

TOWN Reminder

FREE
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Serving the town of South Hadley

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Retiring District 1 Fire Chief honored

By Nick Boonstra
Staff Writer
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SOUTH HADLEY – Fire District 1 Chief Robert Authier was recognized last Friday in honor of his retirement after over three decades in the fire service.

Authier joined Fire District 1 as Chief in January 2011, after having served as Deputy Chief for Holyoke Fire from 2005. He began his career as a firefighter in 1991.

Interim District 1 Fire Chief Tom Stark remarked that Authier had made a significant impact in South Hadley and beyond, and was stepping forward into a well-deserved next chapter of his life. “We’re certainly going to miss him,” Stark said.

State Senator Jake Oliveira of the Hampden, Hampshire and Worcester District presented Authier with a citation from the Massachusetts Senate, and thanked him for his lengthy service to the public.

“These are often thankless jobs,” Oliveira said. “Whether you’re a firefighter, whether you’re a police officer, whether you’re an EMT, whether you’re a schoolteacher – you are the essential functions of government.”

Town Administrator Lisa Wong expressed how impressed she was with just how many hats Authier had to wear in his role as District 1 Chief, juggling duties such as managing personnel, writing grants and ordering equipment alongside the work of keeping the public safe. She also presented Authier with a certificate on behalf of the town in recognition of his years of service.

Hadley Fire Chief Mike Spanknebel spoke on behalf of the Hampshire County Fire Chiefs, highlighting Authier’s



District 1 Fire Chief Robert Authier, left, accepts a plaque from incoming interim Fire Chief Tom Stark.

record of consistently serving not only South Hadley itself, but the surrounding communities as well.

“You always answered the phone,” said Spanknebel, who also presented Authier with a congratulatory certificate.

East Longmeadow Fire Chief Paul Morrissette gifted Authier a bugle on behalf of the Western Massachusetts Fire Chiefs Association, a traditional token of gratitude for retiring chiefs with over five years of service to the region.

State Fire Marshal Jon Davine was also in attendance to congratulate Authier and wish him well in his retirement.

Fire District 1 currently has

Please see **CHIEF**, page 6



Town Administrator Lisa Wong presented Fire Chief Robert Authier with a certificate from the town.

Turley Photos by Paula Ouimette

Capital Planning looks at big ticket items

By Tina Lesniak
Correspondent

SOUTH HADLEY – At its Jan. 4 meeting, South Hadley’s capital planning committee continued its work looking at what big-ticket items the town will need to purchase or fund in fiscal year 25.

Among those with the biggest price tags are the needs of the department of public works, town hall, wastewater treatment plant and the schools.

Although somewhat improved, the moisture issues at South Hadley High School continue to need mitigation. The committee discussed a request to spend \$125,000 to replace the carpet in the library and guidance suite with one that doesn’t allow moisture to come up through the floor.

There is also money needed for HVAC control automation.

“We’ve done a lot of improvements with the drainage there,” explained Scott Moore, facilities director for the town. He noted that there is still more work to be done.

The schools will seek a grant to build emergency exit access up to the fields. The cost for the project is estimated to be \$350,000 and is needed so that all students and faculty can safely exit the rear of the building in case of an emergency.

The recreation department is also hoping to build a new concession stand and restrooms at the high school’s turf field which would run about \$400,000.

Please see **CAPITAL PLANNING**, page 6

Music trip proposal approved

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

SOUTH HADLEY – The School Committee met to discuss updates for the end of the 2023-2024 school year and beginning of the 2024-2025 school year.

The Jan. 4 meeting included Chair Eric Friesner, Vice-Chair Danielle Cooke, Daniel Vieu, Assistant Superintendent Jenn Voyik, Student Representative Tobias Smith, and Superintendent Mark McLaughlin.

Disney/Universal trip

The band and music department submitted a proposal for a trip this coming December to Disney or Universal. A vote from the committee was required be-

fore the go for fundraising could begin.

Smith spoke up about how fundraising works. “In the past, we have done fundraisers in both the spring and summer.”

Vieu asked about gifts or sponsorship from the community, and Voyik seconded the idea and added that gifts could be given with specifics in a letter.

The committee moved to accept the proposed 2024 band trip and to change the name to be the South Hadley High School Music Trip to encompass the choir and band groups.

SHEA update

Amy Foley, president of the South Hadley Education Association, provided updates for SHEA and news for upcoming students.

She talked about how the second grade hosted holidays tradition stroll the Wednesday before break, completed activities at home about how they will spend their winter break. The drama program put on a successful performance of “The Christmas Carol”, and in March will put on “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Coat”.

Foley remarked about the rise of sicknesses everywhere, and resulting extended absences of teachers and students, as well as a substitute shortage.

“Students and staff are most successful in these situations when there is effective communication between schools and families,” Foley said. “This communication will be essential over

Please see **TRIP**, page 3

Human Rights Commission announces new DEIB training

By Emily-Rose Pappas
Staff Writer
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SOUTH HADLEY – The Human Rights Commission met to discuss several new matters including updates to work in town, as well as a new addition to serve the community.

At the Jan. 3 meeting, the commission announced a new training for diversity, equity, and inclusion to be announced to the public and other boards.

DEI Training

The board brought forth a

scope for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training.

The description of the scope reads: “The Town of South Hadley is seeking proposals from qualified vendors to provide training for Department Heads and board members on foundational concepts on diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB)”

The board expresses its desire for people to take these trainings in order to discover ways to respond to issues such as systemic racism, microaggressions, implicit or uncon-

Please see **RIGHTS**, page 5

Community

Council on Aging lists upcoming events

SOUTH HADLEY – The town’s Council on Aging has announced upcoming events at the Senior Center, 45 Dayton St., for the week of Jan. 15-19.

Monday, Jan. 15

The Senior Center is closed in recognition of Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Tuesday, Jan. 16

11:30 a.m. Big Y shopping trip. Please call 413-538-5030 and reserve a seat in our van.

3:30 p.m. Sustainable Fashion Upcycling. Give your wardrobe a new look. Petula will teach the ancient traditions of patching, Sashiko sticking, cutting, reshaping, and stitching techniques. Some sewing materials are provided. Get ready for our Fashion Show in the Spring.

4:30 p.m. Diversity Dinner. Space is limited for this free event. The South Hadley High School Culinary Department under the direction of Chef Adam Popp present a diner of Puerto Rican cuisine, with cooking collaboration from local chefs.

5:30 p.m. Bomba De Aquí,

a music company that performs and teaches Afro-Puerto Rican traditions throughout western Massachusetts and central Connecticut. Directed by Brendaliz Cepeda and her husband Rafael Cepeda.

Wednesday, Jan. 17

9 a.m.-noon Tech Time with Sandy by appointment

9:30 a.m. Oil and Acrylic Paint. A free and new program. Bring your supplies and projects to this class. Christiane will offer assistance and guidance.

12:20 p.m. Fitness Room Orientation. Mandatory - no cost. You must complete your application and your fitness room orientation before using the Fitness Center. Applications are available at the Welcome Desk.

2 p.m. Social with MacDuffie School. Learn Chinese Mahjong with the students and join them for a cookie social.

Thursday, Jan. 18

9 a.m.-noon Tech Time with Sandy by appointment.

11 a.m. Pet therapy with Ri-

ley
1 p.m. Public Health Nurse (please note, this office is on hiatus until March)

Friday, Jan. 19

8:30 a.m. Gentleman’s Breakfast - free

9:30 a.m. Watercolor Bootcamp. Tina is offering a “Boot Camp” for beginners which will focus on techniques unique to watercolor.

10:30 a.m. Genealogy (limit of 12 participants). Pat will be available to assist you in your own Genealogy journey. Bring your research material including a laptop or tablet.

12:30 p.m. Walmart shopping trip. Please call 413-538-5030 and reserve a seat in our van.

1 p.m. Germany in the 21st Century. Donna VanHandle, recently retired professor of German studies at Mount Holyoke College offers an overview of the political and cultural climate in present-day German. Including Germany’s challenging past, it’s effect on life today and Germanys’ role within the EU.

Sunderland man dies after being struck by car

HADLEY – A 33-year-old Sunderland man, Melvin L. Wilson, died Saturday, Jan. 6 after he was struck by a car while walking along the edge of Route 116, a divided highway, heading south, around 5:30 a.m., according to a press release from the office of Northwestern District Attorney David E. Sullivan.

Hadley Police, State Police attached to the Northwestern District Attorney’s Office and

Emergency Services personnel responded to the scene after the driver of the vehicle, a 29-year-old Deerfield woman, called 911 after the collision occurred.

When police and fire personnel arrived on scene, they discovered that a pedestrian had been struck by a motor vehicle and was unresponsive. Responders immediately began medical care.

The victim was transported to Cooley Dickinson Hospital

in Northampton where he later died.

The crash remains under investigation by the Hadley Police Department, State Police attached to the Northwestern District Attorney’s Office, State Troopers assigned to the Crime Scene Services Collision Analysis and Collision Analysis and Reconstruction sections, and the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner.

