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The students playing the roles of angels arrive in the church. Turley photo by Noelle Hisgen

## St. Cecilia Parish holds Annual Christmas Pageant

By Noelle Hisgen  
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - On December 20, 2025, the youth of St. Cecilia's Parish took part in their annual Christmas Pageant, as part of the church's Saturday evening Mass.

This year, over 50 children from first to sixth grade participated in the pageant. Children in grades three through six were given the opportunity for featured speaking roles, while children in first and second

grade could be angels or sheep.

There were also two children narrators guiding the audience throughout the production.

The pageant also featured musical arrangements of songs that were sung by the St. Cecilia's Youth Choir, with all of the pageant participants joining in for the final song, "Joy to the World."

For over 17 years, the Christmas Pageant has been co-directed by Meg Cyr and Lori Callahan.

"I like it because it shows the story of the birth of Jesus in such a beautiful way, with the kids acting it out," Cyr said. "I hope that the kids understand the birth of Jesus and what the true meaning of Christmas is. And then also that their confidence grows when participating in something like this. Whether they have a speaking part or a non-speaking part, just watching their confidence grow

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## SB hears HPL concerns

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
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HAMPDEN - The Selectboard heard concerns from the library's Library Trustees since opening in the new town hall during their December 22, 2025 meeting.

After commending Library Director Ellen Moriarty and Children's Librarian Kate Rumpik for their work on the move to the new town hall, Library Trustee Kathleen Hutchison shared a few items, beginning with lighting, as the library is open on Thursday nights.

"A few of our patrons have complained about the lighting in the parking lot. I don't know about our entrance if those two lights are at the maximum wattage they could be. If they could be improved," Hutchison said. "I know that to put lighting all over the parking lot is an expense, but I don't know if there's some temporary solution. There is an outlet there. Maybe some kind of spotlight that we could put out on Thursday night just to shine on the parking lot, especially this time of year with ice and things like that. So, if that could be looked into, if there's something that can be done to provide a little more light."

Chair John Flynn noted that lighting is being looked into.

"It is something we're looking at. For instance, we're concerned about the lighting around where the



Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

The Hampden Free Public Library's Board of Trustees presented concerns for the Selectboard on Dec. 22 to look into now that the library has moved to the new town hall.

flag pole is. So, we're looking at installations there. I know that both Brian and Herb have talked about what can be done in terms of outdoor spotlighting, not just at the library, but down here what we call the handicap entrance, if you will," Flynn said.

Flynn added they are looking into installing a couple of spotlights and including a timer.

"I'm not really sure in my mind that motion sensors would be the way to go. I don't like that because either it's not triggered or it is triggered too much and I think that a timer light system would be the way to go. I'm

not sure about a switch because when you all close up, you have enough to do and maybe you don't want to flip that switch off as you leave because then your path out isn't illuminated, right? So, that's not a good thing," Flynn said. "But, keep in mind, we're on top of that."

Next, Hutchison shared how several moms—and dads, too—need the diaper changing station.

"There was one—maybe even two—at the town hall. I don't know if they can be moved. But, that being said,

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## Debra Dupont needs new kidney

By Noelle Hisgen  
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - Beloved Wilbraham community member Debra Dupont is looking for a new kidney.

Dupont is facing advanced kidney disease and is in need of a live kidney donor.

Dupont has a hereditary disease known as Polycystic Kidney Disease, which she has had since her 30s. She was informed by neurologists that the best solution is to get a new kidney through transplant.

By considering donating a kidney, someone could be a matched donor to Dupont. If you are not physically or emotionally available to donate a kidney, it is still important that Deb's story gets shared.

Healthy adults aged 18+ and are willing to undergo screenings and evaluations are available to become kidney donors.

"I want to get the kidney transplant so that I can live longer to see my grandkids grow up, graduate from high school, and go to their games and things like that. Whereas if I had dialysis, I would be limited to where I could go and what I could do. So that's why I'm looking to replace my kidney," Dupont said.

For more information, visit the National Kidney Registry at www.nkr.org/



Debra Dupont, a beloved community member of Wilbraham, is in need of a new kidney and needs the community's help.

QBA732 to learn how to help Dupont find a donor. You also need to scroll to the bottom of her microsite and click "Start the Donor Process" to learn more information on donating.

You should, also, contact the Baystate Transplant Living Donor Program at (413)794-2321.

Other ways to help Dupont are by sharing her story with friends, family and social media, learn about kidney donation and encourage others to do the same, and support Deb with prayers and encouragement.

Dupont urges people to spread the word and raise awareness of her need for a new kidney. By simply spreading the word, someone can be the donor that she needs.

## Social Connection hosts December meeting

By Noelle Hisgen  
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - On December 18, 2025, the St. Cecilia Parish's Social Connection hosted their December monthly meeting, with entertainment by The Valley Carolers.

The event started with everyone gathering together and grabbing appetizers, then they were invited to an Italian-style lunch, and then were able to grab cookies and tea to finish off the meal. While they were eating, the connection had entertainment from an outside organization to perform for them.

The entertainment for the month was The Valley Carolers: a quartet of carolers that perform across the Springfield area.

The Social Connection is led by St. Cecilia's Pastoral



Turley photo by Noelle Hisgen

The Valley Carolers begin their entertainment for the St. Cecilia's Social Connection.

Minister, Sister Mary McCue, who spoke about the Social Connection.

"It's a good time for seniors to come out in the light in the afternoon, so that they

can have a gathering for themselves, and to come in, and sit here," McCue said. "We have our hor d'oeuvres to start with, and then we have a full course meal, and

then we have an entertainer." Kathy Perry, a Membership Committee member of the Social Connection, talked

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## Educators speak out on contract negotiations

By Kristin Rivers  
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WILBRAHAM - Educators made their voices heard as contract negotiations continue in the school district.

The latest comments at the December 18, 2025, School Committee meeting come after five standouts were held earlier in the month at Wilbraham Middle School,

Minnechaug Regional High School and on Main Street. The current three-year contract expired at the end of the 2024-2025 school year and, since then, an agreement has not been reached despite negotiations over the past year.

On November 25, 2025, the Hampden-Wilbraham Education Association and the district jointly filed for con-

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Turley photo by Patricia Sullivan

Educators continue to speak out about contract negotiations. Pictured here are members of the HWEA and supporters on Dec. 12 during a standout on Main Street in Wilbraham.

## COMMUNITY

# Select Board appoints two new WPD officers

By Kristin Rivers  
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WILBRAHAM - The Select Board appointed two new police officers, Ostaquiu Rodrigues and Nicholas Cervizzi, during their December 15, 2025 meeting.

Before their interviews, Police Chief Ed Lennon noted Rodrigues is full-time post-certified, while Cervizzi is not and would need to attend the police academy.

Rodrigues, originally from Brazil, came to the United States at 18 years old and worked in construction and auto detailing until he moved to Western Massachusetts with his wife.

From there, he became a police officer which he's done for five years now. Rodrigues looked into Wilbraham after hearing about them and knowing many people want to join the police department.

"I have a friend who works in the department and he mentioned to me about the position and it sparked the interest to become part of the team and that's how I ended up out here," Rodrigues said. "I'm a hard-working man, I love interacting with the community and the way I choose to interact with the community is through doing what I love about the job, which is teaching motor vehicle laws, consequences of their actions, talking to the youth, going to the schools, explaining to kids consequences of bad driving habits and that's how I love to give to the community."

When Vice Chair Marc Ducey asked Rodrigues what drew him to Wilbraham, he emphasized hearing great things about the police de-

partment.

"I know a little bit about the town. I know that it's a lot of industries, a lot of businesses in town and, again, the financial opportunity to be here, it's great and that's what I'm looking for. Being able to work in a place that's going to offer me financial growth and professionally grow, and unfortunately, the place I'm at right now, I don't have that," Rodrigues said.

After Clerk Sue Bunnell asked how he maintains physical fitness, Rodrigues noted playing soccer in the past.

"Right now, what I try to do to keep in shape is go to walks with my wife a couple days a week," Rodrigues said. "The walking and hiking is how I keep in shape."

On Chair Michael Squind's question on why he'd be a good fit for the police department, Rodrigues noted his work ethic.

"I'm a hard-working man. I've been working on my own since I was 18 years old, moving to a different country where I didn't know nothing about it and I was literally forced to learn the language, learn about the culture, so being a hard-working man, being employable, bringing my language skills—I speak Portuguese and Spanish as well, multiple languages—and I believe my work ethics, being a community officer, traffic enforcement officer, I believe those give me the qualities I need for this position," Rodrigues said.

Cervizzi, a resident of Monson who frequently spends time in Wilbraham, got his first job at Six Flags as a security guard and moved up the ranks to security captain, which entailed "oversee-

ing all daily activities within the security department including schedules, auditing and handling the incidents within the park."

He also worked for the Holyoke Auxiliary Police Department, where he assisted the Holyoke Police Department with security for events and weekly traffic details.

"So, the reason I left both of those other two jobs was in May of 2019, I was hired by the Connecticut Department of Corrections. I have been there for the past six and a half years. I did the first four and a half years at a medium-level prison in Enfield, Carl Robinson, and since then, the last two and a half years I've been at a maximum-security prison, MacDougall-Walker, in Suffield, Connecticut. Which is where I still am today and I do the safety and security within the prison, responding to various incidents on a daily basis," Cervizzi said.

On Squind's question on his interest in becoming a police officer, Cervizzi said it's been a lifelong goal since he was a child.

"Now, I am ready to make the jump from the corrections side of it over to the actual, on-the-street law enforcement side of it. I just feel like I'm missing something in the prison. I want to go out in the world, serve the community on a daily basis rather than being behind the walls the whole time," Cervizzi said.

When Ducey asked him about the most important qualities for being an effective police officer, Cervizzi replied the most important quality is integrity.

"You have to be level-headed, you have to be able to think critically and be

impartial. I think the integrity, you're always going to be doing the right thing even when no one's looking. Professional, we got to treat everyone with respect no matter what and just be a good image of what the department wants you to be," Cervizzi said.

For Bunnell's question regarding an example of de-escalating a situation and how he handled it, Cervizzi said "how prison is kind of constant de-escalation," and shared an incident from the day before where an inmate missed his nightly medication. When medical was called down and was told he took too long to come out and wouldn't get the medication, the inmate became irate.

"My partner actually knew him better than I did, but we both talked to him, kind of leveled with him, tried to find some sort of common ground and we showed him that we were doing everything we could to get medical to come down and give him his medication. Eventually, we actually came to a common ground where he gets nightly breath-in treatments. So, we told him if he could wait until his nightly breath-in treatment, it would give him his meds when he goes down there. So, he'd have to wait a couple hours, but he did end up getting them," Cervizzi said.

Both men were appointed unanimously, contingent upon the successful completion of a pre-employment medical screening, psychological assessment and physical abilities test requirements, with an appointment date to be determined by the police chief.

# Nomination papers now available

WILBRAHAM - Wilbraham Town Clerk's Office is announcing that nomination papers are now available for placement of your name as a candidate on the Saturday, May 16, 2026 Annual Town Election ballot.

The last day to obtain nomination papers is Wednesday, March 25, 2026.

The positions being voted that day are:

- 1 Select Board member for 3 years
- 1 Assessor for 3 years
- 2 Regional School Committee members for 3 years
- 1 Cemetery Commissioner for 3 years
- 1 Cemetery Commissioner for 2 years
- 1 Water Commissioner for 3 years
- 2 Library Trustees for 3 years
- 1 Planning Board Member for 5 years
- 1 Wilbraham Housing Authority member for 5 years.

The deadline for submission to the Registrars for certification is Friday, March 27, 2026 at 5 p.m. Fifty (50) signatures from registered Wilbraham voters are required to have a name listed on the ballot as a candidate.

We suggest calling our office to set up an appointment to pick up the papers. Contact the Town Clerk's Office at 596-2800, ext. 200 if you have any questions.

Office hours are Monday thru Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

# Wilbraham Public Library's Winter Reading kicks off

WILBRAHAM - Get a head start on your 2026 reading resolutions with our annual

## Winter Reading Challenge!

Starting Jan. 1, record your reading for a chance to win gift cards, books, and other cool prizes. If you've participated in our seasonal Reading Challenges in the past, get started by logging into your Beanstack account and selecting the challenge for your age group.

First-time participants can create an account by visiting [wilbrahamlibrary.beanstack.com](http://wilbrahamlibrary.beanstack.com), or by downloading the Beanstack

Tracker app. Paper logs and review forms will also be available in the library.

Teens and adults will receive one raffle ticket for each book read. Participants must log and review each book to earn a ticket. Children through Grade Five will earn raffle tickets by tracking the minutes they read each day.

All reading and reviews must be submitted by Feb. 28. Kids and teens can pick up participation rewards starting March 3.

Raffle winners will be notified starting March 4.

Questions? Give the library a call at 413-596-6141 for more info.

## The Wilbraham-Hampden Academic Trust

# Casino Royale Winter Gala

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A group photo of State Sen. Jake Oliveira (D-Ludlow), State Rep. Brian Ashe (D-Longmeadow), Jordan Healy, co-founder of Lock & Key Realty, Marc Murphy, co-founder of Lock & Key Realty, John Sullivan and Joe Sullivan, the co-owners of Lakeside Inn, Michael Rodgers, investor/agent at Lock & Key Realty and State Rep. Angelo Puppolo Jr. (D-Springfield).

# Lakeside Inn announces partnership for redevelopment project

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
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WILBRAHAM - The Lakeside Inn has announced a partnership with Lock & Key Realty as part of its redevelopment project to fully renovate and restore the historical inn on Nine Mile Pond.

