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Sam Webster (Right) and Carter Witruk (Left) give a big thumbs up for shaving cream.

## Shaving cream fun

Turley photos by Noelle Hisgen

### Teens take part in event at Hampden Library

By Noelle Hisgen  
Correspondent

HAMPDEN - On Jan. 11, the Hampden Free Public Library had a teen shaving cream event, where kids hung out in the Sheila R. Flynn Teen Center and played with shaving cream.

The event was created and led by teen library volunteer Irelyn Coffey. Inspired by a past slime event at the library, Coffey wanted to have an event that was entirely dedicated to shaving cream. And so, a shaving cream event was made for all to enjoy.

As teens entered the library beginning at 11 a.m., a table was set up before them and the only thing on it was shaving cream. People



People put lots of shaving cream onto Library Page Gracen Moriarty's hands.

could play with shaving cream however they wanted: such as putting it into cups and bags, or even their

own hands.

Coffey, who led the event, spoke about why she chose to host this event at the library.

"So basically a few months ago there was a slime event at the library. And instead of making slime, I just put a bunch of glitter inside of shaving cream," Coffey said. "And then I thought, since a few months from that, my birthday would land on a Friday, so I thought why don't we make a shaving cream event Saturday?"

In attendance was Young Adult Librarian Maxine Girard and Library Page Gracen Moriarty who spoke about the event in its first year.

"It's wonderfully chaotic. It's just a lot of fun because it's surprising to see what they can do with bottles of shaving cream and miscellaneous things," Girard said.

"During our slime event Irelyn

Please see **FUN**, page 16

## Sand for Seniors



Turley photo by Patricia Sullivan  
Wilbraham Firefighter Jeff Kristek, Barbara Harrington, social services coordinator for the Wilbraham Senior Center, and Firefighter Derrick Merrill work together on the town's Sand for Seniors program.

By Patricia Sullivan  
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM/HAMPDEN - "Ice is terribly dangerous for seniors," says Becky Moriarty, executive director of the Hampden Senior Center. That is why both Hampden and Wilbraham have instituted programs to distribute free sand to seniors to help prevent falls that can lead to injury and even hospitalization.

Working in conjunction with the Hampden County Sheriff's Office and Barbara Harrington, social services coordinator for Wilbraham, the Wilbraham Fire Department delivered 30 five-gallon buckets of sand to the homes of Wilbraham seniors on Jan. 3.

"We want to ensure our seniors' safety," Harrington said.

Seniors spread the sand on their walkways and driveways throughout the winter to help prevent hazardous falls.

Wilbraham has been participating in this program for about five years. Seniors sign up for sand delivery through the senior center.

Please see **SANDMAN**, page 7

## Wilbraham Community Gardens get strong show of support

Residents voiced concerns as the garden manager is set to retire

By Dalton Zbierski  
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - A roomful of gardeners arrived at the Jan. 7 Wilbraham Select Board meeting to show support for the Community Gardens.

While not in real danger, the future of the town's gardening club is uncertain.

Next month, town employee Melissa Graves is set to retire. Graves has managed the gardens for well over a decade, as the club has excelled and grown in popularity.

Town Administrator Nick Breault explained, however, that Graves' gardening

duties were never part of any job description she holds with the town. Her job title is administrative assistant.

Several members voiced concerns about the club's future, when Graves steps down as manager. They want the town to consider hiring a point person to serve a similar role to what Graves has had for all these years.

"I am here to speak on behalf of the importance of the garden. As you can see, it's a big deal to a lot of us," said longtime Wilbraham resident Charlie Hines. "The garden season starts around May and goes until November, so I think whatever the cost of the garden is that the town has been paying, I think it's a drop in the bucket, especially given the fact that there are months and months of use of the garden."

Please see **GARDENS**, page 5



Turley photo by Kristin Rivers  
A shot at the Wilbraham Community Gardens on Monson Road in Wilbraham. The photo was taken on Jan. 11, during its offseason.

# Selectboard holds second Municipal Meeting

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
krivers@turley.com

HAMPDEN - The Selectboard met with members from town departments and committees for a second Municipal Meeting on Jan. 7.

The meeting continues discussions on prioritization and planning for municipal building renovations and capital improvements, with a third Municipal Meeting also scheduled for Feb. 4.

## Updates on Outstanding Questions

Chair Don Davenport addressed outstanding questions from the prior meeting, including the documents pertaining to the Town House and any stipulations on the gift from Miss Elizabeth Sessions.

Pulling up the town warrant from August 7, 1931, Davenport noted Article Four which stated the gift of "a building to be used for consolidated school, gymnasium, library, town offices and community purposes."

"The town voted unanimously to accept that," Davenport said.

Davenport added no stipulations were noted.

From here, Davenport explained their attorney was consulted on what needed to be done regarding the use of Thornton W. Burgess Middle School for town offices due to being taken by an eminent domain for school purposes in the past.

The answer? A town warrant article that would need a two-thirds vote from the town to change the purpose of the original eminent domain taking from only "school" purposes to other municipal uses.

From there, there would need to also be an article to pass by a majority vote for additional funding requests.

## Layout Updates

Town Administrator Brian Domina shared the latest layout he marked up from

Tighe & Bond, adding he is waiting to set up a meeting with them.

Pointing out specific areas, Domina noted the Parks & Rec for office space, locker rooms and the gymnasium.

"There's been a request from Parks & Rec to have additional classroom space, that's what shown right here, so that they can expand programming and that doesn't need the gymnasium," Domina said.

On the existing library in TWB, Domina said there was a site visit with some of the library's trustees, director and staff, with a request for additional classroom space in the front of the building.

"This would be more of the general library, adult library and this would be more of the kids and teen section down here to try to keep those spaces separate," Domina said.

Domina added maintenance and town meeting auditorium would remain the same, while different groups of offices were plugged in based on their function and convenience to people coming into the building, including building, zoning, conservation and financials.

"There's the existing nurse's office and some rooms here, so that's where Tighe & Bond suggested Board of Health coordinator, public health nurse, those types of things," Domina said. "Town Administrator, Selectboard in the main corridor and then two dedicated meeting rooms here and then a third meeting room here is what was suggested. We do have a lot of permanent documents in the Town House, currently, so this would dedicate two full classrooms to modifying those for that."

Dedicated space for the community food pantry for families and access control points would also be included.

## Parks & Rec Insights

Dan Blanchard, director of Parks and Rec, said "it was a tremendous opportunity" for the department as they've been of-

fering 30 new programs since Fall 2023, with hopes for more.

"We've had a lot of positive feedback from the residents about the new programs that we've offered. They've been--I would say very successful--so we'd like to keep that momentum running and a move over for us would be huge," Blanchard said.

Increased accessibility and efficiency was also a highlight, with Blanchard explaining benefits include office organization such as storage, dedicated access to secure buildings for after-hours programs, increased parking, ADA accessibility, sports field maintenance and handling program issues.

"So, all of these things are to improve Parks and Rec and the things that we can offer the town," Blanchard said.

Blanchard stressed the main benefit to a move for Parks and Rec would be "to really exponentially expand and diversify programming to benefit residents of all ages."

"For me, from a Parks and Rec perspective, a move over there would not just benefit the Parks and Rec office and employees, but also the community with expanded programming, being on-site and having a positive impact on the residents through Parks & Rec," Blanchard said.

## Thoughts from Other

### Departments and Committees

Treasurer Richard Patullo said the layout "is a good first stab at it."

"It gives us a good working foil. How, what can we improve upon, so yeah I appreciate this a lot," Patullo said.

Historical Commission Chair Connie Witt suggested the Historical Commission have its own office.

"I was thinking with the Veteran's Office, that's 900 square feet. That could be a wall between (that)," Witt said. "We certainly--the Historical Commission--doesn't need 900 square feet."

After Davenport commented there was

an opportunity for expansion and using space for multiple offices, Domina agreed and noted another version of the layout included a generic boards and commissions room.

"I mean, we have Historic, we have Advisory, we have CPC--Community Preservation Committee--I'm sure I'm missing some of them--but there's definitely the opportunity for folks to have office space there," Domina said.

When Domina noted how that could also help encourage more residents to volunteer with boards and committees, Witt agreed.

"If it's used correctly and it's used a lot by the public, you're going to get more public--more people--interested in volunteering because everything's going to be at one place. There are going to be multiple people in the building all the time and it'll be a more social thing for people to do, to volunteer," Witt said.

The senior center was also brought up again, leading to several minutes of discussion on where this would fit--if considered--with Peter Hatch and Senior Center Building Committee Chair Gary Weiner sharing their takes on this consideration.

Mary Ellen Glover, a former Selectboard Member, asked what happens if this passes at town meeting.

"What happens to this building? Do you need to have another committee to decide what you're going to use this building for and go through this whole process again for this building?" Glover said.

Davenport replied yes. "And throughout the whole process, do you share with taxpayers what this will do to their tax bills?" Glover said.

Davenport confirmed yes. After further discussion, everyone agreed to hold a third meeting.

## National Pie Day

HAMPDEN - The Hampden Senior Center will be celebrating National Pie Day on Jan. 23 at 12:30 p.m. Join us for a delicious slice—or two—of pie!

Stay and play Bingo with Phil after pie too!

Please call 566-5588 to sign up to let us know you're coming.

## Nomination papers available

WILBRAHAM - The 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 17, 2025 Annual Town Election ballot.

The last day to obtain nomination papers is Wednesday, March

26, 2025. The positions being voted that day are one Select Board member for three years, one Assessor for three years, one Regional School Committee member for three years, one Cemetery Commissioner for three years, one Water Commissioner for three years, two Library Trustees for three years, one Library Trustee for one year, one Planning Board Member for five years, and one Wilbraham Housing Authority member for five years.

The deadline for submission to the Registrars for certification is Friday, March 28, 2025 at 5 p.m. and 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.

## How to prevent fires

WILBRAHAM/HAMPDEN - About half of all heating-related fires in Massachusetts involve appliances like fireplaces and wood stoves. If you haven't had your chimney and flue inspected and cleaned, please do it soon. This can reduce the most common types of solid fuel heating fires. In the meantime, always use a fireplace screen or close the wood stove door and keep anything that can burn at least three feet away on all sides.

A message from Wilbraham and Hampden Fire & Life Safety Educators



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# School Committee approves three-tier system for bus transportation

Goes into effect 2025-2026 school year

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - The School Committee unanimously approved on Jan. 9 to move to three-tiered system options for bus transportation for the 2025-2026 school year.

The decision comes after ongoing issues with bus transportation in the district, including staffing issues and buses arriving late to pick up and/or drop off students at school.

After two parents shared their concerns during public input, Alvin Morton, executive director for the Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative, apologized to the district, students and parents.

"It's not purposefully done, it's not intentionally done. It's just something that's happening right now. It's not like we're not working on the situation. We are," Morton said.

Morton said they are working to fill openings for bus drivers and are "trying to find creative and innovative ways in order to recruit and to retain people," adding when he first entered the role with LPVEC, he asked, "When was the last time that we had a full compliment of drivers" in all seven member districts, including Hampden-Wilbraham.

The answer was right before the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I just wanted to make sure that it's not something that we take lightly. If anybody knew me, it's something that we want to take pride in the services that we provide and there's no reason to take pride in the services that we're providing currently in the regional public schools," Morton said.

### The Numbers, Issues and Remedies

Currently, the school district is in a two-tier system with 33 routes and drivers, 10.92 routes and drivers

for specialized transportation and 10 monitors for specialized transportation, with the average daily hours weekly total coming out to 29 hours.

There's also a need for two spare drivers for regular transportation and a spare driver for specialized transportation.

The FY26 costs for the two-tier system are \$2,337,914 for regular transportation, \$75,417 each for one Career and Technical Education bus and one METCO bus and \$965,002 for specialized transportation.

Morton said the biggest issue concerns the shortage of employees for the Wilbraham garage.

"You have 24 of 33 routes that are covered for regular transportation which leaves 9 open routes. You have 7.9 of the 10.92 for specialized transportation, so at least three open routes," Morton said.

There are also no substitute drivers and eight out of 10 monitors for specialized transportation are filled, leaving two open positions.

Morton said Hampden-Wilbraham is one of two districts to be in the two-tier system, with the other town being Longmeadow which has seven buses while Hampden-Wilbraham has 33 buses.

"The reason I bring this up is one of the reasons why we can't retain drivers in the Hampden-Wilbraham (district is) because the average weekly hours are pretty low, so they're making the same hourly rate but they're not making the same total because their weekly hours are lower compared to some of the other districts," Morton said. "So, people prefer to go to other districts."

Morton also explained the other factors contributing to issues included combining routes to get students to and from school, which led to the longer routes, mechanics and all managers and supervisors also driving buses and the late arrivals.

The parent, guardian and caregiver transportation app MyRide K12 not working when routes are combined was another topic.

"When you combine routes, that

app does not work because it cannot read two different buses when you combine two different routes," Morton said. "So, if it's a single route, you still will be able to track your kid's progress to and from school, but when we combine routes the app does not work."

Additional factors were notifications to families when buses are running late, students being late or missing school activities and more traffic on the roads.

The remedies, Morton said, are monetarily incentivizing drivers and monitors for the CBA to pick up extra runs during already scheduled routes and for not missing work, working with the Valley Opportunity Council to see if homeless and migrant families in Chicopee and West Springfield are eligible and interested in employment as drivers and monitors, working with the Hampden County Sheriff's Department on possibly utilizing retired correctional officers as substitute drivers after training, hiring a Bilingual/Spanish speaking Bus Driver Trainer and direct mailings to several communities.

Morton then showed a comparison between a two-tier system and a three-tier system, with three tiers having 28 routes and drivers for regular transportation and 10.92 routes and drivers for specialized transportation, while two spare drivers for regular transportation, one spare driver for specialized transportation and two substitute drivers would still be needed.

"All I'm just proposing is the fact that if you stay with the two-tier system, we're trying to get to that full complement of those drivers, which we've not been totally successful in with this time period, but we are making progress there," Morton said.

The costs for the three-tier system would be \$2,011,217 for regular transportation, \$77,354 each for one Career and Technical bus and one METCO bus and specialized transportation would remain the same at

Please see **SCHOOL**, page 5

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"The Personal Librarian" generated a lot of discussion among the Saturday Book Club members, including the history behind the novel, which was a Good Morning America Book Club pick in 2024.



