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SERVING PALMER, MONSON, BRIMFIELD, HOLLAND & WALES

# The Journal Register

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

February 22, 2024 | Vol. CLXXIII, No. 4 | \$1.00

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**SCHOOL**

## Supt. updates School Committee on district's strengths, areas for improvement

By Marcelo Gusmão  
 Staff Writer  
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**PALMER** – During last week's School Committee meeting, Superintendent Matthew Francis updated the committee on student demographics and the school system's goals for the year.

"I like to begin many of my presentations this school year by bringing it back to our students," Francis said, and shared data about the gender, racial and language demographics of the school.

Francis shared that, with 1,106 students, school enrollment is still down slightly from the previous year, which he said is part of a trend throughout the commonwealth.

"The year following the pandemic, all K-12 public institutions throughout the commonwealth saw a decline of roughly 40,000 students," Francis said. "In the past three years, just the Pioneer Valley has still seen a decline of roughly 2,500 students in all the public K-12s."

Another thing the pandemic has changed is the economic stability of the town's students. According to Francis's data from the Department of Early and Secondary Education, 60% of students come from low-income households.

"Pre-pandemic, we were at 39.2% for the economically disadvantaged," Francis said. "In five years, we've gone up roughly 20% in that category."

Francis reiterated the goals he outlined when he initially presented his entry plan to the committee back in October. The four main goals included gaining a better understanding of the district, examining key issues and how they are handled, identifying tasks that need to be accomplished, and then establishing how they will be accomplished.

Francis explained that this process has been ongoing since he was appointed to the position in April and has involved interviews, surveys and collaboration with school committee members, administrators, students, and other community partners. The superintendent outlined the strengths he had observed in the town's schools as being the quality of staff, established traditions and events, community support and parent and caregiver groups.

"We have approximately 240 employees throughout the district," Francis said. "In August, we celebrated 25 different educators that have 25 or more years of experience." Francis also explained that according to DESE standards, 83% of educators are considered "experienced" thanks to advanced licensure or number of years of experience. "In the fall caregiver survey that I gave out, one of the questions that I asked the caregivers to answer was an open-ended question, 'my favorite thing about the school district is...' and the number one response that I got coming back was the teaching staff," Francis said.

Francis provided examples of parent responses describing the teachers as engaged, caring and genuinely wanting to help students. However, an even better example came from a letter read by Committee Chair Bonny Rathbone earlier in the meeting.

"My daughter recently had

SCHOOL COMM. | page 7

**SPORTS**

## PHS in need of players for varsity baseball

By Gregory A. Scibelli  
 gscibelli@turley.com

**PALMER** – Of the many sites for baseball in Western Massachusetts, Legion Field is one of the most well-known and best quality fields in the region.

But for the first time, it could be empty during the spring months as Palmer High School currently lacks enough players to field a roster for varsity baseball.

Last year, Palmer High School had just 13 players in the entire program. Jake Graveline, a graduate of Palmer High School, had taken over the program last year, and said there was no junior varsity team at the grade 7-12 school.

He doesn't attribute the drop in numbers in the program to anything in particular, but said he thought the COVID-19 pandemic could have played a part. Baseball was lost for the entire 2020 season and many players lost more than a year of development in the sport. Because the pandemic started in the spring, spring sports were the most adversely affected as athletes were unable to work during the spring or summer that year. Spring sports returned in an abbreviated sense in late spring of 2021.

Graveline said there are six players signed up for the program this spring, and the athletic department has gone through its typical preparation, which includes scheduling 18 games for the Panthers. Palmer has typically competed in the Bi-County League for many years.

BASEBALL | page 10

## Monson High School Winter Carnival



Turley photo by Harrison Giza  
**Monson High School students had just as much fun on the sidelines as they did off them, showing a group dub sign for all to see. More photos on pages 6.**

### Classes compete in annual Winter Carnival

By Marcelo Gusmão  
 Staff Writer  
 mgusmao@turley.com

**MONSON** – At last week's Winter Carnival, different grade levels competed against each other in a volleyball tournament in a

vigorous show of school spirit.

The tournament was held in the gymnasium from Noon to 2 p.m. Teacher and Coach Eric Degan said that the event is a highlight for both students and staff.

"This is kind of a makeup," Degan said. "We were supposed to do this on Tuesday night, but with the snowstorm, we didn't have the opportunity to do that."

MHS | page 15



**A Monson High senior leapt into the air to block the ball from his side during Thursday's Volleyball matches. More photos on pages 15 & 16.**

**GOVERNMENT**

## Updates on Monson inter-municipal agreement with Wilbraham

*The agreement focuses on veterans services*

By Kristin Rivers  
 Staff Writer  
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**WILBRAHAM** - Select Board learned the latest on Feb. 12 around an inter-municipal agreement with Monson for veterans services.

Jered Sasen, director of Veterans Services, explained Town Administrator Nick Breault put together the inter-municipal agreement and the language "is very consistent with what the state is looking for."

"When we talk about district forming, the state is specifically looking for manning, which we are meeting that goal and oversight which, in this situation, would set a district board which, again, meets that goal," Sasen said.

Breault elaborated on the draft agreement's highlights, including going with a model forming a district between two municipalities adjacent to one another and the apportionment of costs.

"There are two methods to use. One is to consider the percentage of equalized value of property within each community and if we were to use that, that would be 69% apportionment for Wilbraham, 31% for Monson," Breault said. "Or to go with per capita, and when we look at population, the split there is 64% Wilbraham and 36% Monson, so we think that's very equitable, that's

INTER-MUNICIPAL | page 7

**SCHOOL**

## Old Mill Pond School Kindness Week ends on high note with Spirit Day

By Harrison Giza  
 Staff Writer  
 hgiza@turley.com

**PALMER** - The amount of love and care that the community at Old Mill Pond School puts towards its yearly Kindness Week celebration is unfathomable.

From posters on the walls detailing events of Kindness Week to supportive staff members working around the clock for all who roamed their halls, Old Mill Pond staff were still as energized as they were on Monday for Spirit Day.

Old Mill Pond started off their 2024 Kindness Week with Pajama

KINDNESS | page 5



Turley photo by Harrison Giza  
**Landon Desautels, Jacoby Madera, Ms. Monette, Julianna Koss, Kay-Lynn Gadoua, Lily Menard and Lydy O'Keefe stand together wearing colors to show their school spirit during Kindness Week.**

**EDUCATION**

## Granite Valley School holds successful STEAM Night for students and families

By Harrison Giza  
 Staff Writer  
 hgiza@turley.com

**MONSON** - Granite Valley School held its annual GVS STEAM Night this past Thursday in an incredibly packed schoolhouse.

Parents seemed to be just as enthused as their children at the events and sheer educational fun Granite Valley School provided for all who attended.

The night began at 5 p.m. with a pizza dinner for all those who complied with the \$15 per family cost. Dining activities concluded at 5:45 p.m., though the activities ran until 6:30 p.m.

STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics challenges. The

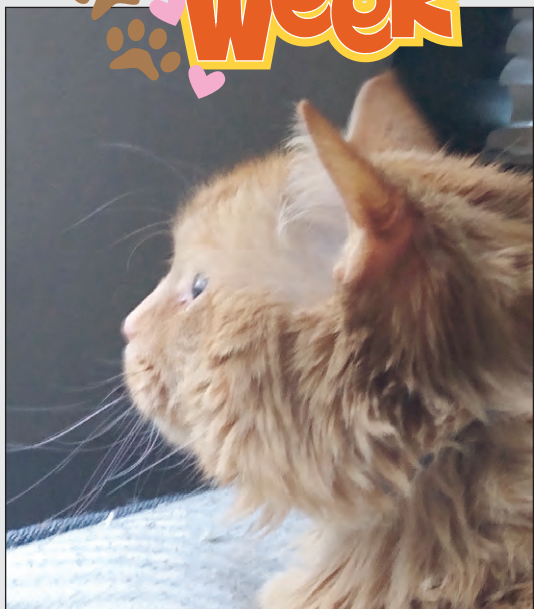


Turley photos by Harrison Giza  
**Granite Valley student Mia Cansell with her well-designed model of the Mars Rover.**

STEAM | page 7



# Pet of the Week



LOKI

Loki is an orange cat from Wales. His hobbies are bothering Charlie the dog, eating, and trying to sneak into the cellar. We feature your pets here. Is your fur friend a dog, cat, chicken, lizard, horse, bird, mouse...you get the point. Is there a pet you're fostering and trying to re-home? All pets are welcome! Email a high-resolution jpg of your pet with a little information to mharrison@turley.com.

## Palmer Teacher receives Excellence in Teaching Award



Assistant Principals Kerry Lynch and Penny Manteria, Angela Craig, Holly Riopel, and Superintendent Matthew Francis commemorated Craig's award.

PALMER — Last week, the Pioneer Valley Excellence in Teaching Award was awarded to Old Mill Pond Elementary School teacher, Angela Craig.

As stated on Harold Grinspoon's website, this awards program was designed to honor local teachers every

year, with a goal to motivate school staff at every level of their careers to aspire to excellence.

"Teachers are so important to the development of our children," Grinspoon said. "Anything we can do to support them, show our deep gratitude and



Submitted photos Superintendent Matthew Francis presented the Teacher of Excellence award to Angela Craig.

nurture them is incredibly valuable."

The program annually honors more than 100 outstanding educators in our commonwealth in Franklin, Hampshire, and Hampden counties. Since its inception, over 2,000 educators have been recognized.

Today, the Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation partners with the Harold Grinspoon Charitable Foundation to make the Excellence in Teaching Awards possible.

## Wilbraham Women's Club to meet on March 14

The March meeting of the Wilbraham Women's Club will be held on March 14, 2024 at noon in the Parish Center at St. Cecilia Church on Main St. Sandwiches and dessert will be served.

The speaker for the day will be Jen, who is the owner of the Flower Shed in Wilbraham's Post Office Park. Jen will be holding a workshop for us at this meeting. She will teach us how to make a lovely succulent to enjoy in our homes. The cost for this meeting will be \$10 and reservations are needed. Please call Michele Axtmann at 413-596-3325 or Linda Raffa at 413-596-8245.

## Country Bank donates millions in 2023

PALMER — Country Bank reported more than 1.2 million in donations for 2023. The bank's philanthropic efforts supported local non-profits throughout its communities, with 463 organizations receiving grants in 2023.

In addition to financial support, Country Bank's team members dedicated their time and expertise to make a difference. They volunteered 1,255 hours of community service, demonstrating their commitment to giving back. Furthermore, 37 team members served on 65 non-profit boards and committees, actively contributing to the success of these organizations.

As a community bank, it recognizes the importance of supporting financial literacy. Country Bank held four Credit for Life Fairs for 1,500 High School Seniors to educate them on credit, budgeting, and how their decisions impact their financial wellness. Classes were also held at Christina's House and within various schools throughout the community. In partnership with Greenlight, the bank launched a debit card for kids to support parents in teaching children early on how to spend, share, and save. The bank also introduced a new program to support financial literacy, Money School, to support local schools with

educational opportunities for in-classroom teachings for all ages, and an online financial educational program on the bank's website.

One of the highlights of Country Bank's philanthropic efforts in 2023 was its partnership with the Wonder Fund during the "Season of Difference" Campaign. This collaboration aimed to support kids and families in Central and Western MA's Department of Children and Families (DCF) system. By joining forces with the Wonder Fund, Country Bank demonstrated its commitment to improving the lives of vulnerable children and families in the community with over \$30,000 in support.

Some of the organizations receiving donations were The Ronald McDonald House, Christina's House, The YWCA, The Boys and Girls Clubs, Behavioral Health Network, The United Way, Salvation Army, The Food Bank of Western Mass, The Worcester County Food Bank, Be Like Brit, Juniper Outreach, Springfield Revitalize CDC, Friends of the Homeless, and 21 Senior Centers and 19 Food Pantries across the region.

Paul Scully, president and CEO of Country Bank, emphasized the bank's dedication to its communities. Scully said "As a community partner, we care deeply about the sustainability of our communities. We are honored to support many organizations through donations and volunteerism to help them with their work. Supporting and enriching our communities is not only a part of our mission; it's who we are as an organization, and we know that it makes a difference for so many."

## Baystate Health offers free virtual program on avoiding falls

SPRINGFIELD — Baystate Health's Loyalty Programs will offer a free virtual event for the general public on Feb. 29 from 2-3 p.m.

During "Do This, Not That, To Avoid Falls" the team from Baystate Rehabilitation Care including Courtney Brown, PT; Michelle Lantaigne, OT; Erin Jarosz, OT; and Diana Edwards-Chung, MSN, RN, who is Injury Prevention Coordinator, will discuss the do's and don'ts as well as practical home safety guidelines for preventing falls in the home.

Registration is required at BaystateHealth.org/events.

## NAMI Western Mass art and poetry show opens April 3

CHICOPEE — The National Alliance on Mental Illness of Western Massachusetts will hold an opening reception for its 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Art and Poetry Show featuring the work of artists and poets living with mental health conditions.

Taking place on Wednesday, April 3 from 6-8 p.m. at the Chicopee Public Library, 449 Front St., the reception, and parking adjacent to the library, are free.

The show will feature art and poetry works, some for sale to the public, with all proceeds going to the artists. Complimentary refreshments will be served, and all are welcome to attend this very special event.

The exhibit runs the entire month of April. This is a wonderful venue for artists and poets with lived experience to have a showcase for their work. It provides an important opportunity to educate the public about the lives, abilities, and creativity of individuals in western Massachusetts communities with mental health conditions.

NAMI Western Massachusetts is dedicated to building better lives for individuals and families affected by mental health conditions. With your help, NAMI-WM can continue to raise awareness and provide essential education, advocacy, and support programs for people in our community.

### 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.



Now open Wednesdays 11a-7p

### St. Patrick's Celebration

Be one of the lucky ones and discover the treasure of Farmer Matt's corned beef and cabbage dinner. Available Mar. 13-17.

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FarmerMatt.com  
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## and Beyond!



Aerial pictures provided by Above the Law Imagery

Ware Business & Civic Association now includes the communities of Palmer, Belchertown, West Brookfield, Warren and Hardwick. Businesses and organizations from those towns are welcome to join!



# JOIN TODAY!

Visit [warebca.com](http://warebca.com)  
email [warebca@gmail.com](mailto:warebca@gmail.com)

## Join Our Small-Town Business Development Adventure!

Are you a small business owner looking to boost your community presence and connect with fellow entrepreneurs? Look no further! Welcome to the heart of our towns' growth and success - the Ware Business & Civic Association...and Beyond!

### Our Mission

We're not just any organization — we're a community catalyst! Our mission is clear: foster camaraderie among local businesses, creating a vibrant hub that transforms our town into a must-visit destination for all. We're here to ignite connections, inspire growth, and spark innovation.

### Why Join Us?

Referrals are just the beginning! As a member, you'll enjoy the spotlight on your business within our close-knit community. Think of us as your business's ultimate cheerleaders, making sure your unique offerings shine bright.

