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FEBRUARY 29, 2024

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Outreach is key for Veterans Services Dept.

PACT Act opened up more benefits than ever before

By Dalton Zbierski
Editor
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WILBRAHAM – When the PACT Act passed in 2022, it represented monumental progress in improving healthcare access and funding for U.S. veterans who were exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange and other toxic substances during military service.

The \$797 billion Act of Congress has already made an incredible difference for veterans across the country. Today, Wilbraham Director of Veteran Services Jered Sasen is hard at work informing local veterans and their families about the benefits of the PACT Act that are available to them.

“The PACT Act was easily one of the

greatest bills for toxic exposure for veterans that has passed in my lifetime,” Sasen said, noting that it opened the door for veterans who experienced one of 27 different disability conditions to now receive benefits.

Sasen, who also serves on the Executive Board of the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers, said that passing of the PACT Act increased his department’s workload tenfold, as it required meeting with more veterans and doing more paperwork than ever before. While he wouldn’t mind funding for more assistance processing claims, Sasen, a U.S. Navy veteran, happily dedicates his time to helping his fellow veterans.

“There are a lot of great things going on and a lot of great benefits that we have,” Sasen said. “I think the last time I calculated, just from PACT Act claims alone, we went up 127%. There’s millions of veterans that now qualify for this.”

Please see **VETERANS**, page 14



Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

Wilbraham Director of Veteran Services Jered Sasen is working hard to inform veterans of the many benefits that may be available to them.

Stuffed animals run amok at Sleepover



A group shot of the Teen Advisory Board volunteers at the Stuffed Animal Sleepover at the Wilbraham Public Library. From the left, front row, John Dickson, Joey Dickson, Owen Wright, Caroline Euber, Greta Rust and Charlotte Oh and from the left, back row, Allison Demetri, Liz Dickson, Liam Sutherland, Ashley Griguoli, Maddy Hoskinson, Katelyn Sheehan and Abigail Patterson.

By Kristin Rivers
Staff Writer
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WILBRAHAM - Families stopped by the library from 3 – 4:15 p.m. on Feb. 22 and 10 – 11 a.m. on Feb. 23 to participate in the Stuffed Animal Sleepover.

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

During the two-day event, children dropped off their stuffed animals in the Brooks Room to stay overnight, filling out a permission and information form, listening to a bedtime story read by a teen volunteer and tucking in their stuffed animals under a blanket upon their departure.

The next day, families participated in a craft and saw a slideshow showcasing what happened during the sleepover.

Some of the shenanigans the stuffed animals got involved in included playing on the computers in the Teen Loft, taking over the main checkout area, drinking out of the water fountain, gathering on the stairs, working on a puzzle and reading

books.

Teen volunteers John Dickson, Ashley Griguoli and Allison Demetri were excited to welcome the children as they dropped off their stuffed animals.

“It’s just so much fun to be here because you’re doing all this stuff for the kids and you know they’re going to love it,” Griguoli said.

“It’s really fun to see how their face lights up when you make them happy and excited. It’s really cool,” Dickson said.

“It’s really fun to be reading the books to them and doing crafts with them because you don’t get to see a lot of kids in the community, so coming together and doing this big thing with them is a fun part of the library,” Demetri said.

Griguoli stressed the importance of taking part in teen events at the library while supporting the community.

“It’s community participation. You get to be a part of a community. It’s amazing. People don’t realize how amazing a

Please see **SLEEPOVER**, page 9

Scantic River Artisans lead Cosmic Bracelet Workshop

Participants create Zodiac sign-themed bracelets

By Kristin Rivers
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HAMPDEN - The lines were out the door on Feb. 22, as attendees arrived for the Cosmic Bracelet Workshop hosted by The Scantic River Artisans.

The workshop is part of several Interactive Learning Through Arts classes the arts association

holds throughout the year.

During the workshop, which took place in the Community Room at the senior center, attendees created their own personalized gemstone bracelets with beads matching the gemstones representing a specific zodiac sign. For example, if an attendee’s birthday was June 23, their zodiac sign would be Cancer and have beads representing the rose quartz, selenite and moonstone gemstones.

Each kit included three pieces of string to practice making a square knot, beads, a felt mat,

elastic string and a brochure explaining each attendee’s zodiac sign and corresponding gemstones.

Instructors from Tangled Vine Jewelry would also walk around to help attendees with their bracelet-making.

Longtime friends Joanne Middleton and Pat Murphy were two of the many attendees at the workshop, creating bracelets corresponding to the Pisces and Libra signs, respectively.

Middleton and Murphy enjoyed the workshop and the op-

Please see **BRACELET**, page 12



Turley photos by Kristin Rivers

Longtime friends Joanne Middleton and Pat Murphy smile with their cosmic bracelets in progress during the Cosmic Bracelet Class offered by the Scantic River Artisans on Feb. 22.

Dalton Zbierski says farewell and thank you for the memories

To the communities of
Hampden and Wilbraham,

After serving as editor of the Wilbraham-Hampden Times for the past three years, this will sadly be my last edition. I've made the difficult decision to move onto a television station in Connecticut, where I will be able to fulfill a lifelong dream of delivering news in my home state as a producer.

What a ride these past three years have been; I wouldn't trade them in for anything. Covering news in Hampden and Wilbraham has always been a privilege and a positive experience. I cherish every interaction I've been fortunate enough to have with the residents of both tremendous and equally unique communities.

Taking my place will be Kristin Rivers, who has served as a staff writer for the past year, covering Hampden and Wilbraham. Kristin is incredibly passionate and will bring renewed energy to the position. I assure our readers, you are in excellent hands.

Thank you to the countless people who have made this job special. I've enjoyed every minute of it. From Minnechaug to Mountain View Restaurant and everywhere and everyone in between, Hampden and Wilbraham will forever have a place in my heart.

It has been quite the journey, and I am forever indebted to our great readers. Be well my friends and keep picking up The Times, I promise you won't be disappointed.

Words can't describe how thankful I am for the way you embraced me. Take care!

— Dalton Zbierski



Hampden Selectmen grant restaurant liquor license

By Dalton Zbierski

Editor

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HAMPDEN – The Board of Selectmen voted unanimously on Monday evening to grant a liquor license to The Black Sheep, a proposed restaurant that will be moving into 5 Allen St.

Co-owners Robert Gossman and Michael White must next seek approval from the commonwealth's Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission. The restaurant will fill the space in the minimall last used by Min Chao Gourmet.

Attorney Daniel Kelly, ESQ represented Gossman and White during the Feb. 26 hearing. He familiarized the Selectmen with the prospective owners.

"Mr. Gossman will be the proposed majority owner and also the proposed manager. He has owned other bars in other jurisdictions. He's also been the manager of other bars in other jurisdictions and has had a clean record both locally and with the ABCC," Kelly said.

White is a retired corrections officer from the state of Connecticut, Kelly said, noting that he's looking for a more productive way to fill his time.

The Black Sheep restaurant is coming to Allen Street

"Now that he's retired, he's looking to do something else and not just be retired all day. He's been lifelong friends with Mr. Gossman, and this is what he's going to do now with his retirement," Kelly said.

Both Gossman and White are TIPS certified, TIPS standing for Training for Intervention ProcedureS. To be certified, one must complete the TIPS training course, which is the country's premier responsible alcohol training program designed to prevent underage drinking, drunk driving and overconsumption.

The Black Sheep will be a small restaurant, covering approximately 2,500 square feet.

"Then, when you count the kitchen and bathrooms, the occupancy we think would be pretty low," Kelly said. "(The final layout is) based on a number of different factors, but it will be fairly tight in there to begin with, which is what they want. They don't want a big spot."

Kelly said there will be a casual vibe with a focus on food and infusion-type drinks to give the restaurant a "different type of feel."

Kelly also said cocktails and various types of "smoke drinks" will be available.

The Selectmen were unfamiliar with the term smoke drinks, and one responded, "I'm a shot and a beer guy," to which Kelly said, "They'll have those too."

Gossman later noted the smoke drinks are "just for flavor and more or less for show."

The restaurant will be open Wednesday through Sunday. Wednesday through Saturday, it will be open from 4 p.m. to midnight, and on Sunday, it will be open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., as the owners hold a weekly brunch.

White is expected to be present at the business most days, but Kelly promised that Gossman will be there during every hour of operation.

"Every minute they're open, Mr.

Gossman will be there. Mr. White will be in and out. You'll probably see him most of the time, but Mr. Gossman, every minute they're open, you'll see him there," Kelly said.

Gossman and White did not apply for an entertainment license. Kelly said they would rather receive the liquor license first before later applying for an entertainment license, as entertainment is not a big part of the business model.

"The only entertainment they'll have there will be some background music you could listen to while you were eating or maybe perhaps a single person if it was St. Patrick's Day or something like that; something light. It's kind of a small place. Anything loud would not be receptive to people eating dinner," Kelly said.

After concerns were raised about parking, Gossman discussed the plan, noting that employees will park behind the mini-mall. He said the restaurant met the Planning Board's requirement for parking on Jan. 10 and will use the additional space behind the building.

"Since the new owners of the plaza have added all that parking in the back, which is actually pretty close to us, (customers can use it). It's on the side, in the back."

Selectman John Flynn voiced his reservations, noting that the previous establishment in the space was a primarily a takeout business and the new business will have a sit-down model.

"I will say I have a concern about the parking. I know you're saying you're doing the math and there are the extra spaces out back, but I don't think the convenience works out with transitioning across the front of the mini-mall and up behind the Dunkin' Donuts parking in back," Flynn said.

Nonetheless, each of the Selectmen voted in favor of granting the liquor license. The prospective timetable for the restaurant's opening was not announced.



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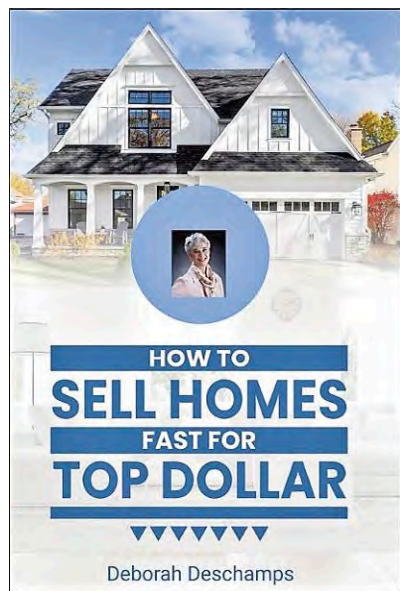
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HOMEOWNER TIP:

Clogged Shower Head?!

If your shower head isn't spraying as well as it should, partly fill a plastic baggie with white vinegar and secure it around the shower head with a rubber band. Let it soak for a while, and any residue clogging it should rinse away.



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Rep. Puppolo appointed to the FCC's Intergovernmental Advisory Committee

BOSTON – State Rep. Angelo J. Puppolo, Jr. (D-Springfield) is pleased to announce that he was recently appointed to the Intergovernmental Advisory Committee of the Federal Communications Commission. Puppolo currently chairs the House of Representatives Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs.

"I am honored to be appointed to serve on the IAC. This will provide me with the opportunity to have Massachusetts included in the discussion and have our concerns brought to the table as a valuable resource to the FCC as they make decisions on a variety of telecommunications issues and their impact on state, county, local and Tribal governments," Puppolo said.