The December 23, 2025 announcement was made by Co-Owners John and Joe Sullivan, who were joined by Marc Murphy, Jordan Healy and Michael Rodgers of Lock & Key Realty, with many community members in attendance.

The Lakeside Inn first opened in the late 1950s as an inn and restaurant and, now, with the Sullivans becoming new owners in August 2025, construction is ready to begin to bring it back to its former glory. Other historical ties for the Sullivans—who are longtime friends and business partners—include Joe Sullivan’s grandfather, Barton Sullivan, having owned an adjacent motor lodge, Sullivan’s Auto Inn, from the early 1900s through the mid-20th century.

The plan is a 15-room boutique hotel with eight rooms upstairs, six rooms downstairs and one accessible room on the main floor, a restaurant including 100 seats and being leased by a private chef and direct access to Nine Mile Pond for recreational activities and to enjoy the waterfront view.

Main construction is expected to begin in March 2026, with hopes of completion by the end of that year. The project is estimated to cost at least \$2 million.

Joe Sullivan was thrilled about the partnership and noted the excitement in the community, including cheers at the Planning Board when the

project was brought up. “The real question is why hasn’t anybody done it already? It just makes sense. So, we’re very excited about this project. We partnered up with a group that I’m really excited about. They have a wealth of knowledge and experience that complements ours. There’s a lot of things that they’ve been very helpful with and answering questions and pushing this process along, which has been great. I never felt so seamlessly integrated with a group before than I have here,” Joe Sullivan said.

Rodgers shared, “It’s been an excellent partnership so far” with the Sullivans.

“We are really excited for the opportunity to bring back this historic inn in Wilbraham with a modern twist and great things are coming,” Rodgers said.

State Sen. Jake Oliveira (D-Ludlow) recalled coming to the Lakeside Inn with his family when he was a kid and noted, “you’re not on Boston Road anymore, you’re in an oasis” at the location.

“When I heard that they were taking over and they were going to be investing in it and they were going to make sure that they were going to breathe new life in it, I immediately knew it was going to be in an incredible, incredible spot,” Oliveira said. He also pointed out the community support and how all three members of the Select Board were in attendance for the announcement.

“I think that shows how invested the Wilbraham community is in making sure that this business, once it gets off its feet, is successful,” Oliveira said.

Ashe reflected on his past work and friendship with the Sullivans.

“I know as a state rep, I



An exterior shot of the Lakeside Inn on Boston Road in Wilbraham.



A shot of one of the spaces that will become a room at the Lakeside Inn when it's redeveloped.

appreciate what you’re doing developing these businesses, making the economy better here, but more so as a resident—somebody who grew up in Springfield, lived in Western Mass my entire life—I appreciate everything that you’ve done and you do it top-notch,” Ashe said. “So, from the bottom of my heart, I am so grateful for what you do day in and day out and I’m thankful and I wish you nothing but continued success.”

Puppolo said, “It’s an exciting day for the area.”

“This is going to be great. This property here is pristine

and, you’re right, I mean, I don’t know why this hasn’t been developed. It has been so many different uses, right, over the years. Nothing really caught on. I think this is going to catch on. They have a knack at doing that,” Puppolo said. “It’s a huge investment and I think, as it was said, the Sullivan Family, they do it right. They don’t cut any corners. So what you’re going to see here is you’re going to see even better than these enhanced visuals and they

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# COMMUNITY

## School Committee withdraws from accelerated repair program

Next, applying to core building program

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
krivers@turley.com



Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

The School Committee has officially withdrawn WMS from the MSBA's accelerated repair program and will now apply for the core building program.

WILBRAHAM - The School Committee has withdrawn Wilbraham Middle School from the MSBA's accelerated repair program.

The December 18, 2025, decision comes after the committee considered its options after being accepted into the MSBA's accelerated repair program, with the Wilbraham Select Board and Hampden Selectboard also providing input.

Both the Wilbraham Select Board and the Hampden Selectboard then approved letters of support on December 8, 2025, to have the School Committee withdraw from the accelerated repair program and apply for the core building program instead, with Hampden Selectboard emphasizing that meetings will continue and a five to six plan for the current middle school should be part of the process.

School Committee Member Sean Kennedy noted the letters of support from the town boards.

"The Wilbraham Select Board recognizes that there are complex issues with the middle school that need attention and mitigation during the MSBA core process," the Wilbraham Select Board said.

"It is the Selectboard's view that it is unfair to the students, faculty and staff of Wilbraham Middle School

as well as irresponsible to delay taking further steps to mitigate the many issues impacting the health, safety and education of our Wilbraham and Hampden students," the Hampden Selectboard said.

Kennedy said how "we don't have a plan yet," and there needs to be one.

"So, right now, I always thought the plan was let's move the eighth grade—as many students as we can—by encouraging them to go to the high school for this Innovation Career Pathways Program," Kennedy said. "So, that was the plan and that would free up space because when I talked to John Derosia, what's the number one thing you need? He said space. Number two, security, and number three, health. Health is the air, health is the asbestos floor tiles coming up."

He stressed "there's some serious things that need to be done," asking what the plan and steps will be.

Vice Chair Dr. Michael Tirabassi explained there were several capital items planned, including mediation for asbestos floors and door repairs.

"One of the things that Hampden made clear was that they did not want the middle school neglected because time would take for the core building program and the plan is to move forward with doing repairs in the middle school," Tirabassi said. "The plan is not to replace all the windows or the doors, but to repair doors and repair floors and, I believe, there's capital projects on the list in regards to the air handlers as well."

Tirabassi said space and building condition are other issues, adding, "we need to start being more proactive about the things that need to be fixed in the building, which it appears we are."

"Moving eighth graders to the high school could never have been a long-term solution to the middle school problems because the NESD

projections for our student enrollment going up are quite clear, and so that would never have been a long-term solution," Tirabassi said.

Tirabassi added, "the problems in the school are serious."

"I would love to go back 10 years in time. I think we're behind the eight ball. I think this should have been done a long time ago. I don't think that the fact that it wasn't done 10 years ago is a reason to not do it now," Tirabassi said. "We can only look at where we are now and come up with our best plan going forward."

After Kennedy mentioned the doors, air handlers and windows have been an issue, Tirabassi said, "none of us have the information right now to know if that building is salvageable, to know if that building is going to be usable for 30 years."

"So, to ask Wilbraham to go in on the accelerated repair program if we do the

windows and doors, we are making a commitment to using that building for 30 years, which right now, I don't have any information and if anybody else has the information, please share it with us to if that's a good decision or not," Tirabassi said. "All we have is a 2015 feasibility study that was done that basically said, at that point, every system in the building was beyond its lifespan, needed replacement, major overhauling and basically nothing done except the roof was replaced."

After a brief further discussion between Tirabassi and Kennedy, School Committee Member Timothy Collins said, to his understanding, the core building program people "have the knowledge and the expertise that we need before we can make a plan" and the committee needs to know if the building is salvageable and are grounds "stable enough to support an addition to the building because we need additional space in that building."

"I have seen buildings older than that be renovated and added to through the core program and it's like having a brand new building, but you don't know that until the experts go in and do an assessment of what that building is standing on. Is the water below going to be problematic to adding an addition?" Collins said. "So, we can't shoot in the dark, but the expertise is there in the core program, and if we try to do it piecemeal, we'll never get it done. That was my number one concern when I got elected to this position was fixing the middle school. Our kids in both towns deserve to be in a mid-

dle school that's up to date." Collins emphasized keeping the school district's reputation high to compete with other surrounding communities and saluted the work that's been done by the principals, "but we can't expect them to continue to be able to do that in these poor conditions."

"I don't want to hesitate another minute on this," Collins said.

Collins also suggested reaching out to State Rep. Angelo Puppulo Jr. (D-Springfield) and State Sen. Jake Oliveira (D-Ludlow) on grants to help address immediate issues in the interim.

Chair Michal Boudreau said after the tours done by elected officials and board members, "I think everybody is committed to make sure that the students are being educated in a safe, healthy environment and that the teachers are working and having proper working conditions."

"So, I think there seems to be a commitment to that and on that capital list, we can't control what we don't know. Whether or not the funds will be approved, but I think we're also saying that we are also committed to making sure that we are taking care of the building for if we are invited into the core program that we are going to maintain the building and making sure that we're doing everything that we can while whatever change is happening whether it's a renovation or a new building," Boudreau said. "We don't know. It's really all unknown, but we do have those on the capital expenditures over the next couple of years."

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## Rick's Place receives \$25,000 Flexible Funding Grant from CFWM

SPRINGFIELD - Rick's Place, Inc. has been awarded a \$25,000 Flexible Funding grant from the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts (CFWM). Flexible Funding grants are awarded through a highly competitive process designed to support organizations whose work aligns with the Foundation's strategic focus areas and regional priorities.

The grant will provide general operating support to advance Rick's Place's 2026 priorities, with a primary focus on relocating to a larger space to meet the growing demand for grief support services. A new location will

enable Rick's Place to serve more families, expand peer grief support programming, and offer a welcoming environment that fosters caring connection and community. Grant funding will also support targeted outreach to help ensure families across the region know where to turn for grief support.

Grief can have a profound impact on youth and families, influencing emotional well-being, learning, behavior, and family dynamics. Access to consistent, age-appropriate grief support helps reduce isolation and strengthen coping and resilience for both youth and caregivers, underscoring the importance

of continued investment in services like those provided by Rick's Place.

"We are deeply grateful to the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts for recognizing the importance of grief support for youth and families and for investing in work that helps ensure families do not have to navigate loss alone," said Therese Ross, Executive Director of Rick's Place.

More information about the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts is available at <https://www.communityfoundation.org>

Learn more about Rick's Place at <https://www.ricks-place.org>



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The Hampden-Wilbraham Regional School District

We are accepting applications for our Integrated Early Childhood programs for the 2026-2027 school year. These programs are designed for children who are 3- and 4- year olds and are open to residents of Hampden, Wilbraham, and surrounding communities.

If your child will turn three by September 1, 2026 you can obtain an application from our website at [www.hwrdsd.org](http://www.hwrdsd.org). Simply navigate to "Departments," then "Student Services," and select "Early Childhood Program." Alternatively, you can call Corinne Roberts, Administrative Assistant for Student Services at 413-279-3863 for assistance.

Please note that priority screening and placement will be given to children who live in either Hampden or Wilbraham.

## Yoga classes at the Hampden Public Library

HAMPDEN – Start the New Year at our new location at 85 Wilbraham Road with yoga classes.

The classes are free and no registration is required. The schedule is posted at [hampden-library.org](http://hampden-library.org).

These classes are sponsored by the Friends of the Hampden Public Library.

The schedule is: The first Thursday of the month: Yoga for “Every-body with Sue Kent at 6 p.m.

“This class is done at a pace to allow explanation as you learn the practice. We will build a strong and safe practice with emphasis on breath and alignment. Yoga can help build a healthier spine, a stronger and more flexible body and mind, so you can have a stable and balanced foundation from which to live life! Beginners to ex-

perienced students will benefit from this class.” Instructor – Sue Kent

The second Thursday of the month: Class begins with meditation with Mark Kent followed by Yoga Nidra with Sue Kent 6 p.m.

### Meditation with Mark

This 15-minute class is an invitation to learn about the practice of meditation. You will learn about the science and benefits of observing your mind, your thoughts and the emotions that arise out of your thoughts. Each class will include a brief introduction to



a specific form of meditation to help you find a practice that suits you. We will discuss how to develop a short meditation practice in daily life.

### Yoga Nidra

“Yoga Nidra is a deeply restorative practice, where you will be resting comfortably as you are lead through a series of ‘visualizations’ to systematically be led towards mental, physical, and emotional relaxation. Through this process, the subtle energy channels are also revitalized. Yoga Nidra is sometimes called Beyond the Dreams, Deep

Deep Sleep, or The Ocean of Emptiness. It is helpful for stress reduction, insomnia, fatigue, depression, anxiety and general well-being. The practice can be done seated or lying down, and your instructor will lead you towards the “place” where there is only a deep abiding stillness that is rich with awareness; a space of inspiration, intuition, and compassionate loving kindness.” -Heartsong Yoga

The third Thursday of the month: Yoga for “Every-body with Sue Kent at 6 p.m.

## Armchair Travel Series: Travel Poland

WILBRAHAM – Feb. 26, Noon to 2 p.m. There’s more than one way at your leisure. Call 596-8379 to register, walk-ins also welcome. Sponsored by the Friends of the Wilbraham Senior Center.

## Read It + Reel It

WILBRAHAM – Murder Club” and find out! What’s better—the book or the movie? Now: Read the book Wednesday, Jan. 21: Join us for a matinee screening of “The Thursday Watch the movie, 1 to 3 p.m.



# THANK YOU to all for making our Celebrity Bartending Event a huge success!

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### CONGRATULATIONS TO TEAM SECURE ENERGY SOLUTIONS:

(Barry, Marc and Mike)  
Who Raised The Most Tips Of The Night

**BIG THANK YOU TO ALL WHO ATTENDED AND SUPPORT THE WILBRAHAM FRIENDS OF RECREATION**

## Ski or Shop event set for Feb. 13

WILBRAHAM – Sign up for a Ski or Shop event on Friday, Feb. 13.

Depart Memorial School at 9 a.m., 310 Main Street, Wilbraham.

Arrive by 8:45 a.m. for a 9 a.m. departure. We will return to Memorial School by 4 p.m.

All prices are per person (gratuities included). Make checks payable to: The Wilbraham Senior Center.

