

# TOWN Reminder

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## Preventing scams and identity theft with the Northwestern DA's Office

By Emily-Rose Pappas  
Staff Writer  
epappas@turley.com

SOUTH HADLEY – The Northwestern District Attorney's Office came to the South Hadley Public Library with a presentation and information on preventing scams and identity theft.

Rachel Webber, the Program Coordinator for Elders and Persons with Disabilities, District Attorney David Sullivan for the Northwestern District (Hampshire and Franklin County), Anita Wilson with the Consumer Protection Unit, the only DA office that has this unit in the district, and Melissa Sippel, Director of Communications and Community Engagement for the DA's Office were present

to provide information about this important topic.

"Tonight's topic for scams and identity theft prevention is important for everybody," said DA David Sullivan. "There is a myth that only senior citizens get exploited, but everybody can get exploited."

The Local Consumer Program works with the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office to help with resolution and advocacy, and works to help people with information about their consumer rights and to prevent fraud and scams.

The Elders and Persons with Disabilities Unit works with agencies and the local law enforcement to look at a case with anyone over the age

Please see **SCAM**, page 11



Turley photo by Emily-Rose Pappas  
DA David Sullivan, Anita Wilson, and Rachel Webber.

## Spring Gardening Workshops coming up March 28

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
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WESTFIELD - The Western Massachusetts Master Gardener Association will be holding the 27th Annual "Let's Get Growing!" Spring Gardening Workshops on March 28 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Westfield Middle School - South.

The festivities will include a marketplace fair, refreshments, an Ask a Master Garden-

er table, refreshments, soil testing and 10 classes to help educate and empower them in gardening this spring.

This year's topics are "Using Trees and Shrubs for Year-long Interest," "Berry Delicious Gardens," "Practical Tips: Growing for a Changing Climate," "Gardening in Small Places," "From One Comes Many: Propagation Workshop (Hands-on)," "Invasive Spe-

Please see **SPRING**, page 9

## Oh, the places they'll perform!

### MESMS Drama Club's Seussical Jr. takes the stage

By Tina Lesniak  
Correspondent

SOUTH HADLEY – From the Jungle of Nool to Whoville, with a stop in South Hadley, the Michael E. Smith Middle School Drama Club is preparing to whisk audiences into a world of imagination with its spring production of Seussical Jr.

The whimsical musical opens March 12 and runs through March 15 at the South Hadley High School Auditorium, marking a milestone year as the club celebrates 20 years of student theater.

Co-director Stefani Holmes said the choice of show felt especially fitting for middle school performers.

"Seussical Jr.'s story is very appropriate for this age group," Holmes said. "Many of the characters yearn for other things and are ostracized for being different. Yet, in the end of the adventure, [they] have become heroes just for being true to themselves. Acceptance and friendship are valuable things."

The musical, co-conceived by Lynn Ahrens, Ste-



Submitted photo

Seventh Grader Hannah Dale portrays the Cat in the Hat, accompanied by Thing 1 and Thing 2 (7th Grader Sophie Saad and 6th Grader Hannah Guggino-Laramie), JoJo the Who (6th Grader Amber Donnelly), and Horton the Elephant (5th Grader Ryan Smith). Not pictured are 6th Grader Clarabelle Kranz and 8th Grader Gabby Moyer, who will portray Mayzie LaBird and Gertrude McFuzz.

phen Flaherty, and Eric Idle, blends iconic characters created by Dr. Seuss into one high-energy story. Horton the Elephant, the Cat in the Hat, JoJo, and the Whos of Whoville all share the stage in a colorful adventure filled with Latin, pop, gospel, and funk-inspired songs.

Holmes noted that this is the school's third time producing the show, and she has noticed a shift in how students connect with the material.

"It was interesting during this production of Seussical Jr. that many of the students only know characters from their animated movies - (the Grinch, the Lorax, Horton - rather than through the original books," she said. "We took some time to introduce them to the books as well as the many morals to these stories."

For the 50-student cast, the rehearsal process has been as lively as the show itself.

"Practicing for the play has been a really fun experience," said Ray Costigan, an 8th grader who plays Sam-

Please see **DRAMA**, page 6



Submitted photos Rosey Bonner

Master Gardener Debby Lapointe created a floral arrangement for the Symposium in 2025.



Speaker Dan Ziomek presents "Trees and Shrubs for Year-long Interest."

### Building snowmen in the community



Submitted photo

Ryan and Grayson posing with their prized snowman! See more photos on page 9.

## MacDuffie students learn from their elders

By Emily-Rose Pappas  
Staff Writer  
epappas@turley.com

SOUTH HADLEY – The South Hadley Council on Aging hosted the MacDuffie students for their monthly visit to have a special time of Interviews and Desserts.

The MacDuffie students came to interview over a dozen volunteers who visit the Center about the history and culture they are from.

"We have students from around the United States and from all over the world, and that's one of the things that makes our program so special," said teacher Carol Tomkiel. "This is meant to be a casual and fun conversation where people can have cookies and juice and get to know one another."

High school students Lu-

cas and Savrina from China, Sebastian from Mexico, Ezgi from Turkey, Stefan from Serbia, Elijah from Boston, Kylie from South Korea, and Skylar from Vietnam came to interview these seniors to practice their English language, ask questions, and learn more about the world around them.

"It's a way for the students to make their learning authentic and more than just a grade. It's a way to help them get off of campus and get to know Americans and American culture, all while fine-tuning their skills," said Tomkiel.

The students at MacDuffie are diverse and represent over 19 different cultures, countries, and regions, which they can share and express

Please see **STUDENTS**, page 6



Sharing a laugh together.

Turley photos by Emily-Rose Pappas

# Warning homeowners to monitor space heaters

SOUTH HADLEY – If you use a space heater please check it. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) announced a voluntary recall of the following models because they can overheat, fail to meet the UL 1278 voluntary safety standard, and pose fire and burn hazards: H7130 (including H7130101, H7131, H7132, H7133, H7134, 7135

These heaters were sold widely in the U.S. and Canada. Testing showed the wireless control features could contribute to overheating.

The CPSC notes that these heaters do not comply with safety standards and can overheat, creating a real risk of ignition. Over 512,000 units were sold in the U.S., meaning many households may still be using them unknowingly.

Fire departments, including Ludlow's, have already encountered fires linked to these recalled models.

What to do if you own one: stop using the heater immediately.



The different kinds of space heaters available to go into homes.

Submitted photo

mediately.

Check the model number on the label (usually on the bottom or back).

If it matches any of the recalled models, contact Govee for a refund.

The CPSC lists Gov-

ee's recall support line as 8337725360 (9 a.m. to 5 p.m.).

# Mount Holyoke College Department of Dance presents "A Place to Land": 2026 Capstone Dance Concert

SOUTH HADLEY - The Mount Holyoke Dance Department is proud to present the 2026 Capstone Dance Concert, «A Place to Land.» This concert is a culmination of a year-long research and choreographic process conducted by Junior and Senior Dance majors. Through an array of vocabularies and styles, these pieces explore human connections, building and rebuilding, and the act of returning, both intentionally and unknowingly.

### About the Program & Choreographers: "Embrace" by Robyn Pilecki

"Embrace" is a work exploring human connections and missed connections. Centered in the research of neuroqueer embodiment, this collaborative choreography highlights the individuality of each dancer as they situate themselves amongst one another.

Robyn Pilecki (she/her) was raised in Tampa, FL by a neurodiverse family where she learned to celebrate different forms of communication and connection. Robyn began training and performing with Dawson Dance Academy and Mary Jo's Performing Arts Academy where she primarily practiced ballet, modern, and contemporary dance forms. During her

studies at Mount Holyoke College, she has performed in works by Barbie Diewald, Rodger Blum, and student choreographers. Robyn has worked on crew for Five College dance productions and acted as an Access Liaison and Assistant Stage Manager for the 2025 Mount Holyoke Capstone Concert: Soul Ties. Robyn has most recently presented Within This... at the New England Conference of the American College Dance Association (ACDA) in March 2025 and the Mount Holyoke College 2025 Student Concert: Labyrinth this past April. In January 2026, she participated in a residency as co-rehearsal director and répétiteur for Barbie Diewald's piece Thousandth Orange that Pilecki performed as a soloist in fall of 2024 and spring of 2025, at ACDA's National Conference. Pulling from her double major in dance and psychology, Robyn's choreography uses a lens of disability studies to explore both strength, power, and struggle in the community.

"the things that keep us up at night..." by Helena McGowan

"the things that keep us up at night..." explores the anxieties, dreams, nightmares, and wonders that keep one's mind spiraling late into the

evening hours.

Helena McGowan (she/her) is a Junior Dance and Psychology double major at Mount Holyoke College. She is a dancer, choreographer, and aspiring dance educator and mental health advocate. Her early training began at Jennifer McGowan's Creative Dance Center in Stow and Pepperell, MA, and Nashoba Valley Dance Academy in Pepperell, MA. She creates with a collaborative approach, influenced by her background in Creative Dance, Ballet, Contemporary, and Modern dance forms. During her time at Mount Holyoke, McGowan has performed in faculty work by Barbie Diewald, as well as several student works by Grace Thompson, Annika Champe, Aria Frehner, Meghan MacBeath, and Quinn Suomala. In the Spring of 2025, she had the opportunity to present her research, "The Benefits of Creative Dance as a Supplement to Other Techniques," at the American College Dance Association New England conference. In Spring 2025, McGowan presented her work, "intertwine," as part of the Student Dance Concert, "Labyrinth". She is also an active member of Mount Holyoke Ballet Club, where she has had various

opportunities to teach, perform, and choreograph. She is excited to present her new work, "the things that keep us up at night..." in the 2026 Capstone Dance Concert this upcoming Spring.