Lisa Wong’s

• WEEKLY WRAP UP •

Annual Town Census mailed to residents

SOUTH HADLEY – 2024 Annual Town Census has been mailed to residents. Review both sides carefully, sign and return to the Town Clerk’s office even if there are no changes to ensure you are on the active voter list.

Dog licenses are also part of the form.

Upcoming meeting

The Selectboard’s next hybrid meeting will be on Tuesday, Jan. 16 at the Senior Center. Details will be posted on the website’s (www.southhadley.org) agenda center.

Master Plan forum

Sign up now for the annual Master Plan forum for town employees, board and committee members on Jan. 12 at the library. Please email acapra@southhadley.ma.

Nomination papers

If you are interested in running for local office and took out nomination papers from the Town Clerk’s deadline, please note that you must return them by Tuesday, Jan. 16 by 5 p.m. for signature certification. For more information, call 413-538-5030, extension 6183

District No. 1 Fire Chief application

The deadline to submit an application for the position of Fire Chief Fire District No. 1 Town of South Hadley is Wednesday, Jan. 24. Qualified and interested candidates should send a cover letter and a resume (including three professional references) in a single PDF document to wsampson@publicsafetyllc.com no later than noon on Jan. 24.

Third quarter real estate/ personal property bills mailed

SOUTH HADLEY – Fiscal year 2024 third quarter real estate and personal property bills were mailed out to residents on Dec. 29, 2023.

The due date for the real estate and personal property bills is Feb. 1.

If you have not received your bills, please email the Treasurer/Collector’s office at collector@southhadley.ma.

gov or call 413-538-5030, extension 6189 and office staff can mail out a new bill.

Bills can be paid online through the Town of South Hadley’s website, southhadley.ma.gov, by mail, dropped in the drop box located behind the Police Department on Bridge Street or in person Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

WILBRAHAM & MONSON ACADEMY TITAN TALKS

Join us for coffee and conversation to learn more about WMA’s programs and community.



MIDDLE SCHOOL

(families interested in grades 6-8)

Tue., Jan. 23, 9 - 10 a.m.

UPPER SCHOOL

(families interested in grades 9-12, PG)

Thu., Jan. 25, 8 - 9 a.m.

RSVP: www.wma.us/TitanTalks

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Harmony House hosts open houses for new volunteers

CHICOPEE – Harmony House of Western Massachusetts is continuing to invite potential volunteers to stop in at a volunteer recruitment event to learn more about its services and to tour the new home at 66 View St.

Harmony House of Western Massachusetts is a home for the terminally ill. After closing its original home in 2019 and purchasing a house in the Aldenville section of Chicopee for renovation, COVID-19 struck, and the plans were on hold for a time.

After a massive reconstruction, Harmony House is planning on reopening in the near future in its beautiful new home. Opportunities exist for direct health care professionals, home health aides, people who enjoy visiting with others, cooking, cleaning, yard work, administrative help, fundraising, and more.

Whether it's a few hours a week or a few hours a month, Harmony House is a welcoming place for people looking to help people.

There are two open houses scheduled. The first is Saturday, Jan. 13 from 10 a.m.-noon the second will be on Wednesday, Jan. 31 from 10 a.m.-noon.

Current volunteers and members of the Board of Directors will be available to answer questions. Please stop by either



Submitted Photo

Harmony House of Western Massachusetts, located at 66 View St., Chicopee is hosting open houses for new volunteers on Saturday, Jan. 13 and Wednesday, Jan. 31.

days at your convenience; it is not necessary to confirm your attendance.

About Harmony House

Harmony House is a local, nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide a loving home providing compassionate care for the terminally ill who have limited or no resources for special care in their final stages of life. Harmony House is primarily staffed by trained volunteers including licensed nurses, caregivers, companions, and others.

If interested in learning more or becoming a volunteer, please contact Harmony House by calling 413-315-9784 or by emailing harmonyhousewma@gmail.com.



Submitted Photo

Happy New Year and Happy Birthday!

Elliot James Krason was the first baby born at Cooley Dickinson Hospital in Northampton in the new year. Parents Sarah Jeanne Boyle and Christopher Michael Krason welcomed Elliot, who was born at 5:14 a.m. and weighed 6 pounds, 8.1 ounces and was 20 inches long. Elliot is the first grandchild on both sides of his family, and he shares his birthday with his father's twin sisters who were born on New Year's Day as well.

TRIP from page 1

the next couple of weeks as we know to expect an increase in absences."

Representative updates

Smith provided information about the high school's midterms schedule which will run from Jan. 16-19 on half days. Smith said that students wanting to receive lunch before they go, need to sign-up.

The school will be holding English Language Arts Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System review sessions every Monday in room 517, as well as science MCAS tutoring on Thursdays in room 310.

On Jan. 5, the middle school held their Snowball Dance.

SHHS teachers can shadow students for a day to see what it's like for a student. Last semester, and continuing in the spring, the robotics class will be learning about gears.

The family consumer sciences made a delicious sauce before the break, and the eighth grade in math classes finished lessons about graphing scales and profit. They also began to create their DC calendars. The advisory classes finished their name projects, which are now hanging in the halls.

Cooke announced that a seat on the Human Rights Commission is now open. The HRC is looking for an appointee for the Commission on Disabilities. Interested individuals can email [Silveira at tayscod@gmail.com](mailto:Silveira@tayscod@gmail.com) for more information.

McLaughlin talked about an appreciation for the appearance of the Nutcracker-

appearances at the opening and close of the day at all four schools.

"It was super fun to see, and whoever it was, we are really grateful and appreciate the way that that has ended the school year before Christmas," he said.

Therapy dog policy and pronoun use

McLaughlin talked first about making a New Years Resolution to ensure that pronouns are accepted and addressed with care towards the individual mentioned.

He also said that a handler with his/her/their therapy dog will follow the rules and expectations set by the superintendent.

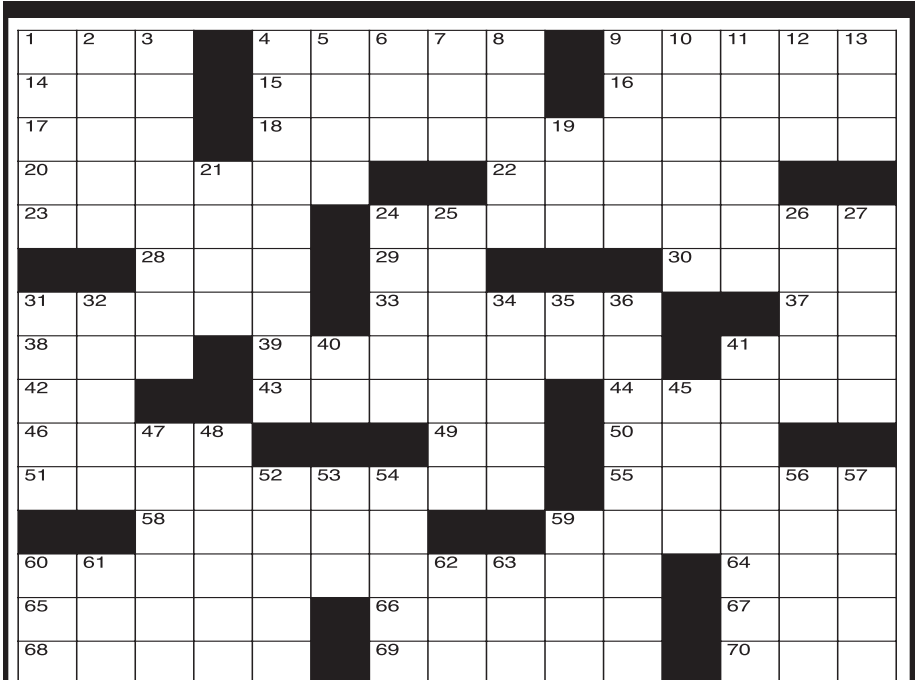
Policy updates on school meals

Universal Free School Meals has made changes to policies so that school meals will be free to all students. Voyik provided an update on how the update will be implemented in order to comply with the new laws about free school meals.

"The school committee is committed to providing students with healthy and nutritious meals each day so that they can focus on school work while maintaining the financial integrity of meal programs and to ensure compliance with federal reporting requirements of the USDA Child Nutrition Program," Voyik said.

The district is going to supply one free breakfast and one free lunch per school day. Any additional meals or extra food will have to be paid for by parents or guardians.