### A Legacy of Achievement

Since 2011, our committee has been making waves. We're not just about meetings — we're about momentum. From securing endorsements for local businesses to orchestrating events that turn visitors into regulars, we've been shaping our towns' destiny, one success story at a time.

### Events that Sparkle

Who says business can't be fun? Picture this: quarterly membership nights that blend networking with laughter. We're all about community, after all — and a little friendly competition in the bowling alley or at the axe throwing yard never hurt anyone.

### Network that Expands

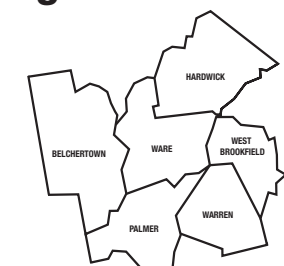
With a sprawling member base, joining us means getting in on the action. Your business won't just get noticed; it'll become a star in our constellation of local talent.

### An Investment in Success

For just \$120 per year, you're securing your spot in our thriving business ecosystem.

### Seamless Entry

### Embrace Uniqueness



Ready to take your business to new heights while having a blast? Join us on this exciting ride! Let's be partners in growth and partners in fun.



## Support the local businesses that support your local newspaper.

Let them know you saw their ad in the Journal Register



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The Journal Register  
**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](mailto:obits@turley.com).

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

**DEADLINE**

The Journal Register has changed its firm deadline for public submissions to Mondays. To get your submission in for that week's edition, email Editor at [mharrison@turley.com](mailto:mharrison@turley.com) or call the office at 413-283-8393 by noon on Mondays. We appreciate the cooperation of our readers.

**Monson Democrats to Elect Delegates to State Convention on March 7**

MONSON — On Thurs., Mar. 7 at 7 p.m., Democrats will convene in person at the Monson Polish Club, 7 Bliss Street, Monson to elect 4 delegates and 4 alternates to represent Monson at the 2024 State Democratic Convention.

Registered and pre-registered Democrats in Monson 16 years old by Thursday, Feb. 15 may vote and be elected as delegates or alternates during the caucus. Youth (age 16 to 35), people with disabilities, people of color, veterans and members of the LGBTQ+ community not elected as delegates or alternates are encouraged to apply to be add-on delegates at the caucus or by visiting [massdems.org/massdems-convention](http://massdems.org/massdems-convention). The 2024 Convention will be in person at the DCU Center in Worcester, Mass. on June 1.

Those interested in getting involved with the Monson Democratic Town Committee should contact Karen Nothe-Valley at [karen\\_monsondems@yahoo.com](mailto:karen_monsondems@yahoo.com) or (413) 846-3041.

**Palmer Democrats to Elect Delegates to State Convention on March 9**

PALMER — On Saturday, March 9 at 11 a.m., Democrats will convene at the Palmer Public Library to elect 3 delegates and 3 alternates to represent Palmer at the 2024 State Democratic Convention.

Registered and pre-registered Democrats in Palmer 16 years old by Feb. 15, 2024, may vote and be elected as delegates or alternates during the caucus. Youth (16 to 35), people with disabilities, people of color, veterans, members of the LGBTQ+ community not elected as delegates are encouraged to apply to be add-on delegates at the caucus or by visiting [massdems.org/massdems-convention](http://massdems.org/massdems-convention). The 2024 Convention will be in person at the DCU Center in Worcester, MA on June 1, 2024.

Those interested in getting involved with the Palmer Democratic Committee should contact Kathy Burns at [Kathyburns24@gmail.com](mailto:Kathyburns24@gmail.com) or call 413-313-9579.

**Wilbraham Garden Club will meet March 7**

WILBRAHAM—The March meeting of the Wilbraham Garden Club will be held on Thursday, March 7th, at 12:00 noon, in the Parish Hall at St. Cecilia's Church on Main St. in Wilbraham. A luncheon of sandwiches and desserts

will be served.

The speaker for the day will be Betsy Szymczak, who will give a presentation on "A Begonia for Any Season". Betsy will speak on how to grow begonias both inside and outside. Begonias make wonderful

houseplants and can also be used in terrariums. Outside they are beautiful as bedding plants or planted in your favorite containers. During the holidays, winter-flowering and fancy-leaf hybrids bring a colorful addition to our homes.



Submitted photo  
Ann Davidson takes the helm as the Executive Director of the Wales Community Pantry serving residents of Brimfield, Holland, and Wales.

**New director at Wales Community Pantry addresses food scarcity concerns**

By Marcelo Gusmão  
Staff Writer  
[mgusmao@turley.com](mailto:mgusmao@turley.com)

WALES — The Wales Community Pantry Board recently announced the appointment of Ann Davidson as the new executive director of the Pantry. The WCP serves residents in need from Brimfield, Holland and Wales.

"I started volunteering there a little more than a year and a half ago," Davidson said. "I had retired, and I was looking for something to do, so I would go there two mornings a week and stock shelves and put together boxes for our participants."

The previous director, Jean Smith, had been with the pantry for over 10 years and retired at the beginning of the year, right around when Davidson joined. On her appointment, Davidson's accounting background was identified as a strong asset.

When Davidson was appointed to the position, it was decided to share the duties Smith had been covering by herself between two positions. She said that this restructuring made the pantry feel like more of a team.

"I'm doing the grants and accounting," Davidson said. "Janna Randall, who had volunteered here for five years, is now the pantry manager. That means she's taking care of ordering food, she's the intake person, chats with participants and manages volunteers."

Davidson described Randall as "just wonderful" and said that her knowledge of people in the associated communities would be beneficial. Davidson has also said she will use her connections to help support the pantry.

"I live in Brimfield," Davidson said. "I go to the senior center, and I know the director there. She'll text me that she knows someone in need. We have a lot of contact with senior centers and also local churches. They direct people to us and hold food donation events."

The board has set its sights on increased fundraising, increased volunteerism and an increase in the number of people it serves in Brimfield, Holland and Wales. This has included changing

the pantry's hours to make it more accessible.

"We changed our hours to accommodate people who can't make it in the mornings because perhaps they're working," Davidson said. "We're open Thursday afternoons now. It's also been great because we're attracting high school kids who come in after school to help us. A lot of them working on college applications and community service looks great."

Davidson said that the schools have been an overlooked source for volunteers and that volunteering helps younger people get interested and more aware of what's going on in their communities.

Davidson said that students from Tantasqua Regional High School held a food drive at Shaw's, with talks of scheduling another one in Sturbridge in April.

"We did it in November and got 800 pounds of food," Davidson recalled. "We were out front with a poster and a van, saying what the pantry really needs, and people were coming back with bags and bags."

The pantry gets most of its food from the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts in Chicopee, placing orders on Thursday to be picked up on Tuesday. When asked why the job was important to her, Ann replied, "Everyone deserves the right to be able to access healthy food."

"Everyone knows that one in eight people are hungry, food insecure," Davidson said. "There's not a lot the government has going on to help them, because the pandemic ended all those extra benefits."

Davidson talked about cuts to the food stamps program, mentioning a single mother with two kids that she knows is getting \$4 a month in food stamps.

Davidson said that the pantry welcomes anyone who may be struggling to feed themselves and their family.

"Everyone qualifies," Davidson said. "Anyone who's hungry can come to the food pantry. They don't even technically have to live in our three towns; if you're hungry just call us, text us, get on our website, Facebook, anywhere. Just let us know you're hungry."

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

E-mail items to [pressreleases@turley.com](mailto:pressreleases@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 [pressreleases@turley.com](mailto:pressreleases@turley.com).

**UPCOMING**

The Town of Palmer will be having early presidential voting on Saturday, Feb. 24, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Monday, Feb. 26, from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Tuesday, Feb. 27 through Thursday, Feb. 29, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. At the Town Clerk's office, 4417 Main St.

Tickets for the 25th annual Second Chance Dinner Auction are now available for purchase. This significant fundraising event marks the kickoff of Second Chance's yearlong 25th-anniversary celebration, promising an evening of philanthropy and joy to benefit homeless shelter pets in need of veterinary care. The event is scheduled for Saturday, March 23, at the La Salle Reception Center in Southbridge. For individuals interested in sponsoring, donating items, or attending the event, complete information and tickets can be found at <http://www.secondchance-animals.org/dinner-auction>.

**ONGOING**

The Swift River Sportsman's Club, 350 Cold Spring Road, is announcing their Friday fish fry is returning on Fridays, starting Feb. 16 and running through April 5. Prices range from \$14 for fish and chips to \$18 for a fish, shrimp and chip combo. Clam Chowder will also be available. Come out and enjoy one of the best fish dinners in the area with generous portions. For more information, please call the club at 413-323-9387.

**INTERESTS**

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 Phil-

lips Sculpture Garden is open year-round (handouts in box on one of the signposts). For more information call 413-267-4137, email [khm@keep-homesteadmuseum.org](mailto:khm@keep-homesteadmuseum.org) or visit [keep-homesteadmuseum.org](http://keep-homesteadmuseum.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.

BINGO IS BACK at Amvets Post 74, 2150 Main St., Three Rivers, on Mondays. The kitchen opens at 4:30 p.m. Early Bird starts at 6:25 p.m. Call the Post at 413-283-4518 for further information.

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](mailto: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: 6 p.m., every Tuesday night at Memorial Hall with Randy Emerson. Free, no registration. Presented by Monson Parks & Rec and the Monson Free Library.

[journalregister.turley.com](http://journalregister.turley.com)



**HOUSING REHABILITATION ASSISTANCE THE TOWN OF MONSON**

The town of Monson with the assistance of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) is applying for funding to assist qualified homeowners in making necessary repairs to their homes. In order to be eligible for assistance, total household income shall not exceed current federal income guidelines based on the number of people residing in a household. (See table below).

If you need to make improvements to your roof, windows, siding, plumbing, electrical, lead paint/ asbestos removal, heating system, septic system repair/ replacement and/or other program eligible improvements, please fill out the following form and return to Shirley Stephens at the PVPC (address appears below). ALL information received is strictly confidential and will be maintained in the Springfield office of the PVPC. If you have questions, please contact PVPC Housing Coordinator Shirley Stephens, at (413) 781-6045.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mailing Address/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Single/Multi Family (Please Circle One)

For P.V.P.C. use only  
 Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Staff Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of improvements needed: \_\_\_\_\_

My household income is not greater than (circle one according to your household size):

1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 Person	5 Person	6 Person	7 Person	8 Person
\$55,800	\$63,800	\$71,750	\$79,700	\$86,100	\$92,500	\$98,850	\$105,250

Return to: Shirley Stephens, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, 60 Congress Street - 1st Floor, Springfield, MA 01104

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## Viewpoints

## SOCIAL SECURITY Matters

By Russell Gloor

### Should I claim Social Security at 68 or wait until I'm 70?

Dear Rusty

I have a question regarding my SS benefits. I turned 68 this month and work part time.

I earned \$28,000 last year, but will probably gross \$36,000 to \$38,000 this year. My husband collects his SS and he earned \$25,000 last year. I was told by a financial planner that I should apply for my benefits now, instead of waiting until I'm 70. I would collect \$1,700 per month at 68 and \$1,944 per month if I wait. Which is the smarter move?

Signed: Seeking Answers

Dear Seeking: I'm sure your financial advisor would agree that your decision on when to claim your Social Security comes down to just a few basic things: 1) how badly you need the money, 2) your life expectancy and 3) whether you will receive a spousal boost from your husband when you claim.

Because you have already passed your Full Retirement Age of 66 years and 4 months, your work earnings won't negatively affect your monthly SS benefit amount. If you claim now, however, your work earnings will affect how much of your SS benefits will be subject to income tax. Assuming you file your income tax as "married/filing jointly," up to 85% of the Social Security benefits you receive during the tax year will become part of your income taxable by the IRS. If you do not urgently need the extra money that your SS will provide, then waiting longer to claim will also postpone paying income tax on your received benefits and that may be a consideration.

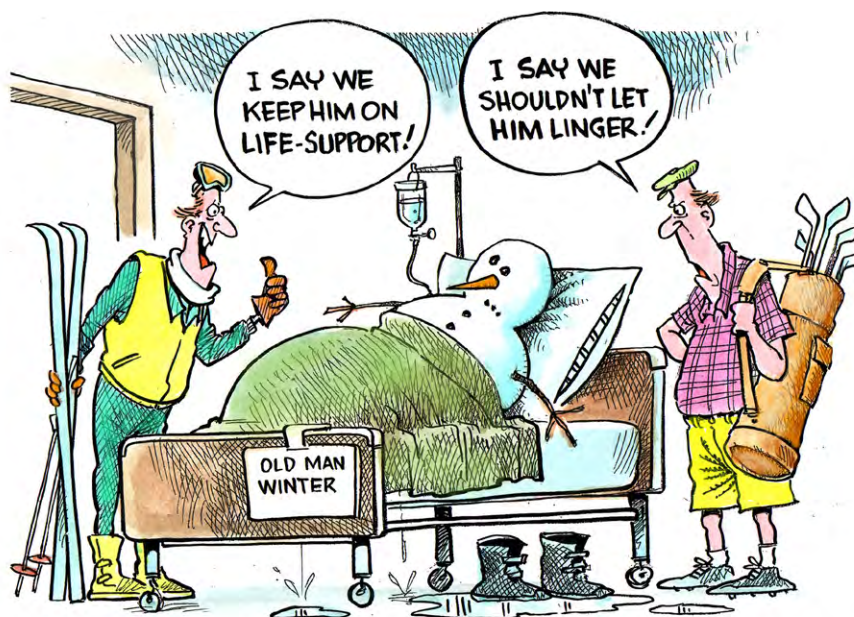
Your life expectancy is key in making your decision on when to claim. You already know that your benefit will be \$244 per month more if you wait until you are 70 to claim. If you claim at 68 (e.g., this month), you will collect about \$40,800 by the time you reach 70. If you, instead, wait until age 70 to get that extra \$244 per month benefit, it will take you about 14 years collecting at the higher rate to offset the \$40,800 you would have received had you claimed now (in other words, you would break even money wise at about age 84). If your life expectancy is longer, then waiting to claim may be the better choice. Of course, no one knows how long they will live but, for general guidance, average life expectancy for a woman your current age is about 87. Family history and your current health are obviously influencing factors as well. If you wish to get a more personal estimate of your life expectancy, I suggest using this tool:

[www.socialsecurityreport.org/tools/life-expectancy-calculator/](http://www.socialsecurityreport.org/tools/life-expectancy-calculator/)

In the end, if you believe you will attain at least average life expectancy and you don't urgently need the money now, waiting longer will not only give you a higher monthly benefit in your later years, but also the most in cumulative lifetime benefits. If, however, you have reason to suspect you won't achieve at least average life expectancy or you need the SS money sooner, claiming before age 70 is likely the better move.

One other thing to consider: If your benefit as your husband's spouse will be more than your own earned maximum SS retirement benefit, then you should claim your SS benefit now. Your maximum benefit as a spouse would be 50% of your husband's full retirement age entitlement and, if that is more than your own benefit will be at age 70, then claiming now to get your maximum spousal benefit would be your best choice. To get a spousal benefit from your husband, your personal FRA entitlement (not your age 68 amount) would need to be less than half of his FRA entitlement. If that isn't the case, then you should make your decision based only on your own Social Security entitlement, as described above.

