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Photo Courtesy of Kaytee Long Becker

Carla Patullo gives her acceptance speech on Feb. 4 after winning the Grammy Award for Best New Age, Ambient or Chant Album for her album, "SO SHE HOWLS" at the 66th Annual Grammy Awards. Patullo dedicated the award to the women behind experimental cancer trials that saved her life during her battle with breast cancer.

## Minnechaug grad Carla Patullo wins Grammy Award

By Kristin Rivers  
Staff Writer  
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - Recording Artist Carla Patullo struck gold on Feb. 4 when she won her first Grammy Award for her album, "SO SHE HOWLS."

The album won Best New Age, Ambient or Chant Album.

Patullo, who was born in Springfield and later grew up in Wilbraham, graduated from Minnechaug Regional High School in 1997. She has also released three albums with White Widow, over 30-plus soundtracks for film and television including the Disney+ film "Maxine" and more.

Reflecting on awards night, Patullo said "It was insane."

She responded to her win with tears of joy alongside her family and collaborators Tonality and the Scorchio Quartet. Lili Hadyn was another collaborator.

She called it "a real honor" to be in her category alongside her fellow nominees.

"I kind of went into this not expecting this at all. This album came from a very personal, tough place for me. It took a moment to feel like, 'This is really happening,' but then it was I was just thinking about the struggles and what I got through to be here and that made me ever more so grateful for it, just for being recognized in this way by my col-

leagues and by the Recording Academy. I just felt so great," Patullo said. "I'm still pinching myself."

Patullo's win also made history as she became the first openly gay woman to win in her category. She credited Sandra Bernhard and Lauren Karpman for their mentorship and support.

"What this is about is getting our voices heard," Patullo said. "But, you know, we hope someday it doesn't have to be like that too. Someday, it's going to be like the best music wins and that's it. You don't need to hear the backstory, but we're not there yet. So, I think everybody needs a platform, and this will hopefully

Please see **PATULLO**, page 4

## 'Big Art Show of Small Works' sees artists showcase

By Kristin Rivers  
Staff Writer  
krivers@turley.com

HAMPDEN - Residents visited the senior center's community room from Noon to 5 p.m. on Feb. 10 and 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Feb. 11 for the "Big Art Show of Small Works."

The art show featured over 140 entries from local artists including metalwork, photography, watercolor, acrylic, oil, pastel and graphite paintings, mixed media and more.

It also included pottery, jewelry, a book signing and a silent auction with artwork donated by the Scantic River Artisans.

Quinn Salerno, the son of Laura Salerno, a potter, was featured for the first time with four photography pieces, having done photography for only five months.



Turley photos by Kristin Rivers

Maurita Eaton of The Portable Brush Valet works on her black and white charcoal painting during the "Big Art Show of Small Works" at Hampden Senior Center on Feb. 10.

Salerno credited his Fine Arts Teacher Kyle Garron for helping him get his start, adding one of his pieces, "Mantis", was already purchased.

"It gives me confidence. I want to do more because I know that people like it," Salerno said.

Along with showcasing his art, Salerno was excited to see many people in attendance.

"It means a lot because it shows that the community really enjoys art," Salerno said. "There's still a

Please see **ART**, page 11

### HISTORICAL WILBRAHAM

## Looking at 'Connected Coincidences'

Local stories remain in our consciousness

By Charles F. Bennett  
Times Editor Emeritus

My son and his wife gave me an excellent book for Christmas, a New York Times non-fiction bestseller, "The Wager - A Tale of Shipwreck, Mutiny and Murder" (Doubleday) by David Grann.

As I was reading it the other day, I realized that the time frame in the book happened at the same time as a project I'm working on for the Wilbraham Historical Commission. We are asking the Community Preser-

vation Committee for funding to replace a worn-out granite memorial marker on Main Street commemorating the date that the first church in Wilbraham was organized.

The stone marker on the corner of the east side of Federal Lane and Main Street reads: "First Church Wilbraham Organized here, June 24, 1741." It commemorates the site of where the first church was founded and its minister, Rev. Noah Merrick was ordained.

In the first history of Wilbraham published in June of 1863, its author, Rufus P. Stebbins D.D., described the day at that site where the organizers met to organize the church. A "Con-



Illustration from the "The Wager" by David Grann, a true story that took place the same time in 1741 as colonial Wilbraham organized its first church. (Courtesy Doubleday publishers)

ected Coincidence" (by time frame) that day, June 24, 1741, is the same day that The British man-o-war, The Wager, was struggling to round the treacherous Cape Horn of South America on a voyage to attack a Spanish Armada.

A few months later survivors of the wreck of The Wager washed ashore on the coast of Brazil on Jan. 28, 1742. Earlier that winter the elders of the new church voted on Dec. 14, 1741, to spend "50 pounds money" for Rev. Merrick's half a year's salary.

Some of my readers may be aware that I like to relate events

Please see **HISTORICAL**, page 14

# Hampden Government Study Committee proposes changes

Selectmen approve incoming town administrator's contract

By Dalton Zbierski  
Editor  
dzbierski@turley.com

HAMPDEN – The Board of Selectmen held a short meeting in the Town Hall on Feb. 12. The Selectmen discussed a variety of developments, including recommendations from the Government Study Committee, an update on the incoming town administrator's contract and a discussion about waiving the senior center rental fee for a youth hockey banquet.

## Government Study Committee

The Government Study Committee aims to present voters with four recommendations at the Annual Town Meeting in May if they pass through town counsel.

The committee was established at the Special Town Meeting on Oct. 24, 2022, and first met on March 6, 2023, according to a presentation last December. The group is tasked with reviewing all aspects of the town's government and pledged to issue a report with its recommendations at the May town meeting.

Town Administrator Bob Markel shared the committee's progress during Monday's meeting. Markel said the committee has four recommendations it hopes will appear on the warrant, but those rec-



Turley photo by Dalton Zbierski.

The Hampden Board of Selectmen met on Feb. 12.

ommendations must first be vetted by town counsel.

Markel listed the proposed changes submitted by the committee.

"One of them would be to modify the language in the town bylaws to permit the town meeting to, if the Selectmen decide, use electronic counting. It doesn't mandate it," Markel said. "Another one would at some point, when our two elected department heads retire, switch from elective to appointed for those positions."

Markel noted that switching from

elective to appointed positions could be troublesome if one of the elected department heads retires before the meeting and another individual steps forward and decides to run.

"How do you handle that? There's some things to be worked out before it gets to the warrant," Markel said.

A third change proposed by the committee is to combine the collector with treasurer once the individuals in office retire.

"It would be treasurer/collector as opposed to clerk/collector," Markel said.

The committee also proposes changing the name of the Board of Selectmen to the Select Board, a process Wilbraham recently completed. To be approved, Markel said the change would not only have to pass through a town meeting, but it must also receive the blessing of the state legislature.

Selectman John Flynn said that even past female members of the Board of Selectmen have had no problem with the board's name. He questioned why the committee spent its time on the item.

"I respect all that, but if that's what we're spending attention on, there must be other things more (relevant)," Flynn said.

## Town administrator contract

In recent weeks, the Selectmen chose Whately Town Administrator Brian Domina to fill the position that will soon be left open by outgoing Town Administrator Bob Markel.

On Feb. 6, Domina negotiated his contract with the town, and the agreed upon version was made official on Feb. 12.

"By law, we have to vote that contract into public session, which is this evening," Board Chair Donald Davenport said, as the board unanimously voted to allow Davenport to sign the contract.

Flynn reviewed the contract before Monday's meeting and considered it satisfactory.

"It was sent by Bob (Markel) earlier today, and I think it hits all the high points. Even though he's starting mid-year, we're going to put him on the fiscal year in his contract," Flynn said.

## Hockey banquet at the senior center

Also on Monday, the Selectmen went back and forth on whether to waive the rental fee for the senior center, as a local

resident requests holding a youth hockey banquet on the premises.

The event would be in March. The fee to rent the senior center is \$250, plus a \$50 custodial fee. Flynn began the conversation by expressing his reservations about removing the fee.

"We've been pretty lenient for town groups, but this is not a town group. This is a town resident," Flynn said. "I thank this person for his volunteerism for children, etc., but I think it opens a door we don't want to open because then when do you say no. We've discussed before. If we want to set some kind of consistency, this is unfortunately where it is."

Selectman Craig Rivest agreed, noting that an employee must be there to supervise, and the event will use electricity and utilities.

"If they were a nonprofit or a registered organization like that, it might be a different case, but I think it would set the precedent that anybody could use it for free of charge," Rivest said.

Ultimately, the board decided to waive the \$250 rental fee but keep the \$50 janitorial fee. Davenport described it as a "reasonable accommodation."

## VFW turkey shoots

After being approved by the Selectmen on Monday, VFW Post 9397 will hold spring turkey shoots on March 24 and April 21. It will also have its regular slate of turkey shoots on Sundays from Sept. 8 to Nov. 24.

Representing Post 9397 was Nick Amberger. He explained the importance of the shoots.

"We've had a pretty good safety record over the years, and, as you all know, what we do really helps our veterans immensely. These extra shoots will really provide the additional funding that we utilize in satisfying quite a few of their needs," Amberger said.

Flynn requested that the VFW post signage on nearby trails on the day of the shoots to warn hikers. He also vetoed Amberger's request to hold a shoot on Memorial Day, as it proceeds down Main Street.

"In my opinion, the only one I would not be in favor of would be Memorial Day only because you have so much happening there (on Main Street). The other two seem (okay)," Flynn said.

## Puppolo announces \$18,922 grant for the Wilbraham Fire Department

Funding will improve firefighter safety

BOSTON – State Rep. Angelo J. Puppolo, Jr. (D- SPRINGFIELD) is pleased to announce that the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety & Security and the Department of Fire Services has awarded the Town of Wilbraham's Fire Department an \$18,922.18 grant for the purchase of firefighter safety equipment. The grant will allow the department to obtain necessary personal protective and safety equipment that will make impact-

ful improvements to the safety and long-term health of their personnel.

"I am pleased to support this funding which will help the Wilbraham Fire Department keep our dedicated firefighters safer," Puppolo said.

The grant program, now in its fourth year, reimburses Massachusetts fire departments for a wide variety of equipment to protect firefighter safety/health and bring fire departments into compliance with national standards as defined by the National Fire Protection Association and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

Welcome

KELLY N.  
POULIOT, O.D.

Dr. Pouliot is a board-certified Optometrist who joined Kelly & Velazquez Eye Center in January 2024. She graduated from the Ramapo College of New Jersey with a Bachelor's degree in Biology. She received her Doctorate degree from the Pennsylvania College of Optometry at Salus University.

Dr. Pouliot has had over two thousand patient encounters upon completion of her clinical externships in the following specialties:

- Contact Lenses (Jacksonville, NC)
- Ocular Diseases (Johnson City, TN)
- VA Hospital (St. Cloud, MN)
- Low Vision Rotation (Philadelphia, PA)

Dr. Pouliot has a special interest in ocular/systemic diseases and other ocular emergencies. She is a member of the American Optometric Association and the Massachusetts Society of Optometrists. She is a native of the Pioneer Valley. She enjoys traveling and spending time with friends and family.



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# Select Board announces passing of Tom Sullivan

2024 Wilbraham Clean-Up Day preparations also discussed

By Kristin Rivers  
Staff Writer  
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM – The Select Board opened its meeting on Feb. 12 by announcing the passing of Tom Sullivan.

Sullivan served as the assistant town administrator for budget and finance, town collector and treasurer for Wilbraham.

After Chairman Theresa Goodrich made the announcement and led everyone in a moment of silence, Town Administrator Nick Breault shared he was “very fortunate” to have worked with Sullivan for eight years in the town.

Breault added he knew Sullivan before through the Scantic Valley Group when they were both representatives for different communities.

“He was a very sharp person, knew municipal finance inside and out, upside down and just had a knack for working with people and, as a good leader is, from where I sat, he made people even better,” Breault said. “I’m sure there’s a lot more eloquent tributes that can be given, but

he is a tremendous person, and just glad I got to know him. Very sad to hear about his passing.”

Board member Sue Bunnell also honored Sullivan during Select Board Updates, after working with him for many years between the Finance Committee and Capital Planning Committee.

“He was an extraordinarily gifted municipal finance person. He will be missed,” Bunnell said.

Next, this year’s Wilbraham Clean Up Day preparations were discussed.

Megan Harrigan, a resident who organized last year’s event, shared that the committee for this year is being put together, with the Clean Up Day date announced for Saturday, April 20. The event has already received approval from the DPW, police chief and main sponsor, USA Waste.

Harrigan also announced Wilbraham will be a part of a chapter for “Keep Massachusetts Beautiful.”

“We have decided to become ‘Keep Wilbraham Beautiful’ so you will potentially see signs popping up around town and more information will come about that,” Harrigan said.

Residents can check out the “Keep Wilbraham Beautiful” Facebook page or email keepwilbrahambeautiful@gmail.com for more information.

Harrigan added she learned a

lot after meeting with the board last year, including asking for approval on signs, permits and paperwork for music in advance.

Also, she wants to get more of the word out for volunteers.

“We had over 300 volunteers last year and it was still more trash,” Harrigan said. “Driving around now, as the snow melts, there’s more trash. It’s there.”

Goodrich agreed on needing more volunteers.

“We were discussing it. I mean, the areas that we personally cleaned last year are back,” Goodrich said.

Harrigan said that’s what she hopes the “Keep Wilbraham Beautiful” can potentially address.

“See if we can keep it cleaner for longer periods of time,” Harrigan said.