Turley photos by Kristin Rivers  
Mary Luff shares her thoughts on this month's book as the members look on.

# Book Clubs kick off 2025 with thought-provoking reads

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
krivers@turley.com

HAMPDEN - The library kicked off a new year of reading and introspective conversations through their book clubs on Jan. 11.

It all began at 11 a.m. with the Saturday Book Club, followed by the Silent Book Club Chapter at 12:15 p.m. and the Social Justice Book Club at 2 p.m.

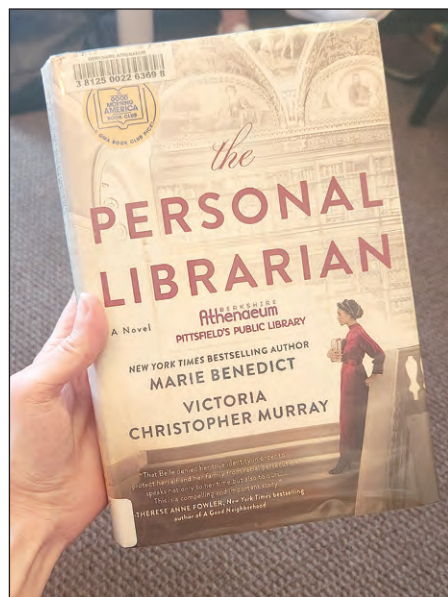
This month's reads were "The Personal Librarian" by Marie Benedict and "South to America: A Journey Below the Mason-Dixon to Understand the Soul of a Nation" by Imani Perry. For the Silent Book Club, attendees can bring their own books while enjoying a hot cup of coffee or tea.

At the Saturday Book Club, "The Personal Librarian" is about J. P. Morgan's personal librarian, Belle da Costa Green, an African-American woman forced to hide her true identity and pass off as white.

The consensus among the members was the book was well-researched and detailed, they loved the main character and enjoyed the refresher on history and discussions around race, self-confidence and maintaining a reputation, family dynamics, conformity, difficult choices and more.

The drawbacks were the readability and not finding the book a page-turner, but still looking forward to picking up the book. Other members added they, also, had a hard time getting into it.

Throughout the discussion, Director Ellen Moriarty oversaw the group, presenting discussion questions and passing around additional books "An Illuminated



"The Personal Librarian" by Marie Benedict was this month's pick for the Saturday Book Club at Hampden Free Public Library.

Life: Belle de Costa Greene's Journey from Prejudice to Privilege" by Heidi Arizzone and "Belle Greene" by Alexandra Lapierre providing further insight into de Costa Greene.

The book club also uses a rating system between one and five stars to rate the books.

Mary Luff, one of the members, enjoys the book club because she would read books she wouldn't normally read.

"I learn a lot and it's great to talk about some of these books with people who I feel comfortable speaking my mind about. It's a good, safe place," Luff said.

On this month's book, Luff said, "It was a hard book to read" but "a very important book because it got me thinking."

"That's the other thing about the book club is you get to read from different perspectives and it gives you more empathy about what life must have been like for different people--not just nowadays--but in different time periods," Luff said.

After reflecting on her favorite reads from 2024, which were "The History of Bees" by Maja Lunde, "The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store" by James McBride and "James" by Percival Everett, Luff shared she was excited about what this year's reads would bring.

"I'm looking forward to seeing what Ellen has in store for us," Luff said. "I'm enjoying the nonfiction books because I really get to parts of history and lives I don't know about and I'm learning about."

Moriarty expressed excitement about this month's book clubs, encouraging residents to read more books this year.

Her 2024 favorites were "Tom Lake" by Ann Patchett, "Sidonia's Seam Binding" by Hanna Perlstein-Marcus, "Stop Buying Bins & Other Blunt but Practical Advice from a Professional Organizer" by Bonnie Borromeo Tomlinson and "The Thursday Murder Club" by Richard Osman.

"More books, more interesting discussions," Moriarty said. "Always looking forward to new fiction!"

On the Social Justice Book Club's book pick, Moriarty emphasized the history.

"This was a really good book. It was very long, but very informative. A couple of our book club members said today they weren't big

history buffs in their younger years and someone said it was the way we were presented with the history. It was boring, it was not something we could relate to," Moriarty said. "But in this book, she talks a lot about the history of the South throughout the history of America, but she ties in stories, so it makes it much more relatable and she stays with that theme through the book."

Moriarty encourages the community to check out the book clubs, adding she is open to suggestions.

"We are welcoming to new members all the time. There's no requirement. You don't have to read the book every month, you can pick and choose which ones you want to read," Moriarty said. "We always have extra copies at the front desk every month and we're a very fun group."

For anyone interested, February's reads are "Hello Beautiful" by Ann Napolitano for the Saturday Book Club and "The New Jim Crow" by Michelle Alexander for the Social Justice Book Club.

The book clubs will next meet on Feb. 8.

## Great Decisions Discussion Group Returns

WILBRAHAM – Registration has begun for the 2025 Great Decisions Discussion Group at the Wilbraham Public Library. Starting Feb. 5, the group will meet weekly on Wednesdays from 4 to 5:30 p.m. through March 26.

Each year, Foreign Policy Association selects eight critical issues facing the country to be the subjects of conversation. The topics for 2025 include American Foreign Policy at a Crossroads, U.S. Changing Leadership of the World Economy, U.S.-China Relations, India: Between China, the West, and the Global South, International Cooperation on Climate Change, The Future of NATO and European Security, AI and American National Security, and American Foreign Policy in the Middle East: Taking Stock and Looking Ahead.

Participants are encouraged to order a briefing book to read in advance so they can be informed and ready to engage. Briefing books are available on the association's website, fpa.org. One copy of the briefing book will be available at the Service Desk for in-library reading. To register and learn more, visit wilbrahamlibrary.org, or call the library at 413-596-6141.

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## Searching Your Family History with Ancestry Library Edition

WILBRAHAM – Assistant Library Director Mary Bell will give a hands-on demonstration of Ancestry Library Edition at the Wilbraham Public Library on Wednesday, Jan. 29 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

She will give a brief introduction of how to use the online resource in the Brooks Room, followed by time in which participants use library computers or their own laptops to access the database and search for themselves. All participants will be given a starter kit with forms and tips for researching genealogy.

“Ancestry Library Edition includes records of the U.S. Census from 1790 to 1950, military records such as World War I and II draft cards, and other records worldwide. International records avail-

able include particularly good coverage in Canada and the United Kingdom,” said Bell.

Images of original records, including immigration records and town records of births, marriages, and deaths can be saved to a flash drive or sent to your email from Ancestry Library Edition. It is accessible in-library only, but can be used through both library computers or personal devices connected to the library’s Wi-Fi.

This program is free and open to the public. Space is limited, and registration is going on now.

For more information, contact the Wilbraham Library at 413-596-6141 or visit the Event Calendar online at [www.wilbrahamlibrary.org](http://www.wilbrahamlibrary.org).

### SCHOOL from page 3

\$965,002.

Comparing the total costs, the two-tier system is \$3,453,750, while the tier-three system is \$3,130,927, a monetary difference of \$322,823.

When comparing current and recommended bell schedules and arrivals for the two tiers, Morton said this.

“I talked to Superintendent Provost, these are just recommended. We have

room to move in these particular time periods. They may not work. Currently, the way they’re set up, they had to give you some type of projection, what we’re looking at,” Morton said. “But, these are just recommended, but we have some room to move around in these time periods if they don’t currently work in the way if you so choose to go to a three-tier system.”

The discussion later concluded with input from the School Committee along with parents.

### GARDENS from page 1

The Community Gardens, located on Monson Road, include around 60 plots, although some are split up. The cost per plot is approximately \$30.

Sue Burke, who has lived in Wilbraham for over 50 years, considers the Community Gardens to be an important resource for a variety of community members.

“Like many people in town, we don’t have a lot of sun on our own property. We have shade,” Burke said. “The garden is where we can grow things, and we can have that pleasure of picking a pea fresh off the vine and enjoying it as well as being able to bring it home or donate it – many of us have through the kind efforts of some people.”

Eric Ball, who has only lived in the town for several years, said the Community Gardens are used and beloved by people of all ages.

“I have a four-year-old, and I’ll tell you the joy of watching him go and say, ‘Dad, look at the peppers coming off,’ and grabbing it right off the vine,” Ball said. “We’ve been doing it for the last two years, and it’s something I didn’t have from where I moved from, so it’s definitely a pleasure to have that. We would hope that there’s a way to continue that. Again, watching the joy of a four-year-old running right through there and eating it off of the vine, there’s nothing better.”

Select Board Chair Sue Bunnell said it was a pleasure to have a full house. She added that the town has no intention of acting to the detriment of the garden club or Community Gardens.

“[This conversation is about responsibilities that are] part of someone’s job who’s retiring. It’s not like we’re trying to make this go away,” Bunnell said.

Breault echoed that the town fully understands the value of the Community Gardens and the opportunities it provides for recreation, learning and socialization.

“So, the value of the property is not in dispute whatsoever,” Breault said.

Breault complimented Graves for doing a “terrific job” managing the garden and said the town is in the process of trying to fill that position.

“As we always do, meaning Human Resources and the Select Board,

when a change is happening in a position, there’s a thorough review of the job description, and often times there will be changes made,” Breault said.

Changes to the job could include re-configuration for field duties, which could impact numerous town departments, as responsibilities are divided up.

“This position is going to go more to the letter of what it is, which is an administrative in-house position for the Conservation and for the Building Department,” Breault said.

It is unclear at this point if the position will be made full-time or part-time. It could fall under the Department of Parks and Recreation, Conservation or DPW.

“Then, there needs to be discussion about more administrative details about the funding source. Is it going to be a revolving fund rather than a general fund,” Breault said. “Again, all things having nothing to do with what the main purpose is, which is to provide an opportunity to garden in the town of Wilbraham.”

Ultimately, Breault recommended that the Select Board give consideration to hiring a part-time person for a season, who will have conversations with the gardeners to help discover a more permanent solution.

Regardless, the gardeners will have more responsibility than ever before, according to Breault.

“Again, I appreciate the difficulty of saying to a group of folks who want to garden that all of a sudden this needs to be managed by you, but that’s the situation we’re in. That’s what I ask the board to talk about,” Breault said.

Since this meeting, the item was addressed the following week during the Select Board’s Jan. 13 meeting.

To learn what happened next, check out this week’s edition.

## Republican Town Committee hosting Inauguration Day Celebration

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham Republican Town Committee will be hosting an Inauguration Day Celebration at 6 p.m. at the Country Club of Wilbraham on Monday, Jan. 20. All are welcome to join the festivities.

For those who would also like to join for a meal or beverage, a special menu and bar will be available.

We hope to see you at the Celebration.

## Cookbook Club at the Wilbraham Library

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham Public Library Cookbook Club is meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 5 at 6:30 p.m.

This month’s selection is “Barefoot Contessa at Home” by Ina Garten.

Please let the library know what you’re bringing when registering so we do not duplicate recipes. Cooking is encouraged but not required for attendance.

Copies of the book are available now at the Service Desk.

The Cookbook Club meets on the first Wednesday of every other month at 6:30 p.m.

This program is free and open to the public, and registration is required. For more information or to register, please call the library at 413-596-6141.

## Women’s Club hosting Luncheon Card & Game Party

WILBRAHAM - The Saint Cecilia Women’s Club is holding a LUNCHEON CARD & GAME PARTY, Thursday, Jan. 23, at the St. Cecilia Parish Center, 42 Main St., Wilbraham.

Come with friends to play any game of your choice and enjoy a delicious luncheon. Donation is \$10. Check-in begins at 11:30 a.m. with lunch served at Noon.

There will also be a raffle for many prizes and gift cards. Proceeds help to fund the club’s scholarships and donations to other needy organizations in the area.

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

## WPD Annual Activity Report

WILBRAHAM – The police department shared the 2024 Annual Activity Report. In 2024, there were 22,956 total calls for service. Broken down, the numbers are as follows:

Arrests: 327

Crashes: 285

M/V Stops: 2,290

Violations: 1,947; 1,808 were civil violations and 139 were criminal violations

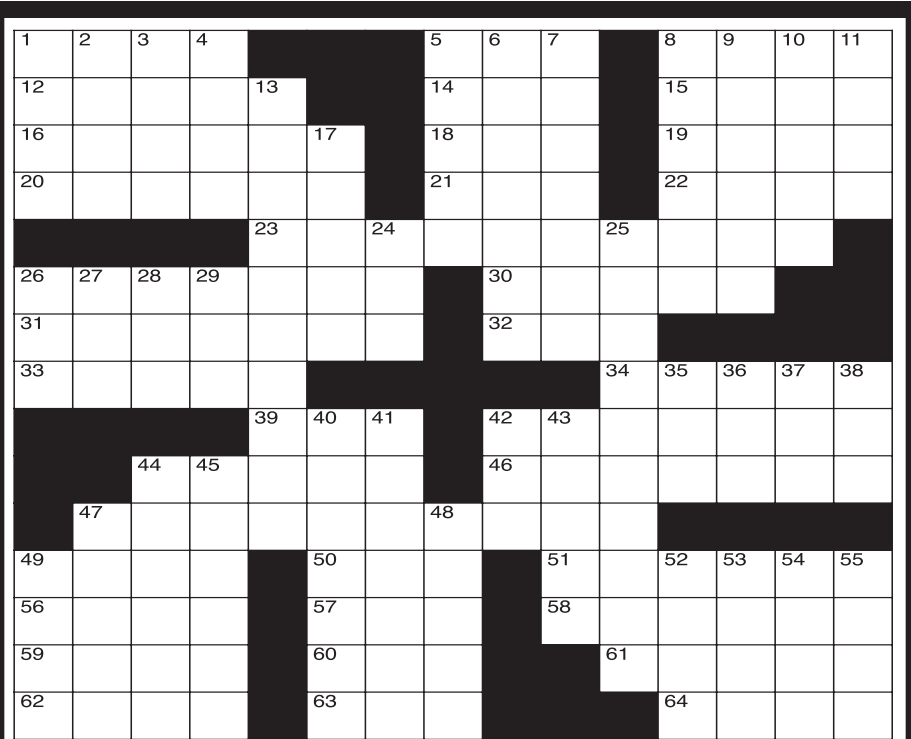
Patrol Checks: 8,712

Domestic: 133

Mental Health: 102

Medical/Assist EMS: 476

Residents can go on WPD Alerts to continue following to receive activity reports, community alerts and more.



