

The Journal Register

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A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com April 9, 2026 | Vol. CLXXV, No. 11 | \$1.00 www.journalregister.turley.com

MONSON



Turley photo by Abigail McCoy

Author Rob Buyea started off by saying that he talks to kids who read his books all over the world, even as far as Turkey.

Students welcome Author Rob Buyea

By Abigail McCoy
amccoy@turley.com

MONSON – Students at Granite Valley School had a memorable opportunity on April 6 as they welcomed acclaimed children’s author Rob Buyea for a special in-school visit, bringing to life a novel many had spent months studying in depth.

Best known for his book “Because of Mr. Terupt,” Buyea met with fifth grade

students for a 45-minute presentation in the school’s auditorium, followed by a meet-and-greet and smaller writing workshops throughout the day during their ELA class. The visit was the culmination of a months-long academic effort that blended literacy instruction with student initiative and community support.

The event itself was

AUTHOR | page 8

MONSON

Budget agreed by Board

Tri-Board reaches budget consensus despite \$380K gap

By Abigail McCoy
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MONSON – Town officials reached a fragile consensus on the Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) budget Monday night, agreeing to level-fund municipal departments while supporting a 1.9% increase for schools—despite a projected shortfall of roughly \$380,000 still unresolved.

The April 6 tri-board meeting brought together the Finance Committee, Select Board, and School Committee for a wide-ranging and, at times, tense discussion on how to balance competing needs amid rising fixed costs and limited revenue growth.

From modest gap to major deficit

Early projections suggested the town was close to a balanced budget. Finance officials initially estimated a shortfall of just under \$20,000 under a level-funded scenario excluding fixed costs.

“The projection... would leave us with a shortfall of just under \$20,000,” one of-

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MONSON

Library prepares for annual epic craft swap

By Abigail McCoy
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MONSON – The Monson Free Library is once again inviting the community to take part in a creative and sustainable tradition, as it hosts its Fourth Annual Craft Swap this April.

Library Assistant Director Rebecca Sawyer shared details about the upcoming event, which encourages residents to donate unused craft supplies and, in turn, pick up new materials

at no cost.

Donation days for the event are scheduled from April 4 through April 9, giving community members several opportunities to drop off items. According to Sawyer, the response so far has been encouraging.

“[Donations] started this past Saturday, and we have a good amount of stuff already,” Sawyer said, noting that contributions will continue throughout the designated days.

The Craft Swap itself

will take place on April 11 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. inside the library. Participants will be able to browse a wide selection of donated materials and take what they can use for their own projects; ranging from fabrics and yarn to art supplies and other creative items.

Now in its fourth year, the event has grown into a popular offering at the library, combining community engagement with environ-

SWAP | page 8



Turley photo by Abigail McCoy

The DeSantis Community Room is filled with table and craft supplies as people drop off donations to be sorted.

MONSON

School funding debate highlights long-term sustainability concerns

By Abigail McCoy
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MONSON – A detailed presentation from school officials during Monday’s Tri-Board meeting underscored growing concerns about the long-term sustainability of education funding, even as the district reduced its budget request to a 1.9% increase.

Superintendent and school leaders described the reduced request as a compromise built on temporary fixes and financial risks, warning it cannot be sustained in future years.

Level Service Changes

The school department’s original “level service” budget called for a 5.9% increase. That figure was reduced after

internal discussions and targeted cuts.

“The 5.9%... was our level service ask,” school officials said. “But [we] prioritized reductions that could potentially be made.”

Those reductions included:

- Cuts to office, instructional, and postage supplies
- Reduced funding for

special education summer programming

- Cuts to curriculum and software
- Eliminating a retiring library aide position
- Reducing stipended curriculum leadership roles

Some planned increases, such as custodial and facility maintenance, were reversed despite expectations of over-

spending in the current year.

Officials emphasized these were not recommended cuts but necessary compromises.

Risky assumptions Built into budget

To reach the 1.9% figure, the district also made several financial assumptions that carry risk:

- Reduced expectations

for federal Title I funding (down \$27,000)

- Assumed increased state rural aid, which is not guaranteed
- Eliminated a reserve for out-of-district student placements
- Lowered projected utility increases from 26% to 20%

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BRIMFIELD

Hitchcock Academy expands programming with new classes

By Abigail McCoy
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BRIMFIELD – From hands-on weaving workshops to outdoor concerts and community fundraisers, Hitchcock Free Academy is entering 2026 with an expanded slate of programming aimed at engaging residents of all ages and skill levels.

At the center of the academy’s latest offerings is a new rag rug weaving class, described by instructor Trisha O’Brien as both an accessible introduction to textile arts and a creative way to repurpose old materials.

“This is a good beginner project,” O’Brien said. “It’s a way to utilize the floor looms that have arrived here, and it gives people a chance to learn a different type of weaving.”

The class, currently in its first week, is being run as a pilot program designed to introduce participants to

floor loom weaving; a more involved process than some of the academy’s previous textile offerings. O’Brien explained that the technique incorporates elements of planning, pattern work, and even basic math, while still remaining approachable for newcomers.

Participants are encouraged to bring their own fabrics, which are cut or torn into strips and woven into functional pieces such as rugs, table runners, or placemats. The use of personal or repurposed textiles adds another layer of meaning to the finished products.

“It makes it more personal,” O’Brien said. “People can bring in heirloom fabrics or just materials they don’t know what to do with and turn them into something usable.”

The rag rug class is part of a broader expansion of fiber arts programming at the

academy. Previous offerings have included inkle weaving, and additional classes, such as flat loom weaving, are planned. O’Brien said she hopes to continue building on the program if interest remains strong.

“There’s so much we can do on these looms,” she said. “If this goes well, I’d love to offer more classes.”

According to Executive Director Cindy Skowrya, the weaving courses are just one piece of a growing lineup of educational and recreational opportunities.

“We have a bunch of new classes coming up,” Skowrya said. “The weaving classes are ongoing, but we’re also

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Turley photos by Abigail McCoy
Above, a previous project being shown as an example. Left, Trisha O’Brien in front of the looms for teaching rag rug weaving.



Students participated in financial literacy fair

By Paula Ouimette
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WARE – Over 250 students from Ware, Palmer and Belchertown high schools participated in Country Bank's annual financial literacy fair, Credit for Life.

This event was held in the gymnasium of Ware Jr./Sr. High School last Thursday morning, giving seniors valuable tools and information to make healthy financial choices in early adulthood.

Jodie Gerulaitis, First Vice President of Community Relations at Country Bank, welcomed the students to Credit for Life, and explained what each booth at the fair represented, and how the students could benefit from the experience. Each booth is manned by Country Bank employees and other community volunteers.

"Take the opportunity to talk to the volunteers and get the most out of this," she said.

Gerulaitis has been a strong supporter in teaching financial literacy through her role at Country Bank, especially to young people. She has been active in supporting a bill that would make financial literacy a mandatory graduation requirement for high school students.

After receiving their careers, salaries and student loan debt, the students visited the Credit booth to get their randomly assigned credit scores. A low credit score can prevent the students from qualifying for purchases at the other booths.

"You're going to see the challenges and some of the restrictions," Gerulaitis said.

Luckily, at Credit for Life, students can visit a booth to answer financial literacy questions to help raise their credit score.

Belchertown High School seniors Evan Perkins, Adam O'Rourke and Thomas Normandeau learned that a good credit score can help when financing the purchase of a car, or finding a place to live.

"Credit score mattered more than I thought," Perkins said.

After finding housing, transportation and insurance, Perkins realized his salary left him with a small budget to purchase other essentials, such as clothing.

"I should spend less money on clothes," he said.

Perkins selected a career as a video production editor, which is something he already has experience with in real life, working with a friend to shoot and edit music videos.

O'Rourke and Normandeau also chose careers similar to what they will be pursuing after graduation, as a linesmen and plumber, re-



Palmer High School seniors Dylan Doherty, Matthew Kirby and Gavin Smola all selected careers in accounting at Country Bank's Credit for Life.



Ware High School seniors Sophia Rheaume and Maia Lamothe participated in Country Bank's Credit for Life last Thursday.

spectively.

"You've got to really figure out your expenses," O'Rourke said. "Try to save as much money as you can."

O'Rourke added that food cost a lot of money, and was a greater expense than he expected.

Normandeau said his budget was impacted by the vehicle he choose to purchase, which was a less cost-efficient truck.

Students were given opportunities for "Fun, Fun, Fun," where they could spend their money on "wants" versus "needs," allowing them the chance to budget for the exciting extras in life, while still maintaining their financial health.

The "Reality Check" wheel of fortune had students spinning to receive an unexpected financial burden, or blessing. They also had chances to work part-time jobs to help boost their income and pay for their debts and expenses.

Other booths handled housing, transportation, insurance, furniture, utilities, savings and retirement, food and nutrition and clothing.

Ware High School seniors Sophia Rheaume, Damian Brace and Daniel Ramirez all selected careers in healthcare, with Rheaume as a psychologist, Brace as an occupational therapist and Ramirez as a pharmacist.

Brace and Ramirez decided to become roommates in order to share living expenses.

Ware High School senior Maia Lamothe selected a career as an electrical engineer, as it was the closest to her future career as a chemical engineer.

Palmer High School seniors Dylan Doherty, Matthew Kirby and Gavin Smola all selected careers as accountants.



Jodie Gerulaitis, First Vice President of Community Relations at Country Bank, welcomed students to Credit for Life.



Volunteers Amie Mirecki, Kathy Radisic and Donna Holden helped staff the Clothing booth.



The "Fun, Fun, Fun" booth tempted students to spend money on fun purchases.

Smola said food and housing were both large expenses in his budget, and Doherty said having a roommate saved him a lot of money.

Kirby put his financial literacy to the test to raise his 575 credit score up to over 700.

This marks the 15th year Country Bank has offered Credit for Life to area seniors, and the first year for interim Superintendent Michael Wood.

"It's really important," Wood said.

Wood said the temptation of spending can have a neg-

ative impact on many young people, especially those on their own for the first time.

"We have to understand what they [the temptations] are and how they impact our credit for life," he said.

About Country Bank Established in 1850, Country Bank has a rich history of supporting personal and business banking customers through financial solutions with FDIC and DIF insurance for added security.

Country Bank is a full-service \$2.2 billion mutual community bank serving Central and Western Massachusetts with 16 banking cen-



Country Bank volunteer Caroline Awebwa assisted students at the Credit booth.



Country Bank volunteer David Micka helped students at his booth.

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CORRECTIONS The Journal Register will gladly correct factual errors that appear in this paper. Corrections or clarifications will always appear on Page 2 or 3. To request a correction, send 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

Are you having difficulty communicating with your partner, struggling with boundaries, and healthy relationships?

We invite you to join us Friday afternoons from 1-2:30 pm to explore these topics and more.