"learned it from you" by Emma Uva

This piece is my way of displaying lesbian life in its most mundane and joyous state: basking in the company of the ones you love and sharing your lives with each other, past and present.

Emma Uva is a musical theater and concert dance choreographer from Montclair, New Jersey. They began dancing at age 3, primarily focusing on contemporary, modern, lyrical, and musical theater vocabularies. Since 2015, they have choreographed nine theatrical productions and five concert dance works. At Mount Holyoke, they choreographed a piece, "in her hands," for the Student Dance Concert Epiphany, and three productions in the Film, Media, Theater department: Lemons, Lemons, Lemons (2025), The Addams Family (2024), and As You Like It (2024). Emma has performed in a piece by visiting faculty member Cha-

Please see **DANCE**, page 12

# Lenten Lunches return to South Hadley

SOUTH HADLEY – For 54 years, the All Saints' Church Lenten Lunch Committee has been welcoming diners from the area communities to meatless lunches during the Lenten season. In recent years, All Saints' has been alternating Friday luncheon sites during Lent with St. Patrick's Church in South Hadley Falls.

The last day at All Saints' Church is Friday, March 20.

The last day at St. Patrick's Church is Friday, March 27.

Remember these dates and locations, and bring a friend for lunch, or take home your favorite choice for supper.

At All Saints' Church, Lenten Lunch chairperson Laura Marsh says, "Lunches should be ordered in advance by calling the Parish Administrator's Office at 413-532-8917, Monday through Thursday between 1 and 5 p.m."

Prices for each of the three luncheon offerings will be

available upon request. Orders can be paid for by cash or check when lunches are conveniently picked up on Fridays in the church parking area located off Route 116 behind the church on Dunlop Place. Drive up, pick up, and enjoy our famous lunches made in our church kitchens on Fridays.

Committee members are Mary Ann Bail, Joe-Ann Bourguignon, Cammie Dagle, Miretta Campbell, Sue Frazier, Michele Pietras, and Cindy Steinbock. Publicity: Marilyn Gass and Don Marsh.

This year, the All Saints menu offers three choices: a lobster roll, chips, a choice of clam chowder or vegetable soup, crackers, and a brownie; a tuna salad roll, chips, a choice of clam chowder or vegetable soup, crackers, and a brownie; and a choice of clam chowder or vegetable soup, crackers, and a brownie.

Proceeds benefit area mission projects.

# Lenten lunches available at St Patrick's Church

SOUTH HADLEY – The Ladies Guild is again offering Grab and Go lunches with pick up at the Social Center at 15 School St.

This is one of the Ladies Guild's main fundraisers, with 100% of the net proceeds going toward scholarships and to many charitable organizations.

Their famous 100% lobster salad rolls are again available for \$24. White albacore tuna croissants are \$13.

Both come with a choice

of clam chowder or homemade minestrone soup, a bag of chips, and a cookie.

The lunch dates are as follows:

March 27 (order and payment are due by March 22)

Order forms are available inside the church or on the rectory porch at 30 Main Street, or you can make your own form and mail it with a check payable to St Patrick's Ladies Guild to St Patrick's Church, 30 Main Street, South Hadley, 01075. Please include your phone number.

# Chief Gundersen lists office hours

SOUTH HADLEY – Police Chief Jennifer Gundersen will be hosting several office

hours around town in March. • March 25, noon to 1:30 p.m., at Newton Manor

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# Country Bank celebrates 175 years of making a difference with over \$1m in community donations and sponsorships

REGION – Country Bank, a full-service financial institution serving Central and Western Massachusetts marked its 175th anniversary. This milestone year served as both a celebration of history and a reaffirmation of the Bank's long-standing commitment to the communities it has served since 1850, a legacy built over 175 years and grounded in relationships, trust, and service.

Throughout its anniversary year, Country Bank contributed over \$1M in community donations and sponsorship to nonprofit organizations, supporting essential programs and services across Central and Western Massachusetts. This investment reflects Country Bank's belief that community banking is about consistently showing up for the people and organizations that strengthen the region.

Giving during the Bank's 175th year focused on key areas including food insecurity, housing stability, education, youth development, health and human services, and financial literacy, causes that have long aligned with

Country Bank's mission and values.

In addition to financial support, Country Bank employees demonstrated a deep personal commitment to service. During the year, team members contributed 1,826 volunteer hours across 846 community initiatives, with 171 employees actively participating. This collective effort reinforces the Bank's belief that meaningful impact extends beyond financial contributions to include time, talent, and hands-on involvement.

A signature initiative of the 175th anniversary year was Country Bank's "Season of Difference", a bank-wide effort created to intentionally honor this milestone by giving back in ways that directly addressed local needs. Through this campaign, employees came together to support food pantries, shelters, schools, children and families, and nonprofit partners throughout the region, reinforcing a shared culture of generosity, teamwork, and service.

Financial education also remained a cornerstone of Country Bank's community

impact. Through its Money School program, Credit for Life Fairs, and classroom-based initiatives, the Bank continued to empower students and families with practical, real world financial skills, helping prepare the next generation for long term financial confidence and success.

"Celebrating 175 years is about honoring the relationships and values that have guided us since 1850. Our anniversary year was a powerful reminder that our greatest impact comes from standing alongside our communities, not just in moments of need, but year after year. I am incredibly proud of our team for the heart, generosity, and purpose they bring to this work," stated Mary McGovern, President and CEO, Country Bank.

The 175th anniversary served as a moment to reflect on the partnerships and community relationships that have defined Country Bank for generations, honoring those who came before us while continuing to invest in the next generation of customers, students, and communities we serve.

# Granby Free Public Library to host month-long book sale, March 3 to 31



Turley photo by Emily-Rose Pappas

The community has been very generous with their book donations!

GRANBY – Book lovers! Bargain Hunters! The Friends of the Granby Free Public Library will host their Month-Long Book Sale during the month of March in the Community Room of the Library. You will be able to choose from a large assortment

of used and like-new hardcover, softcover, paperback books, teen books, and children's books, along with a selection of CDs, DVDs, video games, and audiobooks. The sale will run during regular library hours from March 3 through 31.

The Library is no longer accepting donations after February 25th. Thank you for your support!

The Granby Free Public Library is located at 297 E State St, Granby, MA 01033. Visit granbylibrary.org for hours and more information.

# KYT to host info session on SHELD building

SOUTH HADLEY – Know Your Town will sponsor an informational presentation and discussion on the new proposed SHELD building on Thursday, March 12, at 6 p.m. in the Community Room at the Main Public Library.

Know Your Town

Member Marc Desrosiers will serve as the moderator. SHELD board members John Hine and Paul Dobosh and Manager Sean Fitzgerald will speak to the project.

Audience members may then come to the microphone to ask questions or to comment.

Attendees are kindly asked to bring a plate of easy-to-handle bites for the snacks table.

There will be a nonbinding ballot question on April 14 at the annual town election where you may indicate your support of or opposition to this new building.

Read the Town Reminder online at [www.townreminder.turley.com](http://www.townreminder.turley.com)



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# Opinion

## Guest Column

### Trauma, ACES, mental health and addictions

*The interconnection of substance use and eating disorders*

**By Suzanne Yerdon Lewandowski, M.Ed.**  
Guest Columnist, 32 1/2 years sober, 30 year tobacco free, 26 years eating disorder free

Up to 50% of individuals with eating disorders misuse alcohol or illicit drugs, a rate five times higher than the general population. (1)

Up to 70% of adults with bulimia nervosa and up to 18% with anorexia nervosa have a coexisting substance use disorder. Conversely, up to 35% of those with substance use disorders have a co-occurring eating disorder, a rate roughly 11 times higher than in the general population, confirming a strong, dangerous link.

These intertwined, often hidden, conditions share common risk factors like anxiety, depression, and trauma. (2)

Scientifically defined, "Addiction is a complex, chronic brain disease driven by a combination of biological, environmental, and developmental factors, rather than a mere failure of willpower or moral weakness."

Addiction is also a developmental disorder, usually beginning in adolescence as a result of what is identified as ACES. Trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences are the strongest predictors of addiction.

Trauma may be caused by a single stressful or dangerous event, or repeated and prolonged exposure to highly stressful events such as child abuse, bullying, or domestic violence.

Individuals with an ACE score of four or higher face significantly elevated risks for substance use disorders: they are seven to 10 times more likely to report illicit drug addiction, and seven times more likely to be alcoholics.

Research considers trauma as the "gateway drug." Trauma survivors struggle with anxiety, depression, PTSD, emotional dysregulation, shame and low self-worth. Many individuals use substances to escape, "not feel," or self-medicate for emotional, physical, or sexual abuse.

Because the brain does not fully mature until age 25, young people are more vulnerable to addiction; PTSD and trauma can have varying degrees of severity

and long-term effects. SAMHSA 2024 data reveals that 16.8% of the U.S. population aged 12 or older (about 48.4 million individuals) met the criteria for a substance use disorder (SUD) and that 10.1% of youths aged 12-17 reported significant suicidal thoughts. 2.7% attempted suicide.

Prevention and intervention by friends, families, teachers, and professionals, at any stage of development, can reduce the risk of an individual turning down the very dangerous path of addiction.

Awareness and education are the best places to begin and why public and mental health agencies and advocacy groups designate certain months to encourage people to recognize the signs of trauma and associated mental health concerns.