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](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at [ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org). Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.



DAVE GRANLUND © www.davegranlund.com

## Letters to the Editor

Letter to the Editor:

The Zonta Club of Quabog Valley held a Panel Discussion on Feb. 12, at the Ludlow Country Club on the Foster Care System in Western MA and youth who experience significant barriers as it relates to their physical, mental and emotional well-being, all of which dramatically impact their ability to achieve adult self-sufficiency. Sincere thanks to Moderator Andrea Bordenca, panelists Daisy Acosta, Lashanda Stone and Ginger Elliot (in for Stefany Schaefer), as well as several other attendees who work with foster youth in some capacity. Their dedication and passion showed through. Key takeaways included:

Due to a lack of volunteers, more than half of youth in foster care do not get all the support they need during a

traumatic time in their lives.

Opportunities range from sharing the needs and advocating for change, working behind the scenes to donate money and collect items needed by foster youth, volunteering time and talent to be a resource in the system, getting trained to be a foster care provider and mentoring youth who age out of the foster care system.

We invite all caring individuals in Western MA to check out the continuum of opportunities at [www.zontqv.org/foster](http://www.zontqv.org/foster) and decide how you might be able to support youth in need.

Mary F. Knight  
Communication Chair  
Zonta Club of Quabog Valley

## More questions for the Garden Lady

Eleanor wrote in with this question for the Garden Lady regarding amaryllis bulbs: "I have three bulbs from last year that have been hibernating and now they are in the sun and have produced long green leaves but no buds. I read it somewhere that if you let them dry out, no more water, but keep them in the sun they will send out buds, but I cannot find where I read that. I hope it is true...so I can still get flowers this year before I have to repeat the whole process (by putting them back in dormant condition in August for a few weeks). I do have one more bulb from last year that did give me a flower...but these other three ones are not showing me any prospects. Can you help?"

Without seeing your bulbs and the foliage, my best guess would be that they will likely not flower this year. What leads me to that conclusion is that one other bulb you have already flowered.

If they were on the same timeline, then probably the other bulbs did not have enough strength to send up a flower stalk. I would not let them dry out, but continue to water and fertilize monthly so that the foliage will grow strong, and be able to make enough energy for blooms next year, after a period of dormancy in the fall.

I know this is upsetting after all of your hard work. Re-bloom is often an experiment.

Sadly, sometimes it happens and sometimes it doesn't. It may not be anything you did wrong – it could be that the one bulb that did flower was a bigger bulb to begin with or was from healthier stock initially.

Meredith, who gardens in Wilbraham, posed this question to the Garden Lady: "As I look at all of the seed packets strewn before me, what your best advice would be for starting seeds indoors?"

Ah-hah! I have been itching to talk about this, so your timing is perfect.

Although we are excited to get the season started, the biggest mistake people make is starting seeds too early. Always research the varieties you want to

grow in a good seed catalog.

Johnny's Selected Seed and Fedco come to mind as having great advice on how many weeks prior to the last frost seeds should be sown. For example, tomato seeds should be planted indoors the last week of March or first week of April.

Although that seems late (we want to do it now), we don't want root bound transplants come May.

While average household temps will still result in seeds sprouting, bottom heat by use of heat mats will aid in germination because it will keep the seed bed a constant temperature. Plants usually suffer without enough

light – placing seedlings in the window usually results in seedlings that stretch to the sun. A simple shop light with fluorescent bulbs set a couple of inches above growing plants works out great.

Think about the soil you are using, too.

A soilless mix is far superior to regular potting soil or garden soil. It's milled a little finer, and is made to be well-drained weed and pathogen free.

Moistening it to the consistency of a wrung out sponge before use is perfect. Don't bury small seeds too deep. Tiny seed should simply be pushed into the soil surface and not covered.

Hardening off the seedlings you grew before planting them in the ground is very important. Start acclimatizing them to the great outdoors slowly, first by putting them in the shade for a few hours, working up to full sun over the course of a week's time.

By taking my advice into account, you will be well on your way to growing healthy seedlings indoors.

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](mailto:pouimette@turley.com) with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.

## DALE'S CORNER

### Chocolate...Luscious indulgence or food for the gods?

By Dale Gonyea

There were only two mornings each year that I was allowed to eat chocolate for breakfast: Easter and Christmas.

The Easter basket and Christmas stocking were the place to find my holiday treats for each of those days. There was always one treat in particular that stood out from the rest: chocolate.

Just the name brings images, memories and even the delicate aromas alive! But what is in a name? Where does chocolate come from and how do you make it? Why is it so irresistible and indulgent? What mysterious properties does it have?

The history of this delectable chocolate is very old – 4,000 years old.

Etymologists trace the origin of the word "chocolate" to the Aztec word "xocolatl," which referred to a bitter drink brewed from cacao beans. The Latin name for the cacao tree, *Theobroma cacao*, means "food of the gods."

I find that title absolutely appropriate!

About 70% of the world's cocoa beans come from four West African countries: Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria and Cameroon. The Ivory Coast and Ghana are by far the two largest producers of cocoa, accounting for more than 50% of the world's cocoa.

The process to grow, refine and make chocolate is lengthy so I shall summarize.

Cacao beans are harvested from the trees in pods. The pods are disassembled, and the beans are roasted and cleaned leaving the cacao nib.

Nibs are then ground and then separated from the cocoa butter. The heat generated by grinding causes the cocoa butter or fat to melt and form a fine paste or liquid known as chocolate "liquor".

After conching, tempering and adding flavors to the liquor, you are left with chocolate which can be molded. Depending on the sugar added in relation to cocoa solids, you are left with distinctive different forms of chocolate.

For dark chocolate lovers, bars with 70% cacao or higher are ideal. Dark chocolate is a rich source of antioxidants and minerals, and it generally contains less sugar than milk chocolate.

Some research suggests that dark chocolate may help lower the risk of heart disease, reduce inflammation and insulin resistance, and improve brain function. Happy Day!

This chocolate can also be called bittersweet. If we reduce the solids to around 60% we would call it semi-sweet.

For me, milk chocolate is where it's at! Milk chocolate contains not less than 10% by weight of chocolate liquor, not less than 3.39% by weight of milk fat, not less than 12% by weight of total milk solids and the remaining percent by weight of sugar and/or spices.

It is a creamy and luscious confection, that excites and animates the senses and mind. Whichever your chocolate favorite, this creation melts invitingly on the tongue, longingly on the mind and deliciously from start to finish.

The "other" chocolate we haven't discussed yet has a locally fascinating history.

Is white chocolate real chocolate? This is a frequently asked question and a hot debate.

The FDA said to be called white chocolate, the candy must have at least 20% cocoa butter, 14% milk solids, and 3.5% milk fat – and no more than 55% sugar or other sweeteners. Vanilla is added for flavor, and a fatty substance called lecithin is in there as an emulsifier.

White chocolate is first recorded to be used in Europe around 1930 by the Nestle Corporation in Switzerland. A fascinating fact is that local candy maker, Hebert Candies in Shrewsbury, is credited with bringing this new chocolate to our country!

I had the privilege of having a conversation with Tamara Beland, Retail and Community Engagement for Hebert Candies. Tamara was so gracious and accommodating as we discussed Hebert's history, products and status.

Hebert's has been a New England staple since 1917, as one of the first roadside confectioners. The original chocolatier, Frederick Hebert, was the first to introduce white chocolate to this country after bringing the recipe back from Europe around 1955.

Tamara confirmed that this recipe has been and still is in very strong demand with customers. Hebert's has indeed survived the COVID threat so far. Tamara reports strong holiday sales and shoppers still frequent the mansion, despite COVID restrictions.

We are indeed fortunate here in central Massachusetts to have Hebert's as a chocolate staple. Many of us can recall visiting the mansions and watching the candy being made.

I am reminded of the film "Chocolat". Juliette Binoche plays the mysterious woman that comes to the French village and sets up a chocolate shop.

Soon, the residents have pushed a sort of reset button with their lives, the dreamy and intoxicating chocolate creations have unlocked secret yearnings and desires. Does chocolate have this power?

Chocolate is perhaps the world's best escape. The French believe that food is an experience, not just a necessity.

When enjoyed, one should not be in a hurry. One should slow down and allow the experience of the food to take them wherever it wishes.

When you experience your chocolate, does it take you away? What does it make you long for? As long as the delicate flavors and smells take over your senses, the escape and pleasure are a wonder.

Chocolate is many things. It is mysterious, elegant, majestic and complex.

When you bite the head off that Easter bunny, pop in a Lindt truffle or sit down with a Godiva sampler, allow yourself the luxury and moment to savor and escape. You never know, you may have just shared a piece of food that gods enjoy.

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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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[journalregister@turley.com](mailto: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](mailto:journalregister@turley.com). Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by noon Monday to be considered for that Thursday's newspaper. No attack letters will be printed. No letters written by candidates supporting their own candidacy will be printed. If the volume of letters received is larger than the space available in the newspaper, or if the letters become repetitive, the newspaper reserves the right to print a representative sample. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last edition before the election.

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

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

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

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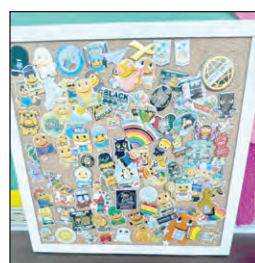
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# OMP Elementary Students Celebrate 100 Days Event



Submitted photos  
A sampling of the many student projects for the 100 day of school celebration.

By Harrison Giza  
Staff Writer  
hgiza@turley.com

PALMER - Old Mill Pond Elementary celebrated a huge milestone of over 100 completed days for the 2023 - 2024 semester.

Students were beyond happy during their 100 Days Event, with one outspoken supporter quite eager to share her thoughts regarding this significant academic achievement.

"The 100th day of school is a special time for us here at Old Mill Pond" said principal Holly-Beth Riopel. "Grade 1 has brought back the tradition of 100 day projects. The students work at home with their families to create the projects."

These aforementioned families gave it their all doling up these kids. Some students dressed up as "older versions" of themselves, many with faded grey wigs and colorful suspenders, highlighting how they think they would look and feel at 100 years of age. One of the kids even went as far as to borrow a cane for the event.

Almost every boy wore sunglasses and a bowtie while there were a large amount of girls dressed in itty bitty glasses, wildly eye-catching wigs, and extravagant hair curlers.

Other Old Mill Pond Elementary students were tasked with putting together projects that involved the number 100, like building with 100 cubes or rolling dice until scoring 100 points. One OMP class required students to draw various gum balls in a candy machine and asked the young artists to fit the right amount of treats into each machine.

"We love having them displayed in our first grade hallway," said Riopel, "they make everything look terrific!"

Old Mill Pond School is a Pre K to 5th grade school with a population of just over 700 students, striving to prepare all of their students for life and learning. The school was opened in 1991 and serves the villages of Bondsville, Thorndike, Three Rivers, and the Town of Palmer.



Principal Holly Riopel with shining student Ramon Aponte III.

## KINDNESS | from page 1

Day on Monday (cozy pajamas), Rock & Roll Day on Tuesday (favorite rock & roll attire), Red & Pink Day on Wednesday (wear red, pink, or hearts), Western Day on Thursday (rodeo outfit) and Spirit Day on Friday (Old Mill Pond gear or blue/white clothes).

Paraprofessional Andrea Lanzillo was dressed to the nines in matching blue attire, with a soaring spirit to match.

"Well, let me tell you," Lanzillo said. "So I live in Springfield. I come all the way from Springfield to here; then, I jump on a bus, go all the way back to Springfield, pick up two

kids, come all the way back here, and I'm not trying to rag, I love those two kids very much... but I come here because I have never been more happy than I have been here."

Lanzillo went on to detail her love for the school, as well as further explain how she came to work there, beside Principal Holly-Beth Riopel.

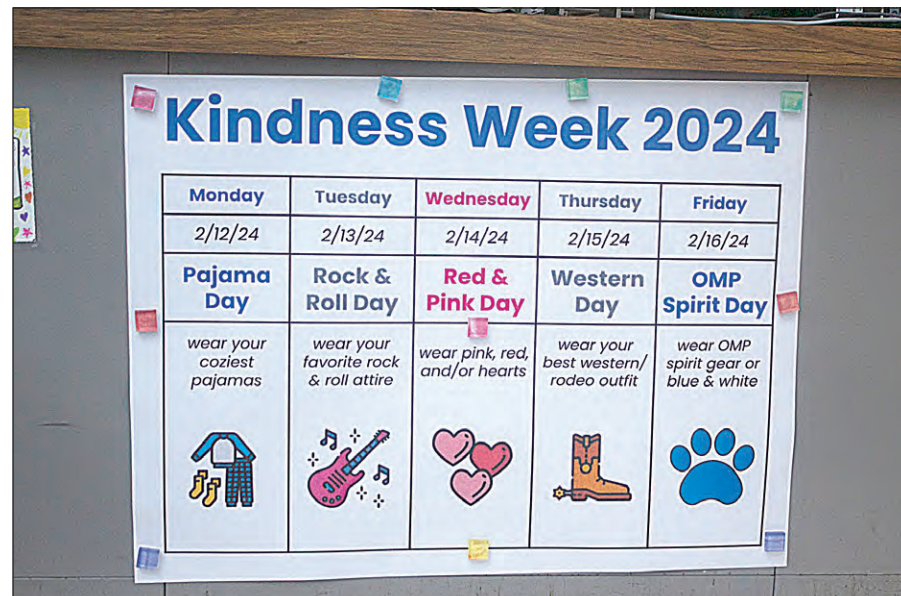
"I was teacher in Springfield for 15 years," Lanzillo said. "The family here? You know it is great and the leadership is wonderful...and not just Holly, but the Assistant Principals as well. They are like a family, and



Paraprofessional Andrea Lanzillo shows off her fantastic fashion choices.



Assistant Principals Kerry Lynch and Penny Manteria show their school spirits as they welcome everyone.



One of a series of posters hung around the school that week, promoted Kindness Week 2024.

if you have a problem or need anything, or if you have problem and you need to fix it, you go talk to your mommy and daddy. When you walk into a room, you are welcomed, they help you out, whether you are new or old here you never feel left out."

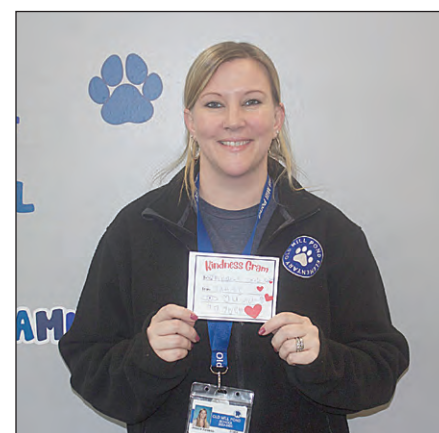
That sentiment could be found inside the warmth of Stephanie Monette's fourth grade class, a popular teacher known for her dedication to the craft.