Further updates can be found on the school website, www.southhadleyschools.org, for further explanation of how these free meals will work.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Defensive nuclear weapon
- 4. Moved back and forth
- 9. One-time coach of the Cowboys
- 14. Last letter
- 15. Cause to become less intense
- 16. Genus of tree bugs
- 17. Body art
- 18. Romance novelist
- 20. Be filled with love for
- 22. City
- 23. Make vivid
- 24. Horses
- 28. Mauna __, Hawaiian volcano
- 29. Atomic #18
- 30. Shortly
- 31. A type of prejudice
- 33. Whirls
- 37. Six
- 38. Old world, new
- 39. __ Hess, oil company
- 41. Talk
- 42. Not off
- 43. Begets
- 44. Cars need them
- 46. Computing architecture (abbr.)
- 49. Of I
- 50. Journalist, activist Wells
- 51. Takes apart
- 55. Lists
- 58. Positively charged electrode
- 59. Hard, colorless compound
- 60. Inflammation of the peritoneum
- 64. Trent Reznor's band
- 65. Simply dry fruit
- 66. "Ivanhoe" author
- 67. Google certification
- 68. French commune
- 69. Medieval circuit courts
- 70. Soviet Socialist Republic

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Indigenous people of Mexico
- 2. Dietary supplement
- 3. Having a particular sheen or luster
- 4. Views
- 5. Academic Bill of Rights
- 6. Automobile
- 7. When you anticipate arriving
- 8. Beef or chicken intestine
- 9. Conspiracy
- 10. Blood disorder
- 11. Long-time NBAer Shawn
- 12. Time zone
- 13. US, Latin America, Canada belong to
- 19. Upton Sinclair novel
- 21. What a cow does
- 24. Cavalry-sword
- 25. Ancient Greek war galley
- 26. Stars
- 27. Rebukes
- 31. Billion year periods
- 32. Some are in a bottle
- 34. Tears down
- 35. Lethal dose
- 36. Humorists
- 40. Midwestern US state (abbr.)
- 41. Frameworks
- 45. Rocker Billy
- 47. More thin
- 48. Dog
- 52. Habitual repetitions
- 53. State of fuss
- 54. Uneasy
- 56. Chemical compounds
- 57. More cognizant of reality
- 59. A place to build
- 60. Exclamation that denotes disgust
- 61. Supplement with difficulty
- 62. Very slick
- 63. Hill or rocky peak

NOTICE

ERRORS: Each advertiser is requested to check their advertisement the first time it appears. This paper will not be responsible for more than one corrected insertion, nor will be liable for any error in an advertisement to a greater extent than the cost of the space occupied by the item in the advertisement.

SOUTH HADLEY COUNCIL ON AGING YOUR VIBRANT CENTER

CALL TO REGISTER FOR THIS AMAZING PROGRAM.

Celebrate Unity in Diversity at the COA! Jan. 16th 4:30 p.m.

Get your FREE ticket at The Welcome Desk. South Hadley High School Culinary Dept. under the direction of Chef Adam Popp presents a dinner of Puerto Rican cuisine with cooking collaborations from local Chefs. Performance at 5:30 p.m. by Bomba De Aqui, a music company that performs and teaches Afro-Puerto Rican traditions throughout Western Massachusetts and Central Connecticut!

MONDAY-FRIDAY 8:00 AM-4:30 PM
TUESDAYS UNTIL 7:00 PM 413-538-5030 X3
45 DAYTON STREET, SOUTH HADLEY 01075

Opinion



New questions for the New Year!

Jim, who gardens in Bridgewater, sent this question in to the Garden Lady.

"I liked your article on experimenting with holly seeds. I do some of my own propagating with trees and perennials, so the holly seeds thing was good. My question concerns being dioecious and at what point can one determine male or female? Is there some way to determine sex at an early stage or must I grow a dozen plants for years before I can wean out the males and keep the females? I have read that a single male will successfully pollinate all the females within a half mile radius so finding the females is my goal at the earliest possible stage of growth."

Sadly, the only way to figure out whether you have a male or female holly is by examining the flowers, so yes, that will require growing them on for some time; my research indicates about four to seven years.

The male flowers will have four petals and four stamens where you will see the pollen at the end. Female flowers look very similar except there is a green "bump" in the center of the petals – the ovary, where the berries will form from.

Garden centers usually propagate vegetatively from either male or female plants, so they are not playing the waiting game. Starting hollies from seed is still a fun experiment, time consuming nonetheless.

Dawn was worried that her amaryllis plant was dead. "My amaryllis was originally a Christmas gift. I've enjoyed it for a few years now, but its leaves yellowed, then they withered and died. I'm worried that I killed it!"

As soon as I heard from Dawn, my thoughts went to my own amaryllis, still in my bedroom window despite the fact that its leaves are brown and have fallen around the outside of its pot. I haven't watered it since it started to "decline."

It has sat there in this sorry state for a few weeks now. Never fear, it's likely our bulbs have gone dormant.

This timing is a little off if you think about all of those boxed sets of amaryllis bulbs sitting on store shelves just in time for Christmas giving and planting. Bulb companies can "time" growth stages a little more reliably than we can.

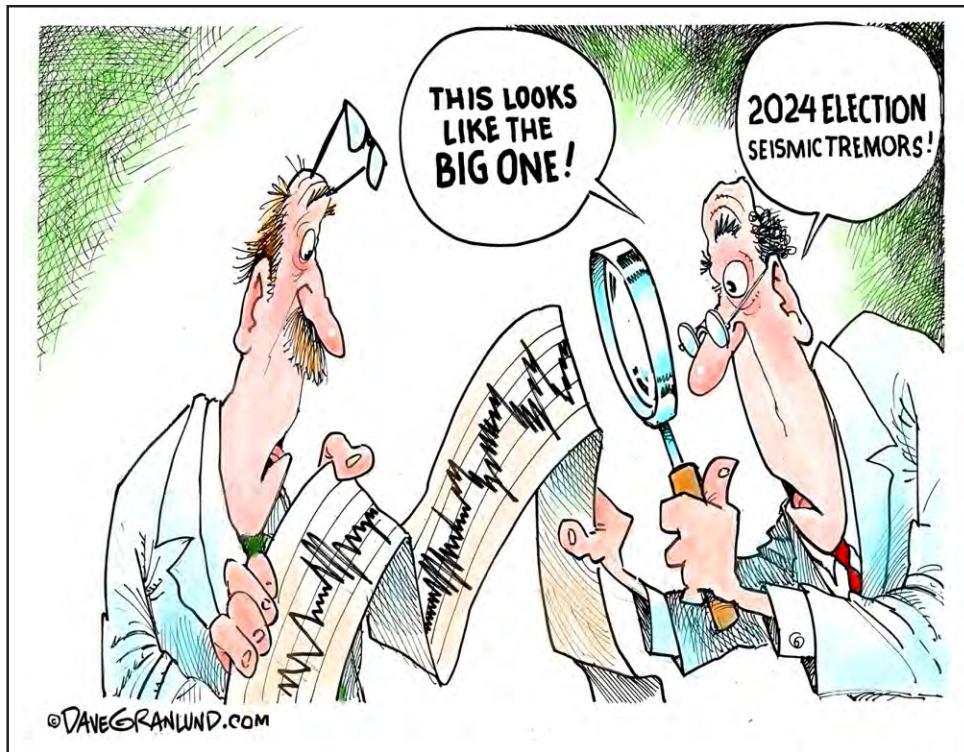
After a month or two of dormancy watering can resume and with good fortune, blooms should reappear in 6-8 weeks. Some experts recommend putting the dormant bulbs in a cool, dark room to rest.

I often move dormant pots of bulbs to my mudroom where temperatures are in the 50s this time of year and when I see green tips on the bulb I bring it back into the living area of my house. Usually regrowth comes, but a flower sometimes doesn't.

In this case, the bulb is likely depleted of nutrients and without enough reserves left for re-bloom. I would recommend watering with an all-purpose plant fertilizer during active growth.

Seed production also diminishes the plant's reserves, so be sure to deadhead the individual flowers as they go by, leaving the stem intact until it yellows. Hopefully these tips will give your amaryllis a few more good years of flowering.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 31 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.



Will my friend's fiancée be entitled to a survivor benefit?

Dear Rusty:

I have a very good friend who has cancer and will begin chemotherapy this week. He is 71 years old and is currently receiving Social Security benefits.

He has been living with his fiancée for a little more than two years, but they have been a couple for about 15 years and will be married in the next few weeks. She is 60 years old.

I am naturally concerned about his and her, future so my questions are:

What, if anything, should he and his wife do to ensure that she gets his Social Security benefits?

What benefits will she be entitled to and how soon will she be able to begin receiving them after his death?

Signed: A Friend with Questions

Dear Friend:

You are kind to be concerned about your friend and his fiancée. Here's what you need to know:

Social Security goes by state rules when it comes to what is often referred to as "common law marriage." That means that whether your friend's fiancée will receive any benefits as a surviving spouse in a "common law" relationship depends on whether they live in a state, which recognizes common law marriage.

Most states do not, but state laws have changed over the years and many states which once recognized such unions as "marriage" no longer do. Although they may have "been a couple" for 15 years, if your friend and his fiancée have been living together for only two it is likely only the last two years will count for Social Security benefit purposes.

So, whether your friend's fiancée will get anything when your friend dies depends on where they live, unless they get married, in which case the rules are different.

In order for a married widow(er) to receive surviving spouse benefits, the couple

must have been married for at least nine months. If they marry and your friend lives longer than nine months thereafter, then his wife will be entitled to a surviving spouse benefit from her husband.