This group will be held in zoom, is educational, confidential, and free. Please contact Pat James 413-726-8661.

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Breakfast with the Easter Bunny

PALMER – St. Stan’s of Three Rivers Annual Breakfast with the Easter Bunny was once again a huge success. The event included a delicious breakfast of pancakes, sausage, and a variety of drinks. The Easter Bunny made a special visit to say hello and take pictures with the children.

In addition to the food

and visit from the bunny, families were able to enjoy games, crafts, and raffles. A new addition this year was the Palmer Domestic Violence Task Force table. Crystal Rondeau, Palmer DVTF Coordinator, gave out Easter themed buckets, while also answering questions and providing materials regarding the task force.



Submitted photos



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Viewpoints



I'll be 65 soon and working. Must I enroll in Medicare?

Dear Rusty:

I will be 65 in October and I am working full-time. My goal is to work until age 67, which is my Full Retirement Age or until age 70.

I heard I have to apply for Medicare Part A only. Is this true or will I be penalized? And do I have to go to the Social Security office to do this or can I do it online? And then will they be still giving me my Medicare through the next five years of working or do I have to pay for something? I will have my own healthcare insurance. Thank you for your help.

Signed: Confused

Dear Confused:

There are two things you should be aware of:

You do not need to claim Social Security benefits when you enroll in Medicare

You do not need to enroll in Medicare at age 65 if you have "creditable" healthcare coverage from your employer, "creditable" is a group plan with at least 20 participants.

Thus, it is perfectly okay for you to delay taking your Social Security benefits until age 67 (your SS full retirement age) or even until age 70 when you will get the maximum SS benefit you are entitled to. And if you now have "creditable" healthcare coverage from your employer, you can delay enrolling in Medicare until such time as your employer's healthcare coverage ends. When you stop working, you will enter a Medicare Special Enrollment Period, during which you can enroll in Medicare without incurring a Late Enrollment Penalty.

Whenever you decide to enroll in Medicare or Social Security, you will not need to visit your local SSA office to do so. You can enroll in Medicare either online at www.ssa.gov/medicare/sign-up or you can call SSA at 1-800-772-1213 to make an appointment to enroll in Medicare on the telephone.

Similarly, when you are ready to claim Social Security, you can do so online at www.ssa.gov/apply or you can call 1-800-772-1213 to make an appointment to apply for SS over the phone. To apply online, however, you should first create your personal "my Social Security" online account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount. Creating your online SS account now at age 65 will facilitate later online enrollment and will also provide you with an estimate of your SS benefit amounts at various ages – e.g., now at age 65, at your FRA of 67 or at age 70. And that should help you decide when it is best for you to claim Social Security.

You should verify with your employer's health insurance provider that they don't require you to enroll in Medicare at age 65. Most employer plans don't, but some do.

You don't need to enroll in Medicare Part A or Part B now as long as your employer's coverage is creditable. And it's okay to enroll in Medicare a couple of months prior to your employer's creditable healthcare coverage ending when you stop working, requesting that your Medicare coverage starts when your employer's healthcare ends. This will ensure that there is no gap in your healthcare coverage. If your employer coverage is creditable, you will not suffer a Medicare Late Enrollment Penalty for enrolling after age 65.

If you claim Social Security benefits at any time prior to your FRA and are still working, you will be subject to Social Security's Annual Earnings Test, which limits how much you can earn before they take away some of your benefits. The AET lasts until you reach your FRA (67), after which you can earn as much as you like without your SS benefits being affected.

Whenever you claim your Social Security benefits, you will be required to take Medicare Part A, which is coverage for inpatient hospitalization services. Medicare Part A is free because you are also eligible for Social Security. But you don't need to enroll in Part A at age 65 unless you also claim Social Security.

Medicare Part B, which is coverage for outpatient healthcare services (doctors, medical tests, etc.), is optional if you have creditable employer coverage as explained above. You do not need to enroll in Medicare Part B, for which there is a monthly premium of \$202.90 in 2026 until your employer's creditable healthcare coverage ends, even if you claim Social Security earlier.

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.



The ins and outs of forsythia

Each year as forsythia bursts into bloom, I am reminded of my dad.

You see, this spring harbinger always blooms right around his birthday. This year would've been a monumental one, as he would have celebrated 100 years!

Although most landscape professionals aren't all that fond of forsythia, it holds a special place in my heart. When it is in full bloom our eyes are lifted away from the still drab lawn and the bare borders to bask at its branches of yellow flowers.

If you are lucky enough to have forsythia growing in your yard, perhaps you will find the following facts interesting, straight from the archives.

Forsythia can be forced into bloom indoors. While it is a little late in the season to fully appreciate this technique, it can easily be achieved now.

As long as temperatures are above freezing, you can harvest the branches. Simply prepare them as you would any other cut flower by removing side shoots that would be under water in the vase. Fill the vase with hot water and just prior to insertion recut the end of the stem on a 45 degree angle to expose as much surface area as possible.

We use hot water because it will move through the plant's vascular system quickly, hydrating it fully.

Place the vase in indirect, bright light, and change the water a couple of times a week. Expect blooms in a

matter of days this time of year; if you harvest stems in early March it will take a bit longer to enjoy the flowers.

Forsythia buds are tender. While the shrub itself is hardy to Zone 4, the buds are reliably hardy to only Zone 5.

After an especially cold winter you may see forsythia in half-bloom! The tops of the shrub may be devoid of blossoms, but the bottom chock-full. This generally happens because the lower portion of the shrub was insulated under a snow bank or leaf mound.

Likewise, the blossoms are also tender – sometimes reduced to mush the morning after a hard freeze.

Forsythia flowers are borne on the previous year's wood. With that in mind, prune as soon as possible after flowering.

Simply cut the oldest stems all the way down to the ground. You can safely remove up to one-third of the bush in a single pruning session. New growth will emerge over the summer and provide blossoms for next season.

While some books recommend cutting overgrown forsythias down to the ground completely, in my experience, this advice is drastic. The plant will need a couple of years to recover from that approach.

Sometimes you see forsythia pruned into balls

or stiff hedges. While some homeowners consider this look appealing, I like to see the bush a little less tame.

It's also hard to guarantee flowers throughout such a manicured shape; sometimes part will bloom and the rest will be just foliage. Kind of a weird look.

Propagating forsythias is easy! Do you want more of a good thing? Try layering your forsythias. Take a long, pliable branch and bend it to the ground a foot or so from the main plant. Cover the bend with soil and secure it with a brick or heavy stone. In a few months' time it will root, and by the following spring the new plant can easily be separated from its mother.

Forsythia is easily grown. Perhaps this is why we see so many forsythias in the landscape.

While it will undoubtedly bloom best in full sun, once established, it can tolerate all but the driest of soils and adapts to a range in pH. Also, it is bothered by few pests or diseases.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 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.



In the Garden

by Roberta McQuaid



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

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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.



Eastern Phoebe

I saw an Eastern Phoebe on March 28, my first sighting of 2026.

The Eastern Phoebe is a plump songbird with a medium-length tail. It appears large-headed for a bird of its size. The head often appears flat on top, but phoebes



By Ellenor Downer

sometimes raise the feathers up into a peak. Like most small flycatchers, they have short, thin bills used for catching insects. The Eastern Phoebe slightly larger than a tufted titmouse.

The Eastern Phoebe is brownish-gray above and off-white below, with a dusky wash to the sides of the breast. The head is typically the darkest part of the upper parts. Birds in fresh fall plumage show faint yellow on the belly and whitish

edging on the folded wing feathers.

The Eastern Phoebe generally perches low in trees or on fence lines. Phoebes are very active, making short flights to capture insects and very often returning to the same perch. They make sharp "peep" calls in addition to their familiar "Phoebe" vocalizations. When perched, Eastern Phoebes wag their tails down and up frequently.

POETRY CORNER

April in Marathon

*Who hears now the early rising dawn –
When grown still the drums to Concord-town ;
Than cheers a course through Boston Common –
And history in deeper ground?*

*It's all got a bit out-of-hand
To eclipse what happened here by another name:
Though runners sweat in uniforms gallant –
And it's a long distance from Marathon...
Where if not presnt to and embattled hour –
Then who will that would destroy all our towers?*

*Not run when steadfast needed stand:
To show the colors over the land?
So long, neglected, the day is filled-in –
And, in recent forms, violence wins.*

*This following of athletics, our renown –
Above what died to have a beginning.
But brave, my brethren, bullets won't hurt –
Tho' fast they fly past your shirt;
Yet, when last remember that we were men?
And April ran through Marathon.*

– Charles Barnes

Opacum announces more green, less screen challenge

STURBRIDGE – Are you looking for a fun way to celebrate Earth Month and America's 250th Anniversary? Join Opacum Land Trust for the 2nd annual More Green, Less Screen Letterboxing Challenge sponsored by Southbridge Credit Union. Leave your devices behind and get OUTSIDE this April vacation week! This free event will take place from April 18 through April 26. New this year – in celebration

of America's 250th anniversary, letterboxes will be hidden at local historic sites in addition to properties conserved by Opacum Land Trust.

What is letterboxing and how does it work? It's like a treasure hunt! Form a team with your family, your friends, your book club, or even your dog – EVERYONE is welcome to participate! There will be letterboxes for all abilities and clues will include an estimated distance

and difficulty level so that you can choose challenges that are right for you.

At the beginning of the week, you will receive a set of clues to hidden letterboxes on conserved properties and at local historic sites in Brimfield, Holland, Monson, Southbridge, and Sturbridge. Once you locate a letterbox, open it up to find a unique rubber stamp, ink pad, and a logbook. Finders bring their own logbook (any notebook

will work) and collect the letterbox stamps.

Find at least 3 boxes between throughout the week and you will be entered in a drawing for prizes from local businesses including Southbridge Credit Union, the WooSox, the Thunderbirds, The Zoo at Forest Park, Ohoodles of Doodles Art Studio, and more.

Grab your kids, your dog, or a hiking partner, bring your walking shoes, and dis-

cover the conserved properties and historic sites in your own backyard. Perfect for all ages and abilities! For more information and to register for this free event visit www.OpacumLT.org/events/ or call our office at 508-347-9144.

About Opacum Land Trust:

Opacum Land Trust is a regional, non-profit land conservation organization that protects land, water, and wildlife for current and fu-

ture generations. Founded in 2000, Opacum currently protects over 4,000 acres of land and is actively working to protect more land across south-central Massachusetts.

Reach out to us at Opacum Land Trust, PO Box 233, Sturbridge, MA 01566; info@opacumlt.org, (508) 347-9144 and check out our website for events, properties you can visit, and ways to get involved at www.OpacumLT.org

Keep Homestead to open April 12

MONSON – The Keep Homestead Museum on 35 Ely Road in Monson, will open for the season on April 12 with the program Indian Baskets of the Northeastern Woodlands with Lorraine German.