Lastly, the board interviewed Marvina Lowry-Brook for an appointment to the Cultural Council.

Lowry-Brook has been a resident since 2016 and involved with art her entire life.

“I’d like to get more involved in the town and things that are going on,” Lowry-Brook said. “Help to bring more things to the town, you know, cultural events, movement, music, arts.”

The board appointed Lowry-Brook to the Cultural Council for a term beginning Feb. 12, 2024, and ending June 30, 2026, 3-0.

# Select Board learns about Veterans Graves Officer role

Also, all articles deadline extended for town meeting

By Kristin Rivers  
Staff Writer  
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM – The Select Board met with Jered Sasen, director of Veterans Services, on Feb. 12 to discuss the Veterans Graves Officer role.

Sasen explained how per Massachusetts General Law, there are two positions for every town: the Veterans Services Officer and the Veterans Graves Officer.

The Veterans Grave Officer is an appointed, unpaid position.

“It’s an amazing asset for



Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

From the left, Select Board Clerk Michael Squindo, Chairman Theresa Goodrich, Vice Chairman Sue Bunnell and Town Administrator Nick Breault listen as Jered Sasen, director of Veterans Services, discusses the Veterans Graves Officer role during the Feb. 12 Select Board meeting in Wilbraham.

the VSO because it has more eyes on the records for the veterans’ graves in towns to ensure that there are minimal discrepancies. Everything from making sure that the graves are appropriately marked, that the records

are appropriately kept all the way to ensuring that the veterans’ graves are essentially cleared away of any type of debris and are in presentable order,” Sasen said.

Please see **VETERANS**, page 5

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Editor

Dalton Zbierski  
dzbierski@turley.com

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# HWRSD meets with Finance Committee for budget discussion

By Kristin Rivers  
Staff Writer  
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - The Hampden-Wilbraham Regional School District met with the Finance Committee on Feb. 7 to discuss its budget.

Aaron Osborne, assistant superintendent for finance, operations and human resources, highlighted several items, including the movement of positions from Green Meadows Elementary School to Wilbraham Middle School due to an exodus of middle school students, leading to staffing changes.

"In the prior version, we also moved some teachers. We eliminated some middle school teaching positions at Green Meadows that won't be needed, and those are mostly vacant positions. So, we're not eliminating jobs. We're just pulling those from the budget because it really appears those will not be needed with the exodus from Green Meadows," Osborne said.

Another highlight was significant increases in district technology, with Osborne adding this will be worked on for the next version.

"You will see that the Chromebooks lined out separately. Nothing's going to change. We just thought it was fair to line that out as an entirely separate item because that is something that, you know, kind of we were asked to remove from capital

and put in operating just so you see the exact," Osborne said.

On utilities, Osborne said electricity is the biggest challenge, referencing recent School Committee meetings where he shared how they are "trending quite a bit over."

"I don't think we're going to be over as much as our initial projections were. Most of our bills are coming in a little lower than we expected, but I think also when I budgeted for this past year, I tried to take into account the impact of the lighting situation and, quite possibly, maybe the lights didn't cost us as much as we thought when they were on all the time," Osborne said.

Attending exploratory in ninth grade generated questions, with Finance Committee member Marc Ducey asking how many students take part.

Superintendent Dr. John Provost answered that it was 17 students, explaining they were "the only district left in the collaborative that was not allowing ninth graders to attend," which severely impacted students accessing vocational opportunities.

"So, by not sending students in ninth grade, we were essentially locking them out and that, I think, is why this was such a priority in the Strategic Plan," Provost said.

Patrick Kiernan asked about funding for vocational students, including if there's additional funding from the state and the cost differences between other districts.

"So, what is the pupil expenditure difference between a vocational student, LPVEC and a student that does not participate in that program at Minnechaug Regional High School versus a student that is participating in, let's say, Smith Vocational (High School) based off the example you used and LPVEC?" Kiernan asked.

Provost said, "It's hard to get an exact per pupil cost," with the rolling average for the district at 43 students in all four grades totaling \$508,188.

"So, you can sort of calculate assess cost of \$11,818 from that. That would compare to, say, the actual net charges, which are currently \$20,076 per year or Pathfinder (Regional High School) at \$20,546. In both cases those are slightly lower than the per pupil cost," Provost said.

Osborne said the district would continue working on the budget.

"We'll provide updated versions as we go and to keep plugging away at things," Osborne said.

Finance Committee Chair Kevin Hanks suggested having tracked changes would be helpful moving forward, as it helped him answer another question he had about a different budget item.

"I think it's helpful to see where we started and where we end up because, from every direction of the perspective, we need to see those changes. It's helpful," Hanks said.

PATULLO from page 1



Photos by Getty Images for the Recording Academy® (courtesy of Kaytee Long Becker)

Carla Patullo holding her Grammy Award in a portrait taken by the Recording Academy.



Carla Patullo and her collaborators Scorchio Quarter and Tonality during a group portrait after Patullo's win for Best New Age, Ambient or Chant Album at the 66th Annual Grammy Awards. Artist Lili Haydn was also a collaborator on the album.

## Irish Music Concert to be held at the Wilbraham library

WILBRAHAM - Dublin-born folk singer Tom O'Carroll will perform "From Tribe to Nation: A Musical Journey Through the History of Ireland" at the Wilbraham Public Library on Monday, March 4 at 6 p.m.

Drawing on archaeological data and historical records as well as music and song, he will explore the broad social and cultural themes of conflict and identity that occur throughout the island's history. To register, please contact the library at 413-596-6141 or visit the Events Calendar at [www.wilbrahamlibrary.org](http://www.wilbrahamlibrary.org). This free program is sponsored by the Wilbraham Friends of the Library.

## Wilbraham history books available at Wilbraham Public Library

WILBRAHAM - A limited number of copies of the Wilbraham History and Culture Volume IV, 1963-2013 Sestercentennial Edition are available free of charge while supplies last. Copies can be picked up at the Wilbraham Public Library's service desk. Please call 596-6141 if you wish to reserve a copy. This edition of Wilbraham's history was published in 2015 as a part of the town's 250th Anniversary Celebration.

help them get there."

A breast cancer survivor, Patullo also reflected on winning her Grammy Award on World Cancer Day, which falls on Feb. 4.

"I knew right away I wanted to dedicate this to these women who did these experimental trials, actually, 30 years ago that saved my life. The fact that they did these trials and they've saved so many lives, and I feel like I want to share this with them, and I want to share this with everyone going through it," Patullo said. "It's just unreal. I think things happen for a reason sometimes."

Patullo expressed gratitude to her collaborators, who taught her the importance of listening.

"I work a lot by myself in my studio, and when musicians come in, you got to listen to each other, and they taught me that," Patullo said. "We just listened to each other, so I am forever grateful to them for lending their energy and being here for me in the toughest time of my life."

Patullo also credits her late mother for inspiring her to follow her dreams and Falcetti Music and her band teacher, Mrs. Reidy, for fostering her passion for music and opportunities to perform with other musicians.

She stressed the importance of music programs in schools, encouraging the community to support them.

"It's so important. Music, on so many levels, you are healing yourself and you are healing other people. It's a platform for you to share, so let's keep that strong. Let's keep music alive in Wilbraham!" Patullo said.

Patullo had this message for her fans and supporters. "I just can't thank you enough for listening and giving me a platform, giving me a space to share my music," Patullo said.

To learn more, visit [carlapatullo.com](http://carlapatullo.com), follow Patullo on Facebook, X and Instagram or find her music on your favorite streaming platform.

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# Community forum on district reorganization to be held Feb. 15

6:30 – 8:30 p.m. program to occur in Minnechaug Auditorium

WILBRAHAM – The Hampden-Wilbraham Regional School District invites residents to community forum on district reorganization to be held from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. on Feb. 15 in the Minnechaug Auditorium.

Babysitting services will be provided by members of the National Honor Society and Student Council. After studying this issue for more than a year, the Planning Committee and School Committee have narrowed the potential reorganization options to just the two shown below. Before taking the final votes needed to move forward with the reorganization, the School Committee would like to hear from faculty, staff, families and other interested parties who would like to share their opinions concerning these options. While evaluating many potential redistricting options, the Committees were guided by five goals that surfaced these two options as the most viable one for the future of our district. These goals were to improve the quality of education in the district, eliminate overcrowding, reduce student transitions, maximize the use of available space within the schools, and exercise fiscal responsibility. Videos and documentation of all Planning Committee meetings are available on the District Website: <https://www.hwrsd.org/>

**Option 1** – Mile Tree (K-1), Green Meadows (PreK-5), Stony Hill (2-3), Soule Road (4-5), TWB (Closed), WMS (6-7), MRHS (8-12)

**Option 2** – Mile Tree (K-1), Green Meadows (PreK-5), Stony Hill (2-5 – three per grade), Soule Road (2-5 – four per grade), TWB (Closed), WMS (6-7), MRHS (8-12)

**Key difference**

The key difference between the two options is whether Stony Hill and Soule Road should continue to serve grades 2-3 and 4-5, respectively or change to a 2-5 configuration.

**Important Potential Changes to the Regional Agreement**

The current Regional Agreement requires students in grades K-8 to be educated in their hometowns. In recent years, this has become a barrier to the optimum organization and allocation of resources. The School Committee is proposing changing the Regional Agreement to unite the district as a whole, and permit students in any grade to be educated anywhere within the district. This integrated approach would allow the district to design services based upon the needs of students rather than on political boundaries.

The current Regional Agreement allows students to be educated in other schools within the district when requested by the parent or guardian and approved by the School Committee. This has created situations in which some resources

have been over stretched while others have been underutilized. To resolve this problem, the Committee is proposing substantially revising or eliminating the within-district transfer process.

**Next Steps**

Implementing either of these plans will require changing the District Regional Agreement. After the School Committee approves a revised version of the Agreement, it will go before the voters of both towns for approval at their town meetings. The School Committee would like this to happen at the 2024 Annual Town Meetings. If the towns approve the revised agreement, it will go to the Com-

missioner of Elementary and Secondary Education for final approval.

Given all that needs to be done to implement a reorganization of this nature, there will be no changes for the 2024-25 school year. Should this plan be approved by the committee, the towns, and the commissioner this spring, next school year would be spent preparing for implementation during the 2025-26 school year.

This may be your last opportunity to share your thoughts about district reorganization before the School Committee votes. If there is anything you would like the members to consider before they cast their votes, the district would encourage you to attend this important meeting.

## FCU holding ‘Month of Giving’ campaign to benefit local animal shelters

Donations to benefit the Foundation for TJO Animals and Franklin County Regional Dog Shelter

SPRINGFIELD – Through Feb. 29, Freedom Credit Union is inviting its members, employees and community to “Paws for a Cause” and make cash donations to benefit the Foundation for TJO Animals in Springfield and Franklin County Regional Dog Shelter in Greenfield.

“These amazing institutions provide food, water, shelter and a variety of critical services for thousands of animals in our region every year,” said Freedom Credit Union President Glenn Welch. “They rely on donations to help fund everything from veterinary care to toys and bedding for the animals’ comfort and enrichment as they

wait to find their forever homes.” The Thomas J. O’Connor Adoption Center provides animal shelter and adoption services for the cities of Springfield, Chicopee and Holyoke. The Foundation for TJO Animals was formed to allow the group to better serve the shelter animals in their care through medical treatments and rehabilitation. This veterinary care allows pets to be brought to the adoption floor to hopefully find their forever homes.

The Franklin County Regional Dog Shelter is a volunteer-led group serving the communities of Franklin County. Its mission is to protect and improve the lives of stray, lost and unwanted dogs by offering a welcoming facility, providing care and finding good homes for each animal.

“We encourage you to donate directly to these organizations or at any of our branches through Thursday, Feb. 29,” Welch said. “Let’s make those tails wag!”

**VETERANS** from page 3

Sasen added the individual would work as a liaison between him and the Cemetery Commission, with the biggest role going through the database to update the veterans’ records from the Cemetery Commission.

“I would love for them to go through our database to find whatever they can to make sure that that is most up to date,” Sasen said.

The other role would be working to ensure flags are appropriately marked on each grave.

“It’s a minimum time. Couple of hours a month at that, but they would also assist in coordinating the major flagging event for Memorial Day and then the reflagging or checking of flags and Veterans Day. That would be another huge one,” Sasen said.

Another idea was having individuals or groups including Boy Scouts, Girls Scouts and school groups go through, wash and clean veterans’ stones, which other towns like Ludlow do.

“We could do something along those lines in the future as well,” Sasen said.

When Chairman Theresa Goodrich asked Town Administrator Nick Breault about the coming steps, he said approval of who is presented before the board for

the position would be next.

After Select Board member Michael Squindo sought clarification on the role in terms of qualifiers, including veteran status, Sasen reviewed the law.

The answer was yes.

“So, you do have to be defined under Mass General Law as a veteran, so I would make that when I was soliciting for that I would be looking for that,” Sasen said.

Board member Sue Bunnell asked about the confidentiality of records.

“How much confidentiality is involved there, and do they have to be in your space in order to access for those records?” Bunnell said.

Sasen said yes, having reached out to the state for further clarification.

“They said that as long as it’s an appointed position they don’t see any issue in offering that as long as they go through the same training that I did,” Sasen said.

A final item of note, with Annual Town Meeting taking place on June 3, the deadline for all articles has been extended to March 1.

“In case somebody was thinking about a petitioned article, this would be, sort of, the final call for that,” Breault said.

The motion to extend the deadline for all articles to March 1 was approved 3-0.