The amount of his wife's benefit will be based upon the amount your friend is receiving at his death, adjusted for her age when she claims her surviving spouse benefit.

A surviving spouse can claim benefits from the deceased as early as age 60, but those benefits will be reduced for claiming before full retirement age (FRA). Taken at age 60, the wife's benefit would be 71.5% of your friend's SS benefit at his death.

The wife need not claim the survivor benefit immediately; she could opt to delay claiming in order to get a higher percentage of the husband's amount. Survivor benefits reach maximum, 100% of the deceased's benefit amount, at the recipient's FRA.

So, if your friend and his fiancée now live in a state which currently recognizes common law marriage (Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Montana, New Hampshire, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Rhode Island or in the District of Columbia), then your friend's partner will be considered his "wife" and entitled to survivor benefits as normal (the fiancée would need to prove they cohabitate in a marriage-like relationship to claim benefits).

If they do not live in one of those states, but they get married and the marriage lasts for at least 9 months, then the wife will be entitled to normal benefits as a surviving spouse as described above.

But if the couple do not live in one of the above states which recognize "common law" relationships or if their soon-to-occur marriage doesn't last at least nine months or if they do not get married, I'm afraid your friend's partner will not be entitled to any survivor benefits from your friend.

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 informational 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.

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.



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GSCWM kick off 2024 Girl Scout Cookie season

HOLYOKE/WORCESTER – Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts kicks off the 2024 Girl Scout Cookie season this weekend, the annual event in which Girl Scouts unbox their futures as young female entrepreneurs through the world’s largest entrepreneurial program for girls.

During this highly anticipated time of the year, girls flex their entrepreneurial muscles and acquire important life skills like money management, team building, public speaking and decision making.

All proceeds from cookie sales stay with the local council and troops to power Girl Scouts’ amazing experiences year-round.

This year’s theme, Unbox the Future, aims to remove social barriers that often keep girls boxed in.

When bold, goal-getting Girl Scouts sell a package of cookies, they’re doing much more than what’s seen at face value. Girl Scouts do more than sell delicious treats—they’re entrepreneurial powerhouses creating a more equitable future for themselves and the world.

Every box of cookies sold provides invaluable experiences for Girl Scouts such as service projects, troop travel and summer camp.

This season, cookie lovers can enjoy the full assortment of Girl Scout Cookies, including fan favorites such as Thin Mints, Samoas, Tagalongs and Do-si-dos as well as Trefoils, Lemon Ups, Adventurefuls,



S’mores, and the gluten-free Toffie-tastic.

Nearly 4,000 girls in central and western Massachusetts participate in the Girl Scout Cookie Program, which provides vital girl-led entrepreneurial skills that build courage, confidence and character. As a result, girls obtain limitless barrier-breaking futures outside the box with transferable life skills.

Girl Scouts can earn a variety of badges and awards to develop valuable business skills including Cookie Business badges, Financial Literacy badges, Cookie Entrepreneur Family pins and Entrepreneur badges.

How to purchase

If you know a registered Girl Scout, reach out to her to find out how she’s selling cookies. If you don’t know a Girl

Scout, check out your local council’s Girl Scout Cookie Finderto find a booth and purchase cookies.

Beginning Feb. 16, customers who do not already know a Girl Scout will also be able to purchase cookies to be shipped directly to their homes by entering their zip code into the Girl Scout Cookie Finder. This link can also be used to find a local booth, purchase cookies and/or to donate cookies for local community causes.

You can also text COOKIES to 59618 to stay informed about how to purchase Girl Scout Cookies and other exciting Girl Scout news. Learn more about the Terms and Conditions and the SMS Privacy Policy.

For more than 100 years, Girl Scouts and their enthusiastic supporters have helped ensure the success of the iconic annual cookie program—and they’ve had fun, developed valuable life skills and made their communities a better place every step of the way. Girl Scout Cookie season in central and western Mass runs mid-January to mid-March.

Girl Scouts in grades K-12 can start their journey to fun, friendship and new experiences by joining the world’s largest entrepreneurial organization for girls at any point in the year. Girls can join and adults can become volunteers at www.girlscouts.org/join.

About GSCWM

Girl Scouts of Central and Western

Massachusetts serves over 5,000 girls in grades kindergarten through 12 with the strong support of over 3,000 adult volunteers in 186 towns and cities in central and western Massachusetts.

The Girl Scout program allows girls to discover the fun, friendship, and power of girls together while building their personal leadership qualities. GSCWM supports girls by giving them extraordinary opportunities to explore, experience, and learn about their world and helps girls recognize that they are vital members of their communities.

To join, volunteer, reconnect, or donate, visit www.gscwm.org.

About the Girl Scout Cookie Program

The Girl Scout Cookie Program is the largest girl-led entrepreneurial program in the world. Not only is the cookie program fun, but it also helps Girl Scouts learn life and leadership skills.

When you buy Girl Scout cookies you are creating opportunities for Girl Scouts to learn, grow, and thrive. From learning how to interact with customers to creating budgets and taking orders, the Girl Scout Cookie Program teaches Girl Scouts invaluable skills that they’ll use to succeed throughout their lives.

Girl Scout Cookie proceeds stay in the community to support local councils and troops.

High levels of radon gas detected in 21.8% of Massachusetts homes

Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer, and the “State of Lung Cancer” report reveals that it is detected at high levels in about 21.8% of homes in Massachusetts.

During January for National Radon Action Month, the American Lung Association in Massachusetts is urging everyone to help save lives by testing their home for radon and mitigating if high levels are detected.

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas emitted from the ground. Radon is odorless, tasteless and colorless, and can enter a home through cracks in floors, basement walls, foundations and

other openings.

Radon can be present at high levels inside homes, schools and other buildings. It is responsible for an estimated 21,000 lung cancer deaths every year and is the leading cause of lung cancer in people who have never smoked.

Here in Massachusetts about 21.8% of radon test results equal or exceed the Environmental Protection Agency action level of 4 pCi/L, according to the Lung Association’s “State of Lung Cancer” report.

“Radon in homes is more common than you think. In fact, high levels of radioactive radon gas have been found in

every state but most places in the country remain undertested, so this isn’t something that should be taken lightly. Exposure to radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States,” said Daniel Fitzgerald, director of advocacy for the Lung Association in a press release. “Testing for radon is the only way to know if the air in your home is safe. The good news is that it is easy to test. Do-it-yourself test kits are simple to use and inexpensive.”

After high levels are detected, a radon professional should install a radon mitigation system, which is easy and relatively affordable. A typical radon mitigation

system consists of a vent pipe, fan and properly sealing cracks and other openings.

This system collects radon gas from underneath the foundation and vents it to the outside. Contact your state radon program for a list of certified professionals in your state. Some state health departments offer financial assistance or low interest loans for radon mitigation.

Learn more about radon testing and mitigation at Lung.org/radon and take the Lung Association’s free Radon Basics course at Lung.org/Radon-Basics.

RIGHTS from page 1

scious bias, and cultural awareness and inclusion.

“We want this to be an organic process,” Town Administrator Lisa Wong said. “We are looking at this as a part of a more complete package, and part of this is figuring out how this fits into a larger ecosystem.”

“Belonging is an important part of the

community,” commission member Tay Silveira, said. The addition of the “B” (belonging) was received positively and included in the acronym.

The idea of providing this training as live webinars or in-person. The board will continue to discuss the trainings and what they will look like for the future.

New clerk

Lori Souder volunteered for the position of becoming the new clerk, while

Dick Matteson will continue on in a new role. The board moved to approve her appointment.

Updates

The committee is also working with the School Committee to create a multi-faith calendar to send out.

“We want to spread that monthly so that we can spread some awareness about other holidays,” Vice-Chair Danielle Cooke said.

Silveira announced that she had been working with the Fire Department to relocate meetings to a more accessible location, which is now in the library.

Silveira said the Buttery Brook project will be moving along with some renovations and changes with the help of the disabilities committee.

The commission is also looking to work with the Master Plan Implementation Committee in future forums to talk about human rights and disabilities.

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Hadley Fire Chief Mike Spanknebel presented Fire Chief Robert Authier with a congratulatory certificate on behalf of the Hampshire County Fire Defense Association.



State Sen. Jake Oliveira presented Fire Chief Robert Authier with a citation from the state Senate.



Fire Chief Robert Authier holds a bugle that was presented to him by East Longmeadow Fire Chief Paul Morrisette on behalf of the Western Massachusetts Fire Chiefs Association.

CHIEF from page 1

26 full-time personnel and 15 call fire-fighters. In 2023, the District responded to over 3,000 total calls, averaging over 8 calls per day.

Authier cited the addition of five personnel to the District as one of his proudest accomplishments in his role as chief.

He also made clear that any impact he may have had on the District was mirrored in the team's impact on him. "As chief, you parent them as your kids," he said of the department, a statement illustrating his prioritization of the growth of his team during his tenure.

One of those new members of the squad was Scott Walsh, a Captain in District 1 who joined the call force in Sept. 2023 after having previously worked with private EMS companies in Holyoke. On his time working with Authier, Walsh said, "It's been a blessing."