Option 1: Ski Butter-nut 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. (\$140)

We’ll drop all skiers at the main entrance where you can pick up your equipment and lift pass. Then enjoy three uninterrupted hours on the mountain with an optional lunch on your own. Guests should meet back at the main entrance by 2:15 p.m. for a 2:30 p.m. departure.

Option 2: Shop ‘til You Drop 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. (\$35)

After we leave our ski friends, we’ll head to Great Barrington cultural district for those who prefer to shop + dine at their leisure. Guests should return to the bus by 2 p.m. for a 2:15 p.m. departure.

Limited space available. Call 413-596-8379 to reserve your spot!

## Open burning starts Jan. 15

WILBRAHAM - Open burning will begin on Jan. 15 and will run through May 1.

Daily permits are required for burning and can be obtained free of charge at [hcburnpermits.com](http://hcburnpermits.com).

## Crafternoon at WSC

WILBRAHAM – Join us for a special Crafternoon, “Vision 2026” on Thursday, Jan. 22 from 1 to 3 p.m.

Create an inspiring vision board to keep your goals front and center as we head in 2026.

What’s a Vision Board? A collage of images and words, this fun and empowering activity is a visual reminder of what you hope to

accomplish in the year ahead. A daily reminder can be a powerful thing—often being the difference between action and inaction. Make this a year of action.

Limited Space Available To register, please call 413-596-8379 or email Amanda at [arena@wilbraham-ma.gov](mailto:arena@wilbraham-ma.gov).

### LAKESIDE from page 4

go top-notch. They don’t cut any corners and I think that is what really makes it not only a marquee development project, but it is really going to be great for our town and for our region.”

John Sullivan was excited to continue the legacy of the Lakeside Inn and said “it takes a village as a whole” to bring everything together, crediting the state and local elected officials, the neighbors in the area and the police and fire departments for their input and support.

He also emphasized preserving the property’s history.

“There’s a lot of family history comprising this piece of property and this location and we’re honored to bring it

back,” John Sullivan said.

Joe Sullivan also emphasized keeping the boutique feel “and that Victorian kind of facade” for the property.

“So, we want it to blend with the history of what it was. We looked at some of the old pictures of the Lakeside Inn. I mean, it looked like a big house and that’s kind of what we’re going for. I mean, the money here is in that beautiful waterfront land in the back and the old pictures we saw of people spread out back there, lounging as it was a beach day. I mean, really, that’s what sold us on the idea,” Joe Sullivan said.

John Sullivan’s message was this.

“They can contact us any time. We listen to the messages, the inquiries, I mean,

just everything. Just patience. This is a very big project, it’s very detailed and we got a lot of work to do with the town, with the town government, councils, Conservation and we’re excited. We just thank everybody for the support,” John Sullivan said.

As for Joe Sullivan’s message?

“Thank you for embracing us and thank you for being patient with us. Things are moving forward and we’re as excited as you are,” Joe Sullivan said.

For anyone interested in staying up-to-date on the project, they can visit the Lakeside Redevelopment Project Facebook page or chat with the Sullivans at their local businesses.

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**VIEWPOINTS**

**SOCIAL SECURITY Matters**  
By Russell Gloor

**I'm on SS disability; should I switch to regular Social Security?**

**Dear Rusty:**  
*Should I take my Social Security now at age 62, or wait till I am 65?*  
*I've been collecting SS disability due to health issues and was curious if I should wait or claim my regular Social Security retirement benefits now.*  
**Signed: Disabled but Wondering**

current age, you would likely get between 75% and 80% of what you are now receiving on SSDI (depending on your exact age in the month you claim and at age 65 you would get about 87% of what you are now receiving on Social Security disability.

In other words, as long as your disability continues and you remain eligible for Social Security Disability Insurance benefits, you should not switch to your normal SS retirement benefit, because you would get less money. And the resulting benefit reduction would be permanent.

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

**Dear Disabled but Wondering:**  
If you are now collecting Social Security Disability Insurance benefits and you are still disabled, it would be a disadvantage to claim your SS retirement benefits at this time age 62 or even at age 65. That's because your SSDI benefit is the same as your Full Retirement Age amount, as calculated for you at the point you became disabled. Born after 1959, your FRA is age 67, but you are already receiving your FRA benefit while on SS disability even though you have not yet reached your full retirement age. That full SSDI benefit will automatically convert to become your SS retirement benefit when you reach your full retirement age.  
If you were to claim your normal SS retirement benefit any earlier than your SS full retirement age of 67, the amount you get would be reduced for claiming early. At your



Sora

The Massachusetts Audubon Society reported a sighting of a sora on Nauset Beach in Orleans on Cape Cod between Dec. 10 and 16.

Soras are small, chubby, chicken like birds with long toes and between eight to ten inches tall. Their stubby bill distinguished them from other rails in the United States and Canada, which have longer bills. They also frequently hold their short tail cocked up showing their white patch under the tail.

Soras are mottled gray and brown with white-edged feathers, but the feature that stands out the most is their yellow candy-corn bill. Other field marks include a black mask, throat patch and vertical white lines on the sides. Females tend to be less brightly colored than males and have less black on the face and throat. Juveniles also lack the black mask.

Soras have a distinct walk pushing their head forward with every step while nervously flicking the tail upward, exposing the white under tail feathers. They tend to forage in dense vegetation, but also venture into open areas from time to time. Their long toes help them walk on top of floating mats of vegetation. Soras make their homes in freshwater wetlands with emergent vegetation such as cattails, sedges and rushes. During migration and winter, they also use brackish marshes, flooded fields and wet pastures.

The Sora makes its presence known with plaintive whistles and whinnies rising from the marshes all across

er sanctuary in Barnstable, a Nashville warbler reported at a house in Yarmouth, continuing unseasonably large numbers of tree swallows in various places including over 50 in Falmouth, two western willets in Chatham and an American golden plover in North Truro.

**Christmas bird count**

From Dec. 15 to Jan. 5, the Christmas Bird Count will commence in the U.S., Canada and 18 other countries in the Western Hemisphere. Countries are divided into geographical regions with 35 in Massachusetts and each region will pick a single 24-hour period to count birds. Data from the CBC can be utilized in many ways, including to monitor trends in bird populations, document range shifts over time and examine how climate change may impact the winter distributions of birds.

CBC data has been used in hundreds of analyses, peer-reviewed publications and government reports over the decades.

Birds likely seen in Massachusetts are chickadees, titmice, many species of woodpeckers, bluebirds, Carolina wren and many raptors. Migrants from the north include kinglets, some raptors, snow buntings and some sparrows. Waterfowl seen mostly along the coast are dabbling and diving ducks. Irruptive species that are only present in some years are evening grosbeak, red crossbill, white-winged crossbill, redpoll, pine grosbeak and red-breasted nuthatch.

**Helping birds**

People may help birds by participating in the Christmas Bird Count. It is an important source of data on birds.

*People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by calling me at 413-967-3505, leaving a message at extension 100, emailing [mybackyard88@aol.com](mailto:mybackyard88@aol.com) or [edowner@turley.com](mailto:edowner@turley.com) or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005.*

**in my BACKYARD**  
By Ellenor Downer

North America. Despite its abundance, it is not often seen: As with other rails, it spends most of its time hidden in dense marshy growth or wet meadows. Occasionally it will walk about in full view at the edge of a pond, delighting any birders, who happen to be nearby. Although Soras might seem like weak fliers when seen fluttering over the marsh, they regularly migrate long distances, many going to South America for the winter.

**Cape Cod bird sightings**

Besides the sora, the following sightings were reported between Dec. 10 and Dec. 16. A western tanager was found at Mass Audubon's Wellfleet Bay sanctuary. The male painted bunting continued at a feeder in Brewster. Other bird sightings included a clapper rail and six western willets in South Chatham, two common terns in North Chatham, a blue-headed vireo and a yellow-breasted chat in South Orleans, a common yellowthroat and for northern shovelers in Harwich and a short-eared owl.

Birds seen at Race Point in Provincetown were a black guillemot, 200 razorbills, 13 dovekeys, three common murre, 45 black-legged kittiwakes, six Iceland gulls, a red-necked grebe and 75 northern gannets.

Other sightings around the Cape included two continuing Eurasian wigeon in Yarmouth Port, two Barrow's goldeneyes at Loop Beach in Cotuit, a great egret at Mass Audubon's Skunknett Riv-

**Testing and taking inventory of seed is a good practice to start the new gardening season off right**

I don't know about you, but I have been caught up in spirit of the holidays. It's been fun to indulge in family time and try and get caught up on much-needed rest.

In the herb category dill, caraway, parsley, angelica and chives come to mind. Year old garden heliotrope, feverfew and bellflowers can be stubborn germinators as far as flowers go.

**in the Garden**  
by Roberta McQuaid

As a general rule I keep seed that is less than three years old, unless the variety in question is rare. Even spotty germination is better than nothing when it comes to seed that is hard to find.

I have given myself this last week of the year to continue to take it easy before I hit the "to do" list.

One of the big things I have been procrastinating on at work is taking inventory of all the seeds I have left from the last couple of years. The box holds a hundred or so different varieties of seeds, mostly heirloom, open-pollinated types.

There is something refreshing about accomplishing this task soon into the new year; a seasonal habit I've had for the last four decades give or take. To me, it means spring is not far behind.

I begin by organizing the seeds first by category: vegetable, flower or herb, then alphabetically. After those piles have been made, I go back and decide which packets are no good or no longer of use.

No matter how well they are stored, some seeds won't germinate well past the year in which they are sold for. Based on my experience these include hybrid onions and parsnips. Carrots can be

You can save yourself disappointment at planting time by performing a simple germination test on questionable seed.

Place a few seeds in a moist paper towel. Roll it up and seal it in a plastic bag in a warm location.

Instructions in the seed catalog or on the packet should tell you how long it takes for germination to occur, as well as inform you of the initial germination percentage. Once the necessary amount of time has elapsed unroll the paper towel and determine how viable your seeds are by observing the sprouting that has occurred.

Based on the results you may decide to sow the seed more thickly or just start over with a fresh batch.

Last year I did my own version of a germination test by sowing few seeds of questionable varieties in pots, and placing them on a shelf near my wood stove. I learned which seeds were worth the effort of sowing in

Please see **GARDEN**, page 15



**'Cough CPR' is a social media myth**

A popular social media post that first surfaced in the '90s is popping up again. It says that regular and vigorous coughing can keep you alive if you have a heart attack while you're by yourself.

The theory is that the coughing can change the pressure on your heart to keep it beating until you can get to help. Sounds reasonable, right? There's one little problem, though: It's not true.



By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN  
Guest Column

It may even be dangerous. More on that later.

I can see why there may be some confusion.

A patient may be told to cough when there's a sudden

abnormal heartbeat (arrhythmia) during a medical procedure, such as in a cardiac catheterization lab, Dr. Manash Patel of the Duke University School of Medicine told the American Heart Association. "I think people believe that coughing is changing, somehow, the heart's squeeze. But coughing has not been shown to do that," he said.

It seems to me that people

Please see **HEALTH**, page 13

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**Correction Policy**

The TIMES will gladly correct factual errors that appear in this paper and can be substantiated. Corrections or clarifications will always appear on the editorial pages. To request a correction, send information in an e-mail or mailed communication to the editor at the above address listed above.

The Wilbraham-Hampden TIMES is published every Thursday by Turley Publications, Inc. One year out of town subscriptions are available at \$45, out of state \$50 by calling 800-824-6458 Ext. 201. The deadline for submission of news material, letters to the editor and photos is Monday at 12 p.m. The TIMES is not responsible for submitted photos.

**Election letters to the editor welcome**

The Wilbraham-Hampden Times welcomes readers to participate in this year's election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to Wilbraham-Hampden Times, care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to [krivers@turley.com](mailto:krivers@turley.com). Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by noon Monday to be considered for that Thursday's newspaper. No attack letters will be printed. No letters written by candidates supporting their own candidacy will be printed. If the volume of letters received is larger than the space available in the newspaper, or if the letters become repetitive, the newspaper reserves the right to print a representative sample. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last edition before the election.

For more information, call the editor at 413-283-8393.

**Campaign news**  
As part of its election coverage, the newspaper plans to print stories about contested races for Congress, state Senate, state House, district attorney and Governor's Council during the weeks leading up to the election, as well as a question-and-answer voters guide. In order to ensure fairness to all candidates, no political press releases will be printed, nor will reporters cover political rallies or fundraisers.

Candidates who wish to further publicize their candidacy, beliefs and events may contact advertising, 413-283-8393 about paid advertising in Wilbraham-Hampden Times.

*Life in &*

Readers are encouraged to send in medium to high resolution photos for this page by e-mail to [krivers@turley.com](mailto:krivers@turley.com) or mail to TIMES, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069.

# WILBRAHAM HAMPDEN

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

Send us in your announcements! Happy Birthdays, Anniversaries, etc.

We will pick one each week to run here free of charge, please keep it to less than 50 words. Please send to [krivers@turley.com](mailto:krivers@turley.com)

## Minnechaug students participate in New England Music Festival

On December 13, 2025, students from Minnechaug participated in the New England Music Festival Solo and Ensemble Festival at Griswold HS. Pictured right to left are five vocalists Joy Mendoca, Laila Williams, Layla Hosnander, Eva Gagliarducci and Ella Gagliarducci with two violinists Hussein Saleh and Elijah Mathias. The students did incredibly well!



Submitted photo and caption Melanie Collins

## Strings and Friends Winter Concerts



Here are the fourth and fifth grade ensemble students from Soule Road School and Green Meadows School.



These are the beginning students from Green Meadows and Soule Road.



