

# TIMES

PSRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PALMER, MA  
PERMIT NO. 22

ECR-WSS  
LOCAL POSTAL CUSTOMER

Dedicated to Improving the Quality of Life in the Communities We Serve

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

JANUARY 15, 2026

www.wilbrahamhampdentimes.turley.com

## Select Board found in violation of Open Meeting Law

Tree removal also begins

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - The Select Board was found in violation of open meeting law, addressing the state attorney general's decision during their Jan. 5 meeting.

The open meeting law complaint stemmed from the July 28, 2025, tree hearing continuation. A prior public hearing on this topic was also held on April 17, 2025.

The topic in question concerned the removal of 69 public shade trees and 300 private trees in circuit 507 L3, which is a four-mile area including Stony Hill Road, Springfield Street and Huntington Avenue, under the Extended Vegetation Management Program. This is a program through National Grid that began during COVID to stormproof the lines.

The board had unanimously approved the tree removal during that July 2025 meeting.

While Select Board Chair Michael Squindo was remote at the July 28, 2025 meeting

via GoTo Meeting, the Open Meeting Violation being discussed and brought forward was a result of the Select Board forgetting to close meeting, then closing the meeting, and holding vote after closing the public hearing.

As of the week of Jan. 5, tree removal has begun on Stony Hill Road.

Mura Bacon-Erickson filed the open meeting law complaint on August 4, 2025, and from there, it was under review by Attorney General Andrea Campbell.

The Times was sent the decision letter by Bacon-Erickson in December, and

Campbell explained the violation.

"Following our review, we find that the Board violated the Open Meeting Law by including an insufficiently specific topic on the notice for its July 28 meeting," Campbell said.

While Campbell clarified the vote itself was not the issue, the lack of specificity informing the public about a vote or discussion taking place was.

"We do not find the notice insufficient because it

Please see **VIOLATION**, page 4



Photo courtesy of Mura Bacon-Erickson  
National Grid working on the trees along Stony Hill Road on Jan. 5.

## Community visualizes 2026 goals

By Angelina Acevedo  
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - With 2026 finally here, the library has offered opportunities to celebrate the new year, and focus on new goals.

On Jan. 5, adults could attend a crafting event to create their own vision boards.

Vision boards are collages of images and words representing a person's wishes or goals, and are intended to serve as inspiration or motivation. Making vision boards are very popular around the new year, as they can help visualize what a person wants to do or achieve during the upcoming year.

Emilie Lang, the adult librarian at the library, explained how to start creating a vision board.

"We started with a brainstorm to get ideas for what we wanted on our vision boards. It was important to narrow down what goals, and only stick to a few to actually put on the board," Lang said. "Some people found that thinking it through first was helpful, but others just jumped straight into finding images and text in our magazines."

The library offered old out



Turley photo by Angelina Acevedo

Emilie Lang's example vision board to help draw inspiration for others.

of date magazines for adults to find collage images, which helps reduce waste. This creative repurposing was able to supply a plentiful amount of images and text to create unique vision boards for each person.

Some themes of the vision

boards included reading, cooking, knitting, photography and traveling. Many goals and aspirations shown were related to enjoying current or new hobbies, trying new foods, and wishes for a happy and healthy new year.

Lang was excited about the

event.

"This was the library's first time having this event, but we're already interested in possibly rerunning it next year. Right now, the event is only for adults, but it could open up to

Please see **GOALS**, page 5

## Selectboard discusses Old Town Hall future

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
krivers@turley.com

HAMPDEN - The Selectboard discussed the future of the old town hall on Main Street during their Jan. 5 meeting.

Chair John Flynn explained how there's been questions on what the town will do with the Old Town Hall, more commonly known as the Town House.

"We don't want to take that upon ourselves to make that call. It's a community asset. We need the community involved in what's going forward. We've had this on our agenda since we've been talking about moving here back in June, July, even earlier," Flynn said. "Brian has met with a couple of different appraisers. We, of course, have the report from Tighe & Bond as to the condition of the building and any improvement and the cost of that improvement."

Flynn said the board is "very interested" in having community members step up to serve on a committee "to really work and provide

the right direction for the board and the town."

"There are lot of challenges with the building to be used in a municipal use, a private use, a home use, a business use. Every one of those would involve a different challenge and there's no easy solution," Flynn said.

When asked about the end goal timeline, Flynn said, if there's monetary involvement, it would have to go before the Annual Town Meeting. But, "at the very least," a report would need to be warranted.

"There's a heating insurance—obviously, we're not duplicating the expense we have here because, obviously, the utilities went down quite a bit when we moved out, but they're still present," Flynn said. "It's somewhat heated. I went in last night. I do the wellness check on Sundays there because I live next door. So, obviously, there's heat to some extent. Security is still there. We have a camera system, so that's present. We insure the

Please see **TOWN HALL**, page 4

## Knights hold Free Throw Competition

By Noelle Hisgen  
Correspondent



A boy gets ready to shoot his next free throw basket.

WILBRAHAM - The St. Cecilia's Knights of Columbus 10195 hosted their annual Free Throw Competition in the Parish Center of St. Cecilia's Church on Jan. 3.

The competition is a long-standing tradition for the Knights, organizing the competition where boys and girls aged 9 through 14 could shoot basketballs in the Parish Center.

The over 20-year-old competition allows children to shoot free throw baskets, while also competing against kids their own age. Each kid takes 15 free throws.

Whoever makes the most shots from that round goes onto the district round, then goes to the regional tournament, the state tournament and so on. Over previous years, the Knights have had competitors from the competition go on to become state champions.

Leading the Free Throw Competition's organization and planning was Chairperson Jared Demetri, who also is the Vice Grand Knight for the first year.

Demetri has been with the Knights for around 11 years and has been the Free Throw Championship chairperson for 9 years.

"Growing up, I loved playing basketball, and we didn't have one of these when I grew up (Free Throw Championships)," Demetri said. "And when I joined the Knights in Wilbraham, I thought it would just be a great opportunity for kids to participate in that. So, being a big fan of basketball, I thought it would be great. And we've had a great turnout every year since I've done it."

Also in attendance was Grand Knight Josh Mitchell, who spoke about the Free Throw Competition.

"Who doesn't like basketball?" Mitchell said. "This is one of my favorite sports growing up, and one of the few things I could do as a kid was shoot free throws. So, just seeing the kids just having a fun time and being in the community and what not is a really good feeling."

The winners from the competition include Kailey

Please see **FREE THROW**, page 8

## School Committee discusses eighth-grade move, again

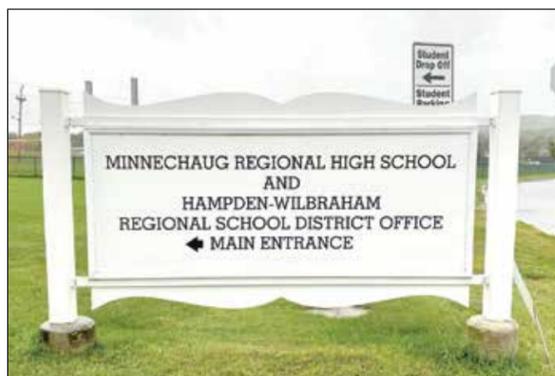
By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - Moving the eighth grade to Minnechaug Regional High School was once again discussed by the School Committee.

The topic was presented after some discussion during the December 18, 2025, meeting when committee members decided to withdraw Wilbraham Middle School from the MSBA's accelerated repair program and apply for the core building program.

Richard Rediker noted the condition of the middle school, overcrowding and "given that right now that we take a percentage of people from the eighth grade and move them into much nicer accommodations from their home."

"If we can get more people out of there and, also, give better conditions to eighth graders, that maybe we could sell



Turley file photo

the move to the high school," Rediker said.

Sean Kennedy mentioned the fears shared by parents in prior discussions, explaining how his son decided to do eighth grade at the high school after many conversations. His son recommended a minimum of two classes and a letter of recommendation from teachers to join the Innovative Pathways program.

"He says the kids need to have something invested. It's not just something, 'Oh, you can just go there.' He has not

been assaulted by anybody; there might have been some teasing going on. I think there's been some disciplinary issues with some of the eighth graders, but that would have happened if there were eighth grade at Minnechaug," Kennedy said.

Kennedy said his son loves attending Minnechaug, the school lunches, teachers and relationships with the upperclassmen, calling it "a positive thing in his life."

Please see **MOVE**, page 5

COMMUNITY

# Bacon-Erickson explains complaint

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM – Mura Bacon-Erickson, a resident of Wilbraham, filed an open meeting law complaint against the Select Board in August 2025 regarding the July 28, 2025, tree hearing continuation.

The Select Board later addressed the complaint and decision from the state attorney general at their Jan. 5 meeting, which readers can learn more about in this week's edition.

The topic in question concerned the removal of 69 public shade trees and 300 private trees in circuit 507 L3, which is a four-mile area including Stony Hill Road, Springfield Street and Huntington Avenue, under the Extended Vegetation Management Program, a program through National Grid that began during COVID to stormproof the lines.

Bacon-Erickson shared back at the April 2025 hearing, she had objected to the EVM program taking down the trees. The vegetation management program everyone is familiar with "cuts hazardous trees down," which, she claimed, is not the situation here.

"No one is trying to say dead, dying, hazardous, invasive or dangerous trees. This was only a campaign to save the healthy, public shade trees, which are supposed to be protected under Mass General Law Chapter 87," Bacon-Erickson said. "In my opinion, this is a misuse of the Public Shade Tree Act. It was never supposed to be used for a blanket, large cutting."

She explained she's met

with the Select Board multiple times and the Planning Board and, in each case, Tree Warden David Graziano "was directed to go through the list of 69 trees and get back to the authorities in town" and it was, also, suggested she go with him.

"He refused every contact I had with him," Bacon-Erickson said. "He never got back to me and we were supposed to walk the 69 trees."

She explained that this current tree cutting is different from others done in town, including tree work that was done on Main Street in May 2025. The trees for this area are being cut, but not pruned.

"In a healthy tree situation where it's close to the line, they have to go back every five years and prune them," Bacon-Erickson said.

She went on to explain that communications between her and the arborist for that area—Ryan Kress—did not seem to flow correctly and she felt that her concerns were being ignored.

On the other 300 trees, Bacon-Erickson said that was "the mature trees that could possibly fall back and hit the lines."

"So, now think about how far back you're going into people's yards," Bacon-Erickson said.

She added with EVM, multiple towns in the state have refused to go forward with these cuttings.

She also attended a Planning Board meeting and found that the number of trees was only increasing, rather than decreasing.

"These are both scenic ways and one of the requirements of a scenic way is it has to have mature shade trees, so they're literally removing



Photo courtesy of Mura Bacon-Erickson

## National Grid works on cutting down the trees.

one of the qualifications that makes Stony Hill Road and Springfield Street a scenic way," Bacon-Erickson said.

Her concern on the Select Board, also, was how they went forward on the removal without information on the healthy trees, during the times she provided public comment or was invited by the board to attend the meetings.

"So, the information and it was suggested at the very first hearing that it was going to be done," Bacon-Erickson said. "There is no provision under Mass General Law for a tree hearing to have a vote."

While Select Board Chair Michael Squindo was remote at the July 28, 2025 meeting via GoTo Meeting, and the Open Meeting Violation being discussed and brought forward was a result of the Select Board forgetting to close meeting, then closing the meeting, and holding vote after closing the public hearing.

Since the complaint, Bacon-Erickson has been working on a citizens' petition for

a tree protection bylaw that will be presented at the May 11 Annual Town Meeting which will "provide greater oversight, better public notice, preserved healthy trees, and add requirements for mitigation like mandatory replanting for few future large scale tree removals in any of our public shade tree areas," with "special efforts protecting healthy mature shade trees that can be as much as 50 to 100 years old" and 18 inches or larger.

She had planned to present this for a possible Special Town Meeting in 2025 to try and save the trees, but requests for collaboration, figuring out how many trees would be impacted and information she hadn't received changed that plan.

"So, the only reason I would have rushed to go forward is if they were going to rush to cut these things down. I believed that they would wait and listen to the taxpayers of Wilbraham and I said, 'if it does not pass at town meeting, then, of course, I lose and the trees go,' but I never dreamed they would cut them before they would ask the taxpayers of Wilbraham," Bacon-Erickson said.

Other concerns for the tree losses include safety, environmental impacts and liability concerns. She also wants to prevent further spread of the EVM program that would impact other trees in town, emphasizing she's not trying to say, "we shouldn't make sure that the electricity is safe and making it to everyone's home."

Going from here, Bacon-Erickson said she will work on educating the community about the bylaw.

"The reality is, I believe that when people see the devastation that's going to happen on Stony Hill Road and Springfield Street, they might get more involved. It's very sad that we're losing them, but maybe we can save trees elsewhere in town," Bacon-Erickson said. "Just think what foliage season, driving down Stony Hill and Springfield Street is going to look like. Gone. These are absolutely gorgeous trees. People moved here for the tree-lined streets and now they're going to have asphalt."

## HAMPDEN CONSERVATION NEWS

# Meet Hampden's newest Conservation Agent

HAMPDEN - The Town of Hampden has hired a new Conservation Agent.

wetlands and floodplains under the Wetlands Protection Act and Town of Hampden Wetland Bylaws, and increase conservation education and outreach for the Town.

Meet Joe Zeno:

"I have a Bachelor of Science in Botany and Ecology from the University of Maine and have been involved with environmental research for many years. Additionally, I served on the Conservation Commission for a few months before being hired.

Now, I have an office in Hampden's new Town Hall where I spearhead the work of the Conservation Commission. As Agent, I aim to foster land use and protection of natural resources through the Open Space and Recreations Plans, preserve and steward the conservation of public lands, oversee to the use of conservation lands and the protection of



As this is a new position for Hampden, it's important to me to establish a working relationship with residents and provide the resources needed to foster healthy wetlands for Hampden. Ultimately, I strive to promote a community that is well versed in wetland protection and conservation ethics; as well as encourage residents to be an active part of the Conservation Commission's missions.

My contacts are: Conservationagent@hampden-ma.gov, 413-566-2151 ext. 122, and my door is open to anyone!"

# WPL's Winter Reading kicks off Jan. 1

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, 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.

