

The Journal Register

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MONSON

FinComm examines budget

By Abigail McCoy
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MONSON – Public safety funding and Monson’s broader fiscal challenges were at the center of discussion during the March 9 meeting of the Finance Committee, where officials reviewed preliminary budget proposals for the Fire and Police departments as they prepare for the upcoming fiscal year.

The meeting, held at Town Hall and chaired by Finance Committee Chair Peter Fimognari, focused largely on the Fire Department’s budget presentation by Fire Chief Brian Harris, followed by an overview of the Police Department budget by newly appointed Police Chief Nick Gasparini. The conversation highlighted growing operational costs, staffing needs and the difficulty of maintaining services as the town confronts significant budget limitations.

Fire Department outlines operational pressures

Harris began the discussion by distributing a detailed budget narrative and worksheet to committee members, explaining that the document was designed to proactively address common questions and provide a clearer overview of departmental needs.

According to Harris, the department has already made numerous reductions over several budget cycles and has reached a point where additional cuts could compromise operations.

“The fire department, like many others, has made significant cuts to our budget over the last several budget cycles,” Harris said. “It’s my findings that we can no longer sustain any additional cuts to our line items.”

One of the department’s most pressing needs involves equipment testing and replacement. National Fire Protection Association guidelines require annual testing of fire hoses and ladders to ensure safety and reliability. Harris said the department has been unable to conduct those tests for the past two years because of limited funding.

FINCOMM | page 6

MONSON

Markey visits Monson to award federal grant

By Abigail McCoy
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MONSON – Town officials, firefighters and community members gathered on March 6 to welcome Senator Ed Markey, who visited the town to formally recognize a \$1 million federal grant that will help fund renovations and an expansion of the Monson Fire Department station.

The funding comes through congressionally directed spending, often referred to as an earmark, and will support ongoing improvements to the town’s fire station. The grant represents a significant federal investment in public safety infrastructure and will reduce the amount Monson taxpayers must contribute toward the project.

According to town officials, the fire station project carries an estimated total cost of approximately \$6.6 million. With the federal funding now secured, the portion



Monson Town officials gather with Senator Ed Markey and other representatives of the various counties of Massachusetts.

Submitted photo

expected to be covered by local taxpayers will decrease to roughly \$5.6 million.

“It’s a significant amount of money for sure,” said Monson Fire Chief Brian Harris. “Being able to bring

back \$1 million to Monson is a huge success for the fire department, the town and the citizens of the town.”

Town officials explained that the grant did not come easily. The Monson Fire De-

partment applied for the congressionally directed funding two years in a row.

The department was initially notified during the first application cycle that it had been successful. However,

federal budget cuts prevented the earmark from moving forward at that time. Officials reapplied the following year and were later notified that

MARKEY | page 13

PALMER

Plans underway to celebrate country’s 250th anniversary

By Abigail McCoy
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PALMER – Community groups and town organizations are already laying the groundwork for a year-long celebration of the United States’ 250th anniversary in 2026, known as the country’s “semi-quincentennial,” with a wide range of historical programs, exhibits and community events designed to highlight the town’s past while encouraging residents to participate in preserving its stories.

During a recent planning discussion hosted through the Palmer Public Library, organizers outlined an ambitious calendar of events leading up to and throughout the anniversary year. The effort aims not only to commemorate the town’s history but also to build public awareness and encourage participation

from residents of all ages.

One of the first challenges organizers identified is simply getting people familiar with the anniversary itself.

“Part of our activities need publicity,” organizer Helene O’Connor said during the meeting. “A lot of people don’t even realize that 2026 is the 250th anniversary.”

To help generate interest, organizers are considering a playful promotional video featuring recognizable community figures attempting to pronounce the word “semi-quincentennial,” culminating with a child delivering the correct pronunciation.

Several events are planned throughout the spring and early summer to build momentum for the anniversary year.

One of the first major programs will take place



during Patriots’ Day weekend in April, when the Palmer Public Library plans to host an exhibit highlighting a historic quilt created during the nation’s Bicentennial celebration in 1976.

The quilt was originally organized by late-Palmer resident Doris Nahabedian, who invited schools along the historic Henry Knox Trail to contribute squares designed by students; the

route used by General Henry Knox to transport cannons from Fort Ticonderoga during the Revolutionary War.

Although three quilts were originally planned, only two were completed. One remains preserved in Palmer’s archives, while the second was presented to the Massachusetts State House.

250TH | page 11

TOWN COUNCIL

BESS moratorium approved

By Abigail McCoy
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PALMER – The Palmer Town Council addressed a wide range of municipal issues during its March 9 meeting, including a temporary moratorium on battery energy storage systems, new tools for addressing neglected properties, budget challenges driven by rising health insurance costs and a potential referendum on merging the town’s four fire districts.

The meeting also included recognition of a longtime volunteer, public comments from residents regarding infrastructure and taxes, and updates on town projects and the upcoming fiscal year budget.

Battery Energy Storage Moratorium approved

Early in the meeting, councilors voted unanimously to approve Zoning Amendment and Ordinance 2026-02, establishing a temporary moratorium on battery energy storage systems in Palmer.

The measure had been discussed at two previous meetings and is intended to give town officials time to review potential zoning regulations and impacts related to large-scale energy storage facilities before allowing development.

Volunteer honored in Community Spotlight

The council also recognized longtime volunteer Dave Cotter as the second recipient of the town’s Community Spotlight award. Cotter was recently named Massachusetts Conservation Commissioner of the Year and has contributed more than four decades of volunteer service in Palmer.

BESS | page 11



PALMER

Historic school photos preserve memories at Schoolhouse Commons



Yelenik holds up an example of a photo that was placed in the racks. Turley photo by Abigail McCoy

By Abigail McCoy
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PALMER – For generations of Palmer residents, the building now known as Schoolhouse Commons was once simply Park Street School at 1085 Park St., a place where thousands of local children spent their earliest years in the classroom. Today, a growing collection of historic class photographs is helping to keep those memories alive.

According to Paula Yelenik, who owns the Frame store within the Schoolhouse Commons, she has been involved with organizing the photographs inside the building. Park Street School served the commu-

nity for more than nine de-

cadec, operating from 1900 until its closure in 1991.

“That’s 91 years,” Yelenik said. “A lot of people went through this school.”

The building later found new life as Schoolhouse Commons, but remnants of its long educational history remained behind. When landlord Nelson Peace purchased the property in the mid-1990s, just a few years after the school closed, he discovered a number of class photographs still inside the building.

Peace’s daughter, a photographer, enlarged many of the images so they could be displayed prominently throughout the

PHOTOS | page 12

Town to celebrate Henry Knox Trail Quilt next month

By Abigail McCoy
amccoy@turley.com

PALMER – This Patriots Day weekend, the Town of Palmer will host a special historical exhibition celebrating a unique piece of Massachusetts heritage: the Henry Knox Trail Quilt, originally created by students in 1976 to commemorate the journey of General Henry Knox during the Revolutionary War.

Originally organized by Palmer resident Doris Nahabedian, the quilt project was part of the town's Bicentennial observances in 1975-1976 and involved schools along the Knox Trail throughout Massachusetts. The project invited students to design and craft applique squares reflecting the significance of Knox's march through their hometowns.

"The original idea was incredible," said Helene O'Connor. "Doris coordinated participation across the state, ensuring students could contribute to something that was not just an art project but a celebration of American history."

Two quilts were ultimately completed. One quilt was gifted to the State House in Boston, while the other remained in Palmer's town archives. The State House quilt has since gone missing, sparking ongoing efforts to locate it.

"The missing quilt is something of a historical mystery," O'Connor noted. "We've reached out to libraries, archives, and universities, but it hasn't surfaced yet. We hope that this exhibition will help generate leads and maybe even reconnect some of the original participants with their work."

The Palmer-based quilt will be on display during the Patriots Day weekend event, alongside a photographic backdrop and other exhibition elements designed to highlight the artistry and historical significance of the project. Organizers emphasized that the exhibit will be family-friendly and engaging for all ages.

In 1975, the Palmer Bicentennial Commission sent letters to high schools along the Knox Trail, encouraging students to participate. Each square was to include the name of the student, their school and class, and the town they represented. Handmade applique work using muslin and cotton fabrics was required, and entries were judged by experts in quilting and representatives from the state Bicentennial Committee. Winners received certificates and, in many cases, a \$50 prize.

Despite the passage of nearly five decades, the stu-



Telegram Photo by MICHAEL E. CASTAGNARO

Squaring A Circle

WEST BROOKFIELD—Thomas Douglas, a sixth grader at the Elementary School, is in a Bicentennial activity sponsored by the Palmer Bicentennial Committee. He is making quilt squares which may be selected as part of three blankets commemorating the Knox Trail through Massachusetts. The 10-inch squares have pictures relating to the historical trail and the Revolutionary War. The sixth grader may be the only elementary school youngster entering the contest designed for high school students.

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A student working on a quilt square for their school.

dents' work remains a powerful testament to their contributions to history. "Seeing the quilt for the first time at the Western Massachusetts Knox reenactment earlier this year was a real joy," said O'Connor. "People were amazed at the detail and creativity of the squares. Even towns that didn't have a student submit a square were represented thanks to contributions from Palmer High students."

The original contest rules were detailed and strict, ensuring each square adhered to a standard size, material type, and design requirements. The goal was to produce three quilts: one for the National Archives in Washington, one for the State Archives in Boston, and one for Palmer's archives. While no third quilt was ultimately completed for the National Archives, the Palmer quilt stands as a lasting artifact of the Bicentennial celebration.

Alongside the quilt exhibition, the event will feature historical presentations, including a talk by a Knox Trail expert, intended to give attendees a deeper understanding of the historical significance of the route and the march. Organizers hope this will enrich the experience and inspire future generations to connect with local and national history.

The search for the missing State House quilt continues, and organizers are asking for public help. Anyone with photographs, memorabilia, or information related to the original 1976 project is encouraged to reach out.

"This quilt is more than fabric and thread...it's a piece of Massachusetts' living history," said O'Connor. "We hope to honor the students who participated, preserve their work, and perhaps even solve the mystery of the missing quilt."

The Patriots Day weekend exhibit promises to be a highlight of Palmer's 250th anniversary celebration, combining local history, artistic expression, and community engagement in a meaningful and memorable way.

For more information or to share photos or stories about the Henry Knox Trail Quilt, contact the Palmer Semiquincentennial Commission through the Palmer Public Library.



Submitted photos by Helene O'Connor

Members of the Palmer Historical Commission in January of 2026 having brought out the Palmer quilt for the Western Mass Knox re-enactment.



Gov. Michael Dukakis accepts the Knox Trail Quilt on behalf of the state in his office. From left are Palmer Bicentennial Commission members Gary Hayes, Chairman David Bussell, Nancy Bauer and Doris Nahabedian with Dukakis. The quilt will be hung next to the entrance to Doric Hall in the State House.

A photo from a Jan. 27, 1977 newspaper of the missing quilt that was given to the state house.

Bake sale to be held at Monson Free Library

MONSON – Tuesday, March 31, the Friends of the Monson Free Library will hold a Swing into Spring Bake Sale in the DeSantis

Community Room from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. or until sold out.

Members of the Friends will bake special treats for

the sale, including specially decorated cookies and bars, homemade pies and breads, cakes, chocolates, and granola.

Many baked goods will have an Easter theme. Proceeds from the sale will

be used to support library programs, including story hours, teen activities, museum passes, and various special events. Membership cards will be available for those who wish to become members of the Friends.

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Nomination Papers available for Board of Water Commissioners and Fire Prudential Committee. Nomination paper can be picked up at the Fire Department Headquarters at 12 Walnut Street or the Water Department at 10 Walnut Street.

Deadline to obtain papers is April 15.

April 22 is the deadline to submit nomination papers.

Annual District Meeting is May 12, 2026.

Bunny and Piggy Yoga hops into community

By Abigail McCoy
amccoy@turley.com

PALMER – Animal lovers and wellness enthusiasts had a unique reason to roll out their yoga mats this past weekend at Seven Railroads Brewing Company, where a one-of-a-kind “Bunny & Piggies Yoga” class combined gentle exercise with furry companionship.

Organized by local animal therapy and wellness advocate Ashley Bousquet, the event offered participants an all-levels Slow Vinyasa Flow class alongside some of the cutest animal guests imaginable: rescued pigs and bunnies. With classes running from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 7, attendees could enjoy a Pilates session followed by yoga, each complemented by a drink token for participants over 21.

The stars of the event were two rescue pigs, Martha and Curly Fry, along with three rescued bunnies, Lola, Petunia, and Zena. According to Bousquet’s assistant, Paul Rekos, the pigs are “Cooney pigs,” a smart and sociable breed who thrive on interaction with humans. Martha, the older pig, and curly-haired Curly Fry were rescued from neglectful situations and now enjoy a happy, healthy life.

The bunnies, meanwhile, were rescued from a hoarding situation in which hundreds of animals lived in cramped conditions. “The first time they ever saw grass was when we put them in their new outdoor enclosure,” Bousquet noted. The bunnies now have a large, safe area to roam and explore, with ample space to hop, play, and socialize with participants during yoga.