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## VIEWPOINTS

### Gardening questions that pose a challenge

A recent visit to mom's house prompted the following question about poinsettias.

Now, don't worry, I haven't forgotten what the date is. Sure, the poinsettia hasn't been in its glory for a few weeks now, but that doesn't mean she is going to give up on it.

You see, my mother likes a challenge, especially when it comes to plants. She wanted some advice on how to encourage new healthy growth before trying to coax it into re-bloom next fall.

Read on to learn how it's done:

In early April cut back the plant to eight inches. Fertilize with an all-purpose house-plant fertilizer once a month. New growth should appear by the end of May.

After the danger of frost has passed, move the plant outdoors. Continue to water but increase fertilization to every two weeks.

Pinch plants in late June or early July to promote bushy growth. At this time you may also wish to repot the poinsettia. Select a pot one size larger, filling around the root ball with a good potting soil.

Bring the plant indoors as temperatures fall in late summer.

The poinsettia is photoperiodic, and long nights of uninterrupted darkness encourage it to bloom. In greenhouses, growers go to great lengths to withhold light, as even small amounts can delay or stop the plant from setting bud.

At home, putting the plant in the closet for 14 hours each night is your best bet. Setting a reminder alarm or making a note helps to keep on track.

Most people get on a 5 p.m.-8 a.m. schedule beginning Oct. 1 and continue it for eight-10 weeks until color shows on the bracts. Night temperatures should be no higher than 70 degrees or flowering may be delayed.

This all sounds fairly straight forward. I



think the biggest frustration for her over the years has been missing a night of darkness, especially near the end of the routine.

Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. Still fun to try, however.

A friend of mine recently asked what I thought of the cloth grow bags that are all the rage right now. Although I haven't used them myself, another friend, Chris, has been gardening up a storm the last few years using these bags.

She has an amazing flower border that you would think is growing in the ground, but it is a collection of dozens of bags in various sizes, holding everything from cannas to dahlias, zinnias and marigolds. She has great success with potatoes and other vegetables, too.

Read on to learn about the benefits of these bags.

I guess the one benefit that I never thought of is breathability. Because the fabric is permeable there is good air exchange, the roots grow to the edge, are air-pruned and branch out.

This is altogether different than plastic or glazed ceramic pots that don't breathe and encourage tangles of roots that encircle the pot eventually becoming bound. When a plant is root bound, it suffers until it is repotted; not so with grow bags!

Another pro would be drainage. The grow

bags hold only what moisture the soil can hold and the rest of it drains away. Sure, the flip side is that you will need to water often in times of drought, but it's nice to know that if we have another summer like we did last year, the plants won't rot, either.

Other more obvious benefits include portability, heat resistance and ease of storage. If you purchase bags with handles, you can move them around the yard much easier than you could if the plants were in heavy pots.

The bags weigh next to nothing compared to clay or ceramics. Grow bags also do not heat up the way glazed or plastic pots do; roots are cooler and the plants are happier.

When the season is over, you can wash the bags and flatten to store. Most brands say that they last for four-five seasons or longer with good care.

Do some research to pair the size bag you use with the plants you are growing. A quick check gleaned that 10 gallon bags are good for three seed potatoes or a single indeterminate tomato plant. Bush type tomatoes would grow well in a seven gallon pot.

Also research the best potting soil or compost mixes to use; there are many out there. Chris uses a blend and uses organic fertilizers, crediting that to her success.

The apple may not fall far from the tree. Mom likes her challenges, and I like mine. I think trying out grow bags is in my near (gardening) future.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 33 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.



#### Dear Rusty

I appreciate your recent article dispelling the myth that politicians have stolen Social Security money.

As a Certified Public Accountant, I dispel this myth repeatedly to clients, who falsely claim SS funds have been raided. But another thing I deal with often is how SS benefits are calculated. I know the formula for determining each person's benefit amount is complex, but I have had to explain numerous times that those, who put the most into Social Security get the lowest rate of return and those who put the least in get the highest return based on the way the benefit formula is structured.

I get tired of people complaining that monthly Social Security payments are higher for retired doctors and other highly paid individuals. Can you please explain how Social Security is weighted in favor of lower income workers?

Signed Tired of the Misunderstandings

#### Dear Tired

Please don't be frustrated. Because of the program's complexity, Social Security is prone to misunderstanding and educating the misinformed is an important professional duty we share. Here's how each person's SS benefit is determined:

The first thing to know is that each person's SS retirement benefit is not based on their financial contributions to the program. Social Security's purpose is to provide a benefit, which replaces a portion of the person's pre-retirement income, so the SS benefit is based on actual lifetime earnings, not on the payroll taxes withheld from those earnings.

Social Security has your lifetime earnings record, obtained annually from the IRS and that record determines your "Primary Insurance Amount." Your "PIA" is initially determined in your eligibility year usually age 62 and is the amount you will get if you claim for benefits to start exactly at your Full Retirement Age.

### How is my Social Security benefit calculated?

To develop your PIA, Social Security first adjusts (indexes) each year of your lifetime earnings up to the annual payroll tax cap to account for inflation. They then select the 35 inflation-adjusted years in which you earned the most, from which they compute your average monthly earnings over your lifetime, this is called your Average Indexed Monthly Earnings. They then break your AIME into three segments, the first of which includes a majority of and possibly all of your AIME.

They then take a percentage of each segment and total those three amounts to determine your PIA. The first segment is the largest and 90% of that first segment contributes most of your PIA. Smaller percentages of the other two segments (32% and 15% respectively if your AIME is higher), are then added to the first computation to arrive at your full PIA - the amount you get if you start benefits in the month you reach your FRA. Note that since most of the PIA comes from the first large segment of each person's AIME, lower income

workers get a higher percentage of their lifetime average monthly amount.

Since benefits are based on earnings, those with lower lifetime earnings do, indeed, get a smaller benefit than those with higher average lifetime earnings, but the percentage of pre-retirement replacement income lower income workers receive is higher than for those with higher monthly average lifetime earnings. The Social Security benefit for lower income workers is typically about 40% of their pre-retirement average monthly income, while those with higher lifetime average earnings may get a benefit as little as 20% of their average monthly pre-retirement earnings.

In that sense, the Social Security benefit formula is progressive and weighted in favor of lower income workers. Nevertheless, albeit a smaller replacement percentage, higher income workers receive a higher monthly SS benefit because of their higher lifetime earn-

Please see **SOCIAL SECURITY**, page 7

### 60th Anniversary of Beatles invasion



## The Wilbraham-Hampden TIMES TEAM



**EDITOR**  
Dalton Zbierski  
dzbierski@turley.com



**ADVERTISING SALES**  
Jocelyn Walker  
jwalker@turley.com



**SPORTS EDITOR**  
Greg Scibelli  
sports@turley.com



**STAFF WRITER**  
Kristin Rivers  
krivers@turley.com

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



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#### WEB

www.wilbrahamhampdentimes.turley.com

**PATRICK H. TURLEY**  
CEO

**KEITH TURLEY**  
President

**DEANNA SLOAT**  
Graphics Manager



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#### Correction Policy

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

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## Creative writing/publishing workshop offered March 10

WEST BROOKFIELD – With just 26 letters and a handful of punctuation, writers create fascinating worlds and unforgettable stories.

A creative writing and publishing workshop will be held on Sunday, March 10, from 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at the Salem Cross Inn in West Brookfield.

Award-winning author Ed Londergan provides a full day of information. “The workshop will cover the entire writing and publishing, including idea development and sources of inspiration, drawing from storytelling traditions, developing the story, structure and flow, conceiving and bringing characters to life, dialogue, editing, short fiction, writer’s block, and the publishing process,” Londergan said in a press release. “The publishing process can be confusing and frustrating. I’ll take the group through the various publishing options available. There will also be some fun writing exercises.”

“Everyone has a story to tell. The workshop aims to help those who want

to write but don’t know where to start or have had an idea for a story that’s been bubbling in their head for years and finally want to put it on paper. I also help people who have written something and need to know how to move ahead.”

Past workshops have been attended by people of all ages and occupations, from 12-year-old students to 75-year-old retirees. “Four attendees have written books and had them published,” Londergan said.

“One of the things past attendees have enjoyed and learned from is the writing exercises,” Londergan said. “The writing exercises this year are different than what I’ve done in the past. I enjoy seeing the creative ideas that come out of them.”

The workshop is limited to 14 participants. The cost is \$110, and lunch is included.

Registration is required. The registration deadline is March 3. To register, email [ed.londergan@gmail.com](mailto:ed.londergan@gmail.com) or call 508-864-8685.



## eCycle of Wilbraham celebrates third anniversary

WILBRAHAM – On Thursday, Feb. 1, eCycle of Wilbraham celebrated its third anniversary in the health and fitness industry with an event at its 85 Post Office Park studio. Among the many eCycle members who gathered were Wilbraham Selectboard member Sue Bunnell; Cheryl A. Spinks, legislative aide to State Rep. Angelo Puppolo (D-SPRINGFIELD) and Jennifer Pickering, aide to Sen. Jacob Ol-

iveira (D-LUDLOW), who each brought citations and congratulatory greetings.

Since opening its doors three years ago, the studio has inspired countless individuals to lead healthier lives through its dynamic and engaging indoor cycling classes. The studio has been instrumental in helping participants achieve their fitness goals, improve cardiovascular health and boost their overall well-being.

### SOCIAL SECURITY from page 6

ings. Even so, those higher earners did, indeed, contribute more payroll taxes from their higher earnings.

So, each person’s SS retirement benefit amount is a percentage of their pre-retirement income. Coincidentally, those with higher pre-retirement income also contributed more to the Social Security program than did those with lower earnings. But their higher SS benefit amount is based on their higher pre-retirement earnings, not on payroll taxes paid from those higher earnings.

*The Association Mature Citizens*

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

## Hampden Senior Center to host Pie Sale

The Hampden Senior Center, 104 Allen St., is having another great Pie Sale. This year, the fundraiser is offering juicy Apple, delicious Fruit of the Forest and mouth-watering Blueberry. Orders for pies at \$19 each will be taken at the senior

center starting March 1, paid in full in advance. Pies will be boxed and bagged and available for drive-up pick up at the center on Saturday, April 27 from Noon to 1:30 p.m. Call 413-566-8271 with any questions.

# HOMETOWN SPOTLIGHT


WILBRAHAM-HAMPDEN TIMES

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## OBITUARIES

Wilbraham-Hampden Times

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Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

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The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$225, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph.

**Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: [obits@turley.com](mailto:obits@turley.com).

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

## Nancy M. (Murphy) Truesdale

WILBRAHAM—Nancy M. (Murphy) Truesdale, a beloved resident of Wilbraham, Harwich and Burlington, MA passed away on Feb. 4, 2024, at the age of 79.

Nancy was happily married to David Truesdale, the love of her life, for 58 years. Nancy was the proud mother of Brian Truesdale (and his wife, Anne) of Boston, MA and Dan Truesdale of Mashpee, MA. She was especially proud to be “Nanny” to her beloved grandchildren, Jack (19) and Claire (16). Nancy was born to the late Alice (Gallagher) and Thomas Murphy of Burlington, MA and had four older brothers. She is survived by brothers Bobby (and his wife Nancy) and David (and his partner, Cookie), and many nieces and nephews, and is predeceased by brothers Jack (survived by his wife Judy) and Paul (survived by his wife, Barbara).

After graduating from Burlington High School and receiving an Associate’s degree from Baystate

Academy in Boston, Nancy met Dave while working together at Friendly’s Ice Cream. After falling in love, they were married in 1966, and moved many times during Dave’s career at Friendly’s, prior to settling in Wilbraham in 1976. They raised their family and lived in Wilbraham for 35 years, where Nancy was an active member of the community. She eagerly volunteered as a parent in the local schools, coached kids’ sports, and was a founding member of the Junior Women’s Club of Wilbraham, to name just a few activities. The family attended, and she was a mainstay at Church of Epiphany. Prior to her retirement, she worked more than a decade for the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts in Springfield.

In retirement, Nancy and Dave moved to Harwich on Cape Cod in 2011, in no small part to be closer to their children and grandchildren. In Harwich, they became active members of Christ Church

Episcopal. For many years, Nancy partnered with Dave at the church’s popular lobster roll lunches on Friday afternoons during the summer. Nancy would work the door, greeting guests with her warm smile, laughter, and gift of gab, while Dave would manage the kitchen.

Nancy, having grown up with four older brothers, having raised two wonderful sons and already having a precious grandson, shared a special bond with granddaughter Claire, her first “girl”. She cherished every opportunity to spend with “my girl”, whether playing games, doing projects, planning parties, or teaching her important life lessons, like “girls’ rule, boys drool...” (always with a smile).

After defeating cancer, Nancy subsequently, and courageously, battled Alzheimer’s disease, never once complaining about the affliction that would ultimately take her away from this world. Nancy’s memory will forever be cherished by her family and friends, and she

### Death Notices

**Nancy M. (Murphy) Truesdale**  
Died on Feb. 4, 2024  
Service Feb. 24, 2024  
Chapman Funeral Home

will forever be in our hearts.

A Memorial service will be held on Saturday, Feb. 24 at 11 am at Christ Church Episcopal, 671 Route MA-28, Harwich Port, MA 02646. A reception will follow directly after in the Parish Hall. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the Alzheimer’s Family Support Center of Cape Cod, 2095 Main St. Brewster, MA 02631.

Notes of comfort may be made to her family at [www.chapmanfuneral.com](http://www.chapmanfuneral.com).