# Nomination papers 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.



THE LOCAL  
Table-n-Tap



**WEDNESDAY**  
All Pastas \$20!  
Try one in our House Made Bread Bowls



**THURSDAY**  
Prime Rib Night  
served with potato, veg

**Our Famous Brunch!**  
Saturday & Sunday 9:00am-Noon

SUN 9:00am - 9:00pm  
Mon-WED 11:00am - 9:00pm  
THURS-SAT 11:00am - 10:00pm  
Bar Open Late



FACEBOOK



INSTAGRAM

Get Local at Home with  
**DOORDASH**

TheLocalTableNTap.com  
(413) 279-1198 • TheLocalTableNTap@gmail.com  
2039 Boston Road, Wilbraham, MA

Available evenings and Saturdays.  
Scan today to book a consult!

**SPPOP**  
ORTHODONTICS

75 Post Office Park  
Wilbraham  
413-675-7570  
www.mypoportho.com

Dr. Ana Serrenho  
100% locally owned and operated

# WPL holds Intention Stamping Workshop

By Natalie Proulx  
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - On Tuesday, Jan. 6, the library kicked off the new year with a Teen Intention Bracelet Making Workshop.

Attendees were taught how to stamp and engrave letters into metal tokens. Teens also received blank journals to decorate.

This workshop encouraged teens to think about an intention word or phrase that they would like to live by for the year and engrave it into something physical that they can look at throughout the year as a reminder.

The event was sponsored by the Wilbraham Friends of the Library.

For about four years now, the library has hosted this event, using tools like hammers, metal stamps, and stands.

One of the teens who attended mentioned that she liked using the more industrial tools because of her love of building and that the tools were fun to work with.

Another found it a little scary at first, hearing the loud clattering of metal, but inevitably enjoyed the overall process of the bracelet and metal token creation.

Using a hammer to physically engrave those intentions with each letter, the practice allows the participants to think about every piece of their word or phrase, reflecting on what it means to them, coordinating carefully.

Teen Services and Young Adult Librarian, Rachel Hapgood, coordinated this year's intention bracelet event and discussed that the act of intention setting is important especially at the start of the year.

Hapgood mentioned that reflection plays a big role in this activity, the action helps participants reflect, "back on the time spent here, or why that word or mantra became theirs. And with every letter we think of our intentions."

"You also own the mistakes," Hapgood said. "The little imperfections."

She also discussed the



Turley photos by Natalie Proulx

Attendees learn how to engrave their intention bracelets and tokens.

importance of acceptance, which not only applies in owning the little things that one does and how a scenario may play out, but also applies to her new year's resolutions.

Hapgood's intention word stamped on her bracelet for this year is acceptance, accepting positivity and all that comes in and out of her life.

"I do wear mine quite a bit," Hapgood said, explaining that last year she mentally challenged herself to stay focused on the term, "grateful" by keeping her intention bracelet from the previous

year near her. She stated how it's a good mental exercise to have something physical to remind yourself of your goals.

Some intentions the participants engraved were to be creative, healthy, positive, and imaginative.

Hapgood explained that the practice is a "visual thing" that is, "very valuable to think about...and super meaningful."

Journaling, another practice of reflecting, is an alternative way to practice intention setting, answering

questions yourself or just spilling your feelings about the day. Attendees were given blank journals to decorate and customize.

Hapgood explained how there are multiple ways of using a blank journal to its fullest extent.

"Some people are also into art," Hapgood said. "However they want to express themselves, they can!"

One of the teens who attended mentioned her love for journaling and intention setting as well as what she likes about it: "I like setting goals for myself and I also like writing down what my goals are or what's going on in my life to be able to go and look back on it later."

She explained that reflection in the beginning of the year but also throughout your daily life is important to viewing your progression.

Hapgood explained that we are usually, "so busy with our lives, especially the teens," with the stress they experience, and that it's good to take some time to really reflect on what you'd like to focus on as a person.

Hapgood also encourages everyone to try intention setting, thinking of one word or phrase that you'd like to live by this new year.

She stated it's, "absolutely beneficial to everyone."

## THE BEST FRESH FOR GOOD HEALTH!

### Specials January 14-20

- Fresh Blackberries 6oz Size..2 For \$5.00
- California Jumbo Navel Oranges.....5 For \$4.00
- Sweet Grape Tomatoes.....2 For \$4.00
- Romaine Hearts 3 Pack.....\$2.99 ea
- Hot House Seedless Cucumbers .....2 For \$4.00
- Sweet Red, Yellow & Orange Peppers .....\$2.99 lb
- Yellow Onions 2lb Bags .....\$1.49
- California Carrots 1lb Bag.....5 For \$5.00
- Boar's Head Deluxe Ham .....\$11.99 lb
- Boar's Head Muenster Cheese ..\$6.99 lb

### January is National Soup Month

#### Fresh "Homemade" Soups 2 Varieties Each Day



PLUS EVERYTHING TO MAKE YOUR OWN FAVORITE SOUPS  
Great Selection Of Soup Mixes

#### Randall's Chicken Pot Pies Every Wednesday



#### Mood Boosting "Vitamin F" For Flowers! Pink "Gratitude" Bouquets ~ \$14.99

#### Colorful Fresh Cut TULIPS

10 Stem Bunches \$9.99



#### HOUSEPLANT SPECIAL 20% OFF

Easy Care Houseplants  
Aloe Vera, Sansevieria Snake Plant & Pothos

#### WARM UP IN THE GREENHOUSE CAFÉ ENJOY HOT COFFEE CIDER DONUTS Randall's Homemade Soup & Gourmet Sandwiches



ALWAYS FRESH AT



631 CENTER ST., Route 21, Mass Tpke Exit 54  
LUDLOW • 589-7071 • www.randallsfarm.net  
WINTER HOURS: OPEN MON - FRI. 7AM - 8PM  
OPEN SAT. & SUN. 7AM - 7PM

Find us on [facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)

## FlashVote sign ups coming soon

WILBRAHAM - Do you have about one minute a month to help make Wilbraham better?

The Town of Wilbraham is working with FlashVote to engage the community and gather valuable input from residents to inform our decisions.

We encourage residents to sign up here now: <https://www.flashvote.com/wilbraham> or call 775-235-2240 to participate by phone or text only.

Sign up takes less than one minute and your input is always kept anonymous. Personal or demographic information collected by FlashVote is never shared with the Town or anyone else. When residents sign up, they can deter-

mine how surveys are received - whether by email, text or phone call. They will receive a notification whenever there is a new survey, and they will have 48 hours to participate before voting closes. Once a survey is closed, everyone who participated will automatically receive a summary of the overall results and be able to see how their responses compare to the group.

Select Board Chair Michael Squindo said, "The Select Board is very excited to use the input collected in these surveys to inform decision making for the Town in ways that serve our residents better."

Sign up now so you don't miss the first survey - coming soon.

## FC & P

**Ferrara Consulting & Properties**

Consulting all Matters of Real Estate



**Art Ferrara**

(413) 348-5827

[www.facebook.com/FCProperties](https://www.facebook.com/FCProperties) | [www.fcpcconsult.com](http://www.fcpcconsult.com)

## ROBERTS ROOFS

SPECIALIZING IN

Slate • Copper • Architectural Shingles • Gutters  
Historical Restoration • Flat Roofing  
Snow Removal  
Snow/Ice Damage Repair

Tel. 413-283-4395  
Cell 413-237-9434

[www.RobertsRoofsInc.com](http://www.RobertsRoofsInc.com)

Trusted Name Since 1982



**Professional - Reliable - Fully Insured**

Tree Trimming and Removal  
Emergency Tree Work • Stump Grinding  
Crane Service • Firewood Delivery

*All Major Credit Cards Accepted  
100% Financing Available*

**162 Sturbridge Road, Brimfield, MA 01010**  
508-641-5249 • [office@robinsontreeservice.net](mailto:office@robinsontreeservice.net)  
[www.robinsontreeservice.net](http://www.robinsontreeservice.net)



## FIVE ISLANDS

Georgetown, Maine  
2 Bedrooms, 2 Bathroom  
Washer/Dryer, Fully Equipped

- Walk to Five Islands Wharf and Ledgewood Preserve Beach
- Close to Reid State Park

\$1200/week  
**207-607-9333**



# SCHOOLS

## Springfield Technical Community College announces fall 2025 dean's list

SPRINGFIELD – Springfield Technical Community College celebrates the accomplishment of the 1,198 students who were named to the fall 2025 dean's list.

The dean's list is published each semester to recognize excellence in academic performance. To be considered, degree-seeking students

must earn 12 or more college level credits in the current semester, or a total of 12 or more combined college-level credits earned during the fall and spring semesters, and achieve a 3.3 or above grade point average.

Student names are listed under the towns or cities in which they reside.

### Hampden

Devan Katrell Beane, Nicholas John Bouchard, Alexander J. Demos, Marina T. Ford, Abigail Pronovost, Emilia Sarnelli, Landon Joseph Smith-Devenitch, Bret Steven Soja, Emma R. Tougas, Michael James Trecker

### Wilbraham

Nicholas L. Aubrey, Arash Balwa, Alexander Christian Barthelette, Benjamin Wilson Cooney, Olivia M. DePace, Ryan Ferris Eldridge, John T. Fitzgerald, Molly Jane Gallagher, Amanda Garcia-Planadeball, Dashiell Garvey, Sadat Golestaneh, Alexander

Gormley, Cameron Ross Hanks, Ian Joseph Horne, Melanie Kathryn Jalonen, Regan Mary Kelly, Ava G. Korzec, Barry Kozaczka, Aidan Lang, Savannah S. Leir-Arterburn, Julia Rose Lewis, Jenna B. Llamas, Samantha Renee Long, Haylie Elizabeth MacBrian, Alison Taylor Manley, Noah Burke

Mayock, Elizabeth Thanh Nguyen, Naomi Nyambura, Ryan Kamlesh Patel, Aidan Raba, Anthony Natale Rachele, Tiana Marie Rivera, Sean Patrick Rooney, Patrick Michael Rowe, Daniel Gerard Ryzewicz, Lauren Elizabeth Saso, Karrie Lyn Vedovelli



Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

The Selectboard began discussing the future of the old town hall during their Jan. 5 meeting.

### OLD TOWN HALL

from page 1

building of course under our umbrella policy."

Selectboard Member Erik Vanderleeden added all current situations Flynn would then explain on what to do with the old town hall are hypothetical.

"Say the Selectboard decide to sell the building. That would come to the town meeting that would be disposal of town asset. Maybe the committee recommends, 'Look, the land's worth more than the building you should tear it down.' But then you'd have to go to town meeting and get the funds to do that action, if you would. It's not so much the action that needs approval, it's the funding of the action," Flynn said.

Flynn then noted an example of a perspective that a committee member could offer in Joe Sibilia as an expert in small business innovation.

"He might look at it and say, 'You know, I can get a couple companies might be

able to turn that building into an innovation center of some sort.' Maybe that happens. So, if we get a broader spectrum of people looking at it, we're going to get more ideas, we think," Flynn said.

Flynn added, from a municipal standpoint, "we're aware the building is sadly lacking in any ADA capacity."

"So, to keep it on the rolls as a municipal building is going to require huge investment to bring it up to snuff as Tighe & Bond said, because we've had that question, well, can this town committee use it? Can the fire department use it during construction, etc.?" Flynn said. "The town was extremely fortunate that until we made the move here, that something didn't happen at that building because of our lack of ADA coverage that would have exposed the town to some severe penalties. Very lucky and I think it wouldn't be prudent on my thought to allow that to continue, so I think a municipal application is going to be difficult to justify knowing that we have all

those improvements to make." Selectboard Member Don Davenport said people should understand "that this isn't going to happen overnight."

"This is a long, drawn-out process," Davenport said. "Secondly, almost every municipality in Western Massachusetts is going through the same thing. Longmeadow has got three municipal buildings it's using, Wilbraham has a Utilization Committee over there being formed, Belchertown, Easthampton, they're all in the same boat."

Davenport said, in his view, "all options are on the table."

"Making an entrepreneurial center, making an arts center, making a cultural thing, making a museum, tearing it down, building it up," Davenport said.

After further discussion and input, the board said they will formalize the committee at their Jan. 12 meeting, encouraging residents to volunteer.

### VIOLATION

from page 1

failed to indicate that a vote may be taken. As explained above, it is reasonably foreseeable that a public body may take action following discussion of a topic and the Open Meeting Law does not require that a public body indicate on its meeting notice that a vote may be taken," Campbell wrote. "However, we find the notice insufficiently specific where the topic 'Dave Graziano, Tree Warden and Ryan Kress, National Grid: Continuation of April 17, 2025[,] Tree Hearing' did not reasonably inform the public that the Board would discuss whether to approve the removal of trees as proposed by National Grid under its extended vegetation management program. Although the topic, as listed, might have been meaningful to Board members and individuals already aware of the Tree Warden's previous public hearing on the matter, we find it was insufficient to reasonably inform members of the public unfamiliar with the issue of the anticipated nature of the discussion."

Additional remedial action was not ordered.

### Select Board Responds

Squindo shared when he first read Campbell's decision, he was "thoroughly confused."

"It's clear that they felt that we violated Open Meeting Law. It was unclear to me what we did and how to prevent it in the future because it basically said that the posting wasn't specific enough and so, I don't know if we



Photo courtesy of Mura Bacon-Erickson

The signs warning drivers of work being done along Stony Hill Road.

had any more feedback from legal on that," Squindo said.

Town Administrator Nick Breault said there was no additional written opinion.

"I did have conversations with our counsel about the decision and I think it would be correct to say that counsel's opinion is that it's flawed," Breault said. "...But we could certainly go back and ask for additional clarification. I don't know that it's going to change anything. If the Select Board wanted to appeal the decision, it would need to do so through the court system."

After Vice Chair Marc Ducey shared his perspective on the letter, Squindo offered additional thoughts.

"The way I got it is that it's not necessary under the law. It's considered a best practice. I read the opinion, I read the complaint, I've watched the video again and the only thing that I can come up (with) and I don't know if

legal can think about this," Squindo said. "We posted that there was going to be a continuation, but that we needed to post that we were going to make a decision outside of that. That's the only thing that I can come up with."

After Squindo later said he was not suggesting they fight Campbell's decision, Ducey said he was not fighting the decision either and if the board got clarity, "that might be helpful."

"If you don't know where the error is, it's hard to correct it," Ducey said.

"Right," Squindo said. "That's where I stand and I'm happy to, otherwise, defer to the theory of our legal counsel at this point unless the board itself wanted just to seek clarity."

The board then moved on to other agenda items.

For Bacon-Erickson's comments, check out this week's edition.

HOMETOWN SPOTLIGHT  
WILBRAHAM-HAMPDEN TIMES

BEER WINE & PROVISIONS  
THE GUILTY GRAPE  
SINCE 2024

MIX & MATCH BOTTLES OF WINE  
12 pk - 15% OFF • 6 pk - 10% OFF  
Create Your Own 4 pk of Craft Beers!