Beginners from Stony Hill School.

Submitted photos and caption Elaine Tryon Holdsworth

The Wilbraham Hampden Strings and Friends program performed their winter concerts at Minnechaug High School Auditorium in December 2025. The fourth and fifth graders from Hampden and Wilbraham performed on Thursday, December 11, 2025.

The beginners from Green Meadows in Hampden and Soule Road in Wilbraham performed on Monday December 15, 2025. The beginners from Stony Hill in Wilbraham performed on Thursday December 18, 2025.

Strings and Friends entered its 20th season this year -- it was started in 2006 by Elaine Holdsworth with 14 students. It has grown to its current point where, under the guidance of director Denise Gendron and founder Elaine Holdsworth, there are currently 170 students participating.



Submitted photo and caption Sue Agnew

## Wilbraham Women's Club Donations

Wilbraham Women's Club's Community Service chairman, Amy Basile, is with Carolyn Martinez, Executive Director of Christina's House. The club donated many articles of new clothing for mothers & children living at the home in Hampden.



## Al Rosati serenades with holiday tunes

Photos and caption courtesy of Hampden Fire Department

A big thank you to Al Rosati for bringing the holiday spirit to Vantage of Hampden with his acoustic holiday songs! It was a wonderful time had by all.



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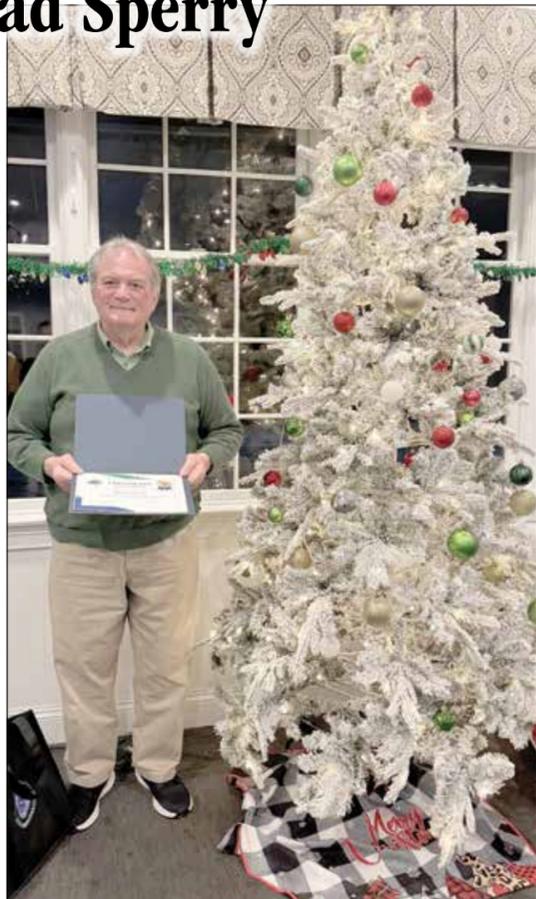
# Gina Kahn MVP Nomination for Mr. Brad Sperry

WILBRAHAM/HAMPDEN - The Hampden Wilbraham Partners for Youth Coalition is proud to recognize Mr. Brad Sperry with the Gina Kahn MVP Award. Mr. Sperry's dedication to supporting youth in our community truly goes above and beyond.

Through unwavering commitment, generous use of time, and a genuine passion for empowering young people, he has made a lasting impact. Whether mentoring students, supporting youth programs, volunteering at community events, or advocating for opportunities that help young people grow and succeed.

Not only Mr. Sperry's involvement, but his heart for service. He leads with compassion, listens with intention, and inspires confidence in the next generation. His actions remind us that investing in youth is investing in the future of our community.

We are deeply grateful for his leadership, service, and example. This recognition is a small reflection of the enormous difference he continues to make in the lives of our young people within our community.



Brad Sperry



The Parish Center is filled with individuals coming together with a good meal and enjoying good company.

## CAROLERS from page 1

about the Connection and its importance.

"First of all, it is run by Sister Mary, who is just wonderful," Perry said. "But it's a nice way of getting people together, to communicate, to talk to each other. And we always just have fun, and then we usually get entertainment, so everybody has a nice snack before Christmas."

The Carolers performed a wide variety of holiday arrangements for the Social Connection, including a special mash-up of "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer" and "Frosty the Snowman," as well as the widely anticipated "Silent Night." They also moved around the tables that were set up, as each table could get a close up on the performance.

The Valley Carolers consist of director and soprano Deb Salli, alto Audrey Pierce, tenor Matthew Macri and bass Bob Fernandes.

Speaking on behalf of the Valley Carolers was Deb Salli, the director of the Carolers.

Salli explained this is the second time the Valley Carolers have been entertainment for the Social Connection.



Turley photos by Noelle Hisgen

Social Connection Treasurers Rita and John Grover welcome and check people into the event.

"I work with Sister Mary, and she's always just such a joy to the world. It's fantastic. She's a wonderful, positive and loving person. So we're very happy to be here," Salli said.

The Social Connection

comes together once every month, usually on the third Thursday of each month.

It was a great way for people to get together, meet new friends and enjoy good food and entertainment this Christmas season.

## Evangel Assembly hosts Open Door Open Mic Night

WILBRAHAM - Evangel Assembly is excited to announce our Open Door Open Mic Night, a vibrant community event taking place on Saturday, Feb. 21 at 7 p.m. at Evangel Assembly, located at 348 Stony Hill Road, Wilbraham in the East Wing.

This event is open to all, inviting guests to enjoy a night of diverse performances or take the stage themselves

for a five-minute performance of their choice. Whether you're a singer, poet, comedian, or storyteller, this is your chance to shine.

Open Mic participants can sign up to perform by visiting <https://evangelassembly.churchcenter.com/people/forms/1120002>. Spectators are welcome to come, relax, and enjoy an evening of local talent and entertain-

ment in a warm, welcoming atmosphere. Join us for an unforgettable evening filled with laughter, music, and inspiration. Admission is free, there will be coffee and treats for donations, and all are welcome.

For more information or to register for a performance slot, visit <https://evangelassembly.churchcenter.com/people/forms/1120002>.

## PAGEANT from page 1

throughout the rehearsals and the night of. That's wonderful."

"I love the church, and I like to give back to the church a little bit when I can," Callahan said. "And it just puts me in the spirit of Christmas, being with all the kids and teaching them what Christmas is about."

Speaking on behalf of the church's pageant as a mother was Jena Fallon, whose two sons, Brody and Russell, were participating in this year's pageant as Joseph and one of the Three Kings respectively.

Fallon is also a cantor at St. Cecilia's who helped with the singing during the pageant.

"It's been wonderful,"



ABOVE: The children participating in this year's Christmas Pageant are front and center telling the story of the birth of Jesus.

Turley photos by Noelle Hisgen

AT LEFT: From the left, The Donkey's Angel, Donkey, Mary, and Joseph arrive at the inn.

Fallon said. "I have loved seeing all the kids learn about the true meaning of Christmas and singing the songs with them, seeing their excitement and joy. As a mom, it's been

wonderful to see."

Lastly, Rosemary Oldread, the head of religious education at St. Cecilia's, also spoke about the pageant, expressing excitement at how many took part.

"We have over 50 children participating this year," Oldread said. "The Christmas pageant at St. Cecilia's is such a wonderful tradition. Seeing all the children act out the story of Jesus' birthday is such a beautiful way to celebrate this season. We are so blessed to have Meg Cyr and Lori Callahan, who have directed this pageant year after year. The kids come back to see them and because they make this pageant such an incredible memory for so many."

Once again, the St. Cecilia's Christmas Pageant was a success: having so many children perform the story of the birth of Jesus to their parish community, all while learning about the reason for the season.

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When they say a family that plays together stays together, they must have been talking about Tony and Chrissy Fazio and their five children. This family is full of creative talent. They literally play together as this family is full of musical abilities and can be seen at various venues throughout the area. They also do a lot of laughing in this household which comes pretty easily in this family as mom performed as a 'stand up' comic in LA. Of course, that was before they had their kids who are now 23, 22, 20, 18 and 15. WHEW, I'm tired just thinking what that must have been like when they were all younger! Imagine the comedic material she must have now with that crew! Tony said when someone in their house takes themselves to seriously, they don't stand a chance because of the family's humor.

Tony and Chrissy have been examples for their children by giving back and being involved with their community in various ways. Chrissy has always participated with the kid's schools and volunteered for projects within their town. Tony as a proud dad shared some things about the kids and their aspirations saying they are all gearing toward something that will be of service to others. Their oldest son has chosen his vocation, is

learning much about the profession and has already purchased a home! One of his daughters has been a Paraprofessional for students with disabilities for a few years now, and though exhausting, loves what she does. Another is in college



By Barb Turcotte

with the goal of being an Adjustment Councilor for high school students, while yet another hopes to become a History Teacher. The youngest is watching all her sibling's accomplishments and has a few years before she needs to make a decision in which direction she wants to go.

Tony along with his friend Ed, voluntarily entertained the thousands of walkers at the Rays of Hope Walk-a-Thon from 2013 to 2020 and then passed the torch to his kids who now volunteer at the same spot. However, last year the walkers got a special treat as the whole family sang at that location! Tony said they like to use their talents to bring joy and in doing so volunteer four or five times a year such as at the Longmeadow

Library and have also performed for Relay for Life. In January he will be entertaining the residents at Keystone Commons, offering his first performance there for free. So as you can see, their children have been nurtured by very giving parents.

Tony went to school for physical therapy then soon realized he liked the teaching aspect better so wound up working with special education students. He's advanced his career and now holds the position of Director of Special Education Programs for the state of MA. The mission is to help these youngsters get the resources they need and are entitled to with hopes of keeping them from ever going down the wrong path and landing in jail.

Chrissy was a stay-at-home mom for years, (hmm, wonder why with five little ones!) but since they are older now, she's ventured into the entrepreneurial world by opening a store called the 'The Living Room'. She had a dream of opening a store that looks like a fully furnished home but with everything in it for sale. After acquiring numerous things from finding treasures at estate & tag sales, she had built up quite an inventory over the years and was ready

Please see **KINDNESS**, page 12



### VSO Pat Renna visits with Knights of Columbus 10195

WILBRAHAM - The Saint Cecilia Knights of Columbus warmly welcomed Wilbraham Veterans Service Officer Pat Renna to their December 16, 2025, meeting.

VSO Renna introduced himself to the Council and then updated the group on several matters related to veterans: The Status of the Holyoke Soldiers Home, the various benefits available to veterans, and pending legislation that could affect veterans.

Renna then explained what his role is and how he can help the veterans of Wilbraham. He met with several Knights personally to answer any questions they may have had. He explained that the commonwealth of Massachusetts is the only state to mandate a VSO for each community. Finally, he explained the HERO ACT and all the benefits due to our veterans under the Act.



### HCC recognizes fall 2025 graduates

HOLYOKE - Holyoke Community College is proud to recognize the following students who will complete their requirements for graduation at the end of the fall 2025 semester. These members of the Class of 2026

were recognized at HCC's third Fall Graduate Reception on Monday, Dec. 1, in the college's Leslie Phillips Theater and will also be invited to participate in HCC's 79th Commencement exercises at the MassMutual Center in

Springfield, Mass., on May 30, 2026.

**Hampden:**  
Korey Colglazier, Adelaide Fay, Adam Poulin.

**Wilbraham:**  
Jean Boutin, Liam Colclough.

### HAMPDEN LIBRARY from page 1

we need the larger bathroom, at least one of them, open, first of all, for ADA compliance, that both of those larger bathrooms have the handicap stalls, and these two little ones don't," Hutchison said. "So, that's something that we really need to happen soon. Getting, maybe, just the girls room unlocked and even if there's certain stalls that you don't want used, we can call it a family bathroom so anyone can use it."

Flynn agreed this was a concern and suggested, "perhaps, we need to consolidate the use of the restroom facilities."

"This is something, but it's evolving. Just like you're bringing it forward, 'Hey, at certain times, we need more facilities than during regular times,'" Flynn said.

Hutchison clarified the diaper changing station would be needed all the time.

"So, it really has to be

open whenever the library is open," Hutchison said.

On the handicapped bathrooms, Flynn noted there are others available at the town hall.

"It might be a little farther away, but there are other(s). Again, this is a growing process here," Flynn said.

Town Facilities Manager Herb Foley also clarified he assumed the smaller bathrooms are ADA-compliant because they were used by the school district, but Town Administrator Brian Domina added he wasn't sure if they had handrails though.

Hutchison confirmed they did not.

"This is great that you're bringing it forward and it's something that between Herb and Brian on a daily basis, they'll look at addressing it," Flynn said.

The final items Hutchison noted are things she'd like the trustees and library to be kept in the loop about such as the HVAC system in case the library needs to close for a day

or two when someone comes by, the lighting as shared earlier, keys and codes for library doors and the fire code.

"There are certain doors that lead out to the other halls, like if we're securing the library, and we don't know if there's some doors that we can bolt or if that breaks the fire code and we didn't know that, now that we're all moved in here, is the fire chief going to come through and give us an emergency exit plan, talk about it..." Hutchison said.

Flynn said he talked to Domina the week before that a fire drill will need to be scheduled and creating a map on the wall showing the exit pathways.

"Probably not this month because so much is going on, but definitely in January," Flynn said. "We'll definitely have the fire department involved in that."

He later added the sidewalks are, also, being looked into to see if they can be modified at the other two entrances, such as installing ramps.

Hutchison agreed on contacting Foley and Domina for concerns and blind-copying the board in any emails,

thanking everyone for their efforts and support.