## Brothers share Bigfoot encounters in presentation at library

Wendy Long  
Correspondent

HUNTINGTON – About 20 people gathered at the Huntington Public Library on Jan. 30 to consider the possible existence of Bigfoot or Sasquatch—large, hairy animals who walk on two feet.

Brothers Eric and Tim Vogel gave a “Bigfoot 413” presentation, where they shared their investigations and encounters with the shy and elusive creatures.

Encounters often include loud whoops, “wood knocks” and objects such as pebbles, sticks or rocks being thrown at them.

Their interest harkens back to 1976, when the teenage brothers found themselves talking with Bigfoot investigators from around the country, who had come to Western Massachusetts to examine tracks found in Agawam. While the incident was eventually discovered to be a hoax, perpetrated by a child, who fashioned plywood “feet” to create them, the stories shared by the investigators sparked an interest that would be renewed years later.

In the 1990s and again in 2004 the outdoor enthusiasts were leading camping tours with their business, Tekoa Mountain Outdoor Programs. Several times, they experienced odd noises on their trips that they could not explain.

But in 2013, Tim said, they “had an experience and it’s one we can’t un-have.” The two were on a wilderness canoe trip to a remote area in the Adirondacks near Saranac Lake. It was September, they had set up camp on an island and went out fishing for bass.

They had paddled up a stream that fed the lake when two trees on shore started shaking and they heard a scream that vibrated into their chests, described as “like being at a Ted Nugent concert.” They returned to their campsite but slept little that night.

“We didn’t talk about it for a while,” Tim said. Tim, who is a ranger at the Moses Scout Reservation in Blandford, said he’s had a number of bear encounters in his work. “Bears just run,” he said. “This thing yelled and screamed and threw sticks and rocks at them for 10-15 minutes.” And the footprint casts that they have since acquired after other encounters are clearly not bear tracks. They not only lack claws, but the big toes on bear prints are the reverse of ours, unlike Bigfoot tracks.

A few years later, they heard a recording that was purportedly of a Bigfoot scream and recognized the sound as the one they’d heard in 2013. While Bigfoot are usually thought to be a phenomenon in the Pacific Northwest, the Vogels report that there have been numerous encounters in the Northeast. The first recorded sighting in Massachusetts dates back to 1765, when a hunter in Great Barrington reported seeing one sleeping by a stream. In 1895, a North Adams newspaper printed a town selectman’s account of seeing one.

And in 1958, the term “Bigfoot” was crafted when Jerry Crew of Humboldt County, California made a plaster cast of 16” footprints. Journalist Andrew Genzoli reported on the finding and coined the term “Bigfoot.”



Turley photo by Wendy Long

**Tim and Eric Vogel are investigators, who lead excursions to areas where Bigfoot has been spotted or encountered.**

Native Americans have a number of different terms for the creatures, but the most commonly known is Sasquatch.

The Vogels have since added Bigfoot investigations or “going Squatching” to their expedition business. There are three types of encounters: Class A, which are actual sightings; Class B, which are sounds and physical things like rocks being thrown or footprints being discovered and Class C, which are third party stories.

They say there have been 64 such reports in Western Massachusetts since 2000, including 14 Class A sightings in Hampden, Hampshire and Berkshire Counties. Encounters have also been reported in the

Worcester and Boston areas, on Cape Cod, and in the “Bridge-water Triangle,” a 200 square mile area in Eastern Massachusetts with numerous reports of

paranormal phenomena including Bigfoot sightings. And, of course, many of us have seen the 15 second video footage taken by Roger Patterson

and Bob Gimlin in 1967 of a Sasquatch walking; according to the Vogels, still the best proof of a Bigfoot to date as no one has been able to debunk the footage. The Vogels report that there are more sightings in the spring and fall, when the creatures might be foraging and fewer in winter, suggesting that they might even hibernate. Sightings, when they happen, are often very brief and despite loud wood knocks and screams, the creatures can move very quietly through the woods.

The Vogels have become part of Bigfoot Field Research Organization, a network of believers who share data, experiences and connect evidence with experts. There is a linguist, for example, who believes that the vocalizations such as whoops, screams and whistles are a form of communication; that person also rules out recordings of things like owls. There are others who can examine the footprint casts of tracks and determine an estimated height and weight of the creature.

During one rainy encounter, the brothers discovered two solid tracks and covered them with bark to protect them. The next day, they returned with a guy, who had casting equipment. As they approached the track they heard a scream from the top of the mountain. The tracks showed a heel depth of 4 inches

prints that are 9 inches wide and 17-½ inches in length and about seven feet between the prints.

According to a BFRO investigator, the Bigfoot that made those tracks would have weighed about 900 pounds. The presenters also played a recording made by a local couple from an encounter in Blandford that was reviewed by the linguist and found to be “in the range.” Although the Vogels admit that the recording was nothing like the scream they heard in the Adirondacks, which they felt was much more aggressive and threatening.

For two hours, participants were spellbound as the Vogels described their additional experiences with Bigfoots. They’ve joined BFRO investigators on seven trips, all of which resulted in Class A or Class B encounters. “We’ve had multiple experiences because we go where they’ve been seen,” Eric said.

One of the odder things reported by witnesses including the Vogels is seeing a blue or white orb, about the size of a softball, hovering near a Bigfoot sighting. “We’ve been told that it’s just energy,” said Eric.

“Weather people call it ball lightning.”

And some of the attendees have had their own encounters with Bigfoot. Lisa Haramut of Westfield said that both she and her father have had run-ins. “When they scream, they can interrupt your internal organs and cause vomiting or blood in your urine,” she said, adding that her father had

experienced this. The Vogels had also heard similar reports, but had not experienced it themselves. Haramut also reported being chased by an orb while driving in an area where she believes she had also encountered one or more juvenile Bigfoots and was subjected to them throwing small rocks at

her and whooping. Shared stories had some common denominators. Many happened in steep, rugged terrain and often when it was raining. In addition to screams, wood knocks and thrown objects, sightings can sometimes be accompanied by a terrible “musk” smell.

The brothers feel it is important not to assign human characteristics to Bigfoot. “I try not to humanize Bigfoot because it’s in the animal world,” Tim said. His brother concurred.

If people had a similar experience, the Vogels invite them to contact them by emailing [wildguide1@yahoo.com](mailto:wildguide1@yahoo.com) or calling 413-454-1296 or Tim or emailing [wildguide2@yahoo.com](mailto:wildguide2@yahoo.com) or calling 413-207-1154 for Eric.

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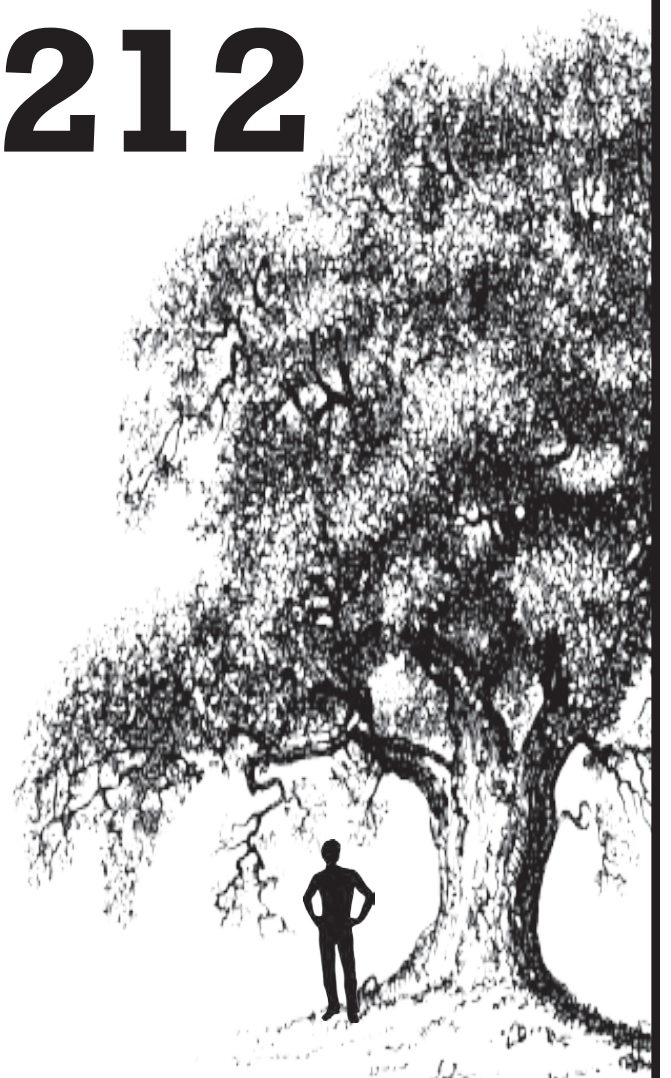
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# DL&G TREE



# Minnechaug Regional High School Honor Roll

WILBRAHAM – Minnechaug Regional High School recently named the second term Honor and High Honor Roll

**Grade 9 Honors:** Jason Abeid, Isaac Abergel, Lilianna Bennett, Adrianna Brandoli, Darby Burgmyer, Philip Castellano, Annabella Cianflone, Cameron Colon, Gavin Coughlin, Emma Dalessio, Kyla Dansereau, Katie DeGray, Addison Derosia, Tucker Derosia, Ava Disa, Braedon Donahue, Angelina Dunn, Elizabeth Espinal, Saniah Evans, Cameron Faneuff, Liam Faneuff, Nicholas Garib, Kaden Gralia, Gavin Grimley, Eliana Gunn, Isaac Hale, Richard Hale, Jacob Hall, Liam Harrigan, Jacob Hisgen, Katelyn Hoar, Ainsley Holden, Paige Holt, Carson Humphries, Kadence Illig, Ryan Jacobsen, Kalhan Kar, Liam Kiernan, Isabella Kirton, Gabriel Kishinevski, Isabella Lafield, Peter Langone, Leah Lomascolo, Caelan Luszc, Andrea Lyon, Reese Magee, Nola Malmberg, Mia Manseau, Alec McInnes, Mason Mish, Athena Nguyen, Selena Nguyen, Jasper O'Connor, Madilyn Ortiz, Nicholas Pelletier, Matthew Perkins, Haley Powers, Patrick Roach, Lauren Roberts, Karolina Robles-Maurer, Emanuel Roman, Layla Rosati, Anne Rowland-LaValley, Madelyn Sackrider, Quinn Salerno, Mia Savoie, Moira Shannon, Savannah Sheerin, Norah Smith, Sophia Sundheim, Kaleb Sweetman, Logan Thomas, Autumn Thompson, Owen Tzoumas, Luis Vega, Ariella Velez, Sarah Rose Walsh, Max Waskiewicz, Azary Wheeler Montanez, Jade Wong-Vallejo, Thomas Wurm

**Grade 9 High Honors:** Gana Abuata, Angelina Bontempi, Katherine Britt, Abigail Camire, Samantha Catellier, O'brien Chen, Ivy Christensen, Catherine Dickson, Brady Dones, Barba Dos Santos Costa, Jonathan Dyer, Nehir Elcin, Isabella Esteves, Marion Fil, Brielle Foisy, Alyssa Fortune, Ella Gagliarducci, Olivia Gencarelli, Brooke Germain, Naomi Griffin, Lucy Haile, Caitlin Hebert, Madelyn Hoskinson, Amelia Kellogg, Ryan Knox-Nelli, Teagan Lawor, Abigail Lee, Molly Lynch, Caroline Maloni, Liam Metzger, Molly Michels, John Morley, Chelsea Ortega, Riddhi Patel, Shiv Patel, Ainsley Patterson, Natalie Petit, Collin Purcell, Jillian Rubner, Jack Rumplik, Cameron Salvador, Jolena Sanchioni, Nico Santucci, Dillon Shaughnessey, Gracie Smith, Alison Souza, Andrew Stark, Olivia Stephen, Tyler Supczak, Grayson Sweet, Faith Trombly, Grace Trombly, Hope Trombly, Brayden Tugie, Isabella Usher, Drew Weinberg

**Grade 10 Honors:** Angelina Acevedo, Lucas Akers, Adam Arce, Emma Balog, Kelly Balog, Colleen Basch, Corinne Brewer, Lila Britton, Austin Buckert, Kennedy Burgmyer, Isabella Carlin, Hayden Carlotto, Desyree Charles, Nicholas Cianflone, Logan Clark, Jonathan Correa, Kelly Cronin, Ava Croteau, Maliha Daubon, Jayden De La Cruz, Gabriella Duffany, Samuel Eaton, Cody Erskine, Zayde Facchetti, Jacob Fahey, Miles Fergus, Margaret Fulton, Lucas Fytrilakis, Yong Ming Gao, Eliana Gaudreau, Ryan Giombetti, Madysen Giroux,

Carina Gonnello, Izabella Gusev, Colin Haines, Brody Harrison, Zerirra Hernandez, Laila Hosnander, Enzo Hrycay, Laya Ibrahim, Lana Johnson, Molly Kinsman, Mai Le, Aidan Lee, Evan Liverseidge, Jacob Long, Kaitlyn Lopez Pham, Christian Lowe, Jack Lucarelle, Ava Luszc, Kai Ly, Ava Manning, Austin Marques, Jaymiel Martinez, Michael Mazzaferro, Nolah McConnell, Riley McLeod, Sean McSwain, Jordan Miller, Jacob Moore, Arianna Morales, Alina Narvaez, Hao-nam Nguyen, Vinh Nguyen, Cambria Norval, Stephen Nowicki, Luke O'Connor, Michael O'Connor, Alexander Parent, Caydence Pellerin, Grayson Placzek, Jackson Pouliot, Natalie Proulx, Kameah Pryce, Connor Roy, Mostaffa Saleh, Shawnee Santiago, Nina Semanie, Alexa Sherman, Cayden Silva, Bianca Stewart, Lincoln Stiles, Lilliana Sullivan, Owen Sullivan, Ava Thompson, Matthew VanDerBeken, Ezekiel Vargas-Nunez, Elijah Webster, Celena Williams