BUILD YOUR OWN 4 PACK

Awarded First Place for "Outstanding Wine" at the ERC5 Feast In The East

- A wonderful variety of fine wines & craft beers - domestic & imported
- Unexpected offerings like sake, ciders, soju, mead honey wines & specialty soft drinks
- Gourmet foods like Greek olive oils, balsamic vinegars, olives, pastas, sauces & pasta dinner kits

6 Burt Lane, Wilbraham (In the rear of the building) 413-279-1252  
Open Mon.-Wed. 11am-8pm • Thurs. & Fri. 11am-10pm • Sat. 11am-10pm • Sun. 11am-7pm

Park CLEANERS, INC.  
Your Hometown Dry Cleaners  
Family owned and operated since 1935  
GET TO KNOW OUR GREAT SERVICE

Ask about special pricing for first responders

"We get stains out like it never happened."

15% OFF DRY CLEANING when you pre-pay!

262 Allen St., Springfield Mon.-Fri. 8am-6pm, Sat. 8am-3pm, Sun. 9am-2pm  
464 Main St., Wilbraham Mon.-Fri. 8am-4pm, Sat. 9am-1pm, Sun. closed  
413-736-5476 • parkcleaners413.com

Affordable Waste Solutions  
Your Hometown Provider for Rolloff and Front Load Dumpster Service

413-244-1943  
A portion of every rental is donated to Breast Cancer Research

POST Computer Systems  
Repairs • Upgrades  
New & Used Equipment • Trade-ins  
Where Technology Has Met It's Match

Expert support beyond the sale for small businesses, home offices, family systems, mobile professionals and everyone in between is what separates POST from all the rest.

2785 Boston Road, Wilbraham, MA 01095  
413-596-5177 • www.pocosys.com

BEER WINE & PROVISIONS  
THE GUILTY GRAPE  
SINCE 2024

A specialty shop offering a wonderful variety of fine wines, craft beers - domestic & imported, sake, soju, mead, ciders and a nice selection of non-alcoholic beers & wines.

6 Burt Lane, Wilbraham (In the rear of the building) 413-279-1252  
Open: Mon.-Wed. 11am-8pm  
Thurs. - Sat. 11am-10pm • Sun. 11am-7pm

**GOALS** from page 1

teens in the future,” Lang said.

Lang shared how the event also offers an opportunity for self-improvement and reflection.

“We always try to offer a variety of self-improvement activities at the start of the year, like last year we had an event with a self-organizer, which helped people learn about how to dispose of old items that aren’t wanted in the new year,” Lang said. “The new year is a fresh start for many people, and the library wants to support those aspirations.”

The library continues to have many crafting events available for adults, such as the Adult Crafternoon Quilled Greeting Card on Jan. 23, where adults can create their very own greeting card. Also, on Jan. 24, adults can create Sea at Les Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer by Van Gogh, but only using crayons. These events are available to register at the Wilbraham Public Library’s website.

Creating vision boards was a great creative way to start off the year at the library for Lang too.

“I love the individuality and diversity that each person brings to their project. Everyone has very different approaches to how they create their own work. Seeing how people use text and images is interesting, and what actually gets put on the boards are too,” Lang said.

The vision board event at the Wilbraham Public Library was successful, with many new creative outlooks for the new year made, and the event providing a time to think and reflect on resolutions for 2026.



Different vision boards created during the event at the Wilbraham Public Library



This vision board features, books, food and cozy vibes.

Turley photos by Angelina Acevedo

# Walking in General Knox’s footsteps

**WILBRAHAM** – The community will have an opportunity to explore the Historic Knox Trail in Wilbraham on Jan. 17. Read on for more details.

**Introduction**  
The Knox Trail is a historic route commemorating the journey of Colonel Henry Knox during the American Revolution. In the winter of 1775-1776, Knox and his team transported cannons from Fort Ticonderoga in New York to Boston, Massachusetts, passing through several communities, including Wilbraham. The trail is marked with monuments and educational markers, offering a unique opportunity to explore American history and local heritage.

**Program Overview**  
This program is designed to guide participants through the Knox Trail in Wilbraham, combining history, outdoor exploration, and community engagement. The activities are suitable for families, history enthusiasts, students, and anyone interested in learning more about the region’s Revolutionary War history.

**Schedule of Events**  
• 9 a.m. Welcome & Introduction: (2-minute drive to the Knox Trail Marker afterwards) Old Stone Bridge,



A monument in Wilbraham marks the route taken by General Henry Knox during the winter of 1775-1776.

2957 Boston Road (Frankie B’s Billiards)  
• 9:30 a.m. View the Knox Trail Marker and information (4-minute drive to the Meeting House afterwards) Knox Trail Marker, 2755 Boston Road (Country Homes Furniture)  
• 10 a.m. Historical Presentation: The Journey of Henry Knox, Meeting House, 450 Main Street  
• 10:45 a.m. Group Discussion & Q&A, Meeting House, 450 Main Street  
• 11 a.m. Closing Remarks, (20-minute drive to the Springfield Armory National Historic Site. Program begins at 12 p.m.) Meeting House, 450 Main Street  
**NOTE:** Outdoor events at the Old Stone Bridge and the Knox Trail Marker weather dependent.

**Key Features of the Program**  
Expert-led historical talks about Henry Knox and the significance of the trail  
Guided walks to major Knox Trail markers within Wilbraham  
Opportunities to meet local historians and community leaders

**Additional Resources**  
Wilbraham  
Town Website  
Mass Moments:  
Henry Knox  
Wikipedia: Knox Trail

**Conclusion**  
The Knox Trail Program in Wilbraham offers a rich educational experience and a chance to connect with the region’s Revolutionary War history. Whether you are a local resident or a visitor, this program provides valuable insights and memorable experiences for all ages.

Please join us as we continue celebrating our shared history at this special event, held at the Springfield Armory National Historic Site. The program begins at Noon at One Armory Square, Springfield, Massachusetts. The Wilbraham segment of this program is proudly sponsored by the Athenium Society of Wilbraham, the Hampden Historical Society, and Wilbraham Historical Tidbits. The program historian will be Rich Howell.

**MOVE** from page 1

“I understand what people were saying before, but I’ve seen what my son has gone through, and, I’m telling you right now, he has a jump on every other eighth grader that is coming to Minnechaug next year because he’s already used to this school. This school is his home,” Kennedy said.

He made clear he was not saying anything negative about the WMS teachers as “they are doing amazing work where the kids don’t feel the overcrowding.”

“But to help out and move the eighth grade here would benefit these children who are coming here, experiencing the eighth grade here, so that when it comes to ninth grade, there’s no adjustment, they’re already in it, this is their school, they already know their people, they know the upperclassmen. They’re ready to go,” Kennedy said.

Vice Chair Dr. Michael Tirabassi acknowledged the many issues at WMS, but said, “overcrowding the high school, I don’t think, is a solution to that.”

After explaining his belief in the middle school model, Tirabassi said he didn’t want to speak against the Innovations Pathway program, but agreed on “a more rigid selection process for what students that are permitted to come up

to the high school.”  
“But, right now, I’m personally against moving the majority of the eighth grade up to the high school, and it’s not just my feelings, right? I know that the people in both towns are against it, and so part of my responsibility is to represent the people that elected me on that year. We’ve all been elected, right? So, I also kind of try to think about not just what I think is best, but here and do my job to represent the town,” Tirabassi said.

When Kennedy asked Tirabassi “what’s the other choice that we have?”, Tirabassi said if the middle school numbers went up by “50 to 100.”

“I think we heard from the principal that would be an unworkable situation. So, then we would have to revisit and then we might have no choice but to move a significant amount of the eighth grade up to the high school,” Tirabassi said.

Secretary Lisa Murray was frustrated the committee was having this conversation again “because I felt like it’s already been put to bed” and “we had all residents make a resounding no.”

“Nothing has changed at the middle school since that. I know that there was talk about eighth grade moving up there before this happened. It was still a resounding no there,

too. When we were talking about it, we did talk about how there would be, even though it says it’s the capacity, it would be overcrowding. We had a conversation about having to feed students, maybe getting a pavilion and buy it with money we do not have to feed students outside just to make room for them. But again, during winter and inclement weather that would not work,” Murray said.

Murray also wanted to listen to the residents on what they wanted; her concerns included teachers sharing spaces, kids not having that welcoming environment or community and enrollment numbers.

“I don’t think we have space for it. We’ve already had this conversation, and I think it’s very interesting that we always talk about eighth grade moving up to the high school, but we always forget about how elementary is overcrowded. There’s buildings in elementary that are overcrowded, but we always talk about eighth grade,” Murray said.

MRHS Junior Representative Kadence Illig explained the vice principals and Principal Stephen Hale “are already doing all the extra work to deal with all the disciplinary actions” and have more on their plates on top of managing another grade.

Illig asked the committee

to also consider teachers’ perspectives.

“In reality, I feel like that it’s just adding another level of an issue rather than solving an issue because what happens when the grades get even bigger and bigger and then you’re going to have five grades here and the grades are going to be too big,” Illig said. “I think it’s just overall a bad idea and it’s not worth it because, yeah, you’re moving up, but then you’re going to say, ‘Okay, now seventh grade needs to move up because XYZ they need the experience earlier so it’s an easier transition for eighth grade’ and it’s just a repeating cycle.”

Superintendent Dr. John Provost said, “Whatever we do, we’re going to be faced with a crisis at the middle school before there’s the potential for an answer that provides any kind of space for the middle school.”

“So, I would not be in favor of moving the eighth grade just because of the conditions of the middle schooler just to get them into a better physical environment one year sooner as a one-off. I could imagine myself being in favor as part of a plan that involved getting the middle school to the place where it really needs to be. I hope that we’re invited to participate in the core program because part of that process will be

the feasibility study and an opportunity for us to get some help from outside experts on how to manage this problem,” Provost said.

Timothy Collins said how “we’ve been in violation” of the regional agreement after Thornton W. Burgess Middle School was returned to Hampden, which “created a problem that landed in the middle school.”

“There’s a lot of ways to approach this, but the bottom line is, for over a decade, we’ve been ignoring the needs of the students in this district, as far as I’m concerned. As a person who spent 25 years teaching middle school, that’s the last place you want to overcrowd kids,” Collins said. “They need space and they need class sizes that are not in crowded, tiny little spaces. So, we need to address this problem.”

Collins said either “we need a renovation or addition to our current middle school or a new middle school.”

“Let’s face the problem head-on and go to the people in this community. People want to move here because it’s got a good reputation with the schools. We’re not going to hold that reputation for longer if we keep tinkering about this and not face head-on the problem that we created and we have our responsibility to solve,” Collins said.

Hale did some research

and found if eighth graders move to high school, academic outcomes may be lower, it’s “a developmentally untimely environment” meaning decline in academic achievement and increased behavioral and social emotional issues, kindergarten through eighth grade configurations “is actually the best model to support achievement,” and social-emotional considerations when transitioning into older peer environments disrupting early adolescence.

Hale added when another grade is brought in that has “specific social, emotional and academic needs and space needs,” what’s being done is “you’re forcing the other thousand kids to operate in three-quarters of a building,” creating an overcrowding situation due to those space needs and development-appropriate environments.

“We’ve asked the public four times to do this. We had the middle school task force, the public said no. We had another time where we asked with Superintendent Ganem to move the eighth grade, the public said no. We did it a year ago, the public said no. Then we developed the ICP program and said you can come. We had 20 kids come. That’s another way the public has said no. They want their eighth-grade in a developmentally-appropriate space,” Hale said.

## Public Auction

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 22<sup>ND</sup> at 11:00 A.M.**

MORTGAGEE’S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

• WILBRAHAM, MASSACHUSETTS •

★ UNDER CONSTRUCTION ★

**2 STORY COLONIAL STYLE HOME**

WITH ONE CAR DETACHED GARAGE

**3281 Boston Road WILBRAHAM, MA**  
To Be Sold On The Premises

**Features:**

- 2 Story Colonial Style Home • ±8,398 S/F of Land •
- ±125 Ft. Frontage on Boston Road • Corner Lot •
- ±1,826 S/F of Living Area • Exposed Studs •
- Rough Electrical & Plumbing • Parcel ID: 743 • Private Well & Septic •
- Hampden County Registry of Deeds: Book 20566, Page 409 •
- ★ NEW SIDING, ROOF, WINDOWS, EXTERIOR DOORS & DECK ★

Inspections: Saturday, January 10<sup>TH</sup> 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. & Morning of Sale – 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Sale Per Order of Mortgagee  
Attorney Joseph J. Lange  
Of the firm of Lyon & Fitzpatrick, LLP  
14 Bohala Road, Holyoke, MA  
Attorney for Mortgagee

Terms Of Sale: \$10,000.00 Initial Deposit Cash, Bank or Certified Funds.  
Deposit to be Increased to 10% of Purchase Price within 5 Business Days of Auction Date.  
5% Buyer’s Premium Applies.  
Other Terms to be Announced at Time of Sale.

West Springfield, MA • Philadelphia, PA  
413-733-5238 • 610-853-6655  
TOLL FREE 1-877-POSNIK-1 (767-6451)  
MA Auc. Lic. #161 • PA Auc. Lic. #AY000241L

Aaron Posnik  
AUCTIONEERS - APPRAISERS

www.posnik.com • E-mail: info@posnik.com

LOWER PRICES TO BOOST YOUR BUDGET!

INFLATION

PRICES IN RED ARE AT OR BELOW LAST YEAR’S PRICES!

USDA INSP. FRESH BONE-IN ASSORTED PORK LOIN CHOPS..... **\$1.88** lb

USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS PORK SIRLOIN CUTLETS..... **\$2.11** lb

USDA INSP. GRADE A DOZEN JUMBO BROWN EGGS..... **\$2.49** lb

SLICED IN OUR DELI

USDA INSP. TURKEY BREAST..... **\$4.99** lb

USDA INSP. MUEENSTER CHEESE..... **\$4.99** lb

TAILGATE SPECIALS

USDA INSP. STORE MADE BONELESS KOREAN BBQ MARINATED PORK BUTT STRIPS..... **\$3.35** lb

USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF TOP SIRLOIN PICANHA STEAKS..... **\$7.99** lb

USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF TENDERLOIN **\$12.99** lb

USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF TOP SIRLOIN SPOON ROAST or STEAKS **\$7.99** lb

USDA INSP. GROUND FRESH DAILY DIET LEAN GROUND BEEF **\$4.99** 5 LB BAG

USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF WHOLE EYE ROUND..... **\$4.75** lb

USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS & SKINLESS CHICKEN BREAST 10 LB BAG..... **\$1.66** lb

USDA INSP. FROZEN CHICKEN DRUMSTICKS TRAY PAK.. **59¢** lb

USDA INSP. FROZEN FULLY COOKED BREADED CUT UP CHICKEN..... **\$1.99** lb

USDA INSP. IQF FROZEN CAPTAIN AL’S SEAFOOD ENTREES LINGUINE & CLAMS MARINARA LINGUINE & CLAMS WHITE SAUCE..... **\$1.49** ea

**90 Meat Outlet**

**90 Avocado St. Springfield 413-737-1288 www.90meat.com**

We reserve the right to limit quantities.