"We are going over our raffle baskets right now, so they understand what that is," Monette said. "We are raising money right now for their fifth-grade field trip."

Administrative Assistant Jessica Jianaces was quick to show off a Kindness Gram that students had given out to those they admire over the past week. However, she had twice the reason to celebrate considering the heart-adorned message was from her own son, James.

"It felt amazing," Jianaces said. "Honestly, it was so sweet to receive one from him. The kids got to buy them in the cafeteria for a dollar, it came with a Valentine's Day pencil attached, and then wrote them out to their friends or whom-ever they wanted. Some wrote them out to staff which was really sweet as well."

Jianaces, like Lanzillo, was quick to



Administrative Assistant, Jessica Jianaces, showing off a Kindness Gram sent to her from her son, James.

sing the praises of the school. "I love working here," Jianaces said. "Everyone is so welcoming, and I'm new here this year, but yeah, it feels like home to me."

It seems like this tradition won't be ending anytime either.

"Kindness Week is a great tradition at Old Mill Pond," Riopel said. "Children and families love to celebrate the different days. We really are a fun, fun group."

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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55				56			57		58
59				60			61		
62				63				64	

### CLUES ACROSS

- Golf scores
- Shock therapy
- Ballplayer's tool
- Quench one's thirst
- Female relatives of American war vets (abbr.)
- Every one of two or more things
- Member of Muslim people
- Play
- Type of cheese
- Type of lounge chair
- \_\_\_ King Cole, musician
- Fellows
- North, Central and South
- In an early way
- Foes
- Georgia rockers
- Cryptocurrency
- Narrow path

### CLUES DOWN

- Pacific Standard Time
- Protruding ridge on
- along a slope
- Disallow
- Joyousness
- Inaccessible
- Evoke emotions
- Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea
- Boston Celtic punk rockers (abbr.)
- Sword
- Actor Idris
- Affirmative (slang)
- Afflicted
- One point north of northeast
- Born of
- Arabic name
- Traumatic brain injury (abbr.)
- Extremity
- Post

- nematodes
- Type of milk
- One who brings home the bacon
- More comprehensible
- Connected with sense of touch
- Red mineral
- Breezed through
- Therefore
- Supplement with difficulty
- Early kingdom of Syria
- Satisfy
- They confuse doctors (abbr.)
- Brass instrument
- Domesticated animal
- Ribonucleic acid
- Snakelike fish
- Woman (French)
- Economically-minded aircraft

- When you hope to get somewhere
- Tease
- Actress Gretchen
- Midway between northeast and east
- Inoffensive
- Yellowish cotton cloth
- Consume
- Does not tell the truth
- Improved something
- Spiritual leader
- Abba \_\_\_, Israeli politician
- Fix
- Evergreen tree genus
- Swiss river
- Prejudice
- Major C. European river
- Long, narrow strap
- Male parent



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# Winter Carnival brings undefeatable energy to Monson



Two members of Monson High School just before a class shoot out.



Four classmates, each with their own varied levels of extracurricular excitement.



A pair of faithful students smile before a round of Tug of War.



The noise Monson High Students made in the gym the second this photo was taken does not do the moment justice. Incredible athleticism.



Jared's Biggest Fan: Some say he's still screaming there now, hoping the carnival never did end.

By Harrison Giza  
Staff Writer  
hgiza@turley.com

MONSON - Athletic excitement and school spirit flooded the gymnasium of Monson High School last week for the school's 2024 Winter Carnival.

From basketball shootouts to tug of war battles, each grade was fighting for the top spot of the school's interclass competitions. Some students were screaming their lungs out while others preferred to clap, stomp and cheer their way through the two-hour athletic event.

Eric Degnan, a physical education teacher at Monson High, lead the event with a focused and thunderous energy, rattling off sports phrases and referee rhetoric. Throughout the near two-hour event, Degnan kept spirits incredibly high.

Hit radio singles from Drake morphed into early 2000's #1 classic "Ride Wit Me" by Nelly, with the atmosphere of Monson High School resembling the energy of a Celtics playoff game. One student had immaculate energy as well as the name of fellow student and Monson lacrosse player, "Jared Perry," written on his stomach. He screamed out with all his heart. "Let's get it! Let's go!"

Other students, dressed in all black, asked for pictures. The group were quick to strike a pose while singing every single word to "Ride Wit Me" at full volume. By the time the Tug of War event started, that noise had doubled in cheering, support and love for every single person participating in the gymnasium. One game required students to tie other students up to collect playing cards while rolling around on the gym floor. This drove the crowd as wild as prior events.

Sheila Mahoney, administrative assistant for Monson High School, has seen many a Winter Carnival madness.

"Quite a bit of time goes towards this event," Mahoney said. "It is a tradition that has been going on for years at this high school. There are posters that are made. Everything that the kids are doing today is planned out way in advance, and people even change schedules around because we have the seventh and eighth grade, which are the middle school kids. They participate their own way, but in a different kind than the other grades do... there is a lot that goes into it."

The energy and warmth in the gymnasium could be seen at Mahoney's desk as she detailed her love for Monson High School students.

"We're just a great group of teachers and faculty and staff," Mahoney said. "It's just a lot of fun. It's a good school."

When asked about her thoughts on which grade might win that day, Mahoney grinned with expertise.

"It's usually the seniors," Mahoney said. "They all put up great efforts. They play hard but they love it, and you know, it's fun thing to do right before vacation all next week. Then, before you know it, it's the next vacation and the end of the year comes fast."



Physics education teacher Eric Degnan officiating a highly important match of Tug of War.



Degnan handled the round-to-round activities for the carnival.



Preparing for 52 Card Pickup with duck tape.



Crowds of teachers and students packed into the gym.



A group of Monson High School students just before the first round of three-point knockout.



Two different classes fighting with all of their might.



The class of 2024 getting ready before the fight of their lives this past Friday.



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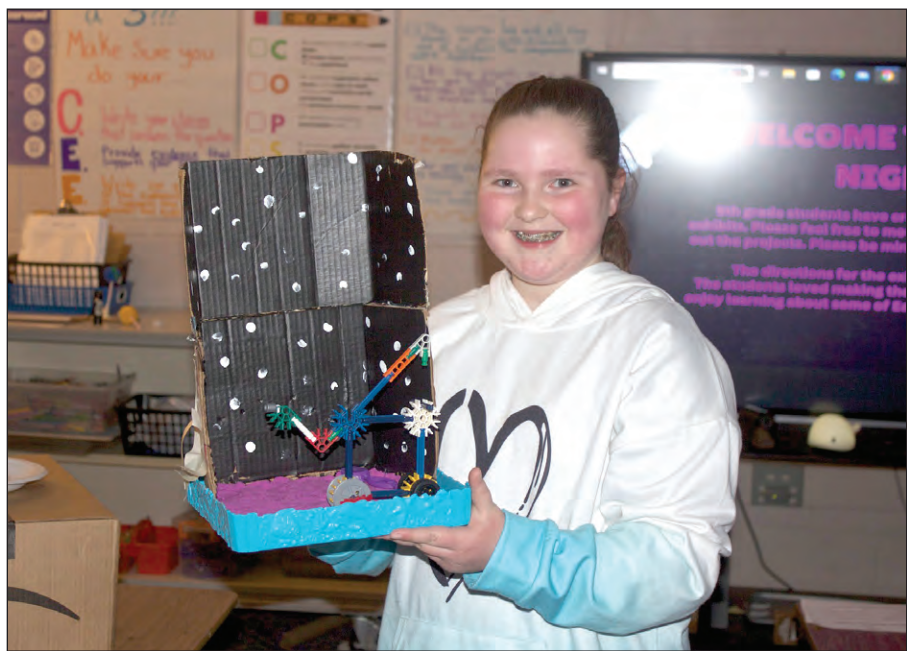
**Journal Register**



Students playing with plastic cups that they had converted into miniature floats for STEAM Night.



Turley photos by Harrison Giza



GVS innovator Maddie Strom was all smiles showcasing her scale Mars Rover.



This family could be seen having a great time on the second floor exhibit of STEAM Night.



Monson Public Schools Guidance Counselors, Megan Clifford and Felicia Lachance, spent the night helping parents send letters to their kids during MCAS studies.



Michelle Siddle and Julia Giebutowski, two wonderful teachers at GVS, standing by banner made for STEAM Night.



One student's project detailing the heat scale and ratio of stars in our solar system.

**STEAM** | from page 1

group offered a night of educational fun for grades four through six students and families on Feb. 15. The event intrigued and excited Monson students of all ages.

"So, my project was about the Mars Rover," GVS student Maddie Strom said. "I had the idea to do this because I really like sand and I wanted to make a good replication of the actual Mars Rover. We were assigned groups, and we were assigned what we had to make."

Fellow classmate, Mia Cansell, was eager to share her thoughts on how her project came to be, stating that her Mars exhibit took about four days to put together.

"We had to do an interactive component," Cansell said. "So, we made these pulley things on each side; you get to pull it and it moves different ways and stuff. We tried to make parts like the sky, and this was Mars' dirt."

Another room of happy students could be found assembling boats from remnants of plastic cups, most with the intention of representing the first American Mayflower ship settlers.

Lachance, alongside fellow Guidance Counselor, Megan Clifford, sat atop the second-floor hallway entrance with their neat and tidy MCAS greeting card booth.

"So, we are a table for parents to write letters of encouragement to their kiddo for MCAS," Guidance Counselor Felicia Lachance said. "That way they have something cute and fun to open up on the morning of their tests."

STEAM and Literacy Connection events, along with the PTSA raffle, were held downstairs on the first floor, while everything else was detailed up on the second.

**INTER-MUNICIPAL** | from page 1

the way to go."

Breault clarified on estimated apportionments, the numbers are subject to final changes because the town will need to speak with Monson about them.

"If anything, they're on the conservative, meaning the high side. So, I don't expect that they would be going up and certainly, we don't want to present something that's going to be more costly to either community than what we presently do," Breault said. "So, this is to be determined."

On governance, Breault explained the district formation requires forming a district board "which would oversee policy and decision-making."

"This agreement would propose that the boards consist of the town administrators of both communities, but it could certainly be a board member of either of the communities, depending on what the communities themselves want to do, or it could even be a designee that is not a staff member or it could be a member of the public that the Select Board would want to (appoint)," Breault said.

For administrative purposes, Breault said the agreement proposes "all of the employees of the district would be, in effect, administratively handled through Wilbraham."

"So, where we have a similar situation with the shared public health services where Longmeadow is the host community if you will for administrative purposes, Wilbraham would be the host

community in this case for that as well," Breault said.

Sue Bunnell, reflecting on the board's prior conversation with Monson's Select Board, looked for clarification on the positions.

"So, this proposes you as the service director and the hiring of another veteran's agent?" Bunnell said. "Plus, clerical support?"

Sasen replied yes. "And the clerical support, is that a full-time person?" Bunnell asked.

Sasen replied it would be a part-time position.

When Select Board member Michael Squindo asked for clarification on whether both models for district governance would be acceptable as practice, Sasen said yes.

"I've seen different models. I've seen models where it's the town administrator, I've seen models where it's somebody from either the Select Board or, in some cases where a city forms with a small town, a city councilor, but yes, absolutely. Both are, and when I spoke to the state about it, they said, 'However you guys want to govern it is up to you,'" Sasen said. "So as long as it's being governed."

After Squindo wondered if an extra member could be the potential appointment of a veteran's citizen from either community, alternating depending on the term, Breault said it could be part of the discussion.

From here, Wilbraham will meet with Monson on the next steps.

**SCHOOL COMM.** | from page 1

(Michael) Martin as her social studies teacher," Rathbone read. "When I say that this teacher lit a fire in my daughter to try and do well and try hard with her grades, I can't stress it enough."

The letter mentioned Martin's willingness to work with students after class, his policy of redoing assignments and his strong understanding that students don't all learn the same way.

"I hope we never, ever lose him," the letter concluded. "Every kid needs a Mr. Martin in their life."

Francis also praised the established traditions and celebrations that the school district holds regularly, which instill a pride in the school in both students and the community.

"There is a rich, deep, long history of celebrating these accomplishments," Francis said. "I had the pleasure of going to all of those listed. (...) These established traditions, events and celebrations, we have to continue them, we have to celebrate them. It speaks to the fabric of the community as a whole."

Francis said that pride in the town's community is palpable all over the district. "The second I stepped foot into the town, you could feel it," he said.

Francis said that this pride manifests in great support from the community, whether it be the Town Manager, the fire department, the police department or Director of the Department of Public Works Matthew Morse.

"When we do the bus evacuation in the fall at Old Mill Pond, all three fire departments show up and the police department shows up," Francis said. "When you call any of these departments, it's pretty much, 'what do you need, and how can we help?'"

Finally, Francis thanked the parent and caregiver groups, saying, "We cannot do what we do in our schools without our Parent/Teacher Organizations, our School Councils, the Pub Club and all our volunteers that come in for any event that we have going in either building."

Francis's report identified emerging trends and themes within the school district, involving a critical review of pro-

cedures, the school's facilities and technology, the students' sense of belonging, meeting the needs of learners and challenging the status quo.

"It appears that we do not have a curriculum review process," Francis said. "It existed some time ago, but for whatever reason had been neglected."

Francis said that the school has already started work to address this, as well as looking into a policy review process and conducting job description review cycles.

Francis announced that the district has procured new curriculum materials for grades 6-12, purchased a Frontline Absence Management system, written procedures for terms of employment and job descriptions and consolidated with the town on payroll services.

One big problem that Francis identified was the Human Resources Department, which he described as "a department of one."

"I'm going to stress that our one HR administrative assistant, Rihanna O'Brien, does a phenomenal job," Francis said, adding that it's not unusual for people at the central office to "wear many different hats."

"I do believe, after looking at everything it entails, we are doing a disservice to our employees," Francis said. "That is an area of growth that we will be addressing through the budget process this late winter and early spring."

Towards the end of his presentation, Francis mentioned changing the school's budget process and advocated for ending the hybrid transportation model due to the cost of benefits of drivers, maintenance of the buses and fees associated with it. Francis used this as an example of his commitment to challenging the status quo.

"This is something that every institution should do on a regular basis," Francis said. "We should always ask the question of why we do something, and if we should continue to do something. We shouldn't just do it because that's the way that we've always done it."

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## FEMA Awards Nearly \$13.5 Million to Mass. for COVID School Testing Costs

BOSTON — The Federal Emergency Management Agency will be sending almost \$13.5 million to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to reimburse it for the cost of providing testing at public schools during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The \$13,450,826 Public Assistance grant will reimburse the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for contracting with Trans Med USA Inc. and Merrow Medical to provide test kits at schools between July 2022 and May 2023.

The department purchased

and distributed 1,089,354 COVID-19 antigen tests to students, faculty and staff at schools statewide during that time period.

"FEMA is pleased to be able to assist Massachusetts with these costs," said FEMA Region 1 Regional Administrator Lori Ehrlich. "Reimbursing state, county, and municipal governments - as well as eligible non-profits and tribal entities - for the costs incurred during the COVID-19 pandemic is an important part of our nation's ongoing recovery."

