He cited good nutrition for the community, climate change, and the health of the environment as some of the reasons why he had such a passion for agriculture, saying he wanted to be "part of the solution." Sarah also said she saw people and the planet as part of the same ecosystem.

The Voilands said they would need all the help they could get to try to recover anything like what was lost in the fire, expressing a disappointment that conversations with their insurance company had not been promising thus far. They said they would be open to any sort of help, including financial donations, in-kind donations, grants and other forms of assistance.

Aside from the barn itself, the supplies being stored inside were also lost, and Ryan said it was fortunate that their tractors had not also been in the barn at the time of the fire like they normally were.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY NICK BOONSTRA

This photo shows the remains of the barn and farm store.



A car was also destroyed by the Feb. 17 fire.

Sarah said that the signs they would set up around the area each year when the season started up were also lost. She speculated that an event might be held at the farm in the coming months to allow volunteers from the community to help create new signs.

Anyone interested in supporting the farm at this time can visit their GoFundMe

at <https://gofund.me/4c80a4e9>, or by mailing a check to the office at Red Fire Farm, 184 Meadow Road, Montague, MA 01351. The farm also has an email newsletter available for signup on their website, <https://www.redfirefarm.com>, which will provide updates about the rebuilding process.

PLAN from page 1

Program cannot guarantee savings compared to National Grid Basic Service... because future Basic Service rates are unknown."

Participation in the program would be voluntary for all customers, and an opt-out letter including a postpaid return envelope will be mailed to all current customers of basic service at least 30 days in advance of service being switched over. Current customers of competitive supply will not be eligible to automatically opt into the program, and could face a penalty from their

current supplier for an early termination of their contract.

Participants in Community Energy Choice would have the right to opt-out at any time without any penalty, and non-participants would be able opt-in for no fee, though at potentially less competitive rates. Additionally, two optional products that include either more or less renewable energy than the standard product will be available to customers through the program.

The plan also guarantees that customers would be notified at least 30 days in advance of any rate changes in the program. National Grid would remain responsible for electrical delivery, and program

participants would receive their bills from National Grid.


The town's crucial next step in bringing the program to fruition would be to secure a supplier for electricity on the competitive market. To this end, the Select Board granted approval for Williams to act as the town's lone signatory to secure a supplier on the day that bids are solicited.

"The length of time that vendors will hold their price is very short," Williams told Select Board members. He explained that this meant that there would not be enough time for him to bring a favorable bid back to the board for approval, thus necessitating his role as signatory.

Williams assured board members that he was not required to accept any bid if nothing favorable came in the day bids were solicited, and that the town would have the opportunity to solicit bids again at a later date if that was the case.

Board member Lesa Lessard Pearson wanted to make sure that Williams was keeping the Energy and Sustainability Committee involved as part of the bidding process, something Williams confirmed he would do.

"They're part of the process, no question about that," he said.



ANNUAL CEMETERY CLEANING NOTIFICATION

The Department of Public Works, Maintenance Division will be conducting the annual removal of ALL seasonal decorations within the Towns' Cemeteries.

For anyone wishing to retrieve personal graveside items, please do so before March 20, 2024.

All items will be removed beginning March 20, 2024.

EDIC from page 1

said of Brisa Ventures.

The approved residential development at Carriage Grove is the first of five phases planned for the site, and Jenkins said during the meeting that phase two was set to be "60 units of elderly housing that will go through the same process" as Brisa Ventures did for their development.

In response to a question from a member of the public, Jenkins clarified that the 60 units were designated for independent senior living, as opposed to assisted living at a facility like the nearby Christopher Heights.

Responding to separate concerns about the capability of Brisa Ventures, a Brooklyn-based firm managing additional projects around New England, Jenkins expressed confidence in their ability to properly devote their focus and resources toward Carriage Grove, saying, "They're big enough."

He also told those present that the work being done in Belchertown was a top priority for MassDevelopment.

The EDIC also made the significant announcement that Jeremy Casey, a real estate agent with SR Commercial of Springfield, had been secured to represent the town and help market the former State School property to businesses.

Unfortunately, Casey was ill on the night of the meeting and unable to attend. However, both Jenkins and the members of the EDIC expressed excitement around his selection, and said that they had already started providing him with initial information about the location.

The EDIC meets regularly on the third Wednesday of each month at Town Hall, and meetings are also accessible virtually via GoToMeeting. Meeting agendas and virtual access information can be found on the town's website, www.belchertown.org.

AMHERST

Activist, author gives keynote address for Black History Month

AMHERST – Catherine Coleman Flowers – internationally recognized environmental activist, critically acclaimed author, MacArthur “Genius Grant” recipient and vice chair of the White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council – will deliver a keynote address for Black History Month on Thursday, Feb. 29, at 5:30 p.m. in the UMass Amherst Student Union Ballroom.



SUBMITTED PHOTO
Catherine Coleman Flowers will give the keynote address for Black History Month at UMass Amherst on Feb. 29.

The keynote address, hosted by the College of Humanities & Fine Arts with generous support from many campus partners, is the culminating event of HFA’s Black History Month celebrations. It is free and open to the public and registration is encouraged.

A cross-campus collaboration aimed at deepening the discussions around climate change, the talk will highlight the intersectional nature of climate change by centering racial, economic and health inequities as they relate to our changing planet.

Flowers is an environmental and climate justice activist who has brought attention to the largely invisible problem of inadequate waste and water sanitation infrastructure in Black, Indigenous, Latinx and poor rural communities of the U.S.

Founder of the Center for Rural Enterprise and Environmental Justice, Flowers has spent her career promoting equal access to

clean water, air, sanitation and soil to reduce health and economic disparities in marginalized, rural communities.

Flowers sits on the board of directors for the Climate Reality Project, the Natural Resources Defense Council and the American Geophysical Union, as well as serves as a Practitioner in Residence at the Nicholas School of the Environment at Duke University.

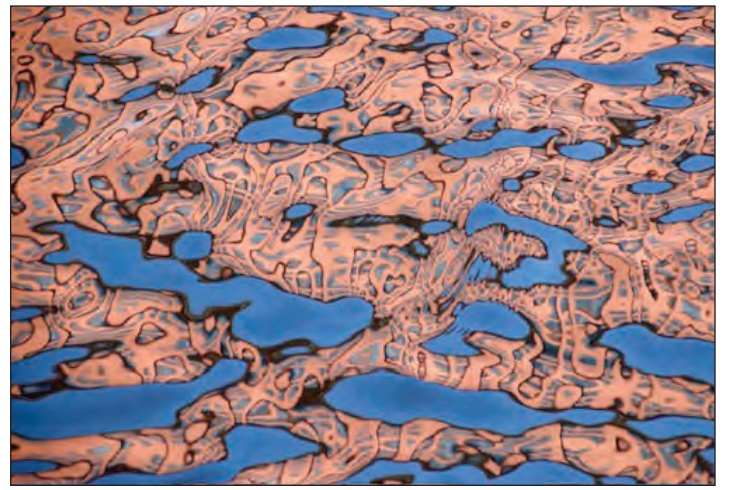
In 2021, her leadership and fervor in fighting for solutions to these issues led her to one of her most notable appointments yet: vice chair of the Biden

Administration’s inaugural White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council. In 2023, she was recognized as one of TIME’s 100 Most Influential People in the World and was featured on Forbes’ 50 Over 50 list.

In her book, “Waste: One Woman’s Fight Against America’s Dirty Secret”, Flowers shares her inspiring story of advocacy, from childhood to environmental justice champion. In the book, she discusses sanitation and its correlation with systemic class, racial and geographic prejudice that affects people across the U.S. She and her work have been profiled by CBS’s 60 Minutes, The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Guardian, PBS Newshour and more.

Learn more at catherinecolemanflowers.com.

Event sponsors include the Toko Lecture Fund by College of Humanities & Fine Arts; School of Earth and Sustainability; Office of the Provost; Isenberg School of Management; College of Natural Sciences; Center for Agriculture, Food, and the Environment; Office of Equity and Inclusion; Commonwealth Honors College; School of Public Health and Health Sciences; Clean Energy Extension; School of Behavioral Sciences; Graduate School; and Women in Leadership.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Northampton photographer and Amherst native Sally Greenebaum will present her exhibit “Reflections: A Moment in Time” at Baystate Medical Center in Greenfield until March 3.