**HOURS:** Mon. - Wed. 8-4  
Thurs. 8-6 • Fri. 8-6 • Sat. 8-3

SALE DATES: 1/15/26-1/21/26

BUY DIRECT FOR SAVINGS • SELECTION • SERVICE

**VIEWPOINTS**

**SOCIAL SECURITY Matters**  
By Russell Gloor

**My wife believes she can get a spouse benefit while I'm still alive; can she?**

Dear Rusty:

A friend of my wife told her and she believes, she could receive a Social Security benefit based on my SS benefit that I'm currently receiving while I'm still alive. I told her she could only receive spouse survivor benefits. Is there any truth to what she now believes? Would you settle this issue for us please? Thank you.

**Signed: Uncertain Husband**

Dear Uncertain Husband:

Well, surely I don't want to get in the middle of your marital discussion, but I'll be happy to explain Social Security's rules about your wife's eligibility for spousal benefits while you are both still living. And just for awareness for both of you, the rules about spousal benefits are one of the most confusing areas of Social Security.

Per Social Security's rules, a spouse (e.g., your wife) can receive a "spousal boost" from you—while you are still living—if the SS retirement benefit she is personally entitled to at her Full Retirement Age is less than 50% of the SS retirement benefit you are (were) entitled to at your FRA; full retirement age amounts are used to calculate living spouse benefits, regardless of when each of you actually claimed your Social Security.

So, if your FRA entitlement benefit amount is more than twice your wife's FRA entitlement benefit amount, she can, indeed, get a "spousal boost" from your record while you are both still living. The spousal boost is added to her own SS retirement amount and will be based on the difference between her FRA entitlement and half of your FRA entitlement. Thus, in this discussion, your wife may be correct - she may be able to get a spousal boost from you while both of you are living, depending on how your personal FRA retirement amounts

compare. The best way for your wife to find out is to contact Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 to inquire and if she's eligible, also make an appointment to apply for her spousal benefit.

And to clarify your wife's options as your possible widow, a surviving spouse can also get a survivor benefit if their marital partner passes away, but only if the deceased spouse's current benefit at death was more than the surviving spouse is already receiving. The surviving spouse receives the higher amount, instead of their own smaller Social Security retirement benefit.

But here is an important thing to know: Whenever any Social Security benefit (including a spousal or surviving spouse benefit) is claimed before the recipient's Full Retirement Age, the payment amount is permanently reduced, both spousal and survivor benefits do not reach maximum until the recipient's Full Retirement Age. And just to complete the picture for survivor benefits, a surviving spouse is also entitled to a one-time, lump-sum death benefit of \$255 if their marital partner dies, in addition to any other benefit they are entitled to.

*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.*

**TLC for overwintering plants**

Have you taken a good look at your tender plants lately? Maybe you have a Gerber daisy, coleus, fuchsia or geranium that you are attempting to overwinter because you loved it so much this past summer.

Perhaps the flower color or leaf shade was perfect in a patio planter and you thought if you could get through the winter you wouldn't have to buy it new this spring. Or maybe you intend to use your overwintered plants as stock plants.

Soon you'll be taking cuttings and making your own new plants. Likewise, maybe you brought in some tender herbs in hopes of growing your own seasoning year round.

Whatever the case may be, closer examination of each plant at this point in the winter might be a smart idea.

What I have noticed almost across the board, especially with my Gerber daisy, fuchsia and geraniums is that there are a lot of older leaves turning yellow or showing discoloration. To me, that indicates that fertilizer is needed.

The fact that this coincides with the lengthening of the daylight hours is no accident. And all three plants have continued to bloom inside, which certainly has taxed their nutrient reserves.

I will start watering with half strength fertilizer twice a month now through mid March. I sure bet that old foliage will start to perk up and new growth won't be too far behind.

Don't push growth by fer-

tilizing more than what I recommended or growth could

even soaked up my plants using a mild dish detergent and hosed them off in the shower.

One pest in particular attacks the herb rosemary and is especially troublesome.

I noticed stippling on the leaf tips and clear winged insects flying away when I brushed by the plants. After placing sticky yellow monitoring cards nearby I learned it was leaf hoppers!

As carefully as I could I carried the lighter plants outside and gave them a good shake to dislodge any eggs or nymphs (and to make me feel better) then I doused them to the point of run-off with insecticidal soap. I will have to be careful here, because tiny 3 mm size, wedge-shaped (adult) insects can transmit viruses from plant to plant.

I'll put out new monitoring cards near the rosemary plants to check if the population is decreasing. Regardless, I am glad I caught this situation early.

With the pests under control and a proper fertilization regiment, these plants will be in great shape come springtime, and ready for new adventures in the landscape.

*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](mailto:pouimette@turley.com) with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.*



**The Wilbraham-Hampden TIMES TEAM**



**EDITOR**  
Kristin Rivers  
[krivers@turley.com](mailto:krivers@turley.com)



**ADVERTISING SALES**  
Jocelyn Walker  
[jwalker@turley.com](mailto:jwalker@turley.com)



**SPORTS EDITOR**  
Greg Scibelli  
[sports@turley.com](mailto:sports@turley.com)

The Wilbraham-Hampden Times is published every Thursday by Turley Publications, Inc., 24 Water St., Palmer, Mass. 01069. Telephone (413) 283-8393, Fax (413) 289-1977.



@Wilbraham-Hampden Times

**WEB**

[www.wilbrahamhampdentimes.turley.com](http://www.wilbrahamhampdentimes.turley.com)

**PATRICK H. TURLEY**  
CEO

**KEITH TURLEY**  
President



[www.turley.com](http://www.turley.com)

Turley Publications, Inc. cannot assume liability for the loss of photographs or other materials submitted for publication. Materials will not be returned except upon specific request when submitted.

**Editorial Policy**

Letters to the editor should be 350 words or less in length. No unsigned or anonymous opinions will be published. We require letter writers to include his or her town of residence and home telephone number. We must authenticate authorship prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions deemed to be libelous or contain unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks, defamation of character and offensive language. All unknown or alleged facts and quotations offered by the author need to cite credible, unbiased sources. Send letters to: Editor, Wilbraham-Hampden Times, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-682-0013 or via e-mail to [krivers@turley.com](mailto:krivers@turley.com). The deadline for submissions is Thursday at noon.

**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 800-824-8458 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.

**ANNUAL REACTION OF COMMUTERS ...**



**Habitat dedication celebrates a major milestone**

By Brandice J. O'Brien  
Marketing and Communications Manager,  
Greater Springfield  
Habitat for Humanity

WEST SPRINGFIELD - Pedro and Damaris are one step closer to their dream of homeownership. On a blustery December afternoon, the couple celebrated the completion of the construction phase at their new Holyoke home. Also in attendance were city officials, community leaders, representatives from Holyoke Housing Authority (HHA), and Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity (GSHFH) staff, members from the Board of Directors, and volunteers.

Unlike previous Greater Springfield Habitat builds, this one came together through a unique collaboration with Holyoke Housing Authority and the University of Massachusetts' DesignBuild program. HHA donated a plot of land on Chestnut Street. GSHFH prepared the site and built the foundation. UMass DesignBuild professors and students designed and con-

structed the modular home, and oversaw delivery to the Holyoke site.

"This house is a testament to the very belief that this community values a collaboration between Greater 'Holyoke' Habitat for Humanity," Holyoke Mayor Joshua Garcia said in jest, "Holyoke Housing Authority, a longtime agency in the city that has transformed neighborhoods, and UMass. The very neighborhood we're standing in is a result from a cross trajectory of resources."

Pedro and Damaris's new home stands in the heart of Churchill Homes, a neighborhood reborn through a \$15-million HOPE VI grant awarded to the Holyoke Housing Authority in 1996. What was once a neglected area has been thoughtfully transformed into a vibrant, family-centered community. Today, the neighborhood includes a mix of rental and homeownership opportunities, along with community centers that bring neighbors together.

Greater Springfield Habitat is proud to have contributed to this revitalization through earlier partnerships

with the HHA by building a home at 365 Chestnut St. in 2013. GSHFH also built three additional homes adjacent to Pedro and Damaris's. They were made possible through the Community Preservation Act (CPA) and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), funding during the COVID-19 pandemic to extend hope and stability during a time when it was needed most.

Pedro is a graduate of HHA's self-sufficiency program. But when he finished the classwork, there were no available homes on the market.

"This project was really done as a way to help support their self-sufficiency program," said Aimee Giroux, GSHFH executive director. "This allowed us to build a home specific to people, like Pedro, who were going through that program, which is a longtime commitment."

Matt Mainville, HHA executive director, who once served as the HOPE VI coordinator, agreed.

"We at the Housing Authority are always excited to see vacant parcels become



**Pedro and Damaris's new home on Chestnut Street in Holyoke.**

homes, particularly at a time when there's a huge demand in the Commonwealth for good housing," he said. "... we also recognize housing resources are limited, dollars for development are hard to acquire. So, when we're able to partner with Habitat, UMass, and the City, it's always a recipe for success."

The 575-square-foot modular home accentuates energy efficiency through double studded walls, lots of insulation, triple-glazed windows, and all-electric Energy Star-rated appliances and air-source heat pumps.

Please see **HABITAT**, page 8

*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

WFD assists in Palmer fire response



The Wilbraham Fire Department assisted the Palmer Fire Department with a structure fire in their town on December 22, 2025.

Photos and caption courtesy of Wilbraham Fire Department

## 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)

## Lower Pioneer Valley Legislative Breakfast



Submitted photo and caption Cheryl Wesolowski

Wilbraham Public Library Director Melissa Harter and State Senator Jacob Oliveira (D-Ludlow) at the Legislative Breakfast December 12, 2025 discussing the need for adequate state funding to support local libraries.

## ADA Vivenzio presents E.A.S.E. – Fraud Prevention



Turley photos by Kristin Rivers



On December 16, 2025, it was a full house at the Wilbraham Senior Center as Assistant District Attorney Nina Vivenzio held an E.A.S.E. – Fraud Presentation on behalf of Hampden District Attorney Anthony Gulluni. The presentation helped seniors learn about the latest scams and prevent fraud. Seniors can get on the Do Not Call Registry List by calling 888-382-1222 or visiting [donotcall.gov](http://donotcall.gov) and, also, call 800-269-0271 for the Social Security Fraud Hotline, some of the many resources available.

## New Year's Delivery



Photo and caption courtesy of Hampden Police Department

We wanted to thank J Polep for the generous New Years food delivery to officers and staff of the Hampden Police Department.

THIS PAGE IS BROUGHT TO YOU AS A COMMUNITY SERVICE BY:

**2341 Boston Road, Wilbraham • 413-302-1908**

Hours: Tues. & Wed. 11 a.m. - 9 a.m. • Thurs. - Sat. 11 a.m. - 10 p.m. Sun. 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. • Mondays available for your private party of up to 20 people

Delivery Services: Uber Eats | Door Dash | Grubhub

[www.roosterschickenandwaffles.com](http://www.roosterschickenandwaffles.com)

# SENIORS

## Monthly Highlights for January at the Hampden Senior Center:

Please call 566-5588 to RSVP for all events or register for classes at the senior center.

Lunch is provided by Greater Springfield Senior Services daily at Noon. Suggested donation is \$3 per meal. You must reserve lunch by 11:00 a.m. at least one day prior. Feel free to schedule your lunch reservations for the month.

### WINTER WEATHER ADVISORY

Remember to watch channels 22 and 40 for information about cancellations and/or delayed openings.

Watch for HAMPDEN SENIOR CENTER and GREATER SPRINGFIELD SENIOR SERVICES for information.

The AARP Tax-Aide Program returns for 2026 by appointment only for those aged 50+. Appointments can be made starting Monday, Jan. 12, by calling the senior center.

We are happy to have this program in Hampden and look forward to a successful season.

### National Pie Day with Entertainment by Rick Gilday

Friday, Jan. 23 at 12:30 p.m. This is a FREE event.

Join us for a delicious slice (or two!) of pie on National Pie Day.

### Veterans Coffee Hour with Jason Burgener

Jan. 28 at 10 a.m.

Join Jason, Ellen O'Brien, and Lori Callahan from the Wilbraham Funeral Home for a discussion about preparing for your future and potential Veterans' benefits. Light refreshments will be provided.

### VSO Office Hours:

At the New Hampden Town Hall, 85 Wilbraham Road, Hampden (former TWB Middle School): Wednesdays, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Please call Jason directly at 413-640-0540 to schedule an appointment.

**SOUP-er BOWL Lunch**  
Friday, Feb. 6 at Noon. \$3 per person.

Join us for a delicious lunch made by Becky & Wendy. Turkey Rice Soup and a sandwich. Dessert donated by JGS Lifecare. Stay to play Super Bowl Trivia with The Trivia Guy, Paul Federico, and a chance to win some great prizes.

### Diamond Dotz, Anyone?!

Tuesday, Feb. 17 at 1 p.m. Cost is \$5 per person, paid when you sign up.

Pre-registration required. Create three Irish-themed Diamond Dotz wall hanging signs for your St. Patrick's Day decorating.

### Greeting Cards with Ellie

Monday, Jan. 26, 1 to 3 p.m. Cost is \$3 per person. All materials are provided.

Come and discover endless possibilities for creating your own personal greeting cards. Learn new techniques each month. Class will meet on the 4th Monday of every month.

### Lobby Learning

Don't have time to come in and sit for a long presentation? We understand! Lobby Learning is aimed at welcoming businesses and organizations to provide helpful information to you. You are welcome to stop in to pick up information and speak one-on-one with representatives in the senior center lobby and stay for as long as you need to get your questions answered. Perhaps there is an organization you would like us to welcome? Please let us know.