FEMA's Public Assistance

program is an essential source of funding for states and communities recovering from a federally declared disaster or emergency.

So far, FEMA has provided nearly \$2.8 billion in Public Assistance grants to Massachusetts to reimburse the commonwealth for pandemic-related expenses.

Additional information about FEMA's Public Assistance program is available at <https://www.fema.gov/public-assistance-local-state-tribal-and-non-profit>. To learn more about the COVID-19 response in Massachusetts, please visit <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4496>.

## 1.5 Million Meals Donated to Food Banks from Big Y

SPRINGFIELD — Big Y's annual Sack Hunger campaign provides funds for the four food banks within their 2-state marketing area. In turn, these food banks support local soup kitchens, food pantries, senior food programs, day care centers and many others of the 2,100-member agencies that they help every day. Their goal is to maximize access to nutritious food and other resources that support food security for those at risk of hunger.

For \$5, customers supported Sack Hunger at Big Y's supermarkets or Table & Vine Fine Wines and Liquors. Every \$5 donation brings 10 meals to those in need of support. Additionally, Big Y has added even more ways to boost this year's efforts with specific proceeds from produce, floral, Smart Chicken, USDA Choice Angus Beef, along with a portion of every one of Big Y's family of brands. Big Y's Sack Hunger cam-

paign started in 2010 where 740 meals were donated. With this year's 1.5 million meals, the program continues to grow in support of those in need.

Big Y's Sack Hunger donation is part of their ongoing support throughout the year including almost daily donations of meat, fresh produce and bakery along with grocery, frozen food and dairy items.

The four regional food banks are the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, the Worcester County Food Bank, the Greater Boston Food Bank in Massachusetts, and the Connecticut Foodshare.

"Every year our customers and employees join us in supporting others impacted by food insecurity. Our Sack Hunger program provides an easy way to help families across Massachusetts and Connecticut during the holiday season through the tireless efforts of

the local food banks. We are grateful to be able to provide this essential support to our community" according to Charles L. D'Amour, Big Y's Executive Chairman.

Big Y Foods, Inc. is one of the largest independently owned supermarket chains in New England. Big Y operates locations throughout Massachusetts and Connecticut including supermarkets, Table & Vine Fine Wines and Liquors and Big Y Express gas and convenience locations with over 10,000 employees. Big Y has been recognized by Forbes as a Best-in-State Employer in Massachusetts and Connecticut, as well as 2018 Employer of Choice by the Employers Association of the Northeast. Founded in 1936 by brothers Paul and Gerald D'Amour, the store was named after an intersection in Chicopee, Massachusetts where two roads converge to form a "Y".

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**BASKETBALL**

## Palmer offense excels in win over Ware

WARE – Last Monday night, Ware girls basketball tried to beat a snowstorm and played rival Palmer a night earlier. The schedule change did not help the Indians, who lost 50-28. Ware got 10 points from Emily McGrail. The Panthers got 26 points from new 1,000-point scorer Charlotte Theriault. Palmer hosted Mahar to open the Western Mass. tournament earlier this week.

Addyson Petraszewicz reaches out for a layup attempt.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com  
Loretta Petraszewicz shoots in traffic.



Madison Rathbone takes a shot.



Jordan Bigda sails a pass away.

**BASKETBALL**

## Mustangs prevail in offensive slugfest



Colin Beaupre follows through on a shot.

## Mustangs prevail in offensive slugfest

MONSON – Last Wednesday night, Monson defeated Southwick in a huge offensive game 90-82. Trey Dillahunt led Monson with 31 points while Colin Beaupre and Austin Meacham had 19 points each. Shane Szado added 17 points in the win. Monson finishes the regular season with 14-4 and hosted Mt. Everett in the quarterfinals of the Western Mass. tournament. The state tournament begins next week.

**BASKETBALL**

## Monson girls fall to South Hadley



Aniah Myrie heads down the court.

Turley photos by Sofia DiGrande



Sedona Arbour looks to pass away.



Olivia Chrzan dribbles her way down the court.



Delianah Wolf looks for an open teammate while under pressure.

MONSON – Last Monday night, Monson girls basketball struggled in the middle of the game and ultimately lost to South Hadley 61-35. The Mustangs got 22 points from Olivia Chrzan, who would actually lead all scorers. The Mustangs had a nonplayoff game scheduled for earlier this week. Despite a 7-10 record, they are virtually guaranteed a spot in the state tournament as they were ranked No. 7 in the Division 5 state power rankings.



Austin Meacham tries to steal the ball.



Trey Dillahunt goes for the layup.



Osvaldo Nieves gets set to pass



Turley photos by Sofia DiGrande  
Jake Beaupre sends a pass away.

**BASKETBALL**



Victoria Stephens heads up for a shot.



Desiree Croteau sends a pass away.



Brianna Beynor goes after the tipoff.



Greenly Lagimoniere looks to go for a layup.



Addison Doktor takes the free throw.

## Pioneers win finale

PALMER – Last week, Pathfinder girls basketball defeated Sci-Tech for the second time this season, winning 59-41 at home in a game that was also their regular season finale. The Pioneers have made the state tournament at 10-6, but did not make Western Mass. and were scheduled for nonplayoff games earlier this week. In the win over Sci-Tech, Greenly Lagimoniere had 16 points while Victoria Stephens had 11 points. Addison Doktor added 10 points to the win. The state tournament begins next week.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

# Warriors score upset in Clark tourney

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

DUDLEY—The Tantasqua boys' basketball team had won only one game at the Clark Tournament during the past 44 years.

After losing to Grafton High School in last year's Large School quarterfinal game, the Warriors certainly didn't want to lose in the same round again this season.

The sixth-seeded Warriors, who scored the first 16 points of the contest, coasted to an 80-47 upset victory over the third-seeded Westborough Rangers before a large crowd inside the Shepherd Hill Regional gymnasium, last Saturday afternoon.

"Last year, we were eligible to play in the Clark Tournament for the first time in many years and we lost in the quarterfinals," said Tantasqua head coach Scott Dion. "One of our goals coming into this season was to win the first Clark game, so we could go play a game on the Clark University basketball court. The kids were really focused, and they played very well at the start of today's game. I'm very proud of them."

While the Warriors (12-8) made their 14th appearance in the Clark Tournament, the Rangers (13-6) have played in the Clark a total of 54 times. They've won the Small School Championship title once and they've won eight Large School Championships.

The last time that Tantasqua,

who has never won a championship title, won a game at the Clark Tournament was in the 1980 quarterfinals. They defeated Clinton High School, 62-56, before losing to Oxford High School, 53-51, in the semifinals.

Not very many basketball teams at any level could play as well as the Warriors did during the first eight minutes of last Saturday's quarterfinal game.

"We played very well both offensively and defensively in the first quarter," said Dion, who played in the Clark tournament several times during his high school career at David Prouty. "We held them to only five points in that quarter. I believe it's the first time that we've done that this season."

The duo of senior Jack Rapose and junior Elijah Webb combined to score 11 of the Warriors' 21 first quarter points.

"We really thought this game was going to come down to the wire," Rapose said. "We played outstanding in the first quarter, and this is a huge win for us."

The other ten first quarter points were scored by senior Bryce Tessier, sophomore Sam Pieczynski, and junior Adam Howe, who hit a jumper in the lane giving his team a 21-5 lead at the end of the first quarter.

"Before the start of the game, coach Dion told us that we needed to start the game strong and that's exactly what we did," McGrath said. "We just came out firing and we've never scored that

many points in a game before today. We're now looking forward to playing in the semifinals at Clark. I've been there in the past as a fan and it's a great atmosphere. It's going to be awesome playing a game on that court."

Howe, who's a captain with Tessier, Rapose, and senior Colm McGrath, was sidelined most of the regular season with an injury. He played in his first game of the season at Leicester, which was a 69-36 victory on February 12. He scored seven points against the Rangers.

"It's awesome having Adam back on the court again," Dion said. "He was one of our starters last year and he's a captain this year. This was the third game of the season."

Webb, who made a total of four 3-pointers, finished the contest with a game-high 20 points.

Rapose was the only other double digit scorer for Tantasqua in the quarterfinal victory with 17 points.

McGrath just missed reaching double digits, as he finished the game with nine points.

Tessier chipped in with seven points.

Junior James Sciaraffa added three points.

Both teams scored 16 points during the second quarter and the Warriors held a 37-21 halftime advantage.

The Warriors began the third quarter with an impressive 20-2 run, which pretty much ended any hope the Rangers might've had of

making a second half comeback.

Back-to-back 3-pointers by Webb from the right and left corners gave the Warriors a 47-21 lead with 5:36 left in the third quarter.

After Westborough made a pair of free throws, Tantasqua reeled off ten more points.

McGrath capped off the run with an old fashion three point play.

All the Warrior's starters were sitting on the bench for most of the final quarter.

Junior Will Ehrhard, junior Teo Vazquez, sophomore Logan Arrastia (4 points), junior Noah Wotton (4 points) junior Chace Fredette, junior Max Cohen, and freshman Sean Allen, who are the Warriors reserve players, managed to keep the lead above 30 points in the fourth quarter.

"It was nice to get the reserve players some experience in a tournament game," Dion said. "All of those guys always work very hard at practice, and they deserved an opportunity to play in a game."

The following night, the Warriors defeated seventh-seeded Oakmont, 52-30, in the semifinals, which was held at the Kneller Athletic Center located in the middle of the Clark University campus.

The Warriors will be making another trip to Worcester to play in the Clark Large School finals against either top-seeded Shepherd Hill or fourth-seeded Millbury on Friday night.

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# Turleysports


## Athlete of the Week

### Greenly Lagimoniere

Pathfinder

Lagimoniere led Pathfinder with 17 points in a regular season win over Sci-Tech last Wednesday evening as the Pioneers prepared to head to tournament.

To nominate someone for Athlete of the Week, contact Managing Sports Editor Gregory A. Scibelli at 413-283-8393 ext. 258 or send an e-mail to gscibelli@turley.com.



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## Candlepin League News

By Ryan Drago  
Staff Writer  
rdrago@turley.com

### Tuesday Night Commercial Elks League

PALMER – The second round of the Commercial Elks league season of 2023-2024 concluded on Feb. 13.

Going into the final week of the round, The Champs R Here are the #1 seed with a record of 26.5 wins and 9.5 losses. Life is Good is just a half point behind with a record of 26-10. In third place, Acres at 24-12 have a chance of securing a playoff berth.

The remaining teams, Team BK, Blue B's, Compression and Last in Line are mathematically out of securing a playoff spot.

In one match, Team BK bowled against the Blue B's to conclude the second round. In game one, Team BK won the first game 391-387 thanks to Mark Fitzpatrick leading the team with a 114 game.

In game two, Blue B's won the second game 389-377. In game three, Blue B's won the last game 374-349. Total pinfall scores were 1150 for Blue B's and 1117 for Team BK.

To maintain first place, Champs R Here were hoping to win a couple points as they bowled against Compression. In game one, Compression salvaged a one-point victory over the Champs by a score of 401-400.

In game two, Compression won again only this time by over 30 points, 403-368. Leading the team in game two was David "Davio" Bowman by bowling his best game of the season, 124. In game three, Compression won for a three-game sweep by a score of 392-356.

Compression won total pinfall by a

final score of 1196-1124. Compression already has a playoff berth as they won the first round of the season.

### Thursday Night Mixed League

Team Two bowled against Team Three during the Thursday Night Mixed League on Feb. 15.

In game one, both teams tied with a score of 386. In game two, Team Three broke the tie by winning the second game 428-392. In game three, Team Two won the last game of the evening by a score of 432-410.

Danny Fennyery finished the night with a 115 and a three-game series of 323. Tyler Moore of Team Three finished with 113 and a 298 series.

Team Three won total pinfall by a final score of 1224-1210.

Team Five bowled against Team Four. In game one, Team Five won the first game 424-404. Mike Wadas of Team Five started off with a 110 and Nick Maslon of Team Four started off with a 117.

In game two, Team Four won the second game 382-377. In game three, Team Four won the last game 409-365. Team Four won total pinfall by a final score of 1195-1166.

Team One bowled against Team Six. In game one, Team One took the first game 404-378. In game two, Team One took the second game 421-363. In game three, Team Six won the last game 413-407.

Sean Comerford of Team One had a good night scoring 110, 109 and 107 for a 326 series. Team One was the winner of total pinfall by a final score of 1232-1154.

Visit Diamond Junction Bowling Lanes at 1446 North Main St. The alleys can be reached by calling 413-289-0013.

## Miracle League to receive Doyle Award

SPRINGFIELD – The Miracle League of Western Massachusetts, a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing inclusive baseball opportunities for individuals with disabilities, have been selected as the recipient of the Ryan Doyle Courage Award by the Western Mass Baseball Hall of Fame.

The Ryan Doyle Courage Award, named in honor of the late Ryan Doyle, a courageous young athlete who battled cancer, recognizes individuals or organizations that demonstrate exceptional courage, resilience, and dedication to the sport of baseball in Western Massachusetts. The Miracle League of Western Massachusetts was chosen for their unwavering commitment to creating an inclusive environment where all individuals, regardless of ability, can experience the joy of playing baseball.

Founded in 2015, the Miracle League of Western Massachusetts has been providing accessible baseball programs for children and adults with disabilities. Through their adaptive facilities and volunteer support, they ensure that every player has the opportunity to participate in America's favorite pastime. The organization has positively impacted the lives of countless individuals, fostering camaraderie, self-confidence, and a sense of belonging within the community.

The Miracle League of Western Massachusetts will be formally presented with the Ryan Doyle Courage Award at the Western Mass Baseball Hall of Fame induction ceremony on March 7th 6pm at Twin Hills Country Club in Longmeadow. This event brings together Western Mass baseball legends, enthusiasts, community leaders, and former MLB players to celebrate the accomplishments of the inductees.

For more information about the Miracle League of Western Massachusetts, their inclusive baseball programs and to volunteer, please visit <https://miracleleaguewestma.com/> or contact Brian Feeley at [brian@miracleleaguewestma.com](mailto:brian@miracleleaguewestma.com).

To Learn more about Ryan's story: Please visit the Ryan Doyle Foundation at <https://rd26.org/>.

For tickets to attend the induction dinner on March 7th please go to [www.valleybluesox.com](http://www.valleybluesox.com) or email [WMassHOF@valleybluesox.com](mailto:WMassHOF@valleybluesox.com)

## BASEBALL from page 1

with variants of the league changing over the years for competition purposes. Palmer meets teams like Ware, Monson, Southwick, Hampshire Regional, and Granby regularly from year-to-year.

Graveline works at Palmer High School as a paraprofessional, and says he and other players who have already signed up are working together to try and recruit more players for this year's team.

"So far, I have been asking student I see in school," he said. "In pass-

ing times between classes and during lunch periods. I'm also posting in the Palmer community forum to reach out to parents."

Graveline said students in seventh and eighth grade are eligible to be part of the team and two seventh graders played for the Panthers regularly last season.