January brings us National Mental Wellness Month as well as Substance Use Disorder Treatment Month. Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month and National Eating Disorders Awareness Month follows in February. All mental health conditions are interwoven!

Eating disorders, again scientifically defined, can be understood as a maladaptive coping mechanism. This means that they serve a function for people; an eating disorder may help someone feel safe or in control during challenging times.

Eating disorders in teens often emerge as a coping mechanism for control, trauma, or emotional pain stemming from unhealthy relationships. Eating disorders are serious mental illnesses, where one's relationship with food and eating is disturbed. This can also extend to preoccupation with movement and body size/weight/shape.

Early signs of an eating disorder include body dissatisfaction and feelings of unhappiness, rapid weight loss or weight gain, changes in body shape and size, or particular body parts/areas, an intense fear of gaining weight, fear, avoidance or lack of interest in food and certain types of foods, denial of being hungry, deceptive behavior around food (hiding or tossing out food), avoiding food and eating in social situations, excessive

Please see **EATING**, page 5

### Garden related chores to ease in the season

Last week I'm writing about a blizzard, while this week it looks as if the mercury is going to climb! How about our crazy New England weather?

If the skyrocketing temps have you feeling the urge to get a jump on the gardening season, you are not alone!

Here are a few tasks, straight from the archives that will get you outside, and a few more to get you back indoors, because inevitably, winter is here for awhile longer. I think.

#### Perform appropriate garden chores

I am usually negligent in cutting down asparagus foliage in the fall. Weather permitting, in other words, if the snow melts enough over the course of the next two weeks, I will get out there and cut it back to its base soon, then haul off the branches to prevent any bugs that overwintered there from infesting this year's spears.

It is also time to prune blueberries, apples, raspberries and grapes.

Pruning can vary depending on the age and health of your specimens. If you are not experienced at it, consult any number of good books on the subject before you head outdoors with your pruning shears and loppers.

#### Assess your tools

Was the rototiller running rough last fall? Perform or schedule a tune up for later this month and beat the rush. Same goes for the weed whacker and lawn mower.

Hoe and spade blades can be washed of dirt and debris then sharpened with a metal file. Medium grit sandpaper works wonders to smooth out the wooden handles of these and other garden tools.

After which, boiled linseed or tung oil can be ap-

plied to both the handle and the metal blade. It helps the wood resist moisture which leads to cracking and prevents rust on the blades.

I love my Dad's old spade. It has a great, hand-made

grass seed, and fertilizers?

Plan to take advantage of preseason sales by knowing what you need ahead of time. Do you have enough containers, trays and labels?

If you find yourself short, you need not buy them. You can start seeds in repurposed fruit and vegetable boxes, the kind that mushrooms, strawberries and lettuce mixes come in. They work great as long as you make a few drainage holes in the bottom.

Pint sized ice cream containers are perfect for a second transplanting of tomato or pepper plants. Seeds of squash or annual flowers can be sown in single serving ice cream cups. As a kid I always saved our Popsicle sticks for labeling seedlings or garden rows.

When I run out of labels, all it takes is a trip to the recycle bin to make some more.

Last year I cut them out of quart-sized yogurt containers; they were the perfect length.

#### Practice good garden hygiene

Disinfect any containers, labels, stakes etc. that you wish to reuse this gardening season by washing them in hot soapy water then a quick rinse of one part bleach to nine parts water. This mixture will kill any pathogens left behind from previous gardening endeavors.

Out with the old, and in with the new – all in due time!

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



wooden handle that is about to crack through; sure wish I had oiled it 20 years ago!

#### Take inventory

Many of us have our seed orders in by now. If you don't, or if you plan to buy your seeds locally, it is a great idea to go through your leftovers.

Before you decide whether or not they are keepers, consider their age and how they were stored. My rule of thumb is that if any seed is over three years old it isn't worth the risk. Some seeds, such as those for parsley, hybrid onion, carrot and parsnip expire even sooner. These are discarded after only one year.

If seeds were stored in a moist or overly hot location, their viability can be cut short sooner than normal. If you have concerns that they might not germinate, sow a few seeds indoors in pots in a warm location and see what kind of results you get.

Nothing is more upsetting than planting seeds in the garden and having few or no seedlings come up. Time is wasted and the harvest is delayed by unknowingly utilizing dead seeds.

We can also take inventory of the various supplies we use during the growing season. How are you set on lime,



### OPINION PAGE/ LETTERS POLICY

Letters to the Editor have a maximum of 350 words. We require writers to include their name, address and phone number in order for our office to authenticate authorship prior to publication. Addresses and phone numbers are not published.

Unsigned or anonymous letters will NOT be published.

We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions. Libelous, unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks or defamation of character are not allowed. Deadline for submissions is Wednesday at noon.

Please email (preferred) letters to townreminder@turley.com. Mailed letters can be sent to Town Reminder, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069.

### Turley Election Policy

This newspaper will print free self-submitted statements of candidacy only four weeks or more out from the election. All candidates running in both contested and uncontested races are asked to submit their statements to the editor to include only biographical and campaign platform details. Total word count for statements is limited to between 300-500 words maximum. Please include a photo. We will not publish any statements of candidacy inside the four weeks from election threshold. To publish any other campaign publicity during the race, please contact our advertising representatives. We also do not allow personal attacks against other candidates or political parties in statements of candidacy, nor do we publish for free any information about key endorsements or political fundraisers.

Letters to the editor of no more than 250 words from supporters endorsing specific candidates or discussing campaign issues are limited to three total per author during the election season. No election letters will appear in the final edition before the election. We reserve the right to edit all statements of candidacy and letters to the editor to meet our guidelines.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Do not let South Hadley enter a death cycle

#### To the Editor,

South Hadley's financial reality has been presented clearly and repeatedly in open meetings, published reports, and public hearings. The Selectboard, Finance Committee, and Budget Task Force have laid out the numbers in detail, and every department undergoes an independent annual audit. The deficit we face is structural and documented. It is not speculative, and it is not the result of secrecy.

What should concern residents most is the risk of entering a true "death cycle" for our schools and, by extension, our town.

When school funding declines, programming and staffing are reduced. As offerings shrink, more families enroll their children elsewhere through Massachusetts' state-mandated School Choice program, a system municipalities have limited authority to control. Each stu-

dent who leaves represents a direct loss of revenue. That loss forces further reductions, which drive more departures. As school quality perceptions decline, property values weaken, constraining the tax base and making it even harder to fund schools adequately. Around and around it goes.

This is not theoretical. In parts of Western Massachusetts, where communities already contend with higher median age populations and slow commercial growth, enrollment erosion has compounded financial strain. Reporting in the Boston Globe and on WBUR has documented districts facing declining student numbers, staffing reductions, and mounting budget pressure as costs rise faster than local revenue. Once that cycle accelerates, stabilizing schools becomes far more difficult... and far more expensive.

If the override fails, we

risk triggering that same pattern here. Larger class sizes, fewer educators, and diminished programming will not make South Hadley more competitive within a School Choice system we did not design. They will make it harder to retain families and protect the long-term strength of our tax base.

It is reasonable to demand accountability. It is not reasonable to ignore structural math or the compounding effects of inaction. The town has been transparent. The finances have been scrutinized. The consequences are clear.

South Hadley cannot afford to enter a downward spiral. We must break the death cycle before it begins.

Vote yes on the Proposition 2 1/2 override at the ballot on April 14th.

David P. Solender-Clark  
South Hadley Town Meeting Member

### Appreciating a local building

#### To the Editor,

At the South Hadley Budget hearing last Wednesday evening, Robert Sklarz, President of The Sycamores Restoration Committee, made a P.I.L.O.T (payment in lieu of taxes) donation to the town.

He said the Sycamores will donate \$6,000 a year for the next 5 years. This pledge represents a step forward as the town wrestles with the future. The Sycamores, the big yellow house located on Woodbridge Street, has a colorful history. It was built in 1788 by Colonel Ruggles Woodbridge, the most eligible bachelor in town. The Sycamores Restoration Committee was established in 1999 by

Ken and Louise Williamson to maintain this gem.

I recently had the chance to tour the home and see the restoration work. It is lovely, watch for an open house during Mount Holyoke's Graduation and reunion weekends.

There is no admission charge, there is some on-site parking, and easy access. You will not be disappointed. The Sycamores, like the town, are a work in progress.

Thank you to Robert Sklarz and the Sycamores Restoration Committee for your work and your interest in South Hadley's future.

Marie Rohan  
South Hadley

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## TOWN Reminder

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**EATING** from page 4

sive or compulsive physical activity, cutting out particular food groups, developing food rituals – such as always using the same bowl, cutting food up into tiny pieces or eating very slowly.

These in turn can bring on behavioral changes such as social withdrawal, or not engaging in activities once enjoyed, sleep difficulties, low self-esteem, moodiness, and/or irritability.

Binge Eating Disorder (BED) is defined by recurring episodes of eating large quantities of food, often quickly and to the point of discomfort, accompanied by a feeling of a loss of control and shame.

Bulimia Nervosa is characterized by frequent episodes of binge eating followed by vomiting, using laxatives, or exercising to excess to avoid gaining weight. Your hungry body responds to its need for food with powerful cravings and another binge ensues. To feel (short-lived) relief and regain control, you purge, but purging only reinforces binge eating and a vicious cycle of bulimia begins.

Anorexia Nervosa is a restrictive eating disorder, characterized most notably by weight loss and nutrient deficiency. Those with anorexia have difficulty maintaining an appropriate weight for their size and shape. In addition to restricting calories, compulsive exercise, use of laxatives, and/or purging is used to keep their weight low.