"Main thing, the lighting outside, bathrooms being

accessible to everyone and the changing table and then just keeping us in the loop," Hutchison said.

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**SCHOOLS**

**Wilbraham Middle School Honor Roll**

**WILBRAHAM** -The following students received Honor Roll status for the Term 1 marking period at Wilbraham Middle School. Distinguished Honors is all A's in all subjects; Honors is all A's and/or B's in all subjects.

**Distinguished Honors Grade 8**

Cassandra Alvarez, Aubrey Appleby, Aria Balwa, Molly Baroni, Reid Blanchard, Madelyn Boudreau, Madeline Britt, Rose Christensen, Jacob DeGray, Joseph Dickson, Emery Dyer, Peyton Eusebio, Cody Feit, Nora Fontaine, Ryenne Fountain, Alaina Giombetti, Gavin Hisgen, Jasper Hulseberg, McKinley Jaeger, Brynn Kennedy, Bree Kiernan, Delaney Kinsman, Julia Magee, Siobhan Mahoney, Therese Mathias, Sophia Mazzaferro, Vivian McIntyre, Calla Minahan, Joseph Montano, Andrew Mullen, Ella Mylonakis, Mia Newman, Shana Oguku, Sunmi Oh, Luiza Paiva, Abigail Patterson, Kennedy Raymond, William Roberts, Jaxson Rogers, Grace Romano, Greta Rust, Natalia Savlick, Sonhae Senez, Jackson Shanley, Louise Shaughnessey, Katelyn Sheehan, Madelyn Smith, Harper Spring, Cole Thomas, Jaxson Walker, Caitlin Weichselbaumer, Ashley Wetherbe, Kylie Zamorski

**Honors - Grade 8**

Aruneesan Anurathan, Mason Axiotis, Alaina Bailey, Brielle Bailey, Kegan Bailey, Vincente Baltazar, Dylan Bean, Lillian Blair, Dante Bontempi, Alianna Brandoli, Brenna Bryan, Jack Christofori, Bella Conde, Marcus Cotto, Emma Cristino, Cieanna Cromartie, Isabella DePace, Leo Deziel, Madelynn Easton, Maycie Eldridge, Timothy Euber, Lukas Gregson, Oliver Hart, Kareem Ibrahim, Jacob Johnson, Andrew Kmelius, Daide Kupis, Jack Lapalm, Aiden Larson, Chloe Lawless, Emma Lewis, Camila Long, Jackson Long, Micah Long, Jack Madore, Logan Man-

gar, Callulah Marrone, Zahra Minhaj, Ryan Minns, Kristina Monteiro, Emily Moraru, Aubrey Morin, Maeghan Morris, Emily Mumper, Ryan Nichols, Desmond O'Brien, Riya O'Connor, Michelle Ohemeng, Mya Pafumi, Joshua Pelletier, Ryleigh Picard, Logan Pryor, Gage Ring, Kaylie Ritchotte, David Roberts, Garrett Roberts, Alexan Robles-Blasenak, Christopher Romano, Jake Salemi, Epi Sanchez, Jamie Scliopou, Clara Steele, Violet Straitiff, Arianna Sundheim, Maxwell Sylvester, Lucas Tassinari, Devdutt Vijay, Samuel Webster, Carter Witruk, Brenna Woytowicz, Owen Wright, Emily Zheng

**Distinguished Honors Grade 7**

Tia Assaf, Owen Benninger, Oliver Bergeron, Olivia Beston, Emily Burke, Sophia Cantalini, Angelica Capatina, Sadie Casella, Olivia Chen, Nathaniel Choinski, Honora Farrell, Natalie Fol, Quinn Folli, Jack Ford, John Guerin, Taleya Gunn, Zoe Harrigan, Sawyer Haugh, Emma Howland, Enzo Imbriglio, Emily Jourdain, Grace Keith, Hayden Kelley, Eva Kellogg, Gavin Kern, Jessica Kwajewski, Michael Lafield, Anthony Lapomardo, Claire Lareau, Jayden Lewis, Jayden Lopez, Katherine Lotterer, Molly MacEachern, Caroline Maserati, Caroline Maziarz, Lucas Morrow, Parker Noonan, Austin Piquette, Ava Ricketts, Taesha Rowe-Singleton, Mia Santos, Damien Sasen, Sophia Schott, Audrey Scott, Paige Smith, Anna Steele, Vivian Stromwall, Kayla Vanderleeden, Camdyn Vazquez, Allie Whittier, Caira Williams, Evianna Wright, Samuel Zanetti

**Honors - Grade 7**

Logan Abdelmaseh, Alexis Adames, Amber Antunes, Pheobe Babineau, Amalia Baltazar, Avery Blume, Jackson Bourke, Margaret Branigan, Matthew Brogle, Cassidy Bryan, Cole Cantalini, Maddox Carreira, Jackson Chappel, Mya Conselino,

Philip Costello, Ella Coviello, Rea DeNardo, Audriana Desousa, Mary Dos Santos, John Gralia, Gavin Haber, Sophia Haygood, Preston Hebert, Nora Hegarty, Charlotte Hemingway, Brennan Hoey, Grayson Householder, Lucas Inguagiato, Noah Kelly, Brooke Kmelius, Helena Kudryk, George Larkins, Rylee Lopes, Zara Lotterer, Ella Luszcz, Amyr Ly, Savannah McNabb, Cole Michael, Adriana Monteleone, Ellis Nelson, Nora O'Connor, Adriana Pafumi, Betty Pagoga, Colin Paige, Austen Paterno, Stella Petit, Amelia Pluciennik, Axel Reed, Olive Reed, Madison Riker, Brayden Rivest, Jua Rodriguez-Gonzalez, Taishla Rowe-Singleton, Summer Saleh, Jaylizhali Santiago, Nicolas Siciliano, Anthony Soto-Tovar, Daniel Soto-Tovar, Samantha Strange, Connor Sullivan, Dominick Tangredi, Juliany Torres, Kayson Twarog-DeJura, Jake Vanderleeden, Carter Verteramo, Justina Wojtowicz, Jaxen Wright, Ella Wrisley.

**Distinguished Honors Grade 6**

Mary Catherine Babbs, Alaina Bertelli, Samuel Castellano, Ethan Chaleiro, Maya Checiek, Violet Chiarizio, Callen Coffey, Emerson Conway, Brooke Dean, Liam Downey, Louis Duong, Joshua Ekong, Parker Ence, Lincoln Eusebio, Elise Falzone, Madelyn Fontaine, Jack Fulton, Sofia Gonzalez, Maximilian Guberow, Lily Harrigan, Colton Hersman, Hunter Houle, Davida Ingman, Jacob Kearns, Cynthia Keen, Alexander Keeping, Caden Knowles, Reed Libbey, Henry Luttrell, Layla Lynch, Veronica Metzger, Emma Pafumi, Mark Pafumi, Nora Parastatidis, Harold Patterson, Kailey Proulx, Savannah Pryor, Sophia Quinn, Weston Salvador, Emma Sheehan, Katherine Souza, Robin Straitiff, Sophia Sutter, Macie Taylor

**Honors - Grade 6**

Olivia Adams, Emma

Althen, Madeline Alvarez, Logan Arbour, Jonathan Balaur, Gabriella Barroso, Sophia Bennett, Logan Bernardes, Caleb Bosworth, Aubrey Boudreau, Bryan Bracey, Aiden Brown, Colton Burzenski, Drake Cafarelli, Lincoln Chappel, Carson Childress, Emerson Couture, Logan Cruz, Liam Devine, Ryan Deziel, Cora Dooley, Gabriella Dos Santos, Raymond Downey, Daniel Duah, Elliott Dunn-MacDonald, Reed Edgar, Gavin Fallon, Genette Fanning, Emersyn Frisk, Genevieve Gaudreau, Emma Griffith, Andrew Griguoli, Peter Harrington, Ella Hart, Harper Hatch, Jackson Hearn, Nolan Krupka, Elijah Kwajewski, Noah Lanzoni, Ava Lee, Josiah Lowe, Evelyn Magill, Liam Mahoney, Caitlin Mastroianni, Berlin Maynard, Vincent McIntyre, Sheamus Miller, Alex Monteleone, Gavin Morales, Cameron Moran, Natalie Moretti, Wyatt Morin, Lucas Nascimento, Madison Nitri, Ethan Noonan, Brynn O'Brien, Finlay Oguku, Taesun Oh, Aria Osorio, Cameron O'Sullivan, Jackson Pelletier, Riley Pelloso, Evangeline Perkins, Vincent Pitzer, Emerie Pluciennik, Jack Powers, Harmony Rioux, Makenna Rodrigues, Brittny Rogers, Charlotte Rust, Drew Salemi, Alivia Sampson, Tyler Sanchioni, Ryleigh Shepard, Autumn Sheridan, Maddison Skinner, Jaxon Smith, Aubrey Stephen, Jack Swain, Ashlen Thomas, Eli Thomas, Mila Tsim, Sadia Vasta, Greyson Williams-Jones, Nolan Witek, Jordan Wong-Vallejo, Kennedy Wright, Lucas Zheng, Daniel Zhou.

**Pomfret School Fall 2025 honors announced**

Pomfret, CT - The following local students were named to a Fall 2025 Honors list at Pomfret School:

**HIGH HONORS**

To achieve this level of distinction, students named to this list earned a grade point average of at least 3.67 and received no grade lower than a B+.

**Class of 2029**  
**Elle Hersman**  
(Hampden, MA)

**HONORS**

To achieve this level of distinction, students named to this list earned a grade point average of at least 3.33 and received no grade lower than a B.

**Class of 2026**  
**Rylee Welch**  
(Wilbraham, MA)

*Events & announcements schedule*

**Wilbraham seeks volunteers to help launch 'Friends of the Veterans of Wilbraham'**

**WILBRAHAM** - The Town of Wilbraham's Department of Veterans Services is calling on local residents, veterans, and community members to help form a new volunteer organization - Friends of the Veterans of Wilbraham.

Over the past year, many residents have expressed interest in doing more to support local veterans beyond the official programs coordinated by the Town. In response, Veterans Services Director Patrick Renna is helping to facilitate the creation of this independent community-based group dedicated to honoring, assisting, and engaging Wilbraham's veterans and their families.

"It's inspiring to see how many people in our community want to do more for our veterans," said Renna. "The Friends of the Veterans of Wilbraham will provide an outlet for that enthusiasm - helping to expand events, programs, and volunteer support for those who have served."

The purpose of the Friends of the Veterans of Wilbraham organization will be to: Plan and fundraise for veteran-centered programs, events, and special projects.

Support community commemorations such as Memorial Day and Veterans Day.

Provide outreach, education, and volunteer assistance to veterans and their families.

Strengthen connections between veterans, their families, and the broader Wilbraham community.

Participate in the selection of the annual Veteran and Veteran Business/Organization of the Year awardees.

While the Department of Veterans Services fully supports this effort, state ethics laws prevent the Director from holding an official role within the organization. However, Renna will continue to provide guidance, coordination, and communication to help ensure the group's success.

Community members interested in helping shape this new organization are invited to attend an information session on Wednesday, January 14, 2026, at 5 p.m. at the Wilbraham Senior Center.

This founding committee will develop the group's mission statement and determine its organizational structure (such as establishing a nonprofit 501(c)(3)).

For more information or to express interest in participating, contact: Patrick Renna, Director of Veterans Services, Town of Wilbraham.

**Wilbraham Disposal and Recycling Center new days and hours of operation**

**WILBRAHAM** - There are new DRC hours of operation beginning Nov. 12.

The town of Wilbraham will be modifying the operating hours for the Disposal and Recycling Center. Saturday and Sunday hours have been modified and Thursday hours have been added.

\*Sunday 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Monday Closed; Tuesday Closed; Wednesday 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.; \*Thursday 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Friday 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.; \*Saturday 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Thank you for your cooperation and continued commitment to responsible waste and recycling practices.

**Tech Help at the Wilbraham Library**

**WILBRAHAM**- Need help setting up an email account, updating your phone, or figuring out a new device?

Students from the Wilbraham & Monson Academy (WMA) Community Service Team will be at the library to assist with technology-related questions. Assistance is available on a first come, first served basis on Fridays from 3:30 to 5 p.m.

Please bring any relevant devices and/or log-in and password information. Contact the library at 413-596-6141 or visit [www.wilbrahamlibrary.org](http://www.wilbrahamlibrary.org) for more information about upcoming dates.

**Hampden Senior Center Group Exercise Classes**

**HAMPDEN** - Join us for PWR! Moves Group Exercise Classes, a Parkinson-specific class with a goal to keep you moving and doing more of what you want to do.

Led by Lisa Kern, OT, reiki master/holistic therapist. Fitness goals include strength, balance, agility, aerobics and flexibility.

Exercises are designed to improve fitness goals and counteract your Parkinson's symptoms.

Classes take place from 9 to 10 a.m. on Mondays at the Hampden Senior Center. Pre-paid rate for eight classes is \$65. Drop-in rate is \$10 per class.

Call to register or for more information at 413-566-5588. Sponsored in part by the Friends of Hampden Senior Citizens.



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# SPORTS

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Jake Moore makes a stop.



Ryan Mackie protects the puck with his stick.



Ryan Semanie curves toward the center of the ice.



Kelly Balog enters the offensive zone.

