

TOWN Reminder

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Renee Sweeney receives first ever COMMONWEALTH PRIDE AWARD

By Ben Hernandez
Correspondent

SOUTH HADLEY – Select Board member and Chair of the local Human Rights Commission Renee Sweeney received the inaugural Commonwealth Pride Award at the State House on June 17. Nominated by State Senator

Jake Oliveira, Sweeney took her place alongside over 100 community leaders, public servants and advocates across the state.

“This is a really special award because it is the first-ever Pride Award that we’ve given out in Massachusetts,” said Massachusetts State Senator Jake Oliveira.

“Obviously, June was Pride Month and as communities celebrated, the LGBTQ+ community, the Commonwealth and legislators wanted to do the same.”

40 senators and 160 representatives gathered together for the ceremony, which appropriately took place in June, as a way to recognize

community leaders for their achievements. Oliveira commented the award is meant to build upon the existing awards given out by the legislature, which include but are not limited to awards for Women’s History Month, the Commonwealth Heroine Award and the Portuguese Heritage Award.

“This one was really unique because legislators give out citations from the Commonwealth from either the House or the Senate,” Oliveira said. “And this was the most unique citation that I’ve ever seen before.”

According to the senator, award citations are distributed with a seal complete with

a ribbon. The Pride Award came with a rainbow ribbon, a departure from the traditional blue expected of the legislature. When asked why he nominated Sweeney as one of the first recipients of the award, Oliveira stated her accomplishments within South

Please see **PRIDE**, page 2



Submitted photos

The swap gathers residents of all ages for a day of brain teasers.

South Hadley Public Library hosts jigsaw puzzle swap

By Ben Hernandez
bhernandez@turley.com

SOUTH HADLEY – The biannual jigsaw swap took place last Saturday at the South Hadley Public Library, the fourth of its kind within the town. Residents traded in previous jigsaw puzzles for tickets used as event currency to purchase other swapped puzzles. Adult Services Librarian Desiree Smeltzer reported she was surprised at the overwhelming community support.

“It has progressively grown over every six months I have it,” Smeltzer said. “I’m pretty excited about it because this was the most we’ve ever had, which was 664 puzzles.”

The latest influx of inter-

est prompted Smeltzer to re-consider how the event was structured. Normally, the puzzles are categorized by type and piece count. Due to the described “exponential growth” received from last week’s swap, she has decided the puzzles will only be organized by the amount moving forward.

“It was brought to me by a patron,” Smeltzer said as she reflected on how the swap came to be. “I had a patron come in and she put forth this idea. And I said ‘yeah, it’s worth a try. You never know.’ So, it was initially done in June of 2024.”

The puzzle swap serves as a kickoff for seasonal programs, as “people can learn about what’s going on” during the summer months.

Smeltzer stated because of how well attended the event is, it also functions as a way to get community feedback.

“I’m always open to patrons coming in and giving me their thoughts and ideas for programming,” Smeltzer said. “I’m always open to patrons coming in and giving me their thoughts and ideas for programming because I can’t think. As my predecessor used to say ‘all of us are smarter than any of us.’”

The jigsaw swaps take place the third week of June and the second week of December. Residents are awarded one ticket for each puzzle brought into the library, which must be held onto until the swap date.

Please see **JIGSAW**, page 5

Health and Wellness Fair shows seniors their options

By Ben Hernandez
bhernandez@turley.com

SOUTH HADLEY – The South Hadley Council on Aging hosted its annual Aging in Place Health and Wellness Fair at the senior center on June 24. Hosted by the Council on Aging, many different aspects of the community attended the fair. Tables were populated by representatives from several community banks, local hospitals,

veteran affairs offices, hospice networks and the local firefighter department. The fair also marked the first year overseen by new Council on Aging Program Coordinator Brandon Dumas.

“The Council on Aging is an entity that’s designed to serve people over 60 years of age within the town,” Dumas said. “We are open to individuals from surrounding towns.”

He reported the event has been hosted for “several years now” and was the idea

of a previous director to help individuals who plan on aging within their homes. The fair is marked as an Aging in Place initiative, a contrast to the Senior Living Options Fair, which takes place in April.

“So, back in April, we had our Senior Living Options Fair, which is our fair that’s designed for individuals who are planning on moving into an assisted living or some

Please see **FAIR**, page 10



Turley photos by Ben Hernandez

Hospice workers Molly and Gracie smile for the camera.

Town begins partnership with new trash, recycling vendor

By Ben Hernandez
bhernandez@turley.com

GRANBY – The town’s new partnership with USA Waste and Recycling for garbage and recycling service began on July 1. With the new disposal services now a week old as of this writing, Town Administrator Ron Aponte reflected on the new contract.

“The town originally had a contract with Waste Management,” Aponte said. “That contract actually did expire on June 30 of this year. And as a result, the acting Town Administrator and the Select

Board were soliciting offers for...a renewed contract for the hauling of trash and the recyclables.”

Aponte mentioned Waste Management did offer a contract renewal proposals, as did USA, before the board decided to go with USA for the new five-year contract. The decision, ultimately, was due to budget concerns and a few “bells and whistles” USA offered.

“USA is offering above and beyond what Waste Management has provided over the last few years,” Aponte said. “There are carts. Some

people may refer to them as barrels.”

The newest addition is the incorporation of 65-gallon trash barrels, intended for solid waste, and a new 96-gallon recyclable cart; containers the town administrator referred to as “the black bin and the blue bin.”

“USA has a fully automated process in which the trucks are equipped with arms that are able to reach out, grab the trash,” Aponte said. “So, it’s a more efficient process versus just the curbside bags and the blue box, if you will.”

Aponte also reported one of the new benefits is “single-stream recycling,” which

no longer requires residents to sort out cardboard and paper from plastic and glass. The new one-stop recycling disposal system also includes a weekly pickup schedule.

“So, you no longer have to pile things in your garage or some other place within your house waiting for the proper week for that particular recyclable,” Aponte said. “So, that was definitely a nice benefit.”

Though there are now faster disposal turnover cycles and less stringent requirements for discarding

recyclables, Aponte admitted the new process wasn’t perfect. He reported the biggest service complaint he fielded from residents was both surprising and unexpected.

“I’d say the biggest ‘complaint’ is the carts are too big for some people,” Aponte said. “I guess, for some of the residents, they are large but they are on wheels.”

The town administrator also had high praise for the new provider’s customer service. Aponte stated the administration and USA share a “hardship list” to tackle potential concerns, compiled

with the help of senior center and Counsel on Aging staff. One such issue was a filed complaint by mobility challenged residents unable to pull their carts to the curb.

“The drivers will actually get out of the truck, they’ll walk down the driveway and they’ll pull that trash out so that it can, in essence, be collected normally through the truck,” Aponte said. “And right there, I think, is a great example of being able to identify an issue an resolving it in a very satisfactory manner...They’ve been very responsive.”

Garden tour set for this Saturday

HOLYOKE — The Holyoke Historical Society invites the public to celebrate the city’s vibrant green spaces at the 2026 Holyoke Garden Tour, a self-guided journey through some of Holyoke’s most unique and inspiring gardens from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

This year’s tour includes more than half a dozen home gardens along with several notable community sites:

- **Laurel Park:** Members of the Historical Society have been hard at work planting a new garden bed featuring dozens of pollinator plants in the triangular park between Laurel and Willow Streets. The historic park features a stone fountain that’s more than 100 years old.
- **La Finca:** Operated by Nuestras Raíces, this 30-acre urban farm hosts over a dozen small farming businesses serving the Holyoke community. La Finca is a hub for urban agriculture, education, and economic development that is a vital resource in our local food security.
- **The Cubit Garden and Armour Yard:** Tour the garden on the site of the Cubit, a historic wire manufacturing facility that’s now home to residential lofts and co-working space. Next door, visit Beyond Armour Yard, Holyoke’s newest community space developed in partnership with Beyond Walls, the team behind some of the city’s vibrant mural art.
- **Honey Bee Presentations:** Learn about honey bees, view an observational hive, and taste local honey with Dr. Kim Skyrms, Chief Apiary Inspector at the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources.

“Every garden on this tour reflects the passion of someone who has invested their time, creativity, and care into making Holyoke more beautiful,” said Joseph Charles, president of the Holyoke Historical Society. “We hope visitors leave inspired—not just by the gardens, but by the people that made them possible.”