Photography exhibit showcases Amherst native

GREENFIELD – The Pioneer Valley Photographic Artists present an exhibit at the Greenfield Baystate Medical Center by Sally Greenebaum, photographer, “Reflections: A Moment in Time.”

Her exhibit can be seen on the oncology wing on the first floor of the Sanderson Street main entrance until March 3.

Greenebaum grew up in Amherst and lives in Northampton. She is an occupational therapist and enjoys playing the cello in several musical groups (including Valley Light Opera) and photography.

“I think my development as a photographer has been highly influenced by my experience as a musician, since I have always been drawn to patterns, reflections, and elements of our natu-

ral and constructed environment that are often hidden in plain view,” Greenebaum said in a press release. “In many ways art and music share fundamental aesthetic ideas, like balance, composition texture, and the relationship between part and whole. I am especially fascinated by reflections, whether they be in water, glass, or anything else. The abstract image created by a reflection is a moment in time and changes with moving water, wind or the angle of the sun. The images in this exhibit show reflections in water, glass, plastic and foil.”

For more information about Greenebaum, visit sallygreenebaumphoto.com and or follow @hiddenpatternsphoto in Instagram.

BBB warns about scammers posing as friends

If a friend asks for a favor, you do it, no questions asked. Right? Time to rethink that policy.

In this new con, a scammer poses as a friend asking for a simple favor. The email is so convincing that Better Business Bureau staff almost fell for it.

How this scam works

You get an email that appears to be from a friend or family member. The message looks harmless and casual – like something a friend might really write.

For example, one version reads: “Hi, how are things going with you? Are you busy? I need a quick favor.” The message even ends with “Sent from my iPhone.”

Concerned about your friend, you reply and ask for more details. The “friend” quickly responds that they are trying to

buy a gift card for their niece’s birthday.

However, they are traveling and having trouble purchasing the card online. “Could you get it from any local grocery store around you?” reads the email. “I’ll pay you back as soon as I am back.”

The request sounds reasonable. But if you do buy the gift card, your “friend” will ask you to share the card’s PIN and/or send a photo of the back of the card.

Unfortunately, by doing this you are essentially handing money to the scammer. It’s nearly impossible to get the money back because gift cards do not have the same protections as credit or debit cards.

How to avoid similar scams
Reach out to your friend direct-

ly – If you get an unusual request, call or text your friend to confirm their story. No matter how harmless the story sounds, always double-check before sending someone money.

Use gift cards wisely – Never do business with anyone who insists on payment with gift cards. Remember, providing the numbers from the back of a gift card is just like sending cash.

For more information

For more information about this scam and others, visit BBB.org.

If you’ve spotted a scam (whether or not you’ve lost money), report it to BBB.org/ScamTracker. Your report can help others avoid falling victim to scams.

Amherst library hosts fraud prevention seminar March 9

AMHERST – Learn to protect yourself from the newest fraud schemes at this fraud prevention seminar on Saturday, March 9 from 3-4 p.m. in the Woodbury Room at the Jones Library.

From identify theft to fraud schemes and cybercrime; the

ways criminals target you, your information, and your money are growing. Join library staff as Madison Kinney, from the local branch of BankESB, shares the latest news on the most prevalent scams and what you can do to prevent being taken.

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OPINION

GUEST COLUMN

Let's all end stigma around getting mental health care

BY STATE REP. AARON L. SAUNDERS,
7TH HAMPDEN DISTRICT.

I grew up in a home where it was OK to ask if you were OK, mentally or physically, at the dinner table.

This was not common during the 1980s when a stay in a psychiatric ward could be a mark against you for life, but my dad was a psychologist and my mother, a teacher.

They knew the importance of conversations with their boys about feelings, expectations, and disappointments, not just a skinned knee and how you got it.

I was reminded of this recently during a visit to the newly renovated adolescent unit of MiraVista Behavioral Health Center in Holyoke. Its recent reopening brought back on line 16 much needed inpatient beds in western Massachusetts for youth ages 13 to 17.

The redesigned environment enhances the delivery of care and healing for this population in which recent government data estimates that nearly 50% have had a mental health disorder at some point in their lives.

Last year Massachusetts' Roadmap for Behavioral Health Reform introduced a 24/7 Behavioral Health Phone Line and network of Community Behavioral Health Centers that provide broader access to mental health services for those in crisis. The state, too, has added inpatient psychiatric beds to ease emergency department boarding for all age groups.

We, as legislators, need to ensure that there is ongoing funding for such services and adequate reimbursement rates for such beds as well as for addiction treatment programs. Mental health and substance use disorders co-occur frequently and it is important for both to be treated.

We also need to continue to consider policies that address staffing shortages and issues like educating students and their families on the importance of mental health care.

Yet, there is another barrier – stigmatization – around lessening disabling behavioral health conditions. Massachusetts has a campaign that seeks to educate that addiction is a chronic illness and not a personal choice, but stigma and misinformation continue to prevent individuals with behavioral health issues from seeking treatment.

You can't legislate all stigma away. We all need to be better educated on the reality that mental illness can be treated and that there are steps to be taken to prevent poor mental health from progressing to where it interferes with daily life.

This is what I reflected on during my recent visit to MiraVista, which offers inpatient treatment for both adults and adolescents as well as outpatient recovery services, in seeing the renovated unit and learning what evidence-based treatment is offered there.

I hear from my constituents of the need for such services close to home and, in applying the lessons learned from my parents in asking my own three children about their feelings, I get a look into their day in an age when bullying and pressure to engage in unhealthy behavior can come from anywhere.

We all need to be more open to talking with our families, friends, and health care providers about our mental health and that of those in our care as this, too, is part of the roadmap to raising emotionally healthy children and staying emotionally healthy, too.



About Medicare's dreaded 'IRMAA' provision

Dear Rusty:

My wife is on Medicare and receiving Social Security benefits each month. We built a house and used money from our investments to pay for it.

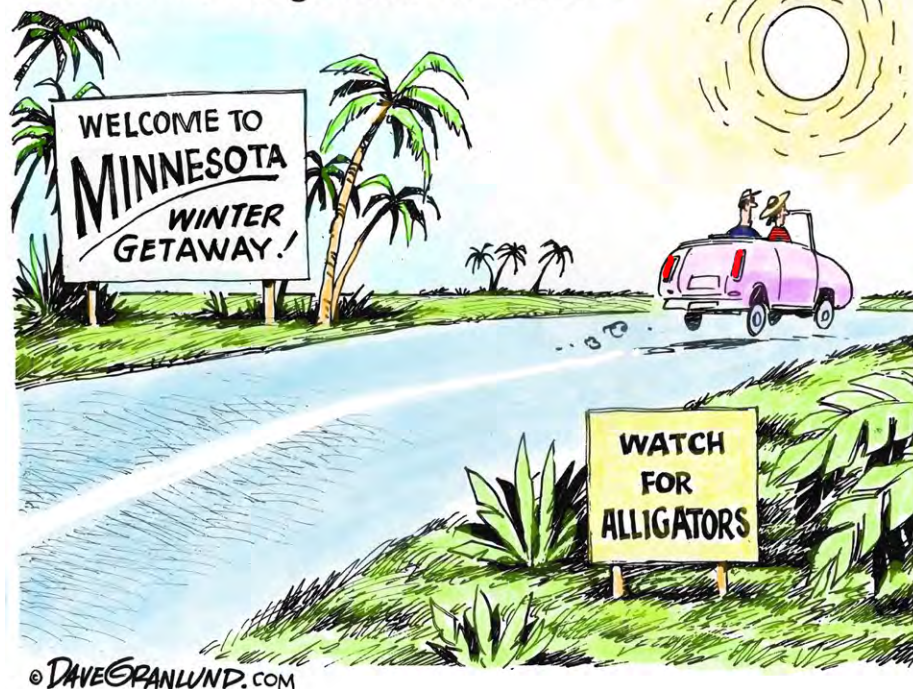
We knew we would pay taxes on that withdrawal, but my wife got a letter from Social Security saying that because the money we withdrew was listed as income, her 2024 Medicare premium went up over \$500. Since Medicare is taken out of her Social Security, that results in a \$6,000 loss to our budget.

Is there anything that can be done about this situation?