Jan. 15—instED, your in-home alternative to the Emergency Department

Jan. 22—The Reserve at East Longmeadow

### PWR! Moves Group Exercise Classes with Lisa Kern, OT, Reiki Master/Holistic Therapist

Mondays from 9 to 10 a.m.

Prepaid rate for 8 classes: \$65. Drop-in rate: \$10 per class.

A Parkinson-specific exercise class that "makes function exercise" to keep you moving and doing more of what you want to do! As you practice, you will be challenged physically and cognitively while working on fitness goals: strength, balance, agility, aerobics, and flexibility. Exercises are designed to improve your fitness, counteract your PD symptoms, and increase your daily activity. This whole body, function-focused exercise class will push you to do more than you think you can in a fun, empowering, and enriched environment!

### Indoor Cornhole

Mondays at 10 a.m. All are welcome! No experience necessary!

### Ukulele Classes with Amy Scott

New 8-week session begins Jan. 5 through March 9.

Beginner Ukulele - Mondays, 11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.

Cost is \$50 for the session if paid in full or \$7 per class for drop-ins.

Advanced Ukulele - Mondays, 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Cost is \$80 for the session.

### Common Threads Led by Joan Tompkins, PhD

Mondays, Jan. 26 at 12:45 p.m.

The group will meet in person on the first and fourth Monday of the month with Joan via ZOOM.

Lunch is available at Noon, and a table will be reserved for the group. If you wish to have lunch, please sign up by 11 a.m. on the Friday before. Suggested donation is \$3 per meal.

### Ballroom Dance for Balance and Longevity!

New 8-week session starts Jan. 5 through March 9.

New day and time! Mondays, from 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm

Social dance classes led by Amy Villalobos-Schold, a skilled occupational therapist. Focused on strengthening, stability, and modifications... so you can dance! Beginners

and singles welcome!  
Cost is \$60 per person for the session if paid in full or \$10 for drop-ins.

This session will focus on learning the Foxtrot!

### Living Stronger... Longer... with Lamar Moore

Tuesdays from 2:15 to 3 p.m.

New 12-week session starts Jan. 6 through March 31.

Cost is \$60 for the session if paid in full or \$6 per class for drop-ins.

Join Lamar to learn about balance and how it impacts your overall health and wellness. Get tips on strength training and cardiovascular endurance to increase mobility and flexibility. "It's never too late to start making progress on your health span. Muscles and balance are the two things you can train and improve even as you age."

### Pickleball at Thornton Burgess, 85 Wilbraham Road

8 to 9:30 a.m., 9:30 to 11 a.m., or 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

This program is for new players and beginners who want to learn the rules and practice playing.

### Pickleball Clinic with Mary Grasseti

Wednesday, Jan. 21, at 11 a.m.

We will have a clinic on the third Wednesday of every month at 11 a.m., where we will run drills and practice games to hone our skills. If you are not registered for the 11 a.m. session, please call to sign up for the clinic. Space is limited.

### MEMORY CAFÉ EVERY FRIDAY AT 10:15 a.m.

Please call Wendy for more information.

Sponsored by: Friends of Hampden Senior Citizens & private donations.

The Memory Café is a welcoming place for individuals with memory challenges, along with caregivers, family, or friends, to gather in a safe,

supportive, and engaging environment.

Here's what's happening at the Memory Café in January:

Jan. 16 - Mindful Movement w/Lisa

Jan. 23 - Rhythm & Motion w/Diane

Jan. 30 - Music w/Renee

### "African Drumming" with Jason

New 12-week session begins Jan. 9 through April 10

Fridays from 2 to 3 p.m.

All are welcome! No previous experience is necessary. Cost is \$70 for the 12-week session if paid in full or \$7 per class for drop-ins.

### "Come What May" Boutique... is open in our lobby

for all to shop during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

We accept donations of new or gently used clothing, outerwear, accessories, and footwear.

All proceeds from Boutique sales will benefit the needs of the Senior Center.

### HELP US STOCK OUR SHELVES with Toothpaste.

Thank you to those who donated hand soap last month. Every month, we will target a different item to help fill monthly Personal Needs Bags.

Due to space constraints, please refrain from purchasing warehouse-sized items.

Elms College Nursing Students will be here on Thursdays, starting Feb. 5, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Students will do blood pressure screening and provide educational health information.

### Did you know we offer the following services....

FREE Blood Pressure Clinic - Walk-in 9:15 to 10:45 a.m.

Tuesdays with Ann Maggio, RN, or Ruth Haley, RN  
Thursdays with Karen Blair, RN

Chair Massage with Min-

dy - by appointment  
Tuesday, Jan. 27. Cost is \$10 for 10 minutes.

Gift Cards are available and make great gifts!

Anyone is welcome to schedule appointments for these services.

Please call 566-5588 to schedule your appointments.

### Need a button sewn? Pants hemmed? Fix a rip? Help is on the way!

Jan. 23 from 10 a.m. to Noon

The senior center welcomes seamstress extraordinaire, Georgina Hamilton, on the second and fourth Fridays of every month to help with your tailoring needs and more.

This service is FREE, but donations will be accepted for senior center programs and services.

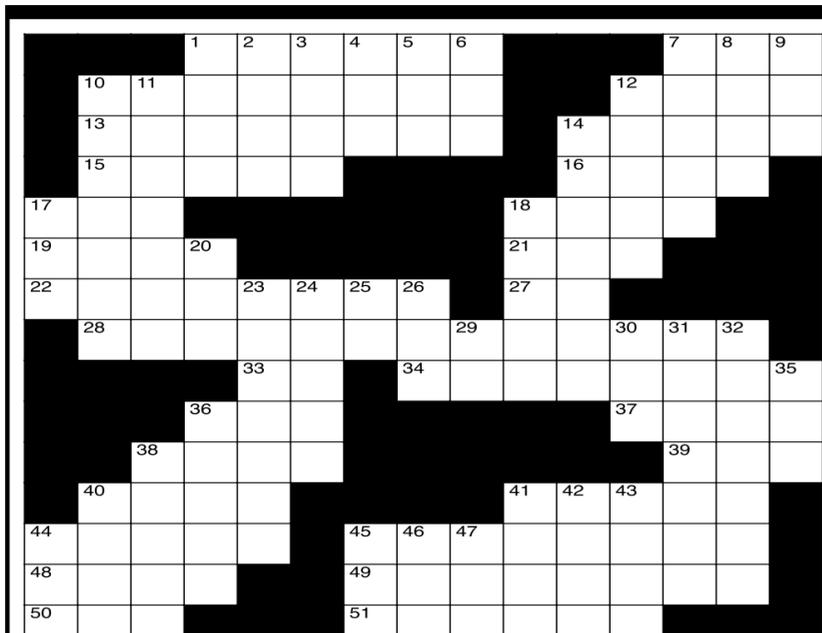
### D & R Farm, Winter Farm Share is back!

Jan. 21. Pick-up at 9:30 a.m.

D & R Farm will once again offer fresh produce twice a month starting in January and running through May. FREE with SNAP/HIP if you qualify! If you do not qualify for SNAP/HIP, you may purchase a share for \$40 cash per month. NEW applications are required. If interested, call Wendy at 566-5588 to get your application in and sign up!

### WARMING HEARTS PROGRAM for Homebound Older Adults in Hampden

Do you know an older adult in Hampden who is homebound and could use some mid-winter cheer? Let us know! Our warming hearts deliveries are a small way for us to let people know we are thinking of them and that we are here should they need anything. Deliveries will include soups, treats, games, and more and will take place during February. Interested in delivering? Call Wendy at 566-5588.



- CLUES ACROSS**
- 1. Mechanical lever
  - 7. Rocky peak
  - 10. Leave a country
  - 12. Discount
  - 13. D.C. ballplayer
  - 14. Partner to "ooed"
  - 15. Engine sound
  - 16. Japanese ornamental box
  - 17. Fido is one
  - 18. Amounts of time
  - 19. DiFranco and Phyo are two
  - 21. Yearly tonnage (abbr.)
  - 22. Make secret plans
  - 27. "Tiny Bubbles" singer
  - 28. "His Airness"
  - 33. Morning
  - 34. Perfected
  - 36. Winger guitarist
- CLUES DOWN**
- 1. Yugoslavian communist leader
  - 2. Exchange rate
  - 3. High school dance
  - 4. Peter's last name
  - 5. When you anticipate arriving
  - 6. Israeli city \_\_\_ Aviv
  - 7. Goat-like mammals
  - 8. Margarine
  - 9. End-of-the-spectrum color
  - 10. Make poisonous
  - 11. Popular beverage
  - 12. Actress Lathan
  - 14. Where planes land and depart
  - 17. Political fundraising entity
  - 18. The distinctive spirit of a people or an era
  - 20. Buffer used in microbiology
  - 23. Light, open carriage
  - 24. Metrical feet
  - 25. Email subject line feature
  - 26. A street with lots of nightmares
  - 29. Rapper Rule
  - 30. River in Scotland
  - 31. One who settles a dispute
  - 32. Most chummy
  - 35. We all have our own
  - 36. Arab tribe
  - 38. Slap
  - 40. Ottoman military commanders
  - 41. Scottish or Irish Gaelic language
  - 42. Emit coherent radiation
  - 43. Sun or solar disk (Egyptian mythology)
  - 44. Inclined to
  - 45. Olfactory reference syndrome
  - 46. Chest muscle (slang)
  - 47. Body part

### FREE THROW from page 1

Staffier (Girls 9), Emma Kelly (Girls 10), Reid Brown (Boys 9), Matthew Thouin (Boys 10), Ty Salazar (Boys 11), Michael Hayes (Boys 12) and Hayden Kelley (Boys 13).

It was a great way for children to come together and share with each other a sport that is so important to each of them, organized by a wonderful organization that wants to see the passion for basketball in these children continue to thrive for years to come.

If anyone is interested in joining the Knights of Columbus, go to [kofcwillbraham.com](http://kofcwillbraham.com) and fill out the information on the contact us page.



Turley photo by Noelle Hisgen  
**Vice Grand Knight Jared Demetri welcomes participants and families to the Free Throw Competition.**

### HABITAT from page 6

The UMass DesignBuild team met with Pedro and Damaris in late winter 2025 to discuss design aspects specific to their needs. As a result, the house has a U-kitchen and interior stairs to the basement.

The DesignBuild team conceived the home in spring 2025. Construction began in summer and the home was delivered in mid-November.

"I'm very anxious and grateful for everything that

I've accomplished. I feel honor and want to say 'thank you' to all of the board of directors of all the agencies, and I'm very grateful that I'm here with you today," said Pedro through his interpreter Vivian Rodriguez, HHA Homeownership and Financial Education coordinator. "I hope to be successful in homeownership."

Pedro and Damaris currently live in a one-bedroom apartment and have complained about their unfriend-

ly neighbors who they say makes their everyday life un-enjoyable. The couple doesn't have children together, but have a large blended family. Pedro has two daughters from a previous relationship and seven grandchildren. Damaris has three children and five grandchildren.

The couple is expected to close on the house early in the New Year. To see more pictures and videos of the construction, visit [habitatspringfield.org/holyoke](http://habitatspringfield.org/holyoke)

**LUDLOW MEMORIAL COMPANY INC.**  
Celebrating over 60 Years in Business ~ The Trusz Family

- ❖ Benches ❖ Statues ❖ Monuments ❖ Custom Design Work
- ❖ Plot Maintenance ❖ Bronze Plaques ❖ Cleaning ❖ Markers ❖ Vases
- ❖ On-Site Lettering ❖ Restorations ❖ Cemetery Signage ❖ Granite Signs

201 East St., Ludlow, MA 01056 ❖ [www.ludlowmemorialcompany.com](http://www.ludlowmemorialcompany.com)  
413-589-7564 Office ❖ 413-589-7588 Fax ❖ 413-531-5360

sports@turley.com

@turleysports

facebook.com/turleysports



Andrew Grasso sends a pass away.

# SPORTS

www.turley.com

SEND US YOUR SPORTS SUBMISSIONS

www.sports.turley.com

## Cybercats outlast Falcons basketball



SPRINGFIELD – Last Thursday night, despite a balanced effort in a fast-paced matchup, Minnechaug boys basketball was defeated by Sci-Tech 59-50. In the defeat, Miles Fergus led the team with 14 points while Max Fergus managed 12 points for the Falcons, who are now 5-3 on the season. The Falcons are involved in the HoopHall Invitational and face Stonington on Saturday, Jan. 17. The game will be held at Sci-Tech at 1:30 p.m.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli  
LEFT: Demetri Smith eyes his opponent.



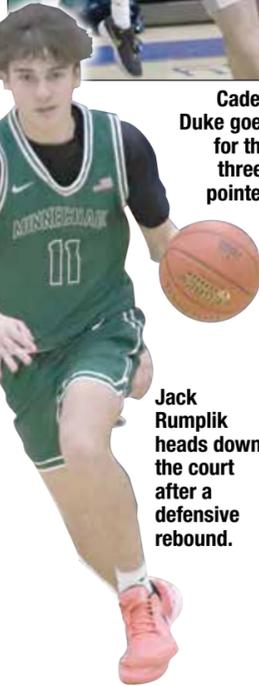
Caden Duke goes for the three-pointer.



Max Fergus tries to fake out his opponent.



Max Baroni tries to overcome an opponent and go for a layup.



Jack Rumprik heads down the court after a defensive rebound.



Zahara Wilson makes her way down the court.



Cailin O'Brien makes a quick pass on the run.



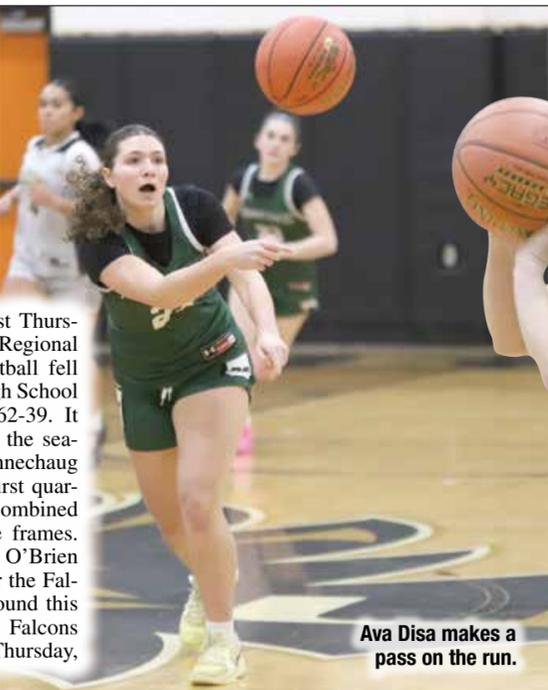
Ava Manning shoots the free throw.

