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The Wilbraham-Hampden

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‘Dial M for Murder’



Turley photo by Noelle Hisgen

The cast and crew of “Dial M for Murder” in a group photo after opening night. The play, performed at Thornton W. Burgess Middle School, on March 7, 8 and 9.

Theatre Guild of Hampden’s production a triumph

By Noelle Hisgen
Correspondent

HAMPDEN - The Theatre Guild of Hampden recently opened their two-week production of “Dial M for Murder” at Thornton W. Burgess Middle School, kicking off on a triumphant note for opening night on Feb. 28.

The play is about ex-tennis star Tony Wendice, who wants his wife Margot murdered so he can get her inheritance. When he discovers her affair with Max Halliday, he comes up with a plan to kill her.

He blackmails an old acquaintance to kill her, but due to the plan going awry, Margot is alive. Now, Tony

needs to outwit the police to keep his secret.

The show features Andy Price as Tony Wendice, Katie Whalen as Margot Wendice (for the evening performances), Taylor Raucher as Margot Wendice (for the Matinee performances), David Martin as Max Halliday, Brad Shephard as Inspector Hubbard, Nathan Medlock as Captain

Lesgate, and Ben Bump as the offstage voices.

“Dial M for Murder” has been directed by Stuart W. Gamble, with stage management by Karolina Kopczynski. Gamble and Kopczynski both contributed in addition to the costumes for the production, which came out

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Youth Coalition renames MVP Award in honor of Gina Kahn

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM/HAMPDEN - The Hampden-Wilbraham Partners for Youth Coalition has renamed its MVP Award for Gina Kahn.

Kahn, the coalition’s founder, passed away on Jan. 9, leaving behind a legacy of service, empowerment and positive impact on the school district and throughout the community. She is also the MVP Award recipient for January 2025, which was presented to her family.

Now renamed The Gina Kahn MVP Award, the award recognizes community members who go above and beyond for youth of all ages in the community, with prior recipients including MRHS Swim Coach Erik Mandell, MRHS Technology/Computer Science/Business Teacher and Football Coach Cam Savoie, MRHS Student Services Teacher and Above The Influence Club Advisor Jay Dalessio, Kellie Hummel, market manager of the Wilbraham Farmers’ Market, and Student Resource Officer Dan Menard.

Anyone who wishes to nominate someone for this award can visit hwp4y.org/

mvp. They can also email Brianna Berneche, director of HWP4Y, at bberneche@hwrdsd.org or Jackie Hafner, community engagement/communications coordinator for HWP4Y, at jhafner@hwrdsd.org.

People who submit nominations can be anonymous and will be kept anonymous.

HWP4Y is a coalition with community members and agencies working together to reduce youth substance use by promoting physical health, mental health and safety for students at HWRSD. It is coordinated with the school district.

Berneche and Hafner said the award is an opportunity to highlight those who create a positive impact on the community.

“With everything negative going on at times, highlighting special people that really can make an impact with the youth and the community is really helpful,” Hafner said.

“Basically the mission of the MVP Campaign—which stands for Most Valuable Person—is just to highlight anyone in the community who goes above and beyond for youth in this community. So, it can be in any capacity. You don’t have to be a teacher or

Please see **KAHN**, page 8



Gina Kahn

Selectboard discusses Veteran Property Tax Exemption

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com

HAMPDEN - The Selectboard discussed the Veteran Property Tax Exemption during their Feb. 18 meeting.

The board was joined by Kelly McCormick, MAA Principal Assessor, Board

of Assessors Member Phil Schneider and Veterans Services Officer Jason Burgener for the discussion.

McCormick explained this was a pickup from a previous meeting where three local options to further extend benefits for veterans and their families for their property tax exemptions were discussed.

“We had talked about three different options, but since the last meeting I spoke to my board again. We had another meeting. I also had a chance to speak to Jason again—our Veterans Service Officer—and everyone agreed that, I think, the main focus should be on Clause 22J. Which is one of the new local options that was

just passed under the HERO Act,” McCormick said. “The other two that were mentioned at the last meeting, we wanted to make everyone aware that they were available—and they have been for a few years back at least—but the 22J is one of the new options.”

McCormick said this op-

tion allows municipalities to increase the current exemption amounts for veterans by a certain percentage up to 100%.

“So, currently, we have the Clause 22 Veteran Exemption which is for veterans that have a 10% disability rating up to but not including 100% and they receive a \$400

annual exemption,” McCormick said. “And then we have the Clause 22E, which is for our 100% disabled veterans and they currently receive \$1,000 a year off their property taxes.”

McCormick added of those amounts, the state reim-

Please see **TAX**, page 13

Virtual forum to be held ahead of work on Route 20

The online meeting is March 6 at 6:30 p.m.

By Dalton Zbierski
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM – Attention Wilbraham residents and business owners, a virtual public hearing is scheduled for March 6 to cover the scope of the work that is set to occur on Route 20 in several years.

The meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on March 6. It will be hosted online at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events>.

The hearing will offer residents an opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed project, which includes resurfacing and other work.

Town officials promise that all views and comments submitted in response to the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum possible extent.

During the Feb. 24 meeting of the Wilbraham Select

Board, several town officials spoke on the opportunity that the meeting will provide community members to get familiar with the scheduled project.

“It’s basically Friendly’s to just beyond the Cottage Ave. Bridge,” Town Administrator Nick Breault said. “On the town’s website, you can click on the announcement and then it will bring you to a page that has a document of the plans going all through where the project extends from.”

Select Board Chair Sue Bunnell described the upcoming work as “repaving and some reconfigurations of a couple of intersections.”

Bunnell recommended that residents partake in the public hearing to see what is coming.

“I would strongly encourage anybody who is on Route 20 with a business or [home] to make sure to get a look at those plans,” Bunnell said. “People are talking about it going out to bid in 2027, so it’s not like it’s happening

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Continental Soldier comes to Wilbraham

By Patricia Sullivan
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - Rob Keenan of Agawam, president and captain of the 25th Continental Regiment, a group of historical re-enactors, gave a fascinating presentation of life in the time of the American Revolution at the Wilbraham Senior Center on Feb. 27.

Keenan, a former history teacher, shared his wealth of knowledge about the war, about the duties of soldiers and about civilian life of the times. He delivered his remarks with humor and answered many questions from his rapt audience of 25 seniors with authority.

He began his presentation with a display of what women wore in the late 18th century. Speaking in character as a Continental soldier, Keenan looked at the crowd and remarked, “It’s disconcerting to see ladies wearing gentlemen’s clothing!”

Keenan explained that women of the time wore a chemise next to their skin and up to 12 petticoats in cold weather. Their clothing

included stays, which served not as corsets but as back braces for all the heavy labor women performed—fetching water, slaughtering animals, cooking with heavy cast iron, cleaning, making candles and soap, and caring for children.

Men’s clothing included spatterdashes—long gaiters worn to keep socks and pants clean.

“Socks were the most difficult thing to make, so you want to protect them as much as possible,” Keenan said.

Keenan wore a Northeast forces regimental frock of blue with white trim. He made the 40 buttons for his frock himself.

It took four days to cast them in metal, sand them and sew them on his uniform.

American soldiers also wore captured redcoats, he said, and often wore civilian clothes.

“Any color was okay,” Keenan said.

Because people bathed infrequently in the 18th century, soldiers wore cocked hats to keep their hair clean.

“This is a terrible hat,” Keenan said. “It’s heavy and



Turley photos by Patricia Sullivan

Rob Keenan came to the Wilbraham Senior Center dressed in a Continental Regiment uniform.

stiff, but looks marvelous!”

After discussing clothing, Keenan moved on to talk about guns and ammu-

munition, tableware, manners, war strategy, military com-

Please see **SOLDIER**, page 10

Metalsmithing heals perfectionism by creating copper bookmarks

By Amanda Munson
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - “This event will be loud, but the outcome is worth it!” During February break for the schools, the library held a Metalsmithing Workshop that offered a unique memento for teens to keep for a lifetime on Feb. 18.

This program was sponsored by the Wilbraham Cultural Council.

With 14 teens in attendance, the class was structured by reviewing a safety lesson, tips and tricks while using the tools, buffing out the bookmark and tying it with a string to take home.

Instructing the class was Metalsmith and Educator Heather Beck of Heather Beck Designs, based in Easthampton at Eastworks and known for her custom-made jewelry. Beck was returning to the library for one of the more popular teen events.

Beginning the event by doing a brief overview of what the guests can expect, Beck is able to walk around and instruct attendees while they create their copper bookmark.

“I work in gold, copper and silver. All the shiny tinies! Engagement rings and wedding bands with diamonds, that’s my bread and butter. I do all custom work and I sell my work at the Assemble store in Northampton and then my studio is in Eastworks. Most of my work comes from people seeing my products at the store and requesting custom made jewelry,” Beck said. “I’ve been teaching and metalsmithing since 2006, I started at libraries seven to eight years ago, and then began in Hadley where I handed my business card over and the librarian was immediately intrigued by

my metalsmith educator title. They asked if I was interested in teaching and we soon invented the class together. I didn’t realize libraries all talk to each other and the next day I had 25 libraries reach out! It was so great.”

Spread across the tables were examples of what Beck created in the past and it was hard for some teens to see that finished work, compare theirs to the finished examples, and contemplate whether they should change it to make it look “better”. When asked about the comparison aspect of her craft and what she experiences from all ages, Beck responded with her favorite quote, ‘Comparison is the thief of joy’ by Theodore Roosevelt.

“I feel like that ‘s my quote. It’s so true though in

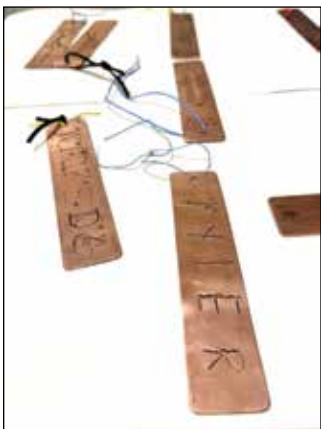


An example of the copper bookmark made by Metalsmith Heather Beck.

my classes since guests will look at the person next to them and say ‘Mine isn’t as good as theirs!’ so I always try to get them back to what



Metalsmith and Educator Heather Beck demonstrating how to properly hammer and accurately mark the copper, hopefully getting the expected outcome for the patrons.



Around 15 bookmarks were made in the hour and a half time block, with unique designs of the teens favorite movies to their names, there were endless possibilities.

they were doing and reiterate that they are missing the point. Teens will always play

around with whatever comes into their mind, they are not afraid to make mistakes, adults are definitely terrified to make mistakes,” Beck said. “Adults are very closed in so my classes are really about healing perfectionism, my whole thing is to really experience the tools and try out a new thing! To be in the present moment and not in the stress of their daily lives, take all that trauma people have been carrying and get it into the copper, out of the body and the ability to hammer your feelings away.”

The most surprising fact about Beck was that she made all the chasing tools for the workshop.

“I am a tiny blacksmith in my studio, if I need a tool I just make it! It’s so fun. Having the agency to be able to do that and create is great,” Beck said.

For those who want to learn more or take a future class, Heather Beck Designs offers classes, custom orders and more at HeatherBeckDesigns.com.

To learn more about upcoming events at the library, visit wilbrahamlibrary.org.



Teen Services and Young Adult Librarian Rachel Hapgood got in on the fun and created a bookmark that will, “Last a lifetime!”.



All the tools that were used during the class were made by Beck, who commented how if she didn’t have a forming stake or mandrel for example, she just made it for her next event instead of buying a new one.



Turley photos by Amanda Munson
Another example of the copper bookmarks.

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Container Gardening Workshop at the Wilbraham Library

WILBRAHAM– Dive into the world of container gardening at the Wilbraham Public Library on Monday, March 10 at 6 p.m.

Expert gardener Mark Gostkiewicz of Tri Gable Lea Farm LLC will share everything you need to know to create a thriving container garden in any space.

In this class, you’ll learn about the different types of containers available, discover the importance of proper soil and drainage in container gardening, get tips on choosing and caring for plants in a container garden, learn how to design and layout your container garden for maximum impact, and get advice on seasonal considerations and hardiness zones. Plus, you’ll receive a list of all the notes and recommended reading to continue your learning.

This free event is sponsored by the Wilbraham Friends of the Library. Registration is encouraged as space is limited.

