

TOWN Reminder

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Marion seeks to collaborate, find solutions for town

By Tina Lesniak
Correspondent

SOUTH HADLEY - When Priscilla Marion decided to run for the South Hadley Select Board, it was driven by a simple goal: helping ensure the town remains a place where residents of all ages can thrive while maintaining responsible stewardship of public resources.

"I ran for the Select Board because I care deeply about South Hadley and, like many residents, I want to see our community remain a place where families and seniors can thrive, businesses can succeed, and town services can meet real needs without losing sight of affordability," Marion said.

Elected this spring as one of the board's two newest members, Marion brings a collaborative approach that she says is rooted in listening, careful analysis and accountability. She believes public service requires balancing empathy with fiscal responsibility.

"My experiences have prepared me to listen carefully, ask hard questions, weigh priorities, and work collaboratively toward practical solutions," she said. "I believe public service requires both compassion and accountability: compassion for



Priscilla Marion recently began a term on the South Hadley Select Board. Submitted photo

the people affected by every decision, and accountability for how we use taxpayer dollars and plan for the future."

As the town confronts financial challenges, Marion says her priorities include strengthening fiscal stability, increasing transparency and encouraging greater resident participation in local government. She also wants to preserve the services that residents value while creating a clearer long-term financial plan.

"We need a clearer long-term financial plan that residents can understand and trust, including honest conversations about revenues, expenses, reserves, staffing,

Please see **MARION**, page 5

Police department unveils new bus camera system

By Ben Hernandez
Staff Writer

SOUTH HADLEY - South Hadley Police Department Lt. Mark Baran revealed a new bus camera system to the South Hadley School Committee in light of a new Massachusetts law which allowed police to enforce punishment on those illegally passing a school bus stop sign.

"In terms of this program, this is really new technology that's out," Baran said. "Again, with Massachusetts law recently changing, it allows for the enforcement of those that do pass a school bus when the red lights are out."

Baran revealed a new partnership with a technology company called Bus Patrol, who will be implementing a new bus stop camera system which will alert law enforcement of bad traffic behavior through an automated warning system.

"From the police department's perspective, obviously one of the most important things is that we keep our kids safe," Baran said. "We have some communities, some cities in the Commonwealth that are currently in basically a testing phase."

Baran cited Chicopee as the nearest location already using the services, who he reported had their camera system for "almost a year." He assured those in attendance the new technology wasn't going to pass out citations, but would serve as a "warning-based" system to help police "enforce laws and take action."

"There are multiple cameras on the buses," Baran said as he explained the technology. "Basically, once the arm is out and the vehicle has stopped, that's going to trigger the cameras to start recording. So, obviously, if you go by it, it's going to record the date, time and location."

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IN TERMS OF
THIS PROGRAM,
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Lt. MARK BARAN
SOUTH HADLEY
POLICE DEPARTMENT

Health board monitor banana compost situation

By Ben Hernandez
Staff Writer

GRANBY - The Board of Health reviewed outstanding concerns with a banana compost operation on Taylor St. Residents reported significant rodent activity within the area and petitioned the Board to investigate the manner.

"We got a letter from Ms. Tara LaFlamme dated July 19 about the banana compost operation on Taylor Street," Board of Health member William Shaheen said. "Apparently, the effort that was embarked on during the spring to eradicate the rats and propagation of rats on the property has apparently failed."

Shaheen further stated it was in their opinion it was the first time they addressed concerns on the property. They cited a complaint in February of 2025, where the Board had to investigate a crow complaint in the area, as well as reports of exposed compost. Shaheen said, according to Ms. LaFlamme's letter, the issue was getting worse.

"Essentially it's a three strikes and you're out situation, in my opinion," Shaheen said and sought his fellow Board member's opinion.

"I was kind of hoping that the folks at Red Fire Farm would have taken a lead on this," Board of Health member Lee Lalonde said.

Lalonde further expressed their desire for the farm to make efforts to "get this operation at least a half to three-fourths of a mile off the road" and concluded they didn't understand why there was a delay in getting the issue resolved.

Shaheen read from the letter, which reported the rat activity on the premises "remains significant since poison has been used as part of the mitigation efforts." The letter went on to claim the property owner found "dead and dying rats" in their yard, which they described as "concerning and unacceptable."

"We are noticing rat burrows developing along our front stone wall," Shaheen said as he read from the letter. "Given those ongoing issues, we would appreciate an update on the next steps being taken to fully address the problem."

Banana Compost owner Lee Gilman stated the company received the letter "back in May" from the neighbors across the street about the "rodent activity." Though he was uncertain if the letter was made public at the time, he reported they sent a letter to the Board of Health "about six weeks ago" which explained their relationship with the farm.

"Since then, we have doubled our efforts on putting more carbon material on top of our food scraps," Gilman said. "That helps keep them

Please see **BOARD**, page 9

South Hadley hosts field hockey summer league



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Madelyn Trudei guides the ball up the field.



Aria Harrington socks a long pass away.

Late policy presented to Granby School Committee

By Ben Hernandez
Staff Writer

GRANBY - Principal Allison Jordan of the Granby Junior Senior High School revealed the new tardiness policy updates added to the student handbook to the Granby School Committee on Aug. 4.

"A lot of work has been done in the handbook in the past few years," Jordan said and highlighted the first change in tardiness policies. Previously, three tardy marks

equaled an absence from school. Feeling a strong need to undo the policy, Jordan cited it was "hard to track" and very "punitive" to mark kids for the behavior.

"We took a different approach and did every five tardies equaled, for this past year, a Saturday school," Jordan said. "We learned rather quickly that the students were attentive."

Jordan stated the new policy improved attendance by "a significant amount," a

fact which was applauded by school staff. Despite negative parent feedback, the principal maintained the new policy was a step in the right direction.

"Is there anything else you can explore?" Jordan said as she quoted parental backlash. "We're like, 'all right; it's new for us. Let's entertain this. What are your suggestions?'"

A common parent suggestion was for community service, which Jordan admitted still held kids accountable while also allowing them to "work on skills." As Jordan mused over the potential punishment shift, she also acknowledged it gave delinquent students an opportunity to "give back to the community."

"We ended up adjusting the chart to reflect that five tardies is five hours of community service," Jordan said. "We didn't want to start with

Please see **POLICY**, page 9

UMass professor to talk drought conditions

BELCHER-TOWN — As drought conditions become an increasingly familiar part of life in Massachusetts, residents will have an opportunity to learn more about how drought develops, how it affects local water supplies, and what the future may hold during a free public presentation on Thursday, Aug. 20, at 6:30 p.m. in the Belchertown Town Hall Auditorium hosted by the Belchertown Conservation Department.