## Win streak stopped for girls basketball



Kelly Cronin tries to get the offensive rebound.

SPRINGFIELD – Last Thursday night, Minnechaug Regional High School girls basketball fell on the road to Central High School in a physical matchup 62-39. It was just the first loss of the season for the Falcons. Minnechaug scored 16 points in the first quarter, but managed just 23 combined points in the other three frames. Zahara Wilson and Cailin O'Brien scored 11 points each for the Falcons, which hope to rebound this week. Coming up, the Falcons host Northampton on Thursday, Jan. 15 at 6:30 p.m.



Ava Disa makes a pass on the run.



Ainsley Holden gets set to shoot a three-pointer.

## Registration set to open Feb. 1 for Quabbin Valley

SOUTH HADLEY – On Sunday, Jan. 11, the Quabbin Valley Baseball League, an over-28 recreational league, held its first meeting of 2026 to prepare for the upcoming season.

At the meeting it was determined registration for players will open up on Sunday, Feb. 1.

For the 2026 season, the cost will be \$215 and will include a 16th game added to the regular season schedule.

During the 2025 season, the league experimented with playing on Mother's Day Saturday as well as a weeknight game to allow players an opportunity to play under the lights. While the night games were very successful, the Mother's Day Saturday games were rained out.

Those elements will return along with a 16th game with an opponent to be determined as the league's board explores possibilities for interleague matchups with another league in the region.

For returning players to the league, the deadline is Mar. 22 at 12 noon to be registered for the 2026 season in order to be guaranteed a roster spot. There will be open practices for all players but specifically targeted at new players scheduled for March 29 and April 4 at times and locations to be announced. The draft is currently scheduled to take place on April 4 following that practice.

The season is currently slated to start on Sunday, April 19 and following the success of the six-team fall league last year, the league will also have a fall league in September and October this season.

The registration link will be live on Feb. 1 at [www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org](http://www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org). Players must register and then pay the league dues via Venmo or contact the league leadership if an alternate form of payment is needed.

Aside from the weeknight and Mother's Day games, other games take place Sundays at 10 a.m. outside of Mother's Day, Memorial Day and July 4 weekends. Playoffs will be in August.

This is the 30th season for the league and league officials are looking to celebrate the anniversary with a couple of events.

**\$12.50 Each**

**Digital Photos**  
TURLEY PUBLICATIONS, INC.  
Purchase a photo that recently ran in one of our publications. Go to [newspapers.turley.com/photo-request](http://newspapers.turley.com/photo-request)

**See more SPORTS on Page 17.**

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli



# CAREER Education

## HCSS: Empowering students for a brighter future

Are you searching for a school where academic excellence meets a supportive community? Hampden Charter School of Science (HCSS) is a top-ranked, tuition-free public charter school serving grades 6-12 in Western Massachusetts. Since its founding in 2009, HCSS has been dedicated to preparing students for college, careers, and a lifetime of success.

### Why Choose HCSS?

HCSS stands out as a premier choice for families because of its unique combination of academic rigor, personalized attention, and community spirit. Our two campuses—the Middle School in West Springfield (Grades 6-8) and the High School in Chicopee (Grades 9-12)—offer students a seamless transition from middle school to high school and beyond. Here's what makes HCSS truly exceptional:

**Academic Excellence:** Our rigorous curriculum is guided by the College Board's AP standards and the Common Core. With honors courses beginning in 7th grade, 15 AP offerings in high school, and innovative programs like Project Lead The Way (PLTW), students are challenged to reach their full potential.

**Comprehensive College and Career Preparation:**



**HCSS begins college and career readiness as early as 6th grade, including SAT/PSAT prep, dual enrollment opportunities, and experiential college campus visits. With a 100% college acceptance rate and over \$49M in scholarships awarded in 2025, our graduates are set for success.**

**State-of-the-Art Technology:** Students benefit from one-to-one Chromebook access, SMART Inter-

active Displays, and hands-on science labs, preparing them for a tech-driven world.

**Award-Winning Extracurriculars:** From robotics, drone, and science olympiad clubs to competitive athletics and social activities, students thrive outside the classroom as well.

### Join Us for an Open House

Explore what HCSS has to offer during our upcoming Welcome Saturday Open

House events. Meet our dedicated staff, tour our campuses, and learn how HCSS can help your child achieve their dreams. Interested families can also join a Virtual Information Session for an in-depth look at our programs from the comfort of home.

### What Parents and Students

**Love About HCSS**  
Parents and students consistently praise HCSS for

its nurturing environment, where every student feels valued and supported. The school's commitment to diversity and inclusion fosters a vibrant community that celebrates different perspectives and cultures. Families also appreciate the convenience of free transportation and extensive tutoring services, ensuring all students have the tools they need to succeed.

### Student Success Stories

HCSS alumni have gone on to attend prestigious universities, including Ivy League institutions like Harvard, Columbia, and Dartmouth. Our students' achievements are a testament to the school's dedication to academic and personal growth. With a consistent college matriculation rate of over 95%, HCSS prepares students not just to attend college but to excel once they get there.

### How to Apply

Applications for the 2026-2027 school year are now open. Rising 6th-10th graders should apply no later than March 1, 2026, to secure a spot in our admission lottery. Visit [www.hampdencharter.org](http://www.hampdencharter.org) to apply and take the first step toward a brighter future.

At Hampden Charter School of Science, we believe every student deserves a world-class education. Join our community of learners, achievers, and leaders today—because your child's future begins here.

**HCSS High School**  
20 Johnson Rd.  
Chicopee, MA 01022  
Tel. 413-593-9090  
**HCSS Middle School**  
511 Main Street  
West Springfield, MA 01089  
Tel. 413-278-5450  
[hampdencharter.org](http://hampdencharter.org)



## HAMPDEN CHARTER SCHOOL OF SCIENCE

**ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR GRADE 6-10**



### Why Hampden Charter School of Science?

- NO COST
- FREE TRANSPORTATION
- COLLEGE-PREP EDUCATION
- TECHNOLOGY IN CLASSROOM
- EXCELLENCE IN ACADEMICS
- ATHLETICS
- ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES and CLUBS
- 100% COLLEGE ACCEPTANCE

### WELCOME SATURDAYS

**11:00 AM - 1:00PM**

January 10th  
January 24th  
February 7th  
February 28th

**VISIT:**  
[WWW.HAMPDENCHARTER.ORG](http://WWW.HAMPDENCHARTER.ORG)

**APPLY NOW / DEADLINE**

**MARCH 1, 2026**








SCAN



# CAREER Education

## St. Joan of Arc School offers comprehensive education

Located in Chicopee, MA, St. Joan of Arc (SJA) School is a private Catholic institution serving students from Pre-K through Grade 8.

St. Joan of Arc School provides a comprehensive educational environment focused on physical, intellectual,

and spiritual wellness.

In the fall the school community welcomed Mrs. Ashley Mahan as the new principal. A lifelong Chicopee resident and former educator in the local public school system, Mrs. Mahan brings extensive experience and a personal connection to the community.

Students can engage in several new and returning enrichment opportunities this year, including:

- Creative Arts: Liturgical Dance Troupe and Choir.
- STEM & Literacy: Robotics, 3D Printing, LEGO,

Book and Newspaper Clubs.

• Curriculum: Academic programs are integrated with technology, music, library, and physical education.

• Student Services: The school offers free breakfast and lunch programs and has hot meal options available for students.

• Extended Care: Affordable extended care and extracurricular programs are available to support families.

• Language Learning:

Innovative offerings include foreign language instruction through tools like Duolingo.

• Our Preschool program for ages 3 and 4 offers full and part-time care, geared toward preparing your child for Kindergarten. Children learn Kindergarten readiness and pre-reading skills through a developmentally appropriate teacher-created curriculum designed to hold your child's interest and spark their curiosity.

The school will be holding

an Open House on Saturday, Jan. 31 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. (no appointment needed). Appointment only tours for families will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 3 and Thursday, Feb. 5 from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Please call Janine or Chris in the Business Office at 413-276-4608 for registration information, or to make an appointment. To learn more visit [www.sjachicopee.org](http://www.sjachicopee.org).

We look forward to meeting you.

### ST. JOAN OF ARC SCHOOL

Pre-K to Grade 8

587 Grattan Street, Chicopee ~ 533-1475

[sjachicopee.org](http://sjachicopee.org)

*Learning Rooted in Christian Values*



### OPEN HOUSE

Saturday, January 31st, 9am-12 noon

*No Appointment Needed*

Tuesday, February 3rd & Thursday, Feb 5th, 3pm-7pm

*By Appointment Only*



Affordable Tuition & Extended Care ~ Free Breakfast & Lunch

Extracurricular Programs~ Technology ~ Physical Education

Music ~ Library ~ Duolingo

Welcoming, Safe & Secure School Community

Social, Physical, Spiritual & Intellectual Wellness Tuition Assistance

*Easy Access to I391 & I90*



## St. Stanislaus School students shine as servant leaders

St. Stanislaus School proudly announces the success of its recent community service initiatives, exemplifying its motto: "Servant Leaders for Today and Tomorrow."

In a spirited effort to support those in need, Student Council organized a can drive that collected an impressive 3,500 items, surpassing their original goal by 1,000 donations. The drive demonstrated the school community's commitment to service, teamwork, and making a tangible difference in the lives of local families.

Building on this momentum, St. Stanislaus students also gathered toiletries, diapers, and other personal items to fulfill the wish lists of The Gray House and Christina's House in Springfield. These organizations provide critical support and safe spaces for individuals and families facing challenging circumstances.

"This can drive is run by our Student Council in grades 4-8," said Mrs. Katherine Rorrio, Principal of St. Stanislaus School. "This drive aligns with the state-

ment that we believe our students are servant leaders for today and tomorrow. It assists our school community in understanding the global community, where we are all neighbors and members of God's family. Our school theme this year is 'Go Make Disciples of All Nations.' Our students are wonderful examples of disciples going out and making a difference in the community. We are so proud of all of our students and families for being so generous to those in need."

St. Stanislaus School remains committed to fostering a culture of compassion, responsibility, and service, preparing students not only for academic success but also for meaningful engagement in their communities.

Founded over 125 years ago, St. Stanislaus School has a rich history of serving families in Chicopee and surrounding communities. Although the original building was lost to fire, the school will celebrate the 50th anniversary of its current building on Saturday, Jan. 31, beginning with Mass at 4 p.m., followed by an Open House and

Celebration. Families interested in scheduling a private tour at another time may call the school at (413) 592-5135.

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

The school has a welcoming Franciscan environment, modern air-conditioned facility, strong core curriculum, enrichment classes, certified faculty, full-day preschool (PreK 3 & 4) and Kindergarten, free breakfast and hot lunch, before and after-school program, and one-to-one use and integration of iPads and Chromebooks into curriculum. Financial Aid is available. Interested students are invited to spend a day with us. To learn more please visit [www.saintstansschool.org](http://www.saintstansschool.org).

We can't wait to meet you.

## ST. STANISLAUS SCHOOL

SERVANT LEADERS FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW



CALL TO SCHEDULE A PRIVATE TOUR!



- Welcoming Franciscan environment
- Strong core curriculum
- Enrichment classes
- Certified faculty
- Full day Preschool & Kindergarten
- Free breakfast and hot lunch
- Before & After school program
- One to one use and integration of iPads & Chromebooks into curriculum
- Modern facility - full gym, full cafeteria, air conditioned, carpeted classrooms.

Call us for more information and to schedule a tour. We welcome the opportunity for you to experience St. Stanislaus School! Interested students are invited to "spend a day with us."

PREK - 8TH GRADE SCHOOL  
PHYSICAL, SPIRITUAL, AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



To learn more



[www.saintstansschool.org](http://www.saintstansschool.org)  
534 Front Street, Chicopee, MA 01013  
413-592-5135



# CAREER Education

## HCC opens registration for Spring 2026 noncredit classes

Holyoke Community College has opened registration for its Spring 2026 catalog of noncredit personal enrichment and professional development classes.

The spring calendar begins Jan. 12, with individual classes running on different schedules throughout the semester.

New next semester is a series of classes for seniors focused on basic technology. Each one-hour class is available for just \$20 and cover a wide range of subjects, including Windows 11, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint, Canva (for graphic design), Artificial Intelligence, Zoom, smartphone use (Android or iPhone), managing and editing photos, document storage, web browsers, and computer scams.

Other classes for spring include cooking (Caribbean, charcuterie, Puerto Rican, Southern), wine tasting (winter reds, Tuscany, New Zealand, Rose, summer wines), sewing (for beginners), sewing (machine), watercolor painting, acrylic painting, drawing, piano, conversational French, conversational Spanish, music technology, voiceover coaching, financial literacy, retirement planning, K-12 education (professional development), writing and publishing (fiction, nonfiction,



tion, screenwriting, short stories, query letters, mysteries, travel, blogs), ChatGPT, how to launch a pet-sitting and dog-walking business, and Quickbooks.

Most classes meet in the Kittredge Center for Business and Workforce Development on the main HCC campus, 303 Homestead Ave. Cooking and wine-tasting classes meet at the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute, 164 Race St. Some classes meet over Zoom.

To see complete spring course listings and schedules, or to register, please visit [hcc.edu/bcs](http://hcc.edu/bcs).

More classes will be added as spring approaches.

The Commonwealth's oldest community college, Holyoke Community College opened its doors in 1946 as the first two-year college in Massachusetts. In the decades since, the college has paved the way for generations of learners from western Massachusetts and beyond, a beacon of hope and opportunity for people

seeking better lives. Please visit us at [hcc.edu](http://hcc.edu).

HCC's Kittredge Center for Business and Workforce Development is the Pioneer Valley's premiere resource for workforce training, professional development, and personal growth. It provides innovative and affordable programming that helps businesses, organizations, and individuals achieve their goals.





# HOLYOKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

A premier healthcare educator in our region.

- + Nursing
- + Radiologic Technology
- + Medical Assisting
- + Veterinary and Animal Science

---

**[hcc.edu/healthcare](http://hcc.edu/healthcare)**



# CAREER Education

## Jump Start Preschool invites families to learn, play, and grow together

Two Locations in Feeding Hills and West Springfield

Jump Start Preschool is proud to welcome families to a nurturing, play-based learning environment where children are encouraged to explore, grow, and develop essential life skills. Serving children ages 2.9 to 5 years old, Jump Start Preschool focuses on learning through play while fostering independence, creativity, and confidence.