Sign up at wilbrahamlibrary.org, or call the library at 413-596-6141.

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12 people apply to be on Wilbraham’s Complete Streets Advisory Board

There are currently two open seats

By Dalton Zbierski
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM – A dozen community members have applied to be on Wilbraham’s Complete Streets Advisory Board, the Select Board announced on Feb. 24.

There are two open seats for the committee, which already includes five town employees or officials. The openings could expand to four, but only time will tell.

The Complete Streets Funding Program provides Massachusetts municipalities with money to make their streets safe and accessible for all modes of travel for people of all ages. These travel modes include walking, biking, driving and transit systems.

Last year, Department of Public Works Director Tonya Capparello announced that the town was looking to partake in the program, and the Select Board has supported the idea.

A key component of getting Complete Streets funding involves a community setting up a Complete Streets Advisory Board to work with the state and help steer the work to the necessary locations.

Now that five individuals associated with the town have joined the group, two community members will also be chosen.

Select Board Chair Sue Bunnell was impressed with the candidates, noting that “once again, we have a wealth of opportunity with folks who have come forward.”

Speaking to the 12 applicants, Bunnell offered them a chance to get a closer look at how the advisory board functions.



Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

The Select Board discussed how 12 people have applied to be on the town’s Complete Streets Advisory Board during their Feb. 24 meeting.

“In case anybody’s watching who’s an applicant, Town Hall will be reaching out to the folks who indicated an interest that there will be a first meeting of this group, which they will be invited to watch – the group as it currently consists – as they move a couple things forward in a timely manner, and then there’s a little breathing room to get more folks on board,” Bunnell said.

Speaking to her colleagues on the board, Bunnell questioned how the interview process should go, as the Select Board will make the final call as to who earns the final spots.

Bunnell proposed interviewing all 12 applicants during one meeting, but Select Board Clerk Marc Ducey said that would take too long. Bunnell responded by informing him it could be possible if each applicant is given three minutes to speak.

Ducey asked if they could narrow down the candidate field to a lower number prior to the interview process. Select Board Vice Chair Michael Squindo agreed, pointing out that the last time the board tried to quickly interview a dozen applicants for a committee in one meeting, he

didn’t think it was thorough enough.

“Having tried that, I think I’d like a little bit deeper of a dive with the folks that we want to learn more about,” Squindo said.

Squindo pointed out that it would be interesting to hear more from the people who have never been involved to the town before. While he applauds people who regularly serve on town boards, Squindo is intrigued by new faces.

“What I want to put out is if we should have a focus on folks who aren’t as engaged in other committees because it brings in new insight,” Squindo said.

Squindo added that it would be best to ask the current members of the advisory board what exactly they’re looking for in candidates, as some have great professional experience while others have more of an experiential background.

“Getting that feedback from the committee I think would be able to help us from there if we can tailor it down to some degree, which means we might have to dig a little deeper into who’s who,” Squindo said.

Ducey inquired if it would be possible to expand the

opening to four, noting that a nine-member board wouldn’t be too big.

“So, we have 12 applicants, which is a great response. Can we expand it to four so we can get some of those experiential [people] as well as the [professionals],” Ducey said. “Nine is not an overwhelming number to me to work with. I just thought, perhaps we could.”

Town Administrator Nick Breault said he would look to find out if this is possible.

Regardless, the Select Board was extremely happy with the number of people who have taken the time to apply to join the committee.

Ducey credited a Facebook post for facilitating such a large response.

“Kudos to whoever put it on Facebook because it works. We need to put this on the town Facebook page. We need to step up and figure out how we can do this,” Ducey said. “It’s a great way to communicate. And, I’m not saying it’s great for everything. But there’s certain things that come out that it’s perfect for.”

Ultimately, Bunnell informed the audience that the new members of the advisory board won’t have an impact on the town for at least several years. She said that the town already has initial plans on how to spend its Complete Streets money.

“There’s Complete Streets money that we’ve already kind of queued up with some level of commitment to the work that we need to do at Springfield Street and Stony Hill [Road],” Bunnell said. “This is kind of a long-term range of having input that might be the next round of funding, which is going to be five years down the road.”

Hampden residents invited to help shape the town’s future at master plan review session

HAMPDEN—The Town of Hampden is looking ahead—to a future of clean water, clean air, preserved open spaces, energy independence, sophisticated technology infrastructure, and a world-class education system. To make this vision a reality, we need the voices of our residents.

Join us on Tuesday, March 18, 2025, from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Thornton Burgess Middle School Auditorium to review and provide feedback on the Hampden Master Plan—a roadmap for the town’s growth and sustainability.

At this session, town officials and planning committee members will present the goals and recommended actions that will shape Hampden’s next chapter. Residents will have the opportunity to ask questions and share insights.

A Future Built on Innovation and Sustainability

The Hampden Master Plan is more than just a set of ideas—it is a commitment to future generations. It outlines a path toward:

- Clean Water & Clean Air – Protecting our natural resources for a healthier community
- Preserved Open Space – Keeping Hampden’s rural character intact while

planning for smart growth

- Energy Independence – Investing in renewable energy and sustainable practices
- Sophisticated Technology Infrastructure – Ensuring high-speed connectivity and modern digital resources
- World-Class Education – Strengthening our schools to prepare students for success in an evolving world

Hampden Needs a Champion – Could It Be You?

A vision of this scale requires leadership. One person—a single champion—can make all the difference. Someone who can bring neighbors together, ignite action, and help turn these ambitious goals into tangible progress. Could that person be you?

“We need more than ideas—we need people who believe in this town and are ready to step up,” said Don

Davenport, Selectboard Chair. “If you have a passion for Hampden’s future, this is your chance to make a lasting impact.”

Be Part of Hampden’s Future

Your voice matters. Your ideas matter. Attend the Master Plan review session and help shape the future of Hampden.

About the Hampden Master Plan

The Hampden Master Plan serves as a blueprint for the town’s future, guiding decision-making on policies, investments, and community initiatives. The plan is developed with resident input and is designed to evolve as Hampden grows and changes.

For more information, please email masterplan@hampdenma.gov or visit our Facebook page Hampden MA Master Plan.

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

Spring Gardening Workshops take place on March 29

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com

WESTFIELD - The Western Massachusetts Master Gardener Association is gearing up for the coming spring with its upcoming Spring Gardening Workshops on March 29.

The event takes place from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Westfield South Middle School has 10 workshops this year, which are “Making Your Garden Edible,” a hands-on workshop called “Updating an Old Garden,” “Gardening in Shades of Shade,” “Native Plants,” “Healthy Lawns,” “Vase Worthy Gardening,” another hands-on workshop called “Growing and Using Herbs,” “Companion Planting,” “Ins and Outs of House Plants” and “Garden Gold: Soil and Compost.”

There will also be raffles and a marketplace fair with informational booths, vendors, a soil testing station testing for PH and texture, an Ask a Master Gardener Booth, complimentary refreshments and more.

This year’s speakers include retired nutritionist and Master Gardener Chris Brown, Larri Cochran, certified horticulturist and Landscape for Life Trainer, Northampton Community Garden co-director, and vice president of the Western Massachusetts Master Gardener Association, Ken Conway, head gardener at Better View Landscapes, Janet Dodder, Horticulture Education Chair for the Springfield Garden Club, Leslie Duthie, horticulturist at Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary, Cornell Master Gardener Chris Ferrero, Master Gardener Ed Sourdiffe, aka “The Green Thumb Guru,” award-winning author Eric Toensmeier and Jen Werner, Urban Forestry Commissioner for the City of Northampton.

Seats are filling up fast and everyone is encouraged to register very soon. Online registration through March 27 is \$30 for two seminars and, if sessions are available, \$40 cash only at the door the day of.

For those who may not want to register online, they can download the form and send it in with a check, which needs to be mailed and arrive by March 16.

Rosey Bonner, a member of the WMMGA and part of



Heidi Dollard from the Mass Pollinator Network talks with an attendee; the organization will be one of many on hand again at this year’s WMMGA’s Gardening Workshops.



A group shot of the members of the Western Massachusetts Master Gardener Association at the registration table.



A shot of the raffle table, which will also be back on hand for avid gardeners.

the Planning Committee for the event, explained the association has been around for many years, becoming a non-profit after the Master Gardener Program Funding was cut in 1989.

The association oversees three sub-regions in Franklin, Hampden, Berkshire and Hampshire counties, takes part in community projects and also speaks at libraries, Farmers Markets, garden clubs and more.

“Our primary mission as master gardeners is we con-

sider ourself a service organization and our mission, really, is to educate the public on best practices in gardening on sustainable gardening practices,” Bonner said. “So, that’s what this workshop is all about.”

Bonner shared she’s one of the newer members of the association and joined after retiring as a school administrator.

“So, when I retired, this is what I said I wanted to get my hands in the dirt and do,” Bonner said.



Master Gardener Chris Brown, Larri Cochran, certified horticulturist and Landscape for Life Trainer, Northampton Community Garden co-director, and vice president of the Western Massachusetts Master Gardener Association, talks with an attendee about herbs.



There will also be plant sales as shown in this photo from last year’s WMMGA Gardening Workshops.



Jen Werner, one of the speakers, talks about lawns. She will be one of the speakers back again this year.

Bonner explained one workshop is already filled up and they are categorized into groups to serve gardeners at all levels who “have different loves and likes,” expressing excitement for all the offerings coming up.

“So, we have many gardeners that love flowers--and landscaping and flowers--so we put three of the workshops geared towards that, and one of them is ‘Gardening in the Shades of Shade,’” Bonner said. “People always struggle. ‘What do I plant in the shade?’ We can find lots of plants to put in the sun, and so this speaker—who is a Cornell Master Gardener--will be talking about some of the nuances of that and suggestions of plants.”

The “Vase Worthy Gardening” workshop, Bonner

added, focuses on “how to put flowers in your existing beds and landscape that you can use as cut garden flowers to make basis of flowers.”

“And the third one--which is nearest and dearest to our hearts as master gardeners--is native plants. Because we really know for our bugs and our birds and everything to



survive that whole life cycle, we need diversity in our yards,” Bonner said. “But, we need native plants because our native insects need plants. They may be getting nectars and dolts from one plant, but they can’t lay their eggs on that plant. They need a different native plant as a host plant.”

Another workshop Bonner looks forward to is about the ins and outs of house plants.

“People are always wanting to know ‘what do I do with my house plants?’ because these are the times you’re transplanting, you’re getting them outside. So, Ed Souddiffe--he’s a master gardener--he will be conducting that workshop,” Bonner said.

The “Garden Gold: Soil and Compost” workshop, which focuses on compost and soil, is another one near and dear to the association.

“You can have the healthiest plants that you’re about to put in. You can have the great sun, good wind. You don’t have good soil, your plants aren’t going to thrive. So, Janet will really talk about what makes up good soil, how do you keep your soil healthy and part of that is how you make and use compost as a supplement to your soil,” Bonner said.

Bonner encourages all surrounding communities to check out the workshops this year and sign up as soon as possible to secure their seat.

“We want you to get out in the garden and enjoy it, have a healthy productive (season) and this is a great way to get some knowledge, but it also gets you inspired. The end of March gets you saying, ‘Time to get in there.’ We call it ‘Let’s Get Growing’ because we will grow as learners, but we want to get our plants and our flowers and our vegetables growing and think of new and different things and get resources,” Bonner said. “So, I’d say get on out here and get inspired for spring!”

To learn more and to register, visit wmmga.org.

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Submitted photos Rosey Bonner
Master Gardener Aaron Walker discusses microgreens.

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Can I get extra Social Security for my military service?

Dear Rusty:
Please help, I served from 1964 to 1966 in the US Army. I have been trying to contact Social Security in order to request extra benefits for veterans. The telephone is a recording and you never get to speak to anyone. The web site at www.ssa.gov is useless to me. I went to the SS office and there was a huge line outdoors in the freezing cold. I am disabled and cannot stand on a line in this cold. Please advise me about my options. Financially, is it worth the trouble?