We sent a letter to Social Security, but they responded that unless her situation was one of only a few categories

Please see **SSI**, page 13

Record warming trend continues...



LETTER

Freedom to speak out against genocide

To the Editor,

I appreciate Justine Dymond's recent letter in the Sentinel regarding the genocide of Palestinians in Gaza.

It feels hard to weigh in on a topic that is so complex, ongoing, and without a long-term solution. It is easier to forget about people far away, and go about our daily lives.

It feels scary to speak out on a topic that most of us are not experts in, and that may draw unwanted attacks from folks who feel differently. However, it is important that regular Americans join the majority of the world in condemning the violence in Gaza.

It is unacceptable that the U.S. continues to block United Nations resolutions for an immediate ceasefire. The death toll in Gaza is now approaching 30,000 people killed.

Our tax dollars are funding the killing of innocent children. Pressure on President Biden is mounting, and the administration appears to be increasingly fed-up with the actions of the Israeli government.

I hope that as more of us raise our voices there will be a change in the current policy,

but we have to be brave and speak out.

When we self-censor because we are afraid of repercussions, we are starting down a very frightening path. Previous generations in our country were censored, books were banned, and free speech was curtailed during times like the McCarthy Era in the 1950s.

Authoritarian governments around the world today stifle dissident voices through imprisonment and killing of journalists and opposition leaders like Alexey Navalny. Please let us not go down that path.

I have a profound respect for freedom of speech, assembly and the press. I deeply value our community dialogue in Belchertown and in western Massachusetts.

While we don't always agree (there is usually more than one way to approach a problem), we can hear each other and come to solutions. Thank you, Ms. Dymond for starting this conversation, and all who write and read the letters to the Sentinel!

Cara Lapenas
Belchertown

you make the box no deeper than three feet. Construct the frame using rot resistant woods like cedar or redwood. Pine is an inexpensive and readily available option, but should be painted with exterior paint prior to assembly to ensure years of use.

White paint will not only make an attractive cold frame, but one that will reflect light to the plants growing in it. The walls should be at least an inch thick, preferably two inches, to further insulate the plants growing inside.

Locate your cold frame in full sun, facing south or southeast. The soil under the cold frame is a "mini plot" that should be enriched as I would any other part of the garden by incorporating an inch or two of compost and a sprinkling of lime and balanced organic fertilizer into the soil prior to use.

The window sash will likely stay shut on overcast days. On sunny days, however, be sure to prop open the window to ventilate the space – it can get quite hot inside and young seedlings could easily be harmed.

The sash can be opened completely (or removed altogether) on very warm days. Don't forget to provide water within the frame – if it is covered it is exempt from the rain.

The cold frame is a great place to start spring greens. There are other uses as well.

Some plants prefer to germinate at cool temperatures and simply won't grow well inside the house, even off the heat cables. Try growing flats of cole crops like kale, broccoli, cabbage and cauliflower right in the cold frame – they'll be the sturdiest plants you ever grew!

Likewise, start small pots of sweet peas, pansies, forget-me-nots and bachelor's buttons inside of it; they germinate better in

Please see **GARDEN**, page 13

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EDUCATION

Belchertown High School lists honor roll

BELCHERTOWN – Belchertown High School announces the second quarter honor roll for the 2023-2024 school year.

Grade 12, High Honors

Zoe Bate, Caleb Brechner, Isabella Cauley, Emalee Chaisson, Luke Cote, Madison DaCosta, Andrew Daponde, Cadence Demers, Matthew Derouin, Avi Duseau, Nora Dyer-Murphy, Kasey Gibbons, Derek Gould, Georgia Greenough, Connor Hoag, Rainer Kristensen, Sasha Kyle, Olivia Lafayette, Bethany Lavoie, Madysen LePage, Tanner Lockwood, Logan Lovett, Chloe Macaluso, Paige Magner, Braeden Meighan, Brielle Murray, Diyath Navaratne, Kaitlyn Park, Zoe Patten, Joe-Ann Richard, Chelsie Rosado-Cuoco, Emily Roy, Ava Shea, Camden Skaggs, Brooke Stelmokas, Victoria Sullivan, Ori Sussman, Sage Table, Veronica Thayer, Priscilla Thornhill, Megan Watts and Maggie Williams.

Grade 12, Honors

Sophia Aparviz, Jacob Avgoustakis, Tadan Baker, Brooke Burrows, Olivia Corbin, Daniel Cormier, Laura Cote, Jackson Couchon, Tyler Dauplaise, Madison DeJesus, Juliana Duclos, Ayden Fasser, Sarah Fink, Ellie Gelinis, Kaley Howes, Allison Kotowski, Mattingly Marques, Dax Morin, Sarah O'Connor, Anna O'Rourke, Calahan Orzech, Skyler Park, Caleb Perron, Rylan Queiros, Trinity Ranzie, Christopher Rivers, Mason Rodrigues, Karyna Rondeau, Olivia Rosati, Violet Snook, Nico St. George, Anna Stamp, Cameron Ting, Trevor Weiss and Kami Wlodyka.

Grade 11, High Honors

Alexia Abu, Alexandra Barabolkin,

Meera Berryhill, Samantha Causeway, Liam Chien, Mia Corish, Kaia Couture, Julianne Cozine, Levi Daigle, Jillian DeBarge, Katherine Dorman, Veronica Dymkowski, Charles Fijal, Katie Gay, Trent Harper, Aubrey Harrington, Lucia Hellyar, Jada Kelley, Dylan Laramee, Chloe LaRoche, Benjamin Les, Jack Mandeville, Isabella Martins, Rocco Meausky, Jack Meyers, Allison Morris, Logan Moses, Colin Mullen, Zachary Mullen, Gianna Picardi, Nicholas Rettura, Laci Sabourin, Varvara Sas, Liam Spraggon, Addison Sullivan, Maya Tellier, Mikayla Valley, Brycen Vann, George Wheeler and Joseph Yoon.

Grade 11, Honors

Kamilah Acosta-Morales, Luke Bergeron, Tyler Black, Gavin Boisjolie, McKenna Cardwell, Alaina Cote, Lilah Dean, Zachary Dragon, Brian Fuller, Patrick Fuller, Kyla Giroux, Caleb Gloster, Natalie Haluch, Jared Haynes, Aliza Hayward, Kamden Houle, Daniel Hulmes, Noah Les, Kate Mark, Joshua Misiaszek, Chloe Moss, Ty O'Donnell, Kanyinsola Okuwobi, Brianna Ribeiro, Alexis Romaniak, Vivian Ross, Margaret Ryzek, Jack Sullivan Stephanie Wenzel, Valerie Williams and Oliver Young.

Grade 10, High Honors

Edith Audette, Zane Auger, Olivia Bailey, Mackenzie Burch, Lily Carr, Canyon Charron, Chase Connor, Josalyn Carrier, Lila Goodrich, Ryan Gould, Alexa Karabetos, Clara Lambert, Miles McNamara, Brandon O'Connor, Mya Philpott, Brooke Pogoda, Destiny Ranzie, Camryn Soon, Ryan Shea, Liam Sherwood, Sam Smolinski, Kiera Struzziero and Patrick Wallace.

Grade 10, Honors

Abigail Almeida, Rachel Baltazar, Mackenzy Bowers, Brian Burns, Tyler Burrows, Owen Clark, Sofia Cofone, Chloe DaCosta, Abigail Deren, Luke Dudek, Lydia Edds, Zoe Eyer-Pelletier, Nathan Fink, Jenna Fletcher, Madison Fontaine, Jake Gormely, Mason Gualberto, Izabella Haggerty, Cooper Hampson, Jordan Kalish, Madison Kapinos, Brooklyn Keeler, Emma Kornbluth, Collin Laragy, Nathan Marino, Molly Mazzaferro, Isabel Moreau, Kayleigh Olszewski, Brenna Raines, Aleksandra Randall, Ashleigh Thayer, Vincent Ting and Ryan Volz-Benoit.