Lorraine, owner of Mad River Antiques in North Granby, Conn. will discuss the development of basket making among Native Americans in New England and

New York including their stylistic differences.

This program starts at 1:30 p.m. in the barn and is open to the public free of charge through donations are welcome. The museum will be open for viewing of new displays and for light refreshments from 1 to 3:30 p.m.

The Friends of Keep Homestead Museum meeting will take place after the Open House at 3:30 p.m.

Knox Trail event scheduled for April 18

PALMER – Knox Trail 250 Event will be held Saturday, April 18 at the Palmer Public Library.

1976 Quilt on display - 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Students from Palmer High School Class of 1978, as well as other Massachusetts towns along the Henry Knox Trail, submitted embroidered squares to become

part of this commemorative quilt project. This venture was organized by Palmer's Bicentennial Committee. The quilt will remain on display until library closing at 2 p.m.

Dennis Picard Knox Trail presentation - 11 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Local Historian, Dennis Picard will share details of

the 1775/1776 Henry Knox wintry expedition as it passed through the Massachusetts town of North Egremont through Springfield, Palmer, and on to Boston. Though a piece of our local lore, some parts of this saga are still debated and remain controversial. Dennis has a personal connection with this event in our history, as he participated in one portion of the recreation of this

trek during the bicentennial of 1976. Please join us for this special presentation and learn more about this daring mission.

These programs are free to the public, but space is limited and registration is requested. Register by visiting: www.palmerlibrary.org/events Drop-ins welcome if space allows. We hope to see you there.

Mass Button Show set for Saturday

THREE RIVERS – Massachusetts State Button Society's spring meeting will be hosted by the Metropolitan and Monson Button Clubs on Saturday, April 11 at the Amvets Post 74 on Main St. in Three Rivers from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The public is invited to attend the day's activities and to purchase buttons and button related items from 9 am to noon and from 1:30

p.m. to 3 p.m. There will be no button sales during the break from noon to 1:30 p.m. as lunch, a business meeting, and auction will take place.

Morning visitors will be treated to coffee and refreshments provided by the hosting club; bring your own brown bag lunch, and dessert will be provided. There is no admission fee, and all are welcome.



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

April 10: "Jackie" – Celebrated actress Natalie Portman leads an acclaimed cast in this powerfully stirring drama as First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy, as she grapples with unimaginable grief and trauma following President JFK's assassination. "Jackie's" faith and strength lead her to a new life with her children. While she honors her husband's remarkable legacy, she also leaves her own indelible mark.

April 17: "Killers of the Flower Moon" – Based on a true story, Mollie Burkhardt, a member of the Osage Na-

Palmer Senior Center

tion, fight to survive and save her community from a spree of greed-fueled murders committed against them in 1920's Oklahoma after oil was discovered on their land.

April 24: "Forrest Gump" – Tom Hanks gives an astonishing performance as Forrest, an everyman whose simple innocence comes to embody a generation. Alongside his mamma, his best friend Bubba, and his favorite girl Jenny, Forrest has a ringside seat for the most memorable events of the second half of the 20th Century.

Monday Evening Programs 4:30 p.m.
April 13: "Quabbin Clearing of the Valley"
April 27: "Construction of the Windsor Dam"

of the Windsor Dam"

Activities April 8, 15, 22 and 29 Fruit and Veggie Stand
April 8 at 11:30 a.m. Information Table "Free Notification System" _with Diane Vadnais

April 9 at 1 p.m., Sunshine Village Craft
April 9 from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. OPEN HOUSE - see the changes here at the center, check out our program-ming and enjoy complimentary charcuterie platters and refreshments.

April 14 at 12 p.m. - "Russo's Lakeside" _in Palmer, this is a self-drive, self-pay event.

April 15 at 11:30 a.m. - Lunch & Learn w/ Pat Prew - Low sodium.
April 16 at 9:30 a.m. -

Kim with Power Back Rehab Informational

April 16 at 12:30 p.m. - Fairy Lantern w/ Kim Keaton

April 21 at 12:30 p.m., Let Us learn together - Watercolor painting.

April 22 at 12 p.m. - Staying Connected to Nature - In recognition of Earth Day, we will explore the many physical and emotional benefits of spending time in nature, along with simple ways to bring more of the outdoors into everyday life. Participants will plant herb seeds to take home with them.

April 23 at 1 p.m. - Sunshine Village Painting

Quabbin Series
 Monday, April 13, April 27, May 11, and May 18

Bargain clothing sale to be held on April 25

MONSON – On Saturday, April 25 at Monson-Glendale United Methodist Church, 162 Main Street, Monson from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

We're serving our community in many ways... our

clothing is \$1.00 per bag. Time to find some clothing for the entire family. Bring your friends too.

Never know what they will have, so it's worth a look. Everyone is welcome.

Women's Club to host Fashion Show Luncheon

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham Women's Club is sponsoring a Fashion Show Luncheon on Thursday, April 23, at the St. Cecilia Parish Center, 42 Main St., Wilbraham.

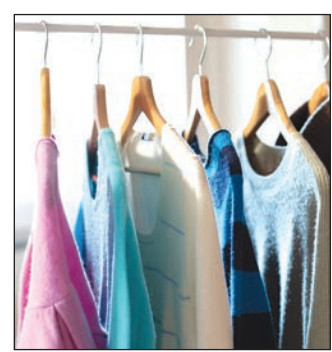
Clothing from Chico's in the Longmeadow Shops will be featured. The catered luncheon choices are Salmon with dill sauce or

Chicken Francaise.

There will also be a raffle for many prizes and gift certificates. Join us at 11:30 for a social time with hors d'oeuvres followed by lunch at Noon. The donation is \$42 and is a fundraiser for the club's scholarships and charitable donations to needy organizations in the area.

For reservations, please make checks payable to Wilbraham Women's Club and mail to Sue Agnew, 7 Aspen Dr., Wilbraham 01095. For questions, call Sue at 596-9480.

Be sure to include meal choice in memo of check. Also, include with whom you wish to sit. Deadline to register is April 14.



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USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS PORK BUTT STRIPS.....	\$2.79 lb	USDA INSP. FRESH CHICKEN THIGHS 10 LB.....	\$1.29 lb
USDA INSP. SMOKED PICNIC PORK SHOULDER.....	\$2.22 lb	USDA INSP. KAYEM ALL BEEF KIELBASA 14 OZ....	2/\$7 ea
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USDA INSP. TURKEY BREAST.....	\$3.99 lb	USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF ROP ROUND ROAST or STEAK	\$7.77 lb
USDA INSP. PROVOLONE CHEESE.....	\$4.89 lb	USDA INSP. FARM FRESH LARGE EGGS BOX.....	\$1.79 doz
SOUP'S ON!		USDA INSP. FROZEN • BARBER FOODS CHICKEN CORDON BLEU CLUB PAK 6 PIECES.....	\$8.99 ea
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USDA INSP. FROZEN CHICKEN FEET.....	\$3.49 lb		

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Monson Garden Club scholarship deadline April 28

MONSON – The Monson Garden Club has announced that two \$500 scholarships are available to high school seniors who reside in Monson and plan to continue school at a 2- or 4-year college to study in

any branch of the life, natural, or environmental sciences. Applications with instructions may be obtained through their school guidance office and are due by April 28, 2026.

Brimfield to mark America's 250th

BRIMFIELD – 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.

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, or if you are interested in putting a float in the parade, contact Friends of Historic Brimfield at (413) 239-0288 for more information.

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.

Visit library's art show

PALMER – April's art show at Palmer Library will feature works by the Abstract Art Squad - four artists who met at an abstract art class seven years ago and continue to meet weekly to support and inspire one another. Abstract art is a genre encompassing many styles and movements. It uses a visual language of shape, form, color and line to create a composition which may or may not have ref-

erences to the real world. Each artist in this show has their own style ranging from simple geometrics to complex intuitive compositions. Approximately thirty-two paintings will be on display, ranging in size from 8" x 12" to 20" x 30".
 The April show will be from April 2 to April 30 in the Community Room. The library is open Monday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday thru Thursday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Friday and

Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Access to the Community Room may be limited if it is in use. You can check with the library at 413-283-3330. There will be a reception with the artists from 6 to 8 p.m. on Thursday, April 16. The library is located at 1455 N Main St, Palmer, MA.
 For more information about the Abstract Art Squad visit their website at <https://www.abstractartsqquad.com/> or their Facebook page.

Town of Palmer announces nomination papers available

PALMER – The Town Clerk of Palmer will have nomination papers available the week of March 9.

The available seats on the June 9, 2026 town election are as follows:
Councilor at Large
1 seat
3-year term
Councilor at Large
1 seat
1-year term

District Councilor PCT#1
1 seat
3-year term
Planning Board
2 seats
3-year term
School Committee
2 seats
3-year term

istrar, no later than April 21, 2026. Fifty valid signatures are required. The fifty signatures must be registered voters in the Town of Palmer; the District Councilor Precinct # 1 seat requires fifty signatures of registered voters from Precinct #1.
 If you have any questions regarding filing requirements on above seats, please reach out to the Palmer Town Clerk's office.

Last day to obtain Nomination papers is April 16, 2026. Nomination papers must be filed with the Reg-

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St. Paul's to host "Dance Night"

PALMER – St. Paul's Church will host "Dance Night! with DJ Seagull" for students in grades 6 through 9 on Friday, April 17 from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The event is designed to offer a safe, welcoming, and engaging space for middle school youth to gather, socialize, and enjoy an evening of music and fun.

The dance will feature music by DJ Seagull of Berkshire Hills Music Academy, along with refreshments and a relaxed, well-supervised environment. Organizers hope the evening will provide an opportunity for young people in the greater Palmer area to connect with friends, meet new peers, and simply enjoy being together in a positive setting.

The event is sponsored by All Young Voices: Circle of Friends, a new twice-monthly teen gathering being developed at St. Paul's. The initiative is focused on creating a safe and welcoming space for connection, belonging, and personal growth. Open to all youth, All Young Voices will include elements of mindfulness, creative expression—including music—and thoughtful exploration of life's deeper questions in an inclusive, interfaith spirit. The group especially hopes to support youth who may feel marginalized or lonely, while remaining open and engaging for all. As part of its growing outreach, All Young Voices plans to offer youth dance nights and similar events multiple times throughout the year.

"All young people need spaces where they can feel comfortable, included, and free to have fun," said organizers of All Young Voices "This is about creating that kind of environment—something that's both enjoyable for youth and reassuring for families."
 Admission is \$5 at the door. For the safety of all participants, students must be signed in and signed out by a parent or guardian. Participants will remain on site for the duration of the event and will not be permitted to leave and re-enter.
 The dance is open to all students in grades 6-9 from Palmer and surrounding communities.
 For more information, visit www.StPaulsPalmer.org or call 413-283-8185.