The FCC is committed to serving state, county, local and Tribal interests by actively soliciting their input in our regulatory processes, and vigilantly assessing the impact our decisions might have on their respective governments. The IAC serves as a valuable source of information and guidance to the Commission on a broad range of telecommunications issues of concern to state, county, local and Tribal governments.



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Friends of Wilbraham Seniors present \$145,820 check to Wilb.



(Charles F. Bennett photo)

Presenting a check for \$145,820.13 to the Wilbraham Select Board at their Feb. 26 meeting in the Community Room at the Police Station are (left to right) Friends of Wilbraham Seniors Capital Campaign Chairman Matt Villamaino, Treasurer Lee Tyrrell, Select Board members Theresa Goodrich, Sue Bunnell and Michael Squindo. The funds raised will be used to provide furnishings for the new Senior Center.

Opening date for new senior center is March 18

By Kristin Rivers
Staff Writer
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WILBRAHAM - The Friends of Wilbraham Seniors presented a check for \$145,820 to the town during the Select Board's Feb. 26 meeting.

Friends President Matt Villamaino, joined by Treasurer Lee Tyrrell, explained how the Friends set a fundraising goal of \$750,000 for the new senior center and when they last met with the board in November, the goal was exceeded.

As of now, \$863,000 has been raised. "We're very, very happy with the response from the community and the businesses and so forth. Without their support, we would not have a new senior center," Villamaino said.

Villamaino added fundraising "doesn't stop there."

"There will always be expenses that weren't anticipated, and I already got a couple of them last week, so that's why we're continuing to fundraise," Villamaino said.

Villamaino then presented the board with a check for \$145,820, again crediting the support of the community and businesses.

"We have over 250 donors step up and more coming, so we'll be plugging away and filling in all the needs that (COA Director Paula Dubord) needs and the senior center needs," Villamaino said.

Board Chair Theresa Goodrich thanked the Friends group for all its work.

"You give credit to the businesses and all the donors, but I give a lot of credit to you folks because you've done so much work," Goodrich said. "This is happening because of you guys as well."

Next, Dubord, director of elder affairs, announced an opening date for the new senior center and provided updates on the building's progress.

Dubord explained the progress is "going really well."

"As of this afternoon at 4 p.m., we finally passed our last hurdle in getting the elevator inspected by the state and we just have some paperwork to do tomorrow and we'll be getting our temporary occupancy permit by the end of the week," Dubord said.

Dubord added that furniture has begun to arrive.

"The billiards pool tables arrive tomorrow, the fitness equipment is coming next week; the outdoor patio furniture is scheduled to arrive sometime in March," Dubord said.

Dubord said the plan is to open on Monday, March 18, with everyone taking a month to "kind of break in the building."

"Then on Saturday, April 20, we're going to be having a grand opening ribbon-cutting ceremony followed by a little open house," Dubord said. "And then the following day on Sunday, we'll also have an open house for a couple of hours for anyone in town who wants to come by and see the new building."

Goodrich noted how everyone is eager to see the new senior center and hopes the seniors "will use it as much as they possibly can."

"Again, it's been a tremendous effort by so many people, so it's nice to see," Goodrich said.

Dubord expressed excitement about the upcoming opening.

"As much as we can't wait to see it, I can't wait to show it off to people, have seniors come in and see all their hard work," Dubord said. "That's our goal: have it filled every day."



Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

From the left, Select Board Clerk Michael Squindo, Chairman Theresa Goodrich, Vice Chairman Sue Bunnell, Acting Police Sgt. Michael Cygan and Town Administrator Nick Breault at the Feb. 26 Select Board meeting held at the Wilbraham Police Department Community Room.

Select Board appoints Cygan to Police Sergeant

Chief Lennon shares update on Officer Cameron Prosperi

By Kristin Rivers
Staff Writer
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WILBRAHAM - The Select Board appointed Acting Sgt. Michael Cygan to full-time sergeant on Feb. 26.

Cygan and Officer John Perry were candidates for the position.

Cygan has been in Wilbraham for over 19 years and has served as acting sergeant since June 2003.

"Some of my specialties include field training officer, I've been doing that since 2007. I am currently a sexual assault investigator and also...a D.A.R.T. member and just enjoy working here for the town of Wilbraham," Cygan said.

After Board Vice Chair Sue Bunnell asked him to describe a leadership role while on patrol, Cygan shared how he and two other officers responded to a home invasion.

"One took one part of that job; one took the other, and I took another role in between the three of us. We had the individual apprehended in less than three hours in Springfield, no questions asked," Cygan said. "I have full faith and full trust in the gentlemen that were working with me to get it done."

Cygan stressed faith, trust and communication play a key role in leadership.

"Trusting the guys that I work with, absolutely. Give them the chance to make a decision and not micromanage them and things get done," Cygan said.

Perry, meanwhile, has been an officer since 2011 and previously worked in Northampton before coming to Wilbraham in 2018.

Perry focused on the importance of self-reflection and continually improving

both professionally and personally, something he took away after completing the sergeant's exam.

"Especially in a role as a supervisor, I think you have to be constantly self-reflecting, trying to better yourself. That way you can be the best leader that you can, so to be able to go back and see some of the stuff that I missed on or just wasn't as fresh as it should have been was nice," Perry said. "So, I did like that aspect a lot."

When Board Clerk Michael Squindo asked Perry what he would most enjoy about the role, he said the opportunity of being a teacher and mentor to younger officers.

"For me, I think when the best parts of the job will be trying to help the people and better the people behind me and help them prepare and continue to grow in this profession," Perry said.

Cygan was appointed to Sergeant 3-0 at a date to be determined by Police Chief Ed Lennon.

Lennon later provided an update on Officer Cameron Prosperi, who is recovering from serious injuries after being shot responding to a call on Old Carriage Drive on Jan. 20.

Lennon said Prosperi is now home getting significant out-patient care and has support from family, friends and co-workers, adding the family "are so glad and so happy with the all the support they've received from the community."

"We're wishing him well, and right now, he has a ton of support, so we're really happy about that," Lennon said.

Board Chair Theresa Goodrich encouraged Lennon to keep the community informed of any events or fundraisers, adding the Hockey for Heroes Foundation will be presenting a charity game on March 2 at 5 p.m. to support Prosperi.

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Area fire chiefs stress importance of smoke/CO detectors

By Dalton Zbierski
Editor
dzbierski@turley.com

EAST LONGMEADOW – Led by State Fire Marshal John Davine, fire personnel from across the state gathered at the East Longmeadow Fire Department on the morning of Feb. 22 to emphasize the significance of maintaining working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

“We have carefully reviewed the recent data from fatal fires and have noticed some trends,” Davine said. “A total of 45 people lost their lives from fire in Massachusetts last year, and nearly 70% of those deaths took place in the home. Two-thirds of those fire victims were older adults ages 65 and up. Tragically, more than half of those homes that had fatal fires did not have working smoke alarms.”

There was a time in the state’s history where a single fire could take the lives of 492 people, as occurred during the Cocoanut Grove nightclub fire in Boston in 1942, so 45 fire fatalities statewide in 2023 represents generational progress, but more progress could be made if all residents installed working detectors.

Westfield Fire Chief Patrick Egloff noted that 30% of the state’s residential fire deaths last year occurred in Western Massachusetts. Egloff is vice president of the Western Massachusetts Fire Chiefs Association, which represents more than 100 communities west of Worcester, ranging from larger urban centers to small rural towns and everything in between.

“No matter where we work, we all agree on one thing: working smoke and CO alarms are vital, lifesaving tools that belong in every home, apartment, moving house and dorm,” Egloff said.

Egloff relayed that fire personnel are realistic and know fires will occur as long as people



Westfield Fire Chief Patrick Egloff speaks at the East Longmeadow Fire Department on Feb. 22.

Turley photos by Dalton Zbierski

are cooking, heating their homes, smoking and using electricity. However, almost every fire death can be prevented if residents install, test and maintain their smoke detectors and alarms.

“Smoke alarms alert you to the danger and give you time to escape safely, especially in the overnight hours while you’re sleeping,” Egloff said. “The sooner you know about the danger, the faster you can escape, and the sooner we’re notified, the faster we can be there to help.”

Davine, formerly the Northampton fire chief, said that in the case of several dozen fatal fire incidents last year, investigators found smoke alarms disabled, outdated or altogether missing.

Springfield Fire Commissioner B.J. Calvi spoke of a tragedy that occurred in the city on March 30, 2023, during a structure fire. Multiple people were trapped in the residence and couldn’t escape.

“When (firefighters) made

entry and knocked down the fire, they found two elderly adults who never made it out of their bed. The subsequent investigation showed that there were no smoke detectors present in the house,” Calvi said.

Calvi noted that there were five fire fatalities in Springfield last year, of which four had no smoke detectors present.

“These are tragedies that could have been averted and need to stop,” Calvi said, noting that all the fatal fires in Springfield last year occurred between midnight and 8 a.m.

“Please don’t spend a single night in your home without a working smoke detector,” he said.

Easthampton Fire Chief Christopher Norris encourages residents to check their detectors and alarms when they change their clocks, as the devices don’t last forever. If you don’t remember when you installed your smoke detector, the manufacturing date is printed on the back.

“Smoke alarms should be replaced every 10

years. If your alarm was made before February of 2014, or if there’s no date at all, it’s time to replace it,” Norris said. “We recommend alarms made by well-known, national brands. You should be



Wilbraham Fire Chief Michael Andrews, shown speaking in East Longmeadow on Feb. 22.

place outside; it should be a safe distance away where everyone can gather.

“Once you’re at the meeting place, never go back inside, not for anything. Call 911 and let the firefighters enter with their protective equipment,” Stamborski said.

Once you create your escape route, practice it often, both during the day and at night until it becomes muscle memory. Also, sleeping with your bedroom door closed is the simplest way to keep fire, smoke and carbon monoxide out.

“You’d be amazed how much protection a simple closed door offers,” Stamborski said.

Wilbraham Fire Chief Michael Andrews spoke about CO, a poisonous gas created by burning fuels that is often produced by home heating equipment. CO is harmful and potentially fatal, especially for young children or

able to find most of these at your local hardware stores.”

Chicopee Fire Chief Dan Stamborski said smoke detectors and alarms are the first line of defense against a fire in your home and that everyone should know what to do when the alarm goes off.

“That’s where your home escape plan comes in,” Stamborski said. “First and foremost, take a look around your house on a daily basis, be sure to keep furniture and clutter away from your doors, windows and stairways because you

don’t want anything blocking your way out during an emergency. And, when we respond to your home, you certainly don’t want to impede our access to get to you.”

Stamborski encourages families to practice their escape routes and choose two or more ways to leave the building, which can include windows if you are on a lower floor. Pick a meeting

older adults.

“What makes CO so dangerous is that you can’t see it, smell it or taste it. Carbon monoxide is a silent, invisible killer,” Andrews said. “Carbon monoxide poisoning is one of the leading causes of accidental poisoning deaths in the country. Here in Massachusetts, more than 350 people end up in the emergency room each year because of CO poisoning.”

Last year, in Massachusetts, there were more than 5,000 calls reporting carbon monoxide, and the vast majority ended safely because people had working alarms.

Andrews said be sure to have CO alarms in every level of your home, test them every month and replace the batteries twice a year. The alarms themselves need to be replaced every five, seven to 10 years; one can check the manufacturer’s instructions or look up the make and model online to find out.