Grade 9, High Honors

Hayden Bressette, Cooper Chianciola, Avery Cooper, Paige Dias, Addison-Rose DiBona, Charles Fisher, Dory Keefe, Cian Lindsay, Sean Lindsay, Charlotte MacKenzie, Isaiah Matthey, Aubrey McCain, Gina Moson, Jocelyn Patten, Piper Patten, Lia Pikul, Alexa Radner, Zachary Restucci, Elise Roggie, Miles Schneider, Ryan Toner, Gianna Zenon

Grade 9, Honors

Rulon Anderson, Naveen Berryhill, Zackery Bledsoe, Tyler Boisjolie, Benjamin Causeway, Kaiya Cavanaugh, Kale Couture, Drake Dragon, Grace Duchon, Maria Fahmy, Ryleigh Fine, Oliver Hellyar, Emmett Howard, Andre Jarry, Natalie Jordan, Owen Laurenzo, Morghan Litz, Grady Martin, Madelynn Perry, Madelyn Philpott, Racquel Pogoda, Julia Rainaud, Kate Rivera, Troy Robinson, Lila Roy, Morgan Sambor, Klara Shaink, Benjamin Smolinski, Lily Tellier, Lelia VanBuren, Isabella Vozzella, Emily Waller and Henry Walter.

Kindergarten registration scheduled for March 5-7

GRANBY – Kindergarten registration will be held in the East Meadow School foyer, 393 East State St., on Tuesday, March 5, Wednesday, March 6 and Thursday, March 7, in person by appointment from 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Evening hours are available on Wednesday, March 6 from 5-6:30 p.m. with no appointment necessary.

Students must be 5 years old by Aug. 31, 2024.

To schedule an appointment, visit <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C094AACAD2FAAFCC07-kinder-garten>.

Please be sure to bring in the following items to your registration appointment (copies can be made while at appointment if needed):

Proof of residency (one of the following is required): deed, current mortgage bill, current signed lease agreement or notarized letter from Town Hall.

Child's birth certificate.
Parent/guardian driver's license or other picture identification.

Custody, guardianship, foster, transfer of rights, restraining orders, or certification of student residency is necessary.

Medical records: copy of up to date (within the past year) physical, lead screening and updated immunization.

Under 603 CMR 8.00: M.G.L. c.69, 1B, all eligible students are to receive a screening prior to beginning kindergarten. This screening is not used to determine if a child is ready for kindergarten; it is used only as a tool to provide our schools with information concerning any special learning needs a child may have before entering school.

Kindergarten screenings will be held in May by appointment only. All students need to be registered for kindergarten, including current East Meadow Preschool students.

Kindergarten registration now open for 2024-2025

BELCHERTOWN – If you are a resident of Belchertown with a child who will be 5 years of age on or before Sept. 1, you are encouraged to complete a kindergarten registration packet for the upcoming 2024-2025 school year.

Please contact Christina Aponte by emailing caponte@belchertownps.org or by calling 413-323-0423 extension 100 for additional information.

Jennifer Parker nominated for LifeChanger of the Year Award

BELCHERTOWN – Jabish Brook Middle School counselor Jennifer Parker has been nominated for National Life Group's 2023-24 LifeChanger of the Year award.

Sponsored by the National Life Group Foundation, LifeChanger of the Year recognizes and rewards the very best K-12 educators and school district employees across the U.S. who are making a difference in the lives of students by exemplifying excellence, positive influence and leadership.

Parker was nominated for the LifeChanger of the Year award by an anonymous member of the community, however, this is not her first accolade in education. In March of 2022, Parker was awarded the Pioneer Valley Excellence in Teaching Award from Superintendent Brian Cameron.

"She goes above and beyond every day making sure everyone is in a positive, safe and respectful environment. During lunchtime at Jabish Brook Middle School Jen offers her full lunch block to sit with students who do not eat lunch or are uncomfortable eating in the lunchroom," said

Cameron in a press release.

On top of her role as a school counselor, Parker fills in as a substitute teacher when needed. She makes an effort to stay informed about her students' well-being and strives to provide them with the support they need to succeed academically and socially.

About LifeChanger of the Year

Each school year, LifeChanger of the Year receives hundreds of nominations from all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Seventeen individual LifeChanger of the Year awards will be given during the 2023-2024 school year.

One Grand Prize Winner will receive \$10,000 to be shared with their school/district; four Grand Prize Finalists will receive \$5,000 to be shared with their school/district; 10 LifeChanger Award Winners will receive \$3,000 to be shared with their school/district; one Spirit Award Winner (this award is given to the nominee whose community demonstrates the most support for their nomination) will receive \$5,000 to be shared with their school/district; and

one Spotlight Award Winner (this award is given to a nominee in a specific discipline each year) will receive \$5,000 to be shared with their school or district.

Winners are chosen by a selection committee comprised of former winners and education professionals, and will be announced in early 2024. Nominees must be K-12 teachers or school district employees.

To be considered for an award, nominees must make a positive impact in the lives of students; enhance their school or district's atmosphere, culture and pride; demonstrate exemplary leadership at the school and/or district level; possess a proven record of professional excellence; show commitment to building a nurturing environment that supports learning; and adhere to the highest moral and ethical standards.

A resource page with ideas for how to celebrate nominees can be found at <http://lifechangeroftheyear.com/showspirit/>.

To view Parker's LifeChanger of the Year nominee profile, or to nominate someone from your school community, visit www.LifeChangeroftheYear.com.

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SESSION 7: AUG 5-9

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Orioles ousted from tourney contention

BELCHERTOWN – The Belchertown High School boys basketball team was able to win its regular season finale, taking down Quabbin in a low-scoring affair 45-43. The Orioles would finish at 8-11, but still qualify for the Western Mass. tournament. The Orioles would lose in the opening round to Monument Mountain to finish at 8-12 overall, and will not qualify for the Division 3 state tournament this year.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY
WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM
Tyler Marino takes a shot from the free throw line.



Cal Orzech makes his way down the court.



Jacob Pacunas heads into the arc.



Jackson Couchon gets ready to fire off a three-point attempt.

Granby beats Palmer for third time in WMass quarterfinals

BY TIM PETERSON
Sports Correspondent

GRANBY—The Granby boys' basketball team won both regular season games against Palmer.

The third meeting of the 2023-24 campaign between the Bi-County West League rivals took place in the Western Mass. Class C. quarterfinals.

With the help of a 7-0 run late in the second quarter, the third-seeded Rams held a 20-14 halftime lead. The home team never trailed during the second half enroute to a 51-36 victory over the sixth-seeded Panthers at Sullivan Gymnasium on Presidents Day.

"It's never easy to beat a team three times in the same season, so this is a huge win for us," said Granby head coach Dylan Dubuc. "We prepared very well, and the players played with a lot of confidence in tonight's game."

Granby (15-5) kept their dreams of winning a sectional title alive with a 51-46 win at second-seeded Drury in the Western Mass. Class C semifinals, last Thursday night.

The trio of junior guard Gavier Fernandez Jr. (22 points), senior guard Colin Murdock (11 points), and junior forward Cody White (10 points) led the way offensively for the Rams against Drury.

The Rams, who captured the Western Mass. Division 3 title in 2005, were scheduled to face top-seeded Mahar regional in this year's Western Mass. Class C. championship game last Saturday. They'll also be competing in the Division 5 state tournament, which starts this week.

Fernandez Jr. (15 points) and Murdock (13 points), who are the Granby co-captains, combined to score 28 points in the Rams quar-



Riley Goodhind rears back for a long pass.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY
WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM
Colin Murdock dekes to his right.

terfinal victory.

Murdock has been a member of the varsity basketball team for the past two years and he won his second postseason game.

"It just feels amazing to win a game in the Western Mass. tournament," said Murdock following the Palmer game. "We played two close games against Palmer during the regular season. It's hard to beat the same team three times in a season, but we did it."

The Rams defeated the Panthers by twelve points in the first meeting of the regular season. They squeaked out a 60-56 victory in the second meeting.

White finished last Monday night's contest with eight points, while junior center Sawyer Clarke chipped in with seven

points. Junior guard Cody Breault made a pair of 3-pointers resulting in his six points. His older brother, Nate, is the last Granby basketball player to score 1,000 career points.

The other senior listed on the Rams postseason roster is Ben Berger, who's a forward. He made a free throw at the start of the second quarter, which was his only point of the game.

Despite the setback, the Panthers (10-9), who only won one game a year ago, will also be competing in the Division 5 state tournament.

"Anytime that your team has the opportunity to play in a post-

Please see **GRANBY**, page 10



TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI
Adrien Moskovitz angles toward the left side of the court as Pathfinder takes over on offense.