Tickets are \$20 per person, and children under 10 are admitted free. Purchase advanced tickets at holyokegardentour.org, or you can purchase tickets the morning of the tour at the event check-in, located at Paper City Fabrics (330 High St.).The tour is held rain or shine. Organizers recommend attendees bring sunscreen and bug spray.

Granby Free Public Library announces July activities

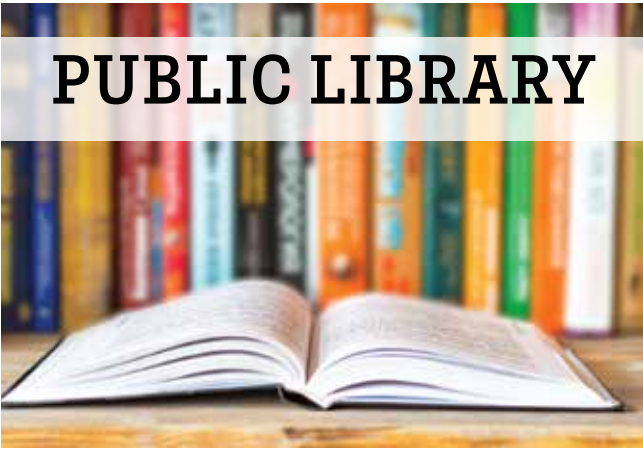
GRANBY – Granby Free Public Library announced the following activities for the remainder of July and August:

Adult Summer Reading – Plant a Seed, Read!
June 23 – Aug. 21

This year, we are asking you to Read it and Rate it! For every book you read this summer, fill out a form to be entered into a raffle for some great prizes!

Photographing and Capturing the Beauty of Flowers and Gardens
Thursday, July 30 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Learn how to elevate your garden and flower photos with a set of simple techniques. All cameras, phones, and experience levels welcome! You will have a chance to try out new skills and experiment with



backgrounds, small lights, reflectors, diffusers, Lensball, and special effect attachments for your phone. Space is limited, please sign-up.

Adult Book Group
Thursday, July 9 at 6 p.m.
The book group will be

discussing The Frozen River by Ariel Lawhon. Grab a copy and join us!

Tabletop Games Club
Saturday, July 18 from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
The Granby Library Tabletop Games Club invites

players of all ages 8 and up to gather and enjoy a variety of board, card, dice, tile, and other in-person tabletop games in a welcoming, social environment.

Knitting Group
Every Wednesday afternoon at 2 p.m.

Bring your latest project and join us for conversation, tips and tricks. There will be no Knitting on July 22

Friends of the Granby Library Meeting
Thursday, July 16 at 4:30 p.m.

Did you know that the Friends sponsor our events? Join us for a meeting and see what’s new.

The Library will close at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 22 for Staff Development

Granby Police

Editor’s Note: The Granby Police Department responded to 168 calls for the week of June 26, through July 2. Those arrested are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. The Granby Police Department provides all information.

Friday, June 26

1:37 a.m. – A resident reported that a vehicle struck a large rock. Granby Police and Fire responded. There were no injuries. A written warning was issued to the operator for failure to stop at a stop sign and crossing marked lanes.

2:18 p.m. – While on patrol, an officer came across a two-car accident. There were no injuries.

Saturday, June 27

9:08 p.m. – An employee at Cumberland Farms reported a disturbance in the parking lot. The parties involved left the area prior to officers arriving.

Sunday, June 28

11:29 a.m. – A motorist reported a two-car accident. One person was transported to the hospital

with minor injuries.

8:52 p.m. – While on patrol, an officer observed a vehicle cut through the Dunkin’ Donuts parking lot at a high rate of speed in an attempt to avoid the traffic signals. The vehicle was stopped and the operator was issued a civil citation for failing to stop at a stop sign, making an improper turn, and improper operation of a motor vehicle.

Tuesday, June 30

12:25 a.m. – A motorist reported that a vehicle struck a tree. Granby Police and Fire responded. The operator was transported to the hospital with serious injuries.

7:21 a.m. – A resident came to the station to report being the victim of identity theft. An incident report was completed.

2:59 p.m. – A resident came to the station to report being the victim of identity theft. An incident report was completed.

Wednesday, July 1

5:51 p.m. – A resident reported that their mailbox had been damaged. An officer responded and completed an accident report.

Exhibit on display through July 23

HOLYOKE – Frederick Douglass: Advocate for Equality, is now available for view at the Holyoke Public Library through Thursday, July 23.

This 6-panel exhibition from the Gilder Lehrman Institute explores Douglass’s epic life from 1818 to 1895, examining his escape from slavery, his work as an ab-

olitionist, and his relentless fight for equality for all individuals during the Jim Crow era.

Groups and individuals welcome to view during all Library hours

Presented in recognition of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence and its ongoing promise.

PRIDE from page 1

Hadley spoke for themselves.

“Renee kind of stood out in my mind as someone not only who has been a force within the South Hadley community and advocating for South Hadley...as a member of the Select Board, but also someone who is genuinely an extremely nice and caring person.” Oliveira said.

The senator applauded Sweeney’s works as a member of the Select Board and said she navigated her position with “integrity and commitment” to South Hadley’s values. He mentioned she was “an advocate all along the way” and he identified her as an impressive civil servant after her impassioned speech during the MHC Votes voting advocacy event.

“I thought of no better person, or no other person, who deserves that recognition more right now than Renee,” Oliveira said. “She understands that she doesn’t just do her job, she also gives back to the community.”

The awards ceremony

took place inside the Senate chamber, a unique circumstance since “most awards don’t take place there.” Oliveira reported Sweeney accepted her award while standing in front of the statue of famed abolitionist and human rights advocate Frederick Douglass.

“We’re hoping to make it an annual event,” Oliveira said as he reflected on the ceremony. “I’m sure we will, given the success of it.”

“It means a lot to be recognized for your full humanness,” said Sweeney. She admitted being nominated for the award came as a surprise, but was nonetheless appreciative of the “beautiful ceremony” and the “great day.”

“I hope that everyone can feel comfortable joining our town government,” Sweeney said and emphasized the strength diversity in government offered. “There’s tons of research that says that groups of folks who come from different places and different perspectives have better outcomes than groups who are similar.”

Town advises residents to stay cool during extreme heat

Headline: SOUTH HADLEY – As summer approaches, now is the time to prepare your home and your family for extreme heat. High temperatures can quickly make indoor spaces unsafe, especially during power outages, when systems for cooling and cleaning indoor air may stop working. Planning ahead can help protect your health and maintain good indoor air quality.

Keep your home cool and your air clean

Extreme heat can cause dangerous illnesses such as heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Indoor temperatures can rise rapidly, especially in homes without air conditioning or during a power outage.

A few simple steps can make a big difference:

If you do not have air conditioning:

- Plan in advance where you can go to stay cool during extreme heat—public cooling centers, libraries, malls, or community centers may provide relief.
- Use ventilation and shading to help moderate indoor temperatures:
- Cover sun-exposed windows with blinds, curtains, or outdoor shading devices (e.g., exterior awnings or louvers) to keep indoor temperatures down.
- When outdoor air is cooler than indoor air, open windows to cool the indoor

air. Otherwise, keep windows closed to maintain cooler indoor conditions.

If you have air conditioning:

- Make sure your unit is cleaned and serviced before hot weather arrives. Regular maintenance helps your system work efficiently when you need it most.
- Position fans to exhaust hot air from rooms or draw in cooler air. Do not use an electric fan in a closed room or for cooling when the room temperature is in the mid-90s or higher. When it is that hot, electric fans are just moving very hot air across your skin, which will not prevent heat-related illness.

Second Chance offering vaccine clinic July 17

HOLYOKE – Second Chance Animal Services is returning to Holyoke with a second low-cost Community Vaccine Clinic for cats and dogs on Friday, July 17, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Veteran’s Park, 216-228 Maple Street. The clinic will offer free distemper/parvo vaccines, \$10 rabies vaccines, \$19 Leptospirosis vaccines, and microchips for just \$5, making it easy and affordable for pet owners to protect their pets.

Many families face barriers to accessing veterinary care, leaving pets vulnerable to diseases that can be prevented with routine vaccinations. By bringing these

services directly into the community, Second Chance helps more pets receive the care they need to stay healthy.

Distemper and parvovirus are highly contagious diseases that can be deadly, particularly for puppies, kittens, and unvaccinated pets. Vaccinating pets not only protects them from serious illness but also helps reduce the spread of disease throughout the community.