### CLUES ACROSS

1. This regulates cortisol production (abbr.)
5. People of northern Vietnam
8. Employee stock ownership plan
12. Regions
14. The center of a city
15. Hindu serpentine deity
16. Roared
18. Sun up in New York
19. “Sir” in Malaysian
20. Shrimp dish
21. Muckraker Tarbell
22. Apex
23. Harmonic effects
26. One of Babe Ruth’s nicknames
30. Groups in organic chemistry
31. More pleasant-tasting
32. Spring forward

### CLUES DOWN

33. Noted writer
34. Building occupied by monks
39. “The world’s most famous arena”
42. Colorless liquid hydrocarbon
44. Long or fast speech
46. Things you can eat
47. Substance in which magnetic moments are not aligned
49. Actor Idris
50. I (German)
51. Taxes
56. Indonesian island
57. Nuisance (slang)
58. Shawl
59. Digits
60. Moved on foot quickly
61. “For goodness \_\_\_”
62. Facial body part
63. Russian river
64. Urinates

### CLUES DOWN

1. Partner to “oohs”
2. Scaly water dweller
3. Pueblo people of New Mexico
4. Music producer Teo
5. Greek mythological goddess
6. Got together to discuss
7. Acquires
8. Involve
9. Some are tomato-based
10. Old Irish alphabets
11. A sheet of glass in a window or door
13. Blood poisoning
17. A moon of Saturn
24. Neither
25. Sums
26. They follow “A”
27. Satisfaction
28. People of southeastern Burma
29. Small amount
35. Guy (slang)
36. Sound unit
37. Midway between northeast and east
38. Affirmative
40. Almost at the top
41. Extremely slow
42. Pearl Jam’s debut album
43. Influential mid-century playwright
44. Martens
45. Approval
47. Dallas-adjacent Texas city
48. African nation
49. Dark brown or black
52. A place to get caught
53. Large-headed, elongated fish
54. Type of sword
55. Scottish tax or levy

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**VIEWPOINTS**

# Thank you, Mr. President

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

WEST SPRINGFIELD -On Dec. 29, 2024, the world lost, arguably, Habitat for Humanity International's best-known volunteer and advocate. Thirty-ninth President James Earl "Jimmy" Carter passed away at 100 years old. President Carter, and his late wife Rosalynn, began volunteering with Habitat in 1984. Since then, their involvement and dedication to the nonprofit only grew.

"We are deeply saddened by President Carter's passing and our prayers are with the Carter family," said Jonathan Reckford, CEO of Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI). "We are grateful for the incredible impact the Carters have had on Habitat and on the families who have benefitted from their shining example. The Carters put Habitat for Humanity on the map and their legacy lives on in every family we serve around the world."

Three years after President



Carter and Rosalynn, left the White House, the pair ventured to Americus, in their home state of Georgia, to work with Habitat for Humanity. The couple quickly realized Habitat's mission aligned closely with their own values and soon developed a strong relationship with the nonprofit to combat the affordable housing crisis.

"I think every human being has within himself or herself a desire to reach out to others and to share some of our blessings with those who are in need," President Carter once said. "What's opened up that avenue for me and my wife and hundreds and thousands of others is Habitat for Humanity. It makes



it easy for us to reach out and work side by side with the homeowner who's never had a decent house, perhaps. I haven't been on a Habitat project that I wasn't thrilled and inspired and wept."

"Habitat successfully removed the stigma of charity by substituting it with a sense of partnership," President Carter once said.

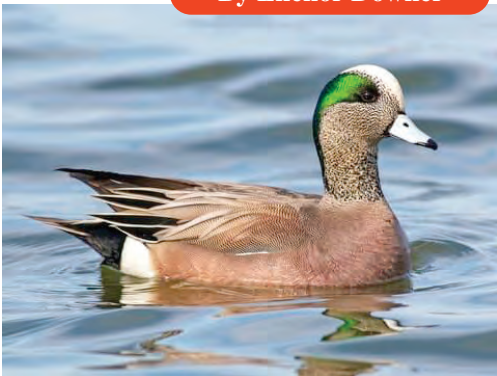
The first "Carter Work Project" was in September 1984 in New York City's Lower East Side to renovate a six-story abandoned building for affordable housing. The Carters led dozens of volunteers to work alongside 19 fami-

lies. President Carter hadn't been active on a build site after 2019, but his namesake lives on. In its 40 years, more than 108,100 volunteers have participated in 14 countries and built 4,447 Habitat homes in quick-turnaround construction projects.

A national day of mourning commemorating President Carter was held Jan. 9. Flags will be flown at half-staff for 30 days, following the president's death. To see more about President Carter's contributions to Habitat, visit bit.ly/4j7IQgE



By Ellenor Downer



American wigeon

I received an email from a Brimfield resident on Dec. 15.

He said he checked out a pond in Ludlow

in preparation for doing the Christmas Bird Count with the Allen Bird Club. He said, "My wife and I have been covering the town of Ludlow since 1989 and did my first count with the club in the late 1970s."

He saw four American Wigeons. He said, "Males with white crown/forehead and female with gray head brown body was swimming with the males. The male's white spot was very visible even to the unaided eye."

The American wigeon is 21 inches long. The male has a white forehead and crown, gray head and a green iridescent patch through the eye. The male has a white spot before the tail, which the Brimfield mentioned in his email.

The female has brownish sides, grayish head and sides, a dark eyespot and light gray bill with black tip. The female wigeon lays six to 12 white eggs in a grassy nest. The nest is concealed in rushes, sedge or under tree clumps.

American wigeons feed on pond weeds, milfoil, wigeon grass, wild celery and eelgrass. They may eat vexation stirred up by diving ducks such as canvasbacks. They summer on lakes and marshes and winter on wet

meadows, lakes and protected coastal waters. They are usually found in small flocks. During courtship competing males give whistling calls and lift folded wings nearly vertical above their back. Males give soft descending three syllable whistles.

**Other birds**

Other birds seen by the Brimfield resident at the Ludlow Reservoir were 63 Canada geese, six mallards, 83 hooded mergansers, 161 common mergansers, one ring-billed gull, three common loons and one bald eagle flew directly overhead just above the tree tops. Other birds were two American crows, two tufted titmice and two dark-eyed juncos.

**Hooded mergansers**

I received an email from a woman on Dec. 14. She said, "The ponds on Brook Road in West Warren have more treasures. Two days ago I saw a pair of hooded mergansers. I sat and watched for several minutes and they spent most of the time under water."

**Bird at feeder**

I received an email from a woman on Dec.

Please see **BACKYARD**, page 7

## 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. 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.



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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. The deadline for submissions is Friday 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 800-824-6458 Ext. 201. The deadline for submission of news material, letters to the editor and photos is Monday at 12 p.m. The TIMES is not responsible for submitted photos.

## Ruth's House Assisted Living to Hold Parkinson's and Dementia Support Groups in January

Parkinson's Support Group "Wellness Warriors" on Jan. 6, Dementia Support Groups on Jan. 13 and 27

LONGMEADOW, Mass. – Ruth's House Assisted Living Residence, located on the JGS Lifecare campus and affiliated with Legacy Lifecare, will be holding specialized support groups for area residents and their families during the month of January.

A Parkinson's Support Group entitled "Wellness Warriors" will take place on Monday, Jan. 6 at 1 p.m. Led by Laura Devine, OTR/L, Rehabilitation Director and Facilitator and Delila Jones, Certified Ageless Grace Instructor, the session focuses upon the realities of a Parkinson's diagnosis, how to empower and inspire individuals with Parkinson's through education, exercise, and emotional support as well as strategies to provide a supportive community for

individuals living with Parkinson's disease, their caregivers and loved ones.

The Alzheimer's and Dementia Support Group will be held on Monday Jan. 13 and Monday, Jan. 27 from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Hosted By Scott Weiss, a Certified Support Group Facilitator and Certified Dementia Practitioner. This dementia support group offers a safe space for caregivers to share experiences, receive emotional support, and gain practical tips for managing the challenges of dementia care. Scott is a compassionate facilitator with extensive experience supporting caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer's disease.

Admission is free and open to the public. Seating is limited and will be reserved on a first come, first serve basis. Light refreshments will be served. To reserve a spot, request more information or find out about additional upcoming support groups, please contact Mary-Anne Schelb at 413-935-1791 or email MSchelb@legacylifecare.org. Ruth's House Assisted Living is located at 780 Converse Street in Longmeadow.

### BACKYARD from page 6

20. She wrote, "I have spotted a bird I believe to be a yellow warbler coming to my feeder. My knowledge of the bird is that it migrates south or the winter." She sent a photo, but the bird was eating so the beak and head were not visible. It had two white wing bars, olive color and some yellow. It may be a male American goldfinch in winter plumage. They do spend the winter here and retain some of their yellow feathers.

#### Loon fact

Most of the fish loons catch are small enough to be swallowed whole when they're still underwater. However, when a loon captures a larger fish, it may need to return to the surface to subdue it before it is able to consume it. Loons may slap a fish against the surface of the water or repeatedly drop and recapture it until the fish stops struggling and is manageable enough to be swallowed.

Loons swallow fish whole, headfirst. When a loon starts to swallow a large fish, it will first ensure that it is oriented properly, sometimes dropping the fish and picking it up several times until it is properly positioned. Once the fish is aligned so that it is headfirst in the loon's mouth, the loon begins the process of

swallowing. Loons have sharp, rear-facing projections along the roof of their mouths and on their tongues. These projections, called denticles, interlock with the fish's scales, ensuring that the fish is not able to escape back into the water. Loons then press their tongue into the fish and begin to inch it down the throat, into the esophagus. Depending on the size of the fish a loon is trying to eat, it may take a few seconds to several minutes for the loon to swallow. Once in the esophagus, the fish moves down into the gizzard. A loon may open its mouth and repeatedly extend its neck upward and then contract it back towards its body to help move particularly large fish through the esophagus to the gizzard.

#### American crow

I saw about five or six American crows foraging on a lawn on my way to church this cold Sunday morning. With the temperature registering 8 degrees F, the crows had their feathers all puffed up for warmth.

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

## support local journalism

### SANDMAN from page 1

"The Sheriff's Office supplies the buckets of sand and the Fire Department delivers it for us. They are wonderful," Harrington said.

According to Lt. Gregory Moss of the Sheriff's Office, their staff has already delivered more than 800 buckets of sand to residents of Hampden County this winter.

"We go from Springfield to the hill towns—all over the place," Moss said. "The Wilbraham Fire Department helps us out by delivering it to homes there."

Wilbraham resident Ruth Chappell was among those grateful to receive the sand.

"The delivery was quick and easy and right to my front door," she said.

"One in five calls to our department is fall-related," noted Wilbraham Fire Department Captain and Fire & Life Safety Educator Patrick Farrow, as his team prepared to deliver sand.

Consequently, says Wilbraham Firefighter Jeff Kristek, "We are all about prevention."

"Sometimes you don't realize how slick it is. A fall may lead to a hospital stay, which may lead to a stay in rehab, and result in seniors being away from home," Kristek said. "And we know people want to stay in their homes above all."

In Hampden, seniors can call the Senior Center for sand delivery and refills throughout the winter. The sand is supplied by Hampden's Highway Department in five-gallon buckets donated by Home Depot and Lowe's.

"The Fire Department delivers it to homes wherever requested—on the front step, near the garage, next to the side door," says Moriarty of the Hampden Senior Center. "It's a great service and wonderful system; so many seniors are unable to lift a heavy bucket of sand."

"We are so grateful that the Fire Department is our partner," Moriarty added.

Lt. Nick Bertrand of the Hampden Fire Department reported that they had delivered close to 70 buckets of sand this winter as of Jan. 3. The department has provided from 400 to 500 buckets of sand to town seniors since the program began several years ago.

"Slip and falls are the number one reason for calls to the Fire Department," Bertrand said. "We want to help keep seniors safe."

## Select Board approves Parks & Rec to manage community gardens

It would be for the season

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - The Select Board approved the Parks & Recreation Department to manage the Wilbraham Community Gardens for the 2025 season on Jan. 13.

The approval comes one week after many residents—including members of the town's gardening club—voiced support for the community gardens as Administrative Assistant Melissa Graves—who also manages the gardens—is set to retire next month.

To learn more about last week's discussion, check out this week's article.

The Wilbraham Community Gardens is located on Monson Road and includes around 60 plots, although some are split up. The cost per plot is approximately \$30 for the season.

Town Administrator Nick Breault explained he "got a little bit more information" when he spoke with Graves after last week's meeting about the gardens themselves.

"The revenue there is \$2,400 annually. The expenses we do have in the ledger and the amount of expenses does not seem to exceed that \$2,400 on any given year or special events like the utilization of the horses or something like that there would be some additional costs," Breault said. "As far as the electricity and water and just in general—the porta potties—those expenditures, they don't appear to exceed the money that comes in for that."

Breault said the day after that meeting, he and Treasurer/Asst. TA of Budget & Finance Barbara Hancock had their budget meeting with the Parks & Recreation Department, where the situation was discussed with Director Bryan Litz.

He added Litz "contacted some of his colleagues" and said "that he would volunteer—the Recreation Department—to be the one to take over the duties of administration" of the gardens and utilize the staff to help out alongside the volunteers, including for the plot lines.

"Basically, the Recreation Department is prepared to take over or, at least, to administer at least for this season," Breault said.

Another advantage, Breault said, was there would be a staff member on or around the area on Saturdays in case availability is needed.

"As far as any costs go, I could tell that money that comes in on revenue is sort of cost-mutual," Breault said. "There was time where Melissa would be out in the field. She actually said that during the summer once things are up and running—barring some sort of unforeseen circumstance—that it's rather easy and not very many hours that are extended that way."

After adding Parks & Rec noting the hours to have a better idea of the need could be helpful, Breault also noted the sentiment—as stated last week—about "what a great job Melissa has done and the results are undisputed and the value's undisputed."