## Falcons offense explodes on MassMutual ice

SPRINGFIELD – On Saturday, Dec. 27, Agawam and Minnechaug ice hockey found a bit larger spotlight to play and made their way nearby to the MassMutual Center in Springfield, home of the Springfield Thunderbirds. Minnechaug was the team that really shined, though, with a nine-goal first period and a 15-1 win over the Brownies. Dominic Fiorentino had three goals. Ryan Donovan, Kelly Balog, and Brody Faneuff had two goals each. Agawam's sole goal came from Brady Klinakis. Agawam is now 0-8 while Minnechaug improved to 6-1 overall.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com  
Jack Gagner sends a wrist-shot at the net.



Brody Faneuff watches a pass head up the ice.

## Chaug girls basketball holds on for win over Tigers

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

WILBRAHAM—Several of the girls' basketball teams in Western Massachusetts changed leagues before the start of the regular season.

Minnechaug Regional, who captured the Valley Wheel League title the past two seasons, and South Hadley, who were the Suburban Division champions the last two years, are the newcomers in the Valley League, along with Pittsfield.

In their first meeting as league foes, the Minnechaug Lady Falcons built a 24-point lead in the middle of the third quarter before the South Hadley Lady Tigers came roaring back. The Lady Tigers sliced their deficit to eight points late in the fourth quarter, but the Lady Falcons remained undefeated with a 59-51 home victory, last Tuesday night.

"The leagues are much different now and we're not going to be beating teams by 40 points. We're happy to be 4-0," said Minnechaug head coach Ryan Minns. "South Hadley is a battle tested team. They were state finalists last year and most of their players are back this year."

The Lady Falcons entered 2026 with a perfect 4-0 overall record and a 3-0 league mark. Their other two league victories came against Northampton and Longmeadow, who are returning members of the Valley League.

Springfield Central, who's a Division 1 team, captured the Valley League title a year ago.

"Every league game is going to be a battle," Minns added. "We've got Pittsfield next followed by Central."

The last time that the girls' basketball teams from South



Abbi Stachowicz makes a no-look pass.



Cailin O'Brien attempts a free throw.

Hadley and Minnechaug faced each other was on January 6, 2020. The Lady Falcons didn't have very much trouble winning that contest, which was also held on their home court.

The Lady Falcons had four players reach double figures in the first meeting of the 2025-26 regular season against the Lady Tigers.

Senior Kelly Cronin, who has committed to playing basketball at Amherst College next year, led the way offensively with 15 points. Senior's Ava Manning and Elizabeth Woytowicz both finished with 14 points. Junior Ainsley Holden chipped in with 10 points off the bench.

South Hadley (1-3, 0-3) only win so far this season came against Belchertown

(64-30) at the Pioneer Valley Tip-off, which was played at the Mullins Center on the UMass-Amherst campus.

A year ago, the Lady Tigers posted a 22-4 overall record, and they lost to Cathedral High School of Boston in the Division 4 state finals, which was held at the Tsongas Center located on the UMass-Lowell campus.

South Hadley head coach Paul Dubuc was pleased with the way his squad battled back against the Lady Falcons.

"Every league game that we play is going to be just like this one," Dubuc said. "Our second half effort was very good, but we just have to clean some things up."

Junior Taylor Bullough

Please see **GIRLS**, page 12

## Falcons pick up win over Tantasqua

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

FISKDALE—Putting the ball into the basket was a major factor in the only meeting of the regular season between the Minnechaug Regional and Tantasqua Regional boys' basketball teams.

The Falcons did manage to make 12 two-point field goals and five 3-pointers leading to a 44-26 non-league victory over the Warriors inside the Tantasqua Field House, last Saturday afternoon.

"It wasn't a very pretty game, especially offensively, but we still found a way to walk out of here with a win," said Minnechaug head coach Mike Orzech. "Our half-court offense wasn't very good, but we played very well defensively. We still have a lot of work to do if we want to compete against the better teams in Western Mass this year."

Minnechaug, who won their fourth consecutive game, had a 5-1 overall record following the road win. The Falcons scored 50 or more points in their first



Max Baroni stretches out his arm as he dribbles toward an opponent.

four victories of the season. They also scored 48 points in a loss to Amherst in the annual Pioneer Valley Tip-off, which was held at the Mullins Center located on the UMass Amherst campus.

The Warriors (1-4) lost their fourth game in a row since defeating Bay Path, 57-20, at home in the season opener on December 16. They made eight two-point field goals and two 3-pointers in the game.

"I thought we defended well against them," said Tantasqua head coach Scott Dion. "Our main issue in today's game was that we just couldn't put the ball in the basket. That's something we'll need to fix."

The Warriors faced the Falcons without senior captain Sam Pieczynski, who's their leading scorer. He missed his second game with an injury. In the three games that Pieczynski has played in this season he has scored a total of 44 points.

"Not having Sam on the court during the past couple of games has hurt us, Dion said. "We're hoping to have him back next week."

Since the first meeting between the two Regional high schools took place on the hardwood during the 2021-22 regular season, the Warriors have a slight 3-2 edge in the series. The Falcons' only other victory in the series came at home by the final score of 46-44 on February 1, 2023.

Two of the Warriors three



Miles Fergus looks to get around an opponent.

Please see **FALCONS**, page 12

**SPORTS**

# Monadnock reflects on great 2025 season

Monadnock Speedway competitors and race teams gathered this past Saturday, Dec. 13 at Best Western in Keene, New Hampshire, to celebrate the achievements of the 2025 racing season. The annual awards banquet served as a night of recognition, appreciation, and reflection on a competitive and memorable year at the speedway, while also setting the tone for the upcoming 2026 season.

Champions from each division were on hand to collect their well-earned hardware, highlighting the dedication, hard work, and perseverance required throughout the season. The evening underscored not only championship success, but also the sportsmanship and camaraderie that define Monadnock Speedway.

The All-States Material Group 604 Modified Championship was claimed by Brian Robie, who also earned the Teddy Bear Pools and Spas

Triple Crown Championship Award. Robie addressed the crowd following his presentation, sharing his plans for the future. While he intends to compete in select events during the 2026 season, he emphasized his commitment to helping younger drivers in the division grow, learn, and achieve their racing goals.

Dylan Zullo, champion of the Twin State Truck Service Super Streets, also collected his championship hardware along with the Teddy Bear Pools and Spas Triple Crown Championship Award. In his remarks, Zullo noted that he plans to continue racing in certain events, while also exploring a new direction for 2026, leaving fans eager to see what changes may be ahead.

The Fabian Fuels Mini Stock Championship went to Jon Fultz, who stepped forward to accept his championship award along with the Teddy Bear Pools and Spas Triple Crown Award. Fultz

took time to thank everyone who supported his championship run, including his crew, family, sponsors, and fellow competitors, acknowledging the teamwork behind his successful season.

In the Brattleboro Towing and Recovery Pure Stock Division, Kyle Kenny was honored as the 2025 champion. Kenny enthusiastically addressed the crowd while accepting his awards, revealing that he plans to move into a new division for the 2026 season at Monadnock Speedway, though he did not disclose specific details.

Also recognized was the champion of the Six Shooter Mini Series, Travis Hollins.

Carlos Grenier was in attendance to receive the Teddy Bear Pools and Spas Pure Stock Triple Crown Series Champion.

The Doug's Auto Body Young Gun Division was recognized collectively for its hard work and dedication throughout the 2025 race

season. Several individual awards were also presented, with Ella Grabowski earning the Sportsmanship Award, Hunter Duquette recognized for Most Wins, Maya Bell receiving the Best Appearing Award, and Sofia Rego honored with the Hard Luck Award.

Special awards were presented across the weekly divisions as well. In the 604 Modified Division, Tyler Leary was awarded Best Appearing, while Tyler Leclerc received the Sportsmanship Award. The Super Streets Division saw J.D. Stockwell earn Best Appearing, with Eric Smith taking home Sportsmanship honors. In the Mini Stock Division, Kevin Clayton received Best Appearing, and Chris Fultz was awarded Sportsmanship. Rounding out the awards, the Pure Stock Division honored Addison Brooks with Best Appearing, while Michaela Krafve received the Sportsmanship Award.



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli  
**aden Duke keeps the ball from going out of bounds.**

**FALCONS** from page 11  
victories over the Falcons were by three points or less.

right sideline to Grasso, who was standing under the hoop. Grasso, who finished the game with 10 points, man-

One of the reasons why the series was started is because Mike Orzech's younger brother, Nate, is the Warriors junior varsity/assistant varsity coach. Nate Orzech is also the varsity football coach at Tantasqua. The Orzech brothers were outstanding athletes at Ware High School.

"We used to scrimmage against Tantasqua before playing them in the regular season," Mike Orzech said. "Tantasqua has had some very good teams in the past and coach Dion is a very good coach. It has been a lot of fun competing against them during the past couple of years."

Nate Orzech's j.v. team suffered a 45-38 loss to the Falcons.

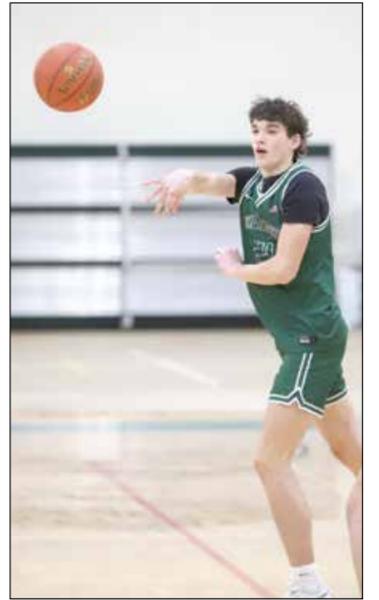
The Falcons varsity team, who won for the first time at the Field House, held the lead from start to finish in last Saturday's contest.

Things started out well for the visitors as senior Caden Duke (10 points) buried a 3-pointer 15 seconds into the opening quarter.

The score remained 3-0 until Minnechaug junior Darren Duah (3points) made a foul shot in the middle of the opening quarter.

With 2:45 remaining in the quarter, the Warriors broke the ice following an inside hoop from junior Sean Allen (5 points).

The Warriors wouldn't get any closer than that as the Falcons put together a 7-0 run during the final two minutes of the first quarter. Freshman Cohen Nelson (4 points) hit a short jumper, and senior Andrew Grasso buried a 3-pointer from the left side. Then with 0.3 seconds showing on the scoreboard clock, senior Landyn Eldridge delivered an inbounds pass from the



**Cohen Nelson slings a pass away.**

aged to get the shot off before the buzzer sounded.

It gave the visiting team an 11-2 lead entering the second stanza.

The Falcons held a 15-2 advantage less than two minutes into the second quarter following inside hoops from senior Miles Fergus (6 points) and Eldridge, which were his only points of the game.

The Warriors outscored the Falcons, 8-5, during the final six minutes of the first half.

Trailing, 20-10, at half-time, Tantasqua senior Drew Wright scored a pair of inside baskets at the start of the second half. He finished the game with a team-leading eight points.

Then an Allen lay-up closed the gap to 20-16 with 4:35 left in the third quarter.

Duke hit a 3-pointer at the buzzer ending the third quarter, which increased the Falcons lead to 29-20 entering the final eight minutes.

The Warriors cut their deficit to six points (29-23) following a 3-pointer from Wright before the Falcons finished the game with a 15-3 run.

# Bruins snap Thunderbirds winning streak

PROVIDENCE, R.I. - The Springfield Thunderbirds (12-13-4-2) suffered another gut-wrenching defeat late in regulation, 3-1, against the Providence Bruins (23-6-1-0) on Sunday inside Amica Mutual Pavilion.

Springfield's power play got two early reps in the first four minutes of play, and the man advantage capitalized as Matt Luff unleashed his team-leading 11th of the season at 4:32 of the period, making it a 1-0 game off set-ups from Dillon Dube and Samuel Johannesson.

The Bruins had a wonderful shift following Luff's goal that nearly tied the score, highlighted by a Victor Soderstrom point shot that rang the post behind Vadim Zherenko.

Eventually, Providence would get even as they also struck on their second power play of the period, as Dans Locmelis beat Zherenko from the left circle at 13:35 after a Fabian Lysell one-time attempt careened right to the waiting rookie winger.

The Bruins' defense suffocated the T-Birds' attack in

the middle period, keeping the visitors to only two shots on net, but Zherenko was tremendous in his own right, denying all 10 Providence shots in the period. Among Zherenko's best pieces of work was a clutch stop on a low-slot tester from Locmelis.

The 1-1 stalemate carried all the way into the game's dying minutes, but for the second time in three meetings in Providence, the Bruins found a way to break the tie late in regulation when Frederic Brunet uncorked a

slapper that eluded Zherenko with just 1:11 remaining.

The T-Birds offense, which managed only 17 shots all night and just seven after the first period, could not get an equalizing response, and Riley Tufte polished off the night with an empty-netter just 13 seconds after Brunet's game-winning goal.

With their win streak snapped, the T-Birds were on the road on Wednesday, looking to start a new one as they visited the Utica Comets for a tussle at Adirondack Bank Center.



**Kelly Cronin goes for the bank shot.**



**Ava Manning attempts a layup with pressure coming.**



**Lyric Nelson makes a pass in transition.**

**GIRLS** from page 11  
led the visiting team with 14 points.

The junior duo of Cara Dean and Kate Phillips each scored 13 points.

Sophomore Olivia Athas scored all her eight points during the final quarter.

The Lady Tigers took a 2-0 lead with an inside hoop from Phillips less than a minute into the opening quarter.

A couple of minutes later, Bullough banked home a 3-pointer from the top of the key. She also made a pair of free throws, which increased South Hadley's lead to 7-0 with 3:55 remaining in the first quarter.

"You're always trying to take an early lead in every game," Dubuc said. "We just couldn't score after taking the 7-0 lead."