Microchipping is another simple step that can make a lasting difference. A permanent form of identification, a microchip greatly increases the chances that a lost pet will be reunited with the family

waiting for them at home.

“Second Chance operates four veterinary hospitals that provide affordable care, including subsidized pricing for those who qualify, but we know many pet owners still face barriers to getting that care,” said Lindsay Doray of Second Chance Animal Services. “Our community vaccine clinics bring lifesaving vaccines directly into local neighborhoods to protect pets from diseases like parvo and distemper, along with low-cost microchips that help lost pets find their way back home.”

The clinic is open to all pet owners, regardless of where

they live. Advance registration is encouraged, as space is limited. Walk-ins will be permitted as time allows. Pet owners can register online at www.secondchanceanimals.org/scasconnect-springfield/.

Second Chance gratefully acknowledges the support of Petco Love alongside the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture (MDAR) in conjunction with the Holyoke Board of Health for helping to make this clinic possible. For more information, visit www.secondchanceanimals.org.

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USDA INSP. FRESH BONE-IN BEEF RIBEYE STEAKS **\$10⁹⁹** lb

USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF SHOULDER LONDON BROIL **\$7⁷⁷** lb

USDA INSP. GROUND FRESH DAILY 80% LEAN GROUND BEEF 7 LB BAG **\$4²⁸** lb

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Fri., July 17

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Sat., July 18

Ireland Parish

Acts of Glory clothing wears faith on sleeve

By Ben Hernandez
bhernandez@turley.com

BELCHERTOWN – Acts of Glory Clothing, a faith-based clothing line developed by co-founders Aiden and Oliver Good. Described on their website as “Christian symbolism mixed with modern street-ware style,” the two combined their shared beliefs to both spread their message and fashion ideas.

“It was just a passion I had,” said Aiden. “I used to work as a detailer. So, I decided just to merge those two passions into one, but also make it more affordable.”

The company opened their digital doors in February of this year. As they celebrate their first four months, the two stated the new business has been “a learning curve” but has been a process which has helped them “grow as children of God.” The brand has grown into the social media space, now having presences on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Tik Tok. The two post regular videos showcasing their wares in short videos they referred to as clothing “lay flats.”

“We’ve known each other for our whole lives, pretty much,” Aiden said as he discussed his history with the co-owner. The two met up during primary school and bonded over their shared interests in faith and fashion. The idea came when the two identified a lack of Christian based clothing in the market, which inspired them to go into business for themselves. Though the brand focuses on urban street wear, the two expressed an interest into branching into active wear.

“It’s unique,” Aiden said

when asked why they chose this particular demographic. “A lot of Christian clothing, it’s just one t-shirt or just a pair of shorts. So, we kind of break that...we just want to do something different, make it unique to Acts of Glory.”

All the logos and designs are made in house without the use of AI or outside help. The two mentioned a background in graphic design supplemented by watching “a lot of Youtube.” The two also mentioned the primary goal for the business wasn’t just to raise a profit but to also give back to the community.

“So, one of our main goals is to give at least a third or more to charity every month,” Aiden said. “Our main goal is just to support other fundraisers or anything like that.”

The two identified one of their main target charities is the Global Christian Relief in Nigeria, an organization dedicated to helping Christians, a region the two described as being heavily persecutive towards their faith. They also mentioned a plan to serve free meals in Northampton to the needy was in the works.

Though the business is currently online only, there are plans in effect to bring their clothing to physical markets. Aiden mentioned a partner who has been “very helpful” in setting up deals with local boutiques. The two referenced Tina’s Boutique as a potential partner, with some additional store presence in “Christian tattoo shops.” As Acts of Glory Clothing builds as a brand, the two expressed the most important thing to them was to not lose focus on what was important to them.



Co-founder Aiden strikes a dynamic pose.

Submitted photos



Co-founder Oliver Good showcases one of their featured t-shirts.



Co-founders Aiden and Oliver have known each other since school and aim to bring their entrepreneurial spirit to the Belchertown community.

NHS to help host blood drive

SOUTH HADLEY – South Hadley High School’s National Honor Society is partnering with Baystate Health to host a Community Blood Drive at the South Hadley Public Library on Monday, July 13, from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Eligible donors, age 17 and up, are invited to donate blood.

Granby Library hosting photograph presentation

GRANBY – On Thursday, July 30 from 5 to 7 p.m. Granby Free Public Library will host “Photographing and Capturing the Beauty of Flowers and Gardens.” If you love flowers, plants, and gardens, chances are you love taking pictures of them too! How do you elevate your flower and plant photos from nice snapshots to gorgeous images that you’ll treasure for years to come? Come learn a set of simple techniques for taking stunning flower and garden photos. All cameras, phones, and experience levels are welcome! You’ll have a chance to try your new skills as we photograph real flowers and experiment with backgrounds, small lights, reflectors, diffusers, Lensball, special effect attachments for your phone, and more. You’ll be amazed at the beautiful images you can create! This workshop is led by Massachusetts-based event, lifestyle, and branding photographer, Joan Celebi. Space is limited, so please contact the library to sign up. Sponsored by the Friends of the Granby Free Public Library.

Granby Lions sponsoring bus trip

GRANBY – The Granby Lions Club will be sponsoring a bus trip to Boston on Tuesday, July 14, 2026. The chartered bus will be leaving the East Meadow School Parking Lot at 8 a.m. and dropping us off in the Seaport District at approximately 10 a.m.

Come help us celebrate the 250th anniversary of the United States at SailBoston 2026, an international maritime event that brings tall ships and naval vessels from around the world to Boston Harbor. You will be on your own to visit the ships and the bus will depart Boston at 4 p.m.

The cost per person is \$75. Please make your checks payable to the Granby Lions Club, and mail to Granby Lions Club, c/o Jim Pietras, 280 East State St, Granby, MA. 01033. Questions – email Jim at jpiertras@comcast.net



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Opinion

SOCIAL SECURITY

Matters

By Russell Gloor

Why doesn't my Social Security record show all my military earnings?

Dear Rusty:
When I look at my earnings on my Social Security account, I see that in 1955 and 1956 have no earnings. I was in the U.S. Navy as a first officer and have my DD-214 paperwork, which shows my military service from Oct. 1954-Oct. 1958.
My Social Security earnings record shows that I had earnings in 1954, 1957 and 1958 but doesn't show that I was paid in 1955 or 1956. Shouldn't I have received Social Security credit for all my service years?
Signed: An Older Veteran

Dear Older Veteran:
First, I want to thank you for your military service.

Whether your earnings while in the military would provide you with any additional Social Security benefit depends on your career earnings after leaving military service. Here's why:

Your monthly Social Security benefit is based upon the highest earning 35 years over your lifetime with earlier years adjusted for inflation.

From those highest earning 35 years, SS develops your Average Indexed Monthly Earnings, your lifetime "AIME," which is the basis of the SS benefit you get if you claim for benefits to start at your Full Retirement Age So, if - after you completed your military service - you had at least 35 years of other employment where you earned more money than you did while serving, then your military pay won't affect your Social Security benefit.

FYI, Social Security payroll tax has been withheld from military pay since 1957, which is why your SS earnings record shows your military pay only for 1957 and 1958. Your SS record wouldn't show military pay prior to 1957 because you didn't contribute to SS from your military pay during those years.

The earnings you see in your SS earnings record for 1954 are likely from non-military employment prior to starting active duty in October 1954.

SS does provide older veterans with "special

extra credits for military service," but those credits are only a supplemental earnings amount added to your military pay record during the years you served.

It is not a bonus amount added to your monthly Social Security payment; rather it is only an amount added to your military pay record used when calculating your Social Security benefit. For those who served prior to 1957, Social Security would have no record of your military earnings during those early service years.

But when you claimed Social Security later in life, they would have asked if you served in the military and given you "special extra credit" in the form of presumed earnings for your service years. They likely asked for a copy of your DD-214 and would have added \$160 to your military earnings record for each active-duty month from October 1954 through December 1956 and additional earnings credits for 1957 and 1958.

But that doesn't mean you get a special Social Security bonus for your military service. If you have at least 35 years of civilian employment after serving in the Navy, your service years would only affect your SS benefit if those military service years were among the highest paying 35 years over your entire lifetime. And, again, please accept our appreciation for your service to our country.

The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. This article is intended for information purposes and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

Bad news, good news in this week's garden

My annual flower gardens were just starting to come into their own when I noticed some damage on the leaves. They looked chomped on from the outer edge going in. Some leaves also had a watery brown residue on them.