Bousquet described the experience as more than just a workout. “Piggies are super smart,” she said. “They love socialization, and the humans love them back. It’s wholesome and gives us a moment to be present in the middle of a busy world. It’s all about pausing, enjoying each other’s company, and being mindful.”

The event catered to participants ages 7 and up, with floor and ground exercises accessible to all levels. Attendees were encouraged to bring their own yoga mats, though rentals were available for a small fee.

Looking ahead, Bousquet has more animal-themed wellness events planned. On Easter Eve, she’ll host a duckling and puppy yoga session in Auburn. Additionally, on April 19, she will hold the 2nd Annual Rise Up and Thrive Holistic Health and Wellness Expo, featuring classes, seminars, workshops, healings, food trucks, and vendors at Sally McDermott Dance Center in Auburn. Admission is free, and there are programs designed specifically for kids, including yoga and



Martha the pig was very friendly and many people gave her pets.

Curly Fry showed a lot of curiosity!

acro yoga.

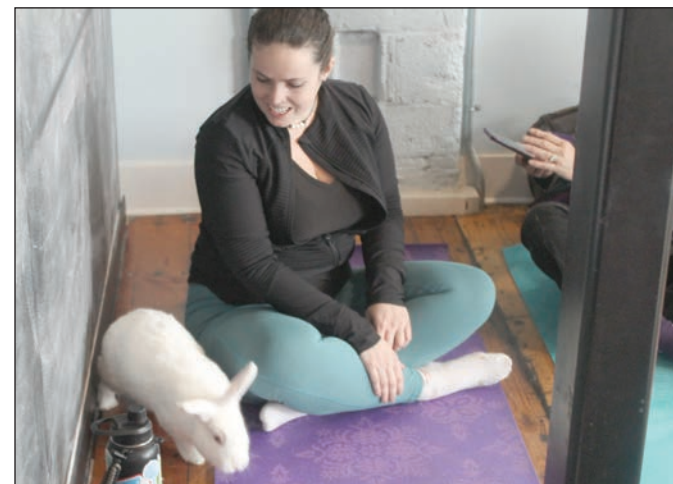
As participants left the mat, many noted how the presence of the rescued animals added an extra layer of joy and comfort to their practice. In a world that often moves too quickly, the combination of mindful movement and animal companionship proved to be a refreshing reminder to slow down and savor the moment.



The room was crowded with people prepped and ready to do yoga with specialist Ashley Bousquet.



The bunnies were pretty skittish due to the number of people.



One of the bunnies was brave enough to explore the room.



Food was spread out over the floor so the pigs would be attracted to it and roam around.

Turley photos by Abigail McCoy



Pictures were also taken of the two hogs before the class started.



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Viewpoints

SOCIAL SECURITY Matters

By Russell Gloor

Is there income tax on Social Security benefits?

Dear Rusty:

The Trump Administration is saying that now there will be no taxes on Social Security benefits. Since we're getting ready to start our 2025 income tax return, can you explain how this all works?

Signed:
Confused Taxpayer

Dear Confused Taxpayer:

You are obviously referring to the so-called "One Big, Beautiful Bill" and how that bill affects income tax on your Social Security benefits. And this is because of the publicity surrounding the so-called "one big, beautiful bill" enacted last year, which claims to "eliminate income tax on Social Security benefits." Well, that bill did, yet technically didn't, fully eliminate income tax on benefits." Allow me to explain.

The OBBB does eliminate income tax on most SS benefits, but it does so in a somewhat unique way – by providing an additional \$6,000 (per person) deduction to your federal taxable income as reported to the IRS. Thus, you will pay less total income tax when you file your taxes with the IRS because of that additional deduction to your taxable income.

The extra deduction is available to those over age 65 and is meant to offset the income tax which will still be levied by the IRS on the SS benefits you received in 2025. Essentially, the rules governing income tax on Social Security benefits have not changed.

The IRS will still levy income tax on your SS benefits if your combined income from all sources (known as your "provisional income") is over \$32,000 as a married couple filing jointly or more than \$25,000 if you file as an individual. If your provisional income is below the threshold for your IRS filing status, you will pay no income tax on your received 2025 SS benefits.

But if your provisional income exceeds the threshold for your IRS fil-

ing status, then somewhere between 50% and 85% of your received SS benefits will be taxed (how much SS income to be taxed depends on your combined income in 2025). By now, you should have received form 1099-SSA which advised of your 2025 Social Security income, including any income tax you had withheld from your SS benefits.

This income should be reported when submitting your 2025 income tax return. If your "provisional income" is over \$32,000 as a married couple filing jointly (or over \$25,000 as an individual filer), then your 2025 SS benefits will still be taxed by the IRS. But when completing your 2025 Income Tax Return, you will also be able to claim an additional \$6,000 per person (\$12,000 if you file jointly), which will likely offset any income tax you must pay due to the SS benefits you received in 2025.

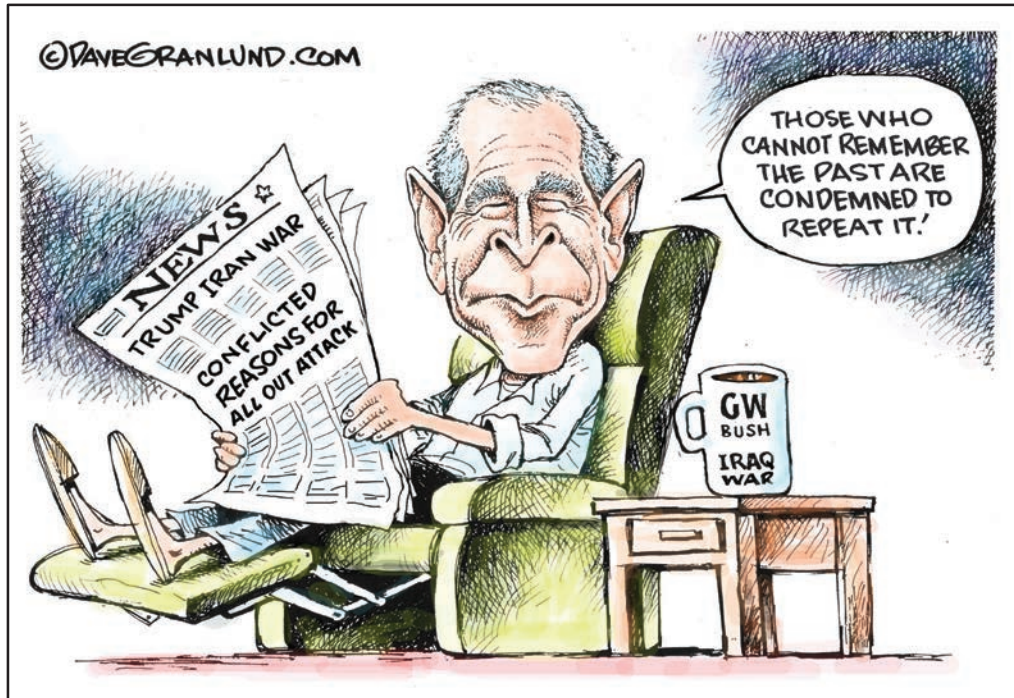
If you use a tax preparer or tax preparation software, they will guide you through this calculation. Note, too, that the \$6,000 per person deduction amount will be less if your combined taxable income is more than \$150,000 as a married couple (or more than \$75,000 as a single filer).

Be aware, though, that the OBBB is temporary tax accommodation which expires after tax year 2028. And that's because the process used to pass the bill in Congress (a "budget reconciliation" process) didn't actually change SS law; rather it provided a way around it to offset income tax paid on SS benefits.

So, to recap, the IRS can still levy income tax on your received Social Security benefits but, because of the OBBB, you will likely also (depending on your provisional income level) receive an extra deduction which offsets any taxes calculated on your Social Security benefits.

Finally, be aware that if your first husband also

SECURITY | page 5



An herb catalog and a favorite herb

One of my favorite seed and plant catalogs of all time is Richters Herbs (richters.com). I look forward to the paper copy arriving in the mail by early December.

The company is out of Ontario, Canada, and offers over 1,200 unique varieties, mostly herbs of all kinds with a few vegetables thrown in for good measure. I've ordered from them for well over two decades and think their products are just great, everything from common culinary herbs to unique medicinal plants and everything in between, even dye plants and ornamentals.

I love how the seeds are packaged in foil lined envelopes and quantities are liberal, often giving you enough seed for two or three years of sowing, depending on the variety. On occasion I have had to order plants that I couldn't find locally and despite the distance, they arrive in good shape.

Basil (*Ocimum spp*) is one plant in particular that we typically order seed of, and we will soon be starting it indoors. The Richters catalog boasts 29 varieties, and we grow nine of them in the Paul Rogers Herb Garden at Old Sturbridge Village.

In the Garden

by Roberta McQuaid



Basil

A trip to our herb garden in season is really worthwhile. Who doesn't like Italian or Genovese basil? Picture the pesto! But in addition to our old favorites, there is lemon, anise, cinnamon and spice, each with fragrant leaves. Looking for unique foliage? Try dark opal, whose leaves are tinted dark purple or bush basil, whose tiny leaves altogether make a round globe of a plant, and who could leave out lettuce leaf, with its crinkled pale green leaves.

Over the years I have found that there are just a few obstacles to growing great basil. Seeds should be planted indoors – rarely will they do well from an outdoor sowing.

Start basil about the same time that tomatoes are sown, in mid to late March. Make shallow furrows and

space the seed one-eighth of an inch apart in rows within a small pot or seed pack. When true leaves form pluck out the tiny seedling and transplant it into a cell of a four or six pack, or an individual tiny pot.

Grow on indoors until the weather improves. Basil is particularly cold sensitive, so be sure that all danger of frost has passed before transplanting it into the garden.

Downy mildew disease was discovered to be prevalent some years back. While I don't take any particular precautions, and my basil shows little sign of the familiar leaf blotching, Richters does offer seeds of resistant varieties for you to try if this disease has been troublesome in your garden. Basil foliage has also been known to burn if planted outdoors without a period of hardening off. For this reason, gradually get seedlings used to bright sun and wind over the course of a week before planting in the ground.

Provide your transplants with fertile, well-drained soil in a sunny spot. If, over the course of the summer you notice that the leaves are no longer grass-green, but instead are pale or even turning brown, your plants may have a nitrogen deficiency.

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The submission deadline for consideration is Monday at noon.

Election letters to the editor welcome

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

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

Campaign news
As part of its election coverage, the newspaper plans to print stories about contested races for Congress, state Senate, state House, district attorney and Governor's Council during the weeks leading up to the election, as well as a question-and-answer voters guide. In order to ensure fairness to all candidates, no political press releases will be printed, nor will reporters cover political rallies or fundraisers.
Candidates who wish to further publicize their candidacy, beliefs and events may contact advertising, 413-283-8393 about paid advertising in The Journal Register.

On March 2, I received an email from a Worthington resident that he just saw a red-winged blackbird.

Male red-winged blackbirds arrive before the females. They are one of the first birds to return to northern breeding grounds, arriving in late February or early March.

Red-winged blackbirds are abundant songbirds, who inhabit marshes, wetlands and fields. The male is glossy black with bright red and yellow shoulder patches or epaulets. Females have streaked

in my BACKYARD

By Ellenor Downer

brown plumage. The highly territorial males often sit on high perches, singing and displaying their epaulets. Their "conk-la-ree" is heard frequently. They are known for "dive

bombing" crows, hawks and even humans to defend their territory. They primarily eat insects such as beetles, dragonflies and moths during the breeding season and seeds and grains during fall and winter.

They nest in loosely associated colonies in shrubs or cattails and are found across most of Northern America. They are polygamous and a single male may mate with up to 15 different females in his territory. Red winged blackbirds can form huge roosts during the winter of up to a million birds.

Brimfield resident

A Brimfield resident sent an email recently. He said, "On Saturday I was driving to West Springfield to put up some picture at the library for



Male red-winged blackbird



Dark-eyed Junco

POETRY CORNER

The Year The Winter Came

Let the juncos sing its merry tune,
As if all the storm were for them;
And bough to bough their jingling chorus
Sounds like a familiar hymn.

Set to bells aringing from window to feeder
And off past an evergreen they fly,
As those inside bend stiffly to think
Of going outside – to echoes of liberty.

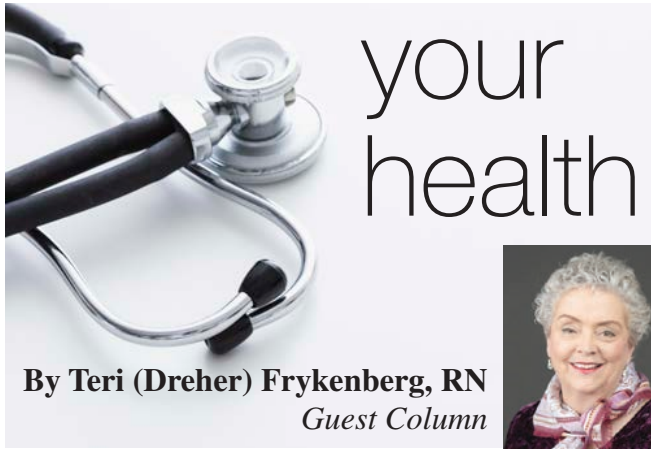
And trudge through the snow that gathers for all,
That would cover any passing parade -
And the winds raged its wintry heart,
Where there was no color or much shade,
When the blizzard fell down upon us
And briefly, one people made.