He emphasized the duties are not part of the administrative assistant role as the position "is only intended to be an admin in-house position for the most part."

"These are separate and above duties that were specific to the individual," Breault said.

Vice Chair Michael Squindo's concern focused on "that there's an unknown at a cost in the long run."

"I don't have an issue necessarily with the recommendation for them here. I think it's good at least to get to an understanding of the actual impacts, but I just want to be on the record in understanding that we don't know all the impacts from it," Squindo said.

Clerk Marc Ducey echoed Squindo's concerns.

"I've dealt with Parks & Rec for so many years and I never heard them say there's going to be additional costs to little things. A lot of little things add up to something and I think that's what this is. I don't think it's going to be insurmountable. I think they could do it for a year. I think they could get a better understanding of it in a year," Ducey said. "So, I support doing it for a year and seeing how it goes. I don't know exactly how many hours we need and then take it back and do something else for a bit. I don't know what's needed."

Ducey added reviewing and addressing this again after understanding the hours that would be needed would be important.

Chair Sue Bunnell also favored the Parks & Rec Department taking on the gardens for the season.

"We really need to make sure that things happen," Bunnell said. "And so then we will have someone who's doing administration and then assigning the plots and understanding some of that paperwork and is already kind of in (the) process."

After additional comments from Squindo and Ducey—including a note about how other towns do volunteer gardens—residents shared their thoughts, with topics ranging from concerns on what the cost would be, praising Graves for how she managed the garden, agreeing with Parks & Rec over-seeing the garden for the time being to expressing caution about the amount of time it would take for anyone who is doing this for the first time.

Bunnell stressed this.

"I don't think we're intending to add more of a burden to the volunteers, I think. What we're hopeful of is that because it's such a vibrant group that has such dedication that that level of engagement will continue and, therefore, help the people who'll be stepping in to try and give the oversight and structure that they're willing to continue," Bunnell said.

Delivering sand to seniors is also a good way for residents to get to know Hampden's firefighters and EMTs, he adds.

In both Hampden and Wilbraham, delivering sand is just part of broad efforts to keep seniors safe and healthy.

The Wilbraham Fire Department is proactive, says Kristek. "If people have questions or concerns about fall prevention, we want them to call us."

For example, "We can go to people's homes and help identify slip-and-fall hazards, such as throw rugs. If someone is falling out of bed, we can refer them to the Senior Center, which might help them to obtain bed rails," Kristek said. "Or if someone is weak returning home from a chemo treatment we can go to their home and help them back inside. We would prefer to do that rather

than respond to a fall."

Bertrand of the Hampden Fire Department notes that his department's outreach includes presentations of home safety tips and assistance with smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

And, the Hampden Fire Department picks up those empty five-gallon sand buckets at the end of the season.

"You'll see us on that first nice 60-degree day and know winter is over," Bertrand said.

Hampden seniors may arrange for sand delivery by calling the Senior Center at 566-5588.

Wilbraham seniors with questions about home safety may call the Wilbraham Fire Department at 596-3122.

# OBITUARIES

## Death Notices

**Gina S. Kahn**  
Died Jan. 9, 2025  
Services Jan. 18, 2025  
Wilbraham Funeral Home

## Gina S. Kahn

May 24, 1955 – January 9, 2025

WILBRAHAM - Gina (Sapienza) Kahn, age 69, passed away comfortably at home with her family on January 9, 2025, after a battle with brain cancer. Gina was born on May 24, 1955, in Lawrence, MA to parents Sam and Mary (Scuderi) Sapienza. She grew up in a multi-generational, multi-lingual house in Lawrence with her parents, grandparents and Agnes, her big sister and source of lifelong inspiration. As a proud first-generation Sicilian-American, Gina connected her family roots through Sicily, Lawrence, MA, and Wilbraham, MA. With annual participation in the Feast of the Three Saints, tireless work to better her community, and stubborn commitment to growing fig trees through the New England winter, Gina demonstrated her commitment to both her roots and her legacy. She leaves behind lifelong friendships and a loving family that will long remember her kindness and dedication.



Gina attended Holy Rosary High School in Lawrence, MA, where she cultivated storytelling through writing, alongside sunrise trips to the beach with friends. She triple majored in Spanish, Psychology and Education at UMass, where she met the love of her life Jason (Jay) Kahn. Jay, a teaching assistant in one of Gina's freshman-year classes, was drawn to her brilliant writing, warmth and independence. At the end of the semester, Jay asked Gina to go on their first date, to see Paper Tiger, and share ice cream after. They immediately connected via a mutual love of the Beatles. Gina's self-admitted crush on Paul McCartney didn't prevent her relationship with Jay from blossoming into a deep connection of lifetime friendship and partnership.

After graduating from UMass, Jay said, "Come with me to Ohio," which led to their engagement in the summer of 1976 and wedding in spring of 1977. The handful of years in Ohio were packed with building a career, working as a social worker, and starting a family. Jay and Gina bought their first house in Canton, a place for sons Jason (b. 1980) and Jeff (b. 1983) to come home to.

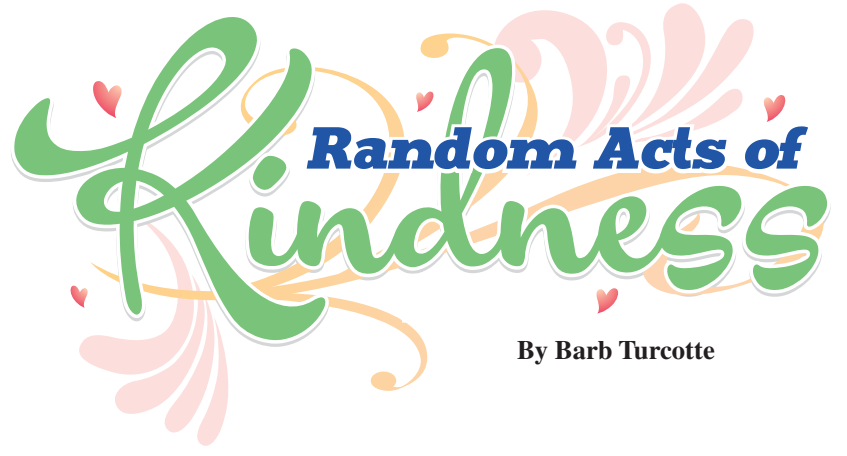
Life and career brought the family to Wilbraham, where their third son Jared was born in 1987. Wilbraham quickly became the center of a new life, with Gina devoting more time to her own education and earning a masters degree, then working as a school psychologist. While her career progressed at Hampden-Wilbraham Regional School District, the family squeezed in ski trips to Vermont, and completed their family when Jill was born in 1995. As long nights were spent cranking out successful grants on her clacky keyboard, Gina was devoted to bringing joy into her home--heart-shaped pancakes on snow days, the world's best Easter egg hunt clues, homemade birthday cakes, themed New Year's Eve and Valentine's Day parties with friends and neighbors, and the legendary brownies that magically appeared no matter the hour.

Gina raised more than \$12 million in grant funding for student safety and mental health programs. She used her quiet influence to play a founding role in community organizations--the Ultimate Party, Rick's Place, HWP4Y, Scantic Valley Y, Minnechaug Building Committee, and the new Wilbraham Senior Center. Her career was devoted to building strong communities, spanning programs over the local, state, and national level. Throughout all the professional achievements, she held on to her reverence for education, earning an EdD at the age of 58 with a dissertation on student bereavement.

In the winter of 2023 when Gina was diagnosed with brain cancer, brain surgery quickly followed. She was determined to regain the exceptional communication skills that had served her throughout life, working with speech and physical therapists to remain independent.

Gina is survived by Jay, her husband of 48 years, her children Jason and his wife Liz Exton, Jeffrey, Jared and his partner Kaitlin Chatterton, and Jillian and her husband Chris O'Brien. She will be remembered as Nanna by her grandchildren Sam and Penny. She also leaves behind nieces and a nephew, extended family, her devoted caretaker Germaine, colleagues, and dear friends.

Visitation will be held on Friday, Jan. 17 from 3 to 7 p.m. at Wilbraham Funeral Home, 2551 Boston Rd, Wilbraham. Family and friends may meet for Gina's Celebration of Life Service on Saturday, Jan. 18 at 10 a.m. at St. Cecilia Church, 42 Main St., Wilbraham. Burial will be private and at the convenience of the family. In lieu of flowers, please consider a memorial contribution to The Jimmy Fund ([https://danafarber.jimmyfund.org/site/Donation2?df\\_id=2118](https://danafarber.jimmyfund.org/site/Donation2?df_id=2118)) or to Rick's Place (<https://ricksplacema.org/donate/>).



By Barb Turcotte

I know we've all heard of brotherly and sisterly love but it was so evident while having the pleasure of sitting down and chatting with Aaron and Amy Porchelli. I asked if they'd always been close, their answer yes, and shared how they'd continually watched out for one another even in their youth.

They expressed how their parents who have been married sixty-three years, were great examples and instilled in them the importance of family. Aaron conveyed how he loved coaching his kids and the younger generation for various sports. Amy and Aaron have carried their parent's belief of family forward not only with each other but their spouses and the next generation. Aaron described how it's often those little things that make such a difference in the quality of life for not only yourself but others. One small example he gave, bringing in a neighbor's trash barrel for them, an effortless gesture. Just a nice Random Act of Kindness.

I'd actually met and knew of Aaron years ago through a friend of mine. In his younger years he helped their kids put in and take out the dock at their lake house, and though he enjoyed the escapades at the lake, he unselfishly offered his help. Aaron has always enjoyed helping others and for over twenty-one years has been an Independent Energy Agent helping people with their gas and electric services. Two years ago he ventured down another path, passed the real estate test and is now a licensed agent as well.

Amy, I met as she's an artist and helps residents where I'm employed with some amazing artwork. She founded her business ArtSong in 2011, providing art enrichment and organizational development programs in our local communities. She's quick to smile and has a warm heart that just endears you to her immediately. Having musical abilities as well, she gives private piano lessons too! I've watched her as she's encouraged some of the residents to explore their imaginations with colors and textures giving each one special attention, as if they were a member of her own family. It's beautiful to witness her kindness as she wants each person to have wonderful experiences.

Did I mention these siblings are very musically talented and collaborated on an original album, 'Bigger

Than Me' in 2019? They play in several local establishments as a duo band called 'The Wandering Kin' and also enjoy performing with a six-piece Pink Floyd tribute band called, 'Retro Floyd.'

Though after chatting with people and being enlightened by the various things they tell me regarding Random Acts of Kindness, this space doesn't allow me to share all their wonderful stories. However, the one that stands out in my mind after chatting with Aaron and Amy was the vision Aaron had come to him during a dream.

Last year Aaron called Amy telling her she'd think he was crazy but went on to share his dream. In this vision they were singing while going into nursing homes, senior centers, schools and other organizations. But instead of doing this as paid gigs, they would do these as complimentary acoustic performances. The premise of this was to put smiles on 1,000 people's faces! Well instead of thinking he was crazy, Amy absolutely loved the idea and his night-time dream became a reality! In addition to this vision they soon founded the '1,000 Smiles' sing-a-thon. They both beamed as they talked about what it had meant to see all those faces light up with their music. This also gave me a beautiful mental image as I imagined all these faces just radiating happiness!

Their plan was a repeat performance this year while adding on some new spots as well. All the plans were in place and they excitedly anticipated this year's festivities but on concert day Aaron woke with no voice plus knew it was something more so didn't want to take the chance of infecting others. Needless to say they were heartbroken as all the holiday plans and promises had to be cancelled. However, they've vowed they're coming back stronger and want to increase the amount of places they sing this year and in the coming years as they expand it for more than one day in the future as well.

What an incredible visualization Aaron had and to be willing to share their talents with no financial gains but instead gaining at the soul level, that's truly a beautiful Random Act of Kindness!

Both Aaron and Amy said living a good life is simply, "Just doing the right thing for people." They added with animated expressions, "It keeps you young!" So if you want to live a good life and stay young the secret is, do a Random Act of Kindness!

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

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Wilbraham-Hampden Times

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A consultation space and private clinic space inside POP Orthodontics.



A wide shot of the clinic spaces to work on patients at POP Orthodontics in Wilbraham.

# POP Orthodontics opens its doors in Post Office Park

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - POP Orthodontics has officially opened its doors in Post Office Park, providing orthodontic care to the community.

Stepping inside the space at 75 Post Office Park #7507, you will find a waiting room space, art curated by local artist Kim Carlino, clinic and consultation rooms, office space for staff and more.

Their services include comprehensive treatment through traditional braces or Invisalign and a range of specialty appliances for limited treatment.

POP Orthodontics is open most evenings and several days during the week, with some Saturdays open as well. They accept most insurances and provide flexible payment options for patients.

Anyone interested can visit [mypoportho.com](http://mypoportho.com) to schedule a complimentary consultation.

Ana Serrenho, the orthodontist and owner of POP Orthodontics, has an extensive background in dentistry. She worked locally as a dental hygienist before attending Boston University for her dental and orthodontic degrees. She practiced orthodontics in Lawrence before moving back to Wilbraham. Dr. Serrenho is also Faculty at the NYU Langone program at the Holyoke Health Center, where she teaches orthodontics to pediatric dental residents.

Dr. Serrenho is active in local and state dental organizations. She was selected for the Massachusetts Dental Society 10 Under Ten in 2017 and received the Massachusetts Association of Orthodontists Anthony Gianelly Award in 2018.

Serrenho has been working in the



Ana Serrenho

dental field since she was 16 years old, receiving a lot of exposure to the positive impacts an orthodontist can have on the well-being of their patients.

“Our mission is to provide high-quality, convenient and comfortable orthodontic care. We have the latest in technology and use cloud software systems to streamline scheduling, billing and patient communication,” Serrenho said.

Serrenho shared that she always wanted orthodontics, as she had spacing on her front teeth growing up and “was

An exterior shot of POP Orthodontics in Post Office Park in Wilbraham.



A shot of art painted by local artist Kim Carlino inside the waiting room space at POP Orthodontics in Wilbraham.

Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

very self-conscious of it.”

“(I) would not smile for photos,” Serrenho said. “Psychosocial effects of a less-than-perfect smile can be long-lasting, such as decreased self-esteem, social anxiety, feelings of embarrassment, etc. and I really enjoy making a difference in kids’ lives.”