Signed:
Disabled
American Veteran

Dear Disabled Veteran:
My profound thanks for your service to our country. FYI, the “special extra credit for military service” you refer to does not provide an incremental Social Security benefit amount for military veterans. Rather, it adds an additional amount to your recording earnings for the years you served, which may or may not affect your Social Security benefit. FYI, I’ve written numerous articles on this topic, one of which you can read at this link: www.socialsecurityreport.org/ask-rusty-older-veteran-asks-about-special-social-security-credit-for-military-service/. In your case, serving between 1964 and 1966, if you told Social Security of your military service when you applied for benefits or gave them a copy of your DD-214, they would have added up to \$1,200 per year to your recorded military pay record

(FYI, those who served after 1967 were automatically given earnings credit for their military service years). However, whether those special extra credits would affect your SS benefit depends on what your lifetime earnings record was when you later claimed SS. When you applied for benefits, Social Security reviewed your lifetime earnings record and used the highest earning 35 years of earnings over your lifetime (adjusted for inflation) to calculate your “Primary Insurance Amount” or “PIA,” which is what you get if you claim benefits to start at your SS full retirement age. If, after your military service, you had 35 or more years of earnings which were higher than what you earned while serving, Social Security would have used those later higher earnings to calculate your benefit, and your military earnings wouldn’t affect your benefit. If, however, any of your military earnings including the “special extra credits” were among the highest over your lifetime, then those higher military earnings would be included when calculating your benefit. So, whether you will benefit from these “special extra credits for military service” depends largely on your post-service earnings history. If your military earnings were among the highest earning years over your lifetime, and you provided SSA with a copy of your DD-214 when you applied for Social Security, then your current SS benefit already includes consideration of your military service. Social Security should have asked about your military service when you applied. If you didn’t advise SS of your military service when you applied for Social Security, or if you aren’t sure, you should contact the SSA at 1.800.772.1213 and ask if you were given those “special extra credits for military service” when you applied. However, if you had at least 35 years of higher earnings after you left military service, your current SS benefit is already based on those later higher earning years, and you will not get anything additional from those “special extra credits” for your military service years. FYI, we know it is often difficult to contact the Social Security Administration by phone, as well as trying to visit SSA offices without an appointment, which is why our AMAC Foundation provides this free service). SSA is now allowing in-person visits “by appointment only” and you can call the

above number to schedule an in-person appointment at your local SSA office. But before you do, please consider what I’ve said above. And remember that your SS benefit is based on the highest earning 35 years over your entire lifetime and each year represents only 1/35th of your benefit amount. So, is it worth the trouble? That depends on whether your military earnings, including the “special extra credits for military service,” are among the highest over your entire lifetime. If the answer is “yes” then it is likely worth it; if “no” then perhaps not. 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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Correction Policy
The TIMES will gladly correct factual errors that appear in this paper and can be substantiated. Corrections or clarifications will always appear on the editorial pages. To request a correction, send information in an e-mail or mailed communication to the editor at the above address listed above.
The Wilbraham-Hampden TIMES is published every Thursday by Turley Publications, Inc. One year out of town subscriptions are available at \$45, out of state \$50 by calling 800-824-6458 Ext. 201. The deadline for submission of news material, letters to the editor and photos is Monday at 12 p.m. The TIMES is not responsible for submitted photos.

Election letters to the editor welcome

The Wilbraham-Hampden Times welcomes readers to participate in this year’s election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to Wilbraham-Hampden Times, care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to krivers@turley.com. Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by noon Monday to be considered for that Thursday’s newspaper. No attack letters will be printed. No letters written by candidates supporting their own candidacy will be printed. If the volume of letters received is larger than the space available in the newspaper, or if the letters become repetitive, the newspaper reserves the right to print a representative sample. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last edition before the election. For more information, call the editor at 413-283-8393.

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

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

Backyard sugaring a fond memory to revisit

It has been a few years since we tapped our maple trees and boiled down the sap. My husband and I agreed that with the upcoming forecast of cold nights and warm days it was time to get out our supplies and give it another go ‘round. Our backyard syruping days go back to the dating phase of our relationship. Enjoying homesteading activities together made me certain that he was a “keeper.” I’m pulling this column straight from the archives and re-reading it to be sure we get off to a good start. Maybe you too will give sugaring a try!

Although the sap from most native species of maple can be used to make syrup, sugar maple sap is most desirable because it has a high sugar content. Sugar maples also bud out later than other species, a good feature considering sap from trees that have begun to break bud will produce syrup with an off-taste. The trees you tap should be at least 10-12 inches in diameter at 4.5 feet off the ground. One tap is sufficient for healthy maples that size, three for those over 25” in diameter and two for those that fall in between. Tapholes are usually made 3-4 feet from the ground for ease of maintenance. You’ll want to drill slightly upward

2.5-3 inches into healthy sapwood (not dark heartwood). Space taps evenly around the tree. The metal spout or spile is inserted into the taphole and set in place with a gentle tap. For small scale production, clean water or milk jugs

go by before you begin to boil down your sap, though, or it will spoil. For our evaporator we rigged up a commercial stainless steel pan that fits over a stone outdoor barbecue that came with the property. It has worked out quite well for us. Whatever you decide to use, be wary of boiling indoors – I have heard horror stories of the sticky steam doing a great job of lifting kitchen wallpaper! As I recall, my urban sister-in-law once boiled sap down on a gas camp stove out on her deck. We weren’t talking hundreds of gallons here, but just enough to show my nephew how it’s done!

I kept notes from the last time we tapped our trees. Once we had collected 21 gallons of sap to boil down. My husband started with about 15 gallons of sap in the pan and as the water evaporated he added more – there is a careful balance between scorching and adding too much, not easily explained unless you’ve had the experience and monitored the candy thermometer. Finish your syrup by no longer adding sap and waiting until the syrup is 7.1 degrees higher than boiling water. Then, syrup can be filtered and stored in sterile containers at 185 degrees or higher for proper seal. Forty-three gallons of sap

are needed to make 1 gallon of syrup. It takes about 7 hours of boiling to get that precious gallon if you use a rectangular pan 2 foot wide by 1 foot deep. Let these statistics be your guide so that you won’t get in over your head the first time you try it. Nothing is worse than having sap go to waste because you are too darn tired to boil into the late hours of the night. Nothing is better, however, than the first bite of maple

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



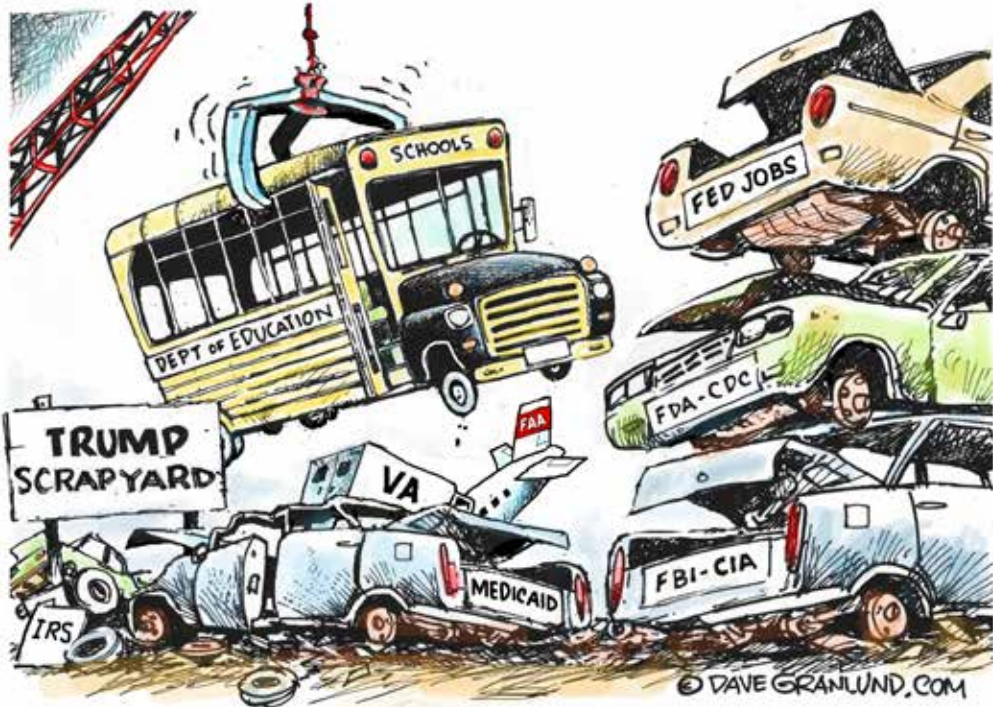
Letters to the Editor

Suggestions for 3/6 MassDOT Virtual Public Hearing on Route 20

To The Editor:
Regarding Route 20 Boston Road, Wilbraham, MA 01095; Please take this opportunity to consider placing traffic lights at the intersection of Forest Street and Boston Road for the safety of all the residents of Forest Street, Manchonis Road, Washington Road, and the recent subdivision off Washington Road. Especially for those who wish to make a left turn on Boston Road because it is difficult for them to get a break in both lanes. The overhead traffic light can be connected to the one at the Cumberland Farms and Post Office Park entrances. They could change at the same time.

Also, at the entrance of Woodcrest Condominiums, across from the Chima Restaurant. It could be connected to the light at the entrance to the Gardens Condominiums. The light could be connected to the traffic light at the entrance to the Gardens Condominiums and the bridge over the railroad tracks and change at the same time as the new traffic light at the entrance to the Woodcrest Condominiums which would allow those leaving the Woodcrest Condominiums to exit the Condominiums and make a left turn safely.

Don Flannery,
Wilbraham





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Life in &

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

WILBRAHAM HAMPDEN

Red Hatters and friends visit Food Bank of Western Mass



Photo and caption Cheryl Phillips

The Red Hatters and friends of Wilbraham enjoyed a wonderful afternoon at the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts on Feb. 20. Registered Dietitian Nutritionist Abigail Killian, MS,RDN lead a cooking demonstration on healthy eating as we age. This was followed by a tour of the Food Bank. An amazing facility!

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

Send us in your announcements! Happy Birthdays, Anniversaries, etc. We will pick one each week to run here free of charge, please keep it to less than 50 words. Please send to krivers@turley.com



Local family donates pizza to HFD

Photos and caption courtesy of Hampden Fire Department
The Hampden Fire Department would like to thank the local family that graciously donated pizza and goodie bags to their members on Feb. 24! We greatly appreciate the support from the community.



WPD reunite dog with family

Photo and caption courtesy of Wilbraham Police Department
The Wilbraham Police Department helped reunite a lost dog with their owners recently. The dog was found in the Three Rivers / Chilson Road area early on the morning of Feb. 18. The WPD's Facebook post helped reunite this adorable pup with his owners not too long after.



Photos and caption courtesy of Wilbraham Fire Department

WFD announces Stryker Emergency Care LP 35 cardiac monitor in service

The Wilbraham Fire Department has placed into service a Stryker Emergency Care LP 35 cardiac monitor. This future-ready device adapts to advancing technologies. The LP 35 features advanced analysis technology that can enhance CPR performance. The new interface within the LP 35 assists paramedics in identifying heart attacks in the field. Members of their EMS committee have spent the last several months onboarding members and training them for the device to be put into service.



Photo and caption courtesy of Hampden Police Department

HPD responds to down cable wire

On Feb. 3, the east bound lane of East Longmeadow Road between Cedar Oak and Somers Road was detoured due to a low cable wire. Traffic was diverted onto Cedar Oak Rd to reach Somers Road. Charter/Spectrum responded to address the wire. At 10:42 a.m., East Longmeadow Road was reopened.



HFD assists WFD in car accident response

Photo and caption courtesy of Hampden Fire Department
At 1:45 p.m. on Feb. 25, Engine 1 was requested by Wilbraham Fire Department to assist them with a serious motor vehicle accident on Route 20 by Maple St. Upon arrival we assisted with mitigating hazards of both vehicles.

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Recreation dept. announces exciting programs and registration deadlines

HAMPDEN – The Hampden Recreation Department is proud to announce an exciting lineup of current and upcoming programs for children and adults. From life-saving CPR training to fun-filled athletic activities, there's something for everyone this season. With multiple registration deadlines approaching, now is the time to sign up for programs designed to engage, educate, and inspire.

Current Programs: Heartsaver CPR AED Training Certification Course

Registration:
Feb. 18 - April 1
Learn essential life-saving skills in this American Heart Association certified course. Designed for individuals who want to be prepared to respond in an emergency, the course includes hands-on practice with CPR and AED (Automated External Defibrillator) techniques. Sign up today to be ready when seconds count!