“Finally, if you hear it going off, get outside and dial 911. Don’t disable them our write it off as a malfunction. Let us check to see if it’s safe,” Andrews said.

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VIEWPOINTS



Dear Rusty

My wife is on Medicare and receiving Social Security benefits each month. We built a house and used money from our investments to pay for it. We knew we would pay taxes on that withdrawal, but my wife got a letter from Social Security saying that because the money we withdrew was listed as income, her 2024 Medicare premium went up over \$500. And since Medicare is taken out of her Social Security, that results in a \$6,000 loss to our budget.

Is there anything that can be done about this situation? We sent a letter to Social Security, but they responded that unless her situation was one of only a few categories (loss of house, divorce, etc.) nothing could be done for the year.

The money was used strictly on another investment, our new house. It wasn't like we took it out and spent it wildly. Can you please advise?

Signed: Frustrated Homeowner

Dear Frustrated

Unfortunately, it sounds like your wife is a victim of the Medicare provision known as "Income Related Monthly Adjustment Amount." Each person's Medicare Part B premium, cov-

About Medicare's dreaded 'IRMAA' provision

erage for outpatient healthcare, is determined yearly from their income from all sources as reported to the IRS two years prior. IRMAA sets income thresholds, depending on your IRS filing status and if those thresholds are exceeded you must pay a higher Medicare Part B premium and also a higher Part D premium if you have prescription drug coverage.

Assuming you file your taxes as "married/jointly," if your combined 2022 income as a couple was between \$206,000 and \$258,000 your wife's 2024 Part B premium is \$244.60, instead of the standard \$174.70; if your combined 2022 income was between \$258,000 and \$322,000 then your wife's Part B premium for 2024 is \$349.40; if your combined in 2022 was between \$322,000 and \$386,000, her Part B premium is \$454.20; if your combined 2022 income as a married couple was between \$386,000 to \$750,000 then your wife's 2024 Part B premium is \$559 and if your 2022 income as a married couple was over \$750,000 your wife's Part B premium is \$594. If your wife also has private Part D prescription drug coverage, IRMAA also increases those premiums. Note that the IRMAA thresholds are different for other income tax filing statuses.

As the Social Security office has already explained, you could appeal your wife's IRMAA premium increase if she had a "life changing event," but the list of acceptable life changing events is quite small (see form SSA-44). The

only good news is that your wife's Medicare premium will be calculated anew for next year, so her Medicare premium for 2025 will, if your 2023 joint income is less than the first IRMAA threshold, revert to the standard 2025 premium.

For Your Information, it doesn't matter what you used the money for. Your withdrawal was reported to the IRS as taxable income, which is what caused IRMAA to apply to your wife's Medicare premium for 2024. Many people don't realize that Medicare premiums are higher for those with a higher income, but since your withdrawal was a one-time event, your wife's Medicare Part B premium next year should be much less and her Social Security benefit correspondingly higher.

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 or email us at ssadviser@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

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Letters to the Editor

Water, Water Everywhere!

To the Editor,

The proposed 530 Glendale Road commercial solar project, located in Hampden, featuring thousands of solar panels and lithium batteries is being actively pursued.

Flooding is a major concern for the town of Hampden, but for anyone and everyone who lives downhill from this potential development, it could become reality. I'd like to showcase one recent example of solar gone wrong in Massachusetts, on an uphill property not unlike 530 Glendale Road.

Neighbors of a solar project in Plainville, approximately 80 miles from Hampden, are being subjected to extreme flooding and washouts after thirty acres of trees were clear-cut last summer. One couple, residents since 1959, never experienced any water problems until construction began. A woman who's been in her home since 2017 will now have to find a new place to live. The cost of pumping gallons of water from the basement, after weeks of non-stop flooding, has proved too costly for her landlord. A different abutter, in tears, said the three feet of water in their finished basement required help from

the Fire Department. Days later, the water was still rushing in. Another neighbor tearfully told CBS News she's out hundreds of thousands of dollars due to property damage. One gentleman described the situation as Niagara Falls. In addition, the excessive water has flooded public roads, causing Plainville's DPW to act. The list goes on and on! Townspeople worry there's no end in sight. Who could blame them? This flooding has been devastating.

Plainville is the latest casualty. They won't be the last. As acres are lost and destroyed by enormous solar projects, stories like Plainville are becoming commonplace. It's the communities and the people in them that ultimately suffer. Is Hampden next?

Public attendance and participation is crucial to protecting the health, welfare and safety of our community. The Hampden Conservation Commission will have their next meeting regarding this project on Wednesday, March 6 at 6 p.m., Hampden Town Hall, 625 Main St.

Gina Stabilo,
Hampden

Why doesn't bullet protection for police extend lower (on their bodies),

To the Editor,

I wonder why bullet protection (bullet proof equipment) for our police doesn't extend lower (on their bodies), so I searched it with Bing. I wanted to know if there is a flexible material that could be relatively comfortable for our police to wear to extend protection further down. Below is the link that will show those materials.

Fabric that stops bullets – Bing Search: <https://www.bing.com/search?q=fabric+that+stops+bullets&FORM=QSRE3>.

Sincerely,
Donald J. Flannery,
Wilbraham

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Questions?
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Your opinion is something we always want to hear. Call or contact us via email dzbierski@turley.com.

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Record warming trend continues...



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Editorial Policy

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

Correction Policy

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

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Ed Popielarczyk entertains families with magic at Hampden library



Turley photos by Kristin Rivers

Ed Popielarczyk opens a colorful umbrella to excited children during his Comedy Magic Show at the Hampden Free Public Library.



Ed Popielarczyk explains a cup stacking trick to one of his volunteers during his Comedy Magic Show at the Hampden Free Public Library on Feb. 21. His volunteer later beat Popielarczyk in the trick and won a trophy.



A child points out a magical plant beginning to grow on its own during Ed Popielarczyk's Comedy Magic Show at the Hampden Free Public Library on Feb. 21.



Ed Popielarczyk watches as toilet paper pieces fly out of the roof of a small outhouse during one of his magic tricks at the Comedy Magic Show at the Hampden Free Public Library on Feb. 21.



Ed Popielarczyk shows off his umbrella with missing pieces as the audience reacts during his Comedy Magic Show at the Hampden Free Public Library.



The world's strongest string trick was one of many magic tricks performed by Ed Popielarczyk, with assistance from audience members, during his Comedy Magic Show at the Hampden Free Public Library.



Audience members raise their hands to volunteer for a magic trick with Ed Popielarczyk during his Comedy Magic Show at the Hampden Free Public Library.

By Kristin Rivers
Staff Writer
krivers@turley.com

HAMPDEN - Families enjoyed laughs and fun surprises on Feb. 21 during a Comedy Magic Show from Ed Popielarczyk.

The event was part of the library's February school vacation offerings.

During the event, Popielarczyk, a professional magician, balloon twister and flea circus ringmaster, performed varying comedy and magic tricks with children from the audience serving as his assistants, including a colorful umbrella trick, trying to make flowers grow with music, a card trick with toilet paper, teeth dubbed his great-grandfather's teeth and an outhouse and more.

Popielarczyk shared he's

been doing shows for children and family audiences for over 40 years and took up magic after he taught himself how to juggle in middle school. He later added balloon twisting and a flea circus into his program offerings.

"I don't juggle as much anymore. It's mainly the magic; it's probably 90% of what I do, and I do get asked to do balloons maybe 10% of the time and flea circus is maybe two or three, four times a year," Popielarczyk said. "But the magic is my first love. It's a way of getting the kids to laugh. Other comedians, they use different methods. I just use this. If I fool them, I fool them.

If I don't, I don't care. If they're laughing, that's all that matters." Popielarczyk enjoys performing for children.

"The kids are great; I haven't done an adult show in probably 35 years. I just enjoy working with the kids. They make the world go round, they're our future and I'm blessed to work with (them)," Popielarczyk said.

Popielarczyk also enjoys the audience participation.

"They like everything. I bring in a wide range of stuff so that I can reach all the ages from the two year olds to the 11 and 12 year olds," Popielarczyk

said. "Cause I had some four year olds helping me, I had some 11-year-olds helping me, so I try to get a mix of ages, so that everybody's having fun, everybody's happy."

Popielarczyk was thrilled to have so many families come out for his show.

"You feel honored that people come out to see you. If they didn't like you, they wouldn't come," Popielarczyk said. "So, it's always nice that people come out and they have fun, and they thank you afterwards. I have so many of the parents having as much fun as the kids. I think that as long as the kids are happy, then you're happy."

Popielarczyk's goal through his shows is to get families laughing and smiling so they can forget about the world and bad news for a while.

"It's nice to get away from it. Even if it's only 45 minutes or so, you get away from it for a little bit and you can feel good for

a little bit," Popielarczyk said.

He also enjoys bringing his show to local libraries.

"The people are there because they want to be there. It's always a great group of people. Everybody's always very nice and respectful to each other. It's a fun morning or an afternoon or an evening whatever time the show is. People are always very nice," Popielarczyk said.

Popielarczyk wants the community to know how important it is to laugh, and he enjoyed coming to Hampden for his show.

"I had a great time today and they were a great crowd. I always have such a good time when I come here," Popielarczyk said.

Popielarczyk thanked everyone for checking out his show, expressing joy for everyone having a good time.

"Thanks for coming! I hope you had fun!" Popielarczyk said.

To learn more, call 413-584-7675, email balloonpop@comcast.net or visit edpop.com.

Wilbraham Women's Club hosting Fashion Show Luncheon

WILBRAHAM - A Fashion Show Luncheon featuring CHICO'S is being sponsored by the Wilbraham Women's Club, Thursday, April 25, at the Saint Cecilia Parish Center, 42 Main St., Wilbraham. The social hour begins at 11:30 a.m. with luncheon served at Noon. The meal choices are chicken francaise and

salmon with dill sauce. The \$35 donation for the luncheon also helps to fund the club's scholarships and community service projects. In addition, there will be a raffle for many prizes. For reservations, please contact Norma Bandarra at 413-596-8173 by April 17.

Wilbraham Middle School Honor Roll

WILBRAHAM - The following students received Honor Roll status for the **Term 2** marking period at Wilbraham Middle School. **Distinguished Honors** is all A's in all subjects; **Honors** is all A's and/or B's in all subjects.