CLASSES | from page 1

expanding into other areas." Among those offerings are Tai Chi sessions, which have proven so popular that the academy is adding additional classes, including a morning session, to accommodate demand. Pottery classes and a nature dye workshop are also planned,

the latter inviting participants to forage for natural materials such as flowers to create their own dyes.
 "It's a really hands-on experience," Skowrya said. "You're going out, collecting materials, and then using them to create something."
 Looking ahead to the summer, Hitchcock Free Academy has opened registration for its seasonal pro-

gramming, which continues to grow each year. What began as a four-week program has now expanded to six weeks, reflecting increasing participation and community interest.
 "It's getting bigger and better every year," Skowrya said.
 The academy's calendar also includes several community events and fundraisers. A

plant sale scheduled for May 9, just ahead of Mother's Day, will feature: hanging plants, garden starters, and donated perennials from local residents.
 "We welcome donations from people who are dividing or clearing out their gardens," Skowrya said. "It's become a really nice fundraiser for us."
 Later in the season, the academy will participate in

the town-wide tag sale at the end of May, followed by a summer concert series featuring seven performances. Organizers are currently coordinating food trucks to accompany the concerts, further enhancing the community atmosphere.
 Outdoor recreation is also part of the academy's plans. Pickleball courts are now open, with les-

sions scheduled for later this month, while tennis facilities are expected to follow.
 With a mix of arts education, wellness programming, and community events, Hitchcock Free Academy continues to position itself as a hub for creativity and connection in the region.
 "We've got a lot going on," Skowrya said. "It's shaping up to be an exciting year."



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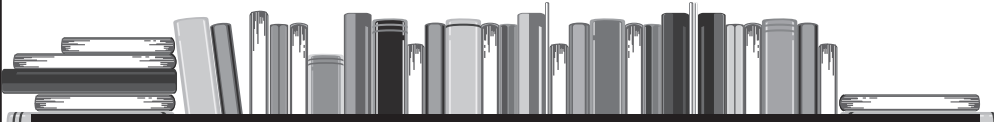
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

April Vendors

- April 16 - Weleful Weavers
- April 21 - Wicked Good Treats
- April 23 - Hobbit Hollow Herbs
- April 30 - Jewelry for Diane

May Vendors

- May 5 - Crystal Clear Emotions
- May 6 - How Charming
- May 13 - Generations of Cookies
- May 19 - Wicked Good Treats
- May 27 - Hobbit Hollow Herbs
- April 30 - Jewelry for Diane

April 14

Financial Fitness: The Power of Budgeting - Palmer Public Library Community Room at 6:30 p.m. Could Budgeting Be Your Superpower? Join Edward Jones Financial Advisor Lucille Germain for an exploration of the power of budgeting. We will examine your wants and needs and talk about personal spending and savings goals. Many think budgeting equals constraints, but a budget can help put you in control.

Are you ready to give budgeting a try? This program is free and registration is not required.

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.

AUTHOR | from page 1

made possible by the students, who organized and contributed to a fundraising effort that brought Buyea to Monson. According to fifth grade teacher Amanda Nobbs, the idea originated during a parent-teacher conference when a parent mentioned the author's school visits. From there, momentum built quickly.

"We did a GoFundMe to raise the money for it, and we raised the money within, like, a week," Nobbs said. "Everybody jumped on board... teachers donated, parents donated. There was overwhelming support."

That enthusiasm reflected the strong connection students had already developed with the book. Nobbs reintroduced "Because of Mr. Terupt" into the curriculum after previously using it earlier in her career, this time structuring nearly half the school year around it as a central teaching text.

Rather than relying solely on traditional textbooks, Nobbs used the novel as a "mentor text" to teach core English Language Arts concepts. From September through January, students engaged in repeated readings, analytical discussions, and writing exercises tied directly to the story.

"We looked at multiple narrators, questioned their motives, talked about reliable versus unreliable narrators, and used context clues to an-

alyze the story," Nobbs explained. "It just lent itself so well to everything we wanted to teach."

The results, she said, were striking.

"In my 25 years of teaching, this is the most engaged I've seen kids in reading," Nobbs said. "They really connected with it."

That engagement was visible during the author's visit, as many students arrived dressed as characters from the novel, wearing name tags identifying who they portrayed. The activity reflected a class-wide character study that encouraged students to deeply understand the personalities and perspectives within the book.

Buyea's presentation built on that enthusiasm, offering students insight into his writing process while encouraging them to draw from their own experiences. Speaking to the audience, he emphasized the importance of memory and creativity in storytelling.

"Memories are always with you," Buyea told students. "You can take something that really happened and change it...make it funnier, scarier, more exciting. That's when writing becomes fun."

Drawing from his own background as a former teacher, Buyea shared how his classroom experiences and interactions with students continue to inspire his work.

"I've got a lot of wonder-

ful school memories," Buyea said. "And those memories have helped me with every book I've written."

Following the auditorium presentation, Buyea spent the remainder of the day working directly with students in smaller groups, leading writing workshops with each of Nobbs' English Language Arts classes. The sessions allowed students to apply his advice in real time, developing their own stories with guidance from a published author.

For many students, the experience marked a rare and meaningful connection between classroom learning and the real world of writing and publishing.

"How often do you get to meet an author?" Nobbs said. "It's just an incredible opportunity for them."

The success of the visit has already sparked interest in making similar programs part of future curriculum plans. Nobbs noted that she would "absolutely" consider organizing another author visit if the opportunity arises.

For now, however, the impact is already clear. What began as a classroom reading assignment evolved into a schoolwide experience: one that not only deepened students' understanding of literature, but also inspired a lasting excitement for reading and writing.

DEBATE | from page 1

Each of these decisions could result in mid-year deficits.

"If we have more students... or utilities go higher... you might find me at a special town meeting saying I have a hole in my budget," Superintendent Paul Foster said.

School officials repeatedly stressed that the 1.9% increase is not viable long-term.

"1.9% is not sufficient as an annual increase... for us to be sustainable in any way," Foster said.

Foster described the current budget as relying on "one-time solutions" and "messing with the numbers" to make it work for a single year.

"If we increase by 1.9%... we're by definition cutting every year," he added.

Tensions over data and comparisons

A significant portion of the meeting focused on disagreements over financial

data and how to interpret it.

School officials presented long-term trends showing:

- General government spending up 157% over 20 years
- Public safety up 122%
- Education up only 31% (excluding fixed costs)
- Fixed costs rising by 200%

They also noted that the share of the town's budget going to education has declined from 55% to 46% over two decades.

Finance Committee members challenged aspects of the analysis, particularly comparisons involving the regional vocational district, Pathfinder.

School officials defended their methodology, arguing that different calculations can yield different but still valid interpretations.

Equity concerns raised

Beyond the technical debate, school leaders framed the issue as one of equity for students.

"We continually are

told... that may have been the final number we presented. That has never been the number we thought is what our students... deserve," one school committee member said.

Officials argued that students remaining in the Monson district should receive comparable investment to those attending regional programs.

Changing needs drive costs

School officials also pushed back on comparisons to past staffing levels, noting that student needs have changed significantly.

They cited increased demand for specialized education services, including programs requiring multiple staff members for small groups of high-needs students.

"We have classes... where we have four adults with four kids," the superintendent said, noting that such programs can still save money compared to costly out-of-district placements.

Public safety

Monson Fire Logs

Monson Fire Department for the week of March 30 through April 4, 2026. The department responded to 18 EMS calls and 3 Fire calls.

On Saturday, April 4 at 3:11 p.m. the department responded to 224 Hovey Road for the sound of an explosion. The department returned to service at 3:24 p.m.

On Sunday, April 5 at 9 a.m. the department responded to 354 Main Street for CO in the building. The department returned to service at 9:27 a.m.

On Sunday, April 5 at 3:49 p.m. the department responded to 174 Hovey Road for the burn complaint. The department returned to service at 4:04 p.m.

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BASEBALL

Pioneers, Monson face off in rain

MONSON – Last Wednesday afternoon, rains started falling at game time, as Monson and Pathfinder got their game underway. The rains persisted, however, and the game had to be stopped. The two teams are scheduled to make up the game on Friday, May 8.



Jake Beaupre sends an easy throw to first for an out.

Ray Sheffer focuses as he takes his lead off first base.

Joseph Szostek takes a lead off first.



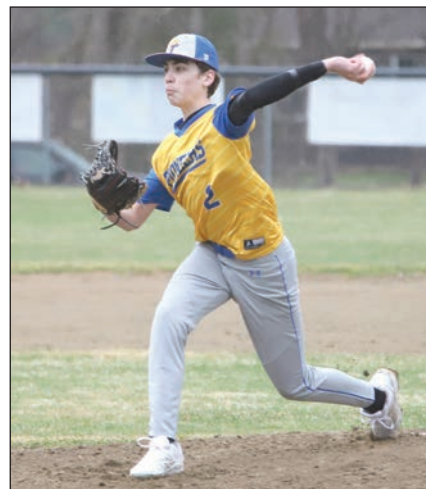
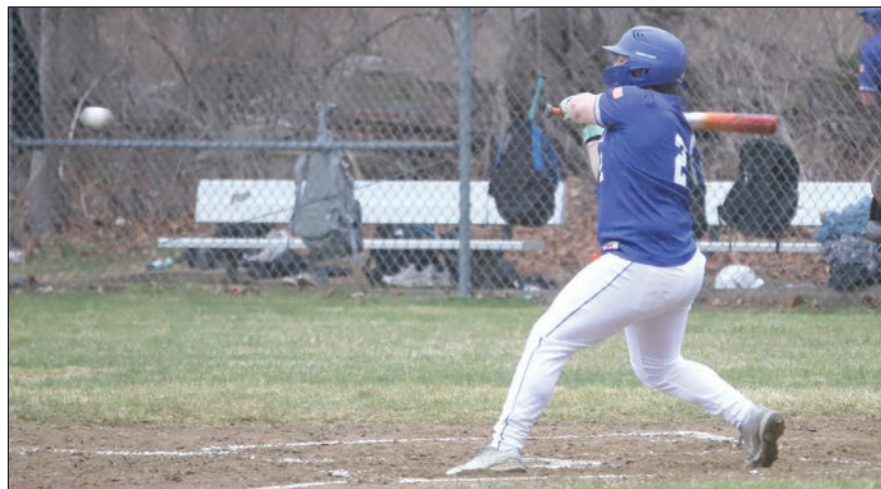
Brody Wetnicka lunges to field a grounder.

Niko Matthieu puts the squeeze on a pop-up out.

Emerson Boronski hustles for second base.

Aiden Girard makes a throw to first.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Anthony Tulloch sends a pitch home.



Edward Szostek fouls off a pitch.

Lucas Pignone takes a swing.