– Charles Barnes

BIRDS | page 5

Viewpoints

Advice on care at home after the hospital



By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN
Guest Column

It's usually good news when the doctor says you or a loved one can come home from the hospital. Sometimes, though, it's a mixed blessing.

Hospital discharge sometimes means that further hospital care won't improve someone's health condition, and the hospital is eager to get someone else in that bed. People are discharged faster these days, often with significant lingering health issues that have to be seen to.

In the hospital, there's a staff of nurses, nurse aides, therapists and others to care for you or a loved one. When you get home, though, it's just you and maybe a spouse or other family member. That's why the home health industry is booming.

In 2020 (the most recent data available), approximately 3 million patients received home health care services in the U.S., often following a hospitalization or skilled nursing facility stay. They are being cared for by some 12,000 home health agencies, more than 80 percent of which are for-profit companies.

Home health is something patient advocates know a lot about – and there's a lot to know. Here are some of the things I've learned over my years as an

RN and nurse advocate. **Prepare in advance if you can**

A best-case scenario is that you know you'll need some help when you get home. For every day you spend in a hospital, you lose a month of muscle tone and mobility, so depending on how long you've been hospitalized, you may need considerable help.

Will you need a walker or wheelchair? Shower chair? A first-floor sleeping arrangement? A bedside commode? These are all things that can be planned for if you know they're coming. Very often, hospitals have social workers who help patients navigate after-hospital care. Medicare has a thorough discharge planning guide on its website; search Medicare Publication No. 11376 in your browser.

Other things to think about are trip hazards like small pets and throw rugs and having some ready-made or frozen meals on hand.

Arrange for help in advance, too

A spouse may be standing by, but they may need help themselves. Adult children, friends or neighbors may be able to pitch in. If there's no one you can call on for help – and more than

50 million Americans over 50 are aging on their own – it's time to contact a home health agency. A patient advocate, who is likely familiar with the home health landscape in your area, is a good resource and go-between.

The cardinal rule is: Ask for assistance when you need it to avoid further complications from falls, lack of nourishment or lapses in personal care.

Understand what Medicare covers

Home health care spending grew at an annual rate of more than 10% in 2024, and shows no signs of slowing down. A significant chunk of the spending in 2023 – \$148 billion – was by Medicare. But Medicare doesn't cover everything, so you may have out-of-pocket expenses.

Medicare-covered home health services include skilled nursing care, physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech-language pathology services when ordered by a doctor. Part-time or intermittent home health aide care is covered only if you're also getting those services at home.

Skilled nursing care can include wound care, injections, nutrition services and monitoring unstable health conditions. Medicare also covers durable medical equipment when prescribed by a doctor, such as beds, walkers, wheelchairs, pumps and oxygen.

Medicare doesn't pay for 24-hour a day care, meal delivery, homemaker services or personal care services that help with bathing, dressing, grooming, etc.

Questions to ask a home health agency

There are a zillion questions you could ask, but I think these are among the most important:

- How long has this agency been in business and is it licensed to perform home health care?

- Can you provide references, or can I speak with previous clients?

- Do you accept long-term care insurance, Medicare or Medicaid? If so, do you bill insurance, or do clients pay you and then file for reimbursement?

- How do you recruit and select caregivers, and do you perform background checks?

- Are your caregivers employees or contractors? Are they bonded?

- Can I meet caregiver candidates and select the ones I want?

- What should I do if my caregiver doesn't show up as scheduled?

- How often is the care plan reviewed?

- How do I communicate concerns and questions to you?

Research has found that patients who recover at home have better outcomes, which is why the hospital-at-home movement is growing. So if you're going to be recuperating at your place, don't go it alone.

Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, R.N., a registered nurse and board-certified patient advocate, is the founder of www.NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com, which trains medical professionals to become successful private patient advocates. A Monson, MA resident, she is the author of "How to Be a Healthcare Advocate for Yourself & Your Loved Ones" and her new book, "Advocating Well: Strategies for Finding Strength and Understanding in Health Care," available at Amazon.com. Contact her at Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com to set up a free phone consultation.

SCHOOL

Dance of the Snails

As residents finish the last of the Valentine's candy, prepare income tax records, and keep an eye on the Kentucky Derby hopefuls, another annual ritual is underway: school budget season.

According to recently released data from the Massachusetts Department of Education, the Commonwealth's statewide student enrollment now stands at 890,622 — a decline of 14,685 students from the previous year. While that number may appear modest at first glance, such a shift creates significant complications for a state budget process that is largely driven by per-pupil funding.

At the same time, Massachusetts finds itself at the conclusion of the six-year funding framework established under the Student Opportunity Act. Central to that formula is each community's ability to meet the state-determined local contribution requirement, which is based on known property and income levels for FY27. Under the Act's design, the state assumes responsibility for 41 percent of defined educational costs, while municipalities are expected to shoulder 59

percent. Whether one agrees with that ratio or not, there appears to be little appetite at the Commonwealth level to revisit or rebalance this division of responsibility.

As municipal leaders and school officials craft their budgets, they do so within tight timelines and often with projected rather than confirmed revenue figures. In most cases, needs and requests exceed available resources. The pace of confirmed state assistance is further slowed by uncertainty surrounding federal funding decisions, leaving local officials to plan amid moving targets.

The result is a fiscal process that can feel painstakingly slow, almost snail-like, while residents wait to understand the eventual impact on their household finances.

As a retired public servant, I encourage patience and thoughtful support for those charged with shaping our fiscal future. The work is complex, the constraints are real, and the stakes for our communities could not be higher.

Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick
Monson

NEWS & FEATURES

As a paper of record, we attempt to cover all general news, personality profiles, and community features that we know about. This includes all selectmen and school committee meetings as well as spot planning board, board of health, finance, and other town meetings determined by the issue's relevance to our readers. There are the annual major community event features that we should always cover, but we are more than open to suggestions of other features to celebrate the fabric of our communities and their many interesting occupants. Our loyal advertisers provide funding for this paid staff coverage.

For more information on news or community features for The Journal Register, please email journalregister@turley.com.

A TURLEY PUBLICATION
www.turley.com

SECURITY | from page 4

predeceases you, you will then become eligible for a surviving ex-spouse benefit from him, even if he has remarried.

The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. This article is intended

for information purposes and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

GARDEN | from page 4

I usually have had to "top dress" my basil twice after planting, each time with a sprinkling of balanced organic fertilizer and some aged compost. Usually they green up in a matter of days.

Basil has the insatiable desire to flower. We must "deadhead" or the plant will fulfill its earthly desire to

reproduce by making and dropping seed, all at the expense of foliage production.

Since we grow this plant for its leaves and not its seed, or its flowers for that matter, clip away the buds at the first sign of them. Another challenge to basil growing has been the Japanese beetle.

Basil leaves riddled with chew marks should best be removed. Japanese beetles are relatively easy

to hand pick in the morning and at night.

A gentle tap on a leaf will easily knock beetles into a wide mouth jar of soapy water positioned underneath. Ideally, basil leaves should be harvested after the dew has dried in the morning but before the sun shines too brightly; at that particular time its oils are the most pungent.

Enjoy the new catalog recommendation and be sure

to get those basil seeds started by the end of the month.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 34 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.

BIRDS | from page 4

an exhibit. Some members of the Allen Bird Club are displaying photographs there for the month of March. On the way I stopped by a nest in Ludlow that bald eagles have used for at least three years."

In Brimfield, he said, "Lately we have been seeing a Cooper's several times in the yard and a broad-winged

hawk was seen on Feb. 22. The broad-winged hawk sat in a tree in front of the house for over an hour. Last year a pair of broad-wings had a nest on the next door neighbor's property. They could see the nest from their deck, but I was never able to see the nest walking around near where they described its location."

Turkey vultures

On Feb. 11, the Brimfield

resident saw a turkey vulture in the center of Palmer near the intersection of Routes 20 and 32. This week, his wife saw 25 turkey vultures flying above that area. They often see vultures soaring over that area and the first of the year shows up in mid-February. He said, "I believe the vultures nest in the area, possibly on or near Mount Dump-lin that is just north of the

turnpike ramps."

Other birds and more

The Brimfield residents still has lots of junco about as well as a healthy the gray squirrel population. Recently they saw two and sometimes three red squirrels. He is enjoying the longer days and looking forward to warmer temperatures.

Red-tailed hawk

A Rutland couple saw a

red-tailed hawk quickly grab

a gray squirrel her husband shot. They watched it hungrily consume a "warm meal" in the yard. They moved their feeder nearer to the house due to the deep snow. They have lots of black-capped chickadees and woodpeckers come to the new location

Bluebirds

An Oakham resident sees bluebirds on a daily basis. She

enjoys watching them.

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

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

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE

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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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

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

UPCOMING

VENDORS FOR THE BAYSTATE WING HOSPITAL GIFT SHOPPE

March Vendors

March 18 - How Charming
March 26 - Weleful Weavers
March 30 - Wicked Good Treats
March 31 - Geriations & Sew On

March 28

Join Here Today Adopted Tomorrow for our "Spay"ghetti Supper Fundraiser on Saturday, March 28, 2026, from 5 to 6:30 p.m. at St. Thomas Parish Center, 1076 Thorndike St, Palmer, MA. Enjoy a delicious dinner prepared by a professional chef, mingle with fellow cat lovers, and support our shelter cats and community programs. Advance Tickets: \$15 adults, \$10 seniors & kids. Enter our raffle for fun prizes and take part in a night of good food, great company, and feline-friendly fun. Can't attend but want to help? Consider becoming a sponsor! Learn more at <https://www.heretoday-sanctuary.org/supper>.

March 30

Public Supper to benefit the Ware Community Garden. Hosted by Ware Grange and Ware Senior Center. Enjoy a dinner of Chicken Marsala, roasted potatoes, carrots, salad, roll, drinks, and cream puffs for dessert. \$15 per person. Join

us on Monday, March 30, from 6 to 7 p.m., at the Ware Senior Center, 1 Robbins Rd, Ware, MA. Please RSVP in advance to waregrange164@gmail.com or call 413-284-1135. Join us for a good meal in support of the creation of Ware's new community garden.

ONGOING

2025-2026 Drama & Dance Program Beginning September 11th and running through May on Thursdays at PHCC. Does your child love dancing and acting? Have they always been interested but never tried? All levels and ages 5 plus welcome! (Drama students must be able to read.) Also offering Adult Hip Hop & Lyrical Dance Classes. Students must be available for show date in May. Date TBD. Adult class students can dance in show or choose not to as long as requested ahead of time. Contact: trulytorie2000@gmail.com for more info and to register.

THURSDAYS - WESTERN LINE DANCE CLASSES 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. and 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. \$10 for one lesson or both. Brimfield Winery at 35 Main Street in Brimfield. Check brimfieldwinery.com for any variations.

CRAFTERNOONS: Drop in 2 to 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. For more information call 413-267-4137, email khm@keephomesteadmuseum.org or visit keephomesteadmuseum.org.

QUABOAG VALLEY QUILTERS GUILD: Members meet at 1 p.m. on the first and third Thursdays of the month in the Amvets post at 2150 Main St., Three Rivers. The Guild is a no-pressure group with varying degrees of accomplishments, from novice to Big E "Best In Show" winners. Dues are \$55 a year. For more information, contact Barbara Beaulieu at 267-4044 or Merry Mombourquette at 283-7577. Follow them on Facebook for more.

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

GAME NIGHT: 6-7:45 p.m. the second Tuesday at 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 283-3691, or email palewis19@yahoo.com.

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

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

FINCOMM | from page 1

"This year we need to test the hoses and ladders and replace some of the hose as necessary," he said, noting that these safety checks are essential for maintaining operational readiness.

Another area of uncertainty involves the operational costs of the town's recently renovated fire station. Harris explained that the department is still determining the full cost of heating and powering the updated building.

The electricity line item in the proposed budget reflects a notable increase due to anticipated energy consumption as well as changes related to the town's net-metering credit programs.

Staffing structure a major concern

Harris also emphasized the need to strengthen the department's command structure by creating additional shift officers.

Currently, only one of the department's three shifts has a designated officer. Harris told the committee that the lack of leadership coverage during some shifts presents operational concerns.

"A critical need of the department is to establish shift officers," Harris said. "I have one shift that has one officer and the other two shifts do not. Simply put, if the chief is not around, there's nobody left in charge."

Instead of adding a higher-level chief officer position previously discussed in past years, Harris recommended creating lieutenant positions

for the remaining shifts as a more immediate and affordable solution. The estimated cost increase for the two additional lieutenant positions would be about \$41,000, with the roles filled by current EMT personnel beginning at the lowest step of the lieutenant pay scale.

The department is also advocating for a paid Deputy Emergency Management Director. Harris explained that emergency management responsibilities currently fall largely to the Select Board chair, who may not have the training necessary to manage large-scale emergencies.

Rising operational costs

Several mandatory operational expenses are also rising, Harris noted. One example is the environmental waste line item associated with pumping the station's oil-water separator, a required environmental protection measure. The cost of that service has increased significantly and must be funded regardless of broader budget constraints.