The Lady Falcons scored the final ten points of the first quarter.

The home team took the lead for the first time at 9-7 when Woytowicz buried a 3-pointer with a minute left in the quarter. She had also made a pair of free throws and a lay-up during the run.

The Lady Falcons, who

outscored the Lady Tigers, 12-7, in the second quarter, held a 22-14 halftime lead.

Minnechaug began the second half on fire offensively.

With the help of two 3-pointers from Manning and another one by Cronin, the Lady Falcons built a 39-15 lead. Freshman Zahara Wilson (2 points) capped off the 17-1 run by making a pair of free throws.

The Lady Tigers battled back with an 11-3 run. Dean scored the first eight points of the spurt before a 3-pointer from sophomore Grace Sherman closed the gap to 42-26 with a little more than a minute left in the third quarter.

South Hadley continued to battle back in the fourth quarter, but Minnechaug managed to hold onto the double-digit lead until the final minute.

With 40.6 left in regulation, the Lady Tigers were trailing, 58-49, following a Phillips inside basket.

After Minnechaug made a foul shot, Bullough cut the deficit to eight points (59-51) with a lay-up, which wound up being the final outcome of



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com  
**Elizabeth Woytowicz makes her way around an opponent.**

the game.  
The Lady Tigers are

scheduled to host the Lady Falcons on January 26.

**KINDNESS** from page 9

to make her dream come true. In fact it's been so successful, it's outgrown its current spot and will be moving to a larger location soon, still in East Longmeadow.

Tony said that Chrissy is really the 'rock of the house' and keeps it all together. He was emphatic by saying he picked a fantastic partner! He chuckled as he explained the kids go to Chrissy for tangible things and if they need to get something done, she'll know exactly how to accomplish the task. Whereas they come to him for the emotional support because as he describes himself, he's just a big softy.

Tony was very humbled in 2005 when he was voted, 'Teacher of the Year'. And all these years later is still a very humble guy and isn't really

into talking about himself, but did agree hesitantly to let me write this story about he and his family. I worked with Tony about 30 years ago and he's never changed, not from his great charismatic personality to his huge smile that makes his eyes glisten.

I'm wishing you all wonderful holidays! Create your own magic by doing a Random Act of Kindness, it will definitely brighten your season as well.

*If you'd like to share a Random Act of Kindness story or if this one has touched you, please contact me at bdt514@aol.com or 413-575-9385. Who knows, you might see your story, 'Just Cause' you witnessed, you did or maybe received something nice being done for you. See you soon with another Random Act of Kindness! ~ Barb*

**HEALTH** from page 6

are also confused about what a heart attack is and what cardiac arrest is. A heart attack is the result of a build-up of plaque in the coronary arteries, disrupting the blood flow to the heart and potentially damaging it. Johns Hopkins details the symptoms:

- A feeling of heaviness, tightness, pressure, aching, burning, numbness, fullness, or squeezing. The pain can either last for several minutes, go away, or come back repeatedly.
- Pains in the torso/upper body, including the arms, left shoulder, back, neck, jaw, or stomach
- Difficulty breathing/feeling out of breath
- Sweating or "cold sweats"
- A sense of fullness, indi-

- Nausea or vomiting
- Lightheadedness, dizziness, feeling like you might faint
- Unexplained tiredness, weakness, extreme weakness (like you can't do easy tasks), or severe anxiety reacting to symptoms
- Rapid or irregular heartbeat

To those I would add feelings of indigestion (especially in women) or just a general feeling that "something's not right."

In cardiac arrest, the heart suddenly stops beating, and the patient won't be conscious to cough—or do anything else. It's a major medical emergency. If you're lucky, bystanders will start hands-only CPR or use an AED (automatic external defibrillator) after calling

911. Someone who has cardiac arrest when there's no help nearby has a poor chance of survival.

So the question remains: What should you do if you feel a heart attack coming on and you're alone, or, say, driving home from work?

First, because a heart attack can be a prelude to cardiac arrest, immediately call 911 before you call anyone else. Don't attempt to drive if heart attack symptoms arise. Pull off the road and call 911.

You might be told to stay on the line with the emergency dispatcher, but if you have a second line, call someone to be with you in case your heart attack turns into cardiac arrest.

Next, unlock the door so first responders can get to you. If you're able to take as-

pirin, chew two 81-milligram children's aspirin or one regular aspirin. Aspirin will help keep your platelets from clotting, and chewing them will get the medication into your bloodstream faster.

People with cardiac issues often are prescribed nitroglycerin. If you have some around, place one under your tongue.

Then, and this is a tough one, do your best to stay calm and quiet. Avoid exertion. Take deep, steady breaths. Count slowly to 100 (one Mississippi, two Mississippi...). Sit upright with your back supported, or you can lie on the floor or bed with your legs elevated.

Don't eat or drink anything. You don't want to risk aspiration if you lose consciousness, and if you need an

immediate procedure, such as a catheterization, your stomach should be as empty as possible.

And don't cough. Johns Hopkins advises: "This probably won't work, and worse still, attempting this technique may put you in more danger. Attempting this procedure on your own can cause you to accidentally work against the rhythm of your heart and make it harder to get oxygen into your blood rather than easier."

I've said it before and I'll say it again: Dr. Facebook is not the best source of medical advice. Stick with authoritative sources like WebMD, university hospitals and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (cdc.gov). And don't believe everything you read.

Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, R.N., a registered nurse and board-certified patient advocate, is the founder of [www.NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com](http://www.NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com), which trains medical professionals to become successful private patient advocates. A Monson, MA resident, she is the author of "How to Be a Healthcare Advocate for Yourself & Your Loved Ones" and her new book, "Advocating Well: Strategies for Finding Strength and Understanding in Health Care," available at [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com). Contact her at [Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com](mailto:Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com) to set up a free phone consultation.



# PET PAGE



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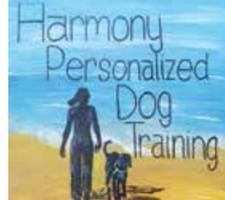
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## Are Your Pets Bored?

When you think about how your pet spends their days, have you considered that they could actually be bored? Both dogs and cats can experience boredom, and they typically exhibit it through negative behavior.

Some signs of boredom to look for in your dog include destructive behavior like chewing, digging, and pawing, as well as whining, barking, and jumping. And although your cat spends a lot of the day napping, they will show repetitive behaviors such as overgrooming, chasing or fighting with other pets, and inactivity or seeming uninterested.

As a result, they tend to make their own stimulation by overeating or shredding fabric or toilet paper. It's important to keep your pets entertained, so here are some ways to prevent boredom in your pets.

**For your dog:**

**Exercise-** Most dogs love to go for walks. Try mixing up their routine every few days by changing the time of day and your route. Also, try running or hiking with your dog.

**Toys-** Longer-lasting chew toys, food puzzles or fillable toys are great options for a bored dog. Fill a food puzzle toy with your dog's favorite treats to keep them busy and

happy.

**Mental Stimulation-** Teach your pup some new, more complicated commands other than the basics like sit and stay. Play nose games with your dog and hide treats around the house for them to sniff out. You can also engage in more physical play such as fetch and tug-of-war to keep them mentally engaged and on their paws.

**For your cat:**

**Toys-** Interactive toys that cats can chase or chew, as well as scratching posts to provide them with an acceptable place to scratch. These toys can often double as

exercise for your cat, especially ones that they are chasing around the house.

**Trees & Towers-** Cats can be pretty nosy, so place tall cat trees and towers close to windows to keep your cats entertained with what's happening in the neighborhood and do some bird watching!

**Mental Stimulation-** Engage in treasure hunts with hidden treats around your home or begin training your cat to reinforce and encourage positive behavior.

The most important part of pet ownership is to spend quality time with them.

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**BOB ROBILLARD'S RUBBISH REMOVAL** Attics, Cellars, Garages cleaned, Pools/Hot Tubs Removed. Family owned/operated since 1950 **(413)537-5090**

### SNOWPLOWING

**RESIDENTIAL** Snowplowing Service. Wilbraham residential only Call or Text now. Limited space available. **413-519-5439**

### TREE WORK

**AAA-TROM'S TREE SERVICE PROFESSIONAL SERVICE.** Residential removal of trees. Free estimates. Fully insured W/Workman's Comp. Remove them before the wind takes them down. Cordwood, stump grinding. Call **413-283-6374**.

**DL & G TREE SERVICE** - Everything from tree pruning, tree removal, stump grinding, storm damage and brush chipping. Honest and Dependable. Fully insured. Now offering a Senior Citizen and Veteran discount. Call today for free estimate **(413)478-4212**

### STUMP GRINDING

**DL & G STUMP GRINDING** Grinding stumps of all sizes, insured & certified. Senior discounts. Call Dave **413-478-4212**

### PETS

**GERMAN SHEPHERD PUPS.** Champion Czech and Belgian bloodlines. 30 years experience. 3M, 2F, Ready, w/shots. Now \$1,200. **413-218-2321**

## Classified Advertising DEADLINE

FRIDAY AT NOON

## HELP WANTED

# ADVERTISING SALES HELP WANTED

- Do you want to work in your community helping local businesses connect with their customers?
- Do you want a career supporting local journalism, which tells the unique stories of our communities?
- If so, then join our team! Turley Publications is looking for an outgoing, energetic person interested in selling advertising for our community newspapers. The right candidate will assume an established territory with a portfolio of customers.

You must be a self-starter with excellent communication and organizational skills. Basic computer skills are required. Previous print sales experience is preferred but we will train the right candidate.

Turley Publications, a locally owned family business, offers a competitive commission structure, 401k, and health plan.

Send resume & cover letter to:



Jamie Joslyn  
24 Water Street  
Palmer, MA 01069  
Email:jamie@turley.com

## HELP WANTED

### CANNABIS CULTIVATION FACILITY (Holyoke)

Holyoke Wilds, a licensed cannabis cultivation facility in Holyoke, MA, is seeking reliable individuals for trimmer and general cultivation positions. Duties include assisting with plant care, trimming, cleaning, and other general tasks within the facility.  
**Start Date:** Within the next few weeks to months  
**Pay:** Varies based on experience. Ranges from \$16 to \$20 per hour. Requirements: Applicants must be 21 or older and eligible to work in the United States. Background checks are required under state cannabis regulations. Interested candidates should email **holokewilds9@gmail.com** with their contact information and brief work history.

Holyoke Wilds is an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, or veteran status.

## HELP WANTED

**LULOW PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT PARA-EDUCATOR.** Submit resume and letter of intent to: **www.schoolspring.com**

## AUTO

**CASH FOR JUNK AND REPAIRABLE CARS**  
FREE TOWING FAST SERVICE CASH PAID AS IS CALL OR TEXT **413-219-6839**

## HOME IMPROVEMENT

**Walker Handyman Services**  
Home Improvement  
Finish Carpentry • Framing • Drywall • Painting • & more!  
**(413) 687-5552**

# FILL OUT AND MAIL THIS MONEY MAKER

MAIL TO: Classifieds, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069  
or call: 413-283-8393

DEADLINES: FRIDAY AT NOON

| CATEGORY:             |                       |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     |
| 5                     | 6                     | 7                     | 8                     |
| 9                     | 10                    | 11                    | 12                    |
| 13                    | 14                    | 15                    | 16                    |
| 17                    | 18                    | 19                    | 20 Base Price \$26.00 |
| 21 Base Price \$26.50 | 22 Base Price \$27.00 | 23 Base Price \$27.50 | 24 Base Price \$28.00 |
| 25 Base Price \$28.50 | 26 Base Price \$29.00 | 27 Base Price \$29.50 | 28 Base Price \$30.00 |
| 29 Base Price \$30.50 | 30 Base Price \$31.00 | 31 Base Price \$31.50 | 32 Base Price \$32.00 |
| 33 Base Price \$32.50 | 34 Base Price \$33.00 | 35 Base Price \$33.50 | 36 Base Price \$34.00 |
| 37 Base Price \$34.50 | 38 Base Price \$35.00 | 39 Base Price \$35.50 | 40 Base Price \$36.00 |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of Weeks: \_\_\_\_\_ X per week rate = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Credit Card:  MasterCard  VISA  Discover  Cash  Check# \_\_\_\_\_  
Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ CVV \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount of charge: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Quabbin Village Hills**  
Circulation: 50,500

**Hilltowns**  
Circulation: 9,800

**Suburban Residential**  
Circulation: 59,000

All Three ZONES for \$26.00 for 20 words plus 50¢ for each additional word.

## REAL ESTATE

### FOR RENT

**QUAINT WEST BROOKFIELD BROOKHAVEN LAKE** by babbling brook, l-shaped 2bdm. ranch, 2/full baths, finished basement, walkout slider, enclosed front porch. Enjoy nature trails, very quiet private area. \$2850/monthly rental fee. Bernice Stone **774-262-6667**.



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

## FOR RENT

All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status (number of children and or pregnancy), national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, or any intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination.  
This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertising in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain about discrimination call The Department of Housing and Urban Development " HUD" toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. For the N.E. area, call HUD at 617-565-5308. The toll free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

# GREAT VALUE! ALL 3 ZONES NOW FOR THE PRICE OF ONE!

Make checks payable to Turley Publications

OUR CLASSIFIEDS REACH 50 COMMUNITIES EVERY WEEK!



**GARDEN** from page 6

the garden and which I needed to discard and order new.

Although viability decreases as seeds age, proper storage can insure that you will get at least three years worth of sprouting out of many of your favorites. It is important to fold over used seed packets and seal them with tape after use, and if you are just getting to it now, it's better late than never. Put them in a location that is cool and dry.