Hunter Griswold one-hands a pass under pressure.



Seth Mitchell drives into the paint.

Pioneers fall in finale before playoffs

PALMER – Last week, Pathfinder boys basketball participated in nonplayoff action, hosting Mt. Greylock. The Pioneers would be tied at halftime, but ultimately were edged by the Mountie 60-57 last Wednesday night. In the loss, Richie Gula had 27 points while Hunter Griswold scored 17 points. Adam Slonka added 10 points. The Pioneers drew a local matchup for the Division 5 state tournament, and played at Palmer High School earlier this week.



Richie Gula heads for the layup.



Cayden Bousquet tries to get around a Mt. Greylock guard.

SPORTS

T-Birds suffer loss at Bridgeport

BRIDGEPORT, Conn. — The Springfield Thunderbirds (24-22-3-2) fell to the Bridgeport Islanders (16-28-6-1) on Sunday afternoon at Total Mortgage Arena by a final score of 5-3.

Things appeared to be starting well for the T-Birds on this day, as Sam Bitten cashed in for his first career AHL goal at the 8:19 mark of the first period when he arrived at the top of the crease and jammed a Drew Callin centering pass through Henrik Tikkanen's legs to make it 1-0 for the visitors.

Springfield increased the lead to 2-0 at 12:54 when Ryan Suzuki sent an alley-oop through the neutral zone that landed inside the Islander blue line. Jakub Vrana accelerated to beat the Bridgeport defender to the puck and then slid a backhand shot through Tikkanen to extend the lead on his ninth goal of the season.

55 seconds after the Vrana tally, though, the Islanders made their way to the scoresheet as Tyce Thompson got a step behind

the defense and lifted a perfect backhand shot over Colten Ellis to cut the lead to 2-1 heading into the first intermission.

The second period began uneventfully, but Suzuki changed matters when he powered down the right wing, protecting the puck before elevating a forehand chip shot over Tikkanen to make it a 3-1 game at 6:34 of the period.

Ellis remained busy but strong as the period entered its final three minutes en route to a career-high 49 saves. Unfortunately for the T-Birds, Bridgeport All-Star Ruslan Iskhakov snapped a goal drought dating back to Jan. 15 to singlehandedly pull the Isles even. First, the crafty centerman made his way to the edge of the crease near the right circle, beating Ellis on a second chance after the T-Bird goalie made a strong reactionary save on the first attempt. That tally cut the score to 3-2 at 17:08.

Not even two minutes later,

now with under a minute to go in the period, Iskhakov delivered the equalizer with a one-time rocket off a circle-to-circle pass from Matt Maggio, and Bridgeport headed into the dressing room with new life in the 3-3 game.

The Islanders were relentless in the final 20 minutes, managing 22 shots on the T-Birds net. Ellis and the Springfield defense held the fort as long as they could before a Sam Bolduc point wrister glanced off traffic and skipped past Ellis to give Bridgeport the lead for good at 11:34 of the third. Hudson Fasching rounded out the scoring with a power-play marker into an empty net in the closing seconds.

The T-Birds' busy stretch continues next Friday in Providence as they tangle with the Bruins at Amica Mutual Pavilion. Springfield returns home on Saturday when they host the Laval Rocket at 7:05 p.m. at the MassMutual Center.

Registration now open for Quabbin Valley baseball

The Quabbin Valley Over-28 Baseball League is looking to infuse new talent into its league for the 2024 season.

Registration for the 2024 season is now open and any interested players can go to www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org to get registered, or to seek more information or make inquiries about the league. The league website will also be updated over the next month with information about the upcoming season.

There are many open roster spots available in the league for the 2024 season, which is tentatively scheduled to begin on Sunday, April 21. The league plays most Sunday from late April through late August with playoffs following that. The league plays a 15-game schedule and typically fields six teams each year. Games are usually played at 10 a.m. with fields in

Easthampton and South Hadley normally used.

The Quabbin Valley league is an all-abilities league and all are welcome to join. Eligibility is players who are age 28 and over. You must be 30 to be eligible to pitch in the league. Your age for eligibility is whatever age you will turn in 2024. The league is also able to entertaining taking in an entire group as a team to add to the league. Please email the league board for to inquire about entering a team.

The league is currently in the process of preparing for the 2024 season and held a meeting on Feb. 18 to discussion plans for the upcoming season. The next meeting is scheduled for Sunday March 24 at 11:40 a.m. at the Hangar Pub & Grill in South Hadley. All are welcome to attend the meeting, ask questions and express interest in joining.

Worcester wraps up road trip with loss to Florida

ESTERO, FL — The Worcester Railers HC (22-22-4-2, 50pts) lost to the Florida Everblades (27-15-7-2, 63pts) on Saturday night by the final score of 5-3 in front of a crowd of 7,650 at Hertz Arena. The Railers have wrapped up their six-game southern road trip and return to the DCU Center against the Trois-Rivieres Lions on Saturday, March 2nd at 7:05pm.

The Everblades opened the scoring with goals from Sean Josling (1-2-3) and Joe Pendenza (1-1-2) just 2:43 apart to grab a 2-0 lead. Worcester responded 27 seconds later as Jack Quinlivan (1-0-1) wrapped a backhand behind the net past Johnson to make it 2-1 going into the second. Worcester kept the pressure on the Everblades in the second as they added on two more from Zsombor Garat (1-1-2) and Andrei Bakanov (1-0-1) to take their first lead of the night going into the third at 3-2. Florida took the lead in the third thanks to goals from Will Reilly (1-0-1), Mark Senden (1-0-1) and an empty netter from Brett Davis (1-0-1) to take the game 5-3.

Florida controlled the pace of play across the first fourteen minutes in the first, culminating in the game's first goal. Sean Josling (14th) received a backdoor pass from Oliver Chau who received the puck from Pendenza below the goal line to bury it past Cole Ceci in net for Worcester to put the Everblades ahead 1-0. With Florida on the power play 2:43

later in the period, Joe Pendenza turned on a one-timer and sent it past Ceci as Florida led 2-0 late in the period. Jack Quinlivan (4th) responded for Worcester just 27 seconds later. He took the puck off the stick of Zsombor Garat and wrapped it with his backhand inside the near post from beneath the net to get Worcester to within one heading into the second.

Worcester picked up the only goals in the second. Zsombor Garat (1st) hammered a heavy one-timer on the power-play from Trevor Cosgrove for his first professional North American goal. His marker tied the game at the 7:29 mark of the second. Later in the period with 4:51 left in the second, Andrei Bakanov (7th) ripped a wrister past the blocker of Cam Johnson following a perfect drop pass from Anthony Callin to give Worcester the 3-2 lead entering the third.

The Everblades would be the only team to score in the third period. First it was Will Reilly (6th) on a wrister from the point that beat Ceci blocker side to tie the game 3-3 just 7:49 into the frame. From there, Mark Senden (9th) found the puck barreling down the left wing and buried it through the legs of Ceci to make it 4-3 Florida. Brett Davis (3rd) sealed the deal for Florida with an empty netter with just 1:31 remaining in the game to give Florida the win and the final score of 5-3.

ASSE seeks host families for exchanges students

ASSE International Student Exchange Programs, a nonprofit, public benefit organization, is inviting local families to discover the many rewards of hosting a foreign exchange student.

ASSE students come from more than 50 countries worldwide: France, Denmark, Spain, Italy, Ukraine, Japan and Australia, to name a few. They are between the ages of 15 and 18 years, and they are enthusiastic and excited to experience

American culture, family life, school, sports, etc.

Students also love to share their own culture and language with their host families, who welcome the students into their home, not as a guest, but as a family member, giving everyone involved a rich cultural experience. Host families may be single parents, couples and single persons.

The exchange students have

Please see **HOST**, page 11

GRANBY from page 10

season game, it's a very good thing," said first-year Palmer head coach Missy Rocker. "I hope we can build off this experience entering the state tournament."

Sophomore center Stephen Fredette paced the visiting team with 11 points. He scored nine of his points during the second half, which helped the Panthers stay within striking distance.

"I thought Stephen played a very good game tonight," Rocker said. "He's one of our sophomores."

Fredette scored a season-high 16 points in a 71-65 home loss to Belchertown on January 30.