Modular Robotics: Cubelet Robot Construction

Registration: *Feb. 24 - March 25*
Dive into the world of robotics with this hands-on program for budding engineers. Participants will build and program Cubelet robots while exploring the basics of STEM. Perfect for young minds interested in technology and problem-solving.

Wildlife Programming at Laughing Brook

Registration: *Ongoing*
Connect with nature through engaging wildlife programs at Laughing Brook. Learn about local

wildlife species, their habitats, and the environment. Programs are designed for all ages and offer opportunities for outdoor learning in a fun, interactive way.

Flower Arrangement & Design

Registration: *Feb. 27 - March 25*
Explore your creative side and learn the art of flower arranging! This program will cover the fundamentals of floral design, from selecting flowers to arranging them beautifully. Ideal for anyone interested in adding a personal touch to their home décor or learning a new craft.

Safe Sitter® Essentials Training Apr

Registration:
Feb. 27 - April 8
a comprehensive course designed to help young teens (ages 11-18) become safe, responsible, and confident caregivers. This course is an excellent opportunity for teens who are ready to take on babysitting or caregiving responsibilities while ensuring they are prepared to handle emergencies and everyday situations with ease.

Healthy Kids Running

Registration: *Ongoing*
Encourage kids to get moving with the Healthy Kids Running program! This initiative promotes physical activity and healthy habits while helping young runners build confidence and improve their fitness. Registration is open for participants of all skill levels.

Upcoming Programs: Little Laxers Lacrosse

Registration:
April 1 - April 30
Get ready for a fun and fast-paced introduction to the sport of lacrosse! This program is designed for younger children who are interested in learning the basics of lacrosse through skill-building drills and friendly games. Don't miss out—registration opens soon!

Hampden Memorial Park Summer Program Activity 2025

Registration Opens: *Mar 10*
Make your summer memorable with activities and events at Hampden Memorial Park. The summer program will offer a variety of fun outdoor experiences, and registration details will be available soon!

Closing Soon: Recreation Baseball Grades K-8 - 2025

Still seeking players for grades (3-4) and (5-6) Time is running out to sign up for the 2025 Recreation Baseball season! If you have a child in grades 3-4 or 5-6, there are still spots available. Don't miss the opportunity to be part of a fun, competitive baseball league!

Soccer - 2025 Spring
Registration:
Through Mar 7
Registration is closing soon for the 2025 Spring Soccer season. Sign up now before the deadline and ensure your spot on the field for a season of exciting soccer action.
Don't miss out! Register today to secure your place in these incredible programs and enjoy a spring full of learning, fun, and physical activity.
For more information and to register visit: <https://hampdenma.myrec.com>.

KAHN from page 1

work in the schools. It can be in any role," Berneche said. "Just to kind of highlight all the good work that people are doing and the impact that they're making on youths' lives and that's what we really want to highlight and show what a great community there is here and how much support there is for the youth."

Berneche said the MVP Campaign was Kahn's idea. "She came in one day and said she saw this on a sports network and she was like, 'Oh, (look) what they were doing--MVP--but they were doing like a Most Valuable Person and we can totally do something like that.' So, this was her idea a couple years ago," Berneche said.

After the campaign started and later went on a hiatus, Berneche noted Hafner helped the campaign ramp up after she joined the coalition. "It's been thriving ever since and we've had nominations every month, so we've been able to honor people,"



Berneche said. "But, we thought it was really fitting to change the name to honor Gina as this campaign lives on forever to honor her because she did so much for this community, so much for their mental health, for supports for families. So, I think we all think it's really fitting that this award be named after her and that she is our MVP forever."

Hafner noted "It's not often that people do get recognized and so many people do so many great things," sharing a story of Mandell being surprised by her and many children with the award. He was nominated anonymously and, later, someone reached out to other parents and they all wrote a rundown of his impact, coming out to seven pages that were later presented to him by Hafner.



Photos courtesy of Brianna Berneche

A throwback photo of Gina Kahn, the late founder of the Hampden-Wilbraham Partners for Youth Coalition. The MVP Award has now been renamed the Gina Kahn MVP Award in her memory.

"Sometimes we don't even realize what we do because we just do it so second nature," Hafner said. Reflecting on Kahn and her legacy, Berneche most misses being able to ask her things "because she was an encyclopedia of knowledge, of all things," adding she felt "very lucky to have worked with her when I did and I learned so much from her in a short amount of time."

"Not just her role here in the district, but just such a kind, nurturing person that you could genuinely ask anything about life, about work, about career paths. Whatever it is, she was a very supportive person," Berneche said. "I just miss having that type of relationship."

Hafner added the award renamed for Kahn is important to the coalition itself, including Janet Farrell who worked closely with her in establishing the coalition and still works with everyone today. "So, it's nice for Janet to see her friend, coworker, colleague, supervisor, continue to be acknowledged for everything she did," Hafner said. "They were here before we were here and so it's really nice, also, to support our co-

worker who had a really close connection with her and her family."

Berneche wants the community to know the coalition is there for them to offer support and they will continue highlighting the people who continue to make a difference in the community. Also, honoring Kahn's memory. "I just really want to encourage people to nominate someone. I think we could all think of at least one person who deserves to be recognized for their work they do in this community and how it could have a positive impact on youth even now or in the future," Berneche said. "It's a really easy thing that we could do that would make a really big impact on the community. Takes two minutes to write up a blurb about why you think someone is a valuable person in this community and that impact will really carry on through the community. Just recognize the work that everyone's doing and keep on honoring Gina's name all at the same time."

To learn more about HWP4Y, visit hwp4y.org or check out their Facebook and Instagram pages.

Watercolor Painting Class at the FCC

HAMPDEN - The Federated Community Church will host a watercolor painting class from 12:30 to 3 p.m. on six Saturdays: March 8, 15, 22, 29 and April 5 and 12 at the church, 590 Main St, Hampden, MA.
The instruction will attempt to take the mystery out

of the watercolor process. Dave Spencer, a retired architect and accomplished watercolorist, will lead the way.
Enrollees will have a small fee of \$10 per session to cover any expenses incurred by the church.
It's always fun to paint

and share new ideas and techniques. Make your interest and commitment known early. You may contact the Church Office at 413-566-3711 directly or contact Pastor Kwan Kim via email at hampdenfederated@gmail.com.

HOMETOWN SPOTLIGHT

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THEATRE from page 1

phenomenally and individually represented each and every character so well.

This show is a true mystery. It has so much raw emotion to the characters, and you become instantly transported into the building where the murder occurred, wondering what will happen to each character involved with the mystery.

Almost instantly, the walls of Thornton Burgess turn into a house of murder and mystery, with the audience always on the edge of their seat on what will and could happen next.

Price as Tony brings unexpected comedy to the role. With his strong emotions and quick thinking, the audience is on the edge of their seat wondering if he can keep his secrets behind and get away with it.

Whalen does a phenomenal job as Margot, being able to portray the character elegantly, but also adding her own spin to the character. She does a phenomenal job and—as Mark Giza recently shared in the Times’ preview story for the show—the audience is encouraged to check out the Matinee show and see Taylor Raucher as Margot, who is just as phenomenal.

Martin as Max and Shephard as Inspector Hubbard does an amazing job. With their emotions and curiosity, they do a great job solving the mystery.

Lastly, Medlock as Captain Lesgate was a very mysterious character as a whole. It made the audience sit on the edge of their seats wondering what he would do.

And Bump’s voice was amazing portraying his character through the phone

calls made during the production.

It is a show you definitely don’t want to miss! It is a murder mystery that will keep you guessing at all times and will have you rooting for the characters at every moment.

Also, wondering how it will all end. If you are looking for a fun, mysterious adventure, then this is the show for you.

The Theatre Guild of Hampden worked very hard to present this show—as they always do with every production—and they did a good job bringing “Dial M for Murder” to life, so check out the show while you can before it’s too late!

Tickets for the remaining shows on March 7, 8 and 9 can be found at the Theatre Guild of Hampden’s website at theatreguildofhampden.org. The showtimes are Friday and Saturday at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m.

Coming Soon to a Theatre Near You...

But wait there’s more theater fans! Up next for the Theatre Guild of Hampden’s milestone 20th season, they plan to showcase their spring show: “Jerry’s Girls,” a musical revue of the classic Jerry Herman musicals which will be performing on April 25, 26 and 27, and on May 2, 3 and 4 at the Hampden Senior Center, directed by Mark Giza.

The Theatre Guild of Hampden is also currently casting their fall production of “Lost in Yonkers,” directed by Rick Rubin, after recently holding auditions. Those performances will take place on Nov. 7 to 9 and Nov. 14 to 16.

Stay tuned for a fun, milestone 20th season.

Judge Michael Ponsor hosting author talk at Hampden Free Public Library

HAMPDEN - The Friends of The Hampden Free Public Library are proud to announce an Author Talk on Saturday, March 22 at Noon in the Auditorium of the Hampden Town Hall 625 Main Street Hampden, MA.

Judge Michael Ponsor currently serves as a district judge in The United States District Court, Western region in Springfield. He is the Author of “The Hanging Judge,” “The One Eyed Judge”

and “Point of Order.”

Judge Ponsor writes from some real-life experiences which are some real-life thrillers. Judge Ponsor is a graduate of Harvard University, Oxford, University and Yale Law School and was a Rhodes Scholar.

Come and listen to The Judge talk about his writing process and answer any questions you may have about our judicial system. This event is free and open to the

public.

No registration is required. Judge Ponsor will be bringing his books to sell for \$15.00 each. Only cash or check can be accepted at this event.

Refreshments will be served by The Friends of The Library. We hope to see you all there.

If any questions, please contact Joan Shea at 413-566-8224.

FORUM from page 1

tomorrow, but there are some changes on the horizon that may have some impact.”

The Wilbraham town website includes design and resurfacing plans for various areas of Route 20. One can view these documents here: <https://www.wilbraham-ma.gov/DocumentCenter/Index/870>.

Also, on Monday evening, the Select Board took time to celebrate the work of a longtime town employee who is retiring this week.

Melissa Graves is an administrative assistant in the Building

Department, but she has been far more influential on the community than her title implies. Breault gave her a sincere shout out during the meeting and invited the public to her office to say farewell.

“Melissa Graves, our colleague and friend, her last day as an employee with Wilbraham is this Friday. That closes out a 20-plus-year career here, and she has made an impact in a lot of ways. I just bring that to the Select Board’s attention and the public in general,” Breault said. “If you’d like to wish her well, please come on and do so by the end of Friday.”

Bunnell also had kind words to share. She reflected on the immense role that Graves played in town by overseeing the Wilbraham Community Garden through the years.

“She certainly had an enormous impact on, obviously, any of the folks who use the community garden. Look at the work that she’s done there to make sure that runs efficiently and is successful,” Bunnell said.

To see what else was discussed at this week’s meeting, check out the town website’s “Video On Demand” page.



The benefits of attending summer camp

Camp by the numbers

Summer camp is something akin to a rite of passage for millions of youngsters each year. Many adults look back fondly on their experiences at summer camp, often crediting such times as formative periods in their lives. Summer camp benefits children in a myriad ways.

- Campers continue to socialize throughout summer. Socializing isn’t just for the school year. While children in high school might be independent enough to come and go with their friends during summer break, kids who are still in elementary school or middle school might not be old enough to handle such freedom. That

can make it hard to stay in touch with friends, which in turn can contribute to feelings of boredom and loneliness. Camp provides ample opportunities for young children to socialize during a time of year when they might not see their school friends as often as they’re used to.

- Campers can expand their horizons. Though some summer camps are exclusive to residents of certain communities, many tend to feature children from numerous towns or municipalities. Such camps provide an opportunity for campers to expand their horizons by engaging with youngsters who come from different backgrounds.

- Camp can get kids off their devices. Modern children are growing up in a digital world, and parents know how hard it can be to get kids to put down their devices and get outdoors. But the key to making that pivot could be access to outdoor play spaces. Many summer camps are structured around outdoor play, making them a potentially invaluable ally as parents seek to help children cut back on the time they spend using their devices. Children who do not attend camp and live in households where both parents work or in single-parent households where Mom or Dad works may be forced to spend much

of summer indoors, which could increase the frequency with which they turn to devices to occupy their time.