The program, “Understanding Drought and Water Supplies” will be presented by Professor Konstantinos (Kostas) Andreadis of the University of Massachusetts Amherst, whose research focuses on hydrology, water resources, drought, and climate impacts.

Designed for homeowners, residents, and anyone interested in understanding where their water comes from,



The Quabbin Reservoir is currently 10 feet below full capacity.

Submitted photo

the presentation will explain the science behind drought in clear, practical terms. Topics will include how Massachusetts defines the different stages of drought, why droughts have become more frequent in recent years, and what scientists expect as the climate continues to change.

Professor Andreadis will also discuss the differences between surface water and

groundwater systems, why each responds differently to drought, and how water managers evaluate long-term and short-term impacts on water supplies. Additional topics will include aquifers, seasonal groundwater recharge from rainfall and snowmelt, well fields, deep and shallow wells, artesian wells, and how public water supply systems collect, store, and distribute

drinking water. “With all the changes in weather we have been having, we felt that this would be a great presentation to help everyone understand how these changes affect their water supply, whether it is wells or reservoirs,” said Belchertown Conservation Administrator Julie Meyer. “Regular droughts are just now a fact of life, and we need to plan and prepare for their impacts.”

Whether residents rely on a private well or a municipal water system, the program will provide valuable insight into the factors that influence water availability and help explain the science behind the drought conditions affecting communities across the Commonwealth.

The presentation is free and open to the public. Questions from attendees will be welcomed following the presentation.

Fatal crash involving electric scooter under investigation

SOUTH HADLEY – On Monday, Aug. 10 at approximately 9:15 p.m., first responders were dispatched to the area of Willimansett Street and Hollywood Street following a report of a motor vehicle crash.

A preliminary investigation indicates that an electric scooter and a Hyundai sedan collided in the breakdown lane while the Hyundai was traveling northbound on Willimansett Street, according to an official press release from the office of Northwestern District Attorney David E. Sullivan.

The 19-year-old male operator of the electric scooter was transported to Baystate Medical Center for evaluation and treatment. He was

pronounced deceased at the hospital on Tuesday.

The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner will determine the cause and manner of death.

The 17-year-old male operator of the Hyundai remained at the scene. Contrary to some reports, this incident was not a “hit and run.”

The crash remains under investigation by the Massachusetts State Police Detective Unit assigned to the Northwestern District Attorney’s Office, the Massachusetts State Police Collision Analysis and Reconstruction Section, the Massachusetts State Police Crime Scene Services Section and the South Hadley Police Department.

NAMI offering family education program

HOLYOKE – NAMI Western Massachusetts is pleased to offer their NAMI Family-to-Family Education Program in person, starting Tuesday, Sept. 15, from 6 to 8:30 p.m. in Greenfield.

What is the NAMI Family-to-Family Education Program?

NAMI Family-to-Family is a free, 8-session educational program for family, significant others, and friends of people with mental health

conditions. It is a designated evidenced-based program. This means that research shows that the program significantly improves the coping and problem-solving abilities of the people closest to a person with a mental health condition.

NAMI Family-to-Family is taught by NAMI-trained family members who have been there and includes presentations, discussions, and interactive exercises.

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Opening for seat on Board of Assessors

SOUTH HADLEY – Due to a recent resignation on the Board of Assessors, the elected body has a vacancy which needs filling.

The Town of South Hadley is proceeding to address that vacancy immediately. This process is consistent and within MGL Chapter 41, Subsections 10, 11 and other applicable policies or regulations.

All parties interested in applying for the position are asked to submit a letter of interest to Executive Assistant to Administration Kristin Maher via email at kmaher@southhadleyma.gov or

through the mail to: Selectboard Office, 116 Main St., South Hadley, MA, 01075. Applicants may submit a resume but it is not required.

Letters of interest and any additional documents must be received by 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 20. Once received by Selectboard administration, a complete packet for each candidate's submission will be made publicly available.

The chairs of the Board of Assessors and Selectboard will decide on a suitable date to have a joint meeting of remaining Board of Assessors

members and members of the Selectboard to conduct interviews. Board members will make an appointment at the public meeting scheduled for the interviews or a subsequent public joint meeting.

Applicants will not be required to be interviewed if they choose not to be, but still may be considered. The joint committee, by way of nomination and subsequent vote to appoint, will fill the vacancy on the South Hadley Board of Assessors for a term from the date of appointment to the next annual town election, scheduled for April 2027.

Ballots sent out for Sept. 1 primary

SOUTH HADLEY – State Primary and Special Town Election ballots have been mailed to registered voters who applied to vote by mail for the Sept. 1 elections. Voters may track their ballot's status here: <https://trackmyballotma.com/>

If you are interested in voting by mail for the State Primary, you have until 5:00 pm on Tuesday, August 25, to apply. Learn more here: <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/divisions/elections/voting-information/vote-by-mail.htm>

Voters should read the

enclosed vote-by-mail instructions carefully! Both the Primary Ballot and the Special Town Election ballot will be enclosed, unless there is a notice in the envelope stating otherwise.

Completed ballots must be sealed in their respective yellowish "Early Ballot" envelope. Ballots not returned in the envelope will be rejected, and the Clerk's Office must mail a new packet out.

Primary Ballots go into the envelope with the pink label

Town Ballots go into the envelope with the yellow la-

bel.

Both yellowish envelopes must be signed by the voter. If the envelope is not signed, the Clerk's Office must reject the ballot and mail a new packet.

Ballots can be mailed back in the white outer envelopes, returned in person to the Clerk's Office, or put in the secure dropbox located behind the Police Station

Please direct any election-related questions to the Town Clerk's office at 413-538-5030, ext. 6183, or elections@southhadleyma.gov.

Fire and Water study group offers update

SOUTH HADLEY – A Study Group, consisting of South Hadley residents, former and current personnel, and governance leaders from Fire and Water Districts 1 and 2 has been meeting over the past two months. The group has reviewed previous merger study reports, conducted a SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) based on current operations and a potential

merger, and is embarking on developing a business plan "mock-up" of what a South Hadley merger might look like. In addition, the group is seeking best practices developed by other Massachusetts municipalities that have conducted mergers.