Distinguished Honors – Grade 8 Bryce Beckel, Gavyn Clark, Irelyn Coffey, Caroline Euber, Nora Fletcher, Emmy Foisy, Devon Fortenberry, Mario Garcia, Corrine Gates, Nicholas Gencarelli, Madison Guertin, Danika Haygood, Kelsey Jennings, Brooke Johnson, Genevieve Johnson, David Kim, Peyton Lee, Savannah Lee, Dylan Lesure, Adrian Lopez, Ryan Mackie, Dominic Mascaro, Olivia Maserati, Isadora Maurice, Clare McMahon, Frank Morin, Tess Morrow, Dylan Niznik, Liam O'Brien, Madeline Pastore, Owen Petit, Kendall Placzek, Brenan Rost, Jillian Rumpalik, Hailey Scliopou, Ava Secor, Ryan Semanie, Riley Senecal, Lillian Sergienko, Alysandra Serju, Sofia Shores, Audriana Stasio, William Szpakowski, Anna Taylor, James Wadzinski, Juliana Washington and Joseph Woytowicz

Honors – Grade 8 Peter Appleby, Rama Awkal, Kayden Bain-Purdy, Addison Baldyga, Mia Balog, Aidan Bean, Seth Beebe, Henry Bernard, Ellianna Brodeur, Nicholas Capen, Anna-

lecia Carlo, Maximus Cayo, Joseph Comes, Michael Cosimini, Leah Croteau, Nathaniel David, Anna Dennis, Ryan Donovan, Maxwell Fergus, Lucas Ferreira, Chase Folli, Gianna Fusco, Mya Gierlich, Eliza Gloss, Hayden Gloss, Daniel Heinold, Parker Hoey, Demetrius Holmes, Keira Horne, Mason Howard, Jeffrey Hurley, Isabella Jimah, Alexis Joseph, Tia Kayrouz, Tony Kayrouz, Emma King, Emma Lacoste, Ashlyn Landry, Rose Langone, Edwin Long, Layla Lozano, Jacob Luttrell, Yman Ly, Hunter Markham, Elijah Mathias, Daizy McDonald, Ellie McRobbie, Mylie Mittler, Ryan Mullen, Aleja Munoz Kopczynski, Lucy Nolan, Nicholas Nordstrom, Gianna Nowicki, Sophia O'Connor, Geoffrey Ohemeng, Tristan Oliveira, Patrick O'Toole, Kirk Pagoaga, Ava Peck, Alexis Powers, Lucas Raiche, Jonathan Santiago, Zachary Senecal, Arianna Soler, Gabriel Solowinski, Joseph Sullivan, Michael Sullivan, Elliot Sylvester, Jillian True and Ormandy Velazquez

Distinguished Honors – Grade 7 Teddy Acquah, Zakaria Ardolino, Alison Aucoin, Sireen Awkal, Margaret Babbs, Thomas Brogle, Benjamin Butts, Jason Cao, Nolan Carney, Charlotte Castellano, Juliana Coffey, Amelia DePace, Liam Doyle, Grace Falzone, Dina Ferrentino, Charlotte Fitzgerald, Eva Gagliarduc-

ci, Aviana Gomez, Olivia Godrow, Teaghan Haluch, Isabel Horne, Jackson Hulseberg, Alexandra Jaslanek, Aurora Kirton, Jillian Lajeunesse, Sophie Libberte, Willis Lam, Christie Lang, Johanna Lewis, Ashley Manning, Jackson McCullough, Michael Murray, Ethan Nunlist, Karina Ocampo, Ava O'Connor, Owen Piquette, Cameron Powers, Logan Richard, Sierra Rocha, Camden Rodrigues, Jackson Rust, Quintis Saviengvong, Adrielle Sheridan, Kayla Smith, Ian Stratton, Nathaniel Tirabassi, Maya Usher, Mason Waskiewicz and Caitlyn Wetherbe

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Distinguished Honors – Grade 6 Aubrey Appleby, Dylan Bean, Reid Blanchard, Maggie Comeau, Maycie Eldridge, Cody Feit, Nora Fontaine, Gavin Higgen Jasper Hulseberg, Andrew Kmelius, Madeline Lee, Jackson Long, Julia Magee, Logan Mangar, Sophia Mazzaferro, Vivian McIntyre, Joseph Montano, Andrew Mullen, Mia Newman, Desmond O'Brien, Shana Oguku, Mya Abigail Patterson, Garrett Roberts, William Roberts, Alexan Robles-Blasenak, Grace Romano, Greta Rust, Jake Salemi, Jackson Shanley, Louise Shaughnessey, Madelyn Smith, Cole Thomas, Marcus Tiderman, Owen Wright, Kylie Zamorski

Honors – Grade 6 Cassandra Alvarez, Mason Axiotis, Alaina Bailey, Brielle Bailey, Kegan Bailey, Molly Baroni, Lillian Blair, Dante Bontempi, Madelyn Boudreau, Alianna Brandoli, Madeline Britt, Colin Broderick, Brenna Bryan, Thomas Campbell, Rose Christensen, Jack Christofori, Zoey Coburn,

Rilynn Conway, Marcus Cotto, Emma Cristino, Jacob DeGray, Leo Deziel, Joseph Dickson, Cooper Donovan, Julian Dugan-Costa, Emery Dyer, Timothy Euber, Peyton Eusebio, Rylene Fountain, Martin Garcia, Alaina Giombetti, Wyatt Hall, Oliver Hart, Gisell Henrichon-Arena, Kareem Ibrahim, McKinley Jaeger, Jacob Johnson, Rieland Kearney, Nicholas Kennedy, Bree Kiernan, Delaney Kinsman, Aiden Kirsch, Noah Kirsch, Chloe Lawless, Jason Lemus, Emma Lewis, Siobhan Mahoney, Therese Mathias, Zahra Minhaj, Ryan Minns, Kristina Monteiro, Sebasti Morales-Garcia, Emily Moraru, Maeghan Morris, Emily Mumper, Radek Muska, Ryan Nichols, Grayson Nowakowski, Riya O'Connor, Sunmi Oh, Michelle Ohemeng, Logan Pryor, Kennedy Raymond, Declan Reidy, Kaylie Ritchotte, David Roberts, Jaxson Rogers, Christopher Romano, Wyatt Sackrider, Peyton Salvat, Epi Sanchez, Natalia Savlick, Oskar Schmidt, Jamie Scliopou, Hayden Senft, Katelyn Sheehan, Jessica Soukup, Clara Steele, Violet Straitiff, Lucas Tassinari, Alanna Thouin, Jaxson Walker, Samuel Webster, Caitlin Weichselbaumer, Ashley Wetherbe, Carter Witruk, Brenna Woytowicz and Emily Zheng



Stuffed animal friends work on a puzzle inside the library during the Stuffed Animal Sleepover at the Wilbraham Public Library.



Stuffed animals take over the main desk inside the library during the Stuffed Animal Sleepover at the Wilbraham Public Library on Feb. 22.



A stuffed William Shakespeare was one of the many stuffed animals dropped off by children during the Stuffed Animal Sleepover at the Wilbraham Public Library.

SLEEPOVER from page 1
community is," Griguoli said. "We all work together to make something super cute like this happen."
For Dickson, he was looking forward to the adventures the stuffed animals would have in the library.
"You have to think outside the box where you want to put them and where to see them,"

Dickson said.
Demetri was excited about everything.
"I like to do the permission slip because I get to learn a lot more about the kids and their animals and get to do the crafts with them and help them be creative," Demetri said.
Katlyn Knight came with her two sons, Emmett and Russell, to drop off Russell's stuffed animal, a dinosaur named Traps.
Knight shared she and her

family are frequent visitors to the library and had visited other libraries nearby during school vacation.
"We love reading and we love coming to the library, so we saw this event and thought it would be a nice family activity," Knight said.
Knight appreciates how the library offers free events for families, especially during school vacations.
"It's nice to just be able to

go somewhere that's community-oriented and doesn't charge you and anybody can go and meet up with friends," Knight said.
Knight encouraged the community to support the library and shared this idea.
"We'd love to see more of these events, especially after work hours like 3 p.m. or later or weekends, because he goes to preschool during the day," Knight said. "But we would like

to see these types of things just to get the community together."
Dickson, Griguoli and Demetri had these messages for the families.
"Have fun! This is supposed to be fun, and it will be fun," Griguoli said.
"Have a good time! Come back next year," Demetri said. "Just enjoy yourself."
"Just have a good time," Dickson said.



Turley photos by Kristin Rivers
A group of stuffed animals read children's books in the library during the Stuffed Animal Sleepover at the Wilbraham Public Library on Feb. 22.



Allison Demetri reads a children's book to a child during the Stuffed Animal Sleepover at the Wilbraham Public Library.



Ryleigh talks about her stuffed animal with Maddy Hoskinson while Logan watches Owen Wright fill out his information and permission slip during the Stuffed Animal Sleepover at the Wilbraham Public Library.



From the left, Greta Rust, Kate Sheehan, Charlotte Oh and Abigail Patterson assist the stuffed animals in coloring their own bookmarks during the Stuffed Animal Sleepover at the Wilbraham Public Library.

A COMMUNITY GALLERY



Father John Connors, pastor of St. Cecilia Church, congratulates Eagle Scouts Jaden Desmarais and Jack Tassinari. Their names have been added to the Eagle Board behind them in the photo. It is in the Rotunda of St. Cecilia Church. Wilbraham Troop 359 was founded in 1959. There are now 114 Eagle Scout nameplates.

Life in & **WILBRAHAM**

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

WILBRAHAM



St. Cecilia Knights of Columbus past Grand Knight John Hegarty spoke at the Eagle Scout Court of Honor Ceremony and presented congratulatory letters to the Eagle Scouts.



Wilbraham Selectman Theresa Goodrich awarded commendations letters to Jack and Jaden. Jack's Eagle Project on the Mount Marcy trail benefits the community and its residents. Goodrich congratulates Jaden.



Hampden Town Administrator Bob Markel congratulates Jaden with a citation from the Town of Hampden in recognition of his Eagle Project on Goat Rock trail.



Wilbraham Troop 359, Pack 177 and scout adult leaders gather for a photo.

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WILBRAHAM HAMPDEN



Jack pinning his Eagle Scout Mother's pin on his mother, Erin Tassinari.



State Rep. Brian Ashe (D-Springfield) congratulates Jaden and Jack.



In addition to choosing their fathers with their Mentor pins, Jack and Jaden chose Assistant Scout Master Perry Bechthold with mentor pins in recognition for his guidance and leadership on their journey to Eagle Scout. Bechthold is a 1977 Eagle Scout member of Wilbraham Troop 359. He has been in Scouting for over 50 years and is a valued member of the troop. He is a talented woodworker and created the Eagle Board years ago that is located in the Rotunda at St. Cecilia Church.



State Sen. Jake Oliveira (D-Ludlow) spoke at the Eagle Scout Court of Honor ceremony and awarded citations to Jack and Jaden for their accomplishments as Eagle Scouts.



Photo with Eagle Scouts Jack and Jaden.



Jaden pinning his Eagle Scout Mother's pin on his mother, Heather Desmarais.



Senator Oliveira Jaden shaking hands_crp
Senator Jake Oliveira congratulates Eagle Scout, Jaden Desmarais.

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Events & announcements schedule

Full tuition scholarship to Space Camp available

WILBRAHAM – The Minnechaug Regional High School Class of 1973 recently celebrated its 50th reunion and created the Janice Voss Memorial Committee. After graduating from Minnechaug Dr. Voss earned degrees from Purdue University and MIT, then became a NASA astronaut and flew five missions in space orbiting the Earth 779 times. In order to honor our classmate, funds were raised to enable one student to attend a week of camp tuition free at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center in Huntsville, Ala., as well as an additional \$1,300 for travel. The scholarship is available to students ages 9-11 for Space Camp, or ages 12-14 for Space Academy.

Applications are available by contacting Lisa Baldrige Fiascone (Class of '73) at: lisafiascone@gmail.com and will require a brief essay as well as a math or science teacher letter of recommendation.

For more information about Space Camp or Space Academy go to www.rocketcenter.com and follow the link to Space Camp. Do not submit applications to their website as our committee will be selecting the recipient. Openings are being held in most weeks for the student we select. The deadline for completed applications is March 1.