He hopes more players will sign up for the upcoming spring season, which is set to begin pre-season practices on Monday, March 18. A former Panther, Graveline believes the experience is worthwhile.

"Student-athletes should want to join the baseball program because it instills discipline," Graveline said. "Hard work, respect, learning what it's like to be part of a team working towards one goal. Also, building friendships that last well after your high school days have come to an end."

Students who might be interested in joining the program can get more information at the school's athletic office. Graveline is also happy to answer any questions or concerns from prospective players.

## Railers fall in shutout to Bears

ORLANDO, FL – The Worcester Railers HC (21-20-4-2, 48pts) got shutout by the Orlando Solar Bears (24-16-6-2, 56pts), on Thursday night by the final score of 4-0 in front of 5,684 fans at the Kia Center.

Orlando struck first with two quick goals late in the first period from Mitchell Hoelscher (1-1-2) and Alex Frye (1-0-1). Tanner Schachle (1-0-1) added one more in the second to push Orlando ahead 3-0 going into the third. Jimmy Mazza (1-0-1) ripped a shot down-ice off of the draw in the third period into an empty net to give Orlando the final goal of the game and a 4-0 victory over Worcester.

The Railers started off the first period strong. During the first ten minutes, the Railers utilized a two-man forecheck which led to some great chances down low and keeping both the puck in their offensive zone and the tired Solar Bear players on the ice. Despite their efforts early, the Solar Bears would light the lamp first. A shot from the point

by defenseman Zachary Massicotte was initially blocked out in front but found its way to an open Mitchell Hoelscher (22nd) who was sitting on the doorstep. The Solar Bears piled on the goal scoring just two minutes later with a 2-on-1 rush. Hoelscher would drag Railers Defenseman Ryan Dickinson to the far side boards to allow Forward Alex Frye (10th) to capitalize on the doorstep with a backhand shot to beat the outstretched John Muse. The Solar Bears outshot the Railers, 12-6.

The second period was a quiet one for the Railers. They would lead the period with shots on goal but none would result in a goal. The Railers had some great opportunities on their first power play of the game late in the period and built some strong momentum for them to carry into the third. However, the Solar Bears would continue to deal damage to the Railers with another late-period goal. Solar Bear forward Tyler Bird would enter the Railers defensive zone from

the far side and send a quick pass to the high slot. The puck bounced to forward Tanner Schachle (2nd) who picked up the loose puck and backhanded a shot through Muse. The Railers led the period and game with shots on goal 14-5 and 20-17.

The third period provided a mix of chances and physicality from both sides. John Muse did a great job shutting down an odd-man rush and breakaway opportunity just a few minutes into the period. Shortly after, the Railers would get their chances on net during their powerplay chance. Tension throughout the game built up to the point where Railers Forward Jack Quinlivan dropped the gloves against Solar Bear Defenseman Jérémie Biakabutuka. The game was capped off with an empty net goal scored by Solar Bear Defenseman Jimmy Mazza with a final score of 4-0 in favor of Orlando. The Railers outshot the Solar Bears in the third and in the game, 16-8 and 36-25.

### The Southbridge Softball league is now enrolling teams and players for the 2024 season.

Games are played at Henry Street Field (located off Rt. 169) in Southbridge.

We have 3 levels of Mens Leagues (A, B & C) that play weeknights starting @ 6:30 PM, a Mens JB draft league (for players age 39 by Sept. 30th) that plays Sunday AM starting at 9 AM

and a COED league (5 & 5) that plays Sat & Sun evenings starting @ 6 PM. The potential for a Women's league or a weekday COED league (6 & 4) exists depending on the number of teams we receive – a minimum of 4 teams would be required for either to be considered.

#### THE FEES FOR 2024 ARE AS FOLLOWS:

\$425 team roster fee and a \$125 forfeit fee for a total of \$550.

If your roster is turned in on or before 3/5 the fee is \$550.

If your roster is turned in between 3/5 + 3/12, the fee is \$600.

#### No rosters will be accepted after 3/12/24.

Player fees for 2024 will be \$55 and a \$5 additional fee will be charged to those players playing on (2) or more teams.

Please email [info@southbridgesoftball.org](mailto:info@southbridgesoftball.org) or check out our Southbridge Softball Association Facebook page for more information.

# Team Mass. holding tryouts for AAU season

STURBRIDGE – Why play for Team Mass? Affordable/competitive AAU Basketball program. Teams could potentially travel to tournaments in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Maine or New York (coach dependent). Program is run on principle to teach the kids to be respectful on and off the court, and to learn the game of basketball with skills needed to be competitive while still having fun. Any questions, contact Chris Siniscalchi 413-539-1548 Email: teammassbasketball@gmail.com

Boys tryouts: Saturday, March 2 (Tantasqua Junior High School)  
 Grades 4/5/6: 8 to 9:25 a.m. and grades 7/8: 9:25-10:50 a.m.  
 Grades 9/10/11: 10:50 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. \*Grades 9/10 and 11 if in districts,

just sign up  
 Girls tryouts: Saturday, March 2 (Tantasqua Junior High School)  
 Grades 4/5/6: 12:15 to 1:40 p.m. Grades 7/8: 1:40 to 3 p.m. Grades 9/10/11: 1:40 to 3 p.m. Grades 9/10 and 11, if in districts just sign up

Players only need to make one tryout, but try to make both as it gives coaches a better look.  
 Tantasqua Junior High School is located at 320 Brookfield Rd., Fiskdale.  
 There is a \$20 tryout fee (covers all tryout dates). Please arrive 15 minutes early for registration. Please bring copy of birth certificate (needed for age/grade verification). Must be accompanied by parent/guardian to fill out and sign registration form.

# Scholarship and Fellowship Funds Available

The Horace Smith Fund, located in Westfield, Massachusetts has scholarship and fellowship money available for graduates of Hampden County public and private high schools. Graduating high school seniors and students already in college may apply for Scholarships of \$12,000. Those in their final year of college and previous college graduates pursuing advanced degrees may apply for Fellowships of \$15,000. Applicants must maintain at least a B average in college and be enrolled as full-time students.

Awards are made based on both academic achievement and financial need. Of great importance is a personal written account of why the student feels deserving of financial assistance and their goals in pursuing higher education.

Last year, \$316,000 was awarded to 30 individuals. Scholarships were given to 22 graduating seniors from nine Hampden County high schools. Three scholarships were also awarded to current college students to assist them in

completing their undergraduate degrees. Five fellowships were given to college graduates pursuing advanced degrees, who had graduated from Hampden County high schools.

The Horace Smith Fund was established in 1899 by the successful and generous philanthropist named Horace Smith, co-founder of Smith & Wesson, established in Springfield. The scholarships and fellowships are named for Walter S. Barr, a West Springfield businessman, whose widow left the bulk of the family estate to The Horace Smith Fund in 1950.

Completed applications must be received either electronically or by mail to The Horace Smith Fund at 16 Union Avenue, Suite 2K, Westfield, MA 01085 no later than March 15, 2024. Applications are available at local high school guidance offices, college financial aid offices, online at [www.HoraceSmithFund.org](http://www.HoraceSmithFund.org) or by phoning (413) 739-4222.

# MSB scholarships available

MONSON— Monson Savings Bank provides \$28,000 in scholarships to local graduating seniors annually. The Bank's 2024 Scholarships are now available to graduating high school seniors in the Monson, Ware, Hampden-Wilbraham, and East Longmeadow School Districts. The purpose of the Monson Savings Bank Scholarship is to promote the attainment of higher education for graduating seniors who reside within the communities that the Bank serves.

"At Monson Savings Bank, we support our neighbors and help them reach their goals," said Dan Moriarty, Monson Savings Bank president and CEO. "Providing our local high school graduates with scholarship money to offset the cost of continuing their education is something we are proud to do. We are pleased to have the chance to assist these hardworking young people in continuing their education and finding success in this next chapter of their lives."

To qualify, graduating seniors must

be planning to attend an accredited college, technical school, or certification program.

Scholarship awards will be based on a variety of factors, which may include the applicant's financial need, academic performance, and extracurricular activities that they have participated in. A candidate for this scholarship should have demonstrated a commitment to their community.

If students are interested in applying for the Monson Savings Scholarship, they should contact their high school guidance department for an application. The deadline for application acceptance varies by school, please contact your school's Guidance Department for more information.

To learn more about Monson Savings Bank, and their commitment to making an impact in the local communities, please visit <https://www.monson-savings.bank/connect/our-community/our-community-commitment.html>.

# Sustainable agriculture grant funding available

Two Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education grant programs are calling for 2024 proposals.

Northeast SARE's Administrative Council has allocated \$750,000 for Partnership Grants and \$500,000 for Graduate Student Research Grants.

Partnership Grants fund researchers, educators and agricultural service providers working in direct partnership with farmers in the Northeast. Funded projects will design and implement innovative solutions to agricultural sustainability challenges, and strengthen connections between farmers and agricultural service providers.

Partnership Grant proposals are capped at \$30,000; about 30 projects will be awarded. Proposals are due April 9 at 5 p.m.

Graduate Student Research Grants fund students conducting research under the supervision of a faculty advisor on sustainable agriculture topics of importance to Northeast farmers, agricultural researchers, and farm support professionals.

Graduate Student Research Grant proposals are capped at \$15,000; about 30 projects will be awarded. Proposals are due April 16 at 5 p.m.

Northeast SARE – including funding decisions – is guided by its outcome statement:

"Northeast agricultural communities honor the holistic connection among land, water, air, and all living beings. Agriculture in the Northeast is accessible, sustainable, and just, addressing

historic and current inequities so all farmers and farm employees can steward resources to ensure sustainability, resilience, economic viability, and a high quality of life."

Live question and answer sessions for both grant programs will take place throughout March and into April. These sessions are a great opportunity for potential applicants to learn if a Northeast SARE Grant is right for them.

They are also a chance to build understanding around how to successfully write and manage Northeast SARE grants.

Partnership Grant Q&A sessions will take place March 5, 13, 19, and 27 from noon-1 p.m. To register, visit <https://northeast.sare.org/2024PartnershipGrantQA>.

Graduate Student Research Grant Q&A sessions will take place March 12, 20, 26, and April 3 from noon-1 p.m. To register, visit <https://northeast.sare.org/2024GraduateStudentGrantQA>.

# CAMPUS NOTES

## Rice Graduates from Elms College

Emily Rice of Three Rivers graduated from Elms College with a Master of Arts in Teaching following the conclusion of the fall 2023 semester.

Rice was among 75 students who received their degrees in December.

## Coastal Carolina University Dean's List

More than 3,000 undergraduate students at Coastal Carolina University were named to the Dean's List for the Fall 2023 semester, including Isabella Huckins, from Wales, MA (01081). Students who make the Dean's List have achieved a grade point average of 3.5 or higher (3.25 for freshmen) for the semester.

Coastal Carolina University is a dynamic, public comprehensive liberal arts institution located in Conway, located just minutes from the resort area of Myrtle Beach, S.C.

## Elms College Dean's List Fall 2023

The College of Our Lady of the Elms has named the following students to the Dean's List for the fall 2023 semester. Congratulations to all the students who are named to the list.

- Camryn Orszulak of Bondsville
- Hailey Magierowski of Brimfield
- Camrynn Lemon of Monson
- Samantha Moyer of Monson
- Joseph Chartier of Palmer
- Ava Denault of Palmer
- Hannah Duggan of Palmer
- Olivia Morin of Wales

## Emmanuel College Fall 2023 Dean's List

Congratulations to Olivia Sloat of Palmer and Ashley Bransky of Bondsville for being named to the Emmanuel College Fall 2023 Dean's List.

In recognition of their outstanding academic achievement, Emmanuel College in Boston has named more than 900 students to the Dean's List for the Fall 2023 semester. To earn a spot on the Dean's List, Emmanuel students must achieve a grade point average of 3.5 or higher for a 16-credit semester.

## Fairfield University Fall 2023 Dean's List

Madalyn Theriault of Palmer was named to the Fairfield University Dean's List Honors for the Fall 2023 semester.

In order to be placed on the Dean's List, students must have completed a minimum of 12 credit hours in a semester, have no outstanding or incomplete grades for that semester, and have attained a semester grade point average of 3.50 or better.

## Holy Cross' Fall 2023 Dean's List

Delaney Walch of Palmer was named to the College of the Holy Cross Spring 2023 Dean's List. A member of the Class of 2024, Walch was named to the Dean's List for outstanding academic achievement during the fall semester of the 2023-24 academic year.

To qualify, students must pass four or more letter-graded courses with no failing grades during the semester and earn a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

## James Madison University Dean's list

Grace Timmins of Brimfield has been named to the dean's list at James Madison University for the fall 2023 semester. Students who earn dean's list honors must carry at least 12 graded credit hours and earn a GPA of between 3.5 and 3.899. Timmins is majoring in Health Sciences - BS.

## Nichols College Dean's List

More than 220 students at Nichols College in Dudley, Mass., have achieved Dean's List honors during the fall 2023 semester.

Dean's List recognizes those students who achieve high grades during a single semester. In order to be included on the Dean's List, a student must have a minimum average of 3.5 for at least 12 undergraduate credit-hours and must have received no grades below B- during the semester.

The following local students earned Dean's List honors for the fall 2023 semester:

- Michael Bachand of Three Rivers, MA
- Isabel Kadlik of Holland, MA
- Olivia Marin of Holland, MA

## Nichols College Fall President's List

More than 215 students at Nichols College in Dudley, Mass., have achieved President's List honors during the fall 2023 semester.

President's List recognizes those students who achieve high grades during a single semester. Students whose semester 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 earned President's List honors for the fall 2023 semester:

- Lydia Julian of Holland, MA
- Avalynne Leneau of Brimfield, MA
- Michael Peloza of Brimfield, MA
- Karissa Wood of Three Rivers, MA

## Plymouth State University President's List

Noel Melnick of Thorndike, MA, has been named to the Plymouth State University President's List for the Fall 2023 semester. To be named to the President's List, a student must achieve a grade point average of 3.70 or better for the Fall 2023 semester and must have completed at least 12 credit hours during the semester, at least nine of which must confer grade points, at the time the lists are finalized. Melnick is a Psychology major at Plymouth State.

## Purchase College Dean's List

Cleo Esposito has been named to Purchase College's Dean's List for the Fall 2023 semester. Esposito, who is from Monson, MA, is studying Arts Management.

## Quinnipiac University Dean's List

The following area students were named to the dean's list for the Fall 2023 semester at Quinnipiac University:

- Jacob Iby of Monson, MA
- Tori Edwards of Palmer, MA

To qualify for the dean's list, students must earn a grade point average of at least 3.5 with no grade lower than C. Full-time students must complete at least 14 credits in a semester, with at least 12 credits that have been graded on a letter grade basis to be eligible. Part-time students must complete at least six credits during a semester. Names followed by an asterisk denotes with honors.

## Russell Sage College's Fall 2023 Dean's List

Anna Breidenbach of Monson was named to Russell Sage College's fall 2023 Dean's List.