The South Hadley Fire and Water Study Group was organized in response to current town budgetary challenges and a town-wide 2024

non-binding referendum that favored exploring a merger. Meetings are open to the public. An upcoming meeting will be held Aug. 26 at 6 p.m. at the South Hadley Public Library. The Study Group will continue to provide ongoing updates of their work. For more information, contact Study Group Chair, Christine Phillips, caphill33@gmail.com, 413-531-1063.

End of the rainbow



A rainbow appeared over South Hadley High School last Saturday after the macroburst storm.

Granby library set for fall book sale

GRANBY – Book lovers. Bargain Hunters. The Friends of the Granby Free Public Library will host their annual Month-Long Fall Book Sale during the month of September in the Community Room of the Library. You will be able to choose from a large assortment of used and like-new hardcover, 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 Sept. 1 to 30.

Starting Aug. 1, the Library will be accepting donations of hardcover and

paperback books, DVDs, music CDs, playable video games, and audiobooks in good condition acceptable for resale. The library does not accept donations of: Textbooks, encyclopedias, dictionaries, thesauri, Reader's Digest books, or books with smoke, mold, mildew, or wa-

ter damage. Donations are accepted at the library during open hours. Please do not leave donated books outside the library or in our book return. Donations accepted until Aug. 27. Thank you for your support! The library is located at 297 E State St in Granby MA 01033.

Mail voting postcards available

SOUTH HADLEY – Vote early by mail in all 2026 elections. No excuse is required. Applications will be mailed 45 days before each statewide election. Sign it and mail it back. Choosing "all elections" covers you for all of 2026. Primaries: Choose your party ballot if unenrolled. The deadline for the state primary/special town election is Aug. 25 at 5 p.m.



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SOCIAL SECURITY

Matters

By Russell Gloor

Is the Medicare Part B Premium a Percentage of our Social Security Amount?

Dear Rusty:
I have a simple question: Is the amount we pay for Medicare Part B premium a percent of our Social Security amount we receive?
Signed: Curious

Dear Curious:
Your Medicare Part B premium is not based on a percentage of your monthly Social Security benefit amount.
Medicare Part B premiums are set in October of each year by Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and are based upon anticipated total costs of the Medicare program in the forthcoming year.
Generally speaking, Medicare Part B enrollee premiums are expected to offset about 25% of CMS’ anticipated total Medicare Part B costs; the rest is borne by the Federal Government.
So, when CMS estimates Medicare program costs for the upcoming year, they also look at the number of anticipated Part B enrollees. They then divide 25% of total anticipated Part B program costs by the number of expected Part B enrollees, resulting in the “standard” Medicare Part B premium for next year.
For 2026, the standard Part B premium amount is \$202.90. The standard premium for 2027 will be announced in October 2026 and will likely be different.
It’s important to understand also that not everyone pays the “standard” Part B premium. Some lower income seniors may pay less because of the so-called “hold harmless provision,” and some higher income folks may pay more than the “standard” monthly Part B premium because of a provision called Income Related Monthly Adjustment Amount.
The “hold harmless provision” says that monthly Social Security benefits cannot decrease as a result of a Medicare premium increase, so if the annual SS Cost Of Living Adjustment is insufficient to offset any increase to the standard Part B premium, then the SS beneficiary may pay a smaller Part B premium amount so that their SS benefit doesn’t decrease (note there are exceptions to this rule).
Conversely, those with a higher “provisional income” (an IRS definition), may pay more than the standard Medicare Part B premium. That’s because of a provision known as IRMAA, which adds a supplemental amount on top of the standard Medicare Part B premium.
IRMAA supplement amounts are determined using a sliding scale to define the required higher Part B premium for each income level category and IRMAA will cause the Part B premium to be more than the standard premium amount.
For those with exceptionally high incomes, the Part B premium can be as much as \$690 per month.
For your information, income reported to the IRS two years ago is used to determine if an individual is subject to IRMAA for the forthcoming year.
The reason for this is timing: when next year’s Part B premium is determined in October of each current year, the IRS has processed all tax returns for the preceding year but doesn’t yet have individual income for the current year.
Thus, they must use a person’s income from October of the preceding year to determine who will pay the standard Part B premium next year, and who will pay a higher IRMAA amount.
And just to complete this picture, you should be aware that IRMAA also applies to Medicare Part D premiums. And that means that those with higher incomes who

Please see **SECURITY**, page 5

My daughter, Paula Ouimette, took this photo of a juvenile brown headed cowbird watching her run laps with her dog, Jo Jo.
The young cowbird perched on a fence near the driveway of the elementary school in Hardwick.
My daughter used the Seek app by iNaturalist to get the identification. It stayed there for about 20 minutes before flying off.
She said there were no other cowbirds around, but cowbirds lay their eggs in nests of birds smaller than then in hopes they will raise their young.
Obviously, this young cowbird looks well feed. I wonder what bird raised it, often at the expense of their own offspring.
Warblers and vireos are the most common cowbird hosts. Their nestlings weight less than half as much as the cowbird nestling.
Some species will either push the cowbird egg out of their nest or leave that nest and start another nest.
The brown-headed cowbird is a stocky blackbird.

in my

BACKYARD

By Ellenor Downer

The females do not build a nest and instead produce up to three dozen eggs per summer.
They lay the eggs in the nests of other bird species and let them raise their young, know as brood parasitism.
Brown-headed cowbirds are native to North America, but many people consider them a nuisance bird because of their parenting style.
Cowbirds destroy the eggs and young of smaller songbirds and have been implicated in the decline of several endangered species, including Kirtland’s warbler and black-capped vireo.
Adult male cowbirds have glossy black bodies and brown heads, hence their name. In poor lighting, the male’s head looks brown.
The female is brown with