Going by date, I knew the culprit already, even before digging around the base of the plant. The Asiatic Garden beetle is hard at work wrecking my plants.

Read on to learn more about this pest.

I've also got some good news. Blueberries and peas are ready for harvest. Yippee!

The Asiatic Garden beetle is a bit smaller than the Japanese beetle and is chestnut brown in color. It feeds during the night, so look for chewed foliage in gardens or planter boxes under lampposts, street lights or other outside lights.

Cultivate directly underneath the affected plant during the day and you will likely see the culprits scurry back into the soil. Usually they snuggle up very close to the stems an inch or so below the soil surface.

Sometimes watering at the base of the plant will bring them to the top of the soil where they can be easily collected or squished. This is one pest you don't want to have around – send them swimming in a soapy bath or you may not have any plants left!

In my experience, two plants they particularly love are coleus and calibrachoa. This year they are decimating my blue salvia.

It's pretty amazing that



I've found dozens a day in an 18-inch planter. If digging around in the soil isn't your style, go out near dusk with a headlamp or flashlight and pick them right off the plant.

Now you may be thinking that I really know how to have fun, but to me, this is what summer is made of! I plant my peas the end of April, so typically they ripen almost on cue each year!

I plant three seeds deep a couple of inches apart up against the interior of my garden fence where they naturally climb up with their tendrils attaching to one another and the fence. I loosen up the soil prior to planting, but I never add any fertilizer – maybe just a sprinkling of compost if I am feeling generous.

Since peas are legumes, they "fix" their own nitrogen from the air.

I do soak the seeds in an inoculant prior to planting them, however, to make the fixation happen easily and to reportedly increase yield.

If you are going to try your hand at freezing your "shell" peas, as opposed to sugar snap or snow peas, be sure to pick, shuck and freeze in the same sitting, since peas begin to lose their sweetness within hours of being off the plant.

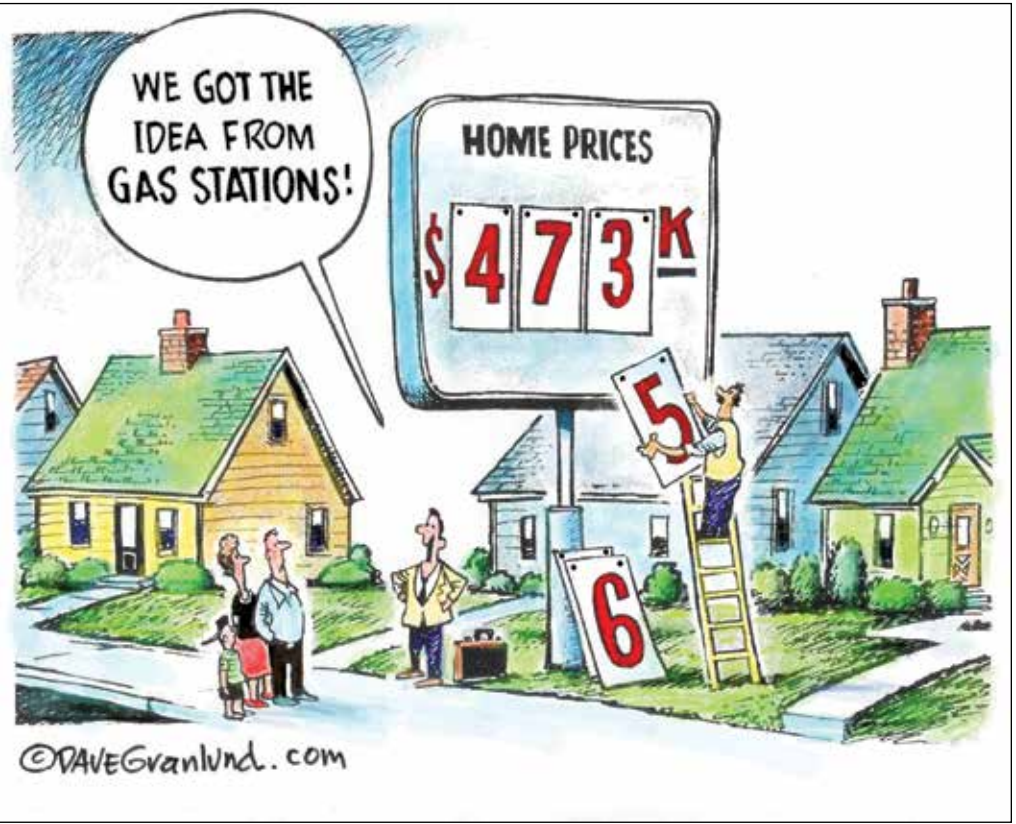
Like anything else, we take the good with the bad. As long as there is enough good, we won't throw in the trowel just yet.

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.

Ordered the fertilizer last year and applied 3 pounds per bush in the springtime. Lo and behold it worked.

I have enough to do it again this fall since I missed the opportunity this past spring. A blend of Granite Meal, sulfur, Tennessee brown rock phosphate, compost, and Azomite, the mix reduces the soil pH and provides the nutrients necessary for healthy blueberry plants and good fruit.

Fourth of July weekends over the last several years have been spent picking, shucking and freezing peas, and this year is no exception. It's technically a tradition around my house.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Say no to batting cages near homes

Dear Editor:

There is a buried threat to residents' quiet enjoyment of their homes (and to chicken flocks) in one of the Planning Board's draft Agricultural by-laws described in your July 3 story: "Chicken Keeping Rules Endorsed."

Specifically, draft bylaw 255-26 would permit noisy outdoor batting cages, a so-called "outdoor recreational facility," next to any number of the thousands of homes in and near South Hadley's agricultural zones.

Batting cages are a source of horrible noise that sounds like gunfire. It far exceeds comfortable decibel levels and travels well beyond the confines of the activity. Residents would be tortured by the loud, incessant crack of metal bats all day long. Should they wear noise-can-

celling headphones?

This loud repetitive noise from batting cages would also be extremely stressful and harmful to pets, chicken flocks and wildlife, especially birds when they are nesting or raising their young.

Batting cages would be allowed on farmland as small as 2 acres. (Reduced from the 50 acreage required in our current bylaw.) The draft bylaw says the goal is to "preserve agricultural lands through enhancing the economic viability of active farmland operations."

The bylaw would help farmers make money by allowing many types of activities that aren't "farming." Outdoor batting cages should not be one of them.

South Hadley already has countless outdoor and indoor recreational opportunities: hiking trails, biking, fishing,

hunting, golf, miniature golf, swimming, boating, horse-back riding, softball and soccer fields, a community garden, pickle ball, Cruise Nights, community concerts, sledding, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, a library with dozens of programs every month, a senior center with dozens of activities, a movie theater, bars, adult entertainment, an art museum, and more.

Some homeowners have voiced their objections to batting cages and have been ignored so far. I hope more residents in the Agricultural zone and those living nearby will attend the Planning Board's public hearing, Sept. 14, and urge that batting cages be banned within earshot of any homes, chicken flocks or wildlife.

Linda Sachs

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.

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EDITOR
townreminder@turley.com

ADVERTISING SALES
Nick Brady
nbrady@turley.com

SPORTS EDITOR
Greg Scibelli
sports@turley.com

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WEB
townreminder.turley.com

PHONE
(413) 283-8393

ADDRESS
24 Water Street
Palmer, MA 01069

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JIGSAW from page 1

Swaps begin at 10am, but Smeltzer advises arriving earlier, as a line forms as early as 9:30 a.m.

“I ask that people only take as many puzzles for tickets they have,” Smeltzer said. “And then, after that, it’s a free-for-all.”

Smeltzer attributed the swap’s success to the seasonal New England weather, as she referenced the area’s tendency to switch from one weather extreme to another.

To her, jigsaw puzzles are an all-ages way to occupy residents’ hands regardless of what’s happening outside.

“We live in snowy New England,” Smeltzer said. “And we live in a very hot place. So, if you’re stuck inside, I think a lot of people like to do something with their hands.”

The swap also serves an unexpected purpose; a way to reduce waste. Smeltzer mentioned the event is a way to keep old puzzles in circulation and to give them new life

by allowing them to be experienced through new eyes.

“It keeps them out of the landfill,” Smeltzer said. “I’m amazed. I didn’t know what a big population of people who love jigsaw puzzles were. I had no idea. And for me, it’s exciting to see a program really take off like this, for people to really love it and enjoy it.”