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. This free program is sponsored by the Wilbraham Friends of the Library.

Wilbraham Women's Club to meet March 14

WILBRAHAM – The March meeting of the Wilbraham Women's Club will be held on March 14 at Noon in the Parish Center at St. Cecilia Church on Main Street. Sandwiches and dessert will be served.

The speaker for the day will be Jen, who is the owner of the Flower Shed in Wilbraham's Post Office Park. Jen will be holding a workshop for us at this meeting. She will teach us how to make a lovely succulent to enjoy in our homes. The cost for this meeting will be \$10 and reservations are needed. Please call Michele Axtmann at 413-596-3325 or Linda Raffa at 413-596-8245.

Gentle Flow Yoga Class at Wilbraham Library

WILBRAHAM - Certified Instructor Michelle Bouchard will lead a light and rejuvenating yoga class at the Wilbraham Public Library on Saturday, March 9 at 10 a.m. Participants ages 18+ will explore breathing practices, mindfulness and meditation techniques and a physical approach to sustainable exercise. All skill levels are welcome. Please bring your own yoga mat and dress comfortably. Space is limited and registration is required. To register, please contact the library at 413-596-6141 or visit the Event Calendar at www.wilbrahamlibrary.org. This free program is sponsored by the Wilbraham Friends of the Library.

To learn more, contact Emilie Lang at 413-596-6141 or elang@wilbrahamlibrary.org.



From the left, Heather Wisley and her daughter, Ella, work on their bracelets during the Cosmic Bracelet Class at Hampden Senior Center on Feb. 22.



Jeweler Heather Bell smiles at the Tangled Vine Jewelry table as she awaits attendees to the Cosmic Bracelet Class on Feb. 22.



A shot of attendees, with the line going out the door, signing in for the Cosmic Bracelet Class on Feb. 22. The class took place in the Community Room at Hampden Senior Center.



Nan Hurlburt, president of the Scantic River Artisans, speaks with the audience as the Cosmic Bracelet Class begins on Feb. 22. The class is part of the art association's Interactive Learning Through Art offerings throughout the year.



Turley photos by Kristin Rivers
Chris Sterritt assists attendees as they make their bracelets during the Cosmic Bracelet Class on Feb. 22.

BRACELETS from page 1

portunity to spend time together.

"I was amazed at the turnout and all the people here," Middleton said.

"Just gives me an opportunity to be with my best friend," Murphy said.

Middleton said the workshop wasn't intense and had a friendly atmosphere.

"You don't need to have all kinds of skills to be able to do this. So, it's very open. You can just come, and you can do it," Middleton said. "All of the people here make you feel very welcome. Everyone comes over

(and says), "That's beautiful. You're doing a nice job."

For Murphy, it's important to support local, including the artists, businesses and community and know they're out there.

"Being able to connect with that I think is really important for all of us, to be honest," Murphy said.

Nan Hurlburt, president of the Scantic River Artisans, was thrilled with the turnout.

"It was so rewarding to see so many people come out and socialize, learn a little bit about jewelry, design and jewelry-making and have so much fun," Hurlburt said.

Hurlburt explained why the classes are called Interactive Learning Through Art.

"The whole concept of interactive learning through art is part of our mission statement, which is to reach out into the community and encourage participation and knowledge of the arts," Hurlburt said.

In this class specifically, Hurlburt said she found the concept for the cosmic bracelets interesting, including how "it brought together the celestial star signs to each person's birthdate."

"I found it very interesting that there were more Pisces in

the room than any other star sign," Hurlburt said.

Hurlburt wants the community to know how much she appreciates holding the classes at the senior center, thanking her team and the senior center staff for their support.

She hopes holding classes here helps people realize what the senior center is and how it supports the community.

"Hopefully, having events like this at the center breaks some of the stigma of senior centers to help people realize that they really are for the community and very inviting," Hurlburt said.

Middleton and Murphy

praised the Scantic River Artisans and encouraged residents to attend future workshops.

"Just keep coming. This is wonderful," Middleton said.

"Try something different," Murphy said.

Hurlburt thanked everyone for attending, hoping to see them again at a future class.

"Thank (you to) all the attendees for coming and for making it such a pleasure to be a part of Scantic River Artisans and Tangled Vine Jewelry, and having had the experience of a great collaboration," Hurlburt said.

To learn more, visit scanticriverartisans.com.

CAMPUS NOTES

UMass Dean's List

AMHERST – Below is a list of local students who were named to the Dean's List at the University of Massachusetts Amherst for the Fall 2023 semester.

To qualify, an undergraduate student must receive a 3.5 grade-point average or better on a four-point scale.

HAMPDEN

Luke Joseph Angelica, Blaise Joseph Barbeau, Maya Damiano, Daniel Michael MacGregor, Linh Nguyen, Gabriella Lee Ofcarcik, Allyson Miranna Santos, Kelsey Jenna Sheehan, Deirdre Renee Simmons and Delaney Walat

WILBRAHAM

Jessica Edith Baker, Jacob Arthur Balbino, Camryn Hope Baroni, Ava Margaret Barton, Jackson Ari Bloomfield, Julia Grace Britton, Ji Cao, Jing Li Chen, Ani Joyce Diefenderfer, Jeremy David Diehl, Parker Anthony Donohue Sr, Samantha Druckenmiller, Grace Dufour, Isabelle Nicole Fergus, Olivia Ashley Ferreira, Iain James Ferreira, Christian Patrick Fuehr, Cameron Mathew Gilrein, Jackson Healy, Harrison Michael Hill, Patrick Joseph Jahn, Timothy Jodoin, Kylie Hope Kane, Emma Rose Kennedy, Joelle Nicole Kovarik, Jonah Kozub, Filip Stanislaw Kumiega, Nicholas Shoga Lang, Jaehee Lee, Jaeyoung Lee, Willy Li, Jaclyn Lee Maller, Thomas Angelo Manning, Madeline Kakley Murphy, Gabriella Ellen Rita, Katherine J Russell, Cally Hays Seyler, Matthew Judson Sherman, Ava Marie Sirois, Alexander Vincent Tirabassi, Caleigh Autumn Wall, Madeleine Joan Wilson, Megan Angela Youmell and Joe Zebian

AIC Athletic Director's 3.0 Club

SPRINGFIELD - American International College congratulates its student-athletes who have been inducted into the Athletic Director's 3.0 Club for the Fall 2023 semester.

AIC Athletics Director Jessica Chapin recognized more than three hundred student-athletes who have achieved a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better after one or more years enrolled at AIC. The primary objective for these students is to stand as academic role models, inspiring fellow student-athletes with their achievements and dedication!

The following student athletes are from Wilbraham:

Joseph Albano, majoring in Sports and Recreation Management

Gabrielle Williams, majoring in International Business

Bryant Univ. Dean's List

SMITHFIELD, R.I. – Bryant University is pleased to recognize the local students named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List.

To earn a place on the Deans' List, students must have a GPA of 3.4 or better for at least 12 semester hours of work. Congratulations to the following local students:

HAMPDEN:

Victoria Velazquez

WILBRAHAM:

Owen Gasteyer, Margaret Petruzzelli and Carly Sleboda

RIT Dean's List

ROCHESTER, N.Y. – The following Wilbraham students were named to the Dean's List at Rochester Institute of Technology for the fall semester of the 2023-2024 academic year.

-Dominick Seymour, who is in the chemical engineering program.

-Jared Laliberte, who is in the cybersecurity program

Full-time degree-seeking undergraduate students are eligible for Dean's List if their term GPA is greater than or equal to 3.400; they do not have any grades of "Incomplete", "D" or "F"; and they have registered for, and completed, at least 12 credit hours.

Dean's List at Tufts Univ.

MEDFORD – Tufts University recently announced the Dean's List for the Fall 2023 semester. Dean's List honors at Tufts University require a semester grade point average of 3.4 or greater. The following Wilbraham students were named to the Dean's List:

-Aidan Lewis, Class of 2027

-James Ma, Class of 2027

OBITUARIES

Lisa Ann Cronin-Hennessy

Lisa Ann Cronin-Hennessy passed away on Sun., Feb. 18, 2024 at the University of Minnesota Hospital after a short illness. Her family was by her side.

Lisa was born July 14, 1966 in Arlington, MA. Her family moved to Hampden in 1973. She graduated from Minnechaug Regional High School in 1984. She then attended Boston College and graduated in 1988 with Bachelor of Arts-Communications.

While in school she worked for New England Sports Network in Boston as Assistant to the Director of Advertising and Public Relations. After graduation she was promoted to Production Assistant. She later worked a short time for Maverick Media in Boston as Assistant to the Senior Producer, where she participated in research, writing, press releases and formulating budgets. She was also involved with actual shooting and post-production editing.

Lisa married in 1992 and moved to Raleigh, North Carolina where her first child Kira was born. The family moved to Ithaca, NY where her second child Karly was born. She worked as an assistant in a Montessori School and decided she wanted to become a Montessori teacher. She enrolled in Montessori Teacher Education training.

Her family then moved to St. Paul, Minn. In 2015, she got her Montessori teaching certification. She worked for a while at a Mon-

tessori school, but then decided she would like to open her own school. She opened Riversong Montessori Pre-School in Minnesota in 2016. She taught 3 1/2 to 6 year olds and loved them all. A few of her special events and projects were the children's Mother's Day Tea, Father's Day get together where the fathers and children made bird feeders and making gingerbread houses with the children at Christmas. She was adored by her students and was loved and respected by their parents. She will be missed by them all.



Lisa loved music, bicycling, gardening and was an avid Trekkie. She was a fan of old science fiction movies. She also loved baking and was known for her delicious pies.

She leaves her husband of 31 years, Daniel Cronin-Hennessy; two beautiful and talented daughters, Kira and Karly; her parents, Michael Cronin and Elizabeth Zuppe; her sister Lianne O'Connor; and her two cats, Artemis and Frisky.

Visitation will be held on Friday, Mar. 8 from 4-7 p.m. at Wilbraham Funeral Home, 2551 Boston Rd., Wilbraham. Family and friends may meet for Lisa's Funeral Mass on Saturday, March 9th at 11 AM at St. Mary's Church, 27 Somers Rd., Hampden. Burial will be at a later date. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society, PO Box 22718, Oklahoma City, OK 73123-1718.

Death Notices

Lisa Ann Cronin-Hennessy
Died Feb. 18, 2024
Services March 8
Wilbraham Funeral Home

OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$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.

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

Wilbraham library director, trustees attend Library Legislative Breakfast



Photo courtesy of Karen Ball, director of the Wilbraham Public Library

Pictured are Trustees Christine Goonan, Karen Grycel, Linda Dagradi, Library Director Karen Ball, Legislative Aide Cheryl Spinks, State Senator Jake Oliveira and Library Trustee Cheryl Wesolowski.

SPRINGFIELD – Wilbraham Public Library Director Karen Ball and members of the Board of Trustees attended the 2024 Li-

brary Legislative Breakfast sponsored by the Western Massachusetts Library Advocates and held at the Brightwood Branch of the

Springfield City Library on Friday, Feb. 23.