Midsummer questions for Garden Lady

Karen, who has a vegetable garden in Hardwick, is concerned over her tomatoes cracking and is asking the Garden Lady for some advice.
“With all the rainstorms we’ve had, one measuring over 5 inches last week, my cherry tomatoes, and even some of my paste types are starting to crack. Is this a normal occurrence and if so, is there anything I can do to prevent this from happening in the future?”
This is a timely question, Karen, and one that I am sure a lot of readers can relate to. I know I can.
It’s always exciting when the tomatoes start ripening and then this happens.
Fruit cracking around the stem, either in rings or radiating downward is caused by overwatering; we or Mother Nature can be at fault. This year I will blame her for some of it.
A week ago many gardeners in the area received an inch or more of rain in two separate deluges. Keep in mind that most veggies require about an inch per week.
Adjust your irrigation to accommodate for the excess.
Mulches do well to moderate soil moisture; if you mulch, you can water less often. If cracking ends up being a big problem for you, consider scouring the seed catalogs for varieties that are resistant to it.
As long as the cracks are fresh, and haven’t begun to show mold, I use the fruit

anyway. Watering issues can also affect other plants. Sometimes gardeners complain that their cucumbers look funny, bent in the shape of an apostrophe.
This effect is also from un - even watering. Besides making necessary adjustments, trellising can also help them to grow straight.
This question came in from Frances who reads the column in the Ware River News: “I have some thornless blackberry plants that produce huge fruit. Occasionally some of the segments on the berries are not colored deep purple or black; they are more of a tan or white color. I was curious why this happens? Years ago when I grew red raspberry bushes I also remember sometimes having this problem. Is it something with my soil? Are the berries safe to eat? I am hopeful it is not some type of mold or fungus.”
Although I do not have a picture to be one hundred percent certain, I believe what you are describing is “druplet disorder.” The lighter areas on your berries are from sun scald. A reaction simply caused by too much heat.
And yes, they are safe to eat.
Some people comment that the berries with this disorder are a little tough or flavorless. It doesn’t really bother me.
Moldy berries would look furry and the area would be raised.
Bill is growing basil for the first time and he had this question for the Garden Lady: “My basil was slow to take off. I came back from vacation and it is in flower. While the bees seem to enjoy the flowers, I was hoping to harvest some of the leaves. Do you have any advice as to how to get it out of flower mode and into leaf production?”
Yes, I do. It involves giving the basil a hair cut. Sure enough, your plant needs to be rid of those flowers.
Once you do that, provide some nitrogen to get them greened up and growing. This could be by the addition of a little blood meal at the base of the plant or a foliar feed of fish emulsion or compost tea.
In no time your plant will rebound. Just be sure to keep those flowers trimmed off.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 32 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.



Juvenile brown headed cowbird

Other Hardwick birds
My daughter, Paula, saw lots of bluebirds, swallows, robins and one hen turkey with a poult. She said there were probably more underneath the hen turkey, but only one was brave enough to come out.
Red tail hawks
I have several red tail hawks in Barre, New Braintree and Oakham. Recently, one flew off and the sunshine showed off the hawks red tail. They are often seen by freshly mowed fields in hopes of featching some rodents, who stand out on a newly cut field.
Great blue heron
Long Pond in Rutland is a popular spot to find a great

blue heron “fishing” in the shallows along Route 122.
Meal worms
I continue to have catbirds come for the mealworms I leave them on the picnic table. The other day I heard a catbird make its meowing call. Males use the call to establish territory and females for communication and alarm purposes.
Raven
Recently, the common raven flew overhead making its gurgling croak. I could hear it, but I was unable to see it with all the trees.
People may report a bird sighting by emailing edowner@turley.com or calling or texting 774-262-5882.

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.

TOWN Reminder

We Want to Hear From You

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Redevelopment funding grant applications available

SOUTH HADLEY – Applications are now being accepted for projects that rehabilitate or redevelop blighted, abandoned, vacant or underutilized properties in the Falls. Priority projects include multifamily buildings, commercial buildings, and mixed-use buildings. Program guidelines: <https://southhadley.org/Document-Center/View/15218/Falls-Redevelopment-Fund---Guidelines--Application>

Ware Grange hosting barbecue dinner

WARE – Ware Grange is holding a Barbecue Dinner at the Fair on Saturday, Aug. 29 at 4 p.m. The menu includes pulled pork, chicken, brisket, baked beans, coleslaw, cornbread, drink, and dessert for

Applications are being accepted on a rolling basis and funding will be provided on a first-come-first served basis for eligible projects. Total funding available is \$50,000. Additional technical assistance will be provided to align eligible projects with additional funding to achieve program objectives.

For more information contact: acapra@southhadley.ma.gov

\$25. Eat outside under the tent or take out is available. Reservations are required. Please call 413-284-1135 or email waregrange164@gmail.com to make your reservations for the barbecue.

Grange Fair book program coming up

WARE – The Ware Grange Fair program books are here. Plan your exhibits by checking out the categories of exhibits in the fair program book. Books are available online at waregrange.org or to receive a book by mail call 413-284-1135 or email waregrange164@gmail.com.

Exhibitors may enter in a variety of categories including vegetables, fruits, eggs, cut flowers, baked goods, fan-cywork, arts and crafts, and photography. Plan your exhibits now for the fair which takes place Aug. 28 and 29. See the Ware Grange website for schedule and details.

Church hosting summer event

GRANBY – Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Granby will be having their Summerfest on Sunday, Aug. 23 from 12 to 4 p.m. Chicken dinner is \$15 and includes a half bbq chicken, baked potato and corn on the cob, as well as dessert and bottled water. Hamburg-ers and hot dogs will also be available. Raffles prizes including \$500, \$250, \$100. Raffle baskets, bake sale, kids games, prizes, lottery trees and more. Fun for the whole family.

Chicopee St. to receive work

GRANBY – Road resur-facing on Chicopee St. be-tween School St. and Car-ver St. Work will commence the week of Aug. 18. Please seek alternate routes if possible. Roadway detours and/or closures are anticipated. Residents may experi-ence short-term inconve-nience/delays due to con-struction operations.

Visit Town Reminder online at www.townreminder.turley.com

Senior Center to show zoom presentation on 9/11 tragedy

SOUTH HADLEY – In observance of the 25th An-niversary of 9/11, the South Hadley Public Library, in partnership with the South Hadley Senior Center and South Hadley High School, will host a live community viewing of a special Zoom presentation by FDNY First Responder Joseph T. Bonan-no on Wednesday, Sept. 2 at 6 p.m.

Sponsored by the 9/11 Tunnel to Towers Founda-tion, Mr. Bonanno will share

his personal experiences and reflections on the rescue and recovery efforts at Ground Zero following the Septem-ber 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Attendees are encouraged to submit questions for Mr. Bonanno in advance through the South Hadley Public Li-brary website at www.shadleylib.org.

Community members may attend the presentation at the South Hadley Public Library, the South Hadley Se-nior Center, or South Hadley

High School. Please register with the location you plan to attend. Library registration is available at www.shadleylib.org. To register at the Senior Center, call 413-538-5030 (Option 3). Registration in-formation for South Hadley High School will be an-nounced soon.

This free program, spon-sored by the 9/11 Tunnel to Towers Foundation, is open to the public. You do not need to be from South Hadley to attend.