Those interested in attending the next jigsaw puzzle swap should mark their calendars for Dec. 19.



Eager puzzle enthusiasts line up by the doors and wait for the jigsaw scramble to begin.



Enthusiastic swappers smile for the camera as puzzles trade hands.

Fireworks display kicks off fair weekend

BELCHERTOWN — A beloved community tradition is coming back. The Belchertown Recreation Department, with support from other town departments, will bring fireworks back to town on Thursday, Sept. 24, at the Chestnut Hill Community School Recreation Area. The event will kick off Fair Weekend and celebrate America’s 250th anniversary.

The evening will bring the community together for food trucks, family activities, and a fireworks show to close out the night. Residents and neighbors from surrounding communities are invited to attend. The celebration is planned in conjunction with the nationwide Semi-quincentennial commemoration

marking 250 years of American independence.

The fireworks display returns after many years without one, reviving a September tradition that longtime residents will remember.

“We’re thrilled to bring this celebration back to the community,” said Kyle Thibeault, Director of the Belchertown Recreation Department. “This is an event built by the community, for the community, and we can’t make it happen without the support of our residents and local businesses.”

The event is funded entirely through donations and sponsorships from local businesses and community members. Fundraising is already well under way, and

the Recreation Department is continuing to seek support to bring the celebration to life.

How to help: Residents may donate any amount, and businesses interested in sponsorship opportunities can find full details, including sponsorship levels and benefits, on the town website at www.belchertown.org/fireworks.

Sponsorship levels range from Bronze (\$500–\$999) through Platinum (\$5,000+), with benefits including banner placement, website recognition, and social media spotlights. Businesses interested in a customized sponsorship opportunity are encouraged to reach out through the contact information provided on the town website.

Lions Club seeks sponsorship for car show event

BELCHERTOWN – In an effort to defray the costs (trophies, permits, entertainment, flyer printing, and distribution, etc.), the Belchertown Lions Club is appealing to our local businesses to have an 18” x 24” weather-resistant sign with ground stake custom-printed and prominently displayed on the Town Common during the event on Aug. 8. We will handle the set-up design and printing for a donation of \$100. All proceeds from this year’s car show will stay locally as we support our Senior Center, Fuel Assistance Programs, Veterans’ Organizations, Scouting America, Girl Scouts, Relay For Life, Aaron’s Day, local Food Pantries, Belchertown

Little League, College and Continuing Ed. Scholarships for seniors at BHS and Pathfinder, as well as emergency requests regarding sight and hearing concerns.

Alternately, or in addition to the sponsor sign, businesses can opt to submit an item or gift certificate in any amount to be displayed for a Pick-A-Prize raffle -- where attendees can purchase a sheet of 25 tickets...and place as many of their tickets into whichever gift bags they desire.

If you are the owner or representative of a local business and would like to sponsor a ground sign, kindly email Lion Mike Mathras at mmathras@charter.net, and you will promptly receive the

necessary information to do so.

If you would like to donate a gift certificate or prize for our raffle table, please get in touch with Barb Greene at br123199@charter.net

As you consider your donation, please keep in mind that all profits from the sale of food, raffle tickets, and sponsor signage at this event will go directly to the local charities mentioned above.

Stay tuned for upcoming information regarding the “Cruisin’ the Common” Car Show in the Sentinel, by visiting our website at www.belchertownlionsclub.com, or by checking out our Facebook page: Belchertown Lions Club.

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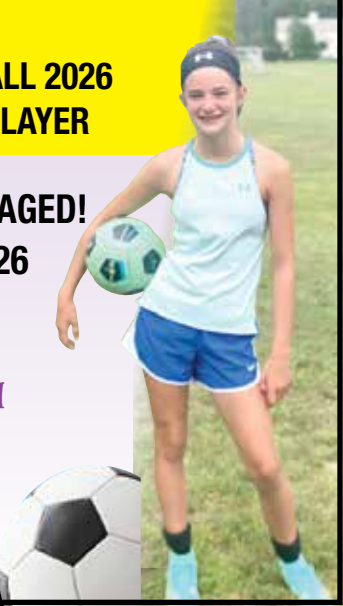
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Post 241 walks off against Aldenville

By **Tim Peterson**
Sports Correspondent

THORNDIKE — Had Monson Post 241 shortstop Matt Santos come up with the game-winning hit against Aldenville (Chicopee) Post 337 at historic Legion Field, it probably wouldn't have meant as much to him as do-

ing it a couple miles away at St. Joe's Ballpark in Thorndike.

The second meeting of the regular season between the two Senior Legion teams was still scoreless, entering the bottom of the seventh. With two outs and the bases loaded, Santos turned on a fastball and ripped it past the

third baseman into left field, giving Monson a thrilling 1-0 walk-off victory last Wednesday night.

"The pitcher threw me a fastball. I knew I needed to get a base hit and win the game," Santos said. "It's just a great feeling. This is also the first time that I've ever won a game on this field."

Santos, who recently received his high school diploma, was an outstanding three-sport athlete at Palmer High School. He was the 2026 recipient of the Karl Oliveira Memorial Tri-County Baseball Scholarship Award.

Oliveira, who passed

Please see **POST 241**, page 7



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli

Charlie Maxwell gets the tag out on the runner.

Pioneers, Black Rock battle to 1-1 draw

By **Tim Peterson**
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW—Just when it appeared that the Western Mass. Pioneers were set to close out a 1-0 shutout victory against Black Rock FC, a late lapse gave the visitors from Nashua, New Hampshire an opportunity to score the tying goal.

Black Rock FC converted a corner kick goal during the seventh minute of stoppage time and last Friday night's USL League 2 match-up held at Lusitano Stadium ended in a 1-1 draw.

The result all but ended the Pioneers' postseason hopes, eliminating them from the USL League Two playoffs for the first time since joining the league in 2019.

"I really don't know what happened at the end of tonight's game," said Pioneers head coach Federico Molinari. "Almost everything has gone wrong for us this season."

It was the third consecutive tie between the two teams, who played a scoreless tie in the first meeting of the season on June 3.

The two squads also played a 1-1 draw at Lusitano Stadium a year ago.

The Pioneers entered the final week of the 2026 regular season sitting in third place in the Northeast Division table with a 7-2-3 (24 points) overall record.

The Western Mass. squad were scheduled

to play at AC Connecticut on Tuesday night before hosting the first place and undefeated Vermont Green FC, who have already clinched a playoff berth, in the regular season finale on Friday night.

NEFC (10-2-0), who joined the league a year ago, is sitting in second place with 30 points. They only need a tie against either last place Boston City FC or the Albany Rush to officially lock up a playoff spot for the first time. NEFC defeated the Pioneers, 4-2, at Lusitano Stadium on May 23.

Black Rock FC (5-3-3, 18 points) has the chance to tie for third place if they can win their final three matches and the Pioneers lose a match.

Each soccer team earns three points for a victory and one point for a draw.

Just like in their first meeting of the regular season meeting a month earlier, neither Black Rock FC nor the Pioneers scored a goal during the first 45 minutes of last Friday's contest.

Geronnimo Gomes had two of the shot attempts for the home side during the opening half.

At the beginning of the contest, Jackson Gould lined a shot from outside the top of the box that sailed wide of the net.

The Pioneers, who had four corner kicks in the first half, best scoring chance came during the 36th minute. That's when a shot taken by Vas-

Please see **PIONEERS**, page 7



Wynn Hammond looks to shoot.



Santiago Blasco Gomez tries to keep the ball from going out.

Bankers in control following Fourth of July holiday

HOLYOKE – PeoplesBank is in control of the Tri-County Baseball League once again, as the longtime playoff champions and multi-time regular season champions stand at an impressive 11-1-1 so far this season.

Please see **BANKERS**, page 7



Pete Hogan fires down to second to try and catch a base stealer.



Jackson LaValley winds and fires for PeoplesBank.



Cam Rivest, of Agawam, swings and connects.



Sam Allen fields a grounder behind second base.



Brian Hungerford tries to keep a throw from getting to the outfield.

POST 241 from page 6

away in 2021, spent many summers playing baseball at St. Joe’s Ballpark for the St. Joseph’s Saints in the prestigious Tri-County Baseball League.

“Matt is a great kid and he’s the perfect candidate to receive this year’s scholarship award,” said Monson manager Steve Tripp. “Karl and I were teammates on the varsity baseball team at Palmer High School. This field was his shrine. Karl probably played 1,000 games here and this is a very memorable night.”