There are other specified feeding disorders (OSFED) that are subcategories of eating disorders that do not fit into the diagnostic criteria. A few include:

- Atypical Anorexia is a disorder that despite food restriction, the person's weight is average or above for their height, not under
- Rumination disorder (habitual regurgitation of food after eating, which may then be re-chewed, re-swallowed, or spit out) avoidant or restrictive food intake
- Pica (the persistent eating of non-food substances with no nutritional value, such as dirt, hair, paint chips, or soap)
- Orthorexia (an obsession with healthy eating with associated restrictive behaviors)
- Drunkorexia (skipping meals or excessive exercise along with heavy alcohol consumption.)

Diabulimia is a life-threatening eating disorder specifically affecting individuals with Type 1 diabetes, characterized by the intentional restriction or omission of insulin to induce weight loss.

Avoidant/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID) is similar to picky eating in children or restricted intake in adults, this involves limiting food intake based on a lack of interest in food, avoidance of sensory characteristics (texture, smell), or fear of negative consequences (choking, vomiting).

In addition to affecting mental health, addictions can seriously damage the physical health systems: gastrointestinal, endocrine, nervous, cardiovascular, immune, respiratory problems, as well as liver damage and kidney disease.

It doesn't take long for tolerance to increase with substance use; more of the drug/alcohol is required to have the same effect. Dependence follows, and the body needs the substance to function normally.

Addiction takes time to develop but soon the cravings and compulsions are stronger than the consequences that follow. If you try to quit, the negative physical and mental health symptoms of withdrawal take over.

Recovery from substance use disorders and eating disorders have many similarities but also a big difference. Abstinence is the goal for many recovering from SUD, but for anyone with an eating disorder, abstinence becomes an eating disorder.

Never in your right mind would you even think about telling an alcoholic to have a beer for breakfast, wine for lunch, cocktails for dinner and a few shots for snacks. One sip, one drug, or one cigarette and the body and mind crave the substance – substance use ensues!

For an eating disorder, food is both the enemy (drug) AND the cure. The body and mind crave food in the same way as a SUD, but eating is essential for recovery.

One must eat to regain both mental and physical health, yet EVERY SINGLE BITE triggers intense emotions, anxieties and potential knee-jerk bingeing/restriction reactions. One must sit with those overwhelming negative

feelings day in and day out. You can only imagine what it is like for those 35%-50% with dual diagnosis to abstain from substance use while relearning what is the right amount of food to provide the best nutrition for healing. What is good for the body will not feel good to the mind and the person resists!

The interplay between physical health and mental health is intense.

With food disorders, there is an interplay of the endocrine and nervous system constantly trying to keep the body at equilibrium whether a person is suffering from bingeing, purging or starvation caused by anorexia nervosa.

Once you're in recovery, it can take three months or more to heal metabolism after an eating disorder. This includes unwanted weight gain, digestive issues, thyroid and hormone problems, and fatigue.

Like alcoholism, anorexia can have fatal consequences without medical intervention. Typical eating disorder recovery takes three-six years.

Marilyn Barrett, author of "Creating Eden: The Garden as a Healing Place" encapsulated my recovery when she wrote:

"Come into the garden with me. Don't worry about not knowing your way: Your heart remembers, even if your head has forgotten. When you were small and first had time to create your dreams, you were at one with the earth you played in and with each leaf, bird, and cloud you saw. This is the garden to which I invite you to return.

Imagine a place to which you can bring stress, sorrow, loneliness, and confusion and from which you can leave with a sense of resolution, understanding, and calm. Imagine a place where you can express your own unique nature, create beauty, grow pure food, and gain control over your life. In my life, the garden has been such a place."

Marilyn so aptly penned that the garden is a place for clearing away anger, confusion, and pain, the trash of the past. She added this clearing is a prerequisite to achieving inner peace, balance and harmony and people must sort through the emotional rubble of the past they have inherited, and they must get to the roots of attitudes and behavior patterns that have stunted their

growth. Getting to the roots of attitudes and behavior patterns that have stunted growth doesn't have to be in the garden. Return to what you loved as a child – sports, art, music, writing, hiking. Find a safe place to face the past.

If you are able, volunteering can be crucial in recovery addiction because it provides structure, fosters a renewed sense of purpose, provides new skillsets, builds a supportive sober community, and improves mental health by reducing depression and anxiety.

It helps individuals replace the self-centered nature of addiction with empathy and structure, ultimately reducing relapse risk by providing meaningful, productive activity.

Additionally, employers value volunteers because they demonstrate key, transferable skills like initiative, teamwork, and leadership, while also signaling a strong work ethic and passion. On a resume, it fills gaps, shows practical experience, and indicates a proactive, community-minded employee.

For every addicted individual, the descent into dependency is uniquely complex as is the journey of recovery. Professional treatment makes for a more successful outcome, so please insist that all your symptoms and conditions are addressed.

Be honest so that you can understand your past and how it affects today's choices.

Joy and well-being will return with each little success!

National Eating Disorders Association: <https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/>

Multiservice eating Disorders Association: <https://www.medainc.org/>

Online Eating Disorder Treatment: Equip <https://equip.health/>

Quaboag Hill Substance Use Alliance: <https://qhsua.org/>

Recovery Center of Hope: <https://www.facebook.com/RecoveryCenterofHOPE-Ware/> 52 Main Street, Ware. RCH is run by people in recovery and helps those reach goals through a strengths-based and community-based approach.

(1 National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA), 2 National Institute of Health)

## State Budget Hearings: A report from Lisa Wong

SOUTH HADLEY – The Joint Committee on Ways and Means will have hearings focused on municipal and school aid. The Mass Municipal Association argues that the Governor's proposal does not keep up with rising costs in labor, health insurance, energy, infrastructure, and much more.

MMA will also advocate for a higher minimum aid figure to ensure that all school districts have the critical resources needed to maintain educational services; prioritize full funding for Special Education Circuit Breaker reimbursements; advocate for addressing the financial strain that charter school

payments impose on public school districts; and advocate for fully funding school transportation accounts.

Following the Joint Ways and Means Committee hearings, the House is expected to debate its own budget bill in April, with the Senate deliberating its bill in May. The Legislature will work to get a final budget bill to the governor by the beginning of the fiscal year on July 1. State aid not keeping up with inflation is one of the main drivers of the South Hadley budget deficit.

For more information on the Mass Municipal Association, visit their website at [www.mma.org](http://www.mma.org).



Submitted photo  
Gianna Allentuck and Connie Mahoney nicely capture the volunteer spirit.

## The Zonta Club helps women in need

REGION – The Zonta Club of Quaboag Valley announced that 600 feminine hygiene kits were assembled for women and girls in need by some amazing volunteers at the Venture Way Collaborative on Saturday February 21st. Special thanks to VWC, Jazzercise Amherst Fitness, Girls Inc. of the Valley, Palmer Public Library, Soul Shine Consignment Boutique, Making Waves Belchertown, The Polished Room, Blush Med Spa, Chamelions Salon, Wilbraham Tanning, Wilbraham Monson Academy and the Skin Studio Wilbraham for

their support in collecting product donations. We also received heart-warming messages and cash to purchase needed products thanks. To the publicity we got from local publications.

Amherst Survival Center was the only non-profit who showed up to get the kits, so they left with hundreds of kits and a trunk-load of additional feminine products.

Some of our members and volunteers will deliver the rest of the kits to the Care Center, Gray's House, local food banks, police departments, etc.

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**2026**

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Hosted by: **Western Mass. Fly Fishermen**

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6:30 PM TO 9:00 PM  
SPEAKER AT 7:30 PM

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More info at **WMFFCLUB.ORG**

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**Guest Speaker:** Dr. Andy J. Danylchuk – From Striped Bass to Trout: Science-Based Best Practices for Catch-And-Release

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# Community support grows for the Second Chance Annual Auction Gala

*Event to benefit more than 64,000 pets in need*

**EAST BROOKFIELD** – Second Chance Animal Services is gearing up for its 27th Annual Auction Gala on Saturday, March 28, at the AC Hotel by Marriott in Worcester, and community support is already building.

The organization is grateful to early sponsors including Herlihy Insurance Group of Worcester and Tito's Handmade Vodka for helping make this special evening possible. Their support reflects a shared commitment to ensuring pets and the families who love them have access to care and second chances.

Second Chance's Auction Gala is the organization's largest fundraiser of the year, bringing together animal lovers, local businesses,

and friends for a memorable and meaningful night out. Proceeds support affordable veterinary care, pet food assistance, adoption services, and other lifesaving programs that help more than 64,000 pets each year.

This year's auction will feature exciting travel experiences, including a one week stay at a private apartment in Le Suquet, the charming old quarter of Cannes, France, a four-night stay at a private home in Kissimmee just outside of Orlando, and a romantic Boston getaway perfect for a special weekend close to home. Guests can also bid on beautiful gift baskets, popular gift cards, and a wide variety of unique items and experiences generously donated by community supporters.

In addition to the in-person event, a limited selection of items will be available through advance online bidding from Friday, March 20,

through Thursday, March 26. This curated online auction will feature select gift certificates and special items, giving supporters an opportunity to participate even if they cannot attend the Gala. Bidding will continue in person at 4 pm on Saturday, March 28, with additional items available exclusively to Gala guests. Complete details and bidding information will be available online.