Rounding out the Panthers scoring column in their quarterfinal loss were freshman guard Taydem Haley (7 points), sophomore guard Angel Torres (6 points), sophomore guard Dylan Doherty (6 points), sophomore forward Matt Santos (2 points), sophomore center Gavin Smola (2 points), and senior forward Shawn Troche (2 points). Palmer's other senior is Andrew Menard, who's a forward.

The two teams combined to score 13 points during the first eight minutes of the contest.

Doherty scored the game's first four points with a lay-up and two free throws.

Granby took a 7-4 lead with 1:50 left in the opening quarter following back-to-back lay-ups by Murdock, who scored ten points before halftime.

Fredette ended the Panthers dry spell offensively with an inside hoop thirty seconds later making the score 7-6.

There were several lead changes during the first five minutes of the second quarter.

With 2:40 remaining in the opening half, Murdock hit a one-handed runner in the lane. He then received a long down-court pass from Fernandez before converting a wide open lay-up.

"Colin became our point guard two years ago," Dubuc said. "He hasn't missed a beat since and he's one of our leaders."

Breault closed out the first half



TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

Gavier Fernandez goes for the hoop.

by burying a 3-pointer from the left corner, which gave the home team a six point halftime lead.

The Panthers couldn't get any closer than four points in the second half.

"Once we fell behind at the end of the first half, we just could never retake the lead again," Rocker said. "We played well defensively, and we rebounded the ball well, but our shooting was a little bit off tonight."

With five minutes remaining in regulation, a Fredette inside hoop closed the gap to 36-32.

Fernandez was then fouled while making a baseline lay-up. He added the bonus free throw.

Clarke scored the next five points which pushed the Rams lead into double digits (44-34) for the first time, which sealed their quarterfinal victory.



Sawyer Clarke shoots a free throw.



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EDUCATION

UMass Amherst names fall 2023 Dean's List students

AMHERST – Below is a list of local students who were named to the dean's list at the University of Massachusetts Amherst for the fall 2023 semester.

In order to qualify, an undergraduate student must receive a 3.5 grade-point average or better on a four-point scale.

Amherst

Ammar Abdel-Maksoud, Ethan A. Ackerman, Abdullah Fathi M. Al Hamoud, Jude Majdi A. Aladmawy, Maksimilians Heinrichs Aleksandrovics, Fathima Amaniyah, Diya M. Antony, Alexander Ernst Auer, Mark Jamison Benedetto, Dorian Benhamou Goldfajn, Nadav Eli Berkman, Gabriela Rani Betancourt, Monil Rushabh Bhavsar, Madeleine Rose Bleyhl, Julia Michelle Block, Cyril Bou-Harb, Jonathan Lee Brown, Cyril Joseph Buckley, Isabelle Nowai Camara, Elena Cardenas, Depre Carr, Alison Helena Cavanagh, Georges Chebly, Julie Choi, Gunyoung Choi, Delia Grace Clotfelter, Jessica April Tanedo Collantes, Tannin Anatolia Costa, Samuel Machado Costa, Rachel Lella Cottman, Samuel Asher Cove, Damien Kayne Crockett, Caden Crouse, Meena Cunniffe, Jared Beals Dalkas, Sofia Dallapiccola, Anabelle Marie Daly, Paul Callahan Davis, Juliana De Salles Terra, Kevin W. Deng, Philip Mathew DeSiervo, Kaleo DeStefano, Bethany M. Deware, Tan Ngoc Dinh, Conor Joseph Doherty, Ian Philip Doherty, Ethan Thomas Donnelly, Ryan Robert Dougherty, Pennington Cassia Duglio, Hazel Rose Durbin, Iris Earl, Maria Ejja, Joseph El Hachem, Rawan Mostafa Elfawal, Christian Michael Fadel, Maria Eugenia Fairhurst Agosta, Evelyn Frances Fanton, Maria Paola Ferretti, Alexander Christopher Fruean, Talish Garg, Miles Gillett de Harven, Katherine Grace Gillis, Hannah James Giroux, James

Harrison Goldbach, Gabriella Amelie Goldin, Victoria Rose Goldstein, Yachen Gong, Advait Ketan Gosai, Niamh E. Gray-Mullen, Russell Matthew Griffin, Sruthi Guntupalli, Marshall Alexander Hanke, Leif Harrigan, Alex Harvey-Arnold, Eric Leonard Hazen, Sophia Difei He, Cleo Hein, Daniel Patrick Heron, Myrte van Herwijnen, Christopher Hill, Julia Donghua Himmelstein, Katherine Elizabeth Hinderliter, Andrew Hines, Tyler Gregory Holbrow, Ryland Adri Holt, Brendan Holtmann, James Loyd Scrimshaw Hornibrook, Alexander Yun-Lei Hsieh, Joseph J. Ignacio, Jared Anthony Invileon, Ratan Deep Iynhalli Vishwadeep Jinn Janpathompong, Mahsa Javid, Linden Ashley Jimison, Chang Jin, Henry Daniel Jordan, Manan Kansil, Alexandra Katsoulakis, Eva Katsoulakis, Aidan Patrick Kelly, Jee Hyun Kim, Ryan Alden Kirkey, Kylie Madison Kittredge, John Klinger, Levi Minna Ensign Koenig, Rishi Krishana, Chewang Diki Lachenpa, Timothy Laderoute, William Breezy Lane, Madison Ashley Larner, Lucy Pepemehmetolgu Latham, Nhu Thieu Makara Le, Nhi Tran Yen Le, Jennifer Lee, Martha Barbour Leo, Danford Orin Chamberlain Leonard, Addison Lepak, Jolie Mae Lepere, Ryan John Lester, Ang Li, Jia Xin Li, Ruopeng Liu, Isabella Rose Locke, Celso Angel Lopez, Maria Paula Lorenzini, Dongcheng Lu, Ordell Wilmot Luetschwager, Sydney Tremblay Mager, Sugat Shrikant Mahale, Ziai Mao, Benito Ruben Ivan Marinero-Rodriguez, Justin Andrew Masteralexis, Nicole Catherine Matthews, Daniel Richard May, Quinlan Mayo, Griffen Lord McClendon, Eris Cora McCubbin, Seamus John McNulty, Sara Jeanne Miley, Amey Navin Mirchandani, Arhan Mirchandani, Quentin Roark Moliterno, Jennifer Marie Nadig, Marc

Moussa Nasser, Rachael Khuyen Tuong Nguyen, Trung Quoc Nguyen, Khang Huu Nguyen, Phuc Duc Hoang Nguyen, Lukas Jonathan Nuesslein, Stefan Nikolaus Nuesslein, Patrick Michael Nugent, Morgan O'Brien, Kevin M. O'Brien, Matthew Louis O'Connor, Ihuoma Onyeukwu, Yuze Ouyang, Schuyler Brie Pacious, Milosz Pankiewicz, Jamie Suyung Park, Louis Horodowich Pate, Khush Harsh Patel, Phoebe Ray Pfaffman, Anh Chau Pham, Ha Truong Minh Pham, Isabel Dora Polak, Cameron Santino Prescott, Nana Tatiana Quanin, Maria Nieves Quevedo Herrera, Amber Rachele, Ishan Rana, Richita Rachel Randhir, Isabel Marina Rich, Michael Robert Rodia, Saketh Sankara, Saliim Abayomi Benoit Sausberry, Jenna Schilling, Sophie Grace Schilling, Oren Joseph Schmerling, Sophia-Zoe Schreyer, Sophia M Schweik, Kiruba Shalin, Maya Shekar, Ammar Khan Sherwani, Athena Bhadrash Sheth, Ishaan Anand Shetty, YuQian Shi, Lucas Scott Singer, Shashwat Singh, Eden Faith Smith, Avery Smith, Latoya Diana Smith, Colton Read Spirko, Chloe Olivia Springer, Myra Lotus Stickney, Eliana Strohmeidav, Victoria Sullivan, Ken Suzuki, keying Tang, Norika Tang, Walter T. Tebbetts, Shreya Thakur, Sapphire Tham, Kien Trung To, Silvia Cristina Toncelli, Quynh Anh Tran, Thu Minh Tran, An Bao Tran, Thien Ngoc Tran, Kwok Hay Jason Tse, Adea Turku, Maya Uhler, Isik Ulasan, Samantha Faith Van Horn, Destina Gabriella Vivo Amore, Khang Hong Vo, Hai Duc Vu, Baoxu Wang, Yusen Wang, Emily Wang, Lufei Wang, Garrett Charles Warren, Kaliska Wiley, Japhet Asher Wise, Ruozhang Xi, Xiaoke Xiang, Feng Xu, Jingyi Xu, Jennifer Rose Yeomans, Ozel Yilmazel, Jisun Yoon, Jinyang Yu, Alex Yu Wang, Haluk Omer Yuzukirmizi,

Ryan James Zawistowski, Haoran Zhang, Jinyang Zhang, Qihang Zhou and Jiayu Zhou.