**Grade 10 High Honors:** Ian Angelica, Ali Awkal, Callan Blanchard, Trinity Burgmyer, Alexis Carreira, Lilianna Catellier, Irene Chen, Anthony Cianflone, Natalia Clarke, Steven Cocchi, Allison Demetri, Madeline Dos Santos, Aidan Dzierwinski, Noemi Fraga, Mateo Garcia, Tyler Jaslanek, Maeghan Joyce, Brady Laliberte, Hannah Luff, Natalie Madison, Daniella Moraru, Ava Moretti, Alyssa Nogueira, Cailin O'Brien, Cora Pace, Mia Peck, Katelynn Pronovost, Hannah Przechocki, Chloe Robins, Aezlin Rost, Connor Seymour, Colin Sheehan, Linda Stanco, Isabella Strand, Ella Trosky, Madisyn Vazquez, Elizabeth Woytowicz, Josiah Zayas, Nicholas Zayas

**Grade 11 Honors:** Hannah Alves, Emamariam Annear, William Bao, Lilliana Barkyoumb, Bryce Barlow, Matthew Beaudin, Mason Belcamino, Hunter Bennett, John Bermudez, Audrey Bernard, Sadie Blair, Joseph Bonavita,

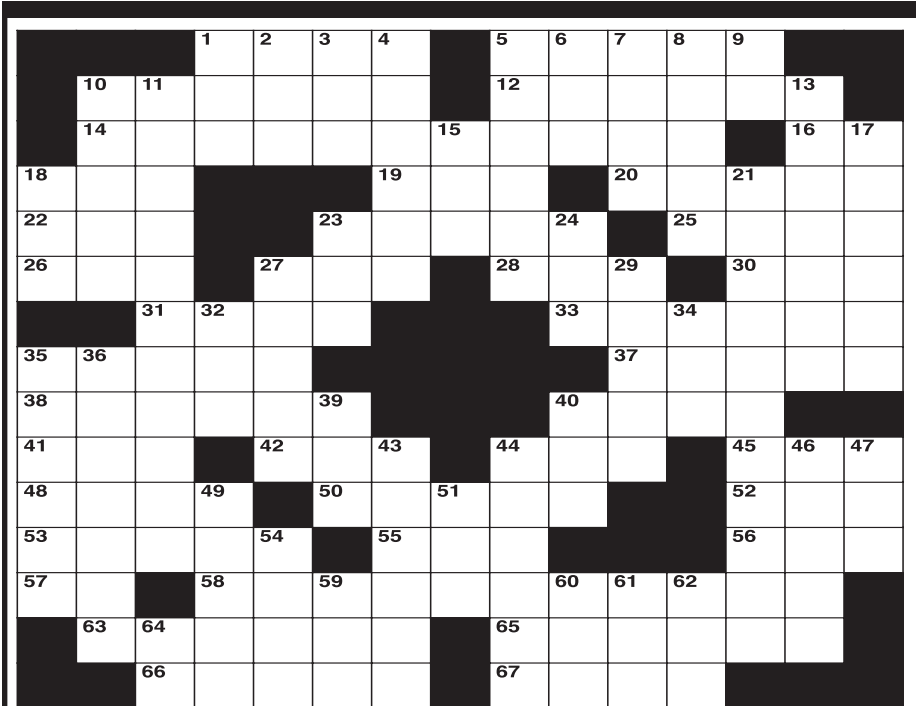
Noah Brathwaite, Bryanna Brown, Jake Burnett, Samantha Burnham, Robert Bustamante, Joseph Butts, Margaret Capuano, Noah Cares, Olivia Christenson, Julia Crooks, Angelina Cross, Saniah Dawkins, Jason DeGray, Elizabeth Dickson, Jordan Dietz, Lucie Dones, Alexandria Dubay, Samuel Ey, Grace Fallon, Aaron Foy, Brodie Fraser, Molly Gallagher, Kendall Gates, London-Reighn Gates, Noelle Giombetti, Hunter Gormally, Alexander Gormley, Renee Goulet, Ian Home, Imani Ibrahim, Ryan Ice, Kalli Joyce, Lila Keegan, Taylor Labadorf, Arthur Lam, Wyatt Lewis, Alayna Lucas, Isabelle Manning, Jeremiah Martin, Madison McCluskey, Cailin McEwan, Alexander Melluzzo, Collin Meunier, John Peter O'Connor, Kelvin Ohemeng, Ryan Oldread, Brayden O'Sullivan, Nathan Pace, Makenzi Pastreck, Trey Pavoni, Abby Peyman, Nicole Pollard, Claire Pouliot, Kamaria Pryce, Gus Przybyl, Ethan Purcell, Sophia Rachele, Liam Richard, Aiden Rodrigues, Matthew Ryan, Christopher Salvi, Zoe Sanders Walter, Amaderis Santiago, Ella Sarno, Corey Smith, Sheyenne Smith, Katherine Socha, Emily Streeter, Jack Sullivan, Brady Suomala, Aidan Thompson, Isabella Tirabassi, Johanyliz Torres, Angela Verdon, Sofia Villanueva, Gabriella Viruet, Ian Wall, Skylar Weinberg, Rylee Welch, Alexander Wietecha, Anja Wingfield

**Grade 11 High Honors:** Alexsa Abeid, Mackenzie Barlow, Cayla Bartosz, Bryan Beckel, Nicholas Benninger, Marissa Bontempi, Alan Botas, Jeremiah Campbell, Kayla Coolbeth, Mackenzie DaFonseca, Joshua Disa, Lukas Dzierzowski, Nina Gallagher, Wen Xi Gao, Aaron Gasteyer, Victoria Gonzalez, McKenna Hale, Giana Hall, Jaiana Hall, Audrey Izzo, Alita Johnson, Caitlyn LaBonte, Andrew Lang, Morgan Lape, Antonia Mascaro, Makenzie McEwan, Catherine McMahon, Aidan McMinn, Taylor Meunier, Margaret Michels, Tiffany Nguyen, Alyah Nogueira, Ava Ofcarcik, Ava Peabody, Laura Pecoy, Owen Perry, Emma Powell, Marilyn Remaly, Hayden Richard, Gabriella Robinson, Rafa Rodriguez Alvarez, Madeleine Rooney, Gianna Siciliano, Landon Smith-Devenitch, Chloe Sullivan, Quinn Symington, Leah Tassinari, Caeli Whitcomb, Domenic Yacovone

**Grade 12 Honors:** Mya Adler, Timothy Arendt, Ryan Atkin, Haile Barnett, Alexander Bar-

thelette, Michael Bigda, Ian Bonasant, Brent Botas, Jacob Bottass, Norah Bottum, Kelsey Brennan, Aren Brubach, Zoey Cardano, Lindsay Carra, Evan Cassady, Lillian Christensen, Christina Clark, Paitan Closser, Morgan Conchinha, Benjamin Cooney, David Cordova, Giana Daniele, Ellaree Daniels, Abigail Dean, Jackson Derosia, Lilliana DiGrande, Mackenna Donahue, David Duah, Norah Dumala, Ryan Eldridge, Christian Erskine, Emily Esteves, Madison Faneuff, John Finnegan, John Fitzgerald, Daniel Gardner, Jacob Gordon, Abyssinia Haile, Chase Harrison, Sydnee Hartin, Paige Hebert, Dajuan Johnson, Dakota Joseph, Lauren Kasper, Kaleigh Kinsman, Evelyn Labbe, Hunter LaDouceur, Sophie Laird, Benjamin Langone, Rory Lavelle, Gavin Lee, Olivia Lee, Parker Letendre, Jolene Lewis, Julia Lewis, Sawyer Lisowski, Taylah Lopez, Anna Lucarelle, Alexander Maurer, Brendan McDonald, Victoria Miller, Presley Mish, Aviana Mitchell, Hector Mojica, Ava Murray, McKenzie Murray, Kate O'Connor, Matthew O'Keefe, Veera Patel, Nicolas Patrakis, Madeline Patterson, Laila Phok-Smith, Claire Poindexter, Ann Marie Prairie, Max Raschi, Ethan Ray, Jonah Rost, Olivia Rucki, Jonas Saabye, Gabriella Salvador, Chad Santos, Jessica Santos, Derek Semanie, Ainsley Sheehan, Aiden Simpkins, Alexander Sleeper, Jordan Stewart, Andrew Szpakowski, Jack Tassinari, Zachary Vigneault, Ailsa Wilson, Benjamin Wilson

**Grade 12 High Honors:** Anissa Barnes, Jonathan Barton-Cimino, Rose Caltabiano, Vince Chiarizio, Ava Connors, Angelina Crooks, Siena Dansereau, Jaden Desmarais, Sofia DiGrande, Nicolas Disa, Danielle Dulude, Amy Dunklee, Madison Duperre, Mia Figueroa Rodriguez, Mia Fraga, Kalia Gagnon, Isabella Gahres, Sophia Gravanda, Gavin Grout, Victoria Harrington, Mia Hickson, Roman Kavanagh, Jonas Kefalas, Mia Korzec, Lindsay Labadorf, Aidan Lang, Jessica Leary, Lauren Lomascolo, Julia Long, Samantha Long, Grace Maloni, Diella Martell, Davis Nelson, Matthew Nordstrom, Adison Oliveras, Owen Ordynowicz, Abigail Pastore, Vyan Patel, Allison Patrick, Erika Przedzieceki, Kylie Ray, Michael Roy, Daniel Ryzewicz, Gianna Sakowski, Aiden Sergienko, Georgia Serra, Ava Sheehan, Cecilia Sheehan, Jack Straut, Cassidy Trask, Katherine Tzoumas, Alina Wawrzonek, Katja Wurm



**CLUES ACROSS**

- 1. Gene type
- 5. Persian male given name
- 10. Type of protection
- 12. Cloud
- 14. One who returns to life
- 16. Gym class
- 18. General's assistant (abbr.)
- 19. Baby's dining accessory
- 20. Enchantress
- 22. Prefix denoting "in a"
- 23. Spiritual leader
- 25. Cavities
- 26. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
- 27. Foot (Latin)
- 28. Sweet potato
- 30. Pharaoh of Lower Egypt
- 31. Land
- 33. More inquisitive
- 35. Dog breed: \_\_ Apso

- 37. Stood up
- 38. Direct and uninhibited
- 40. Authorless
- 41. Blocking type of drug (abbr.)
- 42. Retrospective analysis (abbr.)
- 44. Root mean square (abbr.)
- 45. Macaws
- 48. Actress Remini
- 50. Polynesian wrapped skirt
- 52. City of Angels hoops team (abbr.)
- 53. Fitzgerald and Baker are two
- 55. Bowling alley must-have
- 56. A way to cool down
- 57. Ethnic group in Asia
- 58. A way to alter
- 63. Set of five
- 65. Removes from the record
- 66. Dummies

- 67. Set period in office
- CLUES DOWN**
- 1. DC Comics superhero
  - 2. Brew
  - 3. Play
  - 4. Single-celled animals
  - 5. Rough to the touch
  - 6. Small island (British)
  - 7. Often noted alongside cons
  - 8. Preparation of rootstock
  - 9. Atomic #44
  - 10. Egyptian unit of capacity
  - 11. About secretary
  - 13. Particular groups
  - 15. Poke fun at
  - 17. Make certain that something occurs
  - 18. Financial term
  - 21. Justify
  - 23. Arbitrator
  - 24. 007's creato
  - 27. Czech name for Prague

- 29. Groans
- 32. American time
- 34. No seats available
- 35. \_\_ Stahl, journalist
- 36. Cleft lip
- 39. Talk incessantly
- 40. Expresses atomic and molecular weights (abbr.)
- 43. A part of a river where the current is very fast
- 44. Curdled milk
- 46. Running competitions
- 47. A team's best pitcher
- 49. Carthaginian explorer
- 51. World-renowned city
- 54. Most common Japanese surname
- 59. The bill in a restaurant
- 60. They \_\_
- 61. City of Angels football team (abbr.)
- 62. Distinctive practice
- 64. One quintillion bytes

## Greater Springfield Habitat introduces 'Hearts and Homes' challenge, fundraiser

WEST SPRINGFIELD - Every \$20 donation made to Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity by end-of-day Tuesday, Feb. 13, 2024, will be entered for a chance to win a Spa Renewal Day gift card for two people at the exclusive Canyon Ranch in Lenox. The winner will be drawn at our Valentine's Day dedication, celebrating the completion of our newest home in Holyoke. Participants don't have to be present to win. "We are very appreciative of Canyon Ranch for partnering with us on this fundraiser. Stable affordable housing plays a key role in a family's well-being and Canyon Ranch wants our donors to have a chance at increasing their well-being by supporting our programs," said Aimee Giroux, GSHFH executive director. "What a fantastic way for us to celebrate the completion of a home on Chestnut Street in Holyoke that will be dedicated and sold to the Santos family on Valentine's Day." The "Hearts and Homes" challenge

came about when a volunteer asked the resort that focuses on prioritizing its clients' well-being, if it would be interested in supporting Greater Springfield Habitat through a fundraiser. The donation committee complied and donated a gift card worth \$700. To donate, visit [habitatspringfield.org/donate](https://habitatspringfield.org/donate); <https://bit.ly/3lq36gO>; or text "BUILD413" to 44-321 and follow the prompts. GSHFH is dedicated to strengthening communities by empowering low-income families to change their lives and the lives of future generations through homeownership and home preservation opportunities. Since 1987, Greater Springfield Habitat has built or repaired 129 homes in Hampden County. This project represents the first home to utilize ICFs, which will further reduce long-term costs for the future homeowners. For more information, contact Brandy O'Brien, Marketing and Communications manager, at [obrien@habitatspringfield.org](mailto:obrien@habitatspringfield.org) or (413) 739-5503 x1005.