Second Chance continues to welcome additional sponsors and auction item donations. Businesses and individuals are invited to contribute goods, services, experiences, or themed packages to help make the event a success. Sponsorship opportunities provide meaningful visibility while directly supporting pets in need.

Tickets are on sale now, and early reservations are encouraged as seating is limited. "This evening is a celebra-

tion of what our community makes possible," said Lindsay Doray, Chief Development Officer of Second Chance Animal Services. "We are so thankful for the sponsors and donors who are stepping up. Every ticket purchased and every item donated, helps us provide critical care and keep pets with the families who love them."

Doray added that no one will leave empty-handed. "Our guests will take home the coveted Second Chance swag bag packed with fun finds for pets and their people."

To purchase tickets, learn about sponsorship opportunities, participate in online bidding, or donate an auction item, visit <https://www.secondchanceanimals.org/annual-auction/>.

Join Second Chance Animal Services on March 28 and help create more second chances for pets in need.

About Second Chance Animal Services:

Second Chance Animal Services is a nonprofit animal welfare organization founded in 1999. Second Chance began as an animal shelter and grew to help more pets in need. Today, Second Chance operates Community Veterinary Hospitals in North Brookfield, Southbridge, Springfield, and Worcester, providing access to the highest-quality veterinary care for all. Subsidized rates are provided to underserved communities to ensure access to care for all pets in need. Last year, Second Chance helped over 64,000 pets live better lives through full-service veterinary care, spay/neuter services, adoption services, community & educational outreach programs, training, and a pet food pantry. For more information, visit Second Chance's website at [www.secondchanceanimals.org](http://www.secondchanceanimals.org).

# Important budget dates and meetings

**SOUTH HADLEY** – The Special Town Meeting passed an override, with 66% majority voting in favor of an \$11 million override. Now, the Selectboard and the School Committee are hosting and preparing for budget votes and hearings ahead of the final vote on the April 14 ballot.

- Important dates to remember, and recordings to watch before the Annual Town Meeting:
  - March 3 Selectboard - Budget Public Hearing
  - March 11 School Committee - Budget Public Hearing
  - March 17 Selectboard - Budget Vote
  - March 25 School Committee - Budget Vote
  - March 28 - Community Meeting
  - April 14 - Annual Town Election
  - May 13 - Annual Town Meeting

## STUDENTS from page 1

freely under the encouragement of their school.

"I love first and foremost the students. They want to learn, and they bring the richness of their diverse backgrounds. It's been a career that's given me a real sense of purpose. Second, it's the freedom I'm given as a professional, and thirdly, the in-

tegrity of the program," said Tomkiel.

The students brought pens and paper to their interviews and planned to write up their conversations, which they then planned to share with the people they interviewed.

"I think it is so, so important for students to have authentic learning. For them to get out of their classes,

off the campus, and into the world is important for the international students to learn more about the American culture, but also for every one of them to learn that learning is the experience, and it's so much more than just in the classroom."

"The turnout that we have, and I love that the members want to talk to the kids, and

there are so many smiles and laughter. I think it's how welcoming they make us feel here. They make us feel like family, which is really beautiful," said Jill Skibel.

The interview session was a wonderful opportunity for the students and seniors alike, and provided an intergenerational opportunity for stories and experiences to be shared.



The students and the seniors together, celebrating their new friends.

Turley photos by Emily-Rose Pappas



Taking time to hear others' stories is truly wonderful.



Learning from others is how we grow as a community.

# Spring home

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## DRAMA from page 1

I-Am, a zebra, and a hunter. "We were learning the choreography and the songs, and everybody just makes it so fun, so it has been a really good experience so far."

Sixth grader Hannah Guggino-Laramie, who plays Thing 2, described her time in drama club as transformative. "My experience in drama has been wonderful, and drama club helps me learn from my mistakes that I might make in the play or for my career," she said. "I also think this play will be super fun to do."

Kenslie LaBarre, a seventh grader portraying a Bird Girl, echoed that sentiment. "My experience of this play so far has been amazing! The people involved are all so awesome at what they do, and we couldn't form such a great play without them."

For Holmes, watching students grow has been the most rewarding part of the process. "We have many students who joined the drama club for the first time this year, and it has been wonderful to watch them grow both as actors as well as leaders amongst their peers," she said.

That growth extends beyond the stage. "Any extra-curricular activity allows a student to grow, both inside and out," Holmes added. "I feel one of the largest skills that our cast has been strengthening is time management. They are students first, and then performers. Juggling their academic commitments as well as memorizing lines and blocking has been a challenge for our young cast."

As opening night approaches, students hope audiences will see not just the spectacle, but the effort behind it.

"I want the audience to know that the cast has been working and practicing very hard to make the show perfect," Costigan said.

Fellow cast member LaBarre hopes theatergoers take home a deeper message: "No matter what your background is or what group of people you hang with, we all still come together and work through our mistakes to provide you with the show of a lifetime."

Tickets are available online at [mesmsdrama.ludus.com](http://mesmsdrama.ludus.com) and at the door.

# SPORTS

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## Tigers breeze through tourney opener



Olivia Athas makes her way down the court.

SOUTH HADLEY – With the No. 3 seed in the Division 4 State Tournament, the South Hadley High School girls basketball team will get to enjoy home cooking through the semifinals of the tournament. The Tigers opened up the tournament last Thursday evening, facing a Western Mass. opponent as Mt. Greylock visited. The Tigers offense got out to a fast start and didn't look back in a 61-41 win. Cara Dean led all scorers with 18 points while Kate Phillips also had a big game with 17 points. Olivia Athas added 10 points and South Hadley moved into the Round of 16, scheduled to face West Bridgewater earlier this week.

Sofie Quinn makes a pass on the run.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

## Rams breeze through first-round matchup

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

GRANBY– Aside from missing several foul shots, the eighth-seeded Granby Lady Rams delivered an impressive performance against 25th-seeded Keefe Tech in the Division 5 round of 32 state tournament game.

Building a commanding 13-3 lead at the end of the first quarter, the Lady Rams maintained control throughout the contest. Their efforts culminated in a decisive 53-32 victory over the Broncos at Sullivan Gymnasium last Friday afternoon, which earned them a spot in the sweet 16 for the first time.

"We're very excited about going to the next round," said Granby junior Kalli White. "It also felt very nice to hold the lead for the whole game, which took the pressure off us."

The Lady Rams (19-3), who won the Western Mass. Class D championship in the middle of February, won their eleventh consecutive game. They also have a perfect 13-0 home record this season. The three games that they lost during the regular season came on the road against Ware, Amherst, and Southwick.

"No one expected us to win Western Mass. Class D," said Granby head coach Dave Padavano. "We ended up being the number one seed, and we took the plaque home. This is a good group of girls. They deserve every bit of what they've got."

The last team to beat Granby on their homecourt was Lee High School, who posted a 50-27 victory on January 20, 2025.

Since the start of the 2021-22 regular season, the Lady Rams have a 3-3 record in the Division 5 state tournament.

Granby was scheduled to host ninth-seeded Hoosac Valley in the Sweet 16 game on Monday night.

The trio of junior Brenna Moreno, junior Kalli White, and freshman Rowan Cook, who are all starters, combined to score 40 points in the Lady Rams round of 32 victory.

Please see **RAMS**, page 8



Ryley McMahon tries to shoot under pressure.



Kate Phillips beats the defense and gets the layup.



Simone Quinn tries to grab a rebound.



Cara Dean hits the easy layup.

## HCC Women celebrate final home game

HOLYOKE – Women's basketball played their last regular season game on Friday evening, Feb. 20, hosting regional opponent Bunker Hill CC. The Lady

Cougars defeated their opposition 67-56 to earn their seventh straight win. Holyoke's two second-year players, Emily McGrail (Ware, MA / Ware HS) and Erin

Bullough (South Hadley, MA / South Hadley HS), were honored with a sophomore night that included a pregame ceremony recognizing the athletes and their accomplishments. Posters, photos and decorations were hung on the walls and in the stands around Golas Court.

McGrail led the Cougars in blocks during Friday's game and was second in rebounds, tallying six of each. She leads Holyoke in blocks this season with 59 and blocks per game, averaging 3.5. McGrail is sixth in NJCAA Division III in blocks and third in blocks per game. Bullough sunk the Lady Cougars first basket of the game on Friday. She leads Holyoke in three-point shooting percentage this season and is second in three-pointers made. Bullough has made 41.3% of the three-point shots she has attempted this year,



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Jhanys Andrades goes for the layup.



Erin Bullough, of South Hadley, tries to overcome pressure.

Please see **WOMEN**, page 8



Brenna Moreno takes an easy layup.



Kaitlyn Curran sends a pass away.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Eleanor Szlosek grabs the pass.

# Thunderbirds score much-needed win over Checkers

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds (21-25-5-2) overpowered the Charlotte Checkers (30-18-4-0) on Saturday night before a sellout crowd of 6,793 inside the MassMutual Center on Military Appreciation Night, coming away with a 5-1 victory.

Zach Dean provided instant offense on Friday night, and the third-year pro experienced deja vu on this night, jabbing home a 2-on-1 pass from Hugh McGing just 2:20 into the action to give Spring-

field a 1-0 lead.

Unlike a night earlier, Steve Ott's team was able to build upon its early lead with two successful penalty kills, followed by a power-play re-direction by Matthew Peca at 18:57 of the first, as the captain tipped a Calle Rosen shot through Kirill Gerasimiyuk.

The T-Birds' offense proved to be far from finished, as Alek Kaskimaki took a breakaway pass from Otto Stenberg at 4:30 of the second and stayed with his initial shot to cash in on a re-

bound past Gerasimiyuk, extending the lead to 3-0.