Since temperatures around 37-41 degrees are ideal, many people assume that storage in the refrigerator is preferred. It is, as long as the seeds are first placed in an airtight container along with a desiccant to absorb

moisture. Desiccants such as silica gel are available in the floral section of craft shops, or you can reuse the pouches of silica that come in vitamin bottles or shoe boxes.

If you'd rather not take up space in your fridge, storing the container of seeds in a cabinet in a dry part of the house will also work.

Whatever you do, don't put them in a hot attic or damp basement! It is also not a good idea to purchase seeds from stores that have their seed displays in greenhouses. Temperature and moisture extremes can affect viability even if the seeds are brand new!

Some seed companies sell their seed in foil-lined packets. These are very good at keeping them fresh for

the longest amount of time – especially if they are unopened.

Now that you have inventoried your seeds, it will be a whole lot of fun to order exactly what you need. That's what I will be doing after one more family game night and that last Christmas movie!

*Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 33 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.*

**CONTRACT** from page 1

tract mediation through the Massachusetts Department of Labor Relations after the negotiations reached an impasse.

Maureen Russell, a third-grade teacher at Stony Hill Elementary School, focused on curriculum, explaining how "the expectation of students and teachers is not sustainable."

"Our new curricula are rigorous and engaging, but are also guides meant for educated, experienced teachers to use in combination with how we know children learn best. We are not given autonomy to do that," Russell said. "Since it has been deemed necessary to follow these curricula and their corresponding pacing guides strictly, there is no time to go over content students didn't understand. Rushing through at this fast pace means students aren't able to process and internalize the skills. Thus, more are being identified as needing interventions, which the classroom teacher is also expected to deliver."

Russell said educators, now, have four curricula to plan for, implement and grade, or five if Second Steps is expected to be taught during morning meetings.

"24, that's the number of students in our classrooms, too high. Three, the average number of extra hours we work per day. 74, that's how many days we've been in school this year. That adds up to 222 extra hours of work or approximately 32 additional workdays. 170, the number of days we've gone without a contract and 12 is the number of meetings the HWEA Negotiating Team has had with the School Committee with no outcome," Russell said. "As a teacher and a resident, I find this shameful."

After noting the paraeducators need fair wages too, Russell said this.

"Our district is already getting the most we can give. We love our students and we want to work hard so that they get the best education possible. But educators are losing time with their own families and risking our own health," Russell said. "We ask that you give us the same respect that we give to our students. Pay us what we have earned and deserve."

Jessica Paris, a second-grade teacher at Stony Hill Elementary School, asked for a fair contract "because I care about the sustainability of our schools and the ability of dedicated educators to continue serving our students with the time, energy and commitment they deserve."

Patis said the schools are filled with "hardworking,

caring professionals who give everything they have to ensure students feel safe, supported and capable of success."

"Teachers in our district are carrying more responsibilities than ever before. Larger class sizes, expanded curriculum demands and increased behavioral and mental health needs among students. We are under increasing pressure to integrate rapidly evolving technology into our classrooms while often working with outdated and frequently broken Chromebooks that disrupt learning and add to our workload," Paris said.

Paris added that asking for a fair contract "isn't about asking for more, it's about recognizing the realities of the job" and "ensures that teachers can continue providing the high-quality education our community expects and deserves."

"When teachers are supported, students benefit. A fair contract is an investment in the entire community. Better supported educators attract families, strengthen local economies and keep property values stable. It is not simply about compensation. It is about retention, recruitment and respecting the professionalism of teachers. Our district cannot retain or attract the educators our students rely on if the message they receive is that their dedication is limitless, but their support is negotiable," Paris said. "The decisions you make in this negotiation will shape not only the quality of our schools, but also the future of every child who walks into our classrooms. It is a message to families that our district is committed to excellence, it is a message to teachers that their dedication is not invisible and it is a dedication to students that the adults they rely on are worthy of respect, stability and support. They deserve to see that their community values the people who show up for them day after day and year after year."

Paris ended her comments saying a fair contract "is not just about dollars, but it's about what kind of district we want HWRSD to be," and asking the School Committee "to demonstrate your commitment to our students by settling a contract that truly reflects the value of the people who serve them every day."

"I urge you to take action that reflects the compassion, strength and vision our students count on," Paris said.

Franchesca Dubois, a teacher at Mile Tree Elementary School, is expecting her first child and has taught for four years, fighting back tears as she shared

how lucky she feels to work "with our youngest learners" and teachers who "that consistently put students' needs, learning and even personal fulfillment at the center of each day."

Dubois explained she spends early mornings and late evenings with her colleagues "to make sure each student gets the best possible experience in first grade and beyond."

"At school, their entire educational journey can be determined by those first years of experience. Each one of us knows the importance of the beginning years of childhood and the effect it has on a child's development," Dubois said. "Unfortunately, for my son, his beginning year of development may be different and forced into the hands of someone that is not his mother."

Dubois said she and her husband are bracing for financial obstacles "due to the lack of maternity leave," and her returning to work as early as four weeks post-partum.

"I have only accumulated 20 sick days. Throughout pregnancy, there are many appointments monthly, biweekly and eventually, even more. Some of those appointments I have been able to schedule for after hours. Many I cannot given restricted time for our overwhelmed, local specialist doctors. Those upcoming appointments will slowly take my accumulated days, my time with my newborn," Dubois said. "Once I use my accumulated days, I will no longer hold an income, so I ask for your guidance. What are my options? A second job? Leaving teaching entirely for a career that can provide basic support for my growing family? My husband will carry our young and growing family in a new world that so desperately requires two strong incomes. We already worry about paying our mortgage, insurance, medical bills, student loans and high grocery bills with my first step salary that is under livable wage. Soon enough, diapers and formula will be added to a growing list and an income that will soon stop."

Dubois shared her story to express she's not the only young parent "that this affects."

"Please look at the age graphics of our district. Many more may soon be in this position. I encourage you all to follow suit with other surrounding districts and careers to adapt paid family leave for my son and my family and the rest to come," Dubois said.

**WILBRAHAM PLANNING BOARD**  
The Wilbraham Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Wednesday, January 28, 2026, at 5:45 PM** in the Town Office Building, 240 Springfield Street, on the application of Mark Fulton for a Special Permit (SP25-06) to exceed the size limitations in Sections 3.9.2.2 and 4.4.8 of the Wilbraham Zoning By-Law to allow construction of a 864 square foot (26' in height) detached accessory building on property owned by Mark and Kristen Fulton located at 28 Longview Drive as shown on plans on file in the Planning Office and posted for public viewing on the Planning Board page of the Town of Wilbraham website at [www.wilbraham-ma.gov/123/Planning-Board](http://www.wilbraham-ma.gov/123/Planning-Board). This meeting will be conducted in person and virtually (see meeting agenda for details).  
James Rooney, Chair  
1/08, 01/15/2026

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-7758**  
Docket No. **HD09P1912EA**  
Estate of: **Robert Jablonski**  
Date of Death: **01/08/2008**  
**CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION**

To all interested persons:  
A Petition for S/A - Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by **Brenda Jablonski of Chappaqua, NY** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.  
The Petitioner requests that **Brenda Jablonski of Chappaqua, NY** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 01/26/2026. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must**

**file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.**

**UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE**

**A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.**  
WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.  
Date: December 23, 2025  
**Rosemary A Saccomani**, Register of Probate  
01/08/2026

**SALE OF MOTOR VEHICLES**  
This ad is pursuant to MA Gen. Law Ch.255, Sec. 39A as of January 16, 2026 the following motor vehicles will be for sale to satisfy a garage keepers lien:  
2005 Kia Sportage  
VIN: KNDJE723457063817  
LKO: Louis Cote  
55 James Rd., Ware MA 01082  
2003 Chevrolet Cavalier  
VIN: 1G1JC52F837212188  
LKO: Christopher Edge

11 Chnura St., Apt. C  
Ludlow MA 01056  
2006 Volkswagen Passat  
VIN: WVVMA23B9YP3015858  
LKO: Rosa Fraga  
37 Essex St., Ludlow MA 01056  
2008 Nissan Versa  
VIN: 3N1BC11E48L363404  
LKO: Brianna Babineau  
4040 Main St.  
Thorndike MA 01079  
R & S Assoc. Inc  
PO Box 543  
Wilbraham MA 01095  
413-596-4374  
01/01, 01/08, 01/15/2026

**SALE OF MOTOR VEHICLE**  
This ad is pursuant to MA Gen. Law Ch.255, Sec. 39A as of January 9, 2026 the following motor vehicle will be for sale to satisfy a garage keepers lien:  
Vehicle: 2017 Hyundai Elantra  
VIN#: KMHD74LF2HU433078  
COLOR: Gray  
LKO: Joanne Hish  
167 Kirkland Ave.  
Ludlow, MA 01056  
Lein: Santander Consumer USA  
Fort Worth, TX 76161  
R & S Assoc. Inc  
PO Box 543  
Wilbraham, MA 01095  
413-596-4374  
12/25/2025, 01/01, 01/08/2026

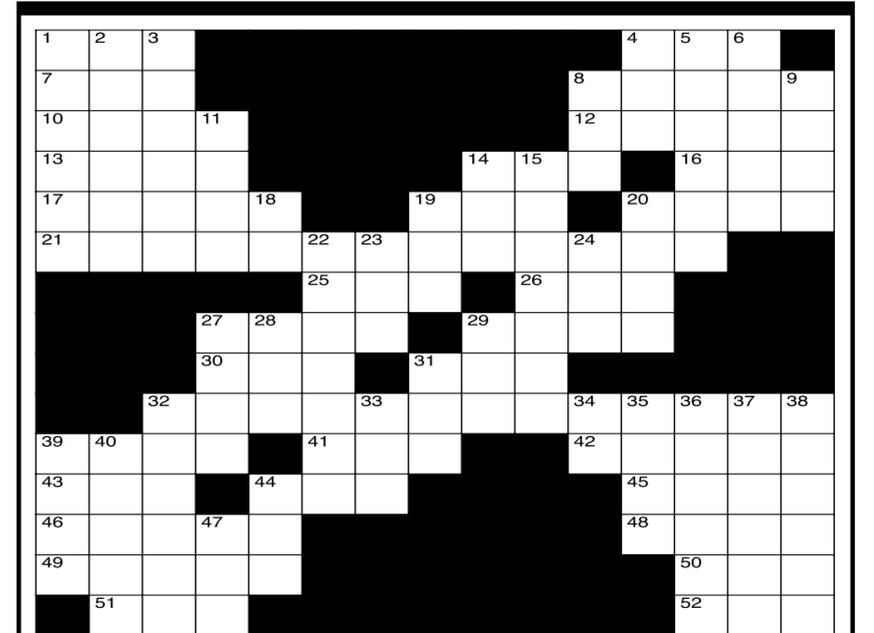
**NOTICE**  
ERRORS: Each advertiser is requested to check their advertisement the first time it appears. This paper will not be responsible for more than one corrected insertion, nor will be liable for any error in an advertisement to a greater extent than the cost of the space occupied by the item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

**PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE**

- Email all notices to [notices@turley.com](mailto:notices@turley.com)
- Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.
- Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts' public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

**Public notice deadlines are Friday at 3 p.m.**

**visit [www.publicnotices.turley.com](http://www.publicnotices.turley.com)**



- CLUES ACROSS**
- 1. Former CIA
  - 4. Language
  - 7. Constrictor snake
  - 8. Demand
  - 10. Rich man
  - 12. Short-tailed marten
  - 13. Zoroastrian concept of holy fire
  - 14. Superconducting super collider
  - 16. International group of countries within the Americas
  - 17. Sacred state for Muslims
  - 19. Shock therapy
  - 20. Engrave
  - 21. Localities
  - 25. Paddle
  - 26. Periodical
  - 27. Dishonestly gained money
  - 29. Gain possession of
  - 30. Actor DiCaprio
  - 31. High schoolers' test
  - 32. Mr. October
  - 39. Sign of healing
  - 41. One's grandmother
  - 42. Entrap
  - 43. One who simultaneously buys and sells
  - 44. \_\_ Francisco
  - 45. Web-based data provider of marine life
  - 46. Type of snake
  - 48. Dark mark or stain
  - 49. Member of the Sallii
  - 50. Former measure of length
  - 51. CNN's founder
  - 52. Witness
- CLUES DOWN**
- 1. Acquire
  - 2. Console
  - 3. Hunting expedition
  - 4. Pie \_\_ mode
  - 5. Simple shoes for peasants
  - 6. Eurasian shrub
  - 8. Reciprocal of a sine
  - 9. Work together in harmony
  - 11. Grenade
  - 14. File extension
  - 15. Minute pores in a plant
  - 18. Medal of Honor
  - 19. Make a mistake
  - 20. Advance slowly, as if by inches
  - 22. Sandwich meat
  - 23. An awkward stupid person
  - 24. Strong tree
  - 27. Commoner
  - 28. Electro-encephalograph
  - 29. \_\_ Mahal
  - 31. Congressman
  - 32. Disorderly crowd
  - 33. 007's creator Fleming
  - 34. Atomic #55
  - 35. Part of a door
  - 36. Short-tail martens
  - 37. Baltimore ballplayer
  - 38. Cuddle
  - 39. Gang in "The Outsiders"
  - 40. Of Croatia
  - 44. Body cavity
  - 47. Get free of

# DL&G TREE

Tree Removal



Structural Pruning



Crane Service



Storm Damage



Stump Grinding



Lot Clearing



Give us a call for your free estimate and tree evaluation

## 413-478-4212

# DL&G TREE



**INSURED AND CERTIFIED**