At Jump Start Preschool, social-emotional learning and communication are key components of each age group's curriculum. Children learn how to problem-solve with peers, practice self-regulation strategies, and build the foundational skills that help them succeed academically and socially. By supporting emotional growth alongside academics, Jump Start helps children thrive both in and out of the classroom.

Family and community partnerships are at the heart

of the Jump Start Preschool mission. In support of this commitment, Jump Start Preschool will host a 5K Run/Walk on May 30, bringing the community together to raise funds for Autism Allies and the children of Jump Start Preschool. Sixty percent of all donations will benefit Autism Allies. The event will feature live music, local businesses, exercise, and great company. Community members are encouraged to participate and support children and families.

Event information and registration: <https://MilesOfHopeForAutism.eventbrite.com>

Jump Start Preschool offers a wide range of perks designed to support both children and working families, including:

- Open year-round
- Reasonable tuition
- Family-friendly hours
- Feeding Hills: 7:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
- West Springfield: 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
- Free healthy morning and afternoon snacks
- Community and in-

house field trips

- Family engagement activities throughout the year
- EEC-certified staff trained in CPR, First Aid, and medication administration
- State-of-the-art playground
- Preschool graduation with a professional photographer
- School photos twice per year
- Free occupational therapy and speech screenings twice annually

"Timeless moments come from learning through movement, creativity, and connection," said Jump Start Preschool. "We invite families to come dance with us and experience the joy of early learning."

Families interested in enrolling are encouraged to visit [www.jumpstartpreschoolma.com](http://www.jumpstartpreschoolma.com) and complete an interest form. Jump Start Preschool is currently enrolling preschoolers ages 2.9 to 5 at both the Feeding Hills and West Springfield locations.

Watch out — learning is happening.

## Various ways newspapers are good for kids

Newspapers have long been part of the fabric of the communities they cover and serve. Whether it's a big-city daily tabloid or a small town weekly, newspapers keep readers and residents up-to-date on the latest goings-on in their communities and across the globe.

Newspapers have been linked to a range of benefits for adults that include greater civic engagement and stronger voter turnout. Such benefits are indispensable, and it's equally important to recognize ways in which newspapers benefit children.

• **Reading and discussing newspaper stories can foster stronger language development.** A 2022 study published in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* noted that parents who provide newspapers at home for their children to read and then discuss stories with young readers can help kids develop strong language skills, which could ultimately benefit them in the classroom and in their personal interactions. The study also noted that discussing newspaper stories with youngsters creates opportunities for children to explore their thoughts.

• **Newspapers can help children develop their critical thinking skills.** A meta-analysis examining ways to teach students critical thinking skills published in the *Review of Educational Research* noted that critical thinking skills are vital because they bolster students' ability to interpret, analyze, evaluate, and make inferences. Newspapers are an invaluable resource for educators aiming to bolster kids' critical thinking skills, as they can be used to teach students to recognize why stories were written, how information in a given story was learned and gathered and how to verify information in a news story. Each of those lessons requires interpretation, analysis and evaluation, ultimately instilling in students vital critical thinking skills that can serve them in the classroom and beyond.



ta-analysis examining ways to teach students critical thinking skills published in the *Review of Educational Research* noted that critical thinking skills are vital because they bolster students' ability to interpret, analyze, evaluate, and make inferences. Newspapers are an invaluable resource for educators aiming to bolster kids' critical thinking skills, as they can be used to teach students to recognize why stories were written, how information in a given story was learned and gathered and how to verify information in a news story. Each of those lessons requires interpretation, analysis and evaluation, ultimately instilling in students vital critical thinking skills that can serve them in the classroom and beyond.

• **Newspapers help students develop vital communication skills.** A 2024 study published in the *Elementaria Journal of Educational Research* found that reading newspapers helped student participants in the study improve their vocabulary, enhance their writing skills and more effectively articulate their ideas. Authors behind the study ultimately characterized newspapers as valuable educational tools, a conclusion that has been reached by researchers across a range of academic disciplines.

Newspapers are part of the fabric of the communities they cover, and children have much to gain from being granted access to their local papers in the classroom and at home.

## Jump Start Preschool

Enrolling Now for the **2026-2027** School Year!



### Preschool & Pre-Kindergarten

Research-based curriculum that builds confidence & excitement about learning

- Social & Emotional Skills
- Language & Literacy Skills
- Cognitive Skills
- Physical Skills

**Jump Start Preschool** provides a safe, loving, nurturing and high-quality childcare and education that promotes and enhances each child's development with the assurance of our parents' peace of mind.

Ages **2.9 to 5** years old



Two Beautiful Locations!



For more information, call or visit our website:

[www.JumpStartPreschoolMA.com](http://www.JumpStartPreschoolMA.com)

- Feeding Hills: 413.789.4987
- West Springfield: 413.301.5694

Full Day & Half Day Programs



Interested in a Career with Jump Start Preschool? Please Contact Us



## WELDING

- Real hands-on experience
- Includes on site and off site internship
- State-of-the-art facilities renovated in 2022 including a robotic arm

Gateway's Welding program is a Chapter 74 vocational education program that prepares students for a career in Metal Fabrication and Welding!

[www.grsd.org](http://www.grsd.org)



JOIN US! Apply today!

## EARLY EDUCATION & CARE

At Gateway you can join our Early Education and Care program (EEC) in 9th grade!

By the time you graduate, you will be ready, certified, and prepared to work with young learners!



You will also be on track to:

- Know how to plan engaging activities and lessons
- Have CPR & First Aid certification
- Experience awesome internship opportunities



Visit: [www.grsd.org](http://www.grsd.org) for more information!



# CAREER Education

## Well-rounded education benefits students

Academic environments have undergone quite a change over the last several decades. Technological advancements have changed the way educators teach and how students learn, but there's also been a notable shift in what students are learning.

Science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) has become a point of emphasis in twenty-first century classrooms, and for good reason. The U.S. National Science Foundation notes that a workforce educated in STEM is vital to a country's prosperity and security. Opportunities in STEM fields are on the rise as well, as the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates STEM occupations will grow by roughly 11 percent between 2022 and 2032.

The value of STEM is undeniable. However, students and parents also should recognize the many ways a well-rounded education that includes math and science but also the humanities and social sciences facilitates strong academic performance.

### Critical thinking skills

A well-rounded education can instill important and useful critical thinking skills in students. When students direct the bulk of their attention to a single subject or



category of subjects, they're less likely to understand how interconnected coursework, and indeed the world, can be. A well-rounded education can instill in students a more nuanced way of looking at problems and potential solutions. That ability can positively affect students' personal lives and ultimately their professional lives when their formal schooling ends, as they will be in position to better assess situations.

### Comprehension

Tests are designed to gauge students' grasp of material. Students' ability to comprehend lessons taught in the classroom is a big part of that, and a well-round-

ed education fosters strong comprehension skills. A 2018 report from the New York State Education Department noted that research has found that students are better readers after they have been exposed to the language and vocabulary of the natural world, the sciences and social studies.

### Crossover benefits

A well-rounded education can help students perform better in all of their subjects. In 2021, a University of Buffalo academic and researcher studying children and dyslexia made a startling discovery regarding the value of reading and how it affects performance in subjects like math. The research found that reading proficiency crosses academic domains and actually guides how students approach various tasks and solve problems. That means a well-rounded education that includes reading-heavy subjects, like those in the humanities and social sciences, could actually improve how students perform in STEM classes.

A well-rounded education pays a number of dividends for students. Recognition of those benefits might compel parents to support a curriculum that includes a wide array of subjects and academic disciplines.

## Gateway announces expansion of career pathways, Chapter 74 vocational opportunities

Gateway Regional School (GRS) is proud to announce the expansion of its personalized learning model, featuring anticipated openings in its premier Chapter 74 Vocational Programs for the fall of 2026. Designed as a "launchpad" for student success, GRS continues to bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world career readiness for students in grades 6–12.

### Innovative Middle School Exploration

The journey begins in the middle grades (6–8), where students engage in an expansive exploratory program. With 26 unique course options—ranging from Intro to Tourism and Woodshop to Data and Statistics in Sports and Sociology—students are encouraged to uncover their passions early.

By the eighth grade, students can gain a head start by accessing Gateway's Chapter 74 vocational programs, providing hands-on introduction to high-demand fields before they even enter high school.

### Challenging Chapter 74 Vocational Programs

Gateway's commitment

to excellence is anchored by two flagship programs that prepare students for immediate entry into the workforce:

- **Welding & Metal Fabrication:** This program offers real hands-on experience in state-of-the-art facilities renovated in 2022. Students learn on modern equipment, including a robotic arm, and participate in both on-site and off-site internships.

- **Early Education and Care (EEC):** Starting in 9th grade, students in the EEC program are put on a track to become certified professionals. The curriculum includes lesson planning for young learners, CPR and First Aid certification, and immersive internship opportunities.

### A Personalized Path to the Future

As students reach the 10th grade, they participate in a "demonstration of learning" to chart their specific goals for their final two years. This tailored approach allows for meaningful experiences, including:

- **Internships and Co-ops:** Real-world placements in students' fields of interest.
- **College Credits:** Through dual-enrollment and concurrent enrollment

partnerships with universities across the country.

- **Work-Study Placements:** Providing a practical balance between education and professional experience.

"At Gateway Regional School, education is more than coursework—it's a launchpad," Dr. Will Sullivan, GRS Principal, states. "We empower our students to excel in life after graduation through intentionally personalized learning pathways crafted to foster achievement and community impact."

### Join the

### Gateway Community

Gateway Regional School welcomes students from its six member towns and surrounding communities. Families interested in exploring these opportunities for the Fall 2026 semester are encouraged to apply today.

For more information on programs and how to apply, please visit [www.grsd.org](http://www.grsd.org).

Media Contact: Gateway Regional School District Website: [www.grsd.org](http://www.grsd.org)

Gateway Regional School District is located at 12 Littleville Road, Huntington, MA 01050.

## WELCOME TO GATEWAY REGIONAL SCHOOL



**"AT GATEWAY REGIONAL SCHOOL, EDUCATION IS MORE THAN COURSEWORK – IT'S A LAUNCHPAD."**

Gateway Regional School (GRS) is proud to educate and welcome students from the six member towns and surrounding communities in a vibrant, forward-thinking learning environment designed to prepare students for life beyond the classroom.

Serving students in grades 6-12, Gateway Regional School is built around one central goal: helping every student discover their interests, develop their strengths, and chart a clear path toward future success. That journey begins in the middle grades, where students in grades 6-8, participate in an expansive exploratory program offering 26 unique course options. From *Intro to Tourism and Woodshop* to *Data and Statistics in Sports, Financial Literacy, Engineering, and Sociology*, students are encouraged to explore new ideas, uncover passions, and start thinking about possible career pathways early on. Eighth-grade students can take that exploration even further by accessing Gateway's Chapter 74 vocational programs in *Early Education and Care* and *Welding*, giving them a hands-on introduction to high-demand fields before they enter high school.

Once students reach high school, Gateway shifts into a highly personalized learning model. In grade 10, students complete a demonstration of learning, sharing their goals and aspirations for their final two years at GRS. These plans guide meaningful experiences such as internships, co-ops, and work-study placements, allowing students to gain real-world experience in fields they are excited to pursue.

Gateway's strong partnerships with colleges and universities across the country further expand student opportunities through dual-enrollment and concurrent enrollment programs, helping students earn college credit while still in high school. Looking ahead, Gateway Regional School is excited to announce anticipated openings in its Chapter 74 Vocational Programs for fall 2026, creating new opportunities for students interested in *Early Education and Care* and *Welding*.

## GATEWAY REGIONAL'S COMMITMENT TO THE FUTURE AND TO EXCELLENCE:

**AT GATEWAY REGIONAL SCHOOL, STUDENTS ARE EMPOWERED TO EXCEL IN LIFE AFTER GRADUATION THROUGH INTENTIONALLY PERSONALIZED LEARNING PATHWAYS AND OPPORTUNITIES, CRAFTED TO FOSTER A FUTURE OF ACHIEVEMENT, CONTRIBUTION, UNDERSTANDING, LEADERSHIP, AND COMMUNITY IMPACT.**



# CAREER Education

## PVPA continues to invest in Arts-focused education



At a time when many public schools are trying to manage difficult budgets by cutting Art programs, Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Public Charter School continues to invest in Arts-focused education for students in Grades 7 - 12.

With an extensive Course Catalog of challenging Academic and Arts courses, PVPA employs 15

full-time Arts teachers, and now has five Arts Departments: Music, Dance, Theatre, Visual Arts and new this year, Technical Design and Production.

Students are encouraged to find their artistic voice through a range of introductory courses and audition level course options, with multiple performance opportunities, all integrated with

their core academics.

PVPA students consistently show that incorporating the arts into education creates, not just better artists, but better students who are equipped to be active participants in their future.

Visit for an Open House on Thursday, Jan. 22, and see why PVPA is consistently voted one of the Best Charter Schools in the Valley.

As a public charter school, admission to PVPA is free and open to all Massachusetts students by lottery; no tuition or audition required.

Now accepting applications for the 2026/2027 school year for Grades 7-12 at [pvpa.org/admissions](http://pvpa.org/admissions).

For more information, please email [admissions@pvpa.org](mailto:admissions@pvpa.org).



**Pioneer Valley Performing Arts**  
Charter Public School  
15 Mulligan Drive, South Hadley  
413-552-1580

### Apply Now!

## Grades 7-11

### 2026/27 school year

#### Free, Arts-focused College-prep Education

Dance, Music, Theater  
Visual Arts  
Technical Design/  
Production

Free Bus Transportation within PVPA region



[www.pvpa.org/admissions](http://www.pvpa.org/admissions)  
**APPLY NOW!**  
Deadline Feb 11, 2026  
**REGISTER FOR OPEN HOUSE**



### PVPA Open House

**Thursday, Jan 22**  
4:00-6:00pm  
*\*registration encouraged\**



## Join Our Team!

# WE'RE HIRING!

Be part of a school system that is thriving in  
*A Culture of Equity and Proficiency* serving over 26,000 students.

[springfieldpublicschools.com](http://springfieldpublicschools.com)

### Teaching the Next Generation

Are you passionate about making a positive impact on young minds within a dynamic public school environment? Springfield Public Schools is seeking knowledgeable, highly effective, diverse educators, to join our K-12 district!