Breidenbach was among more than 400 students named to the list. To be placed on the Dean's List for the semester, a student must earn a grade point average of 3.50 or higher while carrying a minimum of 12 credits in courses graded A-F, with no grades of Incomplete.

## SNHU Announces Fall 2023 Dean's List

It is with great pleasure that Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates the following students on being named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List. The fall terms run from September to December.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.500 to 3.699 for the reporting term are named to the Dean's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

- Brandon Correa of Three Rivers
- Tyler Schmidt of Holland

## SNHU Announces Fall 2023 President's List

It is with great pleasure that Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates the following students on being named to the Fall 2023 President's List. The fall terms run from September to December.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

- Emma Keith of Brimfield
- Kristina Hawley of Monson
- Layne Shuron of Monson
- Brenna Severin of Monson
- Katie Prunier of Monson
- Kayla Gawron of Monson
- Samantha Pufis of Monson
- Sydney DeVries of Monson

## Elms College December 2023 Graduates

College of Our Lady of the Elms congratulates 75 students who graduated in December 2023 following the conclusion of the fall 2023 semester.

- Lauren Lefebvre Ludlow, Bachelor of Arts in Psychology
- Andrew Musante Ludlow, Master of Arts in Teaching
- Angela Nurek Ludlow, Doctor of Nursing Practice in Adult Gerontology Acute Care
- Elizabeth Rodriguez Ludlow, Master of Business Administration in Accounting
- Madison Trombley Ludlow, Bachelor of Science in Nursing

## Clark University's Fall Dean's List

Maya E. Senquiz, of Monson, was named to second honors on the Clark University Dean's List. This selection marks outstanding academic achievement during the Fall 2023 semester.

Students must have a GPA of 3.8 or above for first honors or a GPA between 3.50 and 3.79 for second honors.

## Assumption University's Dean's List

Assumption University has announced those who have been named to the University's Dean's List for the fall 2023 semester. Students named to the Dean's List must achieve a grade point average of 3.5 for a five-class, 15-credit semester to be included on the prestigious list, which is announced at the completion of the fall and spring semesters.

The following local students were named to the Dean's List:

- Ethan Beauchemin of Palmer
- Mason Dumas of Monson
- Jillian Johnson of Holland
- Emily Lebel of Monson

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# WHOA draws Scouts to Moses for winter adventure



Robert Kidd, a longtime staffer at Horace A. Moses Scout Reservation in Russell, shares the history of the peak located on Chips Norcross' property in Blandford with Scouts from Haverhill Troop 24. Scouts hiked up the peak to visit Top O' The Hill Maple sugar shack during the second of three Woronoco Heights Outdoor Adventures held during the winter.

Scouts from near and far enjoyed a variety of winter adventures and activities for Woronoco Heights Outdoor Adventures held at the Horace A. Moses Scout Reservation on Birch Hill Road.

Offering blacksmithing, disc golf, geocaching, ice fishing, It's All Things Birds, orienteering, a sugar shack hike and more, Scouts and their leaders had plenty of fun, skills-based and team-building activities to participate in this past Saturday.

In the Blacksmith Shop, Scouts learned how to forge a J-hook with the guidance of Dana Dupuis of Heroic Wolves Forge.

For It's All Things Birds, Scouts learned about feeding, housing and observing wild birds. Scouts recorded any birds observed and identified at the reservation's birdfeeder for the Great American Backyard Bird Count that was held Feb. 17-20.

Scouts enjoyed the reservation's 9-hole disc golf course, and searched for seven geocache locations.

Using compasses, Scouts honed their orienteering skills, getting both instruction and practice.

A hike to the Top O' The Hill Maple sugar shack in neighboring Blandford followed in the footsteps of General Henry Knox, who passed through the area in the winter of 1775-1776 to deliver artillery from Fort Ticonderoga to General George Washington in Cambridge.

The next WHOA event is scheduled for Saturday, March 16 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. This program is open to anyone ages 5 and up, whether they are a Scout or not.

For more information about WHOA, visit 413WHOA.org.



Turley Photos by Paula Ouimette

Cub Scouts from Pack 168 of Monson enjoyed ice fishing.



Although it was too cold to draw sap this past weekend, Chuck Andrews explains how the evaporator turns sap into maple syrup.



Scouts hammered a nail into the shape of a "J."



A Scout from Troop 161 of Sturbridge used an auger to drill holes through the ice during the ice fishing activity.



Scouts from Troop 161 of Sturbridge cleared pieces of ice from a hole they drilled.



Scouts from Troop 7281 of Ware and Troop 161 of Sturbridge worked together to drill a hole through the ice.



A Scout from Troop 161 of Sturbridge demonstrated how to use a depth finder to set the length of the fishing line on the tip-up.



A Scout prepared to attach a lure to his fishing line.



Chuck Andrews of Top O' The Hill Maple explains the difference between various maple trees.



This Native American turtle-shaped rock formation dating back at least 400 years, was seen along a hike to the sugar shack.



Dana Dupuis of Heroic Wolves Forge in Russell taught Scouts how to create J-hooks in the Blacksmith Shop.

## The Library Loft

Schoolhouse Commons Historical Center • 1085 Park Street, Palmer

We are celebrating our  
**20th year at the Schoolhouse Commons.**

Thanks to our wonderful "friends," volunteers and patrons.

**Hours:**  
Tues. 10am - 4pm • Wed. 10am - 4pm  
Thurs. 10am - 4pm • Fri. 10am-4pm • Sat. 10am-2pm

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Book donations will be accepted at the Palmer Public Library or the Library Loft during open hours. Please, no magazines or Reader's Digest Condensed Books. We accept books only in good, clean condition.

For more information call 283-3330 ext. 100

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visit [www.publicnotices.turley.com](http://www.publicnotices.turley.com)

**DEATH NOTICES**

**Elizabeth Ann (Betty) Fauteux, 91**  
Died on Feb. 15, 2024  
Services Feb. 22, 2024  
Beers and Story Funeral Home

**Priscilla N. Martin**  
Died Jan. 19, 2024  
Service April 29, 2024  
Lombard Funeral Home

*The Journal Register*  
**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](mailto:obits@turley.com).

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

**O B I T U A R I E S**

*Elizabeth Ann "Betty" Fauteux*

PALMER—Elizabeth Ann "Betty" Fauteux, 91, passed away Feb. 15, 2024 surrounded by her family. She was born on Sept. 14, 1932 in Palmer to the late Walter and Bertha (Kinmond) Coulter. Betty was a life long resident of Palmer and was a member of St. Thomas the Apostle Church. She was a master quilter and enjoyed gifting her beautiful quilts to her family and friends. Besides her parents, Betty was preceded in death by her brothers, Jack and Walter Coulter. She will be dearly missed by her

husband of 70 years, Norbert P. Fauteux; their children, Alan Fauteux and wife Sue, Karen McCarthy and husband Tim, and Craig Fauteux and wife Kathleen; as well as 4 grandchildren, 3 great-grandchildren, and many step-grandchildren and step-great-grandchildren.

Visitation will be held on Feb. 22, 2024 from 10-11:30am at the Beers & Story Palmer Fu-

neral Home. A Funeral Mass will be held at 12pm at St. Thomas the Apostle Church. Burial will immediately follow at the MA Veterans' Cemetery in Agawam. In lieu of flowers, donations in Betty's memory can be made to Bay-state Home Health & Hospice, 30 Capital Dr. West Springfield, MA 01089. Please visit [www.beersandstory.com](http://www.beersandstory.com) to extend online condolences.



*Priscilla N. Martin*

MONSON—Priscilla N. Martin, of Monson, 106, passed peacefully in her sleep on Jan. 19, 2024, in North Andover, MA. Her extraordinary life spanned two pandemics, two World Wars, the Great Depression, and many phenomenal changes as she was born shortly after the Wright brothers flew at Kitty Hawk and saw Man journey to the moon. At the time of her death, she was the oldest living person in the history of Monson, Massachusetts, where she had lived in the same house for over 75 years. Her life was blessed with a 70-year marriage to Clarence L. Martin, Jr., who was the love of her life and soul mate. She has now returned to the loving embrace of her beloved husband, "Chick".

Priscilla was born on Aug. 1, 1917, in Springfield, Mass., to Norman and Lillian (Fletcher) Jones, natives of Massachusetts and Vermont. She was extremely proud of her Yankee heritage and would often say New England was the best place in the world. She was predeceased by her parents, her husband, her two sisters and their spouses, Charlotte Hodges (Joel "Bill") and Betty Fay (Don), as well as her three nieces, Judith Hodges Ickes, Martha Fay Feeley, and Priscilla Fay Stover.

She married Clarence L. Martin, Jr. on June 24, 1939, in Needham, MA, where she graduated from high school. They then moved to Monson where "Chick" was teaching at Monson Academy and where they lived the rest of their lives. Remarkably, she lived nearly 85 years after she was married.

She is survived by and was the mother of three children, David Martin (Natalie) of Summerville, SC, Susan Martin (Judith) of Newberg, OR, and Jill Barker (Christopher) of North Andover, MA. She has three grandsons, Jeremy Martin (Jill) of Solana Beach, CA, Jonathan Martin (Betsy) of New Orleans, LA, and Washington, DC, and Benjamin Jones Barker of Chicago Illinois. She was the great grandmother of Josie Martin of Solana Beach and the step great grandmother of Ella Raineri of New Orleans.

Priscilla was gifted with a marvelous singing voice which allowed her to be a lead soloist in Monson's First Congregational Church choir for over 35

years. She had such an exceptional voice that she was asked on occasion to sing at local weddings. Music was her big passion, which led to her co-founding a local area chorus called "The Villagers", that brought her tremendous pleasure and joy from her 50's into her 70's. This abiding love of music and singing continued throughout her entire life as she sang "Happy Birthday" this past October to her great granddaughter Josie, only three months before she passed at over 106.

Besides her husband and children, who were the center of her universe and the most profound joys of her life, she adored her home in Monson on which she lavished hours of painstaking care on its beautiful grounds and on her interior decorating. She truly loved being a wife, mother, grandmother, and a homemaker.

She and her husband loved their walks in the country and loved their travels together, especially in retirement years. Also, her life was not quite complete without her beloved dogs who all held a special place in her heart and life, beginning when she was a youngster keeping twine in her pocket on the off chance that she would come across a stray to befriend.

Apart from her Monson home, her other favorite place on Earth was the summer home in Maine on Cochnewagon Pond in Monmouth. The happiest times in her life were spent with her husband, children, and grandchildren for 75 years at her beloved cottage, "Cedar Hedge", which she lovingly and creatively tended to as she did her family home.

She had many gifts, including being a masterful gardener, a gourmet cook, and a talented decorator. She loved politics and history which she passed on to her son and her two grandsons. Both her daughters and her third grandson inherited her love of singing and the theater. From her youth she was an avid reader and, as a widow at 92, she also loved crossword puzzles and anagrams that she continued to do daily with her wonderful

caregivers. Throughout the years, Priscilla was active in her community. As well as co-founding "The Villagers", she was its Mistress of Ceremonies, and in addition to being a lead soloist in the church choir, she was the Chairwoman of the First Church Music Committee. For many years she was the Monson representative for the Salvation Army and the American Cancer Society. She was a leader with the Girl Scouts, and while her children attended Monson schools, she was employed with the Monson Schools food services. She also served as a teacher's aide at "L'Ecole Francaise", a pre-school program in Monson, and in her early years in town, she was a Monson Academy librarian.

She was blessed in the last fifteen years of her life, after her husband passed, to be surrounded every day by an outstanding team of devoted, loving caregivers who made it possible for her to remain in her beloved home until nearly the end of her life. Priscilla lived an exceptionally long life because she had a "Yankee" constitution, tough, strong and resilient, as evidenced by two remarkable recoveries: after breaking a hip at 100 and contracting pneumonia at 105. She even survived a bout of Covid at 106. Her indomitable spirit and will to live, despite these setbacks, truly personified her life.

In lieu of flowers, Priscilla requested that gifts in her memory be made to the "First Church of Monson Organ Fund", the "Clarence L. Martin, Jr. Yearbook Award" at Monson High School, or the "St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital" in Memphis, TN.

A memorial service to honor Priscilla Martin's life will be held on Monday, April 29, 2024, at 11 a.m., in the First Church of Monson, Congregational (United Church of Christ) at 5 High Street, Monson, MA. Lombard Funeral Home of Monson has been entrusted with the arrangements. For online condolences please visit [www.lombardfuneralhome.com](http://www.lombardfuneralhome.com)



**Police/Fire**

**Police Logs**

**Palmer Police Department**

*The Palmer Police Department reported 461 incidents on its logs for Feb. 6 – Feb. 12.*

**Feb. 6**

At 8:01 p.m. police pulled over and gave summons to Luis Fernando Obregon Abreu, 24, of 7 Glenwood Road, Somerville for operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license, not in possession of license and marked lanes violation.

**Feb. 7**

At 4:59 p.m. police responded to an accident with property damage on Thorndike Street.

**Feb. 8**

At 2:33 p.m. police responded to an accident with property damage at Four Corners.

At 6:11 p.m. police pulled over and gave summons to Cesar A. Rodriguez, 30, of 28 Spruce St., Massena, NY, for operation of a vehicle without a license, unregistered motor vehicle and number plate violation.

**Feb. 10**

At 11:55 a.m. police arrested Pamela Ortiz, 41, of 46 Walnut St., Palmer, on charges of OUI liquor second offense, negligent operation of a motor vehicle, operating a motor vehicle with suspended registration, uninsured motor vehicle and speeding at a rate that was exceeding the posted limit.

At 10:40 p.m. police responded to an accident with property damage and gave summons to Michael A. Remillard Jr., 23, of 27 Randall St., Palmer, for speeding, marked lane violation and negligent operation of a motor vehicle.

**Feb. 9**

At 1:54 p.m. police pulled over and gave summons to Naomi Padilla, 25, of 1098 Pleasant St., Palmer, for uninsured motor vehicle, operating a motor vehicle with a suspended registration and failure to notify RMV with name/address change.

At 6:42 p.m. police gave summons to Jesse L. Baird, 40, of 2026 High St., Three Rivers; Jennifer Frances Lundquist, 41, of 2026 High St., Three Rivers; and Michael L. Voisine, 53 of 61 Belanger St., Three Rivers, for breaking and entering and trespass.

**Feb. 12**

At 12:39 a.m. police pulled over and gave summons to Jesus A. Merino Monge, 30, of 170 E. Hadley Road, Amherst, number plate violation to conceal ID and uninsured motor vehicle.

At 5 p.m. police responded to an accident with property damage on Thorndike Street.

**Fire Logs**

**Bondsville Fire Log**

*For the period Feb. 6 to Feb. 12, Bondsville fire responded to 1 call.*

On Friday, Feb. 9 at 11:23a.m., the department responded mutual aid to Pathfinder H.S. in Three Rivers for an alarm activation. The call was canceled en route and the department returned to service at 11:33a.m.

**Three Rivers**

*The Three Rivers Fire Department responded to four calls for the week of Feb. 11-17.*

On Wednesday, Feb. 14, the Department responded to a malfunctioning alarm on Main Street.