- Camp adds structure to summer days. Once a school year ends, the structure a school day provides vanishes into thin air. Couple that with extracurricular activities that go on hiatus during summer vacation, and kids accustomed to structure are left with little to do and no need to schedule their time.

There’s no shortage of benefits to enrolling youngsters in summer camp, where kids can socialize, grow and get off their devices while engaged in structured but stress-free activities.

- 1 week:** The most popular session length for summer camp, although the majority of independent camp operators offer four-, six- and eight-week sessions. - *American Camp Association*
- 50:** The percentage of respondents whose camps charge \$1,000 or more per session, with most programs costing between \$1,000 and \$1,500. - *CampMinder*
- 58 to 63:** The percentage of female staff members at overnight and day camps, respectively. - *American Camp Association*
- 200 to 300:** The average number of campers served each session. - *CampMinder*
- 7 in 10:** The number of camps that run 10 or more different programs. - *CampMinder*
- 79:** The percentage of camps that maintain a screen-free environment. - *CampMinder*

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OBITUARIES

Joy Chapman (Bullock) Hibsher
1942 – 2025
Died Feb. 23, 2025
Services March 9
Wilbraham Funeral Home

Joy Chapman (Bullock) Hibsher died peacefully on Sunday, February 23, 2025 in Falmouth, MA. Joy was born March 16, 1942 in Boston, MA to the late Thelma Chapman and Elbert Chapman. She graduated from Stoneham High School, University of Massachusetts, Amherst and Springfield College. Joy was the founder and President of Leslie Educational Alternatives, Inc., a human services organization, from 1984 until her retirement in 2004. During her career, she belonged to Hu-

Joy Chapman (Bullock) Hibsher
1942 – 2025

man Service Forum, Western Mass Service Providers and Compassionate Friends. After retiring, Joy worked as a substitute teacher in Belcher-town, MA. She also volun-teered at Top Floor Learning, Palmer, MA, Evangel Food Pantry, Wilbraham, MA, My Father's House, Thorndike, MA and Veterans Empow-erment Center, Springfield, MA. She was a member of Bethlehem Church, Hamp-den, MA.

Joy was predeceased by her husband Paul, a brother, Douglas Chapman, and two daughters, Kristen Kim and Leslie Robin Bullock. She is survived by her brother Daniel Chapman and his wife Wendy, sister-in-law Nancy Chapman, her son

Chip Bullock and wife Jen-nifer of Hampden, MA and her daughter Maura Bullock and husband John McSherry of Fal-mouth, MA. She is also survived by her three beloved grandchildren, Kristina Bullock, Ryan Bullock and Sophie McSherry as well as three stepchildren, Da-vid and Thomas Hibsher and Sharon (Leon) Comstock. Joy was a beacon of kindness and gener-osity. She lived her life with strength, caring and service to others. Her legacy of love and compassion will contin-ue to inspire the many lives she touched throughout her



life.

Family and friends are invited to gather for visiting hours on Sunday, March 9,, 2025 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Wilbraham Funeral Home, 2551 Boston Road, Wilbraham, MA followed by a Funeral Service at 2 p.m. at Bethle-hem Church, 123 Allen Street, Hamp-den, MA. In lieu of flowers, donations in Joy's memory can be made to My Father's House at Milestone Ministries, P.O. Box 37, Granby, MA 01033 (<https://milestoneministry.com/donate>) or Bethlehem Church, 123 Allen Street, Hampden, MA 01036.



An 18th-century lap desk with rolls of gunpowder, paper money and coins.



Diners in the 18th century used two-tined forks and spoons made of horn.



Turley photos by Patricia Sullivan
Keenan brought replica 18th-century accoutrements to the Wilbraham Senior Center, including a wooden canteen.

Wilbraham Women's Club meets Mar. 13

WILBRAHAM – The Wilbraham Women's Club will hold their next general meeting on Thursday March 13.

It will begin at 11:30 with a social followed by lunch at Noon in the St. Cecilia Parish Center. Also, a talk called "You've Come a Long Way Baby" with Michelle Barton.

Michelle Barton is a well-known dynamic speaker who will talk about the trials and tribulations of women from the 1930s through today. All are welcome.

All guests please call Lin-da Raffa at 596-8245.

Wilbraham Earth Day 2025

WILBRAHAM – Keep Wilbraham Beautiful is excited to announce this year's Wilbraham Earth Day Clean Up Event.

The event will take place on April 12 at Foun-tain Park from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. and everyone is wel-come to attend.

Volunteers are also needed!

To learn more, vis-it <https://sites.google.com/view/wilbraham-earth-day-cleanup/home?authuser=0>.

WPL Teen Taste Challenge: Oreo Edition March 11

WILBRAHAM - On Tuesday, March 11 from 6 to 7 p.m., Grades 6 - 12 can join us for "Teen Taste Test Challenge: Oreo Edition" at the Wilbraham Public Library.

Do you think you know Oreos? Then put your taste buds to the test with this fun program!

While blindfolded, teens will taste different Oreo flavors and try to guess the correct flavor. The teen with the most correct guesses will win a prize.

In addition, the group will vote on their favor-ite Oreo. Water and milk will be available for all

to cleanse their palate be-tween rounds.

A raffle prize will also be awarded to a lucky at-tee.

Attention teens with food allergies: please be aware that our food may contain or come into con-tact with common aller-gens, such as dairy, eggs, wheat soybeans, tree nuts, peanuts, fish, shellfish or wheat.

Online registration is required at wilbrahamli-brary.org or call 413-596-6141, as space is limited. Taste Test Challenge is sponsored by the Wilbra-ham Friends of the Library.



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SOLDIER from page 1

pensation, historical figures and other topics. Some of the facts he shared included: High-status Revolutionary War prisoners were treated well. Egotistical Charles Lee, a British officer turned Amer-ican general, allowed himself to be captured by the Brits and lived in a mansion as a prisoner. There he had dogs, horses and the company of a "genteel female companion."

George Washington had a "putrid" reputation as a tacti-cian.

"He fell for British tricks repeatedly," Keenan said. Philadelphia was the largest city in the British Empire af-ter London.

Spitting in the fire during dinner was considered very rude.

British soldiers wore red coats because red was the cheapest dye obtainable in Great Britain.

The punishment of British Army deserters was death, usually by flogging.

The expressions "lock, stock and barrel," "flash in a pan," and "going off half-cocked," all originate with 18th-century muskets.

The Continental Army traded tobacco for supplies

from France.

Revolutionary war casual-ty counts were low, but most wounds were fatal.

Many soldiers were grant-ed 50 acres in Ohio country as compensation for their ser-vice.

At the end of the presen-tation, Susele Luzi of Wilbra-ham, who came to the Senior Center with her husband, Cic-ci Santucci, remarked, "That was excellent, excellent. I love history and academia. We're living in a time when it's especially important to learn about history."

There will be ample local opportunities to learn about history from Keenan's re-giment. With the 250th anni-versary of the 1776 founding of the 25th Continental Reg-iment coming up, his group will be participating in many parades, ceremonies, en-campments and battle reen-actments in Western Massa-chusetts and beyond.

Wilbraham Public Access recorded Keenan's presenta-tion at the Wilbraham Senior Center. It will be available for streaming on the Town of Wilbraham's website: wilbraham-ma.gov. From there, look up "Video on Demand" in the search engine.

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Season ends for Falcons in WMass semifinals

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

WEST SPRINGFIELD—Because they didn’t qualify for the Division 2 state tournament, the Minnechaug Regional hockey players were hoping to capture the Western Mass. Class A championship title for the first time.

Those dreams came to an end for the third-seeded Falcons following a 4-2 semifinal loss to the second-seeded Westfield Bombers, who are the defending Class A champions, at the Olympia Ice Center in West Springfield on Feb. 19.

Despite the final score, the Falcons outshot the Bombers, 28-18.

“We had plenty of opportunities in tonight’s game, but

we just couldn’t bury them. It has been the story of our season,” said Minnechaug head coach Kyle Bousquet. “It’s very frustrating because the kids have worked very hard this year.”

Minnechaug Regional (6-12) lost both regular season matchups against Westfield (12-4).

The Bombers posted a 6-0 shutout victory over the Falcons in the first meeting between the Berry Division rivals at the beginning of January.

The second meeting, which was held on February 13, was a much closer affair. Westfield spoiled Minnechaug’s senior night celebration with a 5-4 overtime win.

The only three seniors



Goalie Matt Lafley gets in position to make a save.

listed on the Falcons hockey roster are Brayden O’Sullivan, Ben Daniels, and Matt Beaudin.

“All three of our seniors are great kids and outstanding leaders,” Bousquet said. “We’re the youngest team in the Berry Division this year.

Every other team has six or more seniors. Our future is very bright.”

O’Sullivan was the team captain this season, while Daniels and Beaudin were assistant captains.

Please see **FALCONS**, page 13



Matt Beaudin looks to clear the puck up the ice.



Dom Fiorentino makes his way up the ice.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Ethan Kelliher sends a pass away.

Fergus leads Falcons to win in opening round of state tourney

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

WILBRAHAM—Minnechaug Regional junior point guard Miles Fergus singlehandedly made sure that he and his teammates, especially the four seniors, would win the final home basketball game of the 2024-25 season.

Fergus scored a game-high 33 points as the 27th-seeded Falcons defeated the 38th-seeded Bishop Stang Spartans, 64-50, in a Division 2 state tournament preliminary round home game, last Tuesday night.

“It’s very exciting winning the final home game of my high school basketball career,” said Minnechaug senior co-captain Josh Disa, who

scored two points. “There was a lot at stake in tonight’s game and we didn’t want to lose. Miles is a great point guard and he’s been our leader this season.”

Fergus, who has scored more than 400 points this winter, made a total of nine field goals, including a pair of 3-pointers against the Spartans (10-11). He also went 13 of 15 from the free throw line.

“I didn’t realize Miles scored 33 points in tonight’s game,” said longtime Minnechaug head coach Mike Orzech. “He’s a tremendous basketball player who does a little bit of everything for us. Without Miles, we wouldn’t be a successful basketball team.”

Disa is planning to

play college football next fall at Springfield College. The Pride football coach is Mike Cerasuolo, who lives in Hampden.

The Falcons’ other senior co-captain is Nate Pace, who chipped in with six points in the home playoff victory. He did suffer an injury late in the third quarter and didn’t return to action.

The other two seniors listed on the Minnechaug boys’ varsity basketball roster are Gus Przybyl (6 points) and Logan Conboy, who saw playing time during the second half against Bishop Stang.

“We won tonight’s game for the seniors,” Fergus said. “We’ve worked very hard, and it feels great to win our first game in the state tourna-

ment.”

The Falcons (11-10) were slated to make a long bus ride to Somerset last Friday night where they faced the 6th-seeded Somerset Berkley Regional Raiders in the round of 32.

While the Falcons have played in the Western Mass tournament during the past couple of years, they qualified for the state tournament for the first time since the MIAA changed the postseason tournament format in 2021.

Under the old playoff system, the last time that Minnechaug played in a state tournament game was in 2006. The Falcons beat Cathedral (Pope Francis) in the Western Mass. Division 1 finals that season before losing

to Central Mass. champion Holy Name of Worcester in the state semifinals. They also captured the Western Mass.

title in 1985.

While the Bishop Stang, which is in North Dartmouth, Please see **TOURNEY**, page 12



Miles Fergus lets a three-point attempt go.



Darren Duah goes after the rebound.



Andrew Grasso fights over a pair of opponents for a shot.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Nathan Pace lunges in the air for the layup.

Minnechaug girls defeated at Walpole

WALPOLE – Last Friday night, it was a loss in the opening round of the State Division 2 Tournament for Minnechaug girls basketball. The Falcons, which were ranked No. 19, traveled to No. 14 Walpole and suffered a 52-45 loss on the road.

Ava Manning led the Falcons in their final game of the season with 15 points. Cailin O’Brien finished the game with 11 points and Elizabeth Woytowicz had 10 points. The Falcons finished their season with an overall record of 14-7.

Railers outlast Bloomington

WORCESTER—Officially, baseball is the only sport with doubleheaders, but it felt like the Railers-Wrenches played one Saturday night.

Worcester tied the first game, 4-4. It won the second one, 2-0. That added up to a 6-4 victory over the Bloomington Bison and two more points in the North Division playoff race.