Despite these pressures, Harris described the overall proposal as largely a "level services" budget, meaning it is designed to maintain existing services rather than expand them.

Fire Department revenue sources reviewed

During the presentation, Harris also provided a breakdown of revenue generated by the department. Combined revenue sources total approximately \$738,207 and include ambulance receipts, Medicare reimbursements through the

federal CPE program, ambulance subscription fees, permit fees, donations and funds generated through previous override allocations.

Finance Committee members asked how those revenues are distributed within the town's financial system.

Harris explained that ambulance receipts are deposited into a "receipts reserved for appropriation" account, allowing those funds to be reallocated to department needs. Other revenues, such as permit fees, are deposited into the town's general fund.

Funds from the ambulance receipts account were recently used to purchase a new ambulance without direct taxpayer cost, Harris noted.

The chief also discussed the department's ambulance subscription program, which provides residents with reduced costs for ambulance services. While subscription participation has increased slightly, Harris said expanding the program is limited by the cost of mass mailing outreach materials.

Historical budget trends

To provide additional context, Harris presented a historical comparison of departmental budget line items spanning roughly two decades.

The comparison showed significant increases in salary and wage costs over time, largely reflecting contractual obligations and rising personnel expenses, while many operational line items have remained relatively flat, with some still comparable to figures from 20 years ago.

Harris said the data illustrates the department's effort to minimize financial impact on the town while maintaining service levels.

Police Department budget presented

Following the fire budget discussion, Police Chief Gasparini provided an overview of the Police Department's proposed budget.

Gasparini noted that several financial details remain uncertain as the town continues negotiations with the police union, which could affect salary figures in the final budget.

He also discussed the importance of maintaining the department's clerical position despite financial pressure to cut staff.

Gasparini said the position plays an important role in assisting residents and providing in-person support at the police station, which many community members prefer over remote or automated services.

Cruiser replacement needs

Police Chief Gasparini also addressed the department's need to replace aging patrol vehicles.

Police cruisers accumulate significant engine hours because officers often leave them idling while responding to calls or operating onboard equipment. As a result, vehicle wear can occur more quickly than with typical municipal vehicles.

The proposed cruiser purchases include both the cost of the vehicles and the specialized equipment needed

to outfit them for police use.

Gasparini referenced a comment from former Police Chief John Kozlowski that reflects the challenge of relying heavily on overtime staffing.

"Overtime is great until you don't want it anymore," Gasparini said, quoting Kozlowski in reference to the strain overtime can place on staffing and budgets.

Townwide budget challenges

The public safety discussions took place against the backdrop of broader fiscal pressures facing the town.

Officials said departments have been asked to prepare for potential budget reductions of approximately 7.5% as the town works to balance its finances.

A large portion of the municipal budget consists of fixed costs such as salaries, health insurance and pension obligations, leaving limited flexibility for reductions without affecting services.

Town officials also discussed the possibility of a Proposition 2½ override, which would allow the town to raise additional tax revenue beyond the state-imposed limit. However, several participants noted that overrides can be difficult to pass and require strong community support.

One town official summarized the challenge by noting the need to identify which services are legally required and which might be considered non-core.

"We have to look at what are the core foundational services that the town is legally

required to provide and what are the non-core services that aren't required," the official said.

Additional financial considerations

The meeting also touched on several broader issues affecting town finances.

Officials are working to better allocate electricity credits generated through net-metering agreements so that the town receives the greatest benefit, particularly as electricity demand increases with the upgraded fire station.

Both the Fire and Police departments also reported difficulties recruiting and retaining personnel. Harris and Gasparini noted that younger candidates increasingly prioritize work-life balance, which has made staffing more challenging in recent years.

Town leaders are also exploring ways to consolidate building maintenance responsibilities under a Director of Facilities position to improve long-term upkeep and reduce emergency repair costs.

Next steps

As budget discussions continue, officials said a Tri-Board meeting involving the Finance Committee, Select Board and School Committee will be scheduled to review budget proposals and discuss potential solutions to the town's financial shortfall.

The Finance Committee is expected to continue reviewing departmental budgets in the coming weeks as the town moves closer to finalizing its fiscal year spending plan.



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KISS ME I'M IRISH



Herbalist comes to senior center

BRIMFIELD – Join us Monday, March 16 at 10:30 a.m. for an engaging presentation at the Brimfield Senior Center, “The Wonder & Magic of Tea” with herbalist Salli Greene from Alternatives for Health in Sturbridge. Salli began her work with herbs in 1977 at Quincy Marketplace in Boston, where she sold live plants and handmade products. Over the years, her interest in culinary and aromatic herbs grew into a lifelong passion.

After returning to Sturbridge in 2001, Salli expanded her gardens and deepened her

studies. In 2004, she completed a 10month herbal program that introduced her to medicinal herbs—a transformative experience that led her to further study in Belize with Rosita Arvigo and with renowned herbalist Rosemary Gladstar. She now teaches Rosemary Gladstar’s 10month Herbal Apprenticeship.

During this program, Salli will demonstrate how to blend teas to support overall health. Join us for an informative session, along with tea and light refreshments. Please call 413-245-7253 to reserve your seat; space is limited.



Friday, Movie Matinee
12:30 p.m. with drinks and popcorn

March 13, “Fools Gold” is a 2008 American romantic action comedy film from Warner Bros. Pictures about a recently divorced couple who rekindle their romantic life while searching for a lost treasure.

March 20 “People we met on Vacation” is a 2026 American romantic comedy film directed by Haley Polar

Palmer Senior Center

opposites, Poppy wants to explore the world while Alex would prefer to stay home with a good book, but surprisingly they become best friends after sharing a car to their small Ohio hometown from Boston. They live far apart, but for a decade they have shared one week of summer vacation together, which finally leads to a deeper connection.

March 27 “Ford VS Ferrari” Academy Award-winners Matt Damon and Christian Bale star in FORD v FERRARI, based on the re-

markable true story of the visionary American car designer Carroll Shelby (Damon) and the fearless British-born driver Ken Miles (Bale), who together battled corporate interference, the laws of physics, and their own personal demons to build a revolutionary race car for Ford Motor Company and take on the dominating race cars of Enzo Ferrari at the 24 Hours of Le Mans in France in 1966.

Monday Evening Programs
4:30 p.m.

March 9, Baked Potato Bar with all the Fixings followed by Trivia

March 16, Brian from BCBS “Presentation on Medicaid” with Light Snacks to Follow

March 18, at 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. St Pat’s Party with Memory Lane

March 23, Spaghetti and Meatballs Dinner/Pictionary to Follow

Join the center for a 4-part series “Introduction to the Quabbin on Monday, March 30, April 27, May 25 and June 29

Palmer Democratic Caucus to be held on March 21

PALMER – The Palmer Democratic Town Committee announces that Palmer Democrats will convene for the Annual Caucus on Saturday, March 21, 2026 at 10:30 a.m. at the Palmer Public Library to elect 5 delegates and 4 alternates to represent Palmer at the 2026 State Democratic Convention.

Registered and pre-reg-

istered Democrats in Palmer at least 16 years old may vote and be elected as delegates or alternates during the caucus.

Youth (16-35), people with disabilities, people of color, veterans, members of the LGBTQ+ community not elected as delegates are encouraged to apply to be additional delegates at the caucus or by visiting massdems.org/

massdems-convention.

The 2026 State Democratic Convention will be held at the DCU Center in Worcester, MA on Friday, May 29 and Saturday, May 30, 2026.

Those interested in getting involved with the Palmer Democratic Town Committee should contact Chairperson Kathy Burns at Palmerdems@icloud.com or 413-313-9579.

Monson nomination papers available for town election

MONSON – The Monson Town Clerk’s Office announces that nomination papers are now available for the Annual Town Election to be held on June 9, 2026.

The following slate of offices are available:

- Select Board, 1 Seat,**
term 3 years
- Town Clerk, 1 Seat,**
term 3 years

- Board of Assessors, 1 Seat,**
term 3 years
- School Committee, 2 Seats,**
one term 2 years
one term 3 years
- Water/Sewer Commission, 1 Seat,**
term 3 years
- Cemetery Commission, 1 Seat,**
term 3 years

- Parks and Recreation Commission, 1 Seat,**
term 3 years
- Housing Authority, 1 Seat,**
term 5 years

The deadline to obtain nomination papers is Thursday, April 16.

For inquiries contact the Monson Town Clerk’s office at 413-267-4115 or email: townclerk@monson-ma.gov.

Snow Be Gone Challenge end on March 20

MONSON – On Saturday, February 28, the Monson Arts Council kicked off a fundraiser/membership drive titled the “Snow Be Gone Challenge”.

Everyone is invited to guess the day that the snowbank at the Monson post office will disappear and become a puddle.

It is \$20 to place your guess, which gives you an automatic membership to the arts council.

The winner will receive a \$200.00 prize. The challenge ends March 20, sign up at www.monsonartsandcouncil.org.

Here Today Adopted Tomorrow’s “Spay”ghetti Supper

Pasta for a Purr-pose

PALMER – Here Today Adopted Tomorrow (HTAT) invites all animal lovers to our annual “Spay”ghetti Supper fundraiser at the St. Thomas Parish Center in Palmer on Saturday, March 28, 2026.

Enjoy a delicious chef-prepared meal while helping the very cats in our community! Whether you’re a true party animal or simply want to make a difference, it’s a great way to support a good cause with friends and family. Plus, enjoy raffles, prizes, and plenty of fun throughout the evening!

Each year, HTAT sees more cats pawing at its doors for help. As prices rise, everyone feels the strain—but many people don’t realize that rising costs affect pets, too. It’s not just veterinary care that has exploded; as food and housing prices rise, many loving pet owners find themselves struggling to keep up. When life becomes overwhelming, cats can be the ones caught in the middle.

That’s where HTAT steps in. Events like the “Spay”ghetti Supper make our support possible, helping us provide food, shelter, and care for cats who might otherwise fall through the cracks.

HTAT Executive Di-

rector Rachael Max says the event is a chance for the community to come together while making a real difference. “ ‘Spay’ghetti Supper is one of our most popular events of the year,” said Max. “It’s always a fun night, but it also plays an important role in helping us continue our work with cats who need a little extra care and attention.”

The “Spay”ghetti Supper takes place at the St. Thomas Parish Center in Palmer on Saturday, March 28, 2026, from 5 to 6:30 p.m. Advance tickets are \$15 for adults and \$10 for seniors and kids under 12, while limited door tickets will be available at \$20 for adults and \$15 for

seniors and kids. To purchase tickets, visit www.heretoday-sanctuary.org or call 413-324-8224.

If you are local and need assistance feeding or caring for your pet, HTAT can help.

Local cat owners can spay or neuter their cats for \$80 or less, and strays and ferals can be fixed for free! Visit www.heretodaysanctuary.org to learn more about our community assistance programs.

DEADLINE

The Journal Register deadline for public submissions to Mondays. To get your submission in for that week’s edition space permitting, email Editor at journalregister@turley.com or call the office at 413-283-8393 by noon on Mondays. We appreciate the cooperation of our readers.

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 an email to: journalregister@turley.com, or call (413) 283-8393. Corrections may also be requested in writing at: Journal Register, Attn: Editor, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA, 01069

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Walk in faith Lenten Mission open to all

BRIMFIELD – St. Christophers Church locate at 16 Sturbridge Rd., Route 20, Brimfield, and St. Patrick's Church at 22 Green Street in Monson are co-hosting a Lenten Mission March 16 to March 19.

The mission title Our Walk in Faith will be led by Fr. David Gunter MIC of the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception from the National Shrine of Divine Mercy in Stockbridge. The talk will be at 7 p.m. each evening.

St. Christopher's will host Monday and Tuesday, while St. Patrick will host on Wednesday and Thursday. Each night Fr. Gunter will lead you on a spiritual journey to awaken and deepen your faith during this holy season of Lent.

The event is free and open to all. For more in-

formation contact St. Patrick's at 413-267-3622. Father Gunter will also offer the masses the weekend before and will hear confessions on the weekend and each evening prior to the talk at 6pm.

The parishes are led by Father Jack Brennan who shares these thoughts "The season of Lent is a time to reflect, listen with our hearts and pray.

It echoes Christ's 40 days in the desert as a period of transformation and a return to the Lord through prayer. To make room for grace by practicing Almsgiving through generosity of heart and choosing compassion over convenience."

Both parishes welcome visitors and all who wish to attend are invited to join us throughout the year.

Brimfield to mark 250th Anniversary of Independence

BRIMFIELD – Save the date! On Saturday, June 13, 2026, a community-wide celebration marking the 250th anniversary of our nation's freedom will take place in Brimfield. In recognition of this year's historic milestone, a full day of remembrance and celebration is planned. All are welcome to attend the day's events, which include the following: Revolutionary War themed cemetery tours, a ceremony at the town common gazebo, a parade, and fun-filled festivities at the Brimfield Winery. The evening will close out with a spectacular fireworks display.

Additional details and updates will be available through the Friends of Historic Brimfield event website: www.fohbrimfield.org. Tax-deductible donations can also be made in support of this celebration through this website, and in gratitude, donors will be

recognized in the event program. Donations can also be mailed to: Friends of Historic Brimfield, P.O. Box 52, Brimfield, MA 01010 with "Spirit of Brimfield" in the memo.