The Monson Legion baseball team normally plays their home games at Legion Field, but they were forced to move last Wednesday game to St. Joe’s Park due to a scheduling conflict.

The walk-off victory snapped Monson’s five game losing streak. Four of those losses were by one run. They entered this week’s action with a 3-7 overall record.

“We’ve been in almost every game that we’ve played so far this season,” Tripp said. “We played very well in tonight’s game.”

A week earlier, Aldenville (2-8-

1) squeaked out a 1-0 victory against Post 241 at Legion Field.

“I think if we faced Monson 100 times, we probably would win 50 games and they would win 50 games,” said Aldenville manager Nate Carillon. “We match up very well against each other. We had several scoring chances, but timely hitting wasn’t on our side tonight.”

The timely hit was delivered by Santos.

Liam McGrath, who was Monson’s starting pitcher before taking over at first base in the seventh inning. He lined a line-drive single into center field against Aldenville righthander Matt Butler leading off the bottom half of the seventh. McGrath was replaced at first base by pinch runner Hunter Sherman. A sacrifice bunt by Josiel Ortiz, who was a defensive replacement at second base, moved Sherman into scoring position. After the next batter grounded out to the second baseman, the Aldenville man-



Ryan Netkovick hustles to first after making contact.

ager decided to intentionally walk both DH Sebastian Mayberry and Kyle Kaczuka, who started the game at second base, which loaded the bases with two outs.

“I decided to walk those two batters to get a forceout at any base and make it a little bit easier on the defense,” Carillon said. “Their hitter just hit the ball very hard into left field for the game winning hit.”

Not only did Santos collect the game-winning base hit, but he was also the winning pitcher. He replaced McGrath on the mound before the start of the seventh inning. Santos did hit a batter with one-out before recording back-to-back strikeouts.

McGrath, who was a junior on the Quaboag Regional High School varsity baseball team this past spring, pitched very well during the first six innings. The righthander didn’t allow any runs on just four base hits, which were all singles. He struck out 12 and issued four walks.

Two of Aldeville’s base hits were by third baseman Cam Carpenter.

McGrath escaped a jam in the

top of the first inning.

Centerfielder Justin Rivera hit a leadoff single into rightfield before stealing second base. Then shortstop Charlie Maxwell drew a walk. Both runners moved into scoring position with two outs following a double steal. McGrath ended the threat with a strikeout.

Maxwell singled to center leading off the third inning before stealing second base. McGrath retired the next three batters on a pop-up and two strikeouts.

Aldenville stranded five runners in scoring position during the first four innings.

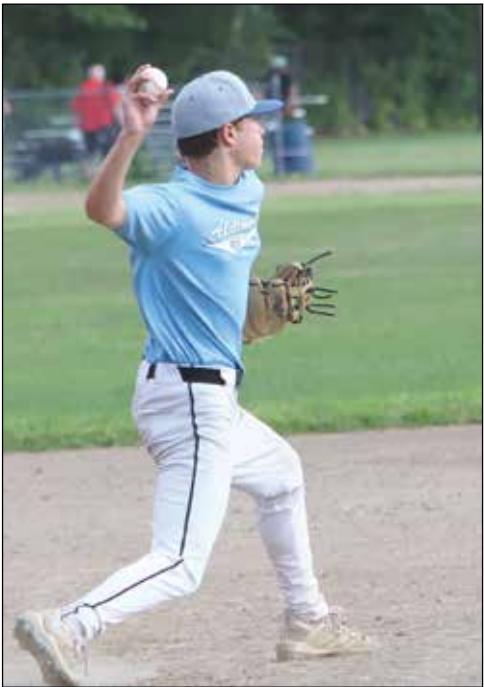
Monson had a golden opportunity to take the lead in the bottom of the fourth inning.

With one-out, Santos walked. After the next batter hit a long flyball caught by Rivera, right fielder Emerson Boronski hit a flair single to left and first baseman Dayne Shanley followed with a walk loading the bases. Butler struck out the next hitter keeping the contest scoreless for a little bit longer.

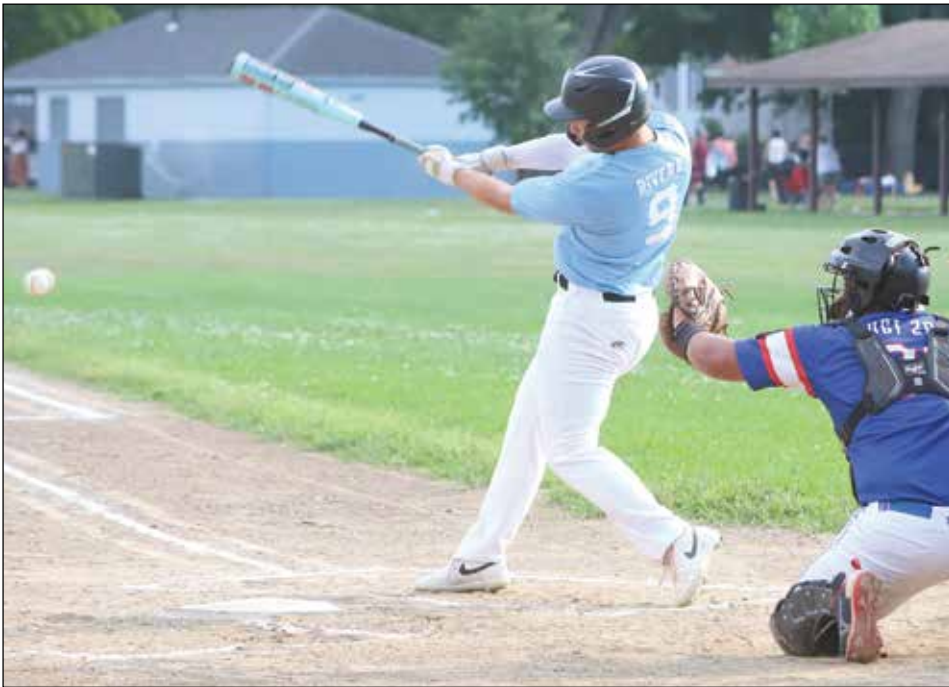
Butler, who went the distance, also pitched very well. He allowed one run on seven hits with four K’s.



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Aidan Robinson delivers a pitch home.



Cam Carpenter sends a throw to second to get a force.



Justin Rivera takes a swing.

PIONEERS from page 6

co Teixeira clanged off the post keeping the match scoreless a little bit longer.

Down at the other end of the field, Western Mass. goalie Ben Alexander didn’t have to make any saves during the first half.

The Pioneers finally ended the scoreless drought with a free kick goal in the 65th minute.

The duo of Ronan O’Brien and Shun Murasawa, who stepped onto the pitch together during the 60th minute, produced the Pioneers goal.

O’Brien sent the ball into the box from the right side where Murasawa headed into the right corner for his first goal of the season.

“I just focused on the ball, and I managed to score my first goal as a member of this team,” Murasawa said. It was a great feeling, but we lost our focus on the last play.

Murasawa was born in Kawasaki, Japan before moving to Franklin, Tennessee with his family as a sophomore in high school. He’ll be a sophomore member of the UMass Amherst men’s soccer team in the fall. He was recruited by UMass volunteer assistant coach Takehiko Nakamura.

Murasawa’s roommate at UMass as a freshman was Thomas Wadas, who’s also a member of the UMass soccer team. Wadas also plays for the Pioneers and was an outstanding soccer player at

Ludlow High School.

“Thomas was my college roommate and teammate last year,” Murasawa said. “He told me about the Pioneers, and I wound up playing here. It’s been a lot of fun and it’s a great atmosphere here.”

The score remained 1-0 until stoppage time.

With ten Black Rock players standing inside the box on a corner kick, Juan O’Neill booted the ball from the right corner and goalie Christian Herluf Braae-Anderson put a shot into the net, which spoiled the Pioneers night.

The Pioneers supporters are hoping to celebrate a victory in the regular season finale on Friday night against the undefeated Vermont Green FC.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Jackson Gould hustles up the field.



Geronimo Gomez socks a free kick away.

BANKERS from page 6

son. The Bankers have 23 points for the league lead with their main rivals, St. Joseph’s, tugging behind with 22 points. Teddy Bear Pools holds third place at 17 points, while Turners Falls, the Spartans, and BankESB round out the standings, all with less than 10 points. Last Monday, PeoplesBank played to their only tie of the season as they battled to a 2-2 draw with the Spartans. The game was called due to darkness at South Hadley High School. Action resumed earlier this week with games scheduled on Wednesday, July 8.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Rey Rivera fakes a throw after making a play.

