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HPL hosts open house

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com

HAMPDEN - The library hosted an open house on March 7 to introduce the community to its new location and spaces after relocating to the new Town Hall on Wilbraham Road.

The festivities included a meet and greet with local author and historian David Bourcier, with attendees also having the opportunity to check out the Local History Room, local resident Paul Gonzales showing off his Kindness Coins, teens making "My Intent" jewelry, key chains and bookmarks in the Sheila R. Flynn Teen Center, families exploring the Kid's Playroom and more.

The event was sponsored by the Friends of the Hamp-



Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

The kids smile for a fun photo with Jean Hall, a member of the Friends of the Hampden Free Public Library.

den Free Public Library, who also provided refreshments.

Director Ellen Moriarty expressed excitement about the event and thanked the

community for supporting the library throughout the move.

"I am so grateful to our entire library staff for all of their hard work and dedica-

tion in making this move possible. A big thank you to the

Please see **OPEN HOUSE**, page 8

SB approves annual Wilbraham Clean-Up

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
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WILBRAHAM - The Select Board unanimously approved this year's upcoming 4th Annual Wilbraham Clean-Up event during their March 9 meeting.

The approvals were for the request of use of public property for special events, a request to place banners/signs (standard yard signs) on Select Board-approved town properties and a request to place banners/signs - signage at Town Hall and Crane Park.

This year's event will take place on Saturday, May 2, at Memorial School from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. The trash collection itself will be from 8 a.m. to Noon and the collected trash will be brought back to Fountain Park afterward.

Event Chairperson Megan Harrigan explained the Keep Wilbraham Beautiful Committee was requesting to use Memorial School for this year's event.

"We have spoken to the Rec Department and talked to them about logistics there and we just needed a change of venue this year because Fountain Park is being used," Harrigan said.

The CARE display—which debuted last year—will be filled with nip bottles collected during the event, with Harrigan sharing this was something in other parts of the country and world.

"I thought it was a cool thing to bring to our area. We're going to do nips only, so that cardboard doesn't

get in it, and we used the library's front lawn last year, but I honestly thought that this was a town-wide event and it would be great to display it in front of the Town Hall," Harrigan said. "If you wanted that type of exposure after the event, it will be cleaned up and taken away and I will drive by and make sure it's maintained."

The others signs, she added, are yard signs.

"We did them last year. They're the small signs that

"THE GOAL IS WE GO TO DO THIS AND THERE'S NOTHING THERE. WE HAVEN'T ACHIEVED THAT YET."

- Jeff Smith

go in the tree belts. We did them in the various sections of the town that we could in the tree belts. We actually got a lot of good attention from it. So, we're also selling them as a fundraiser for people's front yards this year," Harrigan said. "So, we'll have two different designs, potentially. A standard Wilbraham one for the tree belt and then we're thinking, maybe the cuter 'No Litterbug' one for houses, to be determined."

On the price point, it would be \$50 to cover the cost and some sponsorship and will be promoted through the event website.

"I will also ask your town to put our link to the website like they have in the past. So, the town web-

Please see **CLEAN-UP**, page 4

'Complete Works of Shakespeare (abridged) [revised] [again]' debuts

Promising a hilarious night out

By Ben Hernandez
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham United Players begins their latest theater production this week. "The Complete Works of Shakespeare (abridged) [revised] [again]" will be the second main stage show for the year for the Wilbraham United Players, a troupe that will be celebrating their 70th anniversary this year.

"It's a crazy, crazy show," Deb Trimble, the artistic director of the Wilbraham United Players and the stage director for the upcoming production, said.

Trimble, a stage veteran, is a huge fan of the show and was inspired to run it after seeing it on vacation in Westerly, Rhode Island eight years ago. Trimble stated that she saw an ad for the production in the local newspaper and had to convince her daughter to accompany her.

She mentioned that her

Please see **SHAKESPEARE**, page 10



Turley photo by Mark Giza

From left to right stage actors Craig Duda, Joe Lessard, and Kevin Bechard smile for the camera.

Theatre Guild of Hampden to present 'The Wisdom of Eve'

By Kristin Rivers
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HAMPDEN - The Theatre Guild of Hampden will present "The Wisdom of Eve" on March 20, 21, 22, 27, 28 and 29 at the former Thornton W. Burgess Middle School.

Tickets are on sale now and can be purchased at the door or by visiting theatre-guildofhampden.org.

"The Wisdom of Eve" is adapted from the story by Mary Orr, on which the Oscar-winning film "All About Eve" and the hit musical "Applause" were based.