District 1 Prudential Committee Chair Bruce Perron said that Authier had been responsible for not only growing the local squad, but also helping a number of chiefs that have come up across the region.

"He's built a base," Perron said, adding, "that base is represented today" around the region. "It's an accolade to his teaching ability."



Turley Photos by Paula Quimette

Staff from South Hadley Fire District 1 stand to recognize their chief on his retirement.

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CAPITAL PLANNING from page 1

At town hall, the focus will be on replacing the old windows with new, energy-efficient ones. Moore expects the cost to be about \$375,000.

"The windows are literally falling apart," explained Moore. "It's going to be a much-needed improvement over what's there."

The department of public works is requesting \$320,000 to replace a current dump/plow/sander vehicle from 2008 and money to replace culverts on Hillside Avenue and Mountain Avenue.

The police department is hoping to replace two vehicles at a cost of about \$135,000.

At the wastewater treatment plant, the biggest cost is expected to be upgrades to the facility itself which will likely total \$8 million. The plant is also looking at a comprehensive management plan for \$150,000 and to replace a vacuum truck from 2000 for about \$650,000.

Moore explained that all of these requests were current to the best of his knowledge but that the situation is always fluid, and requests can and do change frequently as priorities are reassessed.

The Capital Planning Committee intends to focus its discussions department by department in the coming weeks and will invite the heads of those departments to come in and discuss their requests in greater detail.

Several committee members noted the school department's hope to work more closely with the town in terms of their budgets and shared resources. Moore also noted that several of the items on the school's list, including a freezer and ovens, will likely be taken care of out of the school budget without assistance from the town.

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Habitat breaks the mold

Offers affordable homeownership despite rising costs

By Brandice J. O'Brien

SPRINGFIELD – Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity builds houses, but there's so much more to the nonprofit organization.

Greater Springfield Habitat offers the limited-income population of Hampden County an opportunity to create better lives and generational wealth for their families. GSHFH operates using a three-pronged approach as a construction company, social service agency, and mortgage provider.

In fact, Greater Springfield Habitat's construction projects are built despite the rise of inflation, financial challenges, and changes in the local housing market.

GSHFH primarily constructs three- and four-bedroom single-family homes that measure approximately 1,500 square feet. GSHFH helps families purchase homes that they construct in partnership with the organization, by requiring sweat equity contribution in lieu of down payment from partner families and providing low-to-zero-interest mortgages and subsidies to purchase homes at below market rate.

Greater Springfield Habitat mortgages are based on the family's income and set to not exceed 43% of their total household debt when combined with all financial obligations.

"GSHFH works with families that earn 45% to 60% of the area median income level. For a family of four, that's a household income of \$35,000 to \$59,000 per year," said Aimee Giroux, GSHFH executive director. "Traditional first-time home buyer programs require a minimum income of 80% or \$80,000 AMI and the family must have 3% to 10% down payment to qualify."

By comparison, Giroux said, imagine a family of four earning \$50,000 (50% AMI) is trying to secure a \$150,000 mortgage. They have a current debt of \$700 per month for a student loan, credit card and car loan.

By partnering with GSHFH, they can afford up to a 2.5% interest loan. Their maximum payment with escrow would be \$993 per month with an overall debt to income of 40%.

At the current 6.5% interest rate, their payment would be \$1,348 per month, and their debt to income would be 53%, which would make them ineligible for traditional funding.

Juan Gonzalez said just before he and his wife showed up to the January 2023 closing of his new home in Holyoke, he ran the numbers one last time to make sure the home was within their financial means. Looking over the math, he was



Juan Gonzalez and Ireydiza Perez's finished house

worried.

Unnecessarily so. Gonzalez forgot the loan was interest-free.

When he heard that he exhaled a big breath and said, "Disregard my math. Thank you, Lord. This home is more affordable."

"Habitat made the process easy and with a no-interest loan in this economy, we couldn't have asked for anything better," said Karina Dise, Habitat homeowner in Monson, who with her husband, purchased their home in November 2007. "We are blessed to own a house and have land that goes with it. We can enjoy the outside when the weather is nice and we don't have to hear our noisy neighbors who used to live right next door to us. My husband likes to grill outside too, so that's definitely a plus."

Greater Springfield Habitat realizes everyone deserves simple, decent, affordable housing. Period. Habitat aims to close the racial wealth disparities by providing subsidies and affordable mortgages to help families break the cycle.

"We had debt, we cleaned it up and went to the bank to see if we qualified for a mortgage. We were told we didn't have enough money," said Lori Holt, who with her husband purchased a Springfield Habitat home in May 2014. "Our daughter told us about Habitat and encouraged us to apply. I didn't think we had a chance."

Eventually, Holt and her husband applied and were accepted. "It was such a blessing for us," she said. The couple has five children, four of whom are now adults.

"We pay for mortgage what a lot of people pay for rent. Habitat helped our family a lot," Holt said.

Kim Rivera, who experienced homelessness, on and off since her 18th birthday before owning a Habitat home, said she appreciates what Habitat has done for



Photos submitted by Brandice J. O'Brien

Juan, Ireydiza, two children.

her. Rivera purchased her home in December 2009.

"Habitat gave people like me the ability to get the American dream. I have stability. My children and grandchildren have a safe haven," Rivera said. "I'm never selling this house. I'm going to keep it in the family. I want other generations to know they won't be homeless. I have three kids, and they've all seen the benefits of having a home."

Studies have shown children of limited-income homeowners are 11% more likely to graduate from high school and are 4.5% more likely to complete post-secondary education than children of low-income renters, Giroux said.

Since its inception in 1987, GSHFH has constructed 74 homes throughout Hampden County.

Habitat chooses partner families based on need, their willingness to partner with us, and their ability to repay a mortgage

for the purchase of their home. In many instances, a family's current living situation is less than ideal with issues of rodents, limited electricity, no heat, and/or the apartment is in a dangerous location.

For many families, gunfire, drugs and vandalism are frequent. Families who face these realities often have challenges breaking the cycle for their children.

To ensure selected families understand the "hand up" versus a "hand out" ideology, prospective and have tools to manage the responsibility of homeownership, Habitat partner families must also attend first-time homebuyer education, financial literacy classes, good neighbor and home maintenance classes.

To keep the mission moving forward, GSHFH relies on donations. Most funding comes from individual donations, local businesses, and grants.

To learn more about Greater Springfield Habitat and its mission, visit habitat.springfield.org.



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Tigers pull away from Orioles

SOUTH HADLEY – Last Thursday night, South Hadley boys basketball was able to pour on the offense late and defeated Belchertown 73-66. The Tigers got a huge performance from Jack Loughrey with an impressive 38 points. He made 13 two-point field goals to go with 12 made free throws. Brady Currier had 17 points and Isiah James and Noah Hambley had nine points each.



Isiah James gets ready to drive the hoop.



Griffin Soderbaum sizes up a three-point attempt.



Noah Rivera passes the ball ahead of pressure.



Jack Loughrey goes for the open layup.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli

Rams battle back to get win

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

GRANBY—Granby boys' varsity basketball coach Dylan Dubuc wasn't very happy with how his five starters were performing against Bi-County West league rival Monson in the middle of the third quarter, so he decided to make a change.

After the Mustangs took the lead for the first time, Dubuc inserted five reserve players into the game. The move worked out, as the Rams battled back in the fourth quarter for a 62-51 victory at Sullivan Gymnasium, last Thursday night.

"When I put the five bench guys into the game in the middle of the third quarter, it changed the energy," Dubuc said. "Those guys don't normally get a lot of minutes, but they played very hard in tonight's game. Basketball is a team sport, and every player on the team is very important."

The Rams (7-1, 5-0), who are sitting in first place in the league standings, were co-champions of the Bi-County West Division a year ago.

"We lost at Monson at the end of last season, and we wound up having to share the league title with Belchertown," Dubuc said. "One of our goals every year is to win the league title. We also want to compete for the Western Mass. title and make a run in the Division 5 state tournament. We just want



Turley photo by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Sawyer Clarke goes for the open layup.

to keep getting better in every game."

The Mustangs (4-3, 2-3), who celebrated a 52-46 home win versus Granby last February, haven't won a league title during the past nine years.

"Granby is a very good basketball team, and they deserve a lot of credit for battling back

Please see **RAMS**, page9

Chicopee suffers shutout against Ludlow

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

HOLYOKE—Longtime Ludlow hockey coach Paul Rivest probably wishes that his squad could score two goals in each period of every game.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Caleb Lundgren heads toward the goal.

The Lions accomplished that feat in a 6-0 shutout victory over Fay Division rival Chicopee at the Fitzpatrick Skating Rink in Holyoke, last Wednesday afternoon. The six goals was a season high for the Lions.

"We had trouble scoring goals early in the season," Rivest said. "We were able to score six goals on about 50 shots in today's game. Everyone also had an opportunity to play in today's game, which is a good thing."

The Lions (3-3-1) had a 0-3-1 record after their first four matches. They then defeated East Longmeadow, and Oakmont Regional before reaching the .500 mark for the first time this winter against the Pacers (0-7), who co-op with four high schools.