Belchertown

Julianna Applegate, Samantha Lynne Bachand, Leyna Bajaj, Kyle Bechthold, Selene Rae Bonafini, Julia E. Cady, Elizabeth Chiasson, Nathaniel David Courchesne, John Cowles, Gavin William Cyr, Lucas Jacob Czarniecki, Sarah Marie Fischer, Ashley Rae Fuhrmann, Pavlos L Goulas, Rebecca Laura Hicks, Daniel Lucas Holden, Danish H Humayun, Samuel Jonasson Hunt, Julia Lauren Jimenez, Adrian Kaczor, Ian Joseph Kenneally, Jonathan Ray Kiner, Saffron Danielle Kiner, Elijah Kirsch, Andrew Knapp, Benjamin Knodler, Despina Kofides, Ruby Constance Langlois, Veronica Ann Lashway, Walter John Peter Lloyd, Daniel Mahaney, Mackenzie Marie Marshall, Antonio Boileau Martel, Amy Mas, Abigail Rose Menard, Grace Katherine Menard, Demosthenis Nikitas, Nicole Ann Oberg, Emma Lynne Piedade, Jamie Roy Platt, Ian Roche, Mileena Rose Ryan, Joshua Timothy Smith, Timothy Emmett Spears, Cameron Parker Sullivan-Daley, Cameron David Szarkowski, Joshua Stephen Tan, Karl Lawrence Underwood, Thaddeus Raymond Wegrzyn III and Bryce Whitehead.

Granby

Markus Theodore Baran, Molly Elena Hoffenberg, Jenna Lyn Learned, Isha Ghanshyam Patel, Alexander Richard Pogorzelski, Eric Tarpinian-Jachym, Maxim Tishchenko, Michael William Toth, Shannon Marie Tremblay and Emily M Vallee.

HOST from page 10

pocket money for personal expenses and full health, accident and liability insurance. ASSE students are carefully selected based upon academics and personality, and host families choose their student from a wide variety of backgrounds, countries and personal interests.

ASSE also offers qualified American students the opportunity to learn another

language and culture by spending a school year, semester or a summer with a host family in another country.

Those interested in hosting an exchange student or becoming an exchange student abroad should call Alina at 1-800-677-2773, visit www.asse.com or send an email to asseusouth@asse.com to request more information or start the application process.

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Celebrity Bartending Fundraiser on March 6 benefits JAWM

SPRINGFIELD – Junior Achievement of Western Massachusetts invites the community to its Celebrity Bartending Fundraiser on Wednesday, March 6, from 5-9 p.m. at Loophole Brewing, 51-59 Taylor St.

All celebrity bartender tips from the evening will benefit JAWM.

“This is our seventh year holding this event, and my first as president, so I’m especially excited,” said Amie Miarecki, president, JAWM in a press release. “I’m looking forward to meeting so many JAWM supporters. Our goal is to raise \$10,000 this year! We appreciate the support we receive from the community, and especially want to thank our celebrity bartenders who are donating their time and enthusiasm.”

The event will include a full cash bar, great menu options, a raffle and live music from Maxxtone. Celebrity bartenders will include: 5-5:45 p.m., Springfield Mayor Domenic

Sarno, Hampden County Sheriff Nicholas Cocchi, Jim Kelly of Polish National Credit Union, Nate Costa of the Springfield Thunderbirds and Al Kasper of Savage Arms; 5:55-6:40 p.m., Senator Jake Oliveira; Senator Adam Gonzalez; Amy Jamrog of The Jamrog Group and Chris Marion of Chris Marion Photography; 6:50-7:35 p.m., Meghan Rothschild of ChikMedia, Matt Maguire of PeoplesBank, Jeremy Casey of SR Commercial Realty and Kristin Carlson of Peerless Precision; 7:45-8:30 p.m., Brian Houser of Balise Motor Group, Mike “Bax” Baxendale of WAQY Rock 102, Dan Moriarty of Monson Savings and Jeff Goulet of Loophole Brewing.

“We’re hoping for a great turnout for this fun celebration and fundraiser,” said Miarecki. “Donations will support our workforce readiness, entrepreneurship and financial literacy programs, which are offered to schools and community groups across

Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden and Hampshire counties, as well as part of Worcester County and Vermont.”

Junior Achievement was founded in Springfield in 1919. Today, JAWM is part of the nation’s largest organization dedicated to giving young people the knowledge and skills they need to own their economic success, plan for their futures, and make smart academic and economic choices.

To learn more about the event or “tip” a specific bartender in advance, visit jawm.org/celebrity-bartender or call 413-747-7670.

About JAWM

Junior Achievement of Western Massachusetts was founded in Springfield in 1919 and is the birthplace of JA. Today, more than 8,000 young people ages 5 to 25 in western Massachusetts, part of Worcester County, and Vermont participate in JA learning experiences annually.

For more information, visit jawm.org.

OBITUARY

Sister Jeanne T. Hubert, 93

BELCHERTOWN – Sister Jeanne T. Hubert passed away peacefully on Feb. 23, 2024, at the age of 93.

Jeanne was born July 12, 1930, in Springfield, daughter of William L and Marie (Blais) Hubert.

Jeanne previously lived in West Springfield and then in Belchertown since 1978. She was a longtime resident of Pine Valley Plantation.

She graduated from American International College Magna Cum Laude with a bachelor’s degree and was a registered nurse at St. Francis Hospital in Hartford, Connecticut. She also worked at the former Belchertown State School for many years and served with Daughters of the Holy Spirit in Putnam, Connecticut.

A Funeral Mass for Sister Jeanne will be held Monday, March 4 at 10 a.m. at St. Francis of Assisi in Belchertown with burial to follow in South Cemetery. Please visit www.beersandstory.com.

Death Notice

Hubert, Sister Jeanne T.
Died Feb. 23, 2024
Services March 4, 2024

The Sentinel OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

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

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$225, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph.

Death Notices & Paid Obituaries

should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

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

CAMPUS NOTES

AIC names students to Athletic Director’s 3.0 Club

SPRINGFIELD – American International College congratulates its student-athletes who have been inducted into the Athletic Director’s 3.0 Club for the fall 2023 semester.

Local students include from Amherst, Lucas Morales-Fernandez majoring in general business; from Granby, Michael Flaherty majoring in health science, Nora Young majoring in criminal justice and Gabrielle Walz majoring in health science.

AIC Athletics Director Jessica Chapin recognized more than three hundred student-athletes who have achieved a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better after one or more years enrolled at AIC. The primary objective for these students is to stand as academic role models, inspiring fellow student-athletes with their achievements and dedication.

Tufts University announces Dean’s List honors

MEDFORD – Tufts University recently announced the Dean’s List for the fall 2023 semester.

Amherst students named to the Dean’s List include Quinn Hampson, Class of 2026; Adda Hennessey, Class of 2026; Evan Hu, Class of 2024; and Anna Quiros, Class of 2024.

Dean’s List honors at Tufts University require a semester grade point average of 3.4 or greater.

Fine art sought for ‘Celebrating the Figure’ at ArtWorks Gallery

WARE – ArtWorks Gallery invites artists from throughout the northeastern U.S. to celebrate the human figure in the upcoming 3rd Annual Celebrating the Figure exhibition.

As in previous years, this show focuses on the realistic interpretation of the human figure and is open to all forms of applied mediums, sculpture, and printmaking. Photography and electronic media are not accepted mediums for this exhibition.

The deadline for entry is Thursday, March 7, by midnight. The entry form and full details can be found on workshop13.org.

ArtWorks Gallery is located at 69 Main St. The 3rd Annual Celebrating the Figure exhibition will be on display from April 6-28, opening with a reception on Saturday, April 6, from 3-5 p.m.