Turley photos by Kristin Rivers  
**Quinn Salerno shows off his photograph, "Abandoned" during the "Big Art Show of Small Works" at Hampden Senior Center on Feb. 10. Salerno had four pieces of photography featured in the show.**



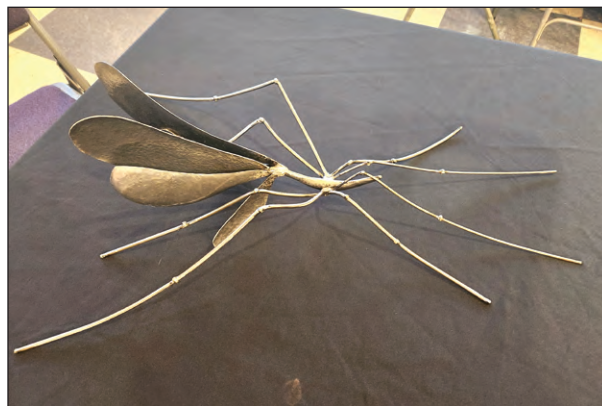
**Jewelry abounded at the "Big Art Show of Small Works" at Hampden Senior Center on Feb. 10 with selections from Nan Hurlburt of Tangled Vine Jewelry and Heather Bell of Calluna Jewelry. Displayed here are some of the offerings from Tangled Vine, a collection of wine-inspired jewelry.**



**A display of art pieces during the "Big Art Show of Small Works" at Hampden Senior Center. The show was hosted by the Scantic River Artisans.**



**A mixed media piece titled "Sticks Gathered" by Tony Cipriani was one of many featured art pieces at the "Big Art Show of Small Works" at Hampden Senior Center on Feb. 10.**



**A metal art piece called "Flutter" by Brian McQuillan was one of several unique metal art pieces on display at the "Big Art Show of Small Works" on Feb. 10.**



**An acrylic painting of "Power of Wind" by Danny Difilippo was one of many acrylic paintings attendees enjoyed during the "Big Art Show of Small Works" at Hampden Senior Center on Feb. 10.**



**A display of auctioned artwork donated by the Scantic River Artisans to support local students in the arts as part of a silent auction during the "Big Art Show of Small Works" at Hampden Senior Center on Feb. 10.**

**ART** from page 1

niche for it even with the new generations."

Maurita Eaton was working on a white charcoal-on-black paper drawing and had two pieces called "Contemplation" and "Winter" at the art show. She was also selling portable brush holders that clip onto any frame, rotate 360 degrees and help artists have a place to put their paintbrushes in as they work.

Eaton, a self-taught artist, started white charcoal drawing two months ago.

"I'm very drawn to the Depression, black and white photos of that era, migrant farmers, that type of thing," Eaton said. "So, it's just a couple months but I just can't stop, it's just so much fun and I can do it pretty quick."

Eaton enjoys the art show as it's opened a new venue for her, including meeting "a lot of friendly people and people of like minds that enjoy similar activities."

"You learn so much from everybody, you know, different techniques, especially being relatively new to art," Eaton said.

Nan Hurlburt, president of the Scantic River Artisans, who was selling wine-inspired jewelry through Tangled Vine Jewelry, explained the art show is called small works because any piece created needs to have one side, if sculptural artwork, or two sides, if a painting, measuring 10

inches or less.

"So, it can be eight by 10, 20 by 10, 20 by eight, eight by six. So as long as two sides, if it's a hanging piece of art, measure less than 10 inches then it qualifies," Hurlburt said.

Hurlburt was ecstatic about the turnout, saying "It gives me great pleasure" to see people coming out to enjoy the art.

"For the artist, I always encourage all of our artists to come and speak to the guests because they're always interested in the backstory of a painting, how it happened, how it came about," Hurlburt said.

Hurlburt added having a small works art show brings variety to the pieces artists submit.

"This one is not themed other than the small works, so I think that too gives the freedom of inspiration to the artists," Hurlburt said. "I think the artists enjoy it too."

Hurlburt looks forward to future shows this year and starting the Interactive Learning Through Art classes, with the Cosmic Bracelet class taking place on Feb. 22.

"We're going to do six of those in 2024 and we always try to be very diverse in those, so those will be coming up and on our website," Hurlburt said.

Hurlburt encourages the community to attend future shows and classes, sharing this simple message for attendees.

"Thank you, thank you, thank you!" Hurlburt said.



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# A COMMUNITY GALLERY



Recently, Members of Wilbraham-Hampden Rotary Club delivered blankets and toiletries to the Rescue Mission in Springfield. Here is a photo of Larry Ottoson, former district governor and husband of past President Ann Marie Ottoson, and Treasurer Diane Ryan, who purchased the items with money raised by the club. Photo courtesy of Don Flannery.

*Life in &*

Readers are encouraged to send in medium to high resolution photos for this page by e-mail to [dzbiwski@turley.com](mailto:dzbiwski@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-HAMPDEN

The Wilbraham Public has an award-winning artist, Alison Smyth Wilbraham, displaying creations in the library cases in foyer for the month of February. They are amazing to see. Alison is the daughter of Assistant Children's Librarian Rachel Smyth. Photo courtesy of Children's Librarian Heidi Pafumi.



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 A HOME is built with love and dreams*

# WILBRAHAM HAMPDEN

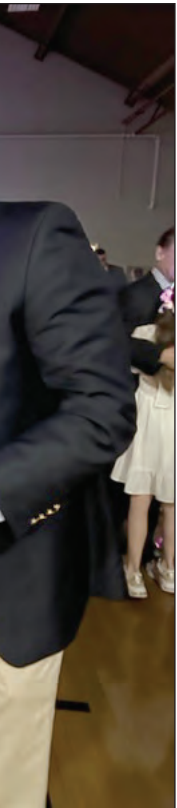
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David Bourcier, Wilbraham historian and president of the Wilbraham Athenium Society, presented "Historical Tidbits" to the Wilbraham Women's Club at its meeting on Feb. 8. David gave an enthusiastic, entertaining and very informative program of Wilbraham past and present, including pictures and stories of people and places in Wilbraham's past. It is a rich history that David has documented from many sources. Much of the information is located at The Old Meeting House on Main Street in Wilbraham. David can be contacted at [WilbrahamTidbits@gmail.com](mailto:WilbrahamTidbits@gmail.com) and at [www.bit.ty/Wilbrahamtidbits](http://www.bit.ty/Wilbrahamtidbits). Photo courtesy of Sue Agnew.



David Bourcier, program presenter, Marge Trimble, club member, and Charlie Bennett, guest, pictured at the "Historical Tidbits" presentation at the Wilbraham Women's Club on Feb. 8. Photo courtesy of Sue Agnew.



On Friday, Feb. 9, St. Cecilia's Parish hosted its 25th annual Father-Daughter Dance. Over 200 guests made their way out and danced the night away. There was good music, great friends, and wonderful memories were made. Photos courtesy of Rosemary Oldread, director of Religious Education.



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## 23rd Annual 94.7 WMAS Radiothon for Baystate Children's Hospital

To be held March 5-6 at the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame

SPRINGFIELD - The public is invited to stop in and join in all the fun at this year's 23rd annual 94.7 WMAS Radiothon for Baystate Children's Hospital at the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame on March 5-6.



Photo courtesy of Baystate Health.

**The 2023 Children's Miracle Network Champion for Baystate Children's Hospital, Ava O'Connor, shares her story with the Kellogg Krew during last year's Radiothon.**

Hundreds of inspiring stories come out of Baystate Children's Hospital every year, some of which will be told during this year's event.

Among the many stories shared will be that of Ryan Caney, who at three years old developed Guillain-Barre syndrome, a rare nervous system disorder that causes muscle weakness and sometimes paralysis. Quick diagnosis and treatment at the Sadowsky Family Pediatric Emergency Department at Baystate Medical Center helped Ryan make a full recovery. Listeners will also hear about Evie Dedrick, who was born prematurely and spent time in the Davis NICU at Baystate Medical Center and then relied on care for respi-

ratory challenges at Baystate Children's Hospital.

While attending this year's Radiothon at the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield, home to the 94.7 WMAS studios, the public can have their photo taken on the red carpet, make a donation and get a sneak peek of 94.7 WMAS's Kellogg Krew broadcasting live.

"We really look forward to this event each year and the difference it makes for these kids in our community," said 94.7 WMAS' Chris Kellogg. "Being able to share these inspirational stories is a reminder of how important it is to support our local children's hospital."

Radiothon hours are from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Donating is easy by phone or text as well as online. Listeners can call to donate via the Lia Auto Group Phone Bank at 413-794-1111 on March 5 and 6 from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. or visit WMASKIDS.com.

"Our generous donors help fuel the work being done each day at Baystate Children's Hospital, the only accredited, full-service children's hospital in western Massachusetts," said Scott Berg, vice president of philanthropy, Baystate Health, and executive director, Baystate Health Foundation. "There are many ways to support the next generation, but helping to keep them healthy is critical. These stories highlight the importance of donations remaining local to support children right here in our community."

Baystate Children's Hospital is one of 170 fundraising Children's Miracle Network Hospitals across the country. Children's Miracle Network Hospitals are unique in that 100% of all money raised locally goes directly to Baystate Children's Hospital in Springfield in support of children's health programs and services.

Major sponsors for the Radiothon include Hyundai Hope on Wheels, Lia Auto Group, Pioneer Valley Credit Union, Ever-source, M&T Bank, City Tire, and PeoplesBank.

To make an online donation today, visit WMASKIDS.com, or for more information, email Heather Clark, event manager, at Heather.Clark2@baystatehealth.org.

### HISTORICAL from page 1

that happened elsewhere in the world at the same time that historical occurrences took place here in our hometown. So, I am mentioning a few more "Connected Coincidences".

#### The Pesky Serpent

Most history buffs remember the story of young Timothy Merrick who was due to get married, but was bit by a rattlesnake and died while working in the fields near what is now Oakland Street in Wilbraham. It happened on August 7, 1761. The tragedy became the source of Wilbraham's own folk song "The Pesky Serpent". Last year the Wilbraham Atheneum Society presented a program by singer/songwriter Peter Lehndorff of Hampden all about Timothy Merrick and things related to the tragedy.

At the same time, in 1761, the collected works of Voltaire in 35 volumes was translated by Tobias Smolett in England. Smollett, baptized on March 19, 1721, was a Scottish novelist, surgeon, critic and playwright. He was best known for picaresque novels such as "The Adventures of Roderick Random", according to Wikipedia.

### 63 Years Ago

#### Minnechaug is 'Sold Out'

Here is a news clipping reported by my mom, Ethel M. Bennett, who was the Wilbraham correspondent for the Springfield daily newspaper The Morning Union from the 1940s through 1970s. From a February, 1961 edition: "After the start of the Gymnastics Championships here Saturday, which brought top recognition to Minnechaug Regional High School, a "sold out" sign had to be used for the first time for an event at the high school.

Some parking problems resulted because every available space, and at the close of the affair South Main Street became the busiest section in town in many years according to residents in the vicinity."

#### The Old Meeting House

Lots of history buffs and the general public enjoy taking in the monthly lectures at the aforementioned Open Houses of The Old Meeting House Museum at 450 Main Street. The museum, overseen by the Atheneum Society, will be presenting talks in 2024 in the Brooks Room of the Library starting in May. Watch the Times for details.

One fact that not might be so well-known is that when Charles Brewer gave the meeting house to the Methodist Society of Wilbraham on Dec. 20, 1794, he leased it to them for one peppercorn a year. The Town of Wilbraham, which now owns the building, continues to lease it to the Atheneum Society for one peppercorn.

"Connected Coincidences" going on in 1794 included the establishment of the U. S. Navy, the "Whiskey Insurrection", Thomas Paine wrote "The Age of Reason" and Robert Burns published "Auld Lang Syne".

#### The Marcus Lyon Murder

Of all the stories that came out of Wilbraham, the Marcus Lyon murder was the most sensational. Lyon was murdered while walking down Boston Road (then called the old Bay Road) near the Chippewa River on Butler Hill, near where the pool hall is today. Lyon's body was thrown in the river and was found on Nov. 10, 1805.

Historian Joan Paris, writing for the Atheneum Society said Lyons' body was taken to Sykes Tavern, a half-mile away, on the north corner of Maple and Chapel Streets for a post-mortem. He had been

pistol-whipped and shot in the chest. And, his horse was missing.

Irishmen Domenic Daley and James Halligan, sailors from Boston, were accused and some say, wrongly convicted for the murder and hanged.

A Northampton jury pronounced a guilty verdict after deliberating less than an hour and the judge delivered the court's decision, "...there to be hung by the neck until you are dead...May God Almighty Have Mercy on Your Soul." Daley and Halligan were hanged in Northampton June 5, 1806.

Paris said undocumented folklore holds that Marcus Lyon's real killer delivered a deathbed confession. It was said that he succumbed to his guilt in the eleventh hour, just prior to his death. Gov. Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts exonerated Daley and Halligan in 1984.