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HELP WANTED

Town Administrator

Town of Russell, MA

The Town of Russell seeks a **Town Administrator** with strong communication and collaborative skills to oversee and manage day-to-day operations for our Town. Russell is a small rural community (pop. 1643) in the Southern Hilltown's of the Pioneer Valley region in Hampden County. Led by a three-member Select Board, and Open Town Meeting form of government, the Town relies on the Town Administrator to be responsible for the oversight and management of daily operations of the Town.

Responsibilities include scheduling, developing and implementing town projects, assisting with the preparation of budgets, coordinating with various town boards and committees, supervising and coordinating overall operations of Town government and managing day-to-day affairs under the general direction of the Select Board. The Town Administrator will support the Select Board, ensure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, interface with government agencies and the public and manage municipal operations for the Town. Attendance at certain evening meetings is required.

Candidates should have knowledge and competence in municipal finance and budgeting, project management, human resource/personnel administration, Massachusetts municipal law, and intergovernmental and community relations. The successful candidate should possess five (5) years of municipal management and leadership experience, or similar responsibilities in a public or similar agency. A degree in public administration or a related field is preferred. An equivalent combination of education, training and experience which demonstrates possession of the required knowledge, skills and abilities may also be considered. This is a full-time position with benefits. Starting salary range of \$70,000 – \$85,000 commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Submit resume and cover letter as a pdf attachment to **nboersig@townofrussell.us**. Applications must be received by July 16, 2026.

The Town of Russell is an equal opportunity employer.

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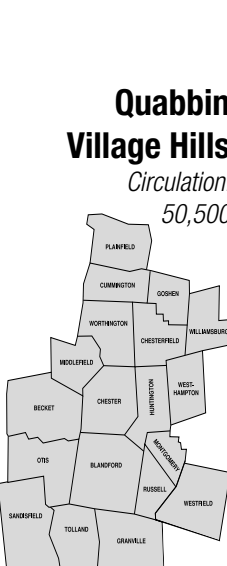
ALL REAL ESTATE advertised herein is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act, which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation, or discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, or intention to make any such preference, limitation, or discrimination." We will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. All persons are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised are available on an equal opportunity basis.

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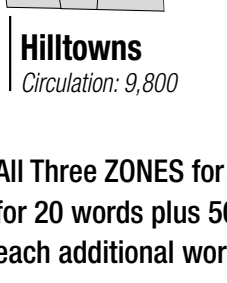
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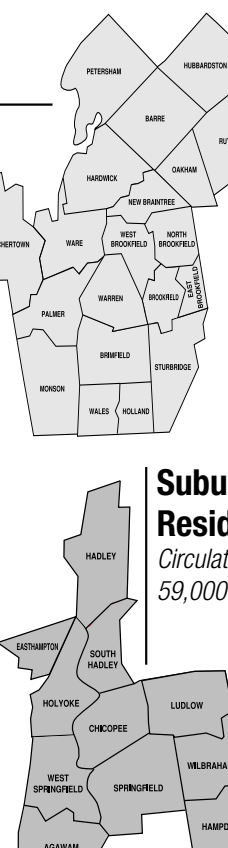
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ALL real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, or intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination." We 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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COUNTRY JOURNAL

CHICOPEE REGISTER

THE JOURNAL REGISTER

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TOWN REMINDER

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St. Francis seeks donations for upcoming tag sale

BELCHERTOWN – The St Francis Parish Giant Tag Sale team invites the community to make donations to this annual event on Aug. 22. The team will gratefully accept most donated items.

As you begin sorting, please be aware that the following donated items will be appreciated: bed and table linens, new dust-free candles, craft items, hardware, kitchenware, luggage, backpacks, handbags, children’s clothes up to size 2T only, children’s books, small working appliances, working lamps, toys, pictures, frames, holiday decorations, hand tools, yard tools, jewelry, shoes, boots, sporting goods, baby gear, small but not-upholstered furniture, knick-knacks, and collectibles. The team politely requests that donors clear all donated items of storage dust, bugs, mold, and critter residue.

Unfortunately, the following items cannot be accepted: partially used dusty candles, any clothing larger than size 2T, cookbooks or non-children books, bed pillows, baby cribs, car seats, computers, monitors, 8-track or cassette or VHS tapes, skis, exercise bikes, treadmills, gas grills, propane tanks, hazardous materials, mattresses, clothes hangers, medical equipment, bed pillows, and any large furniture items.

The proceeds from this annual effort are earmarked for the parish’s Living Our Faith, Building Our Future Capital Campaign in support of the much-needed building of the proposed St. Francis of Assisi Parish Center on the grounds of the Jabish Street campus.

This year, the Tag Sale Team will only accept donations for a ten-day period – Aug. 7 to 16 only. Donations will be accepted Monday to Saturday from 9 am to 7 pm with Sunday donations only accepted noon to 5 p.m. Please do not leave donations outside the Pine Room door when a team member is not there to receive them.

The team is grateful for the continuing, generous support of our Belchertown community.

Planning for Quabbin Days underway

BELCHERTOWN – The Friends of Quabbin are encouraging municipalities, historical societies, museums, libraries, conservation organizations, arts groups, farms, businesses, and community organizations throughout the Quabbin Region to begin planning for Quabbin Days 2026 scheduled for Oct. 9 to 12 (www.QuabbinDays.org).

Quabbin Days is a regional initiative, coordinated by the Friends, to encourage residents and visitors to explore the twelve communities of the Quabbin Region through a variety of local events, programs, exhibits, tours, performances, outdoor activities, and community gatherings.

“We know that many organizations begin planning their fall schedules months in advance,” said Ed Comeau of the Friends of Quabbin. “We want to give everyone enough lead time to consider how they would like to participate and to explore opportunities to work together.”

The inaugural Quabbin Days celebration in 2025 brought together organizations from across the region and demonstrated the value of a shared regional effort through historical programs, museum exhibits, art shows, living-history demonstrations, and much more.

Participation can take many forms. Organizations may create new programs specifically for Quabbin Days or designate existing activities taking place during the October holiday weekend as part of the celebration. Event information will be added to the Quabbin Days website as plans are finalized, and events can be submitted for the calendar at www.QuabbinDays.org/contact.

A key component of the initiative is the Quabbin Trail, a self-guided route connecting the twelve watershed communities. By linking attractions, historic sites, museums, natural areas, farms, and local businesses, the trail encourages visitors to explore the region while supporting individual communities and organizations.

Agawam Community Artists and Artisans ‘Call for Art’

AGAWAM – Agawam Community Artists and Artisans (ACAA) is inviting artists and artisans to participate in its Sixth Annual Pioneer Valley Art Festival.

The Art Festival will be held on Friday, Aug. 21, and Saturday, Aug. 22 at the Polish American Club in Feeding Hills. Show hours are from 2 to 8 p.m. on Friday, and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday.

The ACAA is encouraging artists, artisans, and writers to submit their work for review. Among the artistic mediums included are watercolor, acrylic, oil, mixed media, sculpture, photography, ceramic, stained glass, wood, fashion, textile, and jewelry.

All work must be original and handmade by the artist or artisan, of professional quality. Prints and giclees will be accepted. No kits, food, soap, candles, or AI-generated work will be accepted.

Tent space is available on the paved parking lot for \$50. Students from any area high school are accepted free of charge, and must have a tent set up.

The Pioneer Valley Art Festival is highly promoted through local TV stations;

Volunteer event to remove invasive species from waterway

SOUTH HADLEY – Paddle with a purpose — help us remove the invasive water chestnut from our waterways.

Wednesday, July 15 at 9:30 a.m. Meet at Brunelle’s Marina - please park on the grass just past the boat ramp and not in the restaurant parking spaces. You MUST register for the event ~ especially if you need to borrow a boat! You can do that at the bottom of the page here: <https://ctriver.vomo.org/opportunity/bachelor-brook>. Be sure to register for a borrowed boat or BOYB (Bring Your Own Boat). This important work must be done every year to keep the invasive species under control in our waterway. Bachelor Brook is one of South Hadley’s beautiful waterway.

Water chestnut is a harmful aquatic, invasive species, which is known to take over stretches of water. When left unchecked, water chestnut has the potential to decimate ecosystems and eliminate recreational opportunities.