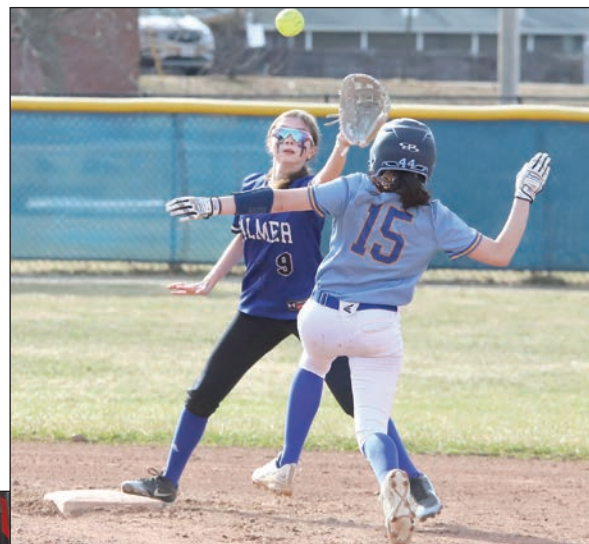
Zachary Smith sends a pitch home.

SOFTBALL

Panthers split first two games

PALMER – The Palmer High School softball team had a tough start to the regular season with a 14-2 loss at Chicopee Comprehensive last Monday afternoon. The Panthers would rebound however, with an 11-run third inning lead them to a 22-10 victory over Mahar in their second

game of the season. Hannah Roy turned in three hits and four RBI against Mahar and Amhia McElreavy also had three hits, as well as five runs scored. The Panthers are 1-1 and next face Ware on Thursday, Apr. 9 at 4 p.m. Palmer hosts Chicopee on Monday, Apr. 13 at 4 p.m.



Jackie Swiatlowski makes a catch at second.



Jill Holbrook sends a pitch away.

Hannah Roy heads over to pick up a base hit to center.

Catcher Kylee Lukas fires to second on a steal attempt.

BASEBALL

Pioneers edged by Panthers

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

PALMER – Tyler Wilson, Connor Roche, and Zach Handzal were the starting pitchers for the Palmer Panthers the last time that they began the high school baseball season with consecutive victories.

For the first time since 2014, the Panthers had a 2-0 record following an 11-9 victory over cross-town rival Pathfinder Tech before a large crowd at historic Legion Field, last Friday afternoon.

“Everyone played a key role in today’s victory,” said Handzal, who’s beginning his second season as the Panthers varsity baseball coach. “We finished the week with a 2-0 record, and we now move on to next week. You always

Candlepin League News

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

League Champions 1

WARE – The league finals have arrived as the Bondsville League closes the door on another season.

The league bowlers at Roll-A-Way Lanes had their attention focused on the championship match between Sandri and Fire Mountain. Representing Sandri are Brandon Lane, Rich Picotte, Ron Gouin, and Sue Horton. Representing Fire Mountain are Shawn Ross, Scott Brewster, Gary Delisle and Rick Trott.

In game one, Sandri won by a score of 466-464 to take an early lead in the match. Three out of four members of Sandri broke 100 with Gouin scoring the highest at 110.

In game two, Fire Mountain ignited the flame and defeated Sandri 491-465. Trott threw a double strike on his way to a 134 game. Horton of Sandri had a good game of 121, but it wasn't enough to keep up with Trott.

In game three, Fire Mountain kept the pressure on by taking the last game with a score of 485-468. Trott finished with 116 and a three-game series of 358. Ross, who started the season with a 70 average and worked his way up to an 85, exceeded the expectations by bowling over his average every game with scores of 96, 92, and 103.

Gouin had a strong showing with 125 in the final game and a series of 331. Picotte had scores of 97, 114, and 107 for 318 in total. Horton had scores of 103, 121, and 89 for 313 in total.

The final score was 1440-1399 in favor of Fire Mountain, who are the 2025-2026 Bondsville League champions. Fire Mountain was leading in first place for the majority of the season but lost that top seed to Sandri for only a few weeks until the championship match. Fire Mountain finished the season with a record of 124.5-78.5. Sandri finished with 123-80.

Final league matches

Cannonballs defeated Zeke's Freaks with a final

score of 1396-1377. Sally Czarniecki of Cannonballs started strong with 115 in game one. Tony Burke of Zeke's Freaks began with 114.

Slow Burners defeated P&J Meats with a final score of 1397-1382. Nate Orszulak of Slow Burners had the highest score of 110 and Paige Stabach of P&J Meats had the highest score of 111.

Snappers defeated Ironmen with a final score of 1431-1353. Kevin "Kras" Krasnecky of Snappers had score of 114, 122, and 122 for a series of 358 to finish the season. Billy Brunk of Ironmen finished with 124 and a series of 332.

Team UMass defeated Night Hawks with a final score of 1433-1417. Keith Ferenz of Team UMass had the highest score of 113. Gavin Sinclair of Night Hawks had the highest score of 126.

Spare Parts Bud defeated Flaming Bowling Balls with a final score of 1384-1379. Madison Jebb of Spare Parts Bud bowled 117 and Ryan McCarthy of FBB had 114.



Turley photos by Maddox Baer

Parker Libiszewski leaps to fire a shot on net.



Jared Perry carries the ball upfield while a defender puts on the pressure.



Noah Latulippe takes contact while advancing with the ball.



Brennan Peterson reaches for a ground ball as an opponent closes in.

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Athlete of the Week

Hannah Roy

Palmer High School

Roy pounded three hits and drove in four runs for the Panthers in their win over Mahar Regional High School.

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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LACROSSE

Lacrosse co-op gets second win

MONSON – Last Friday afternoon on a sun-splashed back field at Monson High School, Monson boys lacrosse defeated Belchertown. The Mustangs, which has a co-op program with Pathfinder Tech, defeated the Orioles

7-5 to improve to 2-1 on the season. The Mustangs also defeated Pittsfield 12-6 and also record a loss against Wahconah 10-9. Monson's co-op is back in action at Lenox on Thursday, Apr. 9 at 4:30 p.m.



Brady Rodeman slings a pass to his teammate.

BASEBALL | from page 9

want to go undefeated each week."

The 2014 Palmer squad won its first five games and finished the regular season with a 17-3 overall record before losing to Athol in a Western Mass. Division 3 quarterfinal game.

The Panthers, who are first year members of the Tri-County League, lost both games that they played against the Pioneers a year ago.

While Palmer began the 2026 season with a 10-2 win at Westfield Tech on March 31, Pathfinder Tech (0-2) fell to Tri-County League rival McCann Tech, 13-2, in their season opener at Legion Field.

"Seven of the 13 play-

ers listed on our roster are new players, and I'm also a first-year varsity coach," said Pathfinder Tech head coach Dan Szostek. "We're still getting to know each other. I thought we kept battling back in today's game."

The winning pitcher in last Friday's contest was Brendan Hess, who's one of the five seniors listed on the Panthers varsity roster. The righthander allowed five runs (3 earned) on only four base hits with five walks and nine strikeouts during the first five innings. He threw 101 pitches.

The Pioneers took a 2-0 lead against Hess in the top of the first inning.

Senior right fielder Dayne Shanley, who drew a leadoff walk, stole second base and scored the first run of the game on a passed ball.

Senior centerfielder Edward Szostek drove home the other run with a cue shot that rolled past first base for a single.

The Panthers, who were the home team, responded by scoring four runs against senior righty Andrew Sullivan in the bottom half of the opening frame. Sullivan only pitched in a couple of games as a junior before suffering a season ending injury.

"Andrew was a pitcher for the varsity team as a sophomore," said coach Szostek, who was an assistant coach a year ago. "He missed most of last season with an arm injury. It's nice having him back on the mound again this year."

With one-out, Hess blasted a run scoring triple to center field before scoring the tying run on a wild pitch that skipped to the backstop.

Eighth grade second baseman Josiel Ortiz and sophomore leftfielder Liam McKee also contributed with RBI singles which gave the Panthers a 4-2 lead.

Both teams scored a run in the third inning.

The Pioneers closed the gap to 5-4 with two outs in the fourth when junior shortstop Brody Wetnicka crossed the plate on a wild pitch.

It didn't remain a one run game for very long, as the Panthers put four runs on the left field scoreboard in their next at-bats. Two runs scored on bases loaded walks by senior third baseman Theo Haley and senior catcher Sebastian Mayberry, who had two hits in the home opener. Another run scored when Hess hit a pop-up single to center.

Sullivan, who threw a to-

tal of 80 pitches, was replaced by freshman lefthander Zach Smith with no outs.

He retired junior first baseman Dylan Holbrook on a ground ball out which scored Haley making the score 9-4.

"We've been hitting the ball very well so far this season," Handzel said. "We scored four runs in the fourth inning, which gave us a little breathing room."

The Panthers scored two more runs in their next at-bats.

Pathfinder Tech, who added an unearned run in the fifth, was trailing 11-5 entering the top of the seventh inning.

The Pioneers put together a rally against Palmer senior right-hander Matt Santos, who had pitched a scoreless sixth inning.

Freshman Anthony Elliott began the seventh inning with a double to left field. Junior left fielder Emerson Boronski also doubled to left field scoring Elliott. Then back-to-back walks by Edward Szostek and freshman DH Zach Latourelle loaded the bases.

At that point, Handzel decided to make a pitching change. Ortiz, who's a righty, replaced Santos on the mound. The Pioneers scored two more runs before Ortiz ended the game with a strikeout.

"Josiel came in with the bases loaded and got the job done," Handzel said. "It was his first appearance on the mound this season."

The two baseball teams are scheduled to meet again under the lights at Legion Field on May 14.

Obituaries

Faith G. Morin

1949-2026

Douglas/Wales-Faith G. Morin, 76, born on October 1, 1949, in Stafford Springs, Connecticut, passed away on April 4, 2026, at UMass Hospital in Webster, Massachusetts. She was a woman who treasured her family and found joy in the simple pleasures of life.



Rebecca Morin, Kelly Morin, Harrison Morin, Monica Morin and Robi, Stephanie Morin and Vinnie; great grandchildren, Bella, Brendan and Hailee. Faith is also survived by her sister, Sandra L. Beaudry, and her brother, Dale Stebbins.

Faith was a graduate of Springfield Trade School, where she became a licensed cosmetologist and hairdresser. She devoted many years to her career, working at Eleanor's in Monson and later at Quaboag on the Common in West Brookfield. She concluded her professional life after 25 dedicated years at Wright's Ribbon.

Faith was an active member of the Wales Baptist Church. She participated wholeheartedly in the Sunday school, contributed to the Church Farmer's Market, and was involved with the flower committee. She also had a deep love for crafting, which was one of her favorite pastimes.