When asked what she enjoys most about her work, Serrenho said the patients.

“I love that each patient is unique. There’s no one-size-fits-all to orthodontics! I specialize in working with children,” Serrenho said. “It’s so rewarding to help kids overcome their concerns and help them achieve beautiful and functional smiles.”

She also stressed the importance of continuity.

“Continuity is not only important for the kids, but parents also want the same orthodontist overseeing the entire treatment for the whole family. That’s something you are much more likely to get with a locally-owned ortho office versus a corporate ortho practice,” Serrenho said. “I also live in the community I practice in, which creates an added sense of responsibility.”

Michael Nordstrom, a practice administrator at Pediatric Services of Springfield in Post Office Park, expressed excitement at Serrenho’s practice moving into the area.

“We are excited to welcome POP Orthodontics as our newest neighbor! Dr. Serrenho’s practice is a wonderful addition to Post Office Park, perfectly complementing the other services we



Photos courtesy of Ana Serrenho  
A “POP Star,” known as one of the young patients at POP Orthodontics, Bradley Ball, dropping off his letter to Santa during his visit to POP Orthodontics.

offer in our shared mission to meet the healthcare needs of the community,” Nordstrom said.

Glen Garvey, the owner and developer of Post Office Park, was also thrilled to have another local business move in.

“The feedback, first and foremost from the patients, has been outstanding. She lives here in town,” Garvey said. “She’s very involved in the community and she’s available for people when they want to get together, doesn’t really matter what time the appointment is...so it makes it very, very convenient for her to have an office here and be a resident of the town to meet with her patients and the parents when it works for them.”

Garvey said Serrenho has already left a positive impact on the community by meeting with and supporting the other businesses, along with her work with the patients.

“She’s super high-energy, very social, very genuine,” Garvey said. “Which I know resonates with her patients.”

Garvey encouraged residents to reach out to Serrenho for their orthodontic needs.

“With her work ethic and her drive and her skill as an orthodontist, going to be great. Going to be very successful in all of her endeavors,” Garvey said.

Serrenho thanked the community for their support and looks forward to serving them.

“As someone who grew up in Ludlow and moved back to Wilbraham from Boston in 2017, I am thrilled to be able to provide services to the local community,” Serrenho said.

To learn more, check out their Facebook and Instagram pages at @mypoportho, visit [mypoportho.com](http://mypoportho.com) or call 413-675-7570.



# Local heroes receive Medal of Valor



WILBRAHAM – The police department shared on Dec. 24 that several of their officers a week earlier received the Medal of Valor by The New England PBA, Inc. for heroism on January 20, 2024:

“Last week members of the Wilbraham Police Department, Officer Jack Alberici, Officer Cameron Proserpi, Officer

Brittani Tassone, and Sergeant Charles Moore, were recognized and awarded the Medal of Valor by The New England PBA, Inc. for an extraordinary act of heroism extending far above and beyond the normal call of duty or service, performed at great risk to their own safety in order to save human lives on January 20, 2024.”

# WPD seeks information on dogs

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham Police Department is asking for the public’s assistance. In the early morning hours of Saturday, December 7, 2024 patrol officers located two young, severely underweight puppies in the area of 155 Mountain Rd.

The animals were turned over to Animal Control and brought to a local veterinary clinic for care. WPD is asking the public for any information regarding the ownership or previous possession of



these two dogs.

Neighbors are asked to check their exterior cameras for images of vehicles between 5 a.m. and 6:30 a.m. on Saturday morning.

Please forward any relevant information to Officer Lewis at JLewis@Wilbraham-MA.gov or the Police Department at (413) 596-3837.

# Women’s Club to Award Scholarships

WILBRAHAM- The Wilbraham Women’s Club will be awarding \$1,500. scholarships to graduating seniors who are residents of Wilbraham or Hampden, and who will be attending a four-year college or university.

The criteria considered are academic achievement, character, and leadership.

Application guidelines are available in the Guidance Office at Minnechaug Regional High School.

For those attending other high schools, please email Mrs. Rae Teed, Scholarship Committee Chair, at rae.teed@gmail.com. Applications must be postmarked by March 21, 2015 to be considered.

# WPD shares new way to alert drivers of emergency response

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham Police Department has a new way to warn drivers that a law enforcement officer is responding to an emergency and motorists need to slow down and move over.

In an effort to enhance road safety and protect first responders & roadway workers, WPD is now testing HAAS Alerts Safety Cloud® digital alerting in their cruisers, through an activation on the Whelen Engineering Company, Inc.s Cloud Platform. This collision prevention service enables the delivery of real-time alerts to Massachusetts drivers when emergency services are actively responding or stopped on the roadways.

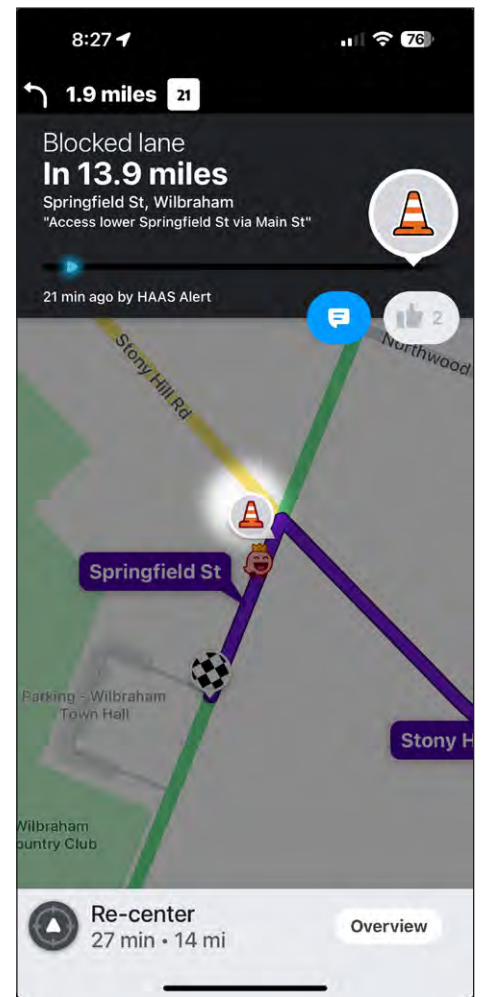
This feature can be particularly beneficial on roadways that do not allow for a long line of sight.

These advance warning notifications, in addition to traditional lights and sirens, have been proven to keep first responders safer and reduce the likelihood of collisions when responding or near roadside incidents by up to 90%. These alerts help facilitate adherence to Massachusetts Move Over laws and make the roads safer for all.

Safety Cloud’s digital alerting automatically broadcasts alerts to drivers up to 30 seconds in advance of emergency vehicles or road workers. Alerts are sent out only when officers are responding with lights activated.

Drivers cannot see a vehicle’s location beyond that. This preemptive measure is proven to significantly reduce collision risks by up to 90%, safeguarding both first responders and the motoring public.

The alerts are accessible via Waze navigation and Apple Maps, compatible with mobile devices, and integrated into the dashboard of many modern vehicles. Safety Cloud alerts are also available on the infotainment screens of millions of vehicles, including Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep,



& RAM as well as newer Volkswagen vehicles.

# Police Department responds to Big Y Express robbery

WILBRAHAM – The police department shared a media release on their Facebook page on Jan. 2 surrounding a larceny incident at the Big Y Express on Boston Road:

“On January 2, 2025 at approximately 0530 hours, the Wilbraham Police Department received a 911 call from the clerk at the Big Y Express on

Boston Road in Wilbraham in regards to a larceny which was occurring. Wilbraham officers immediately responded to the scene but were unable to locate the parties involved as they had left the area in a vehicle.

Responding officers secured the scene and were able to determine through interviews and video that no weapon was used in the larceny or threats made to the clerk. The suspects involved stole an unspecified amount of items from the store before leaving the area.

This investigation is ongoing and being conducted by Wilbraham Police Department and will be updated as further details are confirmed.”

The police department added on Facebook there is no ongoing threat to the public and to contact Capt. Shawn Baldwin with any information.

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# Warm up this winter at the Wilbraham Public Library



Another place to cuddle up with a book inside the Wilbraham Public Library while it snows outside.

By Hannah Yeasley  
Correspondent

**WILBRAHAM** - As the winter cold settles in, the Wilbraham Public Library remains a place where the community can hunker down, settle in, and gear up to read, puzzle, and play.

Upon entering the library, one can be greeted with a smiling staff, several displays that showcase the events that can be attended, and many cozy corners to sit in with a nice book or puzzle.

Many events this winter are sponsored by the Friends of the Wilbraham Library and more information about them can be found in the library's newsletter or online.

Library Director Karen Ball would like to inform the community that the library is now using a platform called "Communico" as their online calendar and event registration system, which will hopefully be easier and more convenient to use than their past system.

For this winter, the library invites readers to participate in their Winter Reading Challenge, which has different parameters for all age groups. Readers earn raffle tickets, which can be entered to win prizes such as gift cards, books and other cool prizes that differ by age group.

For children through grade five, raffle tickets are earned based on the minutes that are read, which can be tracked on paper or through Beanstack.

Teens and adults earn one raffle ticket per book read.

The deadline to submit reading forms and reviews for all ages is Feb. 28, with participation rewards (which includes one free book) becoming available March 3. For those who don't have a Beanstack account, they can make an account by visiting [wilbrahamlibrary.beanstack.com](http://wilbrahamlibrary.beanstack.com) or by downloading the app.

Lisa Berezin, the Assistant Children's Librarian, would like to encourage folks to escape the cold and attend the events this winter, with several fun things to choose from.

"We have so much going on, and it's all so much fun," Berezin said. "We try to offer a variety, so there's something for everyone. The Winter Storytime especially, since it's a different theme each week the kids just really have a good time."

Ongoing for six weeks—now through Feb. 13—is the "Winter Storytime with Mrs. B," which is aimed for ages three to six on Thursdays at 10 a.m. It will be a combination of stories, songs, and crafts for children to do independently.

Each week has a different theme: Jan. 16 is Penguins, Jan. 23 is an Unbirthday Party, Jan. 30 is Donut Day, Feb. 6 is Teddy Bear Day and Feb. 13 is a Valentine's Day Celebration.

Online registration is required for this event.

Other one-time events Berezin is looking forward to include:

"Open Arts and Crafts Event" on Saturday, Feb. 8 from 10 to 11 a.m.. Designed for children ages four and up, attendees will be able to use any of the materials the library has to offer to create their own work of art.

"Dried Bean Mosaics" on Saturday, March 8 from 10 to 11 a.m. Children ages five and up will use colorful beans and seeds to design and make a mosaic.

For all age groups, the library is, also, offering ongoing book clubs:

"Booked for Lunch" meets on the first Tuesday of each month at Noon with Library Director Karen Ball to discuss a different book each month.

"Evening Book Discussion" meets on the third Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. with Assistant Director Mary Bell.

"Graphic Novel Book Club" meets monthly on Thursdays from 3:30 to 4:15 p.m.. This is for children in grades two-five and requires registration ahead of time.

For the adults in the community, there are quite a few things to look forward to:

"Puzzle Race" on Saturday, Jan. 25 from 10:30 a.m. to Noon. Competitors will gather a team of two to four people and race to finish a 500-piece puzzle. Registration has been opened and is required ahead of time. Anyone ages 12 and up can participate.

"Paint Sip Fun" on Monday, Feb. 10 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Instruction for painting on canvas is given by Erin Boughamer and all supplies will be provided. Registration opens Jan. 27 and is required.

"Paper Flower Workshop" on Saturday, Feb. 22 from 10 to 11:30 a.m.. Attendees will learn to create a hyacinth with paper. Registration opens Feb. 3 and is required.

"Great Decisions 2025" is a weekly discussion program for adults to discuss world affairs. They will meet on Wednesdays from 4 to 5:30 p.m. starting Feb. 5 and running through March 26. The Foreign Policy Association has selected eight issues to discuss, which can be over-viewed in a briefing

book that is available on [fpa.org](http://fpa.org) or as an in-house copy at the Service Desk of the library. Registration for this event can be done through the Events Calendar of the library website.

A virtual true crime event called "Encounters with Killers" will be held by author and Forensic Psychology professor Dr. Katherine Ramsland on Monday, Jan. 27 at 7 p.m.. Dr. Ramsland will discuss her career and her interactions with famous serial killers.

The library invites teens in grades six through 12 to participate in several events this winter:

"Teen Advisory Board" meets monthly on Mondays from 4 to 5: p.m.. They plan community service events, as well as advocate for specific teen events that they might want the library to host.

"Paint Sip Fun" on Tuesday, Jan. 28 at 5 p.m.. The Teen Advisory Board will choose the winter

image that teens will receive instruction on from Erin Boughamer. Registration is required and supplies will be provided.

During February Vacation week, the library has events all week long.

Notably, the annual "Stuffed Animal Sleepover" takes place from the evening of Thursday, Feb. 20 to the morning of Friday, Feb. 21. Kids ages three and up can drop off their stuffed animals for a fun night at the library, with registration for this event opening in early February.

In February, families will have the opportunity to make a Valentine's Day card for seniors at the Wilbraham Senior Center and home-bound patrons.



Lisa Berezin, Assistant Children's Librarian, poses in front of the TV fireplace in the Brooks Room.



A display showing books to welcome 2025, the year of the snake, in the Lunar New Year.

Turley photos by Hannah Yeasley

"Valentine's Cards for Care" takes place on Tuesday, Feb. 4 from 4 to 4:45 p.m.. Anyone ages five and up is welcome at this event.

"Visit with the Snow Queen" is on Thursday, Feb. 20 at 10 a.m. The Snow Queen will be visiting the library for an hour of stories, songs, and more.

Pathways for Parents is sponsoring many virtual parenting workshops and in-person groups, including a continuation of their "Grow, Play, Learn" playgroup and a "Winter STEAM" group in February. More information on these groups can be found in the library's newsletter and online at [www.wilbrahamlibrary.org](http://www.wilbrahamlibrary.org).