"Our main goal coming was to reach the .500 mark," Rivest said. "We dug ourselves a hole before winning our first game of the season against East Longmeadow. That was a very

Please see **HOCKEY**, page16



Scarlett LaRose makes her way across the pool in the 100 fly.



Gracie Levrault works in the 200 individual medley.



Adaline Woods competes in the 200 freestyle.



Madi Bomard goes for a win in the 100 freestyle.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com



Trinity Roy makes her way across the ball in the 200 medley relay.

Co-op swimming splits with Monson

HOLYOKE – Last Friday afternoon, Holyoke swimming, which co-ops with Granby and South Hadley, split its meet with visiting Monson. The girls scored a win, defeating the Mustangs 93-66 and improving to 3-1 on the season. The boys suffered a 34-20 loss against Monson and fell to 1-3 on the season. Adaline Woods captured a pair of wins in the 200 and 500 freestyle.

T-Birds suffer loss against rival Bruins

PROVIDENCE, R.I. -- The Springfield Thunderbirds (16-12-3-2) could not overcome an early blitz by the Providence Bruins (19-12-3-0) in a 6-3 loss on Sunday afternoon at Amica Mutual Pavilion.

It did not take the Bruins long to flex their offensive muscles, as John Farinacci slipped into an open area in front of the net, received a pass from Brett Harrison, and one-touched it past Vadim Zherenko to make it a 1-0 Bruins lead just 2:40 into the game.

Just 1:04 later, Justin Brazeau added to the advantage, taking a Georgii Merkulov pass and deking to the backhand past Zherenko on a point-blank opportunity. Anthony Richard added a third at 6:05, and before the T-Birds knew it, the home side had a 3-0 lead.

After a pair of matching minors put the game at 4-on-4 for the first time, the Bruins found another seam in the defense, as Frederic Brunet made a perfect diagonal pass to the right post, where Ian Mitchell guided it into the twine, ending a potent first period for the Bruins with the 4-0 goal at 17:05.

Malcolm Subban entered in relief of Zherenko to start the second period, but the Bruins were not done on the attack,

as Jayson Megna beat Subban on an odd-man rush from the slot, and the lead ballooned to 5-0 at 6:27 of the frame.

Despite the mountain of a deficit, the T-Birds showed tremendous character as Zach Bolduc and Adam Gaudette each found the back of the net behind Michael DiPietro in just a 2:12 span to bring the margin down to 5-2 at the 13:52 mark of the period. Bolduc's fifth of the season broke a personal 11-game drought, and Gaudette scored for a third straight game, becoming the first AHL player to reach 20 goals this season.

The third period went 11 minutes with relatively minimal offensive chances for each team. Springfield would get another one as MacKenzie MacEachern roofed a shot from the right of the crease at 11:54 to cut the margin down to 5-3 off a slick set-up from Wyatt Kalynuk, but the comeback effort would not get any closer. Richard's second goal of the afternoon, a power play marker into an empty net, ended the scoring at the 17:54 mark of the third.

The T-Birds continued their four-game road swing on Wednesday night when they visited the Bridgeport Islanders.



Railers fall to Mariners on the road

PORTLAND, ME -- The skate was on the other foot here Sunday afternoon, much to the Railers' dismay.

After spending a lot of the first part of this season crafting miraculous comebacks, Worcester had it happen in reverse, losing to the Maine Mariners, 4-2.

The Railers squandered a 2-1 lead as they allowed two goals by Alex Kile in the game's closing minutes, then an empty-netter by Curtis Hall at 19:59.

Kile's goals were his 19th and 20th of the season. The tying goal came with Maine on a power play at 17:09 of the third period. The winner was a 5 on 5 shot through a screen from about 55 feet at 19:33. It came after a Railers' mistake, an errant pass that led to an icing call and a faceoff in their own end.

Joey Cipollone and Anthony Callin scored the Worcester goals. Owen Pederson had the first Maine goal.

John Muse stopped 25 of 28 Maine shots. Brad Arvanitis was excellent for the Mariners with 34 saves.

Worcester had a chance to put things out of reach earlier in the third period but could not capitalize on more than three straight minutes of power play time, much of it skating 5 on 3.

The first period was a real trip for the Railers, but in the worst way.

Referee Michael Zyla did not call a penalty and missed a blatant trip that took down a Worcester player and it cost the Railers a goal. It happened at 11:12,

or just before that, as Riley Piercey controlled the puck along the right wing boards in the Worcester zone.

As Piercey began to move out he was tripped. The puck wound up on Pederson's stick. He carried it into the slot and popped a high backhand past Muse.

Otherwise, Muse and Arvanitis were equal to the task to make 18 combined saves.

It took Worcester a while to tie the game but Cipollone finally did at 5:02 of the second period. He entered the Maine zone with Piercey on his right and one Maine defender between them. Cipollone took the puck in deep and his wrist shot broke through Arvanitis to make it 1-1.

Worcester made it 2-1 about seven minutes later on Callin's power play goal. He was set up by Blade Jenkins and zipped a 40-foot wrist shot just under the crossbar for the go ahead goal. The goal snapped an 11-game drought without one for Callin, although he had seven assists in that time.

Jenkins continued a very productive run of games with the assist. He is 2-9-11 in the last eight.

The Railers' next game is Friday night at the DCU Center, the first in a three-in-three versus the Norfolk Admirals. Worcester and Norfolk are likely to jockey for playoff position for the rest of the season and the Admirals have been leading the series to date, winning four of the five meetings.

RAMS from page 8

against us in the fourth quarter," said Monson head coach Zac Dreher. "We really needed to beat them if we want to win the league title this year."

Granby, who lost a non-league home game against Gardner two night's earlier, held a slim 16-12 lead at the end of the opening quarter.

The Rams, who were led offensively in the opening half by junior's Sawyer Clarke (4 points), Gavier Fernandez (8 points), and Colin Murdock (14 points), added three points to their lead in the second quarter. They held a 26-19 advantage at halftime.

Fernandez, who's a school-choice student from Holyoke, was the starting quarterback for the Amherst football team this past fall. Granby has had a co-op with Amherst in football during the past several years.

Monson was trailing, 28-21, with 5:10 remaining in the third quarter of last Thursday's contest.

Their comeback began with



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Colin Murdock takes a shot.



Raymond Colon attempts a free throw.

field goals by sophomore Austin Meacham (6 points), sophomore Jake Beupre (5 points), and se-

nior Sebastian Nava (8 points). Then eighth grader Trey Dillahunt, who finished the contest

with a team-high 19 points, buried a 3-pointer from the top of the key giving the visiting team a 30-28 lead with three minutes remaining in the third quarter.

That's when Dubuc took out his five starters and put in junior Brennan Dwyer, junior Raymond A. Colon (2 points), sophomore Raymond D. Colon (1 point), junior Gavin Moreno (2 points), and senior Ben Berger (4 points) into the game.

A Nava 3-pointer increased the Mustangs lead to 38-33 with 53 seconds left on the scoreboard clock.

It also capped off a 17-5 run. "We were able to make a comeback in the third quarter," Dreher said. "Then they made a couple of big shots in the fourth quarter, and we missed a couple, which turned out to be the difference."

The Rams closed the gap to one point (38-37) entering the final eight minutes following a Moreno jumper in the lane and an inside hoop at the buzzer by senior Colin Murdock, who's one of the Rams starters.

Murdock checked back into

the game with a minute left in the third quarter and he wound up leading the Rams with a team-leading 19 points.

Less than two minutes into the fourth quarter, Murdock made a 3-pointer giving the Rams the lead back at 40-38. Berger followed with a lay-up.

With 5:50 left in regulation, a Dillahunt 3-pointer made it a one-point game (42-41).

Two minutes later, Dillahunt made a pair of free throws tying the score for the final time at 45-45.

Following back-to-back field goals by Fernandez (15 points), junior Riley Goodhind (8 points) buried two 3-pointers from the right side giving the Rams a 56-46 lead with a minute remaining.

The Mustangs, who entered the game with a 3-1 road record, cut the deficit down to seven points before Clarke, who finished the game with eight points, sealed the deal for the home team by sinking four foul shots.

The two rivals are scheduled to meet again at Monson's Michael J. Kane Gymnasium on Jan. 23.

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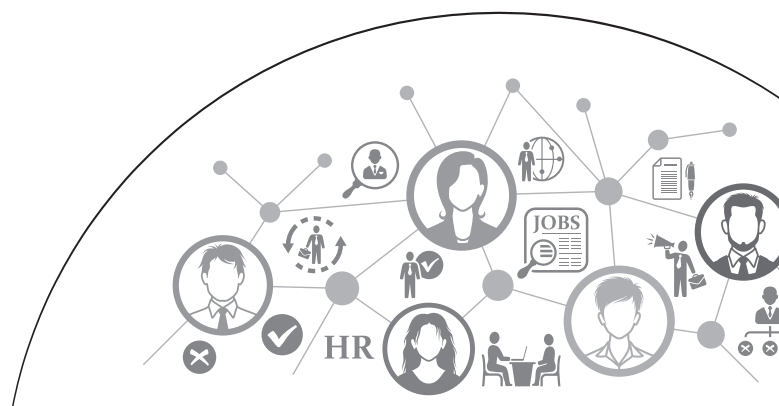
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Education

HCC announces healthy cooking series for new year

If you've made a New Year's resolution to eat healthier in 2024, Holyoke Community College might have just what you need.