**TO APPLY**  
Visit our website or scan the QR Code!









[springfieldk12](https://www.facebook.com/springfieldk12)

# Classifieds

12 WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS | SERVING 50 LOCAL COMMUNITIES

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

COMMUNITY MARKETPLACE

Call us at 413.283.8393

## FOR SALE

### FIREWOOD

**FIREWOOD**  
Fresh cut & split \$225.00  
Seasoned cut & split \$325.00  
All hardwood.  
Tree length available  
\*Also have seasoned softwood for outdoor boilers (Cheap). Quality & volumes **guaranteed!!** New England Forest Products (413)477-0083

**MORE HEAT LESS WOOD.** Central Boiler Classic Edge HDX Outdoor Wood Furnace. EPA Certified. Titanium Stainless Steel. \$2K Tax Credit. Call (508)882-0178

## WANTED

### WANTED TO BUY

**ALL ANTIQUES AND OLD STUFF WANTED.**

**BUYING** Bottles, Crocks, Jugs, Pottery, Costume Jewelry, Toys, Games, coins, sterling, Glassware, Silver-plated items, watches, Musical instruments, typewriters, sewing machines, tools, radios, clocks, lanterns, lamps, kitchenware, cookware, knives, military, automotive, fire department, masonic, license plates, beer cans, barware, books, oil cans, advertising tins, hunting, fishing, signs, and more.

Donald Roy (860) 874-8396

**ALWAYS BUYING ALL ANTIQUES:**

Musical instruments, guitars, horns, keyboards, vintage electronics, jewelry, coins, watches, military cameras, sports memorabilia, art, sterling, signs, automotive, hunting, advertising, radios, ham radio equipment, audio equipment, toys, one item or entire estate.

Call Paul 413-206-8688.

## JUNK REMOVAL

**A Call We Haul FAST REMOVAL**  
Junk, Appliance, Cleanouts.  
We load it & take it.  
**413-531-1936**  
CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED

## SERVICES

**DRYWALL, PAINTING AND CEILINGS,** plaster repair. Drywall hanging. Taping & complete finishing. All ceiling textures. Fully insured. Jason at Great Walls. (413)563-0487

## SERVICES

### ELECTRICIAN

**PJ's Electrical MASTER ELECTRICIAN**  
• Licensed & Insured •  
Providing safe, reliable electrical services for residential and commercial projects.  
**NOW OFFERING FREE CONSULTATIONS.**  
Call today to schedule your appointment.  
**(413) 366-1703**  
(Lic. #24046-A)

**LICENSED ELECTRICIAN**

I offer good quality electrical work, no project too small. Service upgrades, pools, trustworthy, dependable & insured. Master Elec. #20773A. Text/call Luis 413-218-3301.

**ZEN ELECTRIC COMPANY LLC**  
Fully licensed and insured; Master Electrician on staff. Call for all your electrical needs. No job too small. Senior citizen and Veteran Discount. A veteran owned company. MA License #8101A1.  
Call John at (413)206-6509  
Every customer gets a free gem stone.

## INSTRUCTION

**NRA Certified Basic Pistol Course** with Live Fire for License to Carry permit \$140. Matt Marcinkiewicz muscione@hotmail.com 413-537-0620

## LANDSCAPING

**A+ ROZELL'S LANDSCAPING & BOBCAT SERVICE**  
Excavator Services  
Overgrown property?  
Extreme Brush Cutting!  
Shrub, Stump, Tree Removal  
Lawn/Arborvitae Installed  
Loam, Stone, Mulch, Sand  
Storm Clean-up  
Small Demolition/ Junk Removal  
Insured  
Josh Rozell 413-636-5957

## HOME IMPROVEMENT

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

## SERVICES

### HOME IMPROVEMENT

**CHAMELEON PAINTING & REMODELING**  
INTERIOR/EXTERIOR  
**Remodeling & Deck Specialists**  
Residential/Commercial  
Fully Insured • Free Estimates  
**413-351-1147**

## MASONRY

**STOP WET BASEMENTS**  
**ABC MASONRY & BASEMENT WATERPROOFING**  
All brick, block, stone, concrete. Hatchway doors, basement windows, chimneys rebuilt & repaired, foundations repaired, basement waterproofing systems, sump pumps. BBB+ rating. Free estimates. Lic #14790. Call (413)569-1611, (413)374-5377

## PAINTING

**KEN'S PAINTING SERVICES.** Interior painting/staining, wallpaper removal, wall/ceiling resurfacing, cabinet painting. Quality workmanship, fully insured. Free estimates. Call 413-896-8264.

## PRO PAINTING

Low, low prices. All phases interior, exterior painting and wallpapering. Also minor carpentry. 413-310-5099.

## CLASSIFIED DEADLINES

**FRIDAY AT NOON**

## SERVICES

### PLUMBING

**GREG LAFONTAIN PLUMBING & HEATING** Lic #19196 Repairs & Replacement of fixtures, water heater installations, steam/HW boiler replacement. Kitchen & Bath remodeling. 30 years experience. Fully insured. \$10 Gift Card With Work Performed. Call Greg (413)592-1505

## RUBBISH REMOVAL

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

## 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

## AUTO

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

**Buying? Selling?**  
Our Classifieds Get Results!

## HELP WANTED

Wilbraham United Church is hiring a part-time, experienced **ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT/BOOKKEEPER.** Apply to **Wilbraham United Church, Attention: Alesia; 500 Main Street; Wilbraham, MA 01095.** More information at [www.wilbrahamunitedchurch.org/about-us-2/](http://www.wilbrahamunitedchurch.org/about-us-2/)

## LUDLOW PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT PARA-EDUCATOR.

Submit resume and letter of intent to: [www.schoolspring.com](http://www.schoolspring.com)

## REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

**PALMER:** 1 BR Apt. No Pets/No Smoking. 413-283-6940

## REAL ESTATE

### 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.

# 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

# FILL OUT AND MAIL THIS MONEY MAKER

MAIL TO: Classifieds, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069 DEADLINES: **FRIDAY AT NOON**  
or call: 413-283-8393

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.

**GREAT VALUE!**  
ALL 3 ZONES NOW FOR THE PRICE OF ONE!  
Make checks payable to Turley Publications

Post your job openings in our classifieds.  
**We get results!**  
Call 413-283-8393

www.newspapers.turley.com

AGAWAM ADVERTISER NEWS  
 BARRE GAZETTE  
 COUNTRY JOURNAL  
 CHICOPEE REGISTER  
 THE JOURNAL REGISTER  
 THE LUDLOW REGISTER  
 QUABOAG CURRENT  
 THE SENTINEL  
 THE SUN  
 WILBRAHAM-HAMPDEN TIMES  
 TOWN REMINDER  
 WARE RIVER NEWS

turleynews  
TurleyPublications

**OUR CLASSIFIEDS REACH 50 COMMUNITIES EVERY WEEK!**



Kevin Harvey shoots for the legs.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli

## Falcons suffer tough loss to Agawam

WILBRAHAM – Last Wednesday night, depth made a big difference as Agawam High School wrestling picked up a dominant win over Minnechaug, taking a pin or forfeit in nearly every match of the evening to improve its dual meet record for the season. Agawam would also compete on Saturday in multiple meets at Southwick Regional.



Gavin French tries to avoid a takedown.



Logan Richard locks up at 175 pounds.



Yusuf Gunaydin grapples in the 215-pound matchup.



Christopher Duby locks up at 106.



Liam Maher tries to counter a takedown.

## Thunderbirds stunned by Lehigh Valley Phantoms

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds (13-15-4-2) were snakebitten by a three-goal third period rally as the Lehigh Valley Phantoms (19-11-2-2) came away with a 3-2 win on Saturday night before a sellout crowd of 6,793 inside the MassMutual Center on Indians Throwback Night.

Entering the game having allowed only two total goals in their prior three victories, the Phantoms and their netminder, Carson Bjarnason, made it clear goals would not come easily for the T-Birds, as the rookie backstop turned away all 10 first period attempts

from the home side.

At the other end of the rink, Georgi Romanov had a relatively quiet first period, making all seven saves asked of him in the Springfield crease. Neither team could connect on a power play chance, and each goalie came up with a timely save off an odd-man attack, with Romanov stoning a Phil Tomasino 2-on-1 bid and Bjarnason rejecting a Juraj Pekarik breakaway.

The T-Birds' power play wasted little time getting to the lead in the opening minute of the second, as Calle Rosen gathered a pass from Matthew

Peca at the top of the left circle and picked the top corner over Bjarnason's glove to make it a 1-0 Springfield lead just 52 seconds into the frame.

That same man-up unit added to their tally at 16:53 on a gorgeous three-man passing play, as Alek Kaskimaki slid a pass to Chris Wagner at the left post. From there, Wagner stuffed a perfect between-the-leg pass over to Matt Luff, who fired home his team-leading 12th goal to make it a 2-0 game into the intermission.

The third period began at 4-on-4, and the Phantoms finally got on the board as Lane

Pederson curled to the middle of the ice before snapping a perfect shot upstairs over Romanov at the 27-second mark, cutting the Springfield lead to 2-1. On a power play just 2:40 later, Christian Kyrou dissected the T-Birds' defense and chipped a forehand over Romanov's glove, bringing Lehigh to a rapid tie, 2-2.

The 2-2 tie made it all the way to the game's final seconds, but a bad-angle shot from Anthony Richard at the bottom of the left circle somehow found its way home with 11.9 remaining, and Lehigh Valley escaped with the victory.

## Card Game Party & Luncheon set for Jan. 29

WILBRAHAM - The Saint Cecilia Women's Club is holding its annual winter Card & Game Party & Luncheon, Thursday, Jan. 29, in the St. Cecilia Parish Center, 42 Main St., Wilbraham. Check in begins at 11:30 a.m. with lunch served at Noon.

Donation is \$10. There will also be a raffle for prizes and gift certifi-

icates.

Come with friends to play any game of your choice (mahjong, bridge, dominoes, canasta, Scrabble, etc.) Proceeds help to fund the club's scholarships and donations to area charitable organizations.

For reservations, please call Sue Agnew, 596-9480.

## PUBLIC NOTICES

**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.  
HD25P2099EA  
Estate of:  
Allan M Coolong, Jr.  
Date of Death: 09/10/2025  
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION**

To all interested persons:  
A Petition for S/A - Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Linette Coolong of Ballston Spa, 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 Linette Coolong of Ballston Spa, 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 02/05/2026. 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 ad-**

**ministration 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: January 07, 2026  
Rosemary A Saccomani, Register of Probate  
01/15/2026

### 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: VVWMA23B9YP3015858 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

### WILBRAHAM CONSERVATION COMMISSION LEGAL NOTICE

The Wilbraham Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing **Wednesday, January 28, 2026 at 7:15 PM** in Conference Room 1 at the Wilbraham Town Hall, 240 Springfield Street, on the Notice of Intent filed by Tonya Capparello on behalf of the Town of Wilbraham under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and the Wilbraham Wetlands Bylaw. The proposed project includes intersection improvements at Springfield Street and Stony Hill Road. The project proposed is to construct new ADA-compliant concrete sidewalks and curb ramps and will take place within areas subject to protection and jurisdiction under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act, Regulations and the Wilbraham Wetland Bylaw. Information relating to this application is on file with the Conservation Commission.  
Christopher Brown, Chairman  
01/15/2026

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

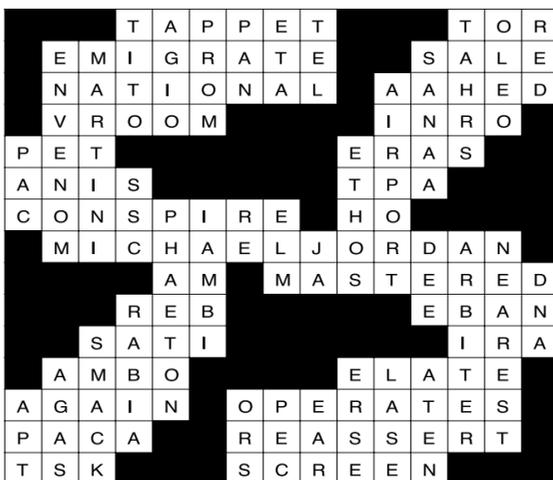
## NOTICE

**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.

## Obituary Policy

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries. One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place. The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice (with a word limit of up to 500 words) and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: [obits@turley.com](mailto:obits@turley.com).

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.



## PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

- 1 Email all notices to [notices@turley.com](mailto:notices@turley.com)
- 2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.
- 3 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)

# DL&G TREE

Tree  
Removal



Structural  
Pruning



Crane  
Service



Storm  
Damage



Stump  
Grinding



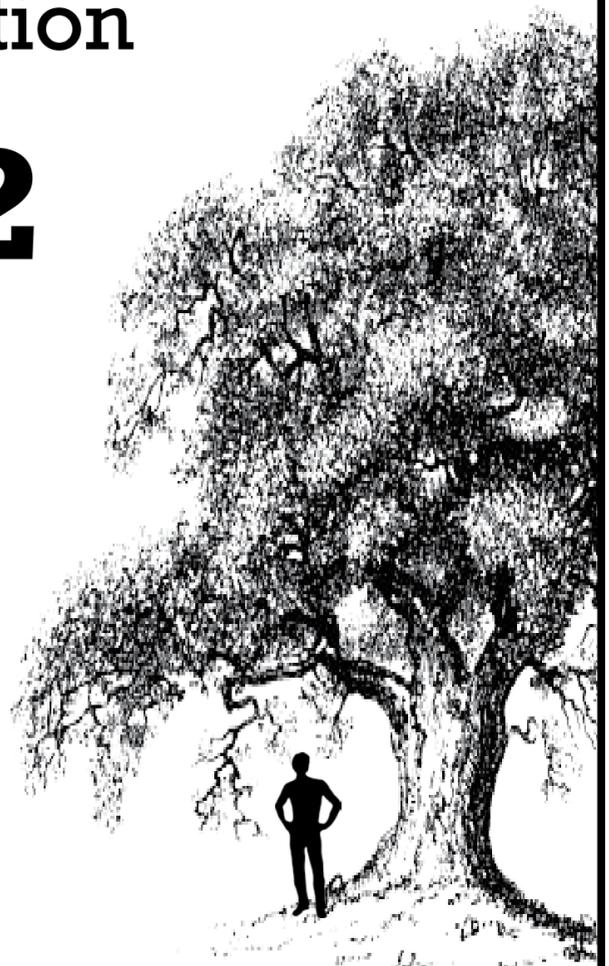
Lot  
Clearing



Give us a call for your free estimate  
and tree evaluation

**413-478-4212**

# DL&G TREE



**INSURED AND CERTIFIED**