Free movie under the stars at Cindy’s

GRANBY – The Gran-by Cultural Council is thrilled to announce a free of charge “Indiana Jones Outdoor Movie Night” on Aug. 28 at 8 p.m. at Cin-dy’s Drive-In on Route 202, Granby. The large outdoor screen will be in the field be-hind the ice cream stand. The movie is free and open to the public.

Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Ask fol-lows a classic hero for this

adventure set in the 1930s, as the quick-witted and har-dy archaeologist goes on the hunt for the Lost Ark of the Covenant. Often facing insurmountable odds, Indy always manages to succeed in the nick of time, joined by endearing companions and opposed by notorious villains.

• What to Bring: Grab your blankets, lawn chairs, and friends.

• Support Local: Get

some takeout from Cindy’s to enjoy during the show.

• Weather Updates: In case of inclement weather, we will postpone the mov-ie to Aug. 29. We will post cancellation updates on the Granby Cultural Council’s Facebook page.

This program is funded by a grant from the Gran-by Cultural Council, a local agency, which is supported by Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

MARION from page 1

partnerships, and economic development,” she said. Improving communica-tion between town hall and residents is another key ob-jective.

“People should not feel that decisions are already made before they are invit-ed into the conversation,” Marion said. “My goal is to support a culture where in-formation is shared early and residents with different views feel respected and heard.”

One of the most pressing issues facing the Select Board is addressing South Hadley’s budget shortfall following the defeat of two Proposition 2½ override votes in April. Marion, who opposed the over-rides during the campaign, says her position reflected concerns about affordability and public confidence rather than opposition to town ser-vices.

“The budget shortfall is real, and I do not take it lightly,” she said. “My opposition

to the April override votes was not opposition to our schools, our departments, our employees, or the services residents rely on. It was root-ed in concern about afford-ability, timing, and trust.”

She supports continuing a line-by-line review of spend-ing, pursuing shared services and efficiencies where appro-priate, examining new reve-nue opportunities and priori-tizing essential services.

“We need to be honest with residents about what cuts mean in practice,” said Marion. “I want us to rebuild trust: with better information, measurable goals, realistic assumptions, and meaning-ful public input before ask-ing residents to make another major financial decision.”

Marion says engagement with residents should be con-tinuous rather than limited to budget season or election years. She plans to remain accessible by attending meet-ings and community events, responding to residents and advocating for clearer com-

munication about town deci-sions.

“Public input is most meaningful when people have understandable infor-mation early enough to shape the outcome,” she said.

For Marion, South Had-ley’s greatest asset is its peo-ple.

“We have residents and businesses who show up, care about their neighbors, volun-teer, support local organiza-tions, and want the town to succeed even when they dis-agree about how to get there,” she said. “That sense of com-munity matters.”

As she begins her first term, Marion says she un-derstands residents’ concerns about taxes, schools, munic-ipal services and the town’s future. Her commitment, she says, is straightforward: “to listen, do the homework, communicate honestly, and make decisions based on what I believe is in the best long-term interest of South Hadley.”



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Please submit your photo no later than
Monday, October 27, 2026.

There is no cost to submit a photo.
No photos will be accepted after deadline.

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Rams up just short in PVSSL finals



Kaelynn Slapski tries to settle the ball.

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW – Riding a flawless 13-0-0 mark, the top-seeded Granby Lady Rams rolled into the Pioneer Valley Summer Soccer League B Division finals, eager to bring home the championship trophy in a showdown with second-seeded Hopkins Academy. The championship match was tied at 1-1 when Hopkins Academy’s Nora Hanna scored the winning goal eight minutes into the first 10-minute overtime period giving her team a 2-1 win at Lusitano Stadium in Ludlow on Saturday, Aug. 1.

“This loss is a little bit frustrating, especially since we had an undefeated record,” said Kalli White, who was a co-captain of the Granby summer league team, along with McKenna Zumburski. “We had several scoring chances in today’s

Please see **RAMS**, page 7



Sofia Marsh tries to turn play around.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Savannah Kraus advances up the field.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Mount Carmel captured the PVSSL Men's title this year.

Mount Carmel takes Men's PVSSL title

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW – Anthony Bourget was an assistant boys’ soccer coach under longtime varsity coach John O’Keefe at Minnechaug Regional High School before stepping down at the end of last season. Bourget was also the head coach of Villa FC, which captured the last two Pioneer Valley Summer Soccer League men’s championship titles. Villa FC changed sponsors before the start of the 2026 summer league season and are now known as Mount Carmel FC. Mason Perham is one of the former Minnechaug soccer players listed on the Mount Carmel roster. Perham scored a second half goal, which helped top-seeded Mount Carmel FC win the championship title once again with a crisp 2-0 win over second-seeded Rumbleseat before a large crowd at Lusitano Stadium in Ludlow on Friday, July 31.



Anthony Basile turns play around.

“We’ve won the last two men’s championship titles with Villa, and this is our first one with Mount Carmel,” Bourget said. “Winning the championship game is something that we expect to do every year. It was a hard fought battle tonight. Rumbleseat played very well against us.” Mount Carmel FC, who finished the PVSSL regular season with a 10-1-0 record, defeated fourth-seeded CF Ardor, 2-0, in the semifinals. Rumbleseat, who also lost to Mount Carmel during the regular season, entered the playoffs with a 9-1-1 record. They advanced into the men’s finals for the first time in more than ten years after knocking off the third-seeded KO Elites FC, 2-1, in the semifinals. “This is the first time that we’ve made the finals in many years, and it was a fun game tonight,” said Kyle Giroud, who was an outstanding three-sport athlete at Chicopee Comp. “It’s always a great

Please see **TITLE**, page 7

West Side Sport Shop grabs ladies title



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
West Side Sports Shop, featuring adult female players from throughout the region, took the PVSSL Women's Championship.

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW – Since joining the prestigious Pioneer Valley Summer Soccer League in 2021, West Side Sports Shop has claimed the women’s championship title five times. West Side Sports Shop entered this year’s playoffs as the fourth seed. They posted a 2-0 shutout victory over second-seeded W. Mass Xtremes in the women’s finals held at historic Lusitano Stadium in Ludlow, last Friday night. “We might be the fourth

seed, but we played very well in the playoffs,” said West Side Sports Shop head coach Chris Andre. “We lost to the Xtremes twice during the regular season.” The only year that West Side Sports Shop didn’t take home the championship trophy was in 2024. They beat top seeded Here for Beer in the finals a year ago. “We’ve set a high standard here,” Andre added. “A number of these players have been playing for me since our first year in this league. We also add a couple of new

players each year. The players get along with each other very well and we always have a lot of fun.” West Side Sports Shop, who finished the 2026 regular season with a 7-4-0 record, defeated the fifth-seeded Lusitano Women, 5-1, in the quarterfinals. Just like they did a year ago, they beat top seeded Here for Beer, 3-2, in the semifinals. West Side Sports also won the regular season match-up Here for Beer. “Here For Beer is a very talented soccer team,” Andre

said. “We played very well against them the other night.” The West Side Sports Shop captain is Rhiann Ryan, who graduated from Minnechaug a couple of years ago. “I love being a member of this soccer team,” Ryan said. “It feels nice to finally beat Xtremes, especially after losing to them twice during the regular season.” Six other players listed on the Westside Sports Shop roster played soccer for legend-

Please see **LADIES**, page 7

RAMS from page 6

game.”