The college is running a series of noncredit cooking classes this spring focused on diabetes but geared toward anyone interested in learning how to prepare healthier, more nutritious meals.

Classes in the "Nutrition for Diabetes" series run either on Tuesday or Wednesday nights beginning Feb. 7. All classes are held at the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute, 164 Race St., and taught by Marissa Chiapperino, a registered dietician and instructor in HCC's Culinary Arts program.

"Certain foods can lower your risk of heart disease and diabetes or help to manage it," Chiapperino said. "Making healthy adjustments to your daily meal plan does not have to be hard or boring. Oftentimes, adding in sources of healthy fats, whole grains, and high fiber fruits and vegetables can boost flavor and decrease the risk of chronic disease."

Each three-hour, stand-alone class will focus on a different theme. The first

hour will be an education session with Chiapperino, followed by a two-hour hands-on cooking activity after which participants can take home leftovers and recipes that align with the nutritional topic of the evening.

Wed., Feb. 7, 6-9 p.m.: "What is a carbohydrate?" (white bean egg shakshuka, breakfast casserole, overnight oats, vanilla bean pancakes, salmon toast)

Tues., March 5, 6-9 p.m.: "What is a protein?" (grilled skirt steak with chickpea salad, fideo, raspberry chicken, tahini-baked cod)

Wed., March 20, 6-9 p.m.: "What is a fat?" (smoothie bar, zucchini fritters, roasted chickpeas, cheesy egg souffles, Vietnamese spring rolls with peanut sauce)

Wed., April 17, 6-9 pm.: "How to read a food label" (grilled swordfish and pepper salad; chicken, lemon and olive bake; sweet potato berry muffins; easy breakfast salad; cheddar and herb savory overnight oats)

Tues., April 30, 6-9 p.m.: "What is a carbohydrate?" (desserts for diabetes:

chocolate date spread, oatmeal cookies, orange chamomile blondies, homemade popcorn four ways, caramelized spiced pears)

In addition, on Tues., April 2, from 6-9 p.m., Chiapperino will lead a similarly structured class on meal planning, "Building a balanced meal," featuring chilled avocado and cucumber mint soup, eggplant and lentil meatballs, chili-stuffed spaghetti squash, kale and fava bean salad, and grain-free granola.

"Making dietary changes can feel overwhelming," she said. "In this class, we will talk about how meal planning can make or break your ability to lead a more nourishing life with food. The concepts discussed will be suitable for those with many different health concerns and also those who just want to get more comfortable in the kitchen."

Chiapperino holds a bachelor of science degree in dietetics from the State University of New York at Oneonta and a masters of public health from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. She specialized in medical nutrition therapy for critical care and oncology at West-



chester Medical Center in New York and was the first bariatric dietician at Holyoke Medical Center, where she helped build their nutrition program.

She is a past president of the Western Massachusetts Dietetic Association and currently serves as executive secretary.

Each session is \$84. For more information, or to register for classes, please go to hcc.edu/healthy-cooking

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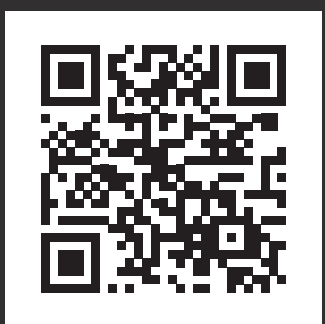
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CAREER Education

Hampden Charter School of Science marks 14 years of educational excellence

Hampden Charter School of Science (HCSS) is a top-ranking free college-preparatory public school founded in 2009 and serving families with students in grades 6th-12th at two campuses in Western Massachusetts: HCSS-East (Chicopee Campus) and HCSS-West (West Springfield Campus).

HCSS proudly provides seven years of unparalleled college preparatory education for grades 6-12 students, paving the way for college admissions and a wealth of scholarship opportunities. College and Career Readiness at HCSS is a tailored process forging the best possible alignment between each distinctively talented student and the most suitable college or university for them. Students collaborate closely with their counselors to delve into their manifold talents and interests, set aspirations based on these insights, and identify colleges that align with their ambitions.

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• Enhanced College-Prep Curriculum: HCSS's amplified curriculum prepares students comprehensively for higher education.

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• Project Lead The Way (PLTW): A new addition fostering STEM skills through hands-on projects and real-world challenges, preparing students for future innovation and leadership.

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CAREER Education

St. Michael's Academy to hold Open House

Are you looking for a school that educates each of its students as an individual? Are you looking for dedicated teachers who want their students to succeed? Are you looking for a school that combines faith with education in order to teach strong moral values, respect and kindness? Are you looking for a school with a structured environment that promotes learning?

Then we have a school for you!

St. Michael's Academy, located at 153 Eddywood Street in the East Forest Park section of Springfield, invites you to an Open House and Curriculum Fair on Sunday, Jan. 28, 2024. There will be a special presentation for prospective students and their families that will begin at noon. The event will include an information session, followed by a panel of students, teachers

and parents for questions and finish with a full school tour. The full school will be open to visitors with teachers in each of the classrooms to accommodate questions.

Attend the Open House and learn what St. Michael's Academy can offer your child. St. Michael's Academy is not just books and papers. The educational process strives to form the entire child academically, spiritually, physically and emotionally. The dedicated teaching faculty truly care about their students and want them to learn, grow and succeed. The final result is a graduate who is well prepared for high school, college and beyond. Each student takes with them a solid foundation for continued growth and achievement, having learned the value of respect, kindness and community service.

Unable to attend the Open House on January 28th? Simply call the Admissions Office at (413) 782-5246, ext. 1208 and schedule an informational session and tour.

St. Michael's Academy is located off of Plumtree Road in Springfield, directly behind Holy Cross Church. The Academy educates students from preschool 3 years old, through grade 8. It is the largest Catholic elementary school in Western Mass and the only Catholic elementary school in Springfield.



Apex Homecare of Western MA expands programs and staffing to meet growing needs in the elder care arena

Direct Support Professionals at Apex Homecare of Springfield provides home care aides to increase independence for the people with disabilities and seniors, every day.

Caregivers and students pursuing a degree in the healthcare field are encouraged to contact the agency to take advantage of Apex's Direct Support Professional (DSP's) training program. To attract top quality Aide's, the agency provides attractive benefits and a career path.

The direct care worker shortage is a global issue, stretching well beyond Massachusetts. In the U.S., 3 out of every 4 agency providers has a wait list for caregiving services. According to the Global Coalition on Aging Report, 70% of Americans who reach age 65 will need long-term services and support. If nothing changes, the report predicts there will be a national shortage of 151,000 care workers by 2030, and a 355,000-caregiver shortfall by 2040.

Pew Research states that one in four Americans live with a disability that interferes with activities of daily living and a recent national survey reports 90% of Americans age 50 and over want to 'age in place'.

To compound the situation, demand in the family caregiving market is increasing as well. Currently, 53 million Americans serve as family caregivers and the number is growing.

An Executive Order from the White House signed in April 2023 offers new



Direct care workers and students pursuing a degree in healthcare are encouraged to contact Apex.

resources to remedy the caregiver shortage crisis to meet increased need. It is the most sweeping set of executive actions to improve care in the nation's history and takes immediate action to enhance job quality for the direct care workforce. Like many of Apex's services, the Executive Order also provides resources for family caregivers that foster emotional well-being and stems the financial and health strain that caregiving has on a family.

About Apex Homecare

Apex provides a safe, compassionate and friendly atmosphere to enable the client to enjoy and maximize the excellence of life in the comfort of his or her home. If you or a loved one needs services, contact Cheryl Rumley RN at Apexhealth01@verizon.net. If you are seeking a career in the caregiving, disability or healthcare field, visit the Apex career page.



St. Michael's Academy

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Looking for a new school for your child?

Join us on **Sunday, January 28th**

at **noon** for an

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Learn what St. Michael's Academy can offer YOUR child!

St. Michael's Academy, 153 Eddywood St., Springfield, MA
Check us out at smaspringfield.org



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CAREER Education

Come and see what great things are happening at St. Stanislaus

St. Stanislaus School in Chicopee is under the new leadership of Principal Katherine Rorrio, who fully appreciates the Franciscan values and long-standing traditions of the school. Mrs. Rorrio is a graduate of the school, was a teacher at the school for 20 years, and is now Principal.

This year the school's theme is "For it is in giving that we receive", an inspirational quote from St. Francis about the value of giving back. Students are focusing on a different Corporal Work of Mercy each month. Some of the Corporal Works of

Mercy that have been covered are - Feeding the Hungry and Working for Peace. The most recent Work of Mercy was Shelter the Homeless. Students and families collected 100 blankets, 50 hats, coats, and many undergarments that were donated to a local homeless shelter to help those in the community. Service projects are done throughout the year to help teach students the value of giving back.