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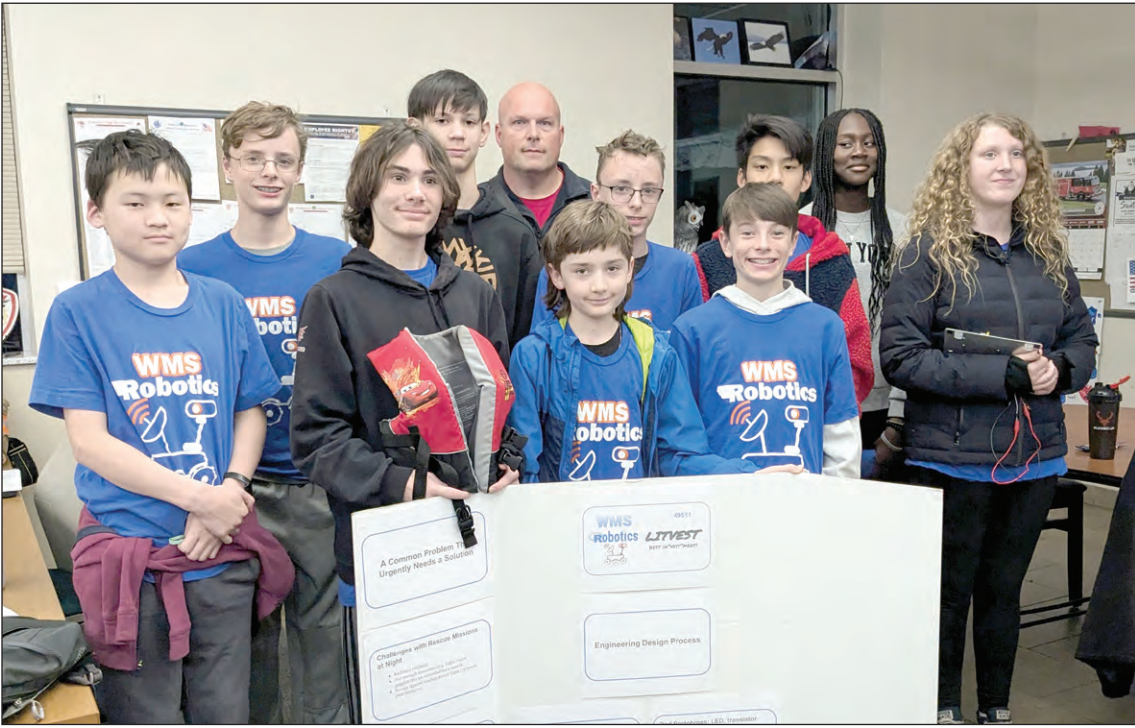
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# A COMMUNITY GALLERY

## WFD demonstrates thermal camera



Submitted photos and captions Samuel Kar Kin Lam  
The Wilbraham Middle School Robotics team paid a visit to the Wilbraham Fire Department. (L-R) Jason Cao, Liam Shattuck, Nolan Carney, Quintis Saviengvong, Captain Josh Mullen, Liam Matthews, Emmett Shattuck, Reid Blanchard, Willis Lam, Michelle Kyei Ohemeng, and Ellen Di Nino.



Captain Josh Mullen demonstrates a firefighter thermal imaging camera in front of a group of WMS Robotics students.

## Red Hat Society celebrates holidays with luncheon



Submitted photo and caption Cheryl Phillips  
The Wilbraham Red Hat Society celebrated the holidays with a festive luncheon at the Country Club of Wilbraham on December 10, 2024.

*Life in &*

Readers are encouraged to send in medium to high resolution photos for this page by e-mail to [dzbierski@turley.com](mailto:dzbierski@turley.com) or mail to TIMES, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069. Please note that if you send us a photo of the Times in different parts of the world, please include a recognizable landmark in the background. Examples: Eiffel Tower; castle in Spain.

# WILBRAHAM



Old Post Road Orchestra assisting them during...

## OPRO celebrates 102-year-old member!



Submitted photo and caption Elaine Gernux  
The Old Post Road Orchestra celebrated 102 yr. old member, Pauline Prince-Lamothe, at their recent concert at Mary, Mother of Hope Church in Springfield. Seated with Pauline are siblings Gabriel and Amelia Levesque of Wilbraham.



## Pauline Prince-Lamothe conducts...

During the celebration, the Old Post Road Orchestra member she was surprised to conduct "Sleigh Ride" Concert at St. Cecilia's Church.

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# WILBRAHAM HAMPDEN

## MRHS Key Club assists OPRO



Submitted photo Elaine Gernux

...stra would like to thank the Minnechaug Regional High School Key Club for ...g their December 6, 2024 concert at St. Cecilia Parish. They were so appreciated!

## Wilbraham Women's Club supports Christina's House



Submitted photo and caption Sue Agnew

The Wilbraham Women's Club delivered many items of new clothing for the mothers & children at Christina's House, Allen St. in Hampden. Pictured left to right are Cheryl Wesolowski, club member. Amy Basile, Community Service chairman, and Carolyn Martinez, Christina's House Executive Director.



Submitted photo Elaine Gernux

## Prince-Lamothe way

...tion of 102-year-old Old Post ...ember Paulina Prince-Lamothe, ...with a baton and got to ...de" during OPRO's Holiday ...ia Parish.

## Strings and Friends performs at Festival of Trees



Submitted photo and caption Elaine Holdsworth

Some of the string students from Hampden/Wilbraham Strings and Friends performed at the Festival of Trees in the Convention Center in Springfield, MA on Sunday, December 15, 2024. In doing so they helped raise money for the young people of Springfield who attend the Boys and Girls Club on Carew Street. Strings and Friends is directed by Denise Gendron (right, front) and was founded by Elaine Holdsworth (left).

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Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli  
**Josh Disa shoots at the free throw line.**



**Orlando Pagan keeps his dribble away from the opponent.**

## Falcons handle Red Raiders

SPRINGFIELD – Last Friday night, Minnechaug’s offense worked steady in a physical game and was able to leave Commerce High School with a 75-61 win. For Minnechaug, it was its sixth of the season against three losses. The Falcons looked to put two wins together for the first time since Dec. 27 when they played Chicopee Comprehensive earlier this week. The Falcons then head to East Longmeadow on Thursday, Jan. 16 at 7 p.m.



**Caden Duke goes for an inbound pass.**



**Nathan Pace uses his body to keep the ball away.**



**Darren Duah goes for an offensive rebound.**



**Miles Fergus heads up the court.**

## Boys swimming now 3-1 with win

WILBRAHAM – Last Tuesday afternoon, Minnechaug boys swimming took care of Central 107-71. In the win, Dawson Rice grabbed a pair of wins. He took the 50 freestyle and the 100 freestyle. Two of Chaug’s relay teams took a win. Collin Purcell won the diving competition while Cameron Maziarz took the 200 individual medley.

Girls swimming moved up to 4-0 with a win over Central 129-51. Gabriella Harding had two wins, taking the 200 individual medley and the 100 fly-stroke. Alayna Lucas had wins in the 50 freestyle and 100 freestyle. Chelsea Ortega, Anna Huynh, and Katie DeGray had event wins. The Falcons swept the three relay events.

## Tough stretch for Falcons hockey

WEST SPRINGFIELD – Despite two straight wins to get to 2-1 early in the season, it’s been a tough stretch of games for Minnechaug Regional High School hockey. Following a 7-5 slugfest with East Longmeadow and a 6-0 loss at Westfield, Minnechaug is now 2-5 on the season. The Falcons will look to change its fortunes when they match up with West Springfield on Jan. 16 at 8:30 p.m. at Olympia Ice Center.

Turley photo by Sofia DiGrande  
**Ben Daniels attempts to keep possession of the puck as he heads up the ice.**



# Tough stretch for Falcons hockey



Dom Fiorentino sends the puck away from the wall.



Jameson Murray sends a shot away.



Nicholas O'Sullivan flicks the puck into the offensive end.



Brayden O'Sullivan is all alone as he goes for the goal.

Turley photos by Sofia DiGrande

## T-Birds reach .500 with road win

HARTFORD — The Springfield Thunderbirds (15-15-2-1) rode spectacular performances by Simon Robertsson and Colten Ellis to a 3-1 win over the Hartford Wolf Pack (16-16-2-1) on Sunday inside the XL Center.

The opening period yielded a scarce amount of chances for the two squads, as Ellis and Dylan Garand were each a perfect 8-for-8 in save opportunities. Dalibor Dvorsky came the closest of the two teams to breaking the scoreless tie when he wristed a forehand off the post on the stick side.

The Wolf Pack, which scored only once in their last three games on home ice, broke the ice at 3:37 of the second as Ryder Korczak cashed a 3-on-2 rush with his third of the season to give the visitors a 1-0 advantage. That Hartford lead lasted less than three minutes as Robertsson evened the slate at 6:20 with a backhand rebound after Garand denied an initial shot from Corey Schueneman.

With the 1-1 score carrying into the period's final minute, Springfield got a tie-breaking goal from a rookie for the second straight evening. Robertsson was nearing the end of a shift but gutted it out with an incredible individual effort to split between two Wolf Pack defenseman before drubbing a forehand shot through Garand's legs at 19:08. The rookie's first career multi-goal game in the AHL gave the T-Birds the 2-1 lead heading into the third.

Ellis was the star of the show in a final period that saw the Wolf Pack relentlessly attack the Springfield goal. Time after time, the young backstop had an answer, racking up 19 third period saves, with a little help from his post along the way on a near-tying goal from Jaroslav Chmelar.

With Garand at the bench with just under two minutes remaining, Hugh McGing darted up the ice to cancel an icing and pound a loose puck into an empty net to end a 29-game goal-scoring drought.

With four points in their pockets out of the weekend, the T-Birds look to build on their momentum on Wednesday night as they make their first visit to Bridgeport to take on the Islanders at 7 p.m. at Total Mortgage Arena.

### 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.

## This Week in Rec

### Falcon Girls Lacrosse Signups for the 2025 Spring Season

WILBRAHAM -Does your daughter want to be part of the fastest growing youth sport in the United States? You are in luck! Registration opens for the 2025 Falcon Girls Youth Lacrosse program on January 8th, 2025 and will run through March 3rd 2025. The Falcon Girls Lacrosse Association (FGLA) will be fielding teams for the following age groups this season: Mites K (registration open through April 1st2025), Lightning (grades 1-2), Bantams (grades 3-4), Juniors (grades 5-6), and Seniors (grades 7-8). This is a Wilbraham Parks and Recreation Department (WPRD) program that is co-managed by the FGLA. The program has a strong history and is supported by a small group of dedicated volunteers. We are open to players and volunteers of all abilities. The goal is to expose your daughter to the dynamics of team play, build/enhance coordination and the fundamentals of lacrosse in a competitive and fun environment. Fun fact, the odds of a female High School lacrosse athlete playing for an NCAA Division 1 school are 23:1. The best odds of all female collegiate sports! Odds of placement on any college roster are 7:1, only second to Ice Hockey at 5:1. (<https://scholarshipstats.com/varsityodds>)

Your daughter can be signed up in-person at the WPRD office located at 45c Post Office Park Wilbraham, MA. Registration fees are: Mites \$125, Lightning \$150, Bantam \$175, Juniors \$200, Seniors \$200. This will include a custom FGLA uniform that the players can retain post season for Bantams-Juniors-Seniors. Mites and Lightning players will be provided with a shooter shirt and a stick that they can keep post season. All other level players are asked to provide their own girls lacrosse stick. A face mask and mouth guard will be required for all levels. USA Lacrosse has an equipment guide that can be found on their website: [www.usalacrosse.com/equipment](http://www.usalacrosse.com/equipment)

We are scheduling 2-3 tournaments for the season. Tournament play has been very well received in the past and is a fantastic opportunity to expose our players to other organizations outside of our league (CT Valley Youth Lacrosse). Your daughters will also have a chance to warm up with the "big kids" on the turf at Minnechaug during the season and have some game time on the new high-tech playing surface we are so fortunate to have. Regular season play for the Junior and Senior teams will be held on the incredible grass surface at the Spec Pond Recreation Facility.

Additionally, there will be (3) indoor clinics for Bantam, Junior, and Senior age divisions held on Tuesday 3/4, 3/11, 3/18 at Soccer City, 2041 Boston Road Wilbraham (Field # 3 - the back indoor field). Start time is 4:30 PM and these will run for 1-hour. Cost is \$20/player/session (collected on site at the clinics) and all participants should be previously signed up as a Falcon Girls Lacrosse player through the WPRD. FGLA will have an insurance waiver form available for any athletes looking to feel out the sport prior to signing up and making a team commitment for the season. This is a great opportunity to introduce the game to new athletes, dust off the sticks for returning players and meet some of the coaching staff.

FGLA is also planning an Exhibition Day to generate interest in the program for all levels. This will include demonstrations from collegiate level players and coaches, radar gun "fastest Shot" competitions, and other activities. Date is planned for pre-season/early March. Exact date TBA...stay tuned!

Any questions can be directed to the FGLA through the WPRD and financial assistance can be provided if this is an obstacle for any aspiring players.

## Polish Junior League awarding scholarships

REGION – The Polish Junior League of Massachusetts has announced that it will be awarding scholarships again this year for college students of Polish Heritage.

Scholarships will be awarded to undergraduate students, and one scholarship will be granted to a graduate or returning student. Application information and forms may be obtained at [www.polishjuniorleaguema.org/applications](http://www.polishjuniorleaguema.org/applications).

Deadline for receipt of application materials is May 1, 2025.

Selection is based upon financial need and academic achievement.

Applications are available online at [www.polishjuniorleaguema.org/applications](http://www.polishjuniorleaguema.org/applications).

## Thayer Academy Honor Roll

BRAINTREE- Thayer Academy in Braintree - an independent coed day school for grades five through 12 recently announced its Middle School (grades five through eight) honor rolls for the first term.

FROM WILBRAHAM  
Solwazi Browne-Vargas



Teenagers enjoy the shaving cream on the table as they take part in the Shaving Cream event at the Hampden Free Public Library on Jan. 11.



Turley photos by Noelle Hisgen  
Teen volunteer Irelyn Coffey, who organized the event, has her hands full of shaving cream.



Everyone enjoyed their time at the Teen Shaving Cream Event, posing in this group photo.