She is lovingly remembered by her daughter, Laura L. Hoenig-McCallum, and her husband, Jason McCallum, with whom she lived. Faith also leaves behind her step-sons: Stephen Morin and his wife Deborah, John Morin and his wife Deborah, and Alan Morin and his wife Leslie Duthie. Her grandchildren, who brought much joy to her life, are Maverick Hoenig and his wife Rebekah, Danica McCallum,

Faith was predeceased by her beloved husband, Edgar "Buck" Morin, who passed away in January 2025, as well as by her infant son, Daryl R. Morin. She was also preceded in death by her parents, Raymond W. Stebbins and Elizabeth (Yedryseck) Bradway and her brother Miles Stebbins.

Visitation will be held Thursday, April 9, 2026, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Lombard Funeral Home, located at 3 Bridge Street in Monson, MA 01057. The funeral service will take place Friday, April 10, 2026, starting at 10 a.m. at Wales Baptist Church, Main Street, Wales, Mass. 01081. Burial will follow at Brimfield Cemetery, in Brimfield, MA.

Faith lived a life full of love for her family and community, leaving behind memories that will be cherished by all who knew her.

In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made in Loving Memory of Faith G. Morin to St. Jude Research Hospital, Tribute Program, PO Box 1000, Dept. 142, Memphis, TN 38101-9908

For on-line condolences please visit www.lombardfuneralhome.com.

Douglas P. Tetreault

1964-2026

BRIMFIELD – Douglas P. Tetreault, 61, was born on June 22, 1964, in Springfield. He passed away on March 30, 2026, at U-Mass Memorial Hospital, surrounded by his family.



and his fiancée Jaclyn Cook. Doug also leaves behind his sister, Justine Tetreault; brothers, Ronald A. Tetreault Jr., Kenneth A. Tetreault, and Wayne A. Tetreault and his wife Heather. A granddaughter, Leia Tetreault, along with nieces and nephews. Doug was predeceased by his parents, Mae (Zagraniczny) Tetreault and Ronald A. Tetreault Sr.

Doug graduated from Tantasqua Regional High School. Throughout his career, he worked as a heavy equipment crane operator for Titan Roofing and was a proud member of Local 98 Operating Engineers. He was the kind of person everyone turned to when there was a problem to solve or something to fix. His helpful nature made him well-loved by those around him. Doug enjoyed several hobbies, including riding his Harley, working on the farm, target shooting, and attending Turkey Shoots. He also liked camping, and spending time outdoors doing the things he loved.

He is survived by his sons, Douglas P. Tetreault Jr and his wife Lindsey, Tyler S. Tetreault

Doug will be remembered as a dependable and caring person who made a positive difference in the lives of his family and friends.

A Celebration of Life will be held at his sister, Justine's home Saturday, April 18, 2026 from 1 to 4 p.m. In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made to UMass Memorial Health in memory of Douglas Tetreault, mail to UMass Memorial Health Office of Philanthropy 365 Plantation Street, Biotech One-Suite301 Worcester, MA 01605.

Joyce Cookman

1930-2026

MONSON – Joyce (Boudreau) Cookman 95, passed away February 14, 2026 holding hands with her twin sister Joan. She was born on October 23, 1930 in Hartford, CT to the late Edmund and Irene (Papineau) Boudreau.

Joyce is survived by her siblings; her twin sister Joan Genholt, Lillian Carpenter, her husband Harold; who all live in Monson, as well as Donald Boudreau and his wife Carol of South Carolina. She leaves behind several nieces and nephews; Frances, Brandy, Christopher, Jonathan, Matthew, Jennifer, Paul, Kathy, Joyce, Daniel, Robin, Carol, and Lisa.

She is preceded in death by her beloved husband, Earl "Cookie" Cookman Jr, and her sisters Patricia Loncto and Muriel Dewey.

Joyce worked for many years at Mass Mutual Life Insurance Co. In 1976, she moved to Knox, Maine with her parents and Husband Cookie where they designed and built a log cabin. She enjoyed many years with her family, hiking, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, and

making maple syrup. Joyce had many diverse interests; she was an amazing baker, dancer and seamstress and also an accomplished organist.



Joyce was a Sunday School teacher at the First Church of Monson. While living in Maine, she was active in the Grange and participated in several parades with her husband Cookie riding a bicycle built for two. In her later years, she found great joy performing and creating costumes for her senior dance company.

Joyce had a deep passion for animals and she had a deep love of the outdoors. She was a founding member of The Moon Mountain Mounties, participating on horseback in shows, parades, and more.

She had many adventures over the years, most notably hiking The Appalachian Trail in completion with her husband Cookie in the early seventies.

Joyce owned and ran Blue Willow Dog Obedience

Training School with her sister Pat Loncto, Ann Boyer, and Anne Pelletier. She owned, trained, and showed many canine friends over the years. Her dogs were her constant companions, most notably Suzie, Kayla, Beau, Maggie, Abraham, Julie, Willie, and Storm (who was born during the 2011 tornado).

A deep heartfelt thanks to all the nurses and aids at Life Care Center of Wilbraham for their loving and compassionate care during her final days.

Joyce Cookman was a phenomenal woman with a brave, kind, loving, and adventurous spirit. Her legacy will continue through the stories and inspirations her family and friends share throughout this, and generations to come.

In lieu of flowers, please make a memorial contribution in Joyce's name to your local animal shelter. Lombard Funeral Home of Monson has been entrusted with the arrangements. For online condolences please visit www.lombardfuneralhome.com

John B. Thompson

1944-2026

MONSON– John B. Thompson, born January 15, 1944, passed away peacefully at his home on April 4, 2026, surrounded by the love of his family.

John was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and great-great-grandfather whose life was defined not only by what he built with his hands, but by the love, laughter, and steady presence he gave to those around him. He had a way of making people feel safe, cared for, and at home in his presence.

He dedicated 35 years of his career to Monson Developmental Center, where he served as head carpenter until his retirement in 2001. He took great pride in his work and in the skill he developed over the years-always willing to lend a hand, fix what was broken, and create something lasting. Whether building clocks or furniture, contributing his craftsmanship to the church, or caring for his own home, he could fix just about anything. He took special pride in creating a warm and welcoming home for his

family and his wife. He also found joy in creating meaningful experiences for those he loved, often going above and beyond-putting in extra effort, creativity, and care to make moments feel special and memorable.



Outside of work, John found joy in the outdoors and a deep connection to the water. He loved ocean fishing, fishing on the lakes, and hunting, and felt most at peace surrounded by nature. Cape Cod held a special place in his heart, where many cherished memories were made with family-from days spent fishing and lobstering to evenings spent singing by the fire. As a member of the Quabbin Fisherman's Association, he enjoyed sharing his passion for fishing and the stories that came with it.

He also had a deep love for music and could often be found playing the guitar-whether with his buddies, at church, or simply for his grandchildren. Those moments, filled with music and togetherness, became some of the most cherished memories

for his family.

But more than anything, John will be remembered for the way he showed up for his family and for others. He had a playful, mischievous spirit and a way of making everyday moments feel special. He created memories filled with laughter, warmth, and a sense of home that will stay with his family forever. He was also known for the simple but lasting lessons he shared, often encouraging those he loved to be safe and to take care of one another. His kindness and willingness to help others extended far beyond his family-even stepping in to save a man's life, a reflection of the quiet strength and selflessness that defined him.

He is survived by his children, Eileen D. Withers (John), Lynn M. Corderia (David), Sharon A. Royer (Rick), and Raymond F. Martell (Rose); his nine grandchildren; twenty great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandchild. He is also survived by his sister,

DEATH NOTICES

Faith G. Morin
Died April 4, 2026
Services April 9, 2026
Lombard Funeral Home

Douglas P. Tetreault
Died March 30, 2026
Services April 18, 2026
Lombard Funeral Home

John B. Thompson
Died April 4, 2026
Services April 11, 2026
Lombard Funeral Home

A Celebration of Life will be held for **Joyce Cookman & Patricia Loncto** Sunday, April 12, 2026 at 2:00 pm at the First Church of Monson, Congregational, 5 High Street Monson MA
A reception will follow in the fellowship hall at First Church

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SEASONAL FACILITIES CREW wanted at Norcross Wildlife Foundation. For a full job description, please visit www.norcrosswildlife.org or email info@norcrosswildlife.org

The Town of North Brookfield is looking for a **part-time Program Assistant** for the Council on Aging. Please submit a resume with a letter of interest to the **Selectmen's Office, 215 Main St., North Brookfield, MA 01535**; or by email to selectmen@northbrookfield.net.

WANT TO WORK THIS SUMMER part or full-time? Help wanted for assisting in landscape maintenance and installation projects. Liberty Orchards Landscape, 413-283-6408.

REAL ESTATE

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AGAWAM APT. FOR RENT. 2 bed, 2 bath, gas heat, private basement washer/dryer hookup. \$1600 mo. No utilities. No pets. Call 413-789-6206.

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Public notices

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS LAND COURT DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT 26 SM 001111 ORDER OF NOTICE

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

Towd Point Mortgage Trust 2018-5, U.S. Bank National Association, as Indenture Trustee claiming to have an interest in a mortgage covering real property in **Monson, numbered 41 Pease Avenue**, given by **Eduardo Almeida and Beverly Almeida to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as Nominee for Foundation Financial Group, LLC**, dated **November 26, 2007**, and recorded at **Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book 17074, Page 436**, and now held by Plaintiff by assignment, has filed with this court a complaint for determination of 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 **May 18, 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 said Court on April 2, 2026

Attest: **Deborah J. Patterson** Recorder 04/09/2026

Notice of Public Bonded Warehouse
Atlas Armament
Mark J Caci
4 Springfield Street
Bldg 3, Suite 210
Three Rivers, MA 01080
04/09, 04/16/2026

Town of Palmer
Request for Proposals
The Town of Palmer is seeking respondents to an RFP for the sale of property at 24 Converse Street, Palmer, MA. The parcel is approx. 2.66 acres and includes a school building of approx. 84,749 sq ft. The Town Council has declared the building available through surplus with a deed restriction of 55+ housing. The RFP requires a minimum bid of \$1.5M and is now available by emailing: bbrothers@townofpalmer.com or for pickup in the Town Managers office. The Town Manager shall select the most advantageous Proposal from a responsive and responsible proposer, taking into consideration the price and all other evaluation criteria set forth in the RFP. **Bids are due on May 15th, 2026 at 12:00PM and will be opened immediately after.**
04/09, 04/16/2026

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue of and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by **NANCY A. BOLDOC and PAUL R. BASTIEN to SOUTHBRIDGE SAVINGS BANK**, dated September 26, 2008 and recorded with the Hampden County Registry of Deeds (the "Registry") in Book 17493, Page 115 (the "Mortgage"), of which Mortgage the undersigned (the "Mortgagee") is the present holder, for breach of the conditions of the Mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at Public Auction at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 6, 2026 at the mortgaged premises located on or near 4112-4116 High Street, Palmer, Massachusetts (the "Premises"), all and singular the premises described in the Mortgage, to wit:

"Certain real estate situated in Thorndike (Palmer), Hampden County, Massachusetts on the northeasterly side of High Street, being known and designated as Parcel B on a plan entitled

"Plan of Land in Thorndike, Palmer, Mass Surveyed for Grayson G. McIntyre, March 4, 1993, Sherman and Woods, Sur-

veyors' which plan is recorded in Hampden County Registry of Deeds Book of Plans 284, Page 50 more particularly bounded and described as follows: Beginning at an iron pin on the northeasterly side of said High Street, 1925 Layout, at the southwesterly corner of land now or formerly of Paul A. Regan et ux.; and running thence

N. 39° 40' W. twenty one and 05/100 (21.05) feet along said High Street to a highway stone bound; thence turning and running

N. 36° 28' W. forty one and 79/100 (41.79) feet along said High Street to an iron pin at land formerly of Minnie B. Marcinek, now or formerly of Grayson G. McIntyre; thence turning and running

N. 54° 11' E. seventy one and 71/100 (71.71) feet along said last named land to an iron pin at land formerly of the Estate of Peter Drogon, now or formerly of said McIntyre; thence turning and running

S. 31° 29' E. forty and 75/100 (40.75) feet along said last named land passing through a drill hole in a concrete step to a point; thence turning and running

N. 59° 42' E. eighteen and 83/100 (18.83) feet along last named land to a point; thence turning and running

S. 24° 01' E. twenty and 70/100 (20.70) feet along last named land to a point at land now or formerly of said Regan; thence turning and running

S. 54° 09' W. eighty one and 31/100 (81.31) feet along land of said Regan to the iron pin at the point of beginning, containing 4,690 square feet of land, all as shown on said plan.

Together with easement rights across Parcel A as shown on said plan.

BEING the same premises conveyed to the Mortgagor herein by deed of Nancy A. Bolduc dated September 26, 2008 and recorded in Hampden County Registry of Deeds herewith."

The description of the Premises contained in the Mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.

The Premises, together with all improvements encumbered by the Mortgage, are to be sold and conveyed subject to all leases, tenancies, occupancies, mortgages, restrictions, covenants, orders of conditions, easements, encroachments, outstanding tax titles, municipal or other public taxes, assessments or liens, federal and state tax liens, other liens or claims in the nature of liens and existing encumbrances recorded prior to the Mortgage and/or otherwise having priority over the Mortgage, if there be any.

TERMS OF SALE: A non-refundable deposit of TEN THOUSAND (\$10,000.00) DOLLARS is to be paid by certified or bank cashier's check by the purchaser at the time and place of sale, the balance to be paid by certified or bank cashier's check and deed to be taken by purchaser within thirty (30) days of the sale at the offices of Seder & Chandler, LLP, 339 Main Street, Worcester, Massachusetts, attorneys for the Mortgagee.

The Mortgagee reserves the right to postpone the sale to a later date by public proclamation on the date and at the time and place appointed for the sale and to further postpone at any adjourned sale date by public proclamation on the date and at the time and place appointed for the adjourned sale.

In the event of the failure or inability of the purchaser to perform and to purchase the Premises in accordance herewith, the Mortgagee reserves the right (but is not obligated) to accept, subject to the Memorandum of Sale, the second highest bid for the Premises, without further advertisement and without further notice to other bidders or persons. In the event that the Mortgagee offers the Premises to the second highest bidder and such person declines either to purchase the Premises at the second highest bid price or to sign the Memorandum of Sale, then the Mortgagee may elect (but is not obligated) to exercise the rights of the second highest bidder under this paragraph and to purchase the Premises at the second highest bid price, without further advertisement and without further notice to other bidders or persons.

Other terms to be announced

at the time and place of sale. **CORNERSTONE BANK**, successor by merger to **SOUTHBRIDGE SAVINGS BANK** Present holder of said Mortgage

Jennifer L. Conrad, Esq. **SEDER & CHANDLER, LLP** 339 Main Street Worcester, MA 01608 (508) 757-7721 Attorneys for the Mortgagee

THE ZEKOS GROUP P.O. Box 549 Shrewsbury, MA 01545 (508)842-9000 Auctioneer, License No. 104 04/09, 04/16, 04/23/2026

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

Premises: 3 Maplelawn Drive a/k/a 3 Maple Lawn Drive, Monson, MA 01057

By virtue of and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Paul L. Bucklin and Donna J. Bucklin to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as Mortgagee, as nominee for Mortgage Research Center, LLC dba Veterans United Home Loans, and now held by **The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, an officer of the United States**, said mortgage dated July 8, 2015 and recorded in the Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book 20780, Page 146, as affected by a Loan Modification dated June 16, 2016 and recorded in the Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book 21396, Page 338; said mortgage was assigned from Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Mortgage Research Center, LLC DBA Veterans United Home Loans to PennyMac Loan Services, LLC by assignment dated March 14, 2016 and recorded with said Registry of Deeds in Book 21114, Page 388; said mortgage was assigned from PennyMac Loan Services, LLC to The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, an officer of the United States by assignment dated June 25, 2025 and recorded with said Registry of Deeds in Book 26174, Page 585; for breach of the conditions in said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at **Public Auction** on April 29, 2026 at 01:00 PM Local Time upon the premises, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage, to wit:

Certain land situated in Monson, Hampden County, Massachusetts, off the Westerly side of Main Street, 1927 State Highway Layout, bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at an iron pin in the Northerly line of a proposed street which runs Westerly from Main Street, said iron pin being the Southwesterly corner of premises conveyed by Edward L. Dickenson, et ux, to Harold C. Wood, et ux; thence South 89° 19' West along the Northerly line of said proposed street, 150 feet an iron pin; thence North 0° 41' West along land now or formerly of Ernest W. Bridges, 92.5 feet to an iron pin; thence North 89° 19' East still along land now or formerly of said Bridges, 150 feet to an iron pin at land of said Woods; thence South 0° 41' East along land of said Woods 92.5 feet to the place of beginning.

Together with the right to pass and reposs on foot or with vehicles over the aforesaid proposed street, which proposed street is now known as Maple Lawn Drive.

The premises are shown as Lot Number 6 on a "Plan of Lots in Monson, Mass., surveyed for Ernest V. Bridges, Scale 1" = 40', November 22, 1954, Kenneth C. Sherman, Engineer-Surveyor, Palmer, Mass."

Subject to a taking for a sewer easement by the Town of Mon-

son dated August 20, 1979 and recorded with Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book 4818, Page 254.

Being the same premises as conveyed to the mortgagors herein by a deed recorded immediately prior hereto.

The description of the property contained in the mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.

For Mortgagor's Title see deed dated June 2, 2015 and recorded in the Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book 20780, Page 144.

TERMS OF SALE: Said premises will be sold and conveyed subject to all liens, encumbrances, unpaid taxes, tax titles, municipal liens and assessments, if any, which take precedence over the said mortgage above described.

FIVE THOUSAND (\$5,000.00) Dollars of the purchase price must be paid in cash, certified check, bank treasurer's or cashier's check at the time and place of the sale by the purchaser. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid in cash, certified check, bank treasurer's or cashier's check within thirty (30) days after the date of sale.

Other terms to be announced at the sale.

Brock & Scott, PLLC
23 Messenger Street
2nd Floor
Plainville, MA 02762
Attorney for The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, an officer of the United States
Present Holder of the Mortgage
(401) 217-8701
03/26, 04/02, 04/09/2026

LEGAL NOTICE INVITATION FOR BID SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION Monson Public Schools

Monson Public Schools (MPS), with the authority of the School Committee, invites bids for the provision of **School Bus Transportation beginning school year 2026 - 2027 and running through school year 2030 - 2031**.

Bid specifications may be picked up at the Monson Public Schools, Central Business Office, 43 Margaret Street, Monson, MA 01057 on or after 10AM, Monday, April 6, 2026 or downloaded from the Monson Public Schools website or by emailing Leah Zippin, Director of Business and Operations, at zippinl@monsionschools.com, after said time. If a potential bidder downloads the Invitation for Bids from the website, it is their responsibility to notify the District they have done so and provide contact information. Otherwise, MPS is not responsible for any lack of communication of vital information to the potential bidder(s).

A voluntary bidders conference will be held in person on **Tuesday, April 14, 2026 at 1PM** at the Central Business Office, 43 Margaret Street, Monson, MA.

Completed bids are to be received by Monson Public Schools at its Central Business Office, 43 Margaret Street, Monson, MA 01057 no later than **2PM, Friday, May 1, 2026** at which time all bids will be publicly opened and recorded. The time on the clock in the Monson Public Schools Central Business Office will be considered the official time for these purposes. In hand deliveries shall be accepted only between the hours of 9:00 am and 3:00 pm at the Central Business Office. If the Monson Public Schools are closed for inclement weather or an emergency, the bid opening will be the following school day in the same location and at the same time.

All bids must be marked on

the outside of the bidder's envelope **"BID - SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION: MONSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2026-2031"**. No bid(s) will be accepted after the above-stated date and hour. The Town of Monson, acting through its School Committee, reserves the right to waive any informalities in any or all bids, or to reject any or all bids, if it be in the best interest of the District to do so.

All bids are subject to the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 30B. No bidder may withdraw its bid within thirty (30) days after the date designated above for the receipt of bids. The contract shall be awarded to the bidder who submits the lowest total responsible and responsive bid for this academic five-year contract, and who is determined by the Superintendent and/or School Committee, to be the most capable and reliable in providing transportation to meet the needs of the students of the Monson Public Schools. The School Committee may reject bids that are incomplete, have erasures/changes that are not initialed, or have other irregularities. The School Committee also reserves the right to reject all bids if it is believed to be in the best interest of the School to do so.

Each bidder must accompany with their bid, a bid deposit in the amount of five (\$5,000) thousand dollars, in the form of irrevocable letter of credit, a bid bond, a certified check or cashier's check, issued by a responsible bank or trust company, payable to the Town of Monson. All bids submitted Monson Public Schools Transportation Bid 01-2026 Page 4 of 34 will be binding for ninety (90) business days subsequent to bid opening. Award will be based on the lowest responsive and responsible bid price for regular transportation. Field and athletic trips, while required, are not a determining factor for award of the contract.

If any successful bidder shall fail to execute the contract or contracts awarded and furnish a performance bond, insurance certificate and all other required documentation within ten (10) days of award of contract, the Committee may at its option determine that the bidder has refused to execute the contract and the bid deposit shall be forfeited as liquidated damages and the bond or contracts may be awarded to another bidder. The bid shall include the legal name of the Bidder and a statement whether the Bidder is a sole proprietor, a partnership, a corporation, or any other legal entity, and shall be signed by the person or persons legally authorized to bind the Bidder to a contract. All required signatures shall be handwritten in ink with the full name of the person executing the same. No initials, stamp, photocopy or other copy, or company name may be used in lieu of any required signature. A bid by a corporation shall also give the State of Incorporation and have the corporate seal affixed on the signature pages of the bid submission. A bid submitted by an agent shall have a current Power of Attorney attached certifying the agent's authority to bind the Bidder.