Charlotte finally got on the board just 52 seconds later when Noah Gregor crashed the net to chip a Brian Pinho pass over the shoulder of Will Cranley, but it proved to be just a small blip on the T-Birds' radar in what would evolve into a firestorm of offense for the home team.

Only 1:03 of game time passed before Springfield had restored its three-goal advantage, as Jakub Stancl circled the offensive zone to the right

circle before firing the puck back toward the goal mouth. Dylan Peterson parked himself right outside the crease and allowed the puck to ricochet off his skate and past Gerasimiyuk to make it a 4-1 game, chasing Gerasimiyuk from the game in the process.

Charlotte backup Louis Domingue did not fare much better, as McGing revved up the ice on a breakaway 55 seconds later. McGing was tripped and may have earned a penalty shot, but as he was falling, the puck continued

on a straight line path under Domingue's legs, giving McGing credit for the third T-Birds goal in a 2:50 blitz, extending the lead to 5-1.

There would be no more goals in the final half of the game, but the fireworks were far from done, and with just eight seconds remaining and tempers flaring, Cranley and Domingue met at center and dropped the mitts for a goal-ie fight, the first in T-Birds history, which left the sellout crowd in an uproar to close out the victory.

# Follow Turley Sports on Instagram

Turley Publications sports department has recently joined Instagram. You can find our account by searching "turleysports." We will regularly feature samples of photos that you will see in our publications on a weekly basis. Please follow and share with your friends and loved ones. We will be featuring photos from all 11 of our sports sections, but as always, you can see all the photos that appear by subscribing to your local paper or picking up a copy in your community.

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## WOMEN from page 7

ranking her fourth in NJCAA Division III. She has drained 31 total shots from long range on the year. Annastacia Dixon (Keene, NH / Keene HS) had an outstanding game in the regular season finale, leading Holyoke in points with 24 and rebounds with eight.

Women's basketball closes out the regular season with a 10-3 regional record and a 14-7 overall record. They are the second-place team in the New England (Region XXI) standings and will be the #2 seed entering the regional tournament. This will be HCC women's basketball's first postseason appearance in over 15 years. The Lady Cougars will get a bye to the tournament semifinals and will host the winner of one of the two quarter-



Annastacia Dixon gets the short jumper away.



Mileidy Rosado avoids a block and gets a shot.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com  
Tatiyana Zuniga passes in transition.

## RAMS from page 7

Moreno led the way offensively with a game-high 18 points. She scored nine points in each half.

White finished with 12 points despite sitting on the bench for the entire fourth quarter.

"You just can't take what Brenna and Kalli do for us for granted," Padavano said. "They're our leading scorers and are only juniors."

Cook also reached double figures with 10 points.

Rounding out the box score for the home team were junior Eleanor Szlosek (7 points), sophomore Kaelyn Slapski (4 points), and senior Kaitlyn Curran (2 points).

Curran is a co-captain, along with senior Mylin Laliberte.

Moreno made three straight field goals in the middle of the first quarter giving Granby a 10-0 lead.

After White made a free throw, Curran hit a foul-line jumper making the score 13-0 with 1:55 left in the opening quarter.

"You can't let a team think they can win," Padavano said. "We almost shut them out in the first quarter. It set the tone for the rest of the game. I was able to play everyone in a postseason game, which was very good. Everyone contributed in their own way."

The Broncos (14-5) ad-

vanced into the Round of 32 after dispatching 40th seeded Edward Kennedy Academy, 33-22, in a preliminary round game, which was their first ever postseason victory.

The visitors from Framingham, who had a lot of trouble handling the Lady Rams full court press, finally broke the ice when sophomore Maria Pimenta (7 points) buried a 3-pointer.

Cook began the second quarter with a jumper and

White made a put-back hoop before Szlosek scored the next five points. She made a jumper in the lane and a 3-pointer, which increased the Lady Rams lead to 22-3 with four minutes left in the opening half.

The Lady Rams, who held a 29-11 halftime lead, put together a 12-2 run during the first five minutes of the third quarter. They were leading 41-13, after White sank a pair of free throws with 2:39

remaining in the third quarter.

Curran and Cook were the only Granby starters standing on the court at the start of the final quarter.

The other three Granby players were freshman Kara White, junior Meredith Bar-tosz, and Laliberte.

Keefe Tech outscored Granby, 16-8, during the final eight minutes, but the home fans were already thinking about the Sweet 16 game at that point.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com  
Kalli White gets the two points.



Rowan Cook shoots over a pair of guards.



Mylin Laliberte takes a shot.

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**SPRING** from page 1

cies 101: Identification & Management,” “Vegetables vs. Pests: How to Win!” “Design Your Own Water Feature,” “Let’s Go Native: A Sustainable, Attainable Approach,” and Get your Hands Dirty: Creating a Succulent Garden (Hands-on).”

The hands-on workshops, it should be noted, are already filled.

The speakers include Dan Ziomek, owner of Sugarloaf Gardens, Berry Specialist Laura Griffin McDermott, Plant Magic Garden Owner and Gardening for Hot People Podcast Co-Host Cheryl Rafuse, Master Gardener Chris Ferrero, Wistariahurst Gardens Master Gardener Toi Graham, Environmental Biologist at the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources Jennifer Forman, Master Gardener Ed Sourdiffe, Full Circle Garden Master Gardeners Margery Gerard and JoAnne Palmer and Kessa McEwen, horticulturist and landscape designer at Berkshire Botanical Garden.

Anyone interested is encouraged to register quickly, as classes fill up fast. Mail-in registrations have to be post-marked and sent in by March 16 at \$35, online registration is through March 26 for \$35 and walk-ins are the day of at \$40 cash only.

Rosey Bonner, a member of the WMMGA and part of the Planning Committee for the event, expressed excitement for this year’s workshops and said attendees have an opportunity to take two of them during the day.

“The sessions are an hour and 15 minutes long. The speaker usually speaks for an hour and then gives them a good 15 minutes because they usually have lots of questions that may not have come up in what we were talking about,” Bonner said.

On the topics, Bonner explained, “our whole mission is sustainability and good practices” and community feedback also guides this, with evaluations at the end of the workshops. A couple of this year’s workshops, for example, came to be through those evaluations.

“We didn’t have anything on trees and shrubs last year, so a lot of people said, ‘Can you bring back something else in trees and shrubs?’ So, the person we have doing it this year is Dan Ziomek and he’s been in the industry for 20 plus years. He’s currently the manager of the Sugarloaf Gardens in Sunderland,” Bonner said. “He has a wealth of information. He will bring his truck loaded with shrubs

and trees and his focus this year is make sure if you’re going to use trees and shrubs, it’s just like flowers. You just don’t have them look good one season, you have them look good four seasons. So, he’s really going to talk about what trees or shrubs might be featured for your garden or landscape over the year long. So, it’s just good biodiversity, but it also makes pretty art too.”

Another topic Bonner highlighted was “Vegetables versus Pests: How to Win!” as attendees always seek a topic on vegetables.

“They talk about some common vegetables that you grow and pests or diseases that take them over. Number one, how to prevent it and number two, how to manage insects and diseases if you get them. It’s practical, useful ideas that really work,” Bonner said. “I say they really work because the two presenters, Margery Gerard and JoAnne Palmer, are both master gardeners, but more important than that, their expertise in this area comes from the fact that they are two of the people that oversee the South Hadley garden called Full Circle Garden. It’s a vegetable garden and they raise way over 2,000 pounds of food in the summer for the food pantry there, so not only are they master gardeners, they have such practical, hands-on experience.”

Bonner said another concern gardeners have is invasive species in “how to identify it and what to do about it,” with the focus on spotted lanternflies, jumping worms, Japanese Knotweed and more.

“The person doing it is very careful to say manage, not completely eradicate, because sometimes, once you get these invasives in here, you can’t get rid of them, but you could at least manage them. Others you catch them early enough because you’ve identified them early enough you can really get rid of,” Bonner said. “She is the point person for Massachusetts that watches over what plants or insects that go on the invasive list, so she’s really got her hands into this part.”

After Bonner expressed gratitude to the Western Mass community for supporting the event year after year and, also, for this year’s raffle, as many community members donated items too, she added that she hopes attendees take away inspiration and ideas to help better understand biodiversity.

“They’re an important part in saving our world and making a difference, and it’s



Western Massachusetts Master Gardens plan workshops to empower and educate home gardeners.

Submitted photos Rosey Bonner



Hands on workshop making succulent container gardens



This vendor showcases live plants.



Other vendors including garden décor.

not mammoth things they have to do. It’s small, little changes that they can do. Whether it’s adding a little water feature or adding a native or addressing that invasive or adding a bush with berries for the birds, there’s something that they’re going to walk away with that they truly will make a difference in helping to save our world,” Bonner said. “They’re taking care of our environment and that’s really what we need is everybody doing a little piece.”

Bonner’s message was this.

“If you’re looking to get energized, inspired, get out of this humdrum of winter, come to our workshops. We guarantee you’ll walk away with a smile and feeling spring is here!” Bonner said.

To learn more and to register, visit [wmmga.org](http://wmmga.org).

*Building snowmen in the community*



A family of snowmen hanging out in the sun.

Submitted photos



A goofy little snowman with a fabulous mustache!



Carolyn and her grandson, Henry, built this snowman together.



Lucana Pettinato with her adorable little snowman friend.