### FUN from page 1

said we should have an event that's just shaving cream. Just shaving cream on a table. And I said, 'You know what kiddo, your birthday's coming up in January and we don't have an event for January so let's do that.' And if you look at the flyer it says shaving cream: That's it, that's the event," Moriarty said. "Sometimes it's the simple events that can be the most fun, and sometimes the complex events that can be the most fun. You never know."

It was a simple event that was so fun. The ability to get lots of kids together under such a simple activity is so wonderful, and everyone was able to enjoy themselves just by playing with shaving cream.

The library is, also, very excited for their upcoming plans now that the calen-

dar has changed to 2025: Along with their Crochet Club, which is held on the first Saturday of every month and meets again on Feb. 1 at 11 a.m., they also plan to have a "Villian-tines" event, which is a reverse Valentines Day, on Feb. 8 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Details about that will be coming up soon.

Teens can also get together and read a favorite book during the Teen Silent Book Club, which meets next on Jan. 25 at 11 a.m.

This year, the Hampden Public Library wants to continue to provide various kinds of programs that people want to be able to participate in. As well as getting people to read additionally with the various activities that they host.

To learn more about upcoming events, visit [hampden-library.org/events](http://hampden-library.org/events).

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### LEGAL NOTICE Sale of Motor Vehicle Under G.L. c. 255 Sec. 39A

Bach Towing Inc., 165 Benton Drive, East Longmeadow, MA is holding a private sale of the following vehicle on 02/06/2025 at 2:00 p.m. to satisfy our garage keepers lien thereon for storage and towing charges and expenses of Notices of Sale. Danielle Van Allen 26 Bristol St. Ludlow, MA 01056 2012 Ford Focus SE VIN# 1FAHP3F24CL179273 01/09, 01/16, 01/23/2025

**Town of Hampden  
Notice of Public Hearing**  
The Hampden Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, January 28, 2025 at 6 PM** in the **Town House, 625 Main**

**Street, Hampden, MA,** for those interested in the petition of Antonio F. Basile to appeal the decision of the Building Inspector regarding three zoning violations. The violations under Section 7.11 of the Zoning Bylaws include an unauthorized travel trailer and storage trailer and his residing in the travel trailer located at Parcel

09-046-002 Scantic Road. The petition and related materials are on file in the Town Clerk's office and may be viewed during normal business hours.  
For the Board,  
L. Jed Berliner, Chair  
01/09, 01/16/2025

**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. HD25P0015EA  
Estate of:  
Tara D Fontanella  
Also known as:  
Tara Daniella Fontanella,  
Tara D Arasin  
Date of Death: 10/23/2024  
CITATION ON PETITION  
FOR FORMAL  
ADJUDICATION**

To all interested persons:  
A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Karl W Topor of Springfield, MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests

that: **Karl W Topor of Springfield, MA** 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 02/03/2025.** 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 CODE (MUPC)**

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration  
WITNESS, Hon. Barbara

**M Hyland,** First Justice of this Court.

Date: January 06, 2025  
**Rosemary A Saccomani,**  
Register of Probate  
01/16/2025

**Please check the accuracy of your legal notice prior to submission (i.e., date, time, spelling). Also, be sure the requested publication date coincides with the purpose of the notice, or as the law demands. Thank you.**

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— Jim D.



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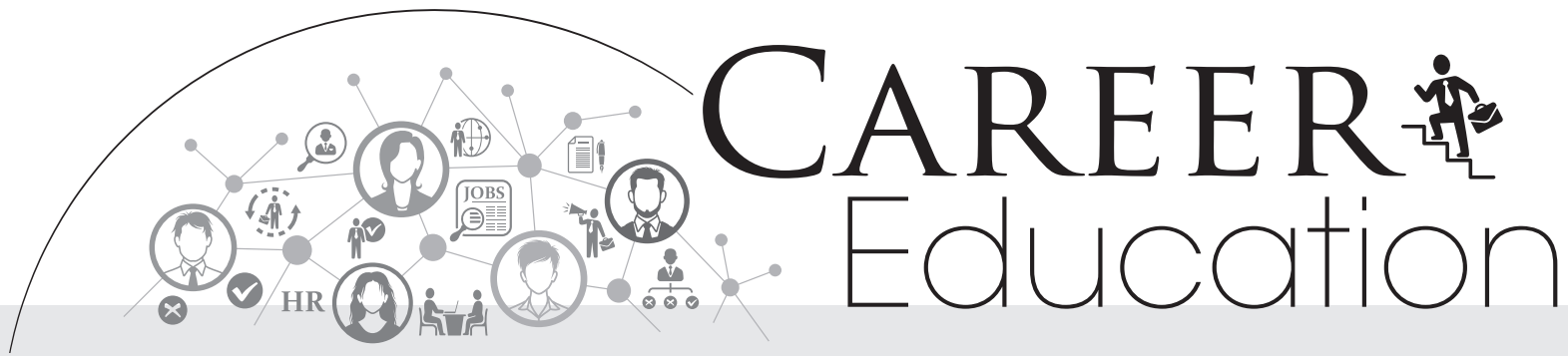
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## Hampden Charter School of Science: Empowering Students for a Brighter Future

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 College Board AP standards and Common Core. With honors courses beginning in 7th grade, 14 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 early SAT/PSAT prep, dual enrollment opportunities, and experiential college campus visits. With a 100% college acceptance rate and over \$51M in scholarships awarded since 2013, our graduates are set for success.

**State-of-the-Art Technology:** Students benefit from one-to-one Chromebook access, SMART Interactive Displays, and hands-on science labs, preparing them for a tech-driven world.

**Award-Winning Extracurriculars:** From robotics and science 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 col-

lege but to excel once they get there.

### How to Apply

Applications for the 2025-2026 school year are now open! Rising 6th-10th graders should apply no later than March 2, 2025, 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!

Agawam, Holyoke, Westfield, West Springfield Chicopee, Ludlow, Springfield

### HCSS High School

20 Johnson Rd. Chicopee, MA 01022  
Tel. 413-593-9090, Fax. 413-294-2648

### HCSS Middle School

511 Main Street West Springfield, MA 01089, Tel.413-278-5450



# HAMPDEN CHARTER SCHOOL OF SCIENCE

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- EXCELLENCE IN ACADEMICS
- ATHLETICS
- ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES and CLUBS
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January 11th  
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February 8th  
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MARCH 2, 2025







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## GATEWAY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT INVITES YOU TO JOIN US!

[WWW.GRSD.ORG](http://WWW.GRSD.ORG)



Nestled in the foothills of the Berkshires, Gateway Regional School District offers a caring and supportive small school environment. With support from the Barr Foundation, Gateway is engaging in transformative work to reinvent the school experience to make learning joyful for every student. Each GRSD school has a focus that aligns with the district's vision of emphasizing real-world learning, collaboration, and innovation.



**Littleville Elementary School** incorporates engaging, hands-on projects and events:

- Hartford Wolf Pack School Learning Day
- Springfield Symphony Orchestra string instrument workshop
- Holiday Craft fair
- Interactive "Author's Experience" with writer Daryl Cobb.

Gateway Regional School's (grades 6-12) pilot program will equip student for success after high school through:

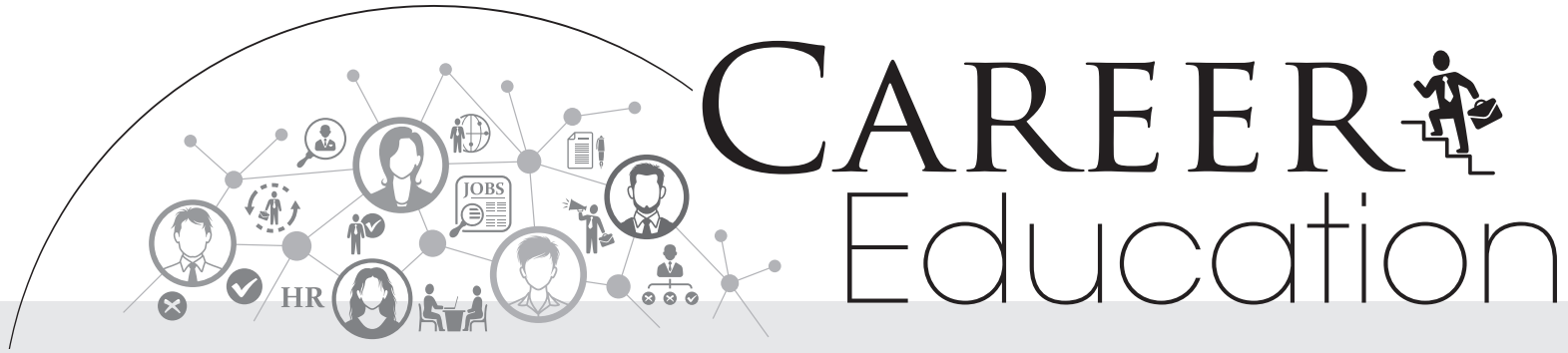
- Fun team-building activities
- College tours
- Career exploration with experts
- Life-skills workshops
- Community projects



**Chester Elementary School** focuses on sustainability, creativity, and environmental awareness:

- Teaching with Trout (raising brook trout from eggs to adulthood)
- School-wide composting initiative
- Student Media Club
- School-wide production of Willy Wonka Jr.
- Visit from the Whalemobile

**WE ARE EXCITED TO MEET YOU!**



## Gateway Raises the Bar(r) for Students

The Gateway Regional School District is making significant advancements in student engagement and staff development, thanks to funding from the Barr Foundation and enthusiastic commitment from students and staff. These funds are being used to support a variety of initiatives that align with the district's instructional vision, emphasizing real-world learning, collaboration, and innovation.

At Gateway Regional, a comprehensive plan has been developed for grades 6-12 to help students prepare for life beyond high school. This plan includes tailored learning experiences for each grade level, such as team-building activities for sixth graders, community exploration in seventh grade, and visits to community colleges for eighth graders. Ninth-grade students will engage in career exploration workshops led by industry experts, while tenth graders will visit four-year colleges. Eleventh-grade students will attend a local college fair and participate in life skills workshops, and seniors will celebrate their achievements with a banquet and lead activities for younger students. While some of these initiatives will be piloted this year, others will launch in the next school year, ensuring students are equipped with knowledge and skills for future success. The high school offers two Chapter 74 programs for students interested in welding and early childhood education. Graduates of these programs will complete a full comprehensive internship and be equipped to enter the workforce with the skills obtained.

Littleville Elementary is incorporating the Barr Foundation funds into engaging, hands-on projects and school-wide events. For example, students in grades three through five recently attended the Hartford Wolf Pack School Learning Day, where they applied physical science concepts like force and motion to a live hockey game. Kindergarten students participated in a String Instrument Workshop led by members of the Springfield Orchestra, while all grade levels are eagerly anticipating an interactive "Author's Experience" with writer Daryl Cobb in March.

Plans are in the works to create a Schoolyard Habitat for Monarch butterflies and other pollinators. Littleville is also planning a mentoring program that will pair high school students with elementary students for long-term support. The school recently hosted a successful Holiday Craft Fair, showcasing student-made goods and fostering creativity.

At Chester Elementary, the focus is on sustainability, creativity, and environmental awareness. For the third year in a row, students are engaged with hydroponic agriculture, growing healthy food for their own school lunches and community. Students are participating in the Teaching with Trout program, where they raise brook trout from eggs to adulthood while learning about ecology and conservation. A composting initiative led by fifth graders is teaching students how to sort waste and reduce their environmental impact. The Student Media Club provides third graders with opportunities to develop and produce their own videos, promoting teamwork and innovation. Chester is also preparing for a school-wide production of Willy Wonka Jr., with fifth graders in lead roles and younger students in supporting roles. Additionally, an in-school field trip featured the Whalemobile, a life-sized inflatable whale that taught students about marine biology and conservation.

District-wide, the Barr Foundation funds are also being used to enhance staff development and collaboration. Teachers are participating in study tours to locations such as Kentucky, Maine, Providence, Boston, and New York City to explore innovative educational practices. An internal instructional vision board encourages staff members to share ideas for projects that utilize the funds to further educational transformation.

Through these initiatives, the Gateway Regional School District is fostering creativity, collaboration, and real-world learning for students while empowering educators with new ideas and strategies. These efforts are preparing students for success both in school and beyond while creating a culture of innovation and engagement throughout the district.

## A New Year a New Career

A new year is upon us and as we declare resolutions, a new job might be in order. The first 5 years of a child's life are so important and since 1965, HCS Head Start has helped thousands of children and families prepare for school and life. We know that it takes a big heart to help shape growing minds and if you want to work with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in your community, Head Start might be the place for you.

The Head Start approach offers both families and their children, birth to five, an extraordinary school readiness experience. Educators who decide to teach in a comprehensive early learning setting have the opportunity to work collaboratively with other specialty areas like health, nutrition, mental health, and family and community engagement, that are designed to prepare vulnerable children for future educational success.

Data shows that when children are enrolled in a high-quality Head Start

program they are better prepared for kindergarten and beyond. Staff and parents work together, learning from one another, to create the best early educational experience both at home and at preschool. This is possible because when parents are involved and engaged in their child's education, children have better outcomes.

In addition to teaching, Head Start also has various career opportunities in the areas of health, nutrition, human services, administration, mental health, and special education. Professional development opportunities and career ladders are built within the Head Start model to promote growth and advancement.

Holyoke Chicopee Springfield Head Start, Inc. offers programs in several cities and towns in Western Massachusetts working with over 1,000 children each year. If you are interested in a rewarding Head Start career please visit [www.hcsheadstart.org/employment/](http://www.hcsheadstart.org/employment/) or call 413-788-6522.