This event is currently being sponsored by the Massachusetts Army National Guard and Classic Hits 97.7 fm. If you or your company are interested in any level of corporate or business sponsorship, please visit the event website at www.fohbrimfield.org. Additional volunteers are needed for both planning and to help with activities during the event, or if you are interested in putting a float in the parade, contact Friends of Historic Brimfield at (413) 239-0288 for more information.

Be sure to save the date for this celebration of the founding of our country! More information will follow.

In the classroom

COLLEGE NOTES

UMass Amherst announces fall 2025 Dean's List

AMHERST – The following students were named to the Fall 2025 Dean's List at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Brimfield

Broderick Dalton Custance, Ella Victoria Petersen, Elizabeth Rose Shaw, Abigail Kathryn Stattenfield, Malahny Yanay Wedderburn

Holland

Abigail S Grillo

Monson

John Edward Daly, Madison Amber Farquhar, Jennifer Gralia, Dante Rashaad Jones, Richard Lin, Margaret Elizabeth Menard, Victoria Jane Miller, Ciara Marie Monaghan, Kayla Ashlyn Murphy, Kylee Teixeira and Alison Mei Jie Weber

Palmer

Zackary Joseph Andre, Vanessa K Baer, Grace J. Maria Cosby, Sara-Mae Fosberg, Daniele Weidlich De Gennaro Freitas, Charlotte Mary Kaiser, Grace Callan Kaiser, Luke Stephen Kwasniewski, Keyshla Nannett Lorenzo, Sharon Dinara Newton and Sara O'Connor

Wales

May Marie Adams and Claire Theresa Godek
Students are appointed to the Dean's List at the end of a semester in which they have completed a minimum of 12 graded credits and have earned a grade point average of 3.500 or better.

Public invited to Opacum's annual breakfast

PALMER – Do you enjoy hiking, mountain biking, hunting, fishing, or other outdoor recreation? Are you interested in protecting local land, water, and wildlife? Are you curious about Opacum Land Trust, land conservation, or how you could get involved? Join

Opacum Land Trust for their Annual Meeting Breakfast. All are welcome to this free event! This free breakfast will be held on Saturday, March 21 at Pathfinder High School, Panek St, Palmer, MA from 10 a.m. to noon.

In addition to local conservation updates, attendees

will hear from guest speaker and Director of Rural Affairs of Massachusetts, Anne Gobi. Director Gobi will speak about her involvement with the MILUS (Massachusetts Integrated Land Use Strategy) Project and PILOT (Payments in Lieu of Taxes) commission and how they

relate to conservation in the state.

Remember To RSVP – Please RSVP by March 6. You can RSVP on our website at <https://www.opacum-llt.org/events>, through the Facebook event, or call the Opacum Land Trust office at (508) 347 – 9144.

Valley Press Club Scholarships available for journalism students

REGION – The Valley Press Club, based in Springfield, Mass., will award \$1,000 scholarships to high school seniors in Western Massachusetts and Northern Connecticut who are interested in pursuing a career in journalism.

The Valley Press Club Scholarships, funded by contributions and dues to the Press Club, are for students planning careers in print, online or broadcast journalism.

The Republican Scholarship, funded by The Republican, is for students living within the newspaper's circulation area who are planning careers in print journalism.

The 22News Scholarship, funded by WWLP-22News is for students planning careers in broadcast journalism.

The MassLive Scholarship is for a Massachusetts high school senior planning to pursue a career in print, online or broadcast journalism/communication. This scholarship is available to a student who is underrepresented in the field of journalism and is planning to attend an institution of higher education in the field.

The Edward J. Malley Jr. Memorial Scholarship, established in memory of a chief photographer for the Springfield Newspapers, is for students planning careers

in photojournalism.

The Rhonda Swan Memorial Scholarship, established in memory of the award-winning journalist, editor and author, honors her legacy by supporting students from the Greater Springfield area who aspire to careers in journalism and bring voices and perspectives that have been historically underrepresented in the field.

Primary emphasis is placed on career goals, writing ability, scholastic aptitude and overall achievement as measured by an applicant's high school transcript, class rank, academic awards, SAT scores and extracurricular activities. The deadline for submissions is April 10, 2026.

Scholarship applications are available at www.ValleyPressClub.com or high school guidance offices. Applications may be sent by mail to Noreen Tassinari, Scholarship Chair, Valley Press Club, P.O. Box 5475, Springfield, Mass. 01102 or electronically to NTassinari77@gmail.com

Over the course of six decades, The Valley Press Club has presented over \$140,000 in scholarships to eligible students. The Valley Press Club consists of active and retired journalists and public relations professionals from corporate and non-profit organizations.

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BASKETBALL

Palmer wins playoff opener

PALMER – Last Sunday, Mar. 1 at Pathfinder Tech, Palmer 5/6 Suburban Basketball won its playoff opening game against Mohawk Pioneer, scoring the victory 46-28. Palmer would move on to face Belchertown in the next round. Palmer would go 7-9 during the regular season.



Julian Bayanilla gets plenty of air on this shot.



Landon Chevalier eyes the hoop.

Connor Baer is focused as he shoots.



AJ Braden goes for the opening tip.



Nathan Drewnowski overcomes a block and shoots.



Alexander Cartier shoots ahead of pressure.

BASKETBALL

Panthers season ends in first round

ORANGE – On Thursday, Feb. 26, the Palmer High School girls basketball team was defeated by host Mahar Regional High School in the opening round of the Division 5 state tournament 64-35.

Palmer reached the state tournament by finishing in the top 32 in Division 5 with a 9-11 total record.

In the first round matchup with Mahar Regional, the Senators were able to get out to a first start to pace the game with a 14-4 run. Palmer would come back with a better second quarter, but could not stop Mahar's offense, heading to halftime training 30-16. The Panthers would not be able to mount any kind of comeback from there.

Addyson Petraszewicz had Palmer's best performance, scoring 15 points to lead the Panthers in the defeat. Palmer finished at 9-12.

ALL-STAR GAMES

Seniors headed to All-Star Games

SPRINGFIELD – The Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame announced the team rosters for the 2026 Western Massachusetts Senior High School All-Star Games. On Friday, Mar. 20, the Hall of Fame will host the 2026 All-Star event on the Jerry Colangelo Court of Dreams at the Hall of Fame. Sixty of the region's top seniors were selected from different divisions to participate in the final high school contests of their prep career.

"We are honored to welcome Western Massachusetts' top high school basketball players to the 15th annual All-Star celebration at the Basketball Hall of Fame," said John L. Doleva, President and CEO of the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame. "This event is a special opportunity to recognize the hard work and achievements of these outstanding seniors, and we invite the community to join us as they take the court one final time in their high school careers."

A committee of local coaches and media members, representing each division on both the boys' and girls' sides, selected the teams. Using the designated classes for the PVIAC Tournament, the players will be divided into six teams: two girls' teams, two boys' teams of Class A and B players, and two boys' teams of Class C and D players. Only graduating seniors are eligible for the All-Star Games. Rosters are on the next page.

For the 15th year, the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame will recognize one boy and one girl as the Western Massachusetts Players of the Year. A special presentation

ROAD RACE

St. Patrick's Day Road Race set to kick off big weekend

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

weather for the Holyoke St. Patrick's Road Race.

HOLYOKE – Last March, for the first several years, it was gorgeous

More than 6,000 people participated in this year's event, with nearly 5,000 participants finishing the 10K,

or 6.2-mile course.

It was Samuel Whittaker of Salem, CT, who finished the race in 31:24. Alex Corbett, who placed second in last year's race, came in 23

seconds later at 31:47.

The top female finisher was Angelia Rafter at 34:13 and she placed 12th overall. Rafter is from Glastonbury, CT.

Among local finishers, Matt Provost of Monson was 19th overall at 35:09. Ryan Davis of South Hadley was a close 20th at 35:10. Lindsay Smith of South Hadley finished 22nd at 35:12.

While the race course, commonly known as a "hilly" course throughout downtown Holyoke ending with a turn off Beech St. and up the hill on Hampden St. toward the finish line remained largely the same, there was one noticeable change in this year's event.

Presidential Timing took over the official timing



The participants are off in the 48th running of the Holyoke St. Patrick's Road Race last March.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli

Candlepin League News

By **Ryan Drago**
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

Bondsville League

WARE – The Wednesday Night Bondsville League at Roll-A-Way Lanes has reached the month of March.

After 25 weeks of league candlepin bowling, Sandri holds the top seed with a record of 109-66. Fire Mountain, the team that held on to first place since the start of the season, has now dropped to second place with a record of 104.5-70.5.

During week 25, Night Hawks bowled against Fire Mountain. In game one, Fire Mountain won by a score of 489-460. Rick Trott of Fire Mountain began the match by bowling a 112. Gavin Sinclair of Night Hawks began with 113.

In game two, Fire Mountain won again by a score of 469-452. In game three, Night Hawks won the last game by a score of 497-478. Sinclair finished strong with 132 and a three-game series of 352. Gary Delisle of Fire Mountain finished with 115.

The final score was 1436-1409 in favor of Fire Mountain. Night Hawks get two points and have a record of 96-79 after 25 weeks.

Team UMass bowled against Ironmen in week 25. In game one, Ironmen won by a score of 489-454. Pete Swistak of Ironmen had the highest game of 132.

His teammate, Billy Brunk, bowled a 111 to start.

In game two, Team UMass won by a score of 488-464. Brunk bowled well with 121 in game two.

In game three, Team UMass won again by a score of 464-449. Swistak finished with 121 and a three-game series of 353.

The final score was 1406-1402 in favor of Team UMass, who move into fourth place with a record of 90.5-84.5. Ironmen are in fifth place with a record of 87-88.

The Flaming Bowling Balls (FBB) bowled against Zeke's Freaks in week 25. In game one, Zeke's Freaks pulled ahead and won 442-438. Zeke Sicard of Zeke's Freaks bowled over his average with 113.

In game two, Zeke's Freaks won again by a score of 437-418. Ryan McCarthy of FBB had the highest game of 104.

In game three, FBB defeated Zeke's Freaks by a score of 478-457. The final score was 1336-1334, just a two-pin victory for Zeke's Freaks.

Spare Parts Bud bowled against Sandri in week 25. In game one, Sandri defeated Spare Parts Bud by a score of 496-482. Sue Horton of Sandri began with 138. Madison Jebb of Spare Parts Bud bowled well over her league average with 108.

In game two, Sandri won again by a score of 490-428.

Horton bowled 139 in game two during her team's win.

In game three, Sandri won for a three-game sweep over Spare Parts Bud, 479-470. Horton finished with 97 and a three-game series of 374. Rich Picotte of Sandri finished strong with 143.

The final score was 1465-1380 in favor of Sandri.

Cannonballs bowled against P&J Meats in week 25. In game one, Cannonballs defeated P&J Meats by a score of 472-450.

In game two, P&J Meats struck back and won 463-452. Shaun Midura of P&J Meats bowled 107 in game two.

In game three, Cannonballs won the last game by a score of 453-439. The final score was 1377-1352 in favor of Cannonballs.

Slow Burners bowled against the Snapper in week 25. In game one, Snappers defeated Slow Burners, 492-450. Andy Tombor of Snappers began the match with 126. His teammate, Eddie Stachowicz, began with 110.

In game two, Snappers and Slow Burners tied, 457-457. As a result, each team receives one victory point.

In game three, Snappers won by a score of 491-469. Tombor finished with 114 and a series of 326. Jody Orszulak of Slow Burners finished with 117. The final score was 1440-1376 in favor of Snappers, who go 6-1 against Slow Burners.

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Athlete of the Week

Addyson Petrashewicz

Palmer High School

In the final matchup of the season for Palmer High School girls basketball in the state tournament, Petrashewicz led the Panthers with 15 points.

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



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Worcester Railers fall to Trois-Rivières Lions in shootout

TROIS-RIVIÈRES, QC – The Worcester Railers HC (25-22-5-2, 57 pts) fell in a shootout to the Trois-Rivières Lions (26-24-1-3, 56 pts) on Sunday, Mar. 8, with a final score of 3-4 at the Colisée Vidéotron, in front of a crowd of 2,010. The Railers are back in action on Wednesday, March 11th against the Norfolk Admirals at the DCU Center for a 7:05 p.m. puck drop.

Trois-Rivières struck first on Sunday afternoon, as Jacob Dion (1-2-3) gave the Lions a 1-0 advantage just 0:59 seconds into the first off a redirect from a Railers defenseman's skate. The Lions grew their lead to 2-0 at 6:22 as Mathieu Bizier (1-0-1) sank a one-timer from the left circle. Riley Piercey (1-1-2) picked up the first goal for the Railers unas-

sisted at 6:47 in the second on a rush from the defensive zone. Calle Odellius (1-0-1) tied the game for Worcester just shy of eight minutes later with a point shot through the pads of Benjamin Gaudreau. Trois-Rivières closed out the second with a late power play goal from Isaac Dufort (1-1-2), which regained the Lions' lead heading into the third (3-2). Worcester tied the game once more as MacAuley Carson (1-0-1) narrowly snuck the puck between the pads of Gaudreau (3-3). Carson's goal pushed the game into extra-time. Nicholas Girouard claimed the only goal scored in the five-round shootout for the Lions' narrow 4-3 win.