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This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertising in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain about discrimination call The Department of Housing and Urban Development "HUD" toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. For the N.E. area, call HUD at 617-565-5308. The toll free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

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# Legal Notices

## TOWN OF GRANBY INVITATION FOR BID #126-01

**FOR TIMBER REMOVAL**  
Sealed bids for timber removal at Dufresne Park will be received in the Selectboard Office, 10-B W State St., Granby, MA 01033 until Tuesday, March 31, 2026 at 1:00 P.M. at which time they will be opened and publicly read by the Chief Procurement Officer.

Bid documents are available on the Town's website at <https://www.granby-ma.gov/selectboard/pages/bid-documents>

The Town of Granby reserves the right to cancel this IFB or re-

ject in whole or in part any and all bids, if the Town determines that cancellation or rejection serves the best interests of the Town. Any addenda or cancellations of this bid shall be published only on the official Town website bid page. 03/06/2026

## Public Hearing on School Department FY27 Budget Wednesday, March 11, 2026 7:00pm

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 38N, the South Hadley School Committee will hold a hybrid Public Hearing regarding

the School Department FY27 Budget:

## Wednesday, March 11, 2026 7:00pm

Join in person at the South Hadley Council on Aging, 45 Dayton St.

Join via zoom Meeting ID 878 6345 1563 Passcode 437225

A copy of the proposed budget is available for public viewing beginning on March 06, 2026, at the Office of the Superintendent. Public comment is invited at the hearing or in writing to the School Department, 116 Main St, South Hadley, MA 01075. Notice also on [www.masspublicnotices.org](http://www.masspublicnotices.org) 03/06/2026

## Quaboag Valley Relay for Life seeking more teams

BELCHERTOWN – The Quaboag Valley Relay for Life is looking for more teams, more team members, Cancer survivors, and donations for our Relay on May 30 on the Belchertown Common from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

You can form a team in memory or honor of a loved one or friend to raise donations for the American Cancer Society and raise awareness of this dreaded disease, Cancer. Cancer has touched EVERYONE, and we need your help to rid the world of Cancer as we know it. If you are a survivor, we would like you

to get registered and come for a walk with us on May 30. If you aren't able to walk, just come and hang out with us. All survivors who get registered will receive a free Survivor shirt and be treated to a free luncheon for you and a caregiver.

During our Relay this year, there will be a Big Craft Fair going on at the same time. This event also benefits the American Cancer Society. There will be many Gift Baskets you can purchase tickets to win. We have ordered great weather for this event too.

For each person who joins

a team and donates or gets donations of at least \$100 will get a free HOPE shirt to wear with pride, knowing you have helped the American Cancer Society raise money for their many services to our Survivors. We like all team members to get a little donation, but you don't have to get the \$100 necessary to get the free HOPE shirt. To donate, form a team, join a team, or register as a survivor, please go to the following link: <http://main.acevents.org/goto/elecanoregray>. If you have any questions, please email [ctellie@juno.com](mailto:ctellie@juno.com).

## Wine Down event to benefit P.E.O., March 13

SOUTH HADLEY – P.E.O. (Providing Educational Opportunities for Women) Chapter AG welcomes community members 21 and over to Wine Down on March 13 as we celebrate Women's History Month. Enjoy appetizers favored by the Notorious Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Learn about our upcoming fundraiser, A Visit with Ruth, on September 27, 2026, at the First Church, 1 Church Street, South Hadley. One of RBG's famous quotes is "Never Underestimate a Girl with a Book." Joe Rodio, Director of the South Hadley Library System, will update

us on the town budget and the libraries.

It promises to be an exciting evening! Friday, March 13, 5:30 to 7 p.m. at the Gaylord Memorial Library, 47 College Street, South Hadley. Admission to Wine Down is \$12.00. There is free off-street parking.

## SCAM from page 1

of 60, and those with disabilities to investigate crimes these individuals may have been victimized by.

### Identity Theft

Identity theft is when someone steals or obtains your personal information through scams or data breaches and then uses your information to open accounts, file tax returns, collect unemployment, or other services that are detrimental to you and your health.

"Once they get your information, there really is no limit to what damage they can do," said Rachel Webber.

Scammers can steal your information through your personal ID, social security card, or other means of identification.

Identity theft and "data breaches" can come in the form of your wallet or purse being stolen, pretending to offer you a job, dumpster diving for tossed mail, stealing your mail, or tricking you into revealing your information through scams.

### Scams and Types of Scams

"Scammers are very tech savvy, and they know how to get around things to steal your information," said Webber. "If anyone calls you and asks you for this information, stop and do research and verify who it is that is seeking this information."

Some of the information scammers will call and ask for includes account log-in and passwords, bank account numbers, credit card numbers, an medicare or health insurance numbers. Real banks and health insurance companies will not call you for your information and will have that on file.

"There is a wide spectrum of people who are getting ripped off and reporting it," said Anita Wilson. "A lot of it comes through phone calls, emails, and text messages."

These scams affect people of all ages, but unfortunately, the senior population falls victim to these scams and loses a lot of money.

There are many different types of scams, including government and law enforcement impostors, bank or credit company impersonators, a business imposter from Amazon, PayPal, or your cable company, for example, someone pretending to be a family member or grandchild, romance

scams, like with dating websites, offering fake investment opportunities, lotteries, prizes, sweepstakes giveaways or prizes, or a computer virus or breach in computer security.

You should never look at or listen to a scammer over the phone, email, or text message telling you something about your account, without first consulting your own apps and bank account apps.

### Artificial Intelligence

With AI on the rise, scammers have been able to use it to clone your voice over the phone or to use your own voice to confirm or deny services.

Something else AI can do is create deepfake scams, like creating fake videos or photos to falsely claim someone didn't do something. Phishing or email attacks can be tampered with AI to make them more personalized to the recipient.

AI can also create fake websites that look identical to the real thing, and fake reviews for products or investment techniques.

### Scams

#### Targeting Homeowners

Many scams will come in the form of paving and home improvement, including people who come to your home claiming they are in the area and can do work on their property, but then keep coming back for more money. Another scam can include them saying they have extra materials to help.

You should always proceed with caution, get estimates on the costs for no hidden surprises, never pay for the work all at once, check their license and insurance, get everything in writing, research before switching electric suppliers, like solar, and report suspicious behavior to the police.

Home Title Theft is when someone pretends to be you and transfers your deed to someone else. They can then use these forged documents to transfer the deed and may even take out loans tied to the property, or try to sell your home. Always sign up for free monitoring with the Registry of Deeds.

#### Easy Payments

Many scammers will try to steal money through bank transfers, bitcoin or cryptocurrencies, gift cards, prepaid cards, wired money, or by pretending to be a courier

and come through to pick up money they have asked you to store in certain forms.

### Reduce Your Risk of Fraud and Identity Theft

"Always, always slow down and take time to verify information before you act," said Webber.

Never click on links or attachments from text messages or emails from contacts that you do not know, as malware and viruses can be linked to these and then steal your information.

Cellphones and other electronic devices have updates, and it is recommended that you update your devices regularly to keep them secure.

Make sure your passwords are all different and hard to guess with different symbols, or by using Multi-Factor Identification to get into multiple accounts, like requiring your password as well as a six-digit code texted to your cellphone to enter.

Be aware of ads and deals offered on social media. "If it's too good to be true, it probably is," said Webber.

Keep all your passwords and log-in information safe and hidden, and only carry cards when you need them. Do not give financial or personal information to anyone who calls to ask for it, and shred your monthly statements and medical documents that you no longer need.

Be mindful of what you post, and that you check your privacy settings to make sure only people you know see your content.

### How to Report

#### Identity Theft or Scams

The first thing to do is to call your bank to put a stop to any fraudulent withdrawals of your assets. You can also report identity theft to the Federal Trade Commission, [www.identitytheft.gov](http://www.identitytheft.gov), and the FBI, [www.ic3.gov](http://www.ic3.gov). You can also report these scams to your local police department so they know what types of fraud and scams can affect their community members. Your local Consumer Protection Program is also another good place to report these frauds and scams to.

Reports are always anonymous, whether for elders or those with disabilities.

You can contact the Northwestern District Attorney's Office through their two offices: Greenfield (413-774-3186) and Northampton (413-586-9225).