# HCS Head Start is Hiring

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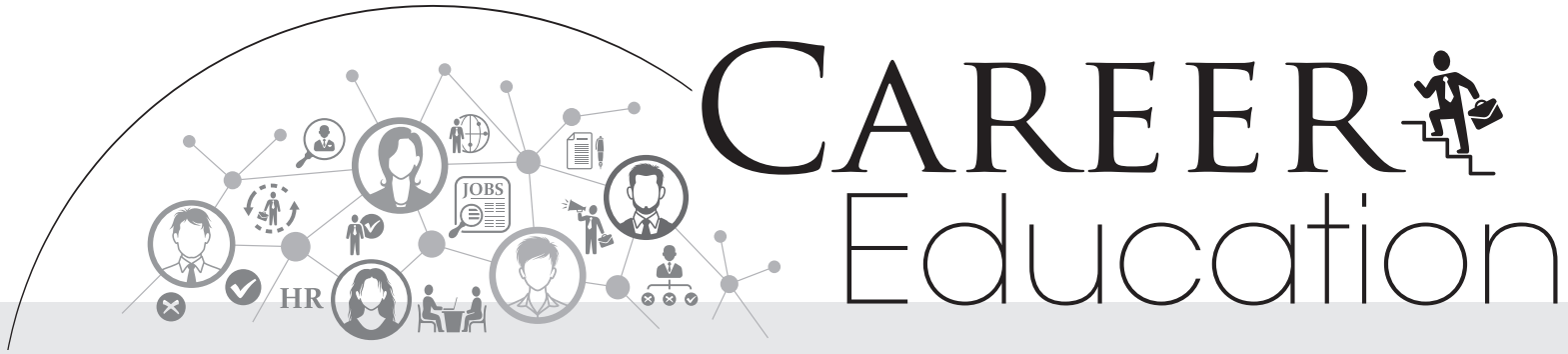


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## HCC gearing up for spring semester

Registration is open for spring 2025 semester classes at Holyoke Community College.

The HCC spring 2025 semester begins Tuesday, Jan. 21, for full 15-week spring semester classes begin. HCC will also be running three accelerated spring flex start sessions: Flex Start I classes begin Jan. 21 and run for seven weeks. Flex Start II classes begin Monday, Feb. 3, and run for 12 weeks; Flex Start III classes begin Monday, March 24, and run for seven weeks.

Thanks to the state-funded MassEducate program, a community college education is now free for all Massachusetts residents who have yet to earn a bachelor's degree.

"MassEducate provides an exciting opportunity for eligible students to attend college without the concern or weight of how to pay for it," said Mark Hudgik, HCC dean of strategic recruitment initiatives, admissions, and financial aid. "There has never been a better time to enroll.

Eligible students who want to earn a certificate or degree need only to complete the standard HCC application, complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) for the 2024-2025 school year, and register for at least six credits (typically two classes).

"Our admissions counselors, academic advisers, and financial aid staff are available to make sure prospective students get all the assistance they need," said Hudgik.

Class schedules and information about MassEducate can be found on the HCC website: [hcc.edu](http://hcc.edu).

Enroll today [hcc.edu/admissions](http://hcc.edu/admissions).

## The MacDuffie School more than just a school, a community

At The MacDuffie School, we believe education is more than academics—it's the foundation for a lifetime of achievement. Our vibrant community fosters creativity, leadership, and excellence while instilling respect and integrity in everything we do.

At MacDuffie, you're not just a student—you're part of a community that celebrates your individuality and supports your growth. Our small class sizes and dedicated teachers ensure you're seen, heard, and challenged to reach your full potential. Here, students don't just prepare for college—they prepare for life.

Choosing the right school is a big decision. That's why we invite you to learn more about MacDuffie and how it can shape your future. Visit our website, schedule a tour, or attend our April 5th open house to see for yourself what makes us different.

Your journey starts here. Define your future at MacDuffie—apply today! [admissions@macduffie.org](mailto:admissions@macduffie.org)

## Come and see what's new at St. Joan of Arc School

Physical Education Teacher Larry Moore and SJA students are enjoying a new basketball hoop funded by generous donations from our Annual Campaign.

A schoolyard basketball hoop is so important in creating not only a healthy environment, but helps with critical thinking, resilience, perseverance & teamwork.

The Dollar General Literacy Foundation recently awarded St. Joan of Arc School a \$500 grant to support its youth literacy program. A Book Club was formed for third and fourth grade students to encourage reading and literacy at a young age. This Book Club helps our students gain a deeper understanding of their reading, of other people through conversations, and provides an opportunity to safely fail and celebrate success. The club meets monthly to discuss the book, work on a fun activity, and share their findings.

The school will be holding

an Open House on Saturday, Jan. 25 from 9 a.m. to noon (no appointment needed). Appointment only tours for families will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 28 and Thursday, Jan. 30 from 3 to 7 p.m. Please call Chris or Janine in the Business Office at 413- 276-4608 for registration information or to make an appointment.

St. Joan of Arc School is a welcoming, safe & secure school community providing social, physical, spiritual & intellectual wellness for students in Pre-K 3 to Grade 8. SJA has innovative offerings that include affordable tuition and extended care, free breakfast and lunch, extracurricular programs, technology, music, library, and Duolingo language classes. Easy access to I391 & I90. Financial Aid and tuition assistance is available. To learn more visit [www.sjachicopee.org](http://www.sjachicopee.org).

We look forward to meeting you!

### Explore Your Passions. Be a Leader. Choose MacDuffie.






## OPEN HOUSE

**Saturday, April 5, 2025 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**



The MacDuffie School is a special place, and it all begins with our mission:  
*To foster in all students the intellectual habits of mind, high ethical standards, and respect for diversity required for becoming effective individuals in their personal and work lives, and moral and responsible participants in the world beyond.*

*There's no better way to get a feel for The MacDuffie School than spending time with us!*

Please register for our Open House at [www.macduffie.org](http://www.macduffie.org) or contact the Admissions Office at (413) 255-0000 to reserve your spot.

**Come Be A Part Of Our Community!**

66 School Street  
Granby, Massachusetts

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


For Students  
in Grades 6 through 12

### 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, Jan 25th 9am-12 noon ~ No Appointment Needed**  
**Jan 28th & Jan 30th 3pm-7pm ~ By Appointment Only**



**Affordable Tuition & Extended Care**  
**Free Breakfast & Lunch**  
**Extracurricular Programs~ Technology**  
**Phys. E ~ Music ~ Library ~ Duolingo**  
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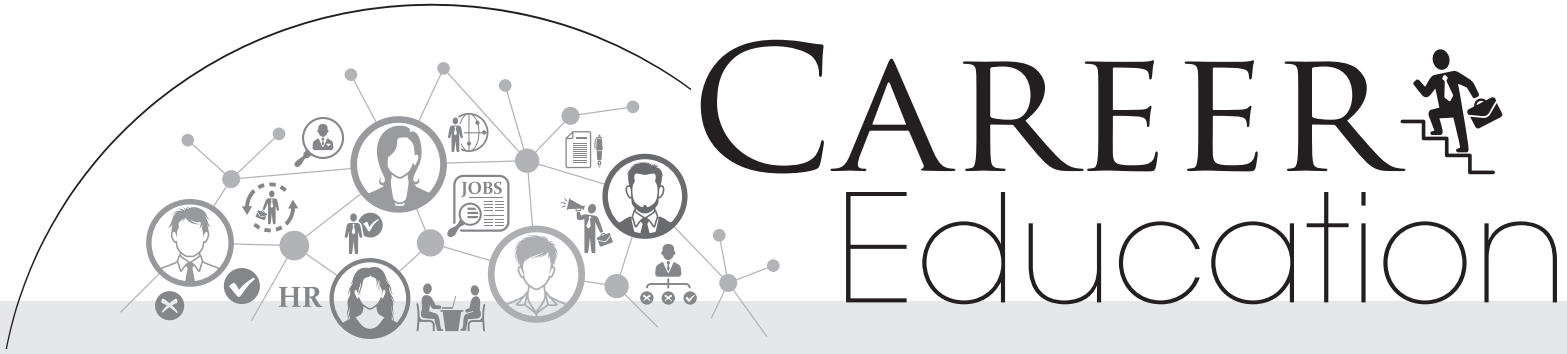
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**REGISTER FOR SPRING!**

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



# CAREER Education

## Come and see what great things are happening at St. Stanislaus School in Chicopee

This year the school's theme is "Many Gifts, One Spirit", which is our belief that every student has gifts to share with others towards the goal of making our world a better place. Our school encourages our students to focus on a different Corporal Work of Mercy to help our greater community. Some of the outreach programs we have participated in this year were: collection of canned goods for Lorraine's Soup Kitchen, for which our students collected 3,800 canned goods; and recently we collected toiletries, diapers, and other personal items to support the wish lists of both The Gray House and Christina's House in Springfield. The Works of Mercy which have been covered are - Feeding the Hungry and Working for Peace.

Service projects are done throughout the year to help teach students the value of giving back.

The school will be holding an Open House on Sunday, Feb. 2 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. (no appointment needed). If you would like to schedule a private tour for

another time, please call the school to schedule an appointment at (413) 592-5135.

St. Stanislaus School is a Roman Catholic, Franciscan, co-educational Pre-K through 8th grade school. Students are assisted in developing their potential spiritually, physically, and socially within a safe and diverse community. A foundation of academic excellence is created to prepare students to become contributing members of a global society. The school has a welcoming Franciscan environment, modern air-conditioned facility, strong core curriculum, enrichment classes, certified faculty, full-day preschool (PreK3 & 4) and Kindergarten, free breakfast and hot lunch, before & after school program, and one to one use and integration of iPads & 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!

## Join us at PVPA for an open house to see what we can offer your child

Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School (PVPA) has a 25+ year history of providing an excellent, arts-focused, college-prep education to students in Grades 7-12.

PVPA students thrive in a creative, challenging learning environment that offers them a broad exposure to the performing arts. Our 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.


With an extensive Course Catalog of over 65 Arts Classes across Music, Dance, Theatre, Visual Arts and Technical Theater, students have access to both introductory courses and audition level courses, with multiple performance opportunities, offered alongside their core academics.

Join PVPA for an Open House and see why we are consistently voted one of the Best Charter Schools in the




Valley!

Now accepting applications for the 2025/2026 school year for Grades 7-12 at [pvpa.org/admissions](http://pvpa.org/admissions).



Visit us to learn more!  
To register for Open House, and TO APPLY:  
[www.pvpa.org/admissions](http://www.pvpa.org/admissions) or QR Code below



**OPEN HOUSE**  
Weds, Jan 15 4-6pm  
Sat, Jan 25 & Feb 1 10am-12pm  
Tues, Feb 18 10am-12pm

Free, Arts-focused, College-prep  
Grades 7-12  
Application Deadline Feb 23, 2025

**Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School**  
[www.pvpa.org/admissions](http://www.pvpa.org/admissions)




photo credit: Julian Parker-Burns

65+ courses in Theater, Dance, Instrumental and Vocal Music, Visual Arts, Technical Theater and Film

**15 Mulligan Drive, South Hadley, MA [www.pvpa.org/admissions](http://www.pvpa.org/admissions) 413.552.1580**

**OPEN HOUSE SUNDAY, FEB. 2, 2025 11AM-1PM**



**ST. STANISLAUS SCHOOL**  
SERVANT LEADERS FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

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- Strong core curriculum
- Enrichment classes
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- 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  
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To learn more 





[www.saintstansschool.org](http://www.saintstansschool.org)  
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 The Town of Blandford is seeking a qualified individual for the position of Highway Superintendent. Salary range starting at \$75,000-\$80,000+ negotiable based on experience/skills. Please visit our website **TownOfBlandford.com** or email **Administrator@TownofBlandford.com** for more information.

**HELP WANTED**  
**TOWN OF WILBRAHAM**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT BUILDING & CONSERVATION P/T EMERGENCY DISPATCHER**

The Town of Wilbraham is looking to fill multiple vacancies. Application deadline 1/27/25. For application and more information please visit [www.wilbraham-ma.gov](http://www.wilbraham-ma.gov). EOE

**TOWN OF WILBRAHAM**  
**POLICE OFFICER**

For application and more information please visit [www.wilbraham-ma.gov](http://www.wilbraham-ma.gov). Review of applications begins immediately. Open until filled. EOE

**WILBRAHAM UNITED CHURCH** is hiring a sexton three evenings, 7-10 hours per week, \$16 per hour. Additional compensation for hours needed for weddings and funerals. Please send resume to [admin@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org](mailto:admin@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org)  
 More information found at [www.wilbrahamunitedchurch.org/about-us-2/](http://www.wilbrahamunitedchurch.org/about-us-2/)

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

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**FOR RENT**



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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.

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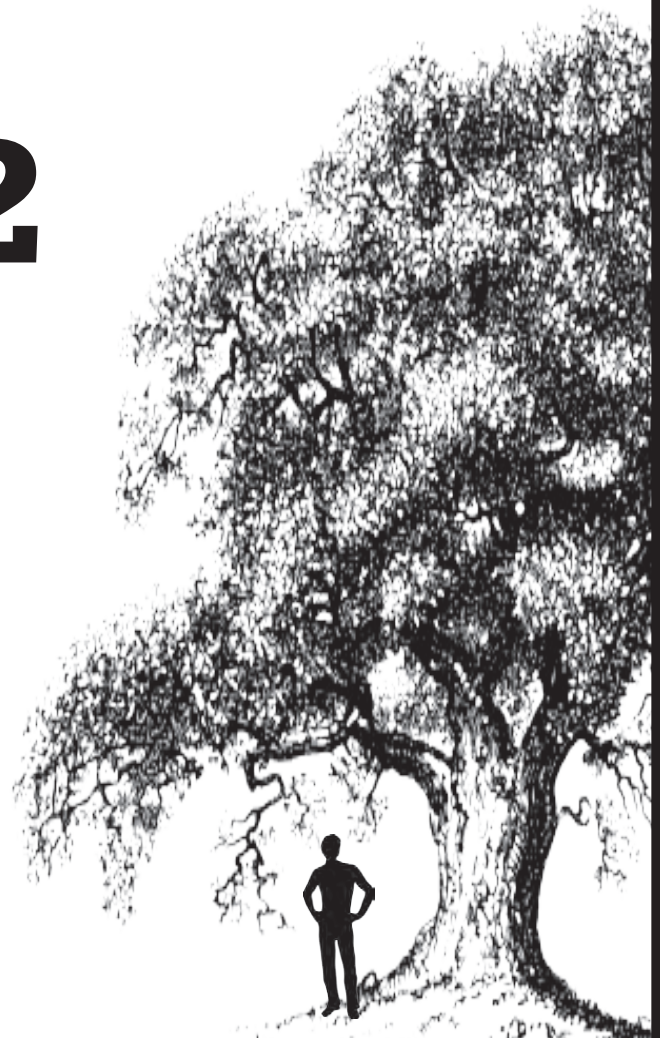
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