The two squads also faced each other in the last two Western Mass. Class D championship matches.

The 2024 contest was scoreless until the shootout where the Lady Rams pulled out a 4-2 win. Granby won last year’s game by the score of 2-0.

They also met during the PVSSL regular season in the middle of July. Granby posted a 5-0 victory.

It was Hopkins (11-1-1), who also had a few players from Amherst High School, only set back of the summer league season.

“They were missing a couple of players the first time that we played them,” White added. “We really wanted to win today’s game.”

The other players listed on the Granby roster are Marcela Tapia, McKenna Cudworth, Bri-Anne Kraus, Sofia Marsh, Brenna Moreno, Makayla Dennis, Margaret Healey, Sophia Labonte, Caroline Koziol, Olivia Heroux, Emily Durham, Kara White, Meredith Bartosz, Sophia Press, Eleanor Szlosek, Kaelynn Slapski, Sophia White, Lily Los, Savannah, Kraus, Leighton Ladas, Madison Scheinost, Carli Zobka, Kaylee Vincelette, and Alexa Nai.

“We have a bunch of talented soccer players on this team,” Kalli White said. “We’re hoping to win the state title after making it to the final four last year. If it does happen, it’ll be a dream come true for us.”

Granby advanced into the PVSSL B-Division finals after defeating the eighth-seeded Falcons, 6-0, in the quarterfinals and another 3-0 shutout against Frontier in the semifinals.

The PVSSL B-Division finals was scoreless until late



Goalie Meredith Bartosz leaps for save opportunity.

in the first half.

Granby took a 1-0 half-time lead when Healey blasted a free kick from the top of the box into the right corner of the net.

Hanna scored the equalizer with unassisted goal four minutes into the second half.

With a little more than ten minutes remaining in regulation, a shot attempt from Kalli White clanged off the crossbar.

Kraus and Zumburski also had shots on goal, but the score remained tied until Hanna netted the game winning goal on a deflected shot in overtime.

Following the championship match, Hanna was given the M.V.P. award.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Lily Los competes against an opponent for possession.



Eleanor Szlosek watches her pass head up the field.

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TITLE from page 6

time playing in this league and I’m looking forward to playing again next year.”

Giroud is also a member of the Skidmore College men’s soccer team.

The men’s finals was scoreless at halftime.

Mount Carmel broke the ice four minutes into the second half.

The scoring play began with a crossing pass from Joao Miranda to Deandrae Brown, who fired a shot from the top of the box past Rumbleseat goalie Luke Theroux.

Miranda was selected as the M.V.P. following the match.

About ten minutes later, Perham scored a goal, which was assisted by Brown.

“It just felt awesome to score a goal in the cham-



Jake Durham plays the ball off his toe.

pionship game,” Perham said. “We took control of the game at the start of the second half. We had another great season.”

Perham has been a member of Villa/Mount Carmel for the past four years.

“I’m very happy for Mason,” Bourget said. “He began playing with us the year after he graduated from Minnechaug. We also have a couple of other Minnechaug players on our team. We have a bunch of talented players on this team.”

The other former Minnechaug soccer players listed on the Mount Carmel roster are Kyle Atkin, Nick Cianflone, Chase Henderson, and Cam Rigney.

The members of the Mount Carmel FC are hoping to make it a four-peat in the summer of 2027.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Deandrae Brown dribbles away from a defender.



Shane Sewell sends a pass away.

LADIES from page 6

ary head coach Nundi Gonçalves at Minnechaug. They are Emily Howard, Gabby Rita, Lylah Jeannotte, Chapin Jeannotte, Gaby Williams, and Claire Poindexter.

One of the West Side Sports Shop starters in the championship match was Mallory Pereira, who graduated from Ludlow High School.

Julianna Beaulieu, who graduated from Chicopee Comp, was selected as the M.V.P. of the women’s championship game.

“I never expected to be the M.V.P. of this game, but I knew we could win another championship title,” Beaulieu said. “I’ve now won three championships with this team, which is very special. It’s been a lot of fun playing soccer for this team.”

Beaulieu, who played both basketball and soccer at Utica University, scored a pair of goals in the finals.

She got things rolling during the 16th minute of the opening half by putting a shot into the back of the net past goalie Madison Harmon.

“Once the ball left my foot, I knew it was going into the net,” Beaulieu said. “It



set the tone for the rest of the game.”

The Xtremes, who went 10-1-0 during the regular season, had an opportunity to tie the score during the 27th minute. Gianna Sakowski, who also graduated from Minnechaug, fired a shot on goal, which sailed high over the crossbar.

Beaulieu scored her second goal early in the second half.

Sara Avery, who was the West Side Sports Shop starting goalie, didn’t have to make very many saves in recording the shutout. Avery lives in Belchertown and she graduated from the MacDuf-

fie School. She’ll be a senior on the AIC women’s soccer team this fall.

The members of the West Side Sports Shop will be looking to win another PVSSL championship title next summer.



Chapin Jeannotte takes the ball up the sideline.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Julianna Beaulieu sends a pass away.