On Friday, Feb. 16, the Department responded to a cooking fire confined to a container on Main Street.

On Saturday, Feb. 17, the Department responded to a lock-out on Springfield Street.

That same day, the Department responded to a malfunctioning alarm on Main Street.

**Registration open for March 9 Fight for Air Climb Boston**

BOSTON – The American Lung Association announced Wellpoint (formerly UniCare), a health benefits company serving Massachusetts state and municipal employees, retirees, and their families, is joining the annual Fight for Air Climb Boston as the Presenting Sponsor.

The Climb will take place at One Boston Place on Saturday, March 9, from 8 a.m.-noon. The Climb will support the American Lung Association's mission to save lives by preventing lung disease, with a fundraising goal of raising \$250,000.

Participants – including many first responders and firefighters – will run or walk up 82 flights of stairs, totally 789 stairs to the top of

the Boston skyscraper.

Registration is now open to individuals and teams at [FightForAirClimb.org/boston](http://FightForAirClimb.org/boston).

"Our Fight For Air Climb Boston aims to bring awareness to lung disease, and honor all those who have experienced lung disease, either personally or through a loved one. It also honors our first responders by highlighting the challenges they face during the call of duty," said Ashley Carrier Executive Director, American Lung Association in Massachusetts in a press release. "Sponsors like Wellpoint empower us to broaden our reach, develop quality education and advocacy programs, and execute a truly fun and rewarding event for our community. We are so grateful to them for

playing a part in our mission to save lives by improving lung health."

The Fight For Air Climb is the American Lung Association's signature event to raise money to help achieve their mission of saving lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease.

Fight For Air Climb events happen around the county, where participants climb hundreds of stairs at iconic stadiums or buildings to do good and feel great. Each Fight For Air Climb event also includes a firefighter division where local firefighters race up hundreds of stairs in full gear.

More information and registration are available at [FightForAirClimb.org/boston](http://FightForAirClimb.org/boston).

**Zonta to celebrate local women**

WESTERN MA— On March 11 at the Ludlow Country Club, Zonta will celebrate Women Making a Difference in honor of International Women's Day.

Each year in March, the global community recognizes women for their achievements regardless of national, ethnic, linguistic, economic or political divisions. The Zonta International community also celebrates Zonta Rose Day, a time to reflect and give tribute to the women who have empowered us. As the theme of this year's International Women's celebration is Inspire Inclusion, the club has chosen a keynote speaker, Dr. Christina Royal, who has spearheaded numerous initiatives to address the inequities experienced by many populations in Western MA, and four women leaders in the community deserving of recognition for exemplifying the ideals of Zonta and inspiring inclusion in their day-to-day work and volunteer efforts.



Submitted Photo  
**Dr. Christina Royal is Zonta's 2023 Women of the Year for her commitment to equity and equality.**

Royal is Zonta's 2023 Women of the Year for her commitment to equity and equality. She will be awarded the Zonta Club of Quabog Valley's first Honorary Member status.

The honorees are; Lisa Bakow-

ski for raising the bar for self-advocacy, self-awareness and self-empowerment of women and children; Andrea Bordenca for working with organizations committed to equity, engagement and positive mental health; Charlotte Chartier Cote for creating positive change in dental practices and owner of Cote Cattle Company; and Roxanna Harper RN, MSN for empowering staff and families to provide exceptional home health, hospice and palliative care.

A donation of \$500 will be made by Zonta in each honoree's name to a cause of their choice.

The public is invited to join us in celebrating these women. RSVP by March 7, at [info@ZontaQV.org](mailto:info@ZontaQV.org). 5:30 p.m. reception, 6 p.m. dinner followed by the program.

Pay at the door for the buffet (\$28) or pay online. Details at [www.zontaqvalley.org/women](http://www.zontaqvalley.org/women).

**Public Notices**

**PALMER CONSERVATION COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

In accordance with the Wetland Protection Act of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Chapter 131, Section 40, and the Town of Palmer Wetlands Bylaws, the Palmer Conservation Commission will hold a public

hearing on **Wednesday, March 6, 2024 at 7:15 PM** in the Town Administration Building, Meeting Room #1, 4417 Main Street, Palmer, MA 01069 on the application of Robert Hutchinson of 49 Sabin St., Belchertown, MA 01007.

The applicant has submitted a Request for Determination of Applicability for activities associated with the removal

of multiple trees on a private land parcel. This work is proposed to occur within the 100ft buffer of a vegetated wetland.

This project is located near the corner of Country Ln. and Peterson St., Palmer MA, 01069. Assessor's Map 14, Parcel 17-9, Lot 4

Any interested persons wishing to be heard on the application should appear at the time and place designat-

ed. A copy of the application and plan may be inspected at the Palmer Town Hall in the Conservation Commission Office, 4417 Main Street, Palmer, MA 01069 or contact the office at 413-283-2687.

Donald Blais, Jr., Chair, Palmer Conservation Commission

02/22/2024

**PALMER CONSERVATION COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

In accordance with the Wetland Protection Act of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Chapter 131, Section 40, and the Town of Palmer Wetlands Bylaws, the Palmer Conservation Commission will hold a public

hearing on **Wednesday, March 6, 2024 at 7:00 PM** in the Town Administration Building, Meeting Room #1, 4417 Main Street, Palmer, MA 01069 on the application of Stephen Marotte of 58 French Drive, Palmer, MA, 01069.

The applicant has submitted a Request for Determination of Applicability for activities associated with the removal

of multiple trees on a private land parcel. This work is proposed to occur within the 100ft. buffer of a vegetated wetland.

The project is located at 58 French Drive Palmer, MA 01069. Assessor's Map 68, lot 59.

Any interested persons wishing to be heard on the application should appear at the time and place designated. A copy of the application

and plan may be inspected at the Palmer Town Hall in the Conservation Commission Office, 4417 Main Street, Palmer, MA 01069 or contact the office at 413-283-2687.

Donald Blais, Jr., Chair, Palmer Conservation Commission

02/22/2024

**MORE NOTICES ON 14**

# Public Notices

## NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

Premises: 42 Washington Street, Monson, MA 01057

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Sherrie L Blain and Richard Blain to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as Mortgagee, as nominee for Academy Mortgage Corporation, and now held by PennyMac Loan Services, LLC, said mortgage dated October 15, 2021 and recorded in the Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book 24186, Page 523, said mortgage was assigned from Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as Mortgagee, as nominee for Academy Mortgage Corporation to PennyMac Loan Services, LLC by assignment dated March 2, 2023 and recorded with said Registry of Deeds in Book 24925, Page 390; for breach of the conditions in said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at Public Auction on **April 3, 2024 at 02:00 PM Local Time** upon the premises, all and singular the premises described in said mort-

gage, to wit: The Land referred to herein below is situated in the County of Hampden, State of Massachusetts, and is described as follows: The land situated in Monson, Hampden County, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, bounded and described as follows: Beginning at the north-east corner of the lot to be described on the junction and corner of Washington Street; thence running westerly seventy-five (75) feet to land of Lyman C. Flynt, now or formerly known as Central Hotel property; thence running southerly on last named land seventy and one-half feet to a stone in the ground; thence running easterly seventy-five (75) feet to Washington Street; place of beginning and thence running northerly on said Washington Street seventy-three and one-half feet to the Being the premises conveyed to the grantor herein by deed of Richard A. Drake dated and recorded on December 16, 2004 In the Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book 14701, Page 643. The description of the property contained in the

mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication. For Mortgageor's Title see deed dated October 14, 2021 and recorded in the Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book 24186, Page 521. **TERMS OF SALE:** Said premises will be sold and conveyed subject to all liens, encumbrances, unpaid taxes, tax titles, municipal liens and assessments, if any, which take precedence over the said mortgage above described. **FIVE THOUSAND (\$5,000.00) Dollars** of the purchase price must be paid in cash, certified check, bank treasurer's or cashier's check at the time and place of the sale by the purchaser. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid in cash, certified check, bank treasurer's or cashier's check within thirty (30) days after the date of sale. **Other terms to be announced at the sale.** Brock & Scott, PLLC 23 Messenger Street 2nd Floor Plainville, MA 02762 Attorney for PennyMac Loan Services, LLC Present Holder of the Mortgage (401) 217-8701 02/22, 02/29, 03/07/2024

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Division 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-8600 Docket No. HD24P0352EA Estate of: Brenda Cole Date of Death: 12/28/2023 INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE** To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Matthew Cole** of Three Rivers, MA. **Matthew Cole** of Three Rivers, MA has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve without surety on the bond. The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses

of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner. 02/22/24

**LEGAL NOTICE** Pursuant to the provisions of MA Gen. Laws, Chap. 255, Sec. 39A, the following vehicles will be sold at public auction for towing and storage charges due: **HONDA VIN:2HKRL18651H566205 Bharat Oza 92 Squire Dr. W. Springfield, MA; HONDA VIN:1HGEM22945L013598 Steven Lindberg 12 Off Lariviere Ave. Three Rivers MA; HONDA VIN:2HGFA1F59BH304668 Mark Veisine 3048 Main St. Bondsville, MA; H Y U N D A I VIN:KMHLR4A7FU594050 Autumn Hostens 47A Cottage St. W.**

Warren, MA; **JEEP VIN:1C4NJRBB0GD550145 Johnathan Lewallen 1501 N. Main St Palmer, MA; CHEVY VIN:1GCHK236X8F126027 Corey Hostingan 4 Winslow Rd Ware, MA; TOYOTA VIN:2T3RFREV6GW532244 Anthony Carter 134 Union St Westfield, MA; VOLKSWAGON VIN:9BWP6H1J324075925 Robert Palmer 1034 Park St Palmer, MA. This auction is to take place on **March 8, 2024, 10:00 A.M.** at LaBontes & Son LLC, 241 Wilbraham St., Palmer, MA 01069. 2/22, 2/29, 3/7**

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-7758 Docket No. HD24P0308EA Estate of: Jeannette R Riddle Date of Death: 04/03/2023 CITATION ON PETITION FOR**

**FORMAL ADJUDICATION** To all interested persons: A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **John R Riddle of Wales, MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that: **John R Riddle of Wales, MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsuperervised administration.** **IMPORTANT NOTICE** You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 03/12/2024.** This is **NOT** a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections

within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you. **UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)** A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration. **WITNESS, Hon. Barbara M Hyland, First Justice of this Court. Date: February 12, 2024 Rosemary A. Saccomani Register of Probate 02/22/2024** **MORE NOTICES ON 13**

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The boys' freshman team gave it their all during the volleyball tournament.



One of the sophomores makes a dash for the ball to help his team.



"We're the reigning champions!" the sophomore boys declared, before going on to win this year's Winter Carnival.



Boys from Monson High banded together with their grade level to support their school.



Each of the students was expected to serve at least once, according to staff on the sidelines.



Girls from different grade levels competed against each other in the volleyball tournament.



In between matches, the students waited in the stands to support their classmates.



The freshmen girls' class stays poised and ready to compete against their older classmates.



It was the class of 2026's turn to serve, and they served up a win.



Sophomores competed with students from all grade levels in the volleyball tournament.



The two matches were held adjacent to each other, with boys competing on one side, and girls on the other.



The girls' senior class danced and jeered at the crowd, heckling their opponents in a good-natured competitive spirit.



A Monson High junior catches some air to bump the ball for his team.



The girls' class practiced passing the ball to one another before going up against their classmates.

MHS | from page 1

Despite traditionally being an evening event, the school opted to hold the competition during the school day, which proved to be a great success.

"All the kids had a good time," Degnan said. "Each grade level gets to put a team of kids together, the freshmen, the sophomores, the juniors and seniors, and our seventh and eighth grade had a smaller scale just the other day. Everybody in the building gets involved; they work on posters and have dress-up days."

Degnan said that the event is made possible through collaboration with the student council, which he described as doing "a tremendous amount of work" to put on the event.

"They have a great group of kids in the student leadership program," Degnan said. "They buy some supplies; there's a lot that goes behind it. I certainly appreciate all their help."

The Winter Carnival has been a long-standing tradition for the high school, with Degnan saying that the event has marked the halfway point through the school year for over 40 years.

"This is a long, long-standing tradition," Degnan said. "I've been doing this for as long as I've been here, and people before me had done it too. It's unique;

there aren't a lot of schools that do this." At this year's tournament, the champions were the girls' senior class and the boys' sophomore class. Though all the students were competing to the best of their abilities, these two teams stood out for their school spirit, their intensity and passion for the game.

"We continue to do it because our kids do a good job with it," Degnan said. "They do it the right way; they have a lot of fun with it in their classes. I know it's something our student body really, truly looks forward to each and every year, and we don't mind putting a little bit of work in and making sure everything goes well."

Degnan thanked the other staff members and administration for their continued support of the event, saying that it's thanks to their hard work that the school is able to celebrate it every year.

"Georgia Perreault does a huge job with the student council side of it, the class officers play a big role, the student council members, the administrative team, our principal and assistant principal are very supportive of it," Degnan said. "We're very lucky that we keep it going, the kids have a blast with it, and we enjoy doing it."

MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE 16



A senior on the girls' team ran up against the net to block the ball from scoring on her side.

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Turley photos by Marcelo Gusmao  
The girls' senior team taunted their opponents in preparation for the deciding match.



Tensions ran high as the girls' senior team ran to catch the ball and prevent it from scoring.



Sometimes, double blocks led to the ball getting caught in the net and scoring a point for the other side.



The boys' junior class made a good showing as they competed against the victors.



A Monson High senior prepared a serve as students watched from the audience.



The senior girls' team celebrated after winning the Winter Carnival for their grade.



An intense showdown between the sophomore and junior boys' teams.



The junior girls' team prepared to bump the ball back onto the other side of the court.



A powerful jump from this Monson High sophomore as she managed to catch the ball.



The sophomore boys' team practices while Coach Eric Degnan watches from the center line.

MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE 15



Students in the audience were encouraged to dress up to watch the competition.



## 2023 Fly Fishing Expo

Hosted by: Western Mass. Fly Fishermen Club

Established in 1971



Monday, March 18th  
6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
Speaker at 7:30 p.m.

Ludlow Elks Club, 69 Chapin Street, Ludlow  
ADMISSION: \$8.00; Free for children under 12 years

### Guest Speaker:

Bob Lindquist has worked with numerous fly-fishing industry companies including Whiting Farms, Solarez, Ahrex and others. His work has led to articles in Fly Tyer, Salt Water Fly Fishing, Fly Fisherman, American Fly Fishing and Japanese Fly Fisherman magazines. Bob's talk will be on fishing the Delaware river.



**Exhibitors:** Fly rod builders, fly fishing/material vendors. Mass State and Wildlife experts, other related exhibitors, and WMFF member demonstrating fly tying.

**Giant Raffle:** Many fishing items, a complete fly-tying kit. Bucket raffles for custom tied flies. Door prize is a Tenkara fly fishing kit.

### Refreshments/Food for sale

Mention where you saw this advertisement or show your WMFF membership card and get **\$1.00 off** your admission



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