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'Let's Get Growing: Spring Gardening Workshops' on March 23

Eight classes designed to educate, empower home gardeners

By Dalton Zbierski
Editor
dzbierski@turley.com

WESTFIELD – The Western Massachusetts Master Gardener Association is excited to present the "Let's Get Growing: Spring Gardening Workshops" on March 23 from 8 a.m. to Noon.

The event will occur at Westfield Middle School and feature eight classes designed to teach and energize gardeners of all skill levels. Rosey Bonner, a member of the WMMGA Symposium Planning Team, offered a glimpse of what can be expected on the fourth Saturday of March.

"Believe it or not, this is our 25th year," Bonner said. "We will work with all gardeners from beginning to experienced and will continue our mission, which is not only sustainability and the idea of 'do no harm' but also rejuvenation and regeneration. We need to help the ecology get back to where it should be. Hopefully, our workshops offer a variety of things that can do that."

The event is structured so that there are four programs beginning at 8:30 a.m. and another four starting at 10:30 a.m. Attendees will be able to attend two.

One 8:30 a.m. program is "Planting for the Birds in Your Backyard" and will include information on turning your yard into a year-round sanctuary for birds with proper plant selection and placement. The session will be led by Dan Ziomek, the manager at Sugarloaf Gardens in Sutherland.

"He's known at least in the master gardeners' circle for being a great pruner, but one other thing in Dan's background is he's a birder," Bonner said. "He even runs a talk show on birding once a week, so he's going to put together his mastery of plants and birds and present on planting for birds in your backyard. He'll be talking about plants that are pretty, plants that are useful and how to bring them together."

Another 8:30 a.m. program is "Start Your Own Seeds – A Hands-on Workshop", which will educate gardeners on when and how to start seeds, care for seeds and plant them. Each participant will prepare a peat pot and plant tomato seeds to take

home in this session led by Master Gardener George Kingston.

"They'll learn the nitty gritty for everything from how do you choose seeds; do you get them from a catalog, or do you get them from Costco? What planting medium do you do? When do you transfer? All those kinds of ideas," Bonner said.

A third 8:30 a.m. program is "Pruning for Better Blooms" and will demystify the "when, why and how" of pruning shrubs to create the best flower show. Led by Horticulturist Jen Werner, a retired professor of Landscape Design Management at STCC, the session will review tools, techniques and specific pruning tips for popular flowering landscape shrubs such as hydrangeas, lilacs and rhododendrons.

"(Werner) is going to be talking about what plants to prune and what not to prune," Bonner said. "She'll talk about a variety of bushes and shrubs and how you can prune them."

The last 8:30 a.m. program, "The Joy of Container Gardening", is led by Master Gardener Priscilla Touhey. The session will demonstrate how to create your own ornamental container garden for spring, what plants are appropriate and how to maintain it.

"You can grow everything from vegetables to flowers in containers and make them beautiful," Bonner said.

One 10:30 a.m. program is "Garden for Life: Using Native Plants in the Landscape" and will be led by Blue Stem Natives Nursery Owner Kristen Nicholson. The session will address the immense value of native plants and discuss why planting natives in your yard is so important.

"You may know a lot about native plants, but you may not. Here are some good ones to start that are good combinations for butterflies or bees," Bonner said.

A second 10:30 a.m. program is "Essentials for the Upcoming Growing Season 101" and is led by Master Gardener and Green Thumb Guru Ed Sourdiffe. The workshop will help attendees learn what to expect in the spring, how to prioritize and what to do to ensure a successful gardening season.

"(Last year), several people wanted to know, 'Okay it's spring, it's March, what do I do?' That's why we put that workshop in," Bonner said. "How do you open a garden? Do you till or do you not till? If you ever watch Mass Appeal, Sourdiffe is

their resident gardener."

A third 10:30 a.m. program is "Setting Up Your Vegetable Garden for Success", led by Beth Carmichael, Margery Gerard and JoAnne Palmer, master gardeners and co-leaders of the Full Circle Food Pantry Garden in South Hadley. The workshop will empower attendees to start their own vegetable gardens or enhance their current gardens, helping to improve production and yields.

"A major issue out there is food security and also the cost of food," Bonner said, noting the garden produces 2,000 pounds of food every year for the South Hadley food pantry. "Even if you're able to feed your family, the cost has gone up, so we're really focusing this workshop along those lines of being able to set up your own vegetable garden for success."

Lastly, at 10:30 a.m., is "Friend or Foe: Helpful and Harmful Garden Insects and Worms", led by Entomologist Dr. Olga Kostromytska, an assistant professor at the UMass Stockbridge School of Agriculture. The program will discuss both beneficial and pest insects in New England and how to spot invasive species such as invasive worms.

"Rounding out our workshops, (Kostromytska) will be talking about insects that are good, so don't get rid of them all," Bonner said. "She'll talk about which ones are beneficial and which are harmful. She'll also talk about the hot topic out there, which is the Asiatic Jumping Worms that are destroying our soil and becoming more prevalent."

In between sessions, the Marketplace Fair will occur. The fair will include information tables on urbs, monarch butterflies, composting, bees and "Ask a Master Gardener".

"We've expanded that break in response to people giving us suggestions for topics, knowing we can't cover every topic, but how do we share more information. We're trying to take advantage of that middle piece more; not only get your coffee and look at vendors but get your questions answered," Bonner said.

One can register for the event online at WMMGA.org. If one registers on or before March 22, the cost to attend is \$30. On the day of the workshop, tickets will be sold for \$40, cash only.

Wilbraham history books available at WPL

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.

Wilbraham Junior Women's Club Scholarship

WILBRAHAM – The GFWC Wilbraham Junior Women's Club is dedicated to community improvement by enhancing the lives of others through volunteer service. In keeping with who we are, The Wilbraham Junior Women's Club is offering a \$1,000 scholarship to a Minnechaug High School graduating senior who will be attending a two-year, four-year or other accredited institution of higher learning.

Applications are available in the Minnechaug Regional High School Guidance Office.

Completed applications must be postmarked by March 25 and mailed to: Wilbraham Junior Women's Club, Attention Scholarship committee, PO Box 14, Wilbraham, MA 01095

VETERANS from page 1

Sasen said the PACT Act created increased visibility and awareness of VA claims in general and that veterans who hear about the PACT Act also learn about other benefits they are eligible for.

When thinking about veterans, Sasen said it is important to consider their families. If a veteran is deceased, their spouse may still be eligible to receive benefits.

For an example, a widow of a veteran who passed 20 years ago visited Sasen's office recently. Sasen asked what the veteran died of and learned it was cardiac arrest.

The veteran's cardiac arrest was connected to hypertension, which is a presumptive condition of Agent Orange exposure. After verifying that the veteran was in Vietnam for two tours, Sasen informed the widow that she is due dependent indemnity compensation, which will pay her more than \$1,600 a month for the rest of her life.

"Those are things we don't track. There's no census of veterans' widows," Sasen said. "So, when I tell you we have a 6% veteran population in Wilbraham with approximately 750 veterans, that doesn't take into account the widows of veterans or spouses or family members. We really have to look at this as a whole community type position and a whole community type benefit."

Sasen acknowledged he is not in a thankless job and he finds it rewarding every time he can lessen the financial burden on a veteran or their family.

"At the end of the day, I'm very proud of the work that I do because I know that I'm helping people in need and veterans and their families," Sasen said.

Sasen said that many veterans will tell him they don't want anything or to save the resource for the next veteran. Sasen informs them each time that it isn't the way the system works.

"I always have to argue and tell them that's not how budgets work. If you actually do want the next (veteran) to get that, you're going to need to use

these services so that they're here tomorrow. As somebody who goes to Washington D.C. and sees how these budgets actually work, that's a very true statement," Sasen said.

Sasen said you can't put words or value on improving someone's quality of life. He said every year, laws change, so the only thing someone in his position can do to advocate for more programs and benefits is show that they are utilized.

Sasen noted that there are misconceptions and there are veterans out there who don't know they're eligible for benefits. He said benefits can be ancillary, as one can turn into another, into another.

"If you've ever in your life raised your right hand and took an oath to protect this country against all enemies foreign and domestic, no matter what you think in your mind, you are a veteran," Sasen said. "You may not be eligible for every benefit out there, but you're a veteran; doesn't matter if you were active duty, if you were reserve, if you were guard, you are a veteran, in terms of what that word means."

Many veterans enter Sasen's office just to talk and by end of the conversation leave with knowledge of multiple benefit programs they didn't know about, and that's the key, he said.

Outreach is critical, but enough can never be completed except for "me walking door to door and giving everybody a two-hour spiel about every veteran benefit there is," Sasen said.

If any local veteran, or family member of a veteran, has a question, Sasen encourages them to reach out to his office at 413-596-8379. He stressed that if benefits aren't used, they'll be gone, and that's the bottom line.

"There's no level of compensation that can cover the fact that your veteran was poisoned by the government, and I know that," Sasen said. "But at least what we can do is give a very small validation that it happened and try to ease some kind of financial burden when we can along the way."

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Kelly Cronin goes for a layup.

Falcons makes WMass semis

Lylah Jeannotte gets ready to take a free throw.

WILBRAHAM – Last Monday evening, Minnechaug girls basketball opened up the Western Mass. Class A Tournament with a 53-29 win over Holyoke. The Falcons would get 11 points from Lylah Jeannotte and 10 points each from Jayla Comes and Kelly Cronin. The Falcons would lose in the semifinals against Northampton to finish 16-4 ahead of the state tournament. Minnechaug would draw a local match-up to start the Division 2 State Tournament. The Falcons were scheduled to host Chicopee Comprehensive on Wednesday, Feb. 28.



Jayla Comes goes makes her way down the hoop.



Elizabeth Woytowicz heads down the court to start a play.



Ava Manning makes a pass.

Pair of losses ousts Chaug from tournament



Max Baroni goes for the layup.



Josh Disa watches the opposition as he goes for a loose ball.



Gus Pryzbyl follows through on a three-point attempt.



CJ Socha makes his way around the perimeter.



Nick Disa uses his body to shield the ball.

WILBRAHAM – Last week, Minnechaug Regional High School boys basketball suffered a pair losses that would go on

to end its season. The Falcons lost nonplayoff games to East Longmeadow and Longmeadow. The Spartans would defeat Min-

nechaug last week 54-51 in the first nonplayoff game. The Falcons got 20 points from Miles Fergus. It was Chaug's last home

game of the day. A few nights later, the Falcons would lose by just one point to Longmeadow 53-52. The defeat brought Chaug

to 9-11 and the Falcons were not in the top 32 in Division 2 to get into the state tournament.

Turley photos by Sofia DiGrande

Regular season ends with win for Falcons

WEST SPRINGFIELD – Last Wednesday, Minnechaug participated in a nonplayoff game, defeating Easthampton 4-1. The Falcons scored two goals in the third period to extend their lead and secure the game. Jake Moore, Tristen Hottin, Ben Daniels, and Matt Beaudin all scored goals while Brayden O’Sullivan had two assists. The Falcons drew a local matchup to start the state tournament. Minnechaug was scheduled to face Agawam in the preliminary round of the Division 2 state tournament earlier this week

Candlepin League News

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

Tuesday Night Commercial Elks League

PALMER – The third and final round of the 2023-2024 league season began for the Commercial Elks League.

Finishing in first place was Life is Good with a record of 30-10 to secure a playoff spot at the end of the season. The Champs R Here finished in second place at 26.5-13.5.