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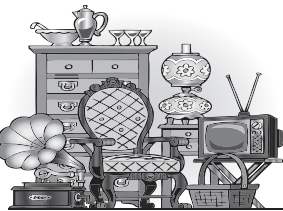
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2021 Kia K5

5XXG14J26MG022396 Kenisha Davis 216 Westover Dr., Apt 6E Hattiesburg MS 39402

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2005 Audi A6 VIN: WAUDG74F15N080548 Amillion Sanchez 767 Chicopee St., Apt 1 Chicopee MA 01013

2009 Honda Accord VIN: 1HGCP267X9A125301 Jasmin Torres 19 Quirk Ave Holyoke MA 01040

2010 Nissan Altima VIN: 1N4BL2AP1AN473732 Jacqueline Sanchez 40 Woodside Ter., Apt 4 Springfield MA 01108

2013 Jeep Wrangler VIN: 1C4AJWAG1DL591654 Carmen Soto-Fontanez 26 Gardner Rd Chicopee MA 01013

2009 Acura RDX VIN: 5J8TB18289A003157 Jarileemari Opio Bonilla 170 Hampshire St., Apt 3R Holyoke MA 01040

2008 Hyundai TUCSON VIN: KM8JN12D28U910423 Sherley Cardona Ferrer 25 Laurence St Springfield MA 01104

2012 Chevrolet Impala VIN: 2G1WB5E38C1208147 Anthony Bettencourt 190 Earle St., Apt 3E New Bedford MA 02746

2008 Mercedes-Benz C-Class VIN: WDDGF81X38F175512 Kimberly Quinones 92 Rivers Ave., Apt 3 Chicopee MA 01013

2012 Audi A6 VIN: WAUDFAFCXCXN116611 Junior Kernagham

107 Ashley Ave., Apt A W. Springfield MA 01089

2014 Buick Encore VIN: KL4CJHSB5EB602969 Owner Unknown

2018 Ford Transit Connect VIN: NM0LS7E79J1380809 Nicholas Lentocha 27 Farmstead Ln Glastonbury CT 06033

2006 Kia Sedona VIN: KNDMB233366029639 Heriberto Miranda Viera 142 Montague Rd Leverett MA 01054

08/07, 08/14, 08/21/2026

TOWN OF SOUTH HADLEY PLANNING BOARD NOTICE OF HYBRID PUBLIC HEARING

Proposed Amendments to the Zoning Bylaw Regarding Agricultural Uses

The South Hadley Planning Board will hold a hybrid public hearing on **Monday, September 14, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.** to discuss proposing articles to Town Meeting for the purpose of amending the Zoning Bylaw to repeal and replace § 255-25 “Agricultural, Horticultural and Floricultural Uses” with “Agricultural Uses Accessory to Residential Use”; repeal and replace § 255-26 “Stables and Riding Academies” with “Commercial Agricultural Uses”; amend § 255-10 to insert new definitions related to agricultural and related uses; amend § 255-24 regarding Accessory Uses and Buildings; amend § 255-41 regarding Outdoor Recreation Facilities; and amend the Zoning Use Schedule as relevant. These amendments seek to address inconsistencies within the Zoning Bylaw and ensure compliance with agricultural use protections identified under MGL Chapter 40A, Section 3; along with other relevant amendments.

The public hearing will be held through hybrid format with in-person attendance to be located in the multipurpose room of the South Hadley Senior Center, 45 Dayton Street South Hadley MA 01075. Virtual attendance will be hosted through the log-in information below:

URL to join: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89989664296?pwd=Fi6hkH1SrTiQ4facFj9ZJ9bSJsbjS.1>

Or join by phone: +1 (309) 205 3325 **Webinar ID:** 899 8966 4296 **Passcode:** 281320

The current drafts of the proposed bylaws and any accompanying documentation can be found here: <https://www.southhadley.org/1318/ProposedDraft-Bylaws>. Alternatively, hard-copies of the documents can be viewed at the Planning & Conservation Department Office (Room U6) in Town Hall. Any person interested in, or wishing to be heard, should appear/join the hearing at the time and in the manner designated.

Brad Hutchison, Clerk
South Hadley Planning Board
08/07, 08/14/2026

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BOARD from page 1

covered and buried from animals getting in there.”

Gilman also reported they hired a professional pest control company to come out and handle the situation, as well as treating the area with bait boxes “every other week.” He also revealed the company was using “non-secondary poisoning” to control the issue.

“They’re using rat-ex,” Gilman said. “It basically just dries the animal out, so there’s no secondary poisoning.”

Gilman asserted all of their material was “covered with tarps every night” and concluded the company had “done a lot to improve the situation.” He went on further to argue against the letter’s

CAMERA from page 1

tion of the violation. It’s going to take a picture of your license plate.”

Reported cases will be transmitted to Bus Patrol, who will look at the data, identify the footage and transfer it over to the police department to verify. Should the record be verified as a violation, a written warning will be issued and a violation will be sent in the mail to the perpetrator. Baran stressed the registered vehicle owner will be responsible for the citation.

Bus Patrol representative Michael Gorman was remote during the meeting to answer questions. During his introduction, he stated there were 43 million cars which didn’t stop as the arm was extended. He cited the rise in traffic violations stemmed from the sheer number of cars populating the streets, which enabled drivers to become more reckless.

“This is how these laws get broken,” Gorman said. “With cars coming in and out, not paying attention, rushing off to college, rushing off to work.”

POLICY from page 1

one, right? It’s hard for them to do one hour of community service once they lock into a project, it’s nice to have them for a good amount of time.”

The new policy gave students either one or two weeks to complete the compulsory service, with the encouragement to complete multiple hours at a time once the project started. However, she noted some students wouldn’t complete it and some were “intentionally skipping.”

“It’s hard to track that too,” Jordan said. “And we get it. It’s a lot. It puts it on the parent, guardian, caregivers to come to school and pick up the kids. But we’re always flexible and worked with the students.”

Jordan stated the amount of community service matched the amount of total infractions. At 15 tardies, however, she mentioned they would “lock into a Saturday school” punishment for the student, as well as for 20 tardiness marks.

Saturday school blocks are four hours in length and Jordan mentioned if the student was unable to attend Saturday school, they were instead offered an after-school make up class. However, Jordan noticed in those cases, students intentionally skipped classes to avoid the Saturday school punishment.

“Interestingly enough, we

all parties agreed they didn’t want the issue to escalate into a civil lawsuit, they agreed to work together to mitigate the problem.

The Board of Health also stated they would have two weeks to research a solution to the problem, with the Board pledging to also do their own independent research. They scheduled a hearing in two weeks to compare notes and resolve the issue.

“If you want to bring your lawyers to the hearing, that would be fine,” Shaheen said. “Let’s come up with a game plan in two weeks and set it into motion and everyone is going to be happy. We’ve got to mitigate this problem because someone’s going to get hurt, someone’s going to get sued and it’s not going to be nice.”

According to Gorman, the camera system’s pilot program started in 2024 in Peabody and Salem. The initial goal was to “point out the fact that this is a real problem” and to offer a solution an issue rampant in Massachusetts.