The home team got big offensive performances from Griffin Loughran, Matthew Kopperud (again), Lincoln Hatten and Matt DeMelis. Loughran and Kopperud were 1-1-2. DeMelis scored two goals. Hatten had the first three-point game of his career going 1-2-3.

Worcester winger Ryan Mahshie did not record a point. He did, however, record a hit that changed

the nature of the night. At 14:26 of the second period, Mahshie delivered a clean, hard body check that led to a fight. He knocked down Bloomington's Josh Boyer with a couple of hard punches early and got the building energized.

"That hit by Mahshie was the turning point of the game," coach Nick Tuzzolino said.

The first 27 1/2 minutes of the match were wild. There are next-goal-wins games, but this was like next-shot-wins. The teams traded eight goals in that span and Worcester chased Bison goalie Yaniv Perets after Kopperud made it 4-3 at 2:43 of the second period.

Bloomington tied it at 7:30 on a goal by Jake Murray, who had a great night at

1-3-4. Kasimir Kaskisuo replaced Perets, but Tuzzolino stuck with Hugo Ollas.

Ollas played shutout hockey the rest of the way. Kaskisuo played well, also. The Railers finally regained the lead on DeMelis' goal at 7:24 of the third period then Anthony Callin hit an empty net at 18:21.

How did Worcester regroup and play shutdown hockey after the early barrage?

"I yelled loudly," Tuzzolino said.

"We talk about it all the time. Our biggest flaw as a team is goals against. If you look at the numbers, we have the worst goals-against stat in our division for the spot we're in. If we fix that, we're gonna win games, plain and simple.

"We have to understand that if we don't sell the farm and play systematically, we're gonna beat most teams."

The victory allowed Worcester to be able to control its fate. If it wins the rest of its games, it makes the playoffs no matter what anybody else does. That is the math, anyway. The reality is different, particularly since the home team faces a tough schedule.

Worcester plays three at first place Trois-Rivieres next week, then three against third place Norfolk here from the 13th through the 15th. Both teams can score. Tuzzolino is hoping he won't need a megaphone.



Caden Duke shoots for the Falcons.

T-Birds take the win in a shootout over Providence

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — The Springfield Thunderbirds (27-19-2-4) dispatched 2-0 and 3-2 deficits en route to a 4-3 shootout win over the Providence Bruins (30-17-4-2) on Saturday night at Amica Mutual Pavilion.

The game's scoring began with a flurry in the final three minutes of a first period that had been quiet until that point. Vadim Zherenko had a tremendous highlight-reel moment past the period's midpoint as he stretched out the right leg to make a breakaway save on a Vinni Lettieri backhand bid.

Providence, though, got back to work and took advantage of a 5-on-3 situation when Oliver Wahlstrom beat Zherenko as the first penalty expired to give the Bruins a 1-0 lead at 17:04. Wahlstrom's goal marked his first in the AHL in nearly five years, as he was playing his first game in the league since March 11, 2020.

The Bruins lead grew to 2-0 just two minutes later as Riley Tufté crashed the net to tip a Patrick Brown centering

attempt by the skate of Zherenko. In the process, however, Tufté was penalized for interference on Zherenko after the puck crossed the line.

While Tufté's goal stood, the T-Birds' power play got a pivotal answer with just 12 seconds left in the first as Dalibor Dvorsky snapped a five-game goal drought with a sizzling wrister from the right circle off a cross-seam pass from Nikita Alexandrov.

The Springfield power play continued its potent night just 2:07 into the second period, as Matthew Peca deflected a Matt Luff snapper past Michael DiPietro to tie the game, 2-2. Peca's goal tied his career-high in a single season (23) and tied Adam Gaudette for the longest goal-scoring streak in team history, as the captain has tallied a goal in six straight contests.

The Bruins generated most of the chances the remainder of the middle frame, but Zherenko stood firm in his crease, turning aside all 17 Providence attempts to carry the 2-2 game into the

final period.

Tufts made things difficult on the T-Birds again when he broke in and beat Zherenko on a forehand chip shot 22 seconds into the final period, restoring the Providence lead to 3-2.

From that point onward, though, Zherenko made sure the home team would not get any insurance, keeping the deficit at a single goal. After getting a clutch penalty kill with less than 3:30 remaining in regulation, Corey Andonovski picked a fantastic time to net his first goal as a T-Bird. The newly acquired winger stopped at the bottom of the left circle and proved to be in the perfect spot as a MacKenzie MacEachern rebound off DiPietro's pads found his stick. Andonovski snapped it by DiPietro, setting the stage for Springfield's third straight overtime game.

The visitors carried the play in the extra session with five of the six shots on net, but DiPietro fended off each bid, including a breakaway effort by Luff. For a third

straight contest, the game advanced to a shootout. After neither team converted on the netminders in the first two rounds, Tanner Dickinson finally elevated a backhand under the crossbar to give Springfield the edge. Needing a goal from John Farinacci to extend the shootout, the Bruins got just that, as the centerman faked beautifully to the backhand side and forced a fourth round.

Alexandrov had his chance at redemption after coming up short on a game-winning attempt on Friday, and the T-Birds' jack-of-all-trades made a magnificent backhand-to-forehand maneuver to beat DiPietro. Tufts was unsuccessful in his bid to solve Zherenko in the bottom of the round, and the T-Birds completed their comeback and victory. Zherenko finished the night with 42 saves in regulation and overtime, followed by three saves on four shootout attempts. In defeat, DiPietro stopped 31 attempts in 65 minutes before the shootout.



Gus Przybyl attempts the layup.

Registration now open for Quabbin Valley baseball

REGION—The Quabbin Valley Over-28 Baseball League is looking to infuse new talent into its league for the 2025 season.

Registration for the 2025 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 2025 season, which is tentatively scheduled to begin on Sunday, April 27. The league plays most Sunday from late April through mid-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 2025.

The next league board

meeting is scheduled for Sunday, March 23 at 11:45 a.m. at the Hangar Pub & Grill in South Hadley. The league has also scheduled two open practices on Sunday, March 30, and Sunday, April 6. Both practices are scheduled to be held at Beachgrounds Park in South Hadley and are weather-permitting. The league website and social media accounts will have updates as the preseason continues.

meeting is scheduled for Sunday, March 23 at 11:45 a.m. at the Hangar Pub & Grill in South Hadley. The league has also scheduled two open practices on Sunday, March 30, and Sunday, April 6. Both practices are scheduled to be held at Beachgrounds Park in South Hadley and are weather-permitting. The league website and social media accounts will have updates as the preseason continues.

TOURNEY from page 1

and Minnechaug boys' basketball teams battled each other for the first-time on the hardwood, it wasn't the first time that the two high schools met in the state tournament.

In the fall of 2023, the Minnechaug girls' soccer team posted a 3-0 home victory over the Spartans in a Division 2 round of 32 match.

Things didn't start out very well for the Falcons when they made their first state appearance in 19 years.

The home team made ten turnovers and were trailing, 11-4, with 3:40 left in the first quarter.

Then Fergus made a pair of lay-ups and junior Caden Duke (4 points) made another lay-up which closed the gap to one point a little more than two minutes later.

"I thought we made too many turnovers in the first quarter," Orzech said. "We'll need to minimize our turnovers if we want to move forward in this tournament."

On the opening possession of the second quarter, Minnechaug junior Darren Duah (8 points) scored an inside hoop tying the score at 12-12.

The Falcons would take a 15-14 lead for the first time with 5:30 left in the first half when Fergus knocked down a

3-pointer from the right side following a Przybyl steal.

A crowd-pleasing dunk by Pace gave the Falcons a 19-16 advantage with 3:45 remaining in the opening half.

Minnechaug largest lead of the first half was 24-18 with 1:50 left when junior Andrew Grasso (5 points) buried a 3-pointer from the left side.

Bishop Stang sophomore Tysen Teixeira scored his team's final ten points of the second quarter. He hit a 3-pointer from the top of the key at the buzzer tying the score at 26. Teixeira wound up scoring a team-high 20 points.

Minnechaug built a double-digit lead during the third quarter, as they outscored Bishop Stang, 17-7.

A driving lay-up by Duke pushed the Falcons lead to 41-31 with 45 seconds left in the quarter.

Disa also made a lay-up which gave his team a 43-33 advantage entering the final eight minutes of regulation.

Fergus made all ten of his foul shots during the fourth quarter. He also made a couple of lay-ups which helped the Falcons maintain their double digit lead the rest of the way.

Wilbraham Earth Day 2025 seeking sponsors

WILBRAHAM - Dear Wilbraham! The Keep Wilbraham Beautiful Committee (KWBC) is thrilled to announce the 3rd Annual Earth Day Community Clean-Up, set for Saturday, April 12, 2025.

After the incredible success of last year's event—where over 300 volunteers worked together to clean up our town—we are aiming for an even larger turnout this year, with 500+ volunteers joining us in this community-wide effort. The KWBC, in partnership with the town Select Board, DPW, local Police and Conservation Commission, is organizing this event to make our town a cleaner, greener, and more beautiful place to live.

On April 12, volunteers will gather at Fountain Park

between 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., where they will receive supplies, instructions, and a designated area to clean up. Volunteers will enjoy a complimentary donut at registration and complimentary lunch upon return to Fountain Park with the collected trash.

We are trying to keep things light, fun and create a positive vibe where participants can celebrate the positive impact they've made. To ensure the success of this volunteer-driven initiative, we need your support.

We are seeking both financial contributions and volunteers to help make this event a reality. Your support will directly contribute to the logistics of the event and the materials needed for the cleanup, ensuring that we

have all the necessary tools and supplies.

How You Can Help:

- Promote the Event: Display our event flyer or banner at your business to help spread the word and encourage more people to participate.
- Sponsor Volunteer Meals: Help fund the Thank-You Lunch for all the volunteers. This is a great opportunity to show your support and appreciation for their hard work.
- Sponsor Supplies: Your donation will help cover the cost of essential cleanup supplies, including trash bags, grabbers, buckets, and safety vests.
- Encourage Volunteers: Share our event on social media and encourage your customers, teams, employees,

and community members to sign up on our Facebook page/Website.

Our goal is to showcase Wilbraham Pride through the collective effort of businesses and residents working together to care for our environment. Your involvement will make a lasting impact on the community and help foster a sense of unity.

If you are interested in supporting this year's Earth Day Clean-Up, please contact Megan Harrigan, Event Chairman, at keepwilbrahambeautiful@gmail.com or 413-427-3670. Together, we can make Wilbraham a cleaner, more beautiful place for all.

Thank you for your consideration and for being a part of this important event.

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Public notice deadlines are Mondays at noon, Fridays noon for Monday holidays.

Wilbraham Hiking Club March Hikes

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham Hiking Club has oodles of March hikes, as several were rescheduled from February because of harsh weather or road conditions. And the Wilbraham Senior Hiking Club has two March hikes. As always, these hikes are all “weather permitting”.

The Wilbraham Hiking Club Hikes are:
March 13 at 10 - Quabbin Gate 35 in Petersham
March 17 at 10 - Fort River Loop in Hadley
March 18 at 10 Whitaker Woods, Somers, CT
March 23 at 1 - Springfield Reservoir in Ludlow
March 26 at 10 - Shenipsit State Forest Soapstone Mnt, Yellow, Brown and Webster Rd Loop - Somers, CT
March 27 at 10 -Mass Central Rail Trail in New Braintree

March 31 at 10 - Mitteneague Park in West Springfield
For more info on these hikes (and possibly additional hikes), use the club’s Team-Reach App or write to wilbrahmhiking@gmail.com. Members who use the Team-Reach App are notified when hikes are canceled or rescheduled.
Wilbraham Senior Center Hikes are:
March 11 at 9:30 - Goat Peak, Mt. Nonotuck, and Dry Knoll at Mount Tom, Holyoke/Easthampton
March 28 at 9:15 - Laughing Brook in Hampden
To register for these hikes and for information about snowshoeing with the Senior Center hikers or upcoming group trips and to register for Senior Center hikes, contact Jen at 596-8379.



Cam Faneuff tries to get away from the wall.



Ryan Donovan looks for an open teammate.