Prominent town citizen Miss E. O. Beebe in 1913 procured the "Marcus Lyon Ballad" to be included in the town history book. Here is an excerpt:

The stone slipped off, there did arise  
A bloody corpse before their eyes.  
Oh! What a scene: Oh what a sight,  
For to behold there in the night.

The "Connected Coincidences" in this case were when the body of Lyon was found in 1805, Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson was victorious over the Franco-Spanish fleets at Cape Trafalgar and died after hearing of his victory, while Napoleon reigned. Then a year later when Daley and Halligan were hanged, Europe saw the end of the Holy Roman Empire and Beethoven wrote his "Symphony No. 4 in B-flat major, Op. 60 and Violin Concerto".

#### Trial By Fire

Chauncey Peck, in his 1913 "History of Wilbraham", remembered when he was 10 years old, in 1854, local hysteria was rampant when a barn situated near the rear of the Village Store caught fire in the Center Village. "I heard it told that at a meeting held in a nearby house, an evening (after the barn fire) one of the speakers in a state of great excitement, was discussing the imminent conflagration of the world and he went on to tell how the trial of fire had already commenced, and said, "Before another week shall pass, the fires shall descend and destroy another building here in Wilbraham."

Sure enough, within the week, the barn next to the other one took fire and was entirely destroyed.

It was during the Crimean War and talk in town was that the conflict in Crimea would "spread over the entire earth - and that every nation in the world would become involved in it, and, THEN THE END WILL COME," he wrote.

When Peck remembered the Crimean War he was referring to an alliance between Britain, France and Turkey and the them declaring war on Russia: there was an unopposed landing of the Allies in Crimea, the siege of Sebastopol began and two victories took place at Balaklava and Inkerman.

#### To be Continued

Sources: "History of Wilbraham Bicentennial Edition 1763-1963" edited by Charles Merrick; Chauncey Peck who wrote "The History of Wilbraham, 1731, 1763-1913. Wikipedia. "Historical Address, Centennial Celebration, Town of Wilbraham" by Rufus P. Stebbins, D.D., 1864. "The Timetables of History" by Bernard Grun, a Touchstone Book published by Simon & Schuster.

Editor Emeritus Charlie Bennett is a member of the Historic Commission and a trustee of the Wilbraham Atheneum Society. Readers can contact him with comments or ideas for the column at cbennett4765@charter.net.

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## Chaug girls win three straight



Laila Smith dribbles toward the hoop.



Kelly Cronin makes a pass.



Lylah Jeannotte gets ready to go up with a shot.



Ava Manning makes her way down the court.



Ainsley Holden bounces a pass to a teammate.



Callin O'Brien contemplates her next move.

CHICOPEE – Last Monday night, Minnechaug girls basketball had a great start and went on to defeat Chicopee Comprehensive 58-28. In the win, Lylah Jeannotte had 14 points while Ava Manning turned in 10 points. The Falcons would also defeat Westfield for its third straight win. The 14-3 Falcons have one game remaining against Chicopee to be played on Feb. 15.

Turley photos by Sofia DiGrande

## T-Birds wins on 'Ice-O-Topes' Night

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Ice-O-Topes (22-19-3-2) rebounded from a 1-0 deficit to knock off the Hershey Bears (37-9-0-2) by a 6-3 score before a sold-out MassMutual Center crowd of 6,793 on Saturday night.

Neither team could find a firm offensive footing in the opening half of the first period, with both squads going 0-for-2 on their first two power play chances. 20 seconds after Hershey's second man-advantage expired, the visitors finally got the game's opening goal as veteran Garrett Roe crashed the top of the crease to jam

a rebound through Malcolm Subban at 14:02 to make it 1-0 for the Bears.

The Ice-O-Topes' second power play came and went, but like the Bears, continuous offensive pressure paid off less than 30 seconds after the advantage concluded. Adam Gaudette made a quick change of direction at the top of the slot area before funneling a shot toward the goal. Zach Bolduc made himself available for a deflection at the edge of the crease, and the rookie

Please see **T-BIRDS**, page 16

## Falcons get needed wins

WEST SPRINGFIELD – Last week, the Falcons hockey team put together three wins in seven days, and are now headed to the state tournament again. The Falcons first defeated Northbridge on the road on Feb. 3 5-2, then defeated Taconic and East Longmeadow both at home. The Falcons trailed Taconic early in the matchup, but came right back in the second period to get out in

front. Minnechaug then defeated East Longmeadow 4-2 last Saturday evening. The Falcons were set to face Westfield earlier this week in its final game of the regular season. The Falcons are 10-8, guaranteeing they finish the season with a .500 record. The Falcons will need that .500 record to make the state tournament as they are ranked below the top 32 in Division 2.

# Falcons suffer trio of losses



CJ Socha sends the three-point attempt away.



Nate Pace gets a dunk.



Nick Disa stays low as he heads down the court.



Max Baroni looks to transition into a pass.



Josh Disa sends a long-range shot away.



John Fitzgerald attempts to keep the ball inbound.

Turley photos by Sofia DiGrande

WILBRAHAM – Last week, it was a big of a struggle for the Minnechaug Regional High School boys basketball team, which had already qualified for tournament two weeks ago. The Falcons played three games in four days, suffered defeats against East Longmeadow, Pittsfield, and last Friday night at Pope Francis 66-47. In the defeat, Miles Fergus led the Falcons with 14 points and Nate Pace had 10 points.

## Bonsignore opens season with second-place finish

NEW SMYRNA, FL – Justin Bonsignore drove the No. 51 Phoenix Communications modified to a second-place finish in Saturday's NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour opener at New Smyrna Speedway.

Bonsignore qualified fourth and ran inside the top-five for the duration of the race. After a pit stop in the final 20 laps, Bonsignore raced from fifth up to second, trying to chase down Ron Silk in the final laps. Although he closed in, he had to settle for second.

The run opened the 2024 season for Bonsignore, who will chase his fourth NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour title in the Ken Massa Motorsports machine this season.

"We were just a little bit too

snug on both sets of change tires," Bonsignore said. "All in all, it was a really good night to start the year. We have to thank Phoenix Communications for everything they do for our team and Ryan Stone and the pit crew for a great job with a brand new car they built over the winter. It takes a lot to come down here to Florida to open the season. We will try and build off this and get better with this new car."

Justin Bonsignore will return to the track driving the No. 30 for Rette Jones Racing in the ARCA Menards Series season opener at Daytona International Speedway on Saturday, February 17. The NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour is back on track at Richmond Raceway on Friday, March 29.

## T-BIRDS from page 15

executed to perfection, squeezing it past Clay Stevenson to tie the score at 17:48.

With the game tied at 1 after 20 minutes, the 'Topes parlayed Bolduc's goal into a firestorm of offense in the middle frame. It began just 2:55 into the second, as Mathias Laferriere dropped a pass in the left circle for Kean Washkurak, who curled the puck to a better shooting lane and snapped a wrister through Stevenson's five-hole to make it a 2-1 game.

1:35 later, Gaudette was in the middle of the action once again. After Hunter Skinner whipped a pass off Gaudette's foot deep in the left-wing corner, Matthew Peca pushed a second-chance shot wide of the goal. With Stevenson still trying to recover back in front of the net, Gaudette used the opportunity to bank it off Stevenson's pants and into the twine to extend the lead to 3-1. With the tally, Gaudette vaulted himself back to the top of the AHL goal-scoring race with his 25th of the season.

After a quiet stretch of play yielded nothing on the scoreboard, Hugh McGing changed things with a determined rush deep in the Hershey zone. McGing's pressure caused a mishandle between Stevenson and Dylan McIlrath, and McGing was there to jab a backhand

through Stevenson, making it a 4-1 game at 15:24. The pesky winger now has seven points over his last seven games.

Former T-Bird Jake Massie gave Hershey a much-needed reply with a one-time shorthanded goal at 17:42, set up by Jimmy Huntington, and the defending champs were back within two heading into the third.

Chances heavily favored the Bears in the third to the tune of an 18-5 shot discrepancy, but Subban and the defense bent without breaking, and Will Bitten added some extra insurance, beating Stevenson on a breakaway backhand through the wickets at 10:54 to make it 5-2.

The Bears' power play would not allow the game to end quietly, as Alex Limoges redirected a Mike Vecchione shot through Subban at 13:30 to cut the lead to 5-3. However, in the end, the visitors ran out of time, and Dylan Coghlan snapped a 15-game goal drought by drilling an empty net with 48.6 seconds to play to make it four consecutive wins on Ice-O-Topes Night for Springfield.

Springfield next takes its game down to Charlotte for a two-game set against the Checkers inside Bojangles' Coliseum next Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 17-18. Puck drop for both games is set for 4 p.m. in North Carolina.



# Dr. Ilyasah Shabazz, daughter of Malcolm X, to speak at STCC

SPRINGFIELD – Dr. Ilyasah Shabazz, the daughter of the late activists Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz, will speak at Springfield Technical Community College on Feb. 29 at Noon as part of the college’s celebration of Black History Month.

Shabazz, an accomplished educator, author and activist, will share her insights and experiences rooted in the rich legacy of African American history and culture.

Shabazz will speak in the auditorium of Sci-belli Hall (Building 2) at STCC. The event is free and open to the public. Attendees are encouraged to pre-register. To register for the event, please visit [stcc.io/shabazz](http://stcc.io/shabazz).

Shabazz is chairperson of the

Malcolm X & Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial and Educational Center Board of Trustees. In her work to preserve the legacy of her parents, she has dedicated herself to institution-building and inter-generational leadership development with the tenets of diversity, equity and inclusion.



Dr. Ilyasah Shabazz

Her books include a memoir, “Growing Up X,” and a children’s book, “Malcolm Little: The Boy Who Grew Up to Become Malcolm X.”

Shabazz has furthered her community impact with the City University of New York’s Office of Academic Affairs, where she created a curriculum to encourage higher education for underserved, inner-city and marginalized high school dropouts.

She has worked with the Office of the Mayor in Mount Vernon, as director of Public Affairs & Special Events. She founded and produced a young adult development program to provide historical context on social justice - encouraging personal empowerment and community service as a way of life.

As president and founder of Ilyasah Shabazz Enterprises, she produces a variety of forums dedicated to power, possibility and sovereignty.

“We are thrilled to welcome Dr. Shabazz to STCC,” said Dr. Kiyota Garcia, assistant vice president of Student Affairs and Interim Chief Equity Officer at STCC. “We want our students, staff and faculty and the community to prepare to be enlightened and empowered by Dr. Shabazz. She will illuminate the significance of Black history and its enduring impact on society.”

## CAMPUS NOTES

### Wilbraham resident earns academic honors from Florida Tech

MELBOURNE, Fla. – Andrew Lynch, of Wilbraham, has been named to the Fall 2023 Dean’s List at Florida Institute of Technology. To be included on the Dean’s List, a student must complete 12 or more graded credits in a semester with a semester grade point average of at least 3.4.

### Person earns spot on Emmanuel College’s Dean’s List

BOSTON – Emmanuel College in Boston has named Timothy Person, of Wilbraham, to the Dean’s List for the Fall 2023 semester. To earn a spot on the Dean’s List, Emmanuel students must achieve a grade point average of 3.5 or higher for a 16-credit semester.

### Rivera, of Hampden, named to Goodwin University’s President’s List

EAST HARTFORD, Conn. – Evett Rivera, of Hampden, earned a place on Goodwin University’s President’s List for the Fall 2023 Session. The Fall 2023 President’s List includes 367 students, all of whom scored a perfect 4.0 GPA.

### Evans, of Wilbraham, named to the UHart Dean’s List

WEST HARTFORD, Conn. – The University of Hartford is pleased to announce Jacob Evans, of Wilbraham, has been named to the Dean’s List for Fall 2023.

## State awards HCC \$1.46 million to build nursing workforce training program

HOLYOKE - Holyoke Community College and its partners have been awarded a state grant worth nearly \$1.46 million to create a CNA (certified nursing assistant) to LPN (licensed practice nurse) training program to help area hospitals meet their workforce needs.

Earlier this month, the Healey-Driscoll Administration announced a total of \$3.9 million in Senator Kenneth J. Donnelly Workforce Success grants for six initiatives representing employers and collaborative organizations across the Commonwealth.

The lion’s share of that money - \$1,457,143 - will go to an HCC-led training program to assist 86 unemployed or underemployed individuals transition from jobs as nursing aides to positions as licensed practical nurses.

The grants, funded through the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund distributed by the Commonwealth Corporation, aim to increase sustainable wage career pathways for Massachusetts residents facing employment barriers and improve the competitiveness of Massachusetts businesses by enhancing worker skills and productivity.

HCC’s partners in the grant include Baystate Medical Center, Baystate Wing Hospital, MassHire Hampden County, Springfield Works, and the National Fund for Workforce Solutions.

“We are delighted about the Commonwealth Corporation’s award to HCC and our many partners in this unique and innovative career pathway in nursing,” said HCC President George Timmons. “Healthcare is one of the largest industry sectors in our region, and it continues to grow. We hope that this pathway for licensed practical nurses will help create more family sustainable incomes for nursing assistants looking to advance in this exciting and rewarding career.”

The multi-stage program will first train individuals as nursing aides, then help them obtain jobs at area hospitals while they continue their training in HCC’s LPN program, all the while providing them with wrap-around support services. HCC already has an existing framework for CNA training through its Jump Start program, which is designed for individuals receiving public assistance.