Trois-Rivières picked up the game's first goal just 59 seconds into play. Jacob Dion (5th) capitalized on the Lions' first shot of the game,

as a lucky bounce off Calle Odellius' skate put the puck in the back of the net. Another goal for Trois-Rivières at 6:22, this time a one-timer from Mathieu Bizier (2nd) along the inner edge of the left faceoff circle, put the Lions ahead by two. Cam McDonald and Anthony Poulin came to blows with just over a minute remaining on the clock. Both men headed to the box for roughing to serve their first half of the penalty. As the period came to a close, Worcester remained shut out

by Trois-Rivières goaltender Benjamin Gaudreau. Worcester outshot Trois-Rivières 10-9, and both teams finished the first period with one penalty apiece.

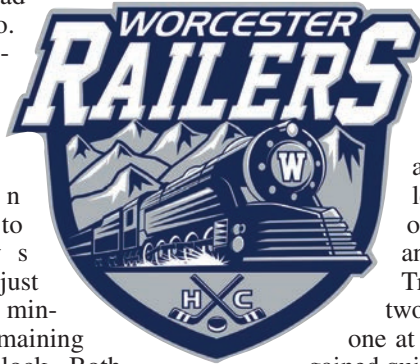
Worcester was eager to close the growing gap created by Trois-Rivières in the first. Riley Piercey (4th) fired a shot in the left corner over Gaudreau and shrunk Trois-Rivières' two-goal lead to one at 6:47. Piercey gained quick possession in Worcester's zone off the faceoff and made a 2-on-1 rush down the near boards alongside Max Dorrington. Calle Odellius (2nd) kept the

scoring going for the Railers at 14:29. The puck remained loose in the Lions' zone after a quick initial save from Gaudreau. With a rebound that ricocheted off the right boards, Odellius stepped up to the puck and fired it between the legs of Gaudreau and evened the board at two apiece. The tie game didn't last long, however, as Isaac Dufort (9th) closed out the second with a slapshot to beat Gahagen with 16 seconds remaining on the Lions' power play and just 1:24 left in the frame. Worcester tied Trois-Rivières with shots on goal at 10 each. The two teams also tied in penalties with two each.

MacAuley Carson (3rd) kept the game alive for the Railers as he tucked the puck through Gaudreau's five-hole at 11:24. Max Dorrington

set up the play as he entered the zone with just one hand on his stick and set Carson up for the goal with a quick pass. Carson's goal was the only one scored in the third period and pushed the game into overtime. Shots on goal favored Worcester with 9 to Trois-Rivières' 8. Worcester and Trois-Rivières were even with penalties at two.

As overtime came and went, neither team found the back of the net for the extra frame of play, and both Worcester and Trois-Rivières were forced into a shootout. In the end, it was Nicolas Girouard for the Lions that came out on top and lit the lamp for a fourth and final time in the fifth round for a 4-3 final in favor of Trois-Rivières. Worcester trailed in total shots on goal by two, with 33 to Trois-Rivières' 35.



ALL-STAR | from page 9

will be made for the recipients during halftime of one of the participating games. A panel of local media members selects the award winners, who are recognized for their achievements on the court as well as their sportsmanship and character off the court.

Participants in the Boys Class C and D game include: Ware's Jack Gaudreau and Brady Guimond, Palmer's Dylan Doherty, Gavin Smola, and Stephen Fredette, Mahar's Jayden Delgado, Granby's

Zavien Fernandez, and Monson's Austin Meacham.

In the girls game, participants include: Minnechaug's Cailin O'Brien, Kelly Cronin, and Elizabeth Woytowicz, Mahar's Hayden Comeau, and Agawam's Isabella Laprise.

And in the Boys A and B game, participants include: Holyoke's Jordan King-Perilli, Chicopee's Dominic Garcia, Belchertown's Jake Pacunas, Minnechaug's Miles Fergus, Chicopee Comprehensive's Brody Fay, and South Hadley's Isiah James.

RACE | from page 9

duties after 4RUN3 went out of business last year. Those looking for more results from the events can go to www.presidentialtiming.com to look at more specific results from the race. Like previous timers, you can look up people by name and bib number to get more specific results.

This year, the road race is set to take place on Saturday, Mar. 21 with the main race beginning at 1 p.m.

This year's race would feature runners from all over the region, the state, and

surrounding states as many are preparing for the Boston Marathon, set to take place in just under a month. Many runners over the years have enjoyed using the St. Patrick's Day Road Race as practice for the marathon because of the challenging hills throughout the streets of Holyoke that runners must navigate through.

While there has been a considerable amount of snowfall this past winter, the Holyoke DPW will have the streets utilized in the race ready to go for both runners and spectators. Helping matters has been the recent

warmer weather that has helped accelerate the melting a lot of the snow.

For participants in this year's race, Runner numbers and bib-tags can be picked up on Friday, Mar. 20 from 3 to 6 p.m. They can also be picked upon Saturday morning between 9 a.m. and 12 noon.

There will be free shuttle service going from Holyoke Community College to the race area. The shuttle will drop runners off at the Mater Dolorosa School parking lot outside of the clothing drop. Race officials advise using a shuttle by 12 noon in order to make the start of the race.



Samuel Whittaker crosses the first line first overall.

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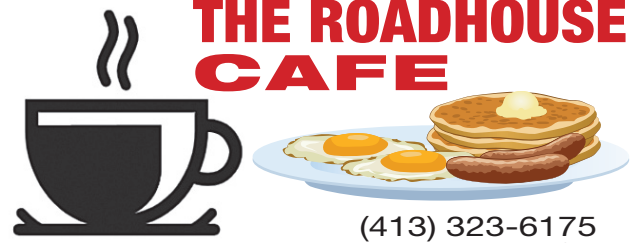
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250TH | from page 1

Organizers say the location of the State House quilt is currently unknown.

The search for the missing artifact has become an unexpected research project tied to the anniversary celebration.

“We’re desperately trying to find it,” O’Connor said, noting that inquiries have already been made with archives, universities and historical collections across the state.

The April event will display the surviving quilt and may also include a historical presentation on the Knox Trail, by regional historians. A community bicycle parade is also being discussed as a possible addition to the same weekend.

Throughout the spring, additional programs are planned to engage residents in a variety of ways.

A puzzle competition scheduled for May 4, a challenge the library has hosted before, will challenge teams to complete identical puzzles in a race against the clock. Organizers say the competi-

tion has become surprisingly intense in past years, with some teams reportedly practicing in advance.

Another event will feature historian and performer Rita Parisi of Waterfall Productions presenting “Woman of ’76,” a program highlighting women who played important roles during the Revolutionary War era.

Musical events are also planned, including a brass band concert on June 6 at the Palmer AMVETS, funded through the Palmer Cultural Council. A second patriotic brass performance is scheduled for June 7 at St. Paul’s Church.

Later in the season, organizers are planning a “70s Trivia Night,” which will include questions spanning the 1770s, 1870s and 1970s. Participants will be encouraged to dress in attire representing any of those decades.

The centerpiece of the celebration will take place in June, commemorating a unique moment in Palmer’s Revolutionary history.

Historical records show that Palmer signed its own declaration of independence

on June 17, 1776, weeks before the national Declaration of Independence was adopted on July 4.

To mark the occasion, organizers plan a series of events on Saturday, June 20, the weekend closest to the historic date.

The day is expected to begin with a guided tour of Oak Knoll Cemetery, highlighting graves of Revolutionary War-era residents and notable figures, including town founder John King.

Later, visitors will gather at the Three Rivers/Palmer Historical Cultural Center for a public reading of Palmer’s original declaration.

During the same event, the Palmer Historical Commission plans to unveil a comprehensive monument booklet documenting historical markers and memorials throughout the town’s villages. The publication will include photographs, descriptions and historical context for each monument.

Organizers also plan to revisit Palmer’s 1976 Bicentennial celebration by screening film footage of the town’s parade from that year.

The event will include an exhibit of professional photographs taken during the parade. Attendees will be invited to help identify people, organizations and groups captured in the images.

Approximately 110 organizations participated in the original parade, according to newspaper accounts from the time.

Organizers hope the display will encourage residents to share memories and help document the event more fully.

The Palmer Public Library will also incorporate anniversary themes into its summer programming.

Plans include an outdoor screening of the musical film “Hamilton” at local parks as part of the library’s outdoor movie series. Organizers are also considering a Hamilton-themed karaoke or lip-sync event tied to the library’s summer reading program.

One of the most ambitious projects being considered is a community history initiative titled “Palmer in 250 Objects.”

The project aims to col-

lect photographs and stories about items that represent Palmer’s history and community identity. Submissions could include everything from historic artifacts and family heirlooms to everyday objects tied to personal memories.

Organizers hope the material will eventually become both a digital exhibit and a printed book documenting the town’s heritage.

Possible contributions could include items such as school uniforms, musical instruments, handcrafted objects, or photographs of historic landmarks.

Community involvement encouraged

Organizers emphasized that community participation will be essential to making the anniversary celebration successful.

A new Facebook page, Palmer MA History Hub, has been created to connect residents with ongoing historical research projects and to gather community input.

Volunteers are also being sought for a range of roles, including:

- Helping connect orga-

nizers with community leaders for promotional recordings

- Creating craft items such as commemorative pins and decorations

- Assisting with event logistics such as parking or raffles

- Recording oral histories through the “Palmer Villages and Voices” project

- Conducting historical research, including efforts to locate the missing Bicentennial quilt

Residents interested in volunteering or contributing ideas can contact organizers through the Palmer Public Library.

Organizers say the goal of the celebration is not only to look back at America’s past but Palmer’s past, and also to ensure that the community’s stories are preserved for future generations.

By combining historical exhibits, community storytelling and public events, they hope the 250th anniversary will become a shared effort that reflects the many voices and experiences that have shaped the town over two and a half centuries.

BESS | from page 1

His work has included helping build and maintain the town’s trail network, installing cameras, developing a GPS trail system and assisting with the pollinator garden at Town Hall.

During the recognition, council members praised Cotter’s dedication and commitment to improving the community.

“Dave works with a smile and he’s a living example of what it means to lead by example,” one councilor said while presenting the recognition. “What I admire most about Dave is that all this work he does is not for recognition... it’s purely for the betterment of the community.”

Residents raise infrastructure and cost concerns

During public comment, several residents raised concerns about infrastructure maintenance and rising municipal costs.

A Thorndike resident reported worsening potholes on the Main Street Bridge and said a request for repairs had not yet been addressed.

The same resident also voiced frustration with sewer charges, noting that a recent bill totaled about \$1,500 for six months of service.

“That’s more than double the property tax,” the resident said.

Questions were also raised about approximately \$330,000 in federal funding allocated for ADA-compliant

sidewalk improvements. Town officials said the project is currently being coordinated with engineering work and is expected to be completed during the upcoming construction season.

Another resident from River Street described a fall caused by uneven sidewalk slabs and asked that the Department of Public Works address the safety hazard.

Public Hearing held on stronger code enforcement authority

The council held a public hearing regarding the adoption of Chapter 40U of Massachusetts General Laws, which would authorize non-criminal disposition for sanitary code violations.

Attorneys Allison Fennell and Joe Ertel explained that the program would provide the town with additional tools to address neglected properties and repeat offenders who fail to comply with health and safety codes.

Officials emphasized that the program is intended to supplement existing enforcement measures rather than replace them.

“In our proposal to adopt the Chapter 40 ordinance, we’re simply looking to complement all of the great work that has already been accomplished while providing additional tools and resources,” Ertel said. “Ultimately it gives the town the teeth to deal with the most problematic properties.”

The program would allow fines related to severe sanitary code violations to be attached

to property tax bills, making enforcement more effective for absentee owners or banks that neglect foreclosed properties.

Councilors also discussed whether the ordinance should include a fixed \$300 fine for initial violations. Some members suggested referencing the town’s fee schedule instead so future adjustments could be made without requiring a full ordinance amendment. Legal counsel said they would research whether the specific amount must be written into the ordinance.

The council is expected to vote on the proposal at a future meeting.

Vietnam Veterans recognized

The council also read a proclamation recognizing Vietnam Veterans Welcome Home Day, observed in Massachusetts on March 29.

The resolution honored the service and sacrifice of Vietnam War veterans and acknowledged that many returned home without proper recognition.

Veterans Service Officer Tina Brohman thanked the town for recognizing those who served.

“I’m really proud of the town for taking the time to do this and recognize the Vietnam War veterans who did not get the recognition when they got home,” Brohman said.

Inspector position expanded to improve housing safety

Councilors approved Resolution 2026-19, allocating \$7,623 to expand the town’s

local inspector position from part-time to full-time.

The request was driven largely by the need to conduct mandatory safety inspections of multi-family housing under state building codes.

Building officials reported that the town has inspected about 80 units so far, primarily in Three Rivers, with only four properties passing inspection.

“The fail rate is horrendous,” officials said during the meeting.

Inspections review safety issues including fire escapes, decks, egress routes and smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. Officials said many of the improvements required during inspections are increasing both safety and property conditions throughout the community.