Acres finished in third place at 24-16. Team BK finished at 23-17, Compression at 19.5-20.5, Blue B’s at 19-21 and Last in Line at 17-23. Life is Good will be joining Compression in the playoffs at the end of the season.

To start off the new round, Life is Good bowled against The Champs R Here. In game one, The Champs took the first game by a score of 371-353. In game two, Life is Good evened up the match by winning the second game 391-373.

Filling in for Life is Good is Bryan Surprise who had a big game in the second scoring 134. In game three, Champs R Here won the last game by a score of 381-372. Champs R Here won total pinfall by a final score of 1125-1116.

Last in Line bowled against Blue B’s in week one of round three. In game one, Blue B’s won 373-333. In game two, Blue B’s won again 354-352. In game three, Blue B’s won for a three-game sweep over Last in Line by a score of 363-358.

Total pinfall was won by Blue B’s 1090-1043.

Thursday Night Mixed League

The Thursday Night Mixed League continues in the second round of the candlepin league season. As of Feb. 15, Team One is in a tie for first place with Team Four. Both teams have a record of 19-13.

Team One bowled against Team Three on the night of Thursday, Feb. 22. In game one, Team One took the first game 455-402. Sean Comerford of Team One bowled his best game of the season, 127.

In game two, Team One was the winner yet again by a score of 413-392. In game three, Team One took the third game 430-364. Team One took total pinfall by a final score 1298-1158.

Team Four bowled against Team Six. In game one, Team Six won the first game by a score of 399-369. In game two, Team Six won again by a score of 428-402. Ron Restaino of Team Six led the team in game two by bowling a 109.

In game three, Team Six won the third game for a three-game sweep over Team Four. Team Six scored 430 and Team Four scored 413. Team Six won total pinfall by a final score of 1257-1184.

Registration now open for Quabbin Valley baseball

The Quabbin Valley Over-28 Baseball League is looking to infuse new talent into its league for the 2024 season.

Registration for the 2024 season is now open and any interested players can go to www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org to get registered, or to seek more information or make inquiries about the league. The league website will also be updated over the next month with information about the upcoming season.

There are many open roster spots available in the league for the 2024 season, which is tentatively

scheduled to begin on Sunday, April 21. The league plays most Sunday from late April through late August with playoffs following that. The league plays a 15-game schedule and typically fields six teams each year. Games are usually played at 10 a.m. with fields in Easthampton and South Hadley normally used.

The Quabbin Valley league is an all-abilities league and all are welcome to join. Eligibility is players who are age 28 and over. You must be 30 to be eligible to pitch in the league. Your age for eligibility is whatever age you will turn in 2024.

The league is also able to entertaining taking in an entire group as a team to add to the league. Please email the league board for to inquire about entering a team.

The league is currently in the process of preparing for the 2024 season and held a meeting on Feb. 18 to discuss plans for the upcoming season. The next meeting is scheduled for Sunday March 24 at 11:40 a.m. at the Hangar Pub & Grill in South Hadley. All are welcome to attend the meeting, ask questions and express interest in joining.

T-Birds suffer loss at Bridgeport

BRIDGEPORT, Conn. – The Springfield Thunderbirds (24-22-3-2) fell to the Bridgeport Islanders (16-28-6-1) on Sunday afternoon at Total Mortgage Arena by a final score of 5-3.

Things appeared to be starting well for the T-Birds on this day, as Sam Bitten cashed in for his first career AHL goal at the 8:19 mark of the first period when he arrived at the top of the crease and jammed a Drew Callin centering pass through Henrik Tikkanen's legs to make it 1-0 for the visitors.

Springfield increased the lead to 2-0 at 12:54 when Ryan Suzuki sent an alley-oop through the neutral zone that landed inside the Islander blue line. Jakub Vrana accelerated to beat the Bridgeport defender to the puck and then slid a backhand shot through Tikkanen to extend the lead on his ninth goal of the season.

55 seconds after the Vrana tally, though, the Islanders made their way to the scoresheet as Tyce Thompson got a step behind the

defense and lifted a perfect backhand shot over Colten Ellis to cut the lead to 2-1 heading into the first intermission.

The second period began uneventfully, but Suzuki changed matters when he powered down the right wing, protecting the puck before elevating a forehand chip shot over Tikkanen to make it a 3-1 game at 6:34 of the period.

Ellis remained busy but strong as the period entered its final three minutes en route to a career-high 49 saves. Unfortunately for the T-Birds, Bridgeport All-Star Ruslan Iskhakov snapped a goal drought dating back to Jan. 15 to single-handedly pull the Isles even. First, the crafty centerman made his way to the edge of the crease near the right circle, beating Ellis on a second chance after the T-Bird goalie made a strong reactionary save on the first attempt. That tally cut the score to 3-2 at 17:08.

Not even two minutes later, now with under a minute to go in

the period, Iskhakov delivered the equalizer with a one-time rocket off a circle-to-circle pass from Matt Maggio, and Bridgeport headed into the dressing room with new life in the 3-3 game.

The Islanders were relentless in the final 20 minutes, managing 22 shots on the T-Birds net. Ellis and the Springfield defense held the fort as long as they could before a Sam Bolduc point wrister glanced off traffic and skipped past Ellis to give Bridgeport the lead for good at 11:34 of the third. Hudson Fasching rounded out the scoring with a power-play marker into an empty net in the closing seconds.

The T-Birds' busy stretch continues next Friday in Providence as they tangle with the Bruins at America Mutual Pavilion. Springfield returns home on Saturday when they host the Laval Rocket at 7:05 p.m. at the MassMutual Center.

Worcester wraps up road trip with loss to Florida

ESTERO, FL – The Worcester Railers HC (22-22-4-2, 50pts) lost to the Florida Everblades (27-15-7-2, 63pts) on Saturday night by the final score of 5-3 in front of a crowd of 7,650 at Hertz Arena. The Railers have wrapped up their six-game southern road trip and return to the DCU Center against the Trois-Rivieres Lions on Saturday, March 2nd at 7:05pm.

The Everblades opened the scoring with goals from Sean Josling (1-2-3) and Joe Pendenza (1-1-2) just 2:43 apart to grab a 2-0 lead. Worcester responded 27 seconds later as Jack Quinlivan (1-0-1) wrapped a backhand behind the net past Johnson to make it 2-1 going into the second. Worcester kept the pressure on the Everblades in the second as they added on two more from Zsombor Garat (1-1-2) and Andrei Bakanov (1-0-1) to take their first lead of the night going into the third at 3-2. Florida took the lead in the third thanks to goals

from Will Reilly (1-0-1), Mark Senden (1-0-1) and an empty netter from Brett Davis (1-0-1) to take the game 5-3.

Florida controlled the pace of play across the first fourteen minutes in the first, culminating in the game's first goal. Sean Josling (14th) received a backdoor pass from Oliver Chau who received the puck from Pendenza below the goal line to bury it past Cole Ceci in net for Worcester to put the Everblades ahead 1-0. With Florida on the power play 2:43 later in the period, Joe Pendenza turned on a one-timer and sent it past Ceci as Florida led 2-0 late in the period. Jack Quinlivan (4th) responded for Worcester just 27 seconds later. He took the puck off the stick of Zsombor Garat and wrapped it with his backhand inside the near post from beneath the net to get Worcester to within one heading into the second.

Worcester picked up the only goals in the second. Zsombor Garat

(1st) hammered a heavy one-timer on the power-play from Trevor Cosgrove for his first professional North American goal. His marker tied the game at the 7:29 mark of the second. Later in the period with 4:51 left in the second, Andrei Bakanov (7th) ripped a wrister past the blocker of Cam Johnson following a perfect drop pass from Anthony Callin to give Worcester the 3-2 lead entering the third.

The Everblades would be the only team to score in the third period. First it was Will Reilly (6th) on a wrister from the point that beat Ceci blocker side to tie the game 3-3 just 7:49 into the frame. From there, Mark Senden (9th) found the puck barreling down the left wing and buried it through the legs of Ceci to make it 4-3 Florida. Brett Davis (3rd) sealed the deal for Florida with an empty netter with just 1:31 remaining in the game to give Florida the win and the final score of 5-3.

This Week in Rec Spec Day Camp Lottery Registration

WILBRAHAM – Although summer seems far off in the distance, we are busy planning our summer programming and our popular Spec Day Camp. In the past, Spec Day Camp registration has been first come first serve with in person registration. At the WPRD we aim to listen to community feedback and improve our processes. Therefore, this year, Spec Day Camp registration will

be lottery based. Every family that is interested in registering for Spec Day Camp will have an equal opportunity to do so through a lottery and registration will NOT be a first come first serve line at the Recreation Office. Our hope is to provide equality to all families with a lottery. Be on the lookout for more information on how to enter the lottery on March 4 via email and social media.



SENIORS

Monthly Highlights for March at the Hampden Senior Center

HAMPDEN – The following programs will occur at the senior center on Allen Street in the coming weeks.

Irish Dance with Phil

Fridays March 1 and 8 at 1 p.m.

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

Learn Irish dance moves with Phil. Direct from Ireland, her Irish brogue comes at no extra cost to you.

The cost is \$6 per class. Please call 566-5588 to sign up.

"African Drumming" with Jason

12-week Session – through April 12 Fridays, 2:15 p.m. to 3:15 p.m., March 1 and 8

No classes on March 15 and 29.

The cost is \$6 per class. Please call 566-5588 for availability

and put your name on our waitlist for future classes.

Learn to play the Ukulele with Sue

6-week Session – through March 11 Mondays, 1 p.m. to 2 p.m., March 4 and 11

The cost is \$6 per class. Please call 566-5588 for availability

and put your name on our waitlist for future classes.

Create a Greeting Card with Ellie!

Tuesday, March 5, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Come and discover endless possibilities for creating your own personal greeting card.

Meet new friends and learn new techniques each month.

The cost is \$3.00 per person; all materials are provided.

Please call 566-5588 to reserve your seat, space is limited.

You've Got Mail

Joe Green will teach a 3-part class on the use of email.

Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 9:45 a.m., 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.

Meet your Veteran Service Officer, Jason Burgener

Wednesday, March 6 at 9:30 a.m. at the Hampden Senior Center.

Coffee and light refreshments will be provided.

Jason is available on Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Hampden Townhouse auditorium.

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

Elms College Nursing Students will be here

Wednesdays, 9:15 a.m. to Noon

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

In celebrating National Nutrition Month, come and enjoy a free Blueberry Smoothie with the nursing students on

Wednesday, March 13 at 10 a.m.

Please call 566-5588 to let us know you will be joining us.

STCC Dental Hygiene Students are coming!

Students will be here on Thursdays, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., March 7, 21, and 28.

Topics will include discussions about

cavities, periodontal disease, dental prosthetics, and oral-systemic link. They will have raffle prizes, free goodies, and lots of information. Stop by their table to learn about the importance of oral health!

They will be providing oral cancer screenings on March 21.

STCC Dental offers the following procedures:

Dental Exams, Regular Cleanings with X-rays, Deep Cleanings, Full Mouth X-Rays, Panoramic X-rays, etc. *A full menu of procedures and fees is available at reception at the Hampden Senior Center.*

Springfield Technical Community College dental hygiene students are under the direct supervision of licensed dental hygienists. Dentists provide all treatment procedures.

Please call 413-755-4900 to make an appointment.