FALCONS from page 1

Daniels, along with sophomore Liam Faneuff and junior Enzo Hrycay, were the Falcons leading goal scorers this season.
Another young Minnechaug player is freshman goalie Chase Folli, who was credited with 14 saves in the semifinal loss.
Westfield scored a pair of goals during the first seven minutes of the opening period.
Junior Joe Maffia began the scoring with an unassisted goal at the 2:45 mark.
Five minutes later, senior Nick Lacombe also netted an unassisted goal giving the Bombers a 2-0 lead.
With 1:12 remaining in the first period, the Falcons sliced their deficit in half following a power-play goal. The play began with Faneuff making a pass from the blue line and junior Jake Moore tipped the puck into the net past Westfield senior Evan Mastroianni (26 saves).
O’Sullivan was also credited with an assist.
The score didn’t stay 2-1 for very long. The Bombers retook a two goal lead nine seconds later following a rebound goal by Lacombe.
A goal by Hrycay with 5.7 seconds left made the score 3-2 entering the second period.
The duo of Daniels and O’Sullivan were credited with the assist.
“I thought we held the momentum entering the sec-

ond period,” Bousquet. “We just couldn’t score any more goals.”
Westfield only had seven shots on goal in the second and third periods, but they managed to hold onto their lead.
Minnechaug had two power-play opportunities in the second period.
During the Falcons first power-play of the second period, Daniels fired a shot from the blue line, but Mastroianni made a glove save.
Moore and Faneuff also had shots on goal during the Falcons other power-play.
The Bombers entered the final 15 minutes of the Class A semifinals still holding a one goal advantage.
A couple of the Falcons third period shots on the goal were by Moore, Beaudin, and Daniels, but they couldn’t tie the score.
The Bombers, who were slated to face top-seeded Greenfield in the Class A finals last Saturday afternoon, sealed their semifinal victory with an empty net goal by Maffia with 1:10 remaining in regulation.
Minnechaug was scheduled to wrap up their season with a road match against Wachusett Regional of Holden the following afternoon.
The returning Falcons players are hoping to qualify for both the Western Mass. Class A and Division 2 state tournaments next year.

WUP Announces Casting for Spring Musical ‘Cabaret’

WILBRAHAM – Wilbraham United Players (WUP) is thrilled to announce the cast for their highly anticipated spring musical, “Cabaret.”
“Cabaret,” a beloved musical by John Kander and Fred Ebb, tells the story of an aspiring writer and his experiences at the Kit Kat Klub, a provocative nightclub where the lines between entertainment and the political unrest of pre-World War II Germany blur. With iconic songs like “Willkommen,” “Maybe This Time,” and “Cabaret,” this production is sure to bring the unforgettable world of 1930s Berlin to life.
Emcee- Jayse Matrishon
Sally Bowles- Carolyn Averill
Clifford Bradshaw- Chris Morey
Ernst Ludwig- Ben Crow
Fraulein Schneider- Christine Greene
Herr Schultz- Doug Lebel
Fraulein Kost/Fritzie- Jami Wilson
Kit Kat Girls- Noelle Hisingen, Shelly Capen, Julia Adamo, Naidelyn Cruz, Meaghan Snapp
Kit Kat Boys- John Woytowicz, Zachary Ciano, Tully Russell, Antonio Mutti
Cabaret is directed by Deb

Trimble, musical direction by Ben Mabrey, and choreographed by Jacqui Panasian. The show is licensed and permitted to perform by Concord Theatricals.
Tickets are now available for the show, including special cabaret tables, which will run from March 28 through April 6 at the Wilbraham United Church.
Support Wilbraham United Players
Show sponsorships are now available for local businesses and individuals looking to support this community-driven theatre production. Sponsorships provide great

exposure and a chance to be part of an amazing artistic experience. For more information about sponsorship opportunities, please contact WUP at the details below.
Visit Our Website for More Information
For more details about the *Cabaret* production, sponsorship opportunities, and to purchase your tickets, please visit www.wilbrahamunitedplayers.org.
Wilbraham United Players
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Snowblower Safety

WILBRAHAM / HAMPDEN - Stay safe while using snowblowers! Always read the manufacturer’s instructions before operating.
Ensure proper clothing and footwear to prevent slips. Never attempt to clear a clogged chute with your hands; instead, turn off the machine and use a stick or provided clearing tool. Keep children and pets at a safe distance. Regular maintenance will keep your snowblower working properly.
A message from your Wilbraham and Hampden fire & life safety educators.

Holiday Shop Til You Drop Thank You

HAMPDEN - The Friends of Hampden Senior Citizens would like to thank everybody for the wonderful donations that came in for our Holiday Shop Til you Drop Sale and all of you who did Shop our Holiday Sale – you helped raise over \$1,350 for the benefit of our Senior Center; we are so grateful.

Without everyone’s involvement our sale would not have been successful. We will start accepting donations for this year’s Great Room Holiday Sale in September; thank you in advance.
Hope to see you soon here at the Hampden Senior Center for lunch, a movie, a class or to just sit by the fire and relax.

TAX from page 1

burses all but \$175.
“So they cover \$225 on the \$400 exemption and \$825 on the \$1,000 exemption,” McCormick said. “So, there would be no additional state reimbursement if Clause 22J were accepted, which is why it’s a local option that would have to be voted on at Town Meeting.”
Chair Don Davenport asked McCormick this.
“But they would still provide the \$225 and the \$400. Is that it?” Davenport said.
McCormick confirmed yes.
“They would continue to reimburse the amounts that they are currently. So, they would reimburse \$225 on the \$400 exemption,” McCormick said. “And \$825 on the \$1,000 exemption. So, they would continue to do that. Any additional amount would be covered by the town.”
Selectboard Member John Flynn asked about the numbers.
“So the \$400 and the \$1,000, is that part of 22E? Is that in those numbers? Where’d that come from?” Flynn said.
McCormick confirmed that was correct and explained the numbers.
“So the Clause 22 is \$400 and that’s for the 10% up to but not including 100% disabled veterans, and the 22E is a separate clause, specifically, for our 100% disabled veterans,” McCormick said.
“Okay, and 22J allows the town to--it doesn’t necessarily have to be 100%--we could increase the numbers, you’re saying. We could make 22--instead of \$400--we could make it \$800 and we could make 22E instead of \$1,000, \$2,000?” Flynn said.
“Correct, yes, or any amount up to that,” McCormick said. “That obviously is the maximum.”
When Flynn and Davenport asked if this changes the number and if that number needs to be on the town warrant article for Town Meeting, McCormick said yes.
“To bring it to Town Meeting, to have the clause adopted, you would have to set a percentage at that point,” McCormick said. “However, I’ve spoken to Jason about this too and it’s my understanding that you could adopt it to increase it by a percentage and then possibly go back at a later point to increase that percentage.”
“So, it’s no longer fixed numbers. If we change from it, it goes to a percent, so not a fixed number,” Flynn said.
Burgener confirmed yes and then broke down the math, using the \$400 as an

example.
“So, say you go 25%, which is \$100 bucks, so it would be \$500, 26% \$500, 27%. That’s the fixed amount is the \$500. Now, say in 2028, economy’s doing great, you guys are doing great and you say, ‘Hey, we can increase it. Do another warrant say we’re going to increase it from 25% to 50%.’ So, then it would go from \$500 to \$600,” Burgener said.
Flynn said he didn’t understand that and sought clarification.
“You’re saying that the two clauses have to run concurrently then, so when you say percentages, your percentage is always adding. So, the \$400 is always going to be a base number,” Flynn said.
“Correct,” Burgener said.
“So any percentage, it would be a set amount for both clauses,” McCormick said.
“When you said 100% before, the 100% is just the expansion of the credit?” Flynn

said. “So you’re saying the biggest expansion you could be going is \$2,000.”
“Yes,” McCormick said.
“If you went to the fully disabled 100% on top of the \$1,000,” Flynn said.
After McCormick said yes, Burgener clarified it was yes and no.
“Say you could adopt to double it to \$2,000 and then you could say, ‘All right, 2030, you can do a cost-of-living increase of 2.4% every year after that.’ I recommend that doesn’t happen. I recommend just say, ‘Hey, we’re going to give max 100% you get \$2,000,’” Burgener said.
Flynn replied that’s where he had the confusion during the discussion last time.
“When I was looking at the 100%, I thought you were talking 100% of the entire tax bill at that point,” Flynn said.
McCormick clarified that was not the case.
Schneider added when a veteran has 100% disability, they get a \$1,000 tax credit.

“The state is allowing by 22J is 100% match of that, which is a grand. So, they would get \$2,000,” Schneider said.
“So, really, it should say 100% match. Not just 100%,” Selectboard Member Craig Rivest said.
It was also clarified any exemptions would come out of the overlay account.
When Davenport asked about the other two clauses, 22G and 22H, Schneider said they have been in effect for a few years and were passed on before, with him and Burgener agreeing on 22J as the best option.
“J would be the biggest beneficial to your veterans in the community,” Burgener said.
After further discussion, the board told Burgener he could submit a town warrant article placeholder on this by March 1 for Town Meeting.

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- CLUES ACROSS**
1. Cut a little bit off
5. State with confidence
11. River in NE Scotland
14. Not narrow
15. Lacking social polish
16. Amount of time
17. Frame
19. Automobile
20. Toadstools
21. High school dances
22. Utilize
23. Challenged
25. One-sided
27. Showing extreme greed
31. Potted plants
34. Everyone has one
35. Lake in Botswana
38. E.T. rode in one
39. Juniors' parents
41. Small amount
42. Mother of Perseus
44. Ornamental box
45. Gov't investigators
46. Uncertain
49. A cotton fabric with a satiny finish
51. The vast grassy plains in S. America
55. Your consciousness of your own identity
56. Noted consumer advocate
60. Spanish sports club
61. Body part
62. Tractability
64. Woman (French)
65. Ready and willing to be taught
- CLUES DOWN**
1. Brushed aside
2. Water sprite
3. Ones to look up to
4. Monetary units
5. A number everyone has
6. Marine invertebrate
7. One who takes you to court
8. Indicates outer
9. Parallelograms
10. Strains
11. Cross
12. A way to remove
13. Some pages are dog—
18. Ukraine city
24. A citizen of Denmark
26. Summer month (abbr.)
28. Hindu queens
29. Jewelry brand
30. Fictional rider of Rohan
31. Wet dirt
32. Russian city
33. Observed
36. Furious
37. Drivers' licenses
39. Musical composition
40. Auction
43. They —
45. Women
47. Inspire with love
48. Japanese ankle sock
49. Appears
50. Old World lizard
52. The leading performer
53. Type of protein
54. Pennsylvania town
57. Art __: around 1920
58. __ Blyton, children's author
59. Abnormal breathing
63. A place to sleep
66. Muslim ruler title
67. Depressed
68. Gradually gave way
69. Clear-thinking

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E	A	R			A	M	E	N	A	B	I	L	I	T	Y
M	M	E			D	O	C	I	L	E		E	M	I	R
S	A	D			E	R	O	D	E	D		S	A	N	E

WILBRAHAM BOARD OF APPEALS PUBLIC HEARING

The Wilbraham Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing on **Thursday, March 20, 2025 at 5:30 PM** on the application of Matthew Reid for a special permit (ZBA25-02) under the provisions of Section 3.9.2.13 of the Wilbraham Zoning By-Law to allow a Screen Printing and Graphic Design (t-shirt printing) business to be operated as a Home Occupation in the existing attached garage on property owned by Matthew Reid located at 10 Joan Street as further specified in the application on file in the Planning Office and posted for public viewing on the

Zoning Board of Appeals page of the Town of Wilbraham website at www.wilbraham-ma.gov/135/Zoning-Board-of-Appeals. Both in person and virtual participation are available. To participate virtually go to <https://meet.goto.com/400439277> or call 866-899-4679 (Access Code: 400-439-277). Edward Kivari Jr., Chairman 03/06, 03/13/2025

WILBRAHAM BOARD OF APPEALS PUBLIC HEARING

The Wilbraham Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing on **Thursday, March 20, 2025 at 5:45 PM** on the ap-

plication of Western Recycling for a special permit (ZBA25-01) under the provisions of Section 3.4.6.9 of the Wilbraham Zoning By-Law to allow the installation of a 6,000 gallon diesel above-ground storage tank on property owned by 120 Old Boston Road Recycling Co., LLC, located at 120 Old Boston Road as further specified in the application on file in the Planning Office and posted for public viewing on the Zoning Board of Appeals page of the Town of Wilbraham website at www.wilbraham-ma.gov/135/Zoning-Board-of-Appeals. Both in person and virtual participation are available. To participate virtually go to <https://meet.goto.com/400439277> or

call 866-899-4679 (Access Code: 400-439-277). Edward Kivari Jr., Chairman 03/06, 03/13/2025

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



PET PAGE

ATTENTION READERS!