Gallery hours are Saturdays and Sundays from 1-4 p.m. Currently on display is All Things Animal, which is on display from March 2-30 and opens with a reception on Saturday, March 2,

from 3-5 p.m.

The juror for the 3rd Annual Celebrating the Figure exhibition is Jeff Stauder. Stauder was born in Cambridge and raised in eastern Connecticut.

He received a bachelor’s degree in art from the University of California at Santa Cruz and a master’s degree from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, where he won the 1996 Dana Pond Painting Award.

Following graduate school Stauder moved to New York City where among other things, he created the Artists Theoretical Racing Circuit, a collaborative conceptual art project. He moved to western Massachusetts in 2008, where he finally indulged his true nature by reveling in imagistic historicism.

That work has been exhibited widely in New England, including a solo exhibition at the University of Massachusetts. In 2022 he was awarded a Massachusetts Cultural Council Artist Fellowship Grant in Painting.

SSI from page 6

ries (loss of house, divorce, etc.) nothing could be done for the year.

The money was used strictly on another investment, our new house. It wasn’t like we took it out and spent it wildly. Can you please advise?

Signed: Frustrated Homeowner

Dear Frustrated:

Unfortunately, it sounds like your wife is a victim of the Medicare provision known as “Income Related Monthly Adjustment Amount.” Each person’s Medicare Part B premium, coverage for outpatient health care, is determined yearly from their income from all sources as reported to the IRS two years prior.

IRMAA sets income thresholds, depending on your IRS filing status and if those thresholds are exceeded you must pay a higher Medicare Part B premium and also a higher Part D premium if you have prescription drug coverage.

Assuming you file your taxes as “mar-

ried/jointly,” if your combined 2022 income as a couple was between \$206,000 and \$258,000 your wife’s 2024 Part B premium is \$244.60, instead of the standard \$174.70; if your combined 2022 income was between \$258,000 and \$322,000 then your wife’s Part B premium for 2024 is \$349.40; if your combined in 2022 was between \$322,000 and \$386,000, her Part B premium is \$454.20; if your combined 2022 income as a married couple was between \$386,000 to \$750,000 then your wife’s 2024 Part B premium is \$559 and if your 2022 income as a married couple was over \$750,000 your wife’s Part B premium is \$594.

If your wife also has private Part D prescription drug coverage, IRMAA also increases those premiums. Note that the IRMAA thresholds are different for other income tax filing statuses.

As the Social Security office has already explained, you could appeal your wife’s IRMAA premium increase if she had a “life changing event,” but the list of acceptable life changing events is quite small (see

form SSA-44). The only good news is that your wife’s Medicare premium will be calculated anew for next year, so her Medicare premium for 2025 will, if your 2023 joint income is less than the first IRMAA threshold, revert to the standard 2025 premium.

For Your Information, it doesn’t matter what you used the money for. Your withdrawal was reported to the IRS as taxable income, which is what caused IRMAA to apply to your wife’s Medicare premium for 2024. Many people don’t realize that Medicare premiums are higher for those with a higher income, but since your withdrawal was a one-time event, your wife’s Medicare Part B premium next year should be much less and her Social Security benefit correspondingly higher.

GARDEN from page 6

cool soil. Many native perennials need to chill for a month before they are able to germinate- “stratify” these seeds in the cold frame and then move them to the border once they are off and growing.

You can also harden off plants that were started indoors inside the cold frame.

What about getting a head start with heat-loving vegetables, such as tomatoes or peppers? Or even herbs like basil or flowers such as celosia, marigold or amaranths? Here is where the hot bed comes in.

If you have access to free, fresh manure, you are all set. The general idea is to build a mound about two feet tall of manure and bedding materials not older than six weeks and top it with soil you will be growing your seedling in, then top that with one of the frame set-ups described above.

The heat generated from the manure will warm the soil and the surrounding air. Seeds should germinate easily and readily.

It’s important not to set up your hot bed too early – mid April to early May is perfect because you will still need to be past the frost free date before planting the seedlings you’ve grown into the garden. Hot beds take a little trial and error, but are worth the experiment.

When we used them at

OSV, the seedlings grown within were always greener and sturdier than those I provided from our fancy greenhouse!

It was fun to think about getting a head start. Soon enough, soon enough!

Over the last decade, tremendous gains have been made in rose breeding, resulting in rose bushes that blend well into landscape plantings and require less maintenance for the homeowner. I still enjoy my heirlooms, and grow the Rugosa to remind me of the beach.

Still others prefer climbers or hybrid teas. Whatever your sweetheart may fancy, indulge this Valentine’s Day in a gift that will keep on giving!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 31 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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Flowers and photos decorated the room to celebrate Amelia "Millie" Dominik's 100th birthday on Feb. 21.



State Sen. Jake Oliveira presented Amelia "Millie" Dominik with a citation from the State House.

MILLIE from page 1

as both a riveter and Heliarc welder at White Aircraft during World War II.

She married her husband Joe in 1946, and enjoyed 35 years of marriage before his death in 1981.

Millie's son Richard said his mother has always had a strong work ethic, working at Grants department store on Main Street in Palmer as a secretary, as well as Monson State Hospital as a medical secretary for three doctors. She also worked at Spencer Wickwire in welding and shipping.

For 50 years, Millie was the office manager for Crimmins-Graveline Insurance Agency in Palmer

"She was the devoted assistant to Bob Graveline, who entrusted his business to her expertise and attention to detail," said Stone.

Millie enjoys travelling, having visited California, Nevada, Florida, New Hampshire and even Canada. In addition to making Polish food, she enjoys baking cookies, as well as going for walks, playing cards and Bingo, reading and music.

Richard said one of his most cherished childhood memories was his mother's fantastic cooking, especially her pierogis. A skill she has passed on to her grandchildren.

"The grandkids made a photo book with her showing them how to make the dough," Richard said. "She did a lot of gourmet cooking."

Richard said his mother is in remarkable health, which he credited to her cooking skills.

"That's all from scratch cooking," he said.

The number one thing he has learned from his mother, is patience, which is something she had a lot of throughout his formative years and continues to have today.

Richard's wife Jo-Anne said the decades she's spent with her mother-in-law have been wonderful, and she shared a book her

RECIPE

Millie's Pierogi Dough

- 6 cups of flour
- 4 eggs
- 2 cups of sour cream
- 1 teaspoon of salt

In large bowl, mix the eggs, sour cream, salt and five cups of flour. Stir well with a wooden spoon. Gradually add another cup of flour. Don't be afraid to mix the pierogi dough by hand.

daughters made to document Millie's special pierogi recipe. They took photos of each step of the process, making sure to follow her "2, 4, 6" instructions for the perfect dough.

The secret to Millie's dough, is sour cream, Richard said.

Even though Millie has only been at Christopher Heights of Belchertown for just over a month, Jo-Anne said the staff and residents have quickly become more than just that.

"They are all friends now," she said.

Stone said when a resident comes to Christopher Heights of Belchertown, they are welcomed in as friends; and that friends there become family.

Stone introduced a number of state and local dignitaries who joined the party to celebrate Millie's birthday, including state Sen. Jake Oliveira, state Rep. Aaron Saunders and Select Board members Lesa Lessard Pearson and Peg Louraine.

Oliveira, who is just as proud of his Polish heritage as Millie and her family, presented a citation to Millie from the State House.



Jo-Anne Dominik spoke about her mother-in-law, Millie, while her husband Richard (Millie's son) looks on.



State Rep. Aaron Saunders presented a citation to Amelia "Millie" Dominik.

"We don't often get to celebrate 100th birthday parties," he said. "It's an honor to be in your presence."

Saunders also presented a citation to Millie to recognize this significant milestone in her life.

"When you think about the Greatest Generation and the sacrifice that was made, we're incredibly indebted," he said.

Millie now joins a number of Christopher Heights of Belchertown residents who have reached the 100th Club, including Ann and Stanley who will both turn 103 this year and Rolland who will turn 101.

A luncheon of Millie's famous pierogis was served along with homemade kielbasa and rye bread. Those present joined in a singing of the traditional Polish birthday song, "Sto Lat" before giving a toast and the cheer "na zdrowie."

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Select Board members Lesa Lessard Pearson and Peg Louraine congratulated Amelia "Millie" Dominik on her 100th birthday and presented her with a citation from the Select Board.