Fire District merger question may appear on ballot

Councilors discussed adding a non-binding referendum question to the June 9 annual town election ballot asking residents whether Palmer’s four fire districts should pursue a merger into a single district.

Officials said the question is intended to gauge public interest and encourage discussion after a previous attempt to organize a meeting with all four districts failed.

“The goal of this question is to get everybody to come to the table and have a discussion on whether or not this town, instead of having four separate fire districts, can have one,” Brothers said.

Because each district operates independently, any actual consolidation would require

approval by the voters within each district.

Budget Pressures continue for Fiscal Year 2027

A major focus of the meeting was the upcoming fiscal year 2027 budget.

Brothers reported that the town is facing a significant increase in health insurance costs, with premiums projected to rise by approximately 35 percent.

The town’s health insurance plan currently has a loss ratio of about 115 percent, meaning medical claims exceed the premiums paid into the system.

Two subscribers alone account for more than \$1 million in annual healthcare costs, officials said.

“These are the kinds of things that drive the numbers,” Brothers said, noting that the town has limited options to change insurance providers for the upcoming year.

The proposed municipal budget totals approximately \$46.2 million. Initial projections showed a deficit of \$1.3 to \$1.4 million, but revenue adjustments and spending re-

ductions have lowered the gap to about \$900,000.

School and library budgets have already been reduced from their original requests, and town officials are now reviewing additional reductions, including possible staffing cuts, to close the remaining gap.

Brothers said a finalized budget proposal will be presented to the council after those discussions are completed.

Election season approaching

Nomination papers for the June 9 annual town election are now available.

Three Town Council seats will be on the ballot: two at-large seats and one district seat. Two seats each on the Planning Board and School Committee will also be contested.

Town officials are also considering moving one polling location to the AMVETS building as part of a trial effort to eventually consolidate all precinct voting into a single location, pending state approval.

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PHOTOS | from page 1

building. Today, those photographs line the stairways and central areas, offering visitors a glimpse into the school's past.

"They blew a lot of them up big and put them on the walls upstairs and along the stairs so people could look at them," Yelenik explained.

As more photographs were uncovered, organizers realized they had the beginnings of a much larger historical archive. Rather than leaving the photos stored away, they decided to make them accessible to the public.

The photos were gathered together and placed into display racks so visitors could browse through the decades of class portraits. Many of the pictures have also been dated, helping to place them within the school's long timeline.

To expand the collection, organizers partnered with the Palmer Public Library, which has played a key role in preserving and cataloging the images. Library staff scan the photographs and create large reproductions that match the size of the existing displays.

"The library will scan them and make them big for us," Yelenik said. "That way they're all at least a similar size."

The collaboration has also helped organizers track which class years are already represented and which ones are still missing. This prevents duplicates and ensures the collection continues to grow in a meaningful way.

In addition to scanning photos, the project invites community participation in another way. Each photo includes a small card on the back where former students can help identify the people pictured.

"If someone comes in and says, 'That's my class... that's Sally or that's John,' they can actually write those names down," Yelenik said. "People can identify the students."

Over time, organizers hope that more visitors will help fill in the missing details, gradually putting names to the many faces captured in the historic photographs.

The effort gained momentum during a special event held about a year and a half ago, when organizers invited former students and community members to visit the building and bring any class photos they might have.

The event, held in the building's lobby, functioned almost like an informal class reunion. Residents toured the former school, shared stories, and contributed photographs to the growing collection.

"A lot of people came to that and really enjoyed it," Yelenik said.

The school once served children from kindergarten through eighth grade, with two classes per grade level. After graduating, many students went on to attend Converse High School in Palmer.

Because the building educated local children for more than 90 years, the potential number of photographs, and

former students, is enormous. Organizers say they are particularly interested in locating more recent images from the school's later decades, especially from the 1980s.

"We're trying to get the more current ones," Yelenik said, noting that newer photos are often in color.

Anyone who has class photos from Park Street School is encouraged to con-

tact the Palmer Public Library before bringing them in. The library can scan the images and coordinate with organizers to determine whether the class year is already represented.

Although the photo racks were not on display during a recent event at Schoolhouse Commons, they are normally available for visitors to browse.

For many former students, walking into the building again can be a powerful experience.

"A lot of former students come in who haven't been here since they were kids," Yelenik said. "They find their

class, and it's really cool."

Organizers hope to continue expanding the archive and may hold another community event in the future to gather additional photos and stories connected to the historic school.

In the meantime, the photographs serve as a visual reminder of the generations of Palmer children who once filled the classrooms of Park Street School, and whose memories remain preserved on its walls.



1972-73, Grade 6, Teacher Phillip Mozden



1980-81, Grade 6



1973-74, Grade 7, Teacher Kathryn Roy



1977-78, Grade 3A, Teacher Karen Ksieniewicz



Turley photos by Abigail McCoy
Nearly 100 school photos line the halls of the Schoolhouse Commons in between the current shops and in the stairways.



1976-77, Grade 2A



1979-80, Grade 5, Teacher Karen Ksieniewicz



1966-67, Grade 7, Teacher Phillip Mozden

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Obituaries

Maura Crowley Moore

Maura Crowley Moore, 71, died Friday, March 6, 2026 at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, MA. She was born on May 7, 1954, in Palmer, MA, the daughter of Richard and Theresa Crowley.



She was the wife of Robert Moore. They were married on Nov. 11, 1978, at St. Patrick's Church Monson, MA.

Maura attended school in Monson, MA and graduated from Monson High School in 1972. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in 1976 from Westfield State College (University). She taught history and social studies at Monson High School, Stevens High School in Claremont, NH, and Pinkerton Academy in Derry, NH. Maura was the advisor to the class of 2007 at Pinkerton Academy.

Maura enjoyed sewing, decorating, and remodeling her homes in New Hampshire and Florida, and flower gardening. She enjoyed beach time in New Hampshire, Maine, and Florida. Walt Disney World was one of her favorite vacation places, having honeymooned there and making multiple return

visits over the years.

She is survived by Robert Moore of Hampstead, NH, their three children, Rachel Moore and her husband Rishi Parikh of Kennett Square, PA, Courtney Davis and her husband Jon of Wilmington, MA, and Patrick Moore and his wife Katelyn (Harrington) of Franklin, MA, as well as three grandchildren, her brother and sister-in-law Dale and Barbara (Cole) Crowley of Berkley, MA, and her sister and brother-in-law Kathleen and Vincent Wnuk of Lunenburg, MA

A celebration of her life will take place at 2 p.m. on Saturday, March 14 at Jamison's Restaurant located at 472 State Route 111 in Hampstead, NH. Everyone is welcome to join, including family and friends.

Rather than sending flowers, contributions in memory of Maura Moore can be directed to The Dana Farber Cancer Institute or the American Diabetes Association. Cremation Society of NH is assisting the family with arrangements. To view an online memorial, leave a message of condolence, or for more information please visit <https://csnh.com/>.

Cecelia A. Garvan

1941-2026

PALMER — Cecelia "Cece" A. Garvan, born Jan. 27, 1941 in Springfield, passed away peacefully on March 6, 2026 at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield.

Cecelia was a graduate of Palmer High School. After graduating, she worked for Church Company as a bookkeeper and later for Zero Manufacturing in the personnel department, where she formed many lasting relationships and fond memo-

ries over the years. Cece also spent many years working alongside her husband, Garv, tending to the flower shop and greenhouses they owned in Monson.

She was predeceased by her husband, Ronald F. Garvan, as well as her loving parents, Stanley and Amelia (Pietruszki) Salamon.

Cece leaves behind family and friends that will remember her gentle spirit and the warmth she brought to those around her.

A Funeral Mass will be held at Divine Mercy Parish

in Three Rivers on Monday, March 16, 2026 at 10 a.m.. Please gather directly at the church. Burial will take place at a later date.

At Cece's request, in lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to: Saint Patrick's Restoration Fund, PO Box 473, Monson, MA 01057, or a charity of your choice.

Lombard Funeral Home of Monson has been entrusted with the arrangements. For online condolences please visit www.lombardfuneral-home.com

DEATH NOTICES

Cecelia A. Garvan
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Services March 16, 2026
Lombard Funeral Home

Maura Crowley Moore
Died March 6, 2026
Celebration of Life
March 14, 2026
Hampstead, NH

Gerald H. Randall, Sr.
Died Feb. 28, 2026
Beers & Story Palmer
Funeral Home

Stanley P. Slowik
Died October 29, 2025
Visitation March 21, 2026
from 10 to 11 a.m.
Service 11 a.m.
Beers & Story Palmer
Funeral Home

Gerald H. Randall, Sr.



PALMER — Gerald H. Randall, Sr., 87, passed away Feb. 28, 2026 at Baystate Wing Hospital. Born Oct. 29, 1938 in Pittsfield, MA Gerald has been a lifelong resident of Palmer. He proudly served his country in the US Air Force from 1957 to 1961. Gerald was a machine



worker at Pearson Industry as well as Jarvis East for many years. In his leisure, he enjoyed watching New England sports games, most especially football, baseball and basketball. In 2003, he was predeceased by his wife, Emily (Swan) Randall and he leaves behind his children, Ruth Holland

of Springfield, Richard Randall of Westfield, Michael and Mark Randall of Palmer along with seven grandchildren and seven great grandchildren. Gerald also is survived by his sister, Lorraine Gatts of Wilbraham. Besides his parents and wife, Gerald was predeceased by his two children, Gerald Randall Jr and Deborah Randall. Beers & Story Palmer Funeral Home has been entrusted with the arrangements.

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MARKEY | from page 1

the town had again been selected to receive the funding.

The grant is structured as a reimbursement program. Under that arrangement, the town will pay for portions of the fire station work upfront and then submit documentation to the federal government in order to receive reimbursement from the earmarked funds.

Despite the reimbursement structure, local leaders say the funding will still significantly ease the financial burden on the town.

The announcement was formally recognized during a press conference held at the fire station at 2 p.m. on March 6. Alongside Senator Markey were several local and state officials, including representatives from the Monson Select Board, town administration and legislative offices.

Representatives from the offices of Brian Ashe, Angelo J. Puppulo Jr. and Ryan Fattman were also present for the event, along with members of the fire department, town staff and several residents.

In a statement shared on the Town of Monson's official Facebook page, officials

emphasized that the funding represents more than just financial assistance for a construction project.

"This investment represents more than just bricks and mortar," the town states. "It represents a commitment to the safety of our residents, the strength of our community and the support of the men and women who serve in our Fire Department every day."

Town leaders noted that projects of this scale require cooperation among multiple levels of government. Officials credited federal and state partners, local leadership and the Monson Fire Department for working together to secure the funding and advance the project.

The town also highlighted the role of Chief Harris in advocating for the improvements.

"Securing this level of support at this stage reflects Chief Harris's foresight, persistence and tireless advocacy on behalf of the department and the residents we serve," the town said in its statement.

Fire station renovations and expansions are often necessary for departments as equipment, staffing levels and operational demands evolve. Local officials say the

improvements will help ensure that Monson firefighters have the facilities needed to continue serving the community effectively.

Harris noted that the funding arrives at a time when many small Massachusetts communities are facing difficult financial decisions.

"It's a fiscally challenging time for small communities in Massachusetts," Harris said. "Being able to bring back \$1 million to Monson is a huge success."

Town officials say the project will help strengthen public safety services while easing the financial burden on residents.

The event concluded with remarks from officials and a group photo featuring Senator Markey, firefighters and town leaders gathered in front of the station that will soon benefit from the federal investment.

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Public notices

Town of Monson Zoning Board of Appeals LEGAL NOTICE

In accordance with Chapter 40A M.G. L. §.11, the Monson Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing **Thursday, March 26th, 2026 at 7:00 P.M.** in the Select Board meeting room at the Town Administration Building, 110 Main Street on the application of Ronald Florek 149 Stafford Road, Monson, MA for a special permit as provided by §6.6 Earth Removal of the Monson Zoning Bylaws to conduct an Earth Removal operation. The property is zoned Rural Residential and located at 149 Stafford Road, Map 80, Parcel 21 and Map 101 Parcel 2. A copy of the application is on file in the Office of the Town Clerk, Zoning Board of Appeals and is available for viewing during regular office hours.

David Beaudoin, Chairman
03/12, 03/19/2026

(SEAL) COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS LAND COURT DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT 23 SM 000281 ORDER OF NOTICE

TO: **MICHAEL G. ALLARD and MARCELLA ALLARD** and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 §3901 (*et seq.*):

LUSO FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in 4 Mechanic Street, Monson, Hampden County, Massachusetts, given by Michael G. Allard and Marcella Allard to Luso Federal Credit Union, dated October 30, 1997, and recorded in Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book 10058, Page 375, has/have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendant's/Defendants' Servicemembers status.

If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above-mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at **Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108** on or before **04/06/2026** or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of non-compliance with the Act.

Witness, GORDON H. PIPER, Chief Justice of this Court on 2/20/2026.

Attest:
Deborah J. Patterson
Recorder
03/12/2026

Legal Advertisement TOWN OF MONSON Monson Bellman Museum HVAC Replacement

The Town of Monson invites sealed Bids for the Monson Bellman Museum HVAC replacement project. The project includes the furnishing of all labor, equipment and materials required to complete the replacement of two HVAC units and ductwork of the Monson Bellman Museum. This project is being funded through the Town's Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding.