“The simple fact of the matter is Massachusetts, for four years running, has the worst drivers in America,” Gorman said. “That’s just fact. Peabody and Salem proved a very valid point. 977 cars did not stop in Peabody in three months on seven buses; just seven buses.”

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CLUES ACROSS

- Midway between south and southeast
- Fathers
- Wine grape
- Al Bundy’s wife
- Derived from ammonia
- Venezuelan state
- Interest rate
- Experts
- Vascular tissues
- Smooth and glossy
- Administrative region in S. Korea
- One from Damascus
- Special interest group
- It cools your home
- Oh, God!
- Intestinal pouches
- Men
- Twelfth star in a constellation
- Former CIA
- Arrange in grades of size

41. A baglike structure in a plant or animal

42. “The Great Lakes State”

43. Having earlike appendages

44. Momentarily stop

46. Ancient kingdom

49. Of I

50. White clerical vestment

51. Songs to one’s beloved

55. Charges

58. Computer application originator

59. A place to dock a boat

60. One guided by reason

64. Slang for cigarette

65. Sailboats

66. “Jerry Maguire” actor Zellweger

67. Screen type

68. Country legend Haggard

69. Puts together in time

70. When you anticipate arriving

CLUES DOWN

- Involuntary muscular contraction
- Eastern US transit agency
- Leaves a place
- Cease to participate
- Current units
- Cease to exist
- General’s assistant (abbr.)
- Earth vibration
- Very strong winds
- For each one
- A bog
- The creation of beautiful or significant things
- Affirmative
- Pie __ mode
- Nonclerical
- Indonesian island
- Educational environment
- Namibian peoples
- Bring out or develop

31. Moves into a place of thought

32. Out of the way

34. Loads a ship

35. Beloved Hollywood alien

36. Distinguishes

40. The ancient Egyptian sun god

41. Secondary or explanatory title

45. Relating to a wing

47. One who gives a speech

48. In the middle

52. Loop with a running knot

53. Airborne (abbr.)

54. Sweet persons

56. Put into play

57. Small cattle breed

59. Millisecond

60. Revolutions per minute

61. They __

62. Moon crater

63. A place to stay the night

Blue Sox celebrate Polish Heritage Night at Mackenzie

By **Brendan Rooney**
Correspondent

CHICOPEE/HOLYOKE — The Valley Blue Sox hosted the 2nd annual ‘Polish Heritage Night’ in tandem with the Polish Center of Discovery and Learning (PCDL) and Bernat’s Deli, on the grounds of Mackenzie Stadium on July 31, and it was well worth the price of admission.

From a live rendition of the Polish National Anthem playing over the intercom, to the budding unison of all generations echoing the ballad, as two young volunteers held the Polish flag, adorned in patterns of porcelain white and crimson red, forever glistening in the spotlight as cameras watched on, to a triumphant playoff-clinching victory on the final day of the season for the Blue Sox, it was clear this was one to night remember.

Offering insight into how

the event came together was PCDL President and Board Chair Joanne Gruszkos, who revealed the reasoning was quite simple.

“The Polish Center was thinking of a way to gather families of Polish descent and offer a night of entertainment and fun, while also being budget-friendly, and so we decided, ‘Why not do a baseball game’ in the local area,” Gruszkos said. “So we decided to reconnect with the Valley Blue Sox and expand on the blueprint and success we gathered from last year’s inaugural event, while also getting Bernat’s in the loop as well, and that’s how the idea of having a VIP tent came into focus, and we couldn’t be happier with the turnout, and we hope this continues to get bigger from here on out as we continue to grow.”

Gruszko added that she extends the invitation to all to



The Valley Blue Sox lineup and staff look on as the Polish anthem is played.

Turley Photos by Brendan Rooney

stop by the PCDL, citing the vast wealth of history and the abundance of Polish culture, perfectly displayed and honored.

“If you haven’t been to the [Polish Center], I recommend you do, because it’s a beautiful and well-crafted exhibit and showcase that’s worth visiting, because the truth is so much of our history relates to every culture, and we would love to share that with everyone, even if you are Polish or not,” she said.

Those who attended the special tailgate were treated to a full buffet of Polish classics, such as reverse Golumbki’s, Kielbasa with Peppers & Onions, among other specialties, along with refreshments, and a traditional specialty cocktail featuring V1 Vodka, courtesy of Bernat’s owner Greg Bernat, who was on site and helped serve; according to consensus gathered, the food was one of the main highlights throughout the evening, with many sharing at times, “This was the best thing I’ve ever eaten, and an-

other sharing, “this tastes just like home.”

Bernat said, “I love this event, and it’s one of my favorites, from the atmosphere at the ballpark to the sense of community; I couldn’t think of anywhere else to be.”

Echoing similar sentiments was Blue Sox general manager Brandon Seymour.

“This event is always a bona fide success, and I can confirm we look forward to hosting this yearly, and it’s quickly become one of my favorite nights of the year at the ballpark,” Seymour said. He then pivoted to discuss the impact that the Blue Sox organization provides in terms of community involvement.

“Our presence in the community is huge, from hosting our youth clinics to making appearances in the schools with our newly added “Pages to Paws” program, which was a pilot program we introduced this year that was focused on helping kids generate interest in reading within the school district, and due to its success, that’s becoming a perennial

event as well,” he added.

Seymour then closed his thoughts by sharing how he felt this season was one to remember.

“And I feel this has been a tremendous season overall, and we couldn’t be happier, and now that we have reached this newfound point of success, we only feel it’s natural to keep raising the bar from here on out, and finding new ways to strengthen our fan-base and connection with the community,” Seymour said.

“As of this story being published, it should be known that the Valley Blue Sox’s season came to an end earlier this month on Aug. 2 after a 14-5 postseason loss to the Sanford Mainers in Game 2

of the opening round of the NECBL(New England Collegiate Baseball League) Playoffs.

Looking ahead

Also, note that the Polish Center is hosting ‘Cigar Night’ at the Rumbleseat Bar & Grille next week on Thursday, Aug. 20 in Chicopee. The event is sponsored by Bernat’s Polish Deli and Cigar Room II, and tickets are going fast and can be purchased at the Polish Center.

They are \$80 per ticket, and with it you get a premium cigar from the Cigar Room II, a beverage of your choice, access to the free Golf Simulator, and a signature buffet. The event runs from 6 to 9 p.m.”



(l-r) Olen Bielski III, Polish Center of Discovery and Learning Director of Business Development, with Ward 9 Chicopee Councilor Mary Beth-Pniak Costello and Greg Bernat, owner of Bernat’s Deli.

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