The school will be holding an Open House on Sunday, Jan. 21 from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. (no appointment needed).

If you would like to schedule a private tour for another time, please call the school to schedule an appointment at (413) 592-5135.

St. Stanislaus School is a Roman Catholic, Franciscan, co-educational Pre-K through 8th grade school. Students are assisted in developing their potential spiritually, physically, and socially within a safe and diverse community. A foundation of academic excellence is created to prepare students to become contributing members of a global society. The school

has a welcoming Franciscan environment, modern air-conditioned facility, strong core curriculum, enrichment classes, certified faculty, full-day preschool (PreK3 and 4) and Kindergarten, free breakfast and hot lunch, before & after school program, and one to one use and integration of iPads and Chromebooks into curriculum. Financial Aid is available. Interested students are invited to "spend a day with us". To learn more please visit www.saintstansschool.org.

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CAREER Education

Explore the difference at St. Joan of Arc School

Explore the difference at St. Joan of Arc School in Chicopee! Lively Letters and OSMO Tangible Play programs have been added to our PreK and Kindergarten programs. Lexia, a phonics instruction that gives students independent practice in basic reading skills, is now offered to Kindergarten through Grade 8 students. And a Robotics Curriculum is coming soon for our 8th graders.

The school will be holding an Open House on Saturday, Jan. 27 from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. (no appointment needed). Appointment only tours for families will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 30 and Thursday, Feb. 1 from 3 p.m. – 7 p.m. Please call Chris or Janine in the Business Office at 536-6038 for registration information or to make

an appointment.

St. Joan of Arc is a welcoming, safe and secure school community providing social, physical, spiritual & intellectual wellness for students in Pre-K 3 to Grade 8. SJA has innovative offerings that include affordable tuition and extended care, free breakfast and lunch, extracurricular programs to include Chess, Book and Lego Clubs, as well as a Performing Arts Club. Computer fundamentals with intro to computer science, music, library, and Duolingo language classes are also offered. Located at 587 Grattan St., Chicopee offers easy access to I391 & I90. Financial aid and tuition assistance is available. To learn more visit www.sjachicopee.org.

We look forward to meeting you!

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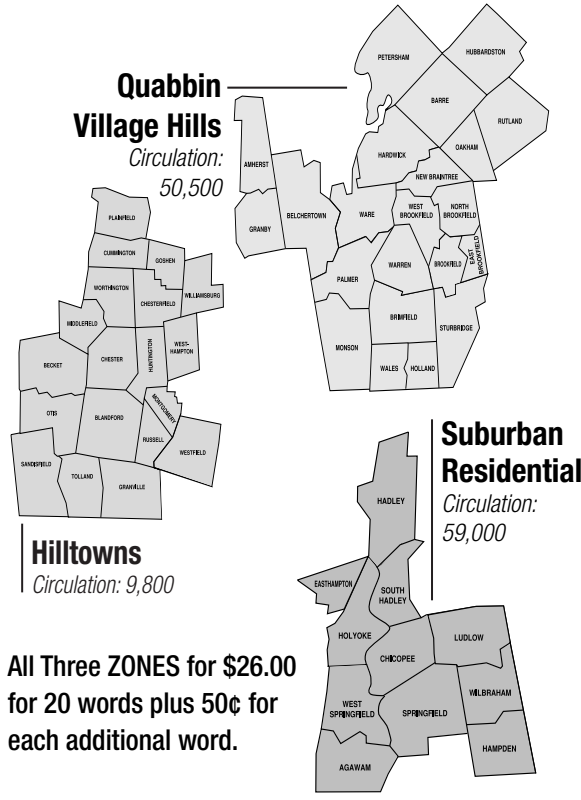
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HOCKEY from page 8

big game for us.”

The Pacers base school is Chicopee High School, but none of the players listed on their hockey roster attend that school. The Pacers head coach is Chad McGillicuddy.

The players from Chicopee Comp are freshman Brennan Corcoran, freshman Bryson Labonte, senior Stephen Samson, freshman Oliver Nardacci, and sophomore Nathan Robitaille.

The players from South Hadley High School are freshman Mason Peters, freshman Ryan O'Donnell, junior Brayden Grochowalski, junior Tyler Denison, junior Chris Walczak, senior Mike Beaulieu, and senior Devin Carleton.

The players from Granby High School are senior Connor McDonell, sophomore Max Kennedy, and sophomore Braydon LaDuke.

The Pacers also have four players from the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School, which is in Hadley.

Ludlow freshman netminder Peter LeBorgne only had to make a couple of saves. He shared the shutout with sophomore Ethan Steigmeyer, who played the final six minutes of the game.

“I really didn't want to take Peter out of the game because it would've been his first shutout in a varsity hockey game, but I wanted to give Ethan some playing time. He always works very hard at practice,”

Rivest said. “Peter is only a freshman and he'll eventually get his first shutout. They do get along with each other very well.”

Senior defenseman Brice Pereira, who's also a captain, gave his thoughts on the Lions first shutout of the regular season.

“It feels great to post our first shutout of the season,” said Pereira, who was also a key member of the Lions golf team last fall. “Peter is doing a very good job as our first year starting goalie. Ethan also played well at the end of today's game. We just want to keep on winning now.”

Ludlow took a 1-0 lead five minutes into the opening period when a shot taken by sophomore Sean Kefalas from the blueline was redirected into the net by his classmate A.J. Stupak. Senior Ryan Kurtz was also given an assist.

“We haven't scored the first goal of the game very often this season,” Rivest said. “It was nice to play with the lead for a change.”

Two minutes later, senior Luke Martin received a pass from sophomore Nick Staeb before firing a one-timer past Chicopee junior goalie Damian Loinaz.

The Pacers couldn't capitalize on three power-play chances during the final eight minutes of the first period.

Ludlow senior Thomas Deroin scored a power-play goal in the middle of the second period.

The duo of junior Ryan Goodwin and senior Cody Sanderson were credited with



Connor McDonell sails the puck into the offensive zone.



Chris Walczak looks to center the puck.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

the assists.

With 1:43 left in the second period, Sanderson netted a short-handed goal, which gave Ludlow a comfortable 4-0 advantage entering the final 15 minutes of the contest.

The Lions also scored two more power-play goals in the third period.


Freshman Evan Dias, who had an assist in the East Longmeadow game, scored his first varsity goal less than two minutes

into the final period.

Sophomore Tanner Severyn and Kefalas were credited with the assists.

Junior Michael Rubin closed out the scoring with his first varsity goal, which was assisted by Kurtz, with 1:46 remaining on the scoreboard clock.

The two hockey teams are scheduled to play a primetime game at the Olympia Ice Center in West Springfield on February 8.



BEERS & STORY FUNERAL HOMES
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NOW HIRING:

PART TIME ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

We currently have an opening for a **Part Time Administrative Assistant** at **Beers & Story South Hadley Funeral Home**. The position requires working 25-28 hours per week.

As an Administrative Assistant, you will provide administrative and clerical support to managers, team members, and client families, including answering phone calls, scheduling, creating and proofing correspondence, and data entry.


What You Will Do:

- **Compassion & Empathy:** Answer phones and field questions with appropriate phone etiquette, greet and interact with families, and handle inquiries and direct them accordingly.
- **Technology Competent:** Familiar with Microsoft Office Suite, company software programs, email, social media, text, online portals, live webinars, and updating the funeral home website as needed.
- **Clear Communicator:** Strong communication and grammatical skills, with the ability to proof work.
- **Meticulous Attention:** Monitor accounts and financials related to receipt books, deposit policies, and receivables. Close accounts when appropriate and complete product inventory.
- **Follow-through:** Ensure all funeral service delivery items, such as cremation permitting, death certificate filing, and other documentation, are carried out professionally and promptly.
- **Preparation Excellence:** Maintain neat and presentable office area and office equipment as necessary, take responsibility for inventory, and reorder office supplies as needed.
- **Active Team Member:** Participate in weekly updates with supervisors to share and exchange resources and ideas to meet goals; complete monthly and quarterly financial and administrative processes.

What We Require:

- High school diploma or the equivalent
- Minimum three years of work experience in a small business office environment – funeral industry experience a plus
- Knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook)
- Able to use and learn multiple computer software, systems, and other office equipment
- High attention to detail and accuracy, with excellent follow-up skills
- Able to establish and maintain effective internal and external work processes

Are you ready? Take the next step to join Beers and Story Funeral Homes, a proud member of The Foundation Partners Group, as we transform funeral care through innovation and service.



Please contact us directly at 413-283-9061 or email your resume to info@beersandstory.com

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Tuesday Night
6:30pm
Pitch Night

Wednesday Night
5-7pm
Smoked BBQ Dinner

Friday Night
5-7pm
Spaghetti Dinner
7:30pm
Trivia Night

Saturday, January 27th
4-7pm
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