Additionally, the name(s) of the principals of the sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, or other legal entity shall be provided to the District for all those individuals whose ownership is equal to, or is greater than, five percent (5%) of the entity. In the case of a publicly traded Corporation, the latest annual report listing all officers shall be provided.

Each bid form shall include a signed statement of certifications, non-collusion and tax com-

pliance; Bid Form B is included in this document.

The bid for the five (5) year contract must be signed with the name and address of the bidder and the bid bond must be submitted together in a sealed envelope.

All questions concerning this Invitation to Bid must be submitted in writing via e-mail, and will be accepted up to April 17, 2026 at 3PM. Please submit questions to zippinl@monsionschools.com. All questions and responses will be forwarded to all parties. 04/09/2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Division
Docket No.
HD21P0835EA
Estate of:

Paul Louis Roman
Date of Death: 12/26/2020
INFORMAL PROBATE
PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Joseph Roman of Holland, MA**.

Joseph Roman of Holland, MA has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve **without surety** on the bond.

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner. 04/09/2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Division
Docket No.
HD11P0413EA
Estate of:

Alberta M. Sorensen
Date of Death: 11/18/2010
INFORMAL PROBATE
PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Linda Beaulieu of East Hartford, CT**.

Linda Beaulieu of East Hartford, CT has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve **without surety** on the bond.

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner. 04/09/2026



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PVPC allots over \$288,000 in DLTA grant awards

To be put towards supporting communities with local projects

SPRINGFIELD – The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) announced its most recent Direct Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) grant awards, allotting \$288,682 to support projects across Hampden and Hampshire counties. The projects span a wide range of community priorities, from establishing a shared regional building inspector in Western Hampden County, to developing town-wide communications policies. Some additional work includes land use and comprehensive planning efforts, updates to zoning and regulations, flood risk outreach, exploration of housing production strategies, permitting and bylaw modernization, and farmland protection initiatives. Projects are set to begin over the following weeks.

assistance to communities across Western Massachusetts is critical to the work we do at PVPC. We understand and recognize our municipalities - what they do, what they need, and how they can flourish," said Kimberly H. Robinson, Executive Director of PVPC. "In a region where many municipalities are small, rural, suburban, and operate with limited staff and resources, we are proud at PVPC to collaborate with those that need it most. From creative solutions to unruly problems, to updating and perfecting current plans, to looking out for what's best for community members. By working together at the regional level, PVPC helps communities turn their ideas into lasting improvements that benefit residents for years to come."

The PVPC is able to provide this local technical assistance at no cost to these communities thanks to funding provided by the Massachusetts Legislature with the support of local legislators, under a contract with the Massachusetts Executive Of-

fice of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) for the DLTA Program.

Some of the projects which will be supported are:

1. Granville - "Shared Building Inspector Through PVPC Program", create shared building inspector position with other towns in the Western Hampden County region.
2. East Longmeadow - "East Longmeadow Communications Policy", advance a Town-wide Communications Policy for internal and external communications.
3. Monson/Palmer - "Shared Services Council On Aging/Recreation", evaluation/study of possible shared services of both Palmer and Monson Council On Aging and Recreation departments.
4. Belchertown - "Land Use Plan for the Coming Decade", Land Use element of Comprehensive Plan.
5. Blandford - "Permit Review Process Permitting Guide - Town of Blandford", Solar/Battery Energy Storage System Zoning Bylaw and Overlay work.
6. Hadley - "Hadley Flood Risk Management Outreach Project", Flood Risk Management Outreach.
7. Huntington - "Town of Huntington Master Plan", updating permitting guidebook and Master Plan components
8. Ludlow - "Ludlow Future Growth", 40R exploration
9. Palmer - "Palmer Subdivision Rules and Regulations Update", subdivision regulations and permitting guide
10. Plainfield - "Comprehensive Community Plan/Vision for Future", putting together a comprehensive plan for public engagement
11. Russell - "General Bylaw and Zoning Bylaw Review and Update", bylaws review and update
12. Southampton - "Southampton Zoning Bylaw Review to Support Housing Production", evaluating housing-related bylaws like inclusionary zoning and multifamily zoning
13. Match for Farmland Protection Action Grant - supplement funds for a

project PVPC is working on as part of the Massachusetts Farmland Partnership Program

14. Open Space and Recreation Plan - funds are set aside for PVPC to respond to comments from the state on local plans that have been submitted for review

PVPC's Land Use & Environment department is driving bold, community-centered change across the region. They help cities and towns bring their visions to life through smart zoning, comprehensive planning, and strategies that support vibrant, resilient, and sustainable communities. Their work blends local goals with regional priorities to protect the environment, advance affordable housing, and preserve community character. They partner with municipalities, agencies, nonprofits, and the private sector to expand access to clean, renewable energy, build green infrastructure, and safeguard natural resources like rivers, forests, and drinking water. They help communities con-

front the effects of climate change, reduce food insecurity, and plan for natural hazards with resilience in mind. With technical expertise and a passion for sustainability, the Land Use and Environment team helps communities grow wisely, equitably, and in harmony with the environment - ensuring a thriving Pioneer Valley for generations to come.

PVPC's Community and Economic Development Department works with the region's 43 cities and towns to strengthen local economies and support community development across the Pioneer Valley. The department provides technical assistance on a wide range of initiatives, including capital planning, shared services, digital equity, and strategic economic development. By assisting municipalities with grant writing, project management, and long-term planning, the department helps communities secure funding, address local challenges, and advance projects that improve quality of life across the region.

Annual Pioneer Valley Wine Festival set for June 6 and 7

BRIMFIELD – Brimfield Auction Acres, Birthplace of the world-famous Brimfield Antique Shows will host the 6th annual Pioneer Valley wine festival on Saturday, June 6 and Sunday, June 7 from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m.

2026 Marks the 7th year of the Pioneer Valley Wine and Food festival. This exciting event brings together New England Wineries, Cideries, Distilleries, and Meaderies from

across the Pioneer Valley and Farmers of many sorts selling their wares.

The event started in 2018 by the collaboration with farm wineries throughout New England and local farmers to create a festival to highlight the magnificent products Massachusetts provides all in unison and support of Massachusetts Agricultural Department.

The festival will feature local vintners and craft brew-

ers ready to spill their secrets, Live Art demonstrations, sizzling chef panel starring culinary celebs - to be announced soon. Last year celebrity guests include Brynn Gibson, the youngest Black Jacket finalist from Fox's Hell's Kitchen with Gordon Ramsay. We also have Jared Forman, the culinary mastermind behind Deadhorse Hill, who brought the heat on Food Network's Beat Bobby Flay.

Plant, Bake Sale, Craft & Tag Sale to be held on Hardwick Common

HARDWICK – The Tri-Parish Community Church is pleased to announce they will be holding their 20th Annual Plant, Bake Sale, Craft & Tag Sale on the Hardwick Common Saturday and Sunday, May 16 and 17 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. each day. This popular East Quabbin area event will feature traditional, favorite, and connoisseur perennials, plus selected

annuals, heirloom vegetable plants, and herbs in time for spring planting! There is a wonderful variety in plants offered through several local vendors including Stillman's Farm and Howe's Farm and Garden of New Braintree, Inishowen Farms of North Brookfield from private gardens. A delicious assortment of home-baked desserts and breads will also be sold. The

event is held rain or shine. All are welcome!

The Church is also seeking vendors for their annual Tag and Craft sale to coincide with the Plant and Bake Sale. Please reserve your space on the Hardwick Common early. Spaces will be offered for \$35 each. Applications may be obtained by contacting Marguerite at: mcrevier1.mc@gmail.com or (413) 477-6942.

BUDGET | from page 1

ficial explained early in the meeting.

However, that figure quickly escalated as more realistic assumptions were layered in, particularly the school department's request and rising transportation costs, ultimately pushing the gap to approximately \$380,000.

Fixed costs drive budget pressure

A major theme of the meeting was the rapid growth of fixed costs, which continue to limit flexibility in the town's operating budget.

Among the most significant increases:

- Pensions: +\$281,707
- Health insurance: +\$85,000
- Pathfinder Vocational School assessment:

+\$147,799

- Westcom dispatch services: +\$15,391
- Animal control shared services: +\$9,976

Additional increases in legal services, audit costs, and contractual planning services further compounded the strain.

"These are costs we cannot reduce," finance officials emphasized, noting many are contractual or state-mandated.

Even seemingly small additions, such as a new \$4,200 "Sealers Weights and Measures" line, reflected broader structural changes in how services are delivered and billed.

Clarifying the police budget

One point of confusion centered on the police bud-

get, where the chief's salary appeared to jump by roughly \$20,000.

Officials clarified the increase was not new spending but a reclassification for transparency.

"The compensation is reflective of what he's really receiving," one administrator explained. "Items like education incentives and holiday pay were moved into the salary line."

Short-term adjustments and one-time fixes

To ease pressure on the FY27 budget, officials identified several temporary solutions:

- Use of remaining ARPA funds to cover technology upgrades
- A \$1,000 increase in postage offset by reductions

in office supplies

- A \$10,000 contribution from the Cemetery Commission for maintenance costs

Officials also discussed creating a dedicated line item for retirement buybacks, noting an increase in long-tenured employees retiring.

Hard choices ahead

With the budget still unbalanced, officials outlined potential options to close the gap:

- Debt exclusion for energy (ESCO) projects, which could free up roughly \$300,000 annually
- Deferring \$125,000 in capital spending
- Reducing stabilization fund contributions
- Closing Memorial Hall, potentially saving \$50,000
- Cutting services, in-

cluding library hours, senior services, or recreation programs

The idea of across-the-board payroll cuts was briefly raised but quickly dismissed due to union contracts and operational impacts.

Finance Director warns against using reserves

Finance leadership strongly cautioned against using one-time funds such as free cash to cover recurring expenses.

"This is a massive amount... The answer is not taking from our reserves or free cash," Finance director Sherii Roberson said.

She warned that doing so would create an immediate deficit in the following fiscal year and could negatively impact the town's bond rating.

"I advise that everyone level funds across the board and we truly begin planning immediately as to how we're going to handle next year," Roberson added.

Consensus reached, but gap remains

Despite those warnings, the Finance Committee ultimately voted unanimously to support:

- Level funding for town departments
- A 1.9% increase for schools, including transportation costs

The decision was made with Select Board and School Committee members present and aligned.

The vote sets the framework for the FY27 budget, but does not solve the funding gap.



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