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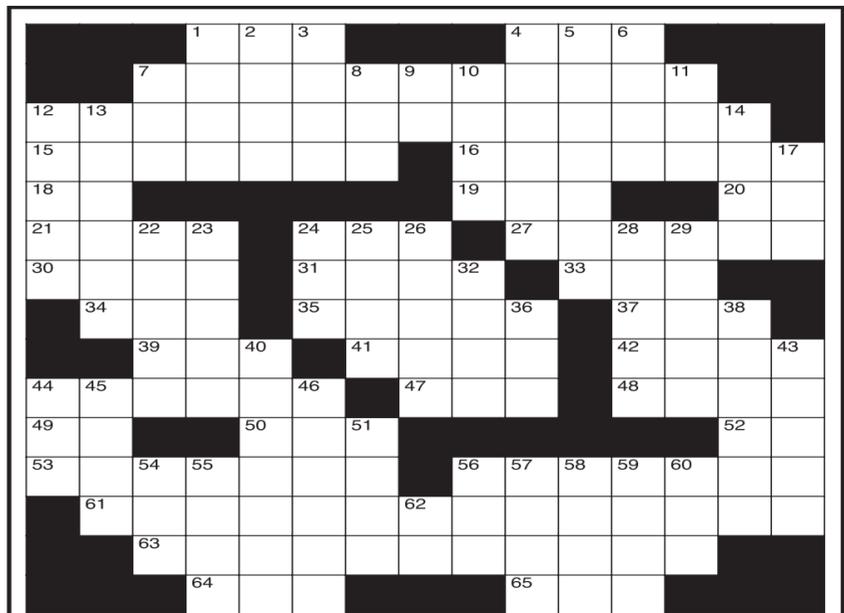
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### CLUES ACROSS

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1. Blockchain-based entity</p> <p>4. A woolen cap of Scottish origin</p> <p>7. Painted with glue</p> <p>12. Legendary crooner</p> <p>15. Structure made with strips of wood</p> <p>16. Tropical fruits</p> <p>18. Commercial</p> <p>19. Comedienne</p> <p>20. The Ocean State</p> <p>21. Ancient Scot</p> <p>24. Basics</p> <p>27. Stated propositions</p> <p>30. Scottish island group</p> <p>31. Expression of annoyance</p> <p>33. Large tree</p> <p>34. Engine additive</p> <p>35. Conspiracy</p> <p>37. Drunkard</p> | <p>39. Someone who is morally reprehensible</p> <p>41. Ancient Syrian city</p> <p>42. Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls</p> <p>44. Carry (slang)</p> <p>47. Sweet potato</p> <p>48. European river</p> <p>49. The Golden State</p> <p>50. Windy City ballplayer</p> <p>52. New Testament</p> <p>53. Possess spiritually</p> <p>56. A treeless grassy plain</p> <p>61. Popular historical novel</p> <p>63. In a law-abiding way</p> <p>64. A place to sleep</p> <p>65. Criticize</p> | <p>4. Occupant</p> <p>5. Member of Great Plains people</p> <p>6. Social media firm</p> <p>7. Digital audiotape</p> <p>8. Midway between east and southeast</p> <p>9. Chronic, progressive disease</p> <p>10. Chinese lute</p> <p>11. Not wet</p> <p>12. Moves wings up and down</p> <p>13. Communication devices</p> <p>14. Swiss river</p> <p>17. Female sibling</p> <p>22. Receive</p> <p>23. Relating to a type</p> <p>24. General's assistant (abbr.)</p> <p>25. Steep bank</p> <p>26. Taxi driver</p> <p>28. Moves into without difficulty</p> <p>29. Bicycle manufacturer</p> <p>32. Traditional rhythmic pattern</p> <p>36. Fugitives are on it</p> <p>38. Bitter-tasting organic substance</p> <p>40. Die</p> <p>43. Matched</p> <p>44. Literary genre __-fi</p> <p>45. Cannot</p> <p>46. Pounded</p> <p>51. British rock group</p> <p>54. Debt relief order</p> <p>55. 2006 NL Cy Young winner</p> <p>56. Green vegetable</p> <p>57. Tough outer skin of fruit</p> <p>58. __ Spumante (Italian wine)</p> <p>59. Ailments</p> <p>60. Famed singer Charles</p> <p>62. Camper</p> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**DANCE** from page 2

vi Bansal, as well as numerous student-choreographed works. Much of their work is story-based and heavily inspired by queer existence and history, finding joy in the mundane, response to touch and body language, and the formation of relationships.

**“To you, 21 Years Later”**  
by Maddie Stith

“To you, 21 Years Later” is centered on the deterioration of relationships through the lens of broken-down memories. This work focuses on how grief and time can cause memories to fall into disarray and force you to remember the good and the bad moments you shared with someone.

Maddie Stith was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York. They began dancing at

the age of three and attended a majority Black dance school that centered around empowering young Black girls and boys. Maddie has primarily trained in modern and hip hop with additional experience in West African dance and Latin social dances. In their time at Mount Holyoke, they have performed in works by Mustapha Braimah, Michael Ofori, and Shakia Barron, and have worked on the crew for the Fall 2025 faculty dance concert. They choreographed a piece titled “We Grow in Waves” for the 2024 Mount Holyoke Student Dance Concert: Labyrinth. Maddie connects their work to their life experiences as a queer, Black, disabled, and trans individual. They heavily incorporate the art of storytelling in their work to bring light to real, everyday chal-

lenges people face, the process of healing, and gravitating toward what brings us joy.

“close, but never close enough” by Mia Frias

This work explores the idea of past lives, nostalgia, memory, and the fleeting moments we have with the people around us. Through this work, we examine why we meet the people we meet, from those who leave to those who stay, and the ones in between.

Mia Frias (she/her) was born and raised in Lawrence, Massachusetts, and she is currently a junior at Mount Holyoke College. Before coming to college, Mia began dancing at the age of 3 and has trained in styles such as Ballet, Jazz, Contemporary, and Tap. During her time at Mount Holyoke, Mia has performed in the faculty work

of Barbie Diewald and Mustapha Braimah, as well as in a student work by Amanda Amoabeng. She has also choreographed a contemporary work, titled “meeting again, and again, and...” for the Mount Holyoke 2025 Student Concert. Mia is interested in creating work that focuses on human connection and relationships through philosophical ideas. She is also interested in exploring partnering and gestures in her work. Mia draws inspiration from everyday life and conversation, as well as the people around her.

**“Turn of Phrase”**  
by Emma Belfer

“Turn of Phrase” is a queer reimagination of David Gordon’s “Not Necessarily Recognizable Objectives” (1978). Part of a thesis in dance, the work connects archival material and theory.

Emma Belfer is a choreographer and performer, currently studying Dance and Spanish at Mount Holyoke. At five, they started dancing at Dawn’s School of Dance in their hometown of Northborough, Massachusetts. They are primarily trained in modern and contemporary, but have experience in breaking, funk styles, hip hop, Latin social dances, ballet, and tap. In their time at Mount Holyoke, they have performed in works by Balinda Craig-Quijada, Barbie Diewald, Chavi Bansal, Gabby Carmichael, and Mustapha Braimah, as well as a variety of projects with their peers. They performed at the American College Dance Association Northeast Conference in 2024 and brought their own work to ACDA New England in February 2026. In March of 2025, they

performed for U-Haul Entertainment (Audrey Gavitt and Erica Schwartz) at the SPARK Theater Festival in New York. As a choreographer, their work uses humor, athleticism, and relationships to objects as modes of investigation into dance as a medium.

**Performance Dates and Times:**

Friday, March 27, 7:30p.m.  
Saturday, March 28, 7:30p.m.

Tickets: \$8 General Admission | \$5 Student & Seniors

This concert will be held at Mount Holyoke College in the Studio Theater in Kendall Sports and Dance Complex. For more information or to reserve tickets, please visit [mhc.ludus.com](http://mhc.ludus.com) or contact us at [PerformingArts@mtholyoke.edu](mailto:PerformingArts@mtholyoke.edu).



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

**Make the most of the summer camp**

Summer camp season will soon be here, and throngs of children will board buses each morning or pack their parents’ cars full of essentials to survive a few weeks away from home.

Looking back, many adults who experienced summer camp have fond memories of their adventures — whether they all went according to plan or there were some hiccups along the way. Parents want their children to make their own summer camp memories. Even if the canoe capsizes or the cabin leaks during a summer thunderstorm, such experiences can build character and strengthen friendships.

According to RegPack, an online registration software company, more than six million American children participate in some form of camp each year, including sleep-away camp or day camp. The American Camp Association says that number is closer to 14 million, with the most popular camp session length around one week or less. Families getting prepared for camp can follow these guidelines to ensure the experience is one kids won’t soon forget.

**Search for an accredited camp**

Accredited camps must meet more than 300 standards related to program quality, safety and health, according to the ACA. An accredited camp will likely give parents the most peace of mind.

**Consider children’s readiness**

There’s no magic age when a child may be ready to go to camp, but generally kids who are ages seven or eight may be fine to start a resident sleep-away camp. Day camp kids can begin as early as age three, the same age kids often begin preschool programs. Gauge whether the child has spent time away from home at friends’ or family members’ homes to decide if a resident camp will be the right fit or if a day camp is a better fit.

**Connect with fellow campers**

If possible, attend a meet-and-greet prior to the start of the season. Neighborhood day camps tend to draw kids from local communities, so there’s already a chance kids will know a few fellow campers.

**Get to know camp counselors early on**

Campers can introduce themselves to camp counselors and other program directors and are urged to ask questions about specific programs. Counselors can direct campers toward activities they may enjoy.

**Make the most of all situations**

Much of summer camp will likely be smooth-sailing, but it’s reasonable to expect some bumps along the way. Campers shouldn’t expect perfection, but use the situations that may go awry as learning experiences on how to handle adversity — trying to find the fun in them anyway. Even a medical situation can be overcome, particularly because camps staff qualified medical personnel to ensure campers are safe and well.

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<b>WEEK 1: JUNE 15-19</b>	Studio Arts & Crafts	Cross Country Camp	Game’s Guild
<b>WEEK 2: JUNE 22-26</b>	Speech & Debate	Taylor Swift Camp	STEM Challenges!
<b>WEEK 3: JULY 6-10</b>	Broadway at Bement	Soccer Club	Mission Monadnock
<b>WEEK 4: JULY 13-17</b>	Magic Behind the Music	D&D Camp	History Hunters
<b>WEEK 5: JULY 20-24</b>	Graphic Novel Camp	Counselor in Training	Flag Football & More
<b>WEEK 6: JULY 27-31</b>	Little Explorers Camp	Soccer Camp	PE Games & Sports
<b>WEEK 7: AUGUST 3-7</b>	Movie Magic Camp	Spanish Explorers	

 The Bement School  
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Registration Link  
[bement.org/summer](http://bement.org/summer)