“Every individual in Massachu-



Photo courtesy of HCC

setts should have access to quality job training, and our employers should have access to the skilled talent they need to do business,” said Governor Maura Healey. “Our workforce is our greatest competitive strength. The latest round of Workforce Success Grants is another example of our administration’s commitment to expanding opportunities and expanding our lead.”

The grants were announced Dec. 18 by Labor and Workforce Development Secretary Lauren Jones during a graduation event at the Boston-area African Bridge Network, which received \$498,655.

To help leverage the state grant for the HCC-led project, the National Fund for Workforce Solutions invested \$200,000 to incorporate the voices and lived experiences of participants in the design of the program to advance equitable employment outcomes.

“This is an amazing achievement,” said Anne Kandilis, director of Springfield WORKS/Working Cities Challenge. “Sometimes we focus on the grant itself, but the 18 months of hard collaborative work that goes into proposing something this big is important to lift up too.”

According to the Healey-Driscoll Administration, the grants are part of a strategic investment in the Massachusetts workforce to develop programs that support individuals facing barriers to employment, such as lack of formal schooling, language literacy, or past involvement with the criminal justice system.

“Investing in our workforce and our businesses is investing in the

Massachusetts economy and puts the state in a position to succeed,” said Lieutenant Governor Driscoll. “These grants help organizations attract workers who may be unemployed, underemployed, or experiencing barriers to employment and provide the necessary skills they need to thrive. These grants will help us achieve our workforce development goals, expand our skilled talent pool, and strengthen our competitiveness.”

The six grant-funded initiatives aim to train and hire 384 individuals over three years.

The Springfield-based Entrepreneurial & Business Collaborative also received a grant worth \$630,998 to prepare 90 individuals for jobs in the hospitality industry. The group is partnering with the Northampton Brewery, Granny’s Baking Table, River Valley Market, Tandem Bagel Company, and Puerto Rico Bakery II.

Other grant recipients include the Training and Upgrading Fund in Quincy (\$717,220), Cambridge College, Inc., in Boston (\$436,062), and Cape Cod Regional Technical High School District in Harwich (\$225,425).

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## PUBLIC NOTICES

## SENIORS

### TOWN OF HAMPDEN PUBLIC HEARING: LIQUOR LICENSE

Notice is hereby given that the Hampden Board of Selectmen will hold a hearing under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 138, Section 12 on **Monday, February 26, 2024 at 6:00 pm** at the Town House, 625 Main Street, Hampden, MA to hear public comment on an application for a new all-alcohol liquor license for restaurant previously doing business as Min Chao Gourmet, 5 Allen Street, Hampden. Premises described as consisting of one floor, about 1632 sq ft, one front entrance, and one rear exit with the capacity of about 60 people. Persons wishing to comment on the referenced application will be heard.

Hampden Board of Selectmen  
Local Licensing Authority  
02/08, 02/15/2024

### Town of Hampden Notice of Public Hearing

The Hampden Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, February 27, 2024 at 6 PM** in the Town House, 625 Main Street, Hampden, MA, for those interested in the petition of owners Mark Hebert and Gretchen Warner for a Special Permit or Variance under Section 7.3, Table 7.2 of the Hampden Zoning Bylaw for the rear yard requirement for the construction of an accessory building at their residence located at 34 Echo Valley Drive. 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  
02/08, 02/15/2024

### Town of Hampden Notice of Public Hearing

The Hampden Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 6:30**

PM in the Town House, 625 Main Street, Hampden, MA on the application of Glendale Road Development, LLC for a Special Permit under Section 7.16\*, Solar Energy Systems, of the Hampden Zoning Bylaw to allow the construction of a 4.92 MW-ac Ground Mounted Solar Facility coupled with Energy Storage and associated access driveways, site grading and utilities located at 530 Glendale Road. The facility will be an Agricultural Ground Mounted System where the interior array areas will be maintained as pasture fields grazing sheep, cattle and chickens managed by Ledge Valley Farm who is already established at the site. Information related to this application is on file in the Town Clerk's Office and is available for review by the public during normal business hours.

\*Correction of bylaw section described in 02/08/24 notice.

For the Board,  
Madison Pixley, Chair  
Hampden Planning Board  
02/08, 02/15, 02/22/2024

Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Hampden Probate and Family Court  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
(413)748-7758  
Docket No. HD24P0249EA

Estate of:  
Joanne E Radkowski  
Date of Death: 10/09/2023  
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 **Cheryl Brown of Belchertown, MA and Lisa Radkowski-Lavelle of Wayland, 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: **Cheryl Brown of Belchertown, MA and Lisa Radkowski-Lavelle of Wayland, 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 03/05/2024.**

**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: February 06, 2024  
Rosemary A. Saccomani  
Register of Probate  
02/15/2024

## Hampden Senior Center Building Committee provides update

HAMPDEN – In October of 2022, the Hampden Board of Selectmen established the Senior Center Building Committee. The mission of the committee was to review the future program and spatial needs of the Hampden Senior Center for the coming 50 years. The senior center building has not undergone any physical changes since being constructed in 2000. Since its inception, the Building Committee has held twice monthly meetings in order to review current programs, input from the staff, the physical condition of the structure, as well as reports from previous consultants. The committee has also received feedback from the residents of Hampden through a survey conducted in April of 2023.

The Building Committee studied demographics in Hampden and surrounding communities in order to provide additional support for future needs. Utilizing the information gained during the past 16 months, the committee prepared a list of possible building renovations and a potential addition to accommodate existing and future programs.

In the summer of 2023, the Building Committee requested proposals from qualified firms specializing in senior needs and

senior center spatial requirements. Three firms submitted proposals. After review of the proposals and subsequent interviews, the committee recommended EDM Studio, inc. of Unionville, Conn. Following Hampden's Fall Town Meeting approval of funding, a contract with EDM was awarded by the Selectmen.

This winter, the committee has been working with EDM and its sub consultant Life Span Design Studio to identify critical needs and prepare preliminary building layouts in order to address those needs. The committee has selected a possible senior center expansion plan but is awaiting preliminary construction cost numbers prior to finalizing a plan.

The Hampden Senior Center Building Committee, which meets on the second and fourth Monday of the month, is planning on having a proposal for building renovation and expansion ready for Spring Town Meeting. Town of Hampden residents are welcome to attend the meetings and are encouraged to obtain additional information from the committee on the Town of Hampden website: <https://www.hampdenma.gov/senior-center-building-committee>.

## Highlights for February and beyond at the Hampden Senior Center

HAMPDEN – The following programs will occur at or through the Hampden Senior Center on Allen Street.

### Irish Dance with Phil

Six-week session on Fridays at 1 p.m.  
Began Friday, Feb. 2

Get your dancing shoes on and get ready for some Saint Paddy's Day fun!

Learn Irish dance moves with Phil. Right from Ireland herself, you could not ask for a better teacher. Her Irish brogue comes at no extra cost to you.

The cost is \$30 for the session when paid in full, or \$6 per class.

Please call 566-5588 to sign up.

### You've Got Mail

Joe Green will teach a three-part class on the use of email.

Wednesdays from 9-9:45 a.m. starting March 6, 13 and 20.

Part 1: Getting started with Email - Setting up an account

Part 2: Using Email (sending and receiving emails)

Part 3: Tips & Tricks

Bring your own personal device; laptop, tablet, or mobile phone fully charged.

Sessions are free. Please call 566-5588 to sign up. Space is limited.

### Winter Weather Advisory

Remember to watch channels 22 and 40 for information about cancellations.

Watch for Hampden Senior Center and Greater Springfield Senior Services for information.

### Sand for Seniors

Now through April 2024 the Hampden Fire Department and Hampden Senior Center will work together to manage the Sand for Seniors program. This program is available for anyone over the age of 60 living in Hampden. The Fire Department will deliver a FREE five-gallon bucket of sand to your home for you to use on your steps and walkways.

If you wish to have a bucket of sand delivered, please call the Senior Center at 566-5588 and leave a message with your name, address, phone #, and the location of the property where you would like the bucket delivered. If we need additional information we will call you back, otherwise, you're all set!

Thanks to the Hampden Fire Department for continuing this great program!

### Hampden Resident Emergency Fuel Fund

The Fuel Fund is available to any Hampden resident who is in a heating crisis. A resident must have received a shut-off notice from the electric company, have less than a quarter of a tank of oil, or be in another emergency heating situation.

Please call Wendy at 566-5588 for more information or to schedule an appointment.

All information provided is confidential.

The Hampden Emergency Fuel Fund is made available through private donations throughout the year. We are so grateful for the support of this valuable program.

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

Do you know an older adult in Hampden who is homebound and could use some mid-winter cheer?

Our warming hearts deliveries are a small way for us to let people know we are thinking of them and that we are here should they need anything. Deliveries will include soups, treats, games, and more and will take place during the month of February.

Interested in delivering? Call Wendy at 566-5588.

### HELP US STOCK OUR SHELVES with Liquid Dish Soap!

Thank you to those who donated liquid tissues last month. Every month we will target a different item to fill our shelves to provide non-food items to SNAP recipients.

### D & R Winter Farm Share

PICK-UP is on Wednesday, Feb. 21 at 9:30 a.m.

D & R Farm is offering fresh produce twice a month FREE with SNAP/HIP if you qualify.

If you do not qualify for SNAP/HIP, you may purchase a share for \$40 per month.

New applications are required. If interested, please contact Wendy to get your application in! Please let us know if you need your shares delivered. Shares are limited.

Please call Wendy at 566-5588, or email outreach@hampdenma.gov to sign up.

# Classifieds

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### HELP WANTED

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# MONEY MATTERS

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In the ever-evolving world of finance, PV Financial Group looks to stand out for its unwavering dedication to building lasting relationships with its clients. At the core of the firm's philosophy is the belief that true financial success is rooted in trust, communication, and a personalized

approach.

#### Trust Beyond Transactions

PV Financial Group takes a refreshing departure from the transactional norms of the financial industry. Instead of focusing solely on transactions, the firm's finan-

cial advisors prioritize cultivating strong relationships with their clients. This commitment ensures that every interaction is characterized by a delicate balance of care, skill, diligence, and objectivity.

#### Communication as the Cornerstone

The firm firmly believes that effective communication is the bedrock of a thriving client-advisor relationship. PV Financial Group's comprehensive process involves open and transparent communication to understand each client's unique financial situation, goals, and preferences. This commitment to communication extends through every step of developing and managing clients' financial lives.

#### A Team of Professionals

PV Financial Group boasts a team of trained and courteous financial professionals who collaborate seamlessly to provide clients with the highest level of personalized service. Through continuous training, the team stays well-informed and equipped to navigate the complexities of the financial landscape. The courteous approach reflects the firm's commitment to treating clients with respect and professionalism.

#### Comprehensive and Meticulous Approach

The firm's comprehensive process involves a meticulous examination of each

client's financial needs and aspirations. Financial advisors exercise balance, care, and skill in crafting personalized financial plans, considering factors such as risk tolerance, financial goals, and market conditions. Diligence is a hallmark of PV Financial Group's approach, ensuring thorough research, analysis, and ongoing monitoring of clients' portfolios.

#### Objectivity in Action

Objectivity is a guiding principle in decision-making at PV Financial Group. Financial advisors maintain a clear and objective perspective, always acting in the best interests of the clients. This commitment ensures that recommendations align with each client's unique circumstances and financial objectives, fostering a relationship built on trust and integrity.

PV Financial Group, through its client-centric approach, aims to be a reliable partner on the journey toward financial success for every client. With a focus on trust, effective communication, and a team of dedicated professionals, the firm is making waves in the financial landscape by prioritizing relationships over transactions. As we navigate the intricate world of finance, PV Financial Group stands out as a beacon of personalized and trustworthy financial guidance, dedicated to building a secure and prosperous future for its clients.

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# THE ROAD TO **Financial Wellness**

## The Benefits of Using a Financial Planner

In today's complex financial world, many investors seek out financial planners to help them navigate the intricacies of personal finance. The benefits of having expert financial help are manifold, including investment advice, retirement planning, tax strategies and estate planning.

Most financial planners collaborate with their clients to choose an asset allocation that melds the client's risk tolerance with their goals. After investments are chosen, often the advisor plays the role of cheerleader. Keeping clients from making rash decisions and veering off course from their financial plan may be one of the most important roles an advisor plays. All advisors have seen clients panic and try to make changes to portfolios in response to political or economic events that soon pass.

Retirement planning may be one of the most important acts that an advisor can perform. Everyone would love a stress-free retirement. A good planner can help calculate how much you will need to save to retire. He or she will also create a

strategy for claiming social security and any pensions in order to meet retirement spending needs.

An often-overlooked benefit of having a good financial expert is tax planning. Should you invest in a traditional 401k or a Roth? When should you begin withdrawing from your taxable accounts? Do you have to pay taxes on social security? When do you need to take Required Minimum Distributions and are you taking the correct amount?

In addition to all the above, proper estate planning is imperative to make sure that your assets end up where you would like them to, with the least amount of hassle. Do you need trust or is your will sufficient? Is your house protected from Medicaid in the future? Hiring a good financial expert can greatly enhance your financial life.

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- Gathering all of the personal property and arranging for support of the family.
- Obtaining appraisals of required property for tax purposes.
- Reviewing real estate records to assure timely payment of taxes and collection of rents.
- Evaluating contracts and leases to comply with all requirements, including giving necessary notices.
- Investigating and handling all claims against the estate.
- Collecting all life insurance, rents, and other amounts due to the estate.
- Preparing and filing estate and inheritance federal and state tax returns.
- Paying related estate and inheritance taxes.
- Preparing a final accounting of the estate.
- Distributing the estate to the beneficiaries as directed by the Will.



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