Send in your pet picture for our “Pet of the Month” and receive a free weekend get-away or spa package for your pet courtesy of Porter Road Pet Care. Email your photos to: jwalker@turley.com. Please include your name and your pet’s name.



PET OF THE MONTH Meet Dakota



Dakota is a 3 year old Boxer, Rottweiler mix. She enjoys playing ball. She is a cuddler and jokester! Her favorite food is whatever dad pulls out of his lunch bag (and he always makes sure there are leftovers). She lives in Palmer with Jamie, Megan, Mike and Emma Chevalier



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NEW IN MARCH

- At Post Office Park in Wilbraham Every Saturday Beginning March 8th 12 noon - Pack Walk 1:30 p.m - Basic Obedience & Socialization (Both Weather Permitting)
- At Pathfinder Regional Voc/Tech High School in Palmer Beginning March 20th
 - Basics of Obedience 6 Week Course Thursdays 5:30-6:30 p.m
 - Canine Good Citizenship AKC Certified Course Thursdays 6:45-7:45 p.mRegister Online through Pathfinder



NEW Board & Train Programs Starting This Spring



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The Benefits of Working With a Professional Dog Trainer

If you've been trying to train at home and find that your goals and expectations aren't coming true, consider reaching out for help. There's nothing quite like working with a professional in the field! Research shows that well-trained dogs are 50% less likely to develop problems such as aggression, anxiety, or destructive behavior. This statistic alone highlights how training can lead to a more harmonious existence for pets and their families. Here are just some of the many benefits of working with a certified professional trainer.

Customized Programs: Every dog has a unique personality and individual needs that a professional trainer has been taught to look for. They can then tailor a personalized training program that will benefit your dog specifically.

Problem Solving Recommendations: If your at-home training plan and goals aren't working out, a certified trainer can help you understand why. Then, they steer you in the right direction about what your next steps should be.

Supportive Environment: Experienced professional trainers are empathetic towards your struggles and goals. They understand that training your dog should be a fun and beneficial experience for both of you. They're non-judgmental and just here to help!

Socialization: Early exposure to various environments, people, and other animals can lead to better-adjusted dogs. The ideal time for socialization is between 3 and 14 weeks of age when puppies are most receptive to new experiences.

Building a Strong Bond: Training is not just about commands and obedience; it's also about strengthening the bond with your dog. Dogs that participate in regular training sessions show increased trust and attachment to their owners. This bond can lead to a happier, more fulfilling relationship for the dog and the owner.

Training plays an indispensable role in a dog's overall growth and development. The benefits of training are far-reaching, from improving behavior and social skills to enhancing the bond with their owners.



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East Longmeadow Dog Obedience Training Club

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546 Main Street, Hampden, MA

Classes held every Monday-Thursday evenings



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WILBRAHAM Animal Hospital

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Leah Guidry, DVM
Madison Harris, DVM
Nicholas Schipper, DVM



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413.596.8395
wilbrahamanimalhospital.com

East Springfield Veterinary Hospital
525 Page Blvd., Springfield, MA
413.739.6389 • esvhospital.com
(Less than 1 mile from Rt. 291)
Open Evenings & Saturdays

SCHOOLS

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 2-year, 4- 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 April 1, 2025 and mailed to: Wilbraham Junior Women’s Club, Attention Scholarship Committee , PO Box 14 , Wilbraham, MA 01095.

Wilbraham Women’s Club to Award Scholarships

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

The criteria considered are academic achievement, character, and leadership. Application guidelines are available in the Guidance Office at Minnechaug Regional High School.

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

Rotary Scholarship applications now available

WILBRAHAM - The Scholarship Committee of the Rotary Club of Wilbraham-Hampden has announced that applications for the 2025 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, 2025. The scholarships are available to qualified high school seniors who are residents of Wilbraham or Hampden.

The club will award nine scholarships, each in the amount of \$2,000. Applications may also be obtained from Brad Sperry by calling (413) 537-4171.

St. Cecilia Women’s Club awarding scholarships

WILBRAHAM - The Saint Cecilia Women’s Club is awarding \$1,500 scholarships to graduating seniors who are members of St. Cecilia Parish and who will be attending a two- or four-year college.

The selection criteria are academic achievement, character and leadership. Applications are available at Minnechaug Regional High School and at Saint Cecilia Parish.

Applicants may also contact the chairperson, Linda Hitas at 413-537-0014 or lindahitas1@gmail.com for an application.

The deadline for receipt of the application is March 10 and should be sent to Saint Cecilia Women’s Club, Saint Cecilia Parish, 42 Main St., Wilbraham 01095 or dropped off at the parish office.

Polish Junior League of Mass. awarding scholarships

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

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

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

Selection is based upon financial need and academic achievement.

Applications are available online at www.polishjuniorleaguema.org/applications.

CAMPUSNOTES

UMass Amherst announces fall Dean’s List

AMHERST - The following students were named to the Fall 2024 Dean’s List at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Students are appointed to the Dean’s List at the end of a semester in which they have completed a minimum of 12 graded credits and have earned a grade point average of 3.500 or better.

Hampden, MA

Blaise Barbeau, Jaclyn Nguyen, Linh Nguyen, Allyson Santos

Wilbraham, MA

Jessica Baker, Camryn Baroni, David Borawski, Jing Chen, John Chen, Ava Connors, Adriana Cosentini, Reighan Demers, Ani Diefenderfer, Jeremy Diehl, Parker Donohue, Kegan Druckenmiller, Grace Dufour, Isabelle Fergus, Catriona Ferreira, Christian Fuehr, Madison Gallant, Cameron Gilrein, Chase Harrison, Harrison Hill, Patrick Jahn, Timothy Jodoin, Kylie Kane, Emma Kennedy, Anya Khan, Joelle Kovarik, Jonah Kozub, Nick Lang, Gavin Lee, Willy Li, Jillian Long, Samantha Long, Jaclyn Maller, Thomas Manning, Sofia Manuel, Jillian Mawaka

Trent Maziarz, Madeline Murphy, Cade Norris, Briana Ricketts, Natalie Ricketts, Gabriella Rita, Jada Rosario, Jonas Saabye, Erik Saarela, Cally Seyler, Matthew Sherman, Ava Sirois, Alexander Tirabassi, Nina Tseitlin, Ruth Tucker, Samantha VanZandt, Caleigh Wall, Corrina Williams, Megan Youmell, Joseph Zebian

Univ. of Minnesota Duluth announces Dean’s List

DULUTH, Minn. - The University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD) has announced its Dean’s List for Fall Semester 2024. Students on the Dean’s List have achieved a grade point average of 3.50 or higher while earning a minimum of 12 letter-graded credits.

Wilbraham, MA

Marykate O’Brien, SR, Labovitz School of Bus & Econ, Business Analytics B B A; Marketing

Local Students graduate from UW-Madison

MADISON, Wis. - Just over 2,000 students received degrees during the University of Wisconsin-Madison Winter 2024 Commencement at the Kohl Center on Dec. 15, 2024.

Here are the degree recipients from Wilbraham:

Wilbraham, MA

Taryn Isenburg, College of Letters and Science, Master of Science-Geoscience, Geoscience

Polish Plate Dinner coming up on March 22

INDIAN ORCHARD MA. 413-543-3627

– A Polish Plate Dinner— Eat In or Take Out. Tickets at \$20 per plate are available by calling: Maria Kowalski at 413-222-6229, Irena Wurszt at 413-427-5846 or the Parish Office Monday through Wednesday, 3 to 6 p.m. at

There are also options for the following:

Frozen Polish Food Sale (Golabki (3) \$12, Kapusta (Large) \$10.

Pierogi (Cabbage & Potato & Cheese) \$14, (Sweet Cheese, Blueberry) \$15.

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John Mollenbrey
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Zoe Czaplicki
519-9224



Linda Alston
246-8616



Steve Lortie
427-4122



Kathi Calabrese
374-5867



Shari Lokey
218-8811



Maria D'Angelantonio
575-2898



Luci Giguere
575-2837



Ann Paquette
626-6871



Ann Marie Martin
206-1161



Sandy Wegrzyn
519-1056



Art Ferrara
348-5827



Alyssa Rhodes
896-9269



Chrissy Albano
374-6254

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SINGLE FAMILY LISTINGS

STATUS	ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION	LIST PRICE	SOLD PRICE
ACT	12 Federal St. Extension, Agawam	8 room, 3 bed, 1f 1h bath Dutch Colonial	\$499,900	
ACT	287 Allen St, East Longmeadow	5 room, 3 bed, 1f 0h bath Ranch	\$339,900	
ACT	313 Bennett Rd., Hampden	7 room, 3 bed, 2f, 1h bath Cape	\$535,000	
ACT	12 Upper Palmer, Monson	7 room, 4 bed, 2f 1h bath Colonial	\$699,900	
ACT	117 Buckingham St., Springfield	10 room, 7 bed, 1f, 1h bath Colonial	\$269,900	
ACT	170 Blanche S., Springfield	6 room, 3 bed, 1f, 1h bath Ranch	\$364,900	
ACT	2 Anna Marie Lane, East Longmeadow	8 room, 4 bed, 2f, 1h bath Colonial	\$897,500	
CTG	90 Angela Dr., Chicopee	7 room, 3 bed, 2f 1h bath Colonial	\$475,000	
CTG	27 Oakland St, Wilbraham	8 room, 4 bed, 2f, 1h bath Colonial	\$489,900	
UAG	28 Dover St, Agawam	5 room, 3 bed, 1f 0h bath Ranch	\$314,900	
UAG	70 Moody St, Ludlow	4 room, 2 bed, 1f, 0h bath Ranch	\$255,000	
UAG	84 Cote Rd, Monson	7 room, 3 bed, 2f 0h bath Colonial	\$359,999	
UAG	210 Moulton Hill Rd., Monson	7 room, 3 bed, 2f, 0h bath Colonial	\$450,000	
UAG	128 Tiffany St, Springfield	6 room, 3 bed, 1f 0h bath Cape	\$299,900	
UAG	495-497 Springfield St., Wilbraham	9 room, 4 bed, 2f, 0h bath Colonial, Cottage	\$499,900	
SLD	5 Granger Dr., Agawam	6 room, 3 bed, 2f, 0h bath Ranch	\$389,900	\$420,000
SLD	8 Andrew Cir, Hampden	6 room, 3 bed, 2f, 0h bath Ranch	\$729,900	\$805,000
SLD	55 Norman St., Springfield	6 room, 3 bed, 1f, 1h bath Colonial	\$274,900	\$275,000
SLD	152 Carroll St., Springfield	5 room, 3 bed, 1f, 1h bath Cape	\$279,000	\$289,000
SLD	23 Rachel St., Springfield	7 room, 3 bed, 1f, 1h bath Colonial	\$365,000	\$360,000
SLD	299 Stony Hill Rd., Wilbraham	8 room, 4 bed, 2f, 0h bath Antique	\$374,900	\$375,000
SLD	28 Maple St, Wilbraham	6 room, 3 bed, 1f, 1h bath Colonial	\$419,000	\$394,000

CONDOMINIUM LISTINGS

UAG	5 Southwood Cir., U:5, Hampden	4 room, 2 bed, 2f, 0h bath Garden	\$399,900	
UAG	308 Miller St., U:17, Ludlow	4 room, 2 bed, 2f, 0h bath Garden, Half-Duplex	\$408,000	
UAG	101 Mulberry St., U:502, Springfield	3 room, 1 bed, 1f, 0h bath Mid-Rise	\$84,999	
SLD	270 Nassau Dr., U:270, Springfield	4 room, 2 bed, 1f, 0h bath Garden	\$224,900	\$225,000

MULTI FAMILY LISTINGS

UAG	15 Page Ct, Chicopee	2 unit, 13 total rooms, 4 total bedrooms 2 Family	\$435,000	
UAG	13-19 South St., Palmer	4 unit, 18 total rooms, 9 total bedrooms 4 Family	\$379,000	

COMMERCIAL LISTINGS

SLD	2703 Boston Rd., Wilbraham	Commercial Building	\$385,000	\$355,000
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