St. Patrick's Day Luncheon

Friday, March 15 at Noon Entertainment provided by Sarah the Fiddler.

Come and enjoy a delicious meal of Corned Beef, Cabbage & Carrots, Red Bliss Potatoes, Rye Bread, and Dessert. The cost is \$2 per person suggested donation to GSSSI for lunch.

Please call 566-5588 *starting March 1* to reserve your seat. Space is limited.

Sponsored by Hampden Cultural Council.

This program is supported in part by a grant from the Hampden Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Easter Breakfast

Wednesday, March 27 at 9 a.m.

Becky and Wendy will be making a hot breakfast, so join us for

Egg Bake, Breakfast Potatoes, Fruit, Coffee, and Juice.

The cost is \$3.00 per person. Please call 566-5588 to reserve your seat. Space is limited.

Grab & Go East Dinner

Thursday, March 28, pick up from 2 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Enjoy a delicious Easter Dinner of Ham, Potatoes, Vegetable, and Dessert.

The cost is \$5 per person. Please call 566-5588 *starting March 1st* to order your dinner.

HELP US STOCK OUR SHELVES with Toothbrushes & Toothpaste!

Thank you to those who donated liquid dish soap 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 Wednesdays, March 6 and 20 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.

Rotary Scholarship applications now available

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham-Hampden Rotary Club Scholarship Committee, has announced that applications for the 2024 Rotary Club scholarships are now available in the Guidance Departments of Minnechaug Regional High School, Wilbraham & Monson Academy and Pope Francis Preparatory School.

Applications are due no later than April 1, 2024. The scholarships are available to qualified high school students who are residents of Wilbraham or Hampden.

The club will again award nine scholarships, each in the amount of \$1,500. Applications may also be obtained from Brad Sperry by calling 413-537-4171.

Wilbraham Women's Club to Award Scholarships

WILBRAHAM – The Wilbraham Women's Club will be awarding several \$1,000 scholarships to graduating seniors who are residents of Wilbraham or Hampden and who will be attending a four-year college or university.

The criteria considered are academic achievement, character and leadership. Applications are available in the Guidance Office at Minnechaug Regional High School. For those attending other high schools, please email Mrs. Teed, at rae.teed@gmail.com. All applications must be postmarked by Tuesday, March 26, 2024, to be considered.

Pastel Workshop to be held at the Wilbraham library

WILBRAHAM - Award-winning pastel artist Gregory Maichack will return to the Wilbraham Public Library to teach his new workshop, Seascapes inspired by Winslow Homer, on Monday, March 18 from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. This pastel painting workshop is designed for beginners to experienced artists. Participants ages 18+ will experiment with the artist's professional-grade pastels, pencils and paper. Materials will be provided and all attendees will get to take their artwork home. Registration opens Monday, Feb. 26, and space is limited. To register, please contact the library at 413-596-6141 or visit the Event Calendar at www.wilbrahamlibrary.org. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Wilbraham Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency. Funding is also provided by the Wilbraham Friends of the Library.

To learn more, contact Emilie Lang at 413-596-6141 or elang@wilbrahamlibrary.org.

Polish Plate Dinner to be held March 9

INDIAN ORCHARD – A Polish Plate Dinner (Four Pierogi, one Golumbki, Kielbasa, Kapusta, Rye Bread) will be held on Saturday, March 9, from 3 p.m. – 6 p.m. at Immaculate Conception. Church Hall 25 Parker St., Indian Orchard. Eat In or Take Out. \$20. per plate. For Tickets please call: Maria Kowalski at 413-222-6229, Irena Wurszt at 413-427-5846 and Maryla Bukowski at 413-427-9464.

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CLUES ACROSS

- Home of Iowa State University
- ___-fi (slang)
- Mottled green and yellow fruit
- Capable of thinking and expressing oneself clearly
- Sports broadcaster Eagle
- Midday
- Kinsmen
- Cable network
- Simpleton
- Brunch beverage
- Fed
- European capital
- Native inhabitants
- Mechanical device
- Rare geese native to Hawaii
- Bedroom furnishing
- The products of human creativity

CLUES DOWN

- Mass transit option
- Made a mistake
- Sacred sound symbol
- Large N. American reindeer
- Dull and flat
- Partner to huffing
- Written works
- Monetary unit of Serbia
- Midway between east and southeast
- Peninsula of southwestern Asia
- Widely used multiuser OS
- Aggressive dog
- Varnished
- Hindu queen
- Time units, abbr.
- Farm animals
- Capital of Latvia
- Where golfers begin
- Takes to civil court

CLUES DOWN

- One who graduated
- An inspired holy person
- Electronic counter-countermeasures
- A place to store things
- Indian instrument
- Spanish saloon
- Whole number
- Not fastened
- Gives a boost
- Lounges about
- Interested in
- Remove salt
- Type of sword
- Naturally occurring solid material
- Gets involved without being invited
- Feline
- Bobby ___, NHL champ
- "Kill Bill" actress Thurman
- Hawaiian dish
- Moroccan coastal region
- Baseball statistic
- Long period of time
- Moved earth
- Central Netherlands city
- Take stock of
- Central processing unit
- Distinctive qualities one generates
- Getting stuck
- Loss of bodily movements
- Veranda
- Abrupt
- What cats do
- Expresses pleasure
- Type of cheese
- Professional STEM organization
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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS VILLAGE CENTER MUNICIPAL PARKING FEASIBILITY STUDY AND TRAFFIC FLOW MASTER PLAN

WILBRAHAM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE WILBRAHAM, MASSACHUSETTS The Wilbraham Economic Development Committee (EDC) for the Town of Wilbraham (TOW), Massachusetts is soliciting Requests for Qualifications (RFQ) from Civil Engineering Planning and/or Landscape Architectural Firms, experienced in producing municipal parking and village center traffic flow Feasibility Studies and Master Plans and licensed in the State of Massachusetts, to develop a Feasibility Study and Comprehensive Municipal Parking and Pedestrian/Vehicular Traffic Flow Master Plan for Crane Park, 322V Main Street, Wilbraham, MA 01095.

RFQ documents will be available on February 21, 2024 at 2:00 p.m. Documents may be obtained by visiting the Town's website at: www.wilbraham-ma.gov, under "Government/Bid Postings."; and on Combuys.

The Fee for this service is Not to Exceed \$50,000. The Fee shall be submitted with the RFQ in a separate, sealed envelope.

Questions should be

directed in writing to Nick Breault, Wilbraham Town Administrator, at: nbreault@wilbraham-ma.gov

RFQ's due no later than 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 21, 2024 in the Select Board/Town Administrator's Office, Wilbraham Town Hall, 240 Springfield Street, Wilbraham, MA 01095. RFQ's will be opened at 2:05 p.m. in the Select Board's Meeting Room on that date.

The Wilbraham Select Board shall be the Awarding Authority. The Wilbraham Select Board reserves in its sole discretion the right to reject any or all bids, to waive informalities, or to issue a new RFQ, as deemed in the best interest of the Town. 02/22, 02/29/2024

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 Docket No. HD24P0379GD In the matter of: James Goss Of: Wilbraham, MA Respondent Alleged Incapacitated Person

CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIAN FOR INCAPACITATED PERSON PURSUANT TO G.L. c. 190B, §5-304

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by Dept of Developmental Services of Springfield,

MA in the above captioned matter alleging that James Goss is in need of a Guardian and requesting that Edward J. Wojtowicz of South Deerfield, MA (or some other suitable person) be appointed as Guardian to serve Without Surety on the bond.

The petition asks the court to determine that the Respondent is incapacitated, that the appointment of a Guardian is necessary, and that the proposed Guardian is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court and may contain a request for certain specific authority.

You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 a.m. on the return date of 03/21/2024. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

IMPORTANT NOTICE The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or

financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense.

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara M Hyland, First Justice of this Court. Date: February 21, 2024

Rosemary A Saccomani Register of Probate 02/29/24

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 Docket No. HD18P0086GD In the matter of: James Goss Of: Wilbraham, MA Respondent Alleged Incapacitated Person CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF TERMINATION OF A GUARDIAN OF INCAPACITATED PERSON

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by Dept of Developmental Services of Springfield, MA in the above captioned matter requesting that the court: Terminate the Guardianship.

The petition asks the court to make a determination that the Guardian and/or Conservator should be allowed to resign; or should be removed for good cause; or that Guardianship and/or Conservatorship is no longer necessary and therefore should be terminated. The original petition is on file with the court.

You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 a.m. on the return date of 03/21/2024. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

IMPORTANT NOTICE The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right

to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense.

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara M Hyland, First Justice of this Court. Date: February 21, 2024

Rosemary A Saccomani Register of Probate 02/29/24

WILBRAHAM CONSERVATION COMMISSION LEGAL NOTICE Town of Wilbraham

The Wilbraham Conservation Commission will hold a public meeting on Monday, March 11, 2024 at 6:00 PM at the Wilbraham Town Hall, 240 Springfield Street on the Request for Determination of Applicability filed by the Massachusetts Electric Company to determine whether the activities depicted on submitted plans is subject to the Wetlands Protection Act and the Wilbraham Wetland Bylaw. Work includes the installation of a new utility pole, feeder monitors and a 4G communication unit between existing pole 8 on Cottage Ave and the customer owned utility pole at 33 Cottage Ave. Portions of the work are within the 100ft Buffer Zone to Inland Bank/Bordering Vegetated Wetlands and 200ft Riverfront Area to the Chicopee River. Information relating to this application is on file with the Conservation Commission.

Christopher Brown, Chairman 02/29/2024

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-7758 Docket No. HD24P0395EA Estate of: Michael Alexander Sloan Date of Death: 09/14/2022 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 Kathryn A. Sloan of North Hollywood, CA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order

and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: Kathryn A. Sloan of North Hollywood, CA 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 03/19/2024.

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 23, 2024

Rosemary A. Saccomani Register of Probate 02/29/24

WILBRAHAM PLANNING BOARD

The Wilbraham Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on Wednesday, March 13, 2024, at 6:00 PM in the Town Office Building, 240 Springfield Street, on the application of Wilbraham Monson Academy for site plan approval as required under Sections 3.4.4.1 and 13.5 of the Wilbraham Zoning By-Law to allow renovation and expansion of the Gill Chapel building (for conversion to a dining hall) and expansion of the associated parking lot on the Wilbraham Monson Academy campus on property known as 404 Main Street as shown on information on file in the Planning Office and posted for public viewing on the Planning Board page of the Town of Wilbraham website at www.wilbraham-ma.gov/123/Planning-Board. Both in person and virtual participation are available. To participate virtually go to https://meet.goto.com/744758973 or call 877-309-2073 (Access Code: 744-758-973).

JohnMcCloskey Chair 02/22, 02/29/2024

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PART-TIME LEAD CUSTODIAN United Congregational Church of Holyoke. Custodian wanted to ensure the upkeep and cleanliness of our building. Application and complete job description available at www.uccholyoke.org/contact/employment-opportunities or submit a cover letter and resume to office.uccholyoke@gmail.com or call 413-532-1483.

SQUIER & CO. is looking to hire an oil truck driver. \$40,000-\$60,000 full time. Squire will provide CDL school for the right candidate! Email: squieroil@verizon.net. Call 413-267-3184 or visit us at 5 Squier Ave., Monson, MA. Monday-Friday.



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