Contract documents, including specifications, may be obtained electronically beginning March 11, 2026 at 9:00 AM by contacting Penny Gustafson Pgustafson@monson-ma.gov at the Town of Monson.

All bids for this project are subject to the provisions and minimum wage rates required by M.G.L. c.149, §§26 to 27H, inclusive. All applicable Federal minimum wage rates and applicable Federal labor standards shall also apply pursuant to the Davis-Bacon Act. When both State and Federal wage rates are applicable, the higher rate must be paid.

The Awarding Authority encourages, to the extent feasible, the use of minority-, women- and disadvantaged-owned businesses for work under this contract. Bidders on the work shall make a good faith effort to achieve the goals of the Federal Minority and Women's Business Enterprise (MBE/WBE) policy regarding utilization of MBEs and WBEs

in order to be deemed a responsible bidder.

Bid security in the form of a bid bond, certified or cashier's check, payable to the Town of Monson, is required in a dollar amount of not less than five percent (5%) of the total bid amount. A payment bond for 50% of the total contract price, issued by a satisfactory surety company shall be required by the successful bidder.

The Town of Monson reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to accept proposals deemed to be in the best interest of the Town, and to waive any informalities or irregularities in the bids received. Bids may not be withdrawn within 30 days of the bid opening.

The Town of Monson, through its Selectboard, reserves the right to waive any informality in the bidding or to reject any and all bids in total or in part as may be deemed to serve the best interest of the Town. The lowest qualified, responsible bidder shall be awarded the contract.

The Town of Monson will not be responsible for any costs incurred by a bidder in preparing and submitting a bid in response to this IFB.

The Town of Monson Select Board is the Awarding and Contracting Authority.

Bids may be changed or withdrawn prior to the bid opening, but not within the sixty (6) days subsequent to the bid opening, by submission of such a change in writing in a sealed envelope, identifying the submitting party and indicating that it contains a correction of the bid for the Monson Bellman Museum HVAC replacement project.

A pre-bid site walkthrough will be held at Monson Bellman Museum, 200 Main Street, Monson, Massachusetts on March 19, 2026 10:00 a.m. The building will be available for inspection at that time.

Questions regarding this procurement directed to Jennifer Wolowicz at Jwolowicz@monson-ma.gov.

Hard copy bids for the Monson Bellman Museum HVAC replacement project for the Town of Monson, Massachusetts, must be received by the Town of Monson, 110 Main Street, Monson, MA 01057, Office of Building Department 4:00 PM, on Wednesday, April 1, 2026.

03/12, 03/19/2026

Legal Notice Public Hearing Town of Wales

The Board of Selectmen will hold a public hearing at the Wales Senior Center, 85 Main Street, Wales, MA on **March 23, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.**, to consider a request by Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid and Verizon New England, Inc to allow National Grid to install 7 JO Poles on Sizer Dr and relocate 6 JO Poles on Sizer Dr beginning at a point approximately 350 feet southeast of the centerline of the intersection of MA-19 and Sizer Dr and continuing approximately 3,200 feet in a southeastward direction. Install new Poles 2-50, 3-50, 4-50, 5-50, 8-50, 11-50, 13-50. Relocate the following Poles: P-2, 40' NW - P-6, 50' SE - P-8, 10' N - P-9, 80' S - P-11, 30' N - P-13, 45' NE. The documents and maps related to this matter are available for review from the Executive Secretary during regular business hours.

Wales Board of Selectmen
03/12, 03/19/2026

(SEAL) COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS LAND COURT DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT Docket No. 26 SM 000618 ORDER OF NOTICE

TO: **Kathy Monaco a/k/a Kathy Marie Monaco a/k/a Kathy Wesniak**

and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 §3901 (*et seq.*):

U.S. Bank Trust National Association, not in its individual capacity but solely as owner trustee for RCAF Acquisition Trust

claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Palmer, numbered **15 Colonial Street**, given by **Kathy Monaco to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for**

Mortgage Lenders Network USA, Inc., its successors and assigns, dated May 17, 2006, and recorded in Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book 15927, Page 1, and now held by the Plaintiff by assignment, has/have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendant's/Defendants' Servicemembers status.

If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above-mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at **Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108** on or before **04/13/2026** or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of non-compliance with the Act.

Witness, GORDON H. PIPER, Chief Justice of this Court on 2/25/2026.

Attest:
Deborah J. Patterson
Recorder
03/12/2026

TOWN OF PALMER TOWN COUNCIL NOTICE OF PASSAGE

On March 9, 2026, the Palmer Town Council passed Ordinance 2026-02, that the Code of Ordinances of the Town of Palmer, be amended to add ARTICLE XXIV § 171.127 - Temporary Moratorium on Battery Energy Storage Systems. The moratorium shall be in effect through May 1st, 2026, or until such time as the town adopts Zoning Ordinance amendments that regulate Battery Energy Storage Systems as a principal use, whichever occurs earlier. During the moratorium period, the Town shall undertake a planning process to address the potential impacts of Battery Energy Storage Systems in the Town as a principal use in the Town, and to consider the State's model zoning language regarding Battery Energy Storage Systems and shall consider adopting a new Zoning Ordinance in response to these new issues. A complete text of this Ordinance is available at the office of Town Manager and Town Clerk, 4417 Main Palmer, MA 01069.

Town Council of Palmer, MA
03/12/2026

TOWN OF PALMER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT Request For Proposals for Public Social Service Programs

The Town of Palmer is seeking proposals from qualified public social service organizations that need funding assistance to provide needed services to Palmer residents. Proposals may be included as part of an application through the FY26 Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC), Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG). Eligible activities include a wide range of public social services that build economic security and self-sufficiency, as well as activities that address homelessness and workforce development and seek to build social capital, increase economic mobility, and enhance civic engagement. Any proposed project or activity must also primarily benefit low to moderate-income residents of the town.

Palmer may choose to fund all, any, or none of the proposals submitted and only review the most responsive and responsible proposals. The Town reserves the right to reject any proposal that is not in the best interest of the Town or the CDBG program. Agencies or organizations identified for inclusion in the grant will be required to submit additional information as part of the full FY26 CDBG application to be submitted by April 21, 2026. Programs funded by the MA EOHLC are anticipated to begin in the late summer of 2026. For more information or to receive a proposal request form, please contact John Latour at (413) 283-2614 or email jlatour@townofpalmer.com.

Proposals must be submitted to the Palmer Community Development Office, 4417 Main Street, Palmer, MA 01069 by Tuesday, March 25, 2026, at 11:00 AM.
03/12/2026

TOWN OF BRIMFIELD PUBLIC HEARING

The Brimfield Select Board will hold a public hearing on the following pole and wire locations petition filed by National Grid on **Monday, March 23, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.** for the following:

Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid. requests permission to locate poles,

wires, and fixtures, including the necessary sustaining and protecting fixtures, along and across the following public way:

Shaw Road
Reason: Shaw Road – Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid to install 1 SO Pole on Shaw Rd beginning at a point approximately 896 ft southwest of the centerline of the intersection of Little Alum Rd.

Persons with an interest in this public hearing are asked to appear at the Brimfield Elementary School, 22 Wales Road, Brimfield, MA on the date and time affixed to this notice.

Martin J. Kelly
Select Board, Chairperson
Town of Brimfield
03/05, 03/12/2026

PALMER PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 40A, Section 11, M.G.L. the Palmer Planning Board will hold a public hearing on **Monday, March 30th, 2026 at 7:00 PM** in the Town Administration Building, 4417 Main Street, Palmer, MA.

The applicant, RDL Associates, LLC, is seeking a Special Permit and Site Plan Approval as required by section 171.73 of the Palmer Zoning Ordinance to remove earth materials from the property located off Palmer Street, Bondsville, also known as Assessor's Map 24 Lot 66.

A copy of the application may be inspected at the Planning Department office in the Town Administration Building Monday through Thursday 8:30am-4:30pm.

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

This notice shall also be posted on the Massachusetts Newspaper Publishers Association's (MNPA) website:

(<http://masspublicnotices.org>).
Norman Czech, Chairman
03/12, 03/19/2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758

Docket No. HD26P0324EA
Estate of:
John W Pisiakowski
Date of Death: 01/09/2026
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:
A Petition for S/A - **Formal Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Ann E Meilus of Barre, 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 **Cynthia T, Dugas of Brimfield, MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 03/24/2026. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

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

WITNESS, Hon. **Claudine T. Stoudemire**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: February 25, 2026
Rosemary A Saccomani,
Register of Probate
03/12/2026

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413-297-5886 or dflynn@turley.com

Hardwick Crossing Country Club

GILBERTVILLE - The former Dutton Country Club, a 9-hole golf course, reopened at 262 Lower Road, known as "Hardwick Crossing" and has a five-star quality restaurant without the price tag.

Hardwick Crossing golf course opened in July 2022 with a menu of memberships packages to suit a range of guests and family needs. This endeavor fulfilled owner Kenneth Unacted's dream of reopening the former golf course.

The newly renovated restaurant, known by regulars as "The Clubhouse," opened in September 2022 and provides a full-service bar and gourmet food. Choices include saute dishes, clam chowder, prime rib, fish and chips Buffalo chicken dip, Buffalo tenders, Gnocchi, Bourbon steak tips and salmon.

The executive chef is Thomas Simons. He was at Eiricos Brick Oven Pizzeria for eight years as well as Lower Hill Botanical Gardens for many years. Their Sous Chef Neil Anderson took over that position when Simons got promoted to executive chef. Anderson comes from Starbridge Hot Hotel and Erika's and been at Hardwick Crossing from the beginning.

A 3,000 square foot banquet venue, which seats 170 people is open for special events and weddings. It has a panoramic view of the golf course. Chef Jeff Nicholas assists in the regular kitchen and runs the events and wedding kitchen. They also have outdoor seating for 125 overlooking the golf course.

The motto they follow at Hardwick Crossing is ingredients are "from the sea, from the table" and "from the family," so fresh and local products are a top priority.

General Manager Courtney Letourneau said the restaurant has food delivered six days a week. Alex Symons is Assistant Manager and Cassandra Hobbs, Bar Manager. They offer products and produce from Gibson Farms, Meadow Meats, West Boylston Seafood, local farm stands, Five Year Farms.

The restaurant is open Sunday through Thursday from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Friday and Saturday 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. People may follow them on Facebook and Instagram at [hardwickcrossing.com](https://www.facebook.com/hardwickcrossing).

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SUMMER CAMP

Check Out These Great Camps!

The benefits of attending summer camp

Summer camp is something akin to a rite of passage for millions of youngsters each year. Many adults look back fondly on their experiences at summer camp, often crediting such times as formative periods in their lives.

Summer camp benefits children in myriad ways. Recognition of the many advantages of attending summer camp can serve as a great reminder of just how fun it can be for children to spend their time away from school at a camp of their choosing.

• Campers continue to socialize throughout summer.

Socializing isn't just for the school year. While children in high school might be independent enough to come and go with their friends during summer break, kids who are still in elementary school or middle school might not be old enough to handle such freedom. That can make it hard to stay in touch with friends, which in turn can contribute to feelings of boredom and loneliness. Camp provides ample opportunities for young children to socialize during a time of year when they might not see their school friends as often as they're used to.

• Campers can expand their horizons. Though some summer camps are exclusive to residents of certain communities, many tend to feature children from numerous towns or municipalities. Such camps provide an opportunity for campers to expand their horizons by engaging with youngsters who come from different backgrounds. Indeed, the Graduate School of Education at Harvard University notes that summer camp may be the first time children spend substantial amounts of time with people whose backgrounds differ from their own.

• Camp can get kids off their devices. Modern children are growing up in a digital world, and parents know how hard it can be to get kids to put down their devices and get outdoors. But the key to making that pivot could be access to outdoor play spaces. A 2025 study from researchers at the University of Michigan published in the journal Health and Place found that efforts to reduce kids' screen time are more successful when children are given a chance to play outside. Many summer camps are structured around outdoor play, making them a

potentially invaluable ally as parents seek to help children cut back on the time they spend using their devices. Children who do not attend camp and live in households where both parents work or in single-parent households where Mom or Dad works may be forced to spend much of summer indoors, which could increase the frequency with which they turn to devices to occupy their time.

• Camp adds structure to summer days. Once a school year ends, the structure a school day provides vanishes into thin air. Couple that with extracurricular

activities that go on hiatus during summer vacation, and kids accustomed to structure are left with little to do and no need to schedule their time. That can add an aimlessness to summer days. Camp can provide the structure kids are accustomed to but still offer a break from responsibilities like homework or the commitments required of extracurricular activities.

There's no shortage of benefits to enrolling youngsters in summer camp, where kids can socialize, grow and get off their devices while engaged in structured but stress-free activities.

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- July 13-17, ROBLOX Coders (ages 8-10, 11-14)
- July 6-10 and 13-17, Fun Bites with Chef Swanigan (ages 9-16)
- July 20-24 and 27-31, Around the world with Chef Swanigan (ages 9-16)
- July 6-10 and 13-17, Cooking without Borders with Chez Vargas-Gonzalez (ages 9-16)
- July 20-24 and 27-31, Passport to Flavors with Chef Vargas-Gonzalez (ages 9-16)

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