Fortunately, it is easily identifiable and smaller infestations can be managed with trained volunteers hand-pulling the plant. The key to keeping water chestnut from invading new areas is to remove plants before they have a chance to set seeds.

Join us in South Hadley, on the morning of Wednesday July 15 to pull water chestnut from beautiful Bachelor Brook, part of the Stony Brook Conservation Area. We will meet and launch from Brunelle’s Marina. Each paddler is required to register and consent to CRC’s liability waiver using the register button below. All registered participants will receive an email with more details and confirmation the day before each pull.

We have a limited number of folding kayaks, paddles, and PFDs for paddlers to borrow, or you can bring your own kayak and canoe with PFD and paddle. Register as a “Bring Your Own Boat” participant or register for an available kayak to borrow. Please note that the max paddler height for the borrowed folding kayak is 2” and the max paddler weight is 225 lbs.

Need to know

Bring: •Hat •Sunscreen •Sunglasses •Water •An extra layer for chilly weather •Clothes that can get wet and dirty (and a change of clothes in the car just in case) •Closed-toed shoes or water shoes (no Crocs or flip-flops but secured sandals are ok) •A boat and paddles (unless you specified otherwise during registration) •PFD (there are some available on site if you don’t have one) •Optional: work gloves (example, gardening gloves)

Should you have any questions or concerns, please call/text Kelly Beerman at 802-318-1390 or email at kbeerman@ctriver.org.

Or contact Rebekah Cornell at town hall, Planning & Conservation department. 413-538-5030 x 6129 rcornell@southhadleyma.gov

Tykes Tuesday returns to mall July 7

HOLYOKE – Summer is just around the corner and that means Tykes Tuesday is back for free family fun at Holyoke Mall Tuesday mornings from July 7 through Aug. 18.

Tykes Tuesday features seven weeks of free family activities and exclusive discounts on Tuesdays starting at 11 a.m. on the lower level in Macy’s Court. The kids’ program is free, open to the public, and is best suited for children ages 12 and under.

Tykes Tuesday Schedule:

- July 7: The Science of Suds with CT Science Center
- July 14: Piti Theatre’s Story Wizards (3:00pm-4:00pm)
- July 21: Celebrate Christmas in July with Mrs. Claus, Face Painting and More
- July 27: Sing and Learn with Something Royal Party Co. & Pickleball 101 Class for Kids 7+ (at Pickleball Kingdom)
- August 4: Wildlife on Wheels with Forest Park Zoo
- August 11: Kimberly’s Pocket Circus
- August 18: Nature Time with Mass Audubon and Face Painting with Clowntique

Please note the time change for the event on July 14. Families are encouraged to pre-register at <https://www.holyokemall.com/tykes-tuesday-2026/>. Registration is required for the Pickleball 101 class and is for children 7 and older. The event that week will be held inside and in the common area outside of Pickleball Kingdom, on the lower level, near JCPenney.

More information about Holyoke Mall stores, restaurants, and entertainment venues, can be found at Holyokemall.com. Follow and share your stories at the center on Facebook and Instagram.

Exhibit on display through July 23

HOLYOKE – Frederick Douglass: Advocate for Equality, is now available for view at the Holyoke Public Library through Thursday, July 23.

This 6-panel exhibition from the Gilder Lehman Institute explores Douglass’s epic life from 1818 to 1895, examining his escape from slavery, his work as an abolitionist, and his relentless fight for equality for all individuals during the Jim Crow era.

Groups and individuals welcome to view during all Library hours

Presented in recognition of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence and its ongoing promise.

Turley Publications is looking for an outgoing, energetic person interested in selling advertising for our community newspapers plus more! The right candidate will assume an established territory with a portfolio of customers.

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Mended

7. Hymns

13. Commercial transport of goods

14. Poked holes in the ground

16. They precede C

17. Branch of knowledge concerned with wealth

19. Larry and Curly’s pal

20. Injured

22. Popular type of dance

23. Moon crater

25. American state

26. Places to lock valuables

28. Stalk that supports the capsule

29. Keyboard key

30. ‘___ death do us part

31. A type of cage

33. A place to sleep

34. Annual music awards show

36. Made over

38. Hard, stony substance

40. Incantations

41. Long-legged, wading bird

43. Breathe noisily

44. Congressman

45. Rip off

47. Golf score

48. Popular pickup truck

51. Where infants sleep

53. Music term

55. Small opening in a surface

56. Musical term meaning “very”

58. Soviet Socialist Republic

59. Treats with powder

60. Email subject line feature

61. A British lawyer

64. Expression of laughter

65. Farmer’s calendar

67. Seeds used as food

69. Eurasian shrubs

70. Periods of inactivity

CLUES DOWN

1. Hard things to kick

2. Collective of countries

3. Letter of Hebrew alphabet

4. One-time Alabama running back

Eddie

5. One’s sense of self-esteem

6. Of the teeth

7. Treat with care

8. Type of whale

9. Curved structure

10. Emits coherent radiation

11. One of the Gospels (abbr.)

12. Smallest interval in western music

13. Netherlands seat of government

15. Gives to charitably

18. Lout

21. Pastas

24. Release from restrictions

26. Female sibling

27. Title of respect

30. Silver coins

32. Region in India

35. Partner to cheese

37. Dark or dusky

38. Pacific Northwest tree

39. Exaggerate

42. Toddler

43. Touch lightly

46. Fundamentals

47. Jeopardies

49. Curved structures

50. Isolated, flat-topped hills

52. Forming the bottom layer

54. Reciprocal of sine

55. Genus of Old World birds

57. New York college

59. Cloak

62. Kawhi Leonard’s team (abbr.)

63. Vietnamese offensive

66. “The Great Lakes State”

68. “___, myself and I”

FAIR from page 1

type of care facility,” Dumas said. “So, those types of vendors that would attend that fair versus our Aging in Place Fair are very different.”

Dumas reported he was happy to see more prominent vendors also attend the fair, with names such as the AARP, Bacon Wilson Law Firm and Mass Veterans Home being present this year. He stressed the most important aspect to him about the fair was to increase awareness about the senior center and the Council on Aging.

Starting his role in November of 2025, Dumas reported last year pulled in 36 vendors. This year, the count has reached a historic 45 vendors; a figure Dumas observed was a sign the event was “steadily growing.” The fair is a key way to reach out to the wider community, to increase awareness about the senior center and to promote resources available to senior citizens.

“A lot of our local businesses reach out first,” Dumas said when asked how he sourced the vendors. He mentioned the hardest aspect

of running the fair was to help town residents identify the differences between the two events run within the building.

“A lot of our older adults don’t recognize that, you know, they may have that resource within their town,” Dumas said. “And how important it can be to them as a person. People come in day to day looking for socialization...it’s a way for our older adults to get out into the community.”

“Say one person comes out of this with a substantial improvement to their life,” said Human Resources Director Andy Rogers. “Then, it’s worth it.”

Rogers called the senior center a “vibrant place” and more than just a facility for people to just “sit around.” The fair, in his opinion, is a way to increase awareness about the facility’s existence, as well as a way to encourage people to engage with the local community.

“South Hadley’s a great place to live,” Rogers said. “Our people support each other.”



Council on Aging Program Coordinator Brandon Dumas spoke on the growing success of the Aging in Place Fair hosted at the South Hadley Senior Center on June 24.



The local Shine Program booth shines a light on free, state-run services within Massachusetts. Turley photos by Ben Hernandez



Northampton Cooperative Bank waits for attendees to try their luck.



The well-attended wellness fair hosted a number of community staples for curious attendees.

Send Us Your Autumn Event Information

Turley Publications will print your Autumn event **FREE OF CHARGE** in our **Autumn Fest Supplement** which will be published **September 9, 2026.**

Total circulation of 85,000 reaching over 200,000 readers in the Pioneer Valley.

Deadline for Calendar submissions is August 19.

Community Autumn Events

Event Should Be Non-Profit & Open to the Public

FREE Calendar Listings Reaching over 200,000 Readers in the Pioneer Valley

Event Name _____

Date/Time _____

Location _____

Description _____

Cost _____

Contact name & phone number for more information _____

MAIL YOUR LISTING INFORMATION TO:
Turley Publications, Attn: Jamie Joslyn, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069
or email* them to: jamie@turley.com
***Be sure to indicate “Autumn Event” in the subject line of your email.**