The cast includes Rick Malone as Tally-Ho Thompson, Nathan Alvarez as Harvey, Allison Reardon as Eve, Amanda Emet as Vera Franklin, Andy Price as Bert Hinkle, Andrea Stolar as Leila, Heath Verrill as Lloyd, Jeanie Wysocki as Margo, Margie Secora as Karen and Phil Godeck as Clement.

The artistic director is Mark Giza and the stage manager is Gail Weber.

The showtimes are Friday and Saturday at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday Matinees at 2 p.m.

Wysocki explained her character, Margo, is still very active in the theater, but "she's realizing that time is

marching on."

"I just thought it would be a fun role to try to do because it's completely opposite of my personality," Wysocki said.

She credits her daughter for her start in local theater.

"A few years back, my daughter used to do the children's productions of Mark Giza's theater group and when she was little, she was the one who inspired me to start," Wysocki said.

Wysocki praised Giza, Weber and her fellow cast members.

"Having a director like Mark Giza and we have a great stage manager in Gail Weber and then the entire cast, they're all seasoned and they are fantastic," Wysocki said. "So, for me, it's a real honor to be able to work with them."

Stolar shared that Leila is the dresser in the production. She previously worked with Giza on "Jerry's Girls" in 2025, having also performed in other community theater groups.

"I have a small part, but she's quite the character. She really watches Margo's back and tries to protect her from Eve, so it's a good little part and it's a great show," Stolar said. "The cast gets along re-



Turley photos by Kristin Rivers
Allison Reardon as Eve pokes out from behind the curtain.

ally well and some good acting, very entertaining."

Giza and the community are what drew her to the Theatre Guild of Hampden.

"Mark always does a very professional show and I love Hampden. It's a great little town, so I'm happy to be here," Stolar said.

Her advice for aspiring and future theatre actors was this.

Please see **WISDOM OF EVE**, page 9

Holyoke hosts 2026 Colleen Gathering

By Brendan Rooney
Correspondent

HOLYOKE - The city hosted this year's Colleen Gathering at the Wyckoff Country Club on Sunday, March 8.

The gathering featured the 2026 Colleens and their courts from Holyoke, Chicopee, Agawam, West Springfield, Springfield and Westfield, along with the 2026 award recipients from the surrounding communities. Festivities included a luncheon, raffles, and performances from the Black Rose Academy of Irish Dance, along with the Colleens and their courts, who

also got to show off their Irish step dance moves.

Before the presentation kicked off, remarks were provided by Dave Haslam, a member of the Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Committee and chairman for this year's Colleen Gathering, along with 2026 Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee President Jim Wildman, who offered a bit of insight into the behind-the-scenes process of the event and revealed that every year, the parade president of the St. Patrick's Committee of Holyoke selects a city to host the Colleen Gathering in early March.

"Normally, we try to set

this up throughout the regionals every year and have it be different," Wildman said. "And it's always a great day. It brings all the Colleens and all the committees together, and it gets them all in one place, and lets them just have a day of fun and relaxation, before the next two weeks, which get really busy and hectic leading up to the parade weekend. I'm also looking forward to enjoying the Parade, and just getting ready for the lead up to things, it's great to see the weather getting better, and can't wait for the parade weekend."

Please see **COLLEEN**, page 10



Turley photo by Brendan Rooney

The 2026 Colleens and Courts for Holyoke, Chicopee, Agawam, Springfield, West Springfield and Westfield assembled for a group photo.

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Hampden Selectboard presents regional agreement discussion clarification

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com



Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

The Hampden Selectboard provided a regional agreement discussion clarification on March 9.

HAMPDEN - The Selectboard presented a regional agreement discussion clarification during their March 9 meeting.

Chair John Flynn explained the board received a note that there was interest in having attorneys for the three parties—the Selectboard, Wilbraham Select Board and School Committee—to meet and have a group discussion. Also, Wilbraham's attorney, Brian Winner, had reached out to Hampden's.

"Is this something we're willing to do or is this, it's just too nebulous at this point? I mean, if they wanted to discuss some legal opinion that's defined, sure," Flynn said. "Are we worried it's just going to be a bit of a group bug or what?"

Selectboard Member Don Davenport then presented his thoughts, wanting to clarify the discussion surrounding the regional agreement and Wilbraham Middle School.

"First, the Wilbraham Select Board unilaterally acted to instruct their Town Counsel to meet with the Regional School Committee's counsel and Hampden's Town Counsel to negotiate proposed changes in the Regional Agreement, particularly the section dealing with responsibility for capital expenditures at the Middle School. The meeting between legal counsels is apparently scheduled for this Thursday," Davenport said. "I want to make it clear that the Wilbraham Select Board took this action unilat-

erally and that Hampden has not agreed to this approach. Speaking for myself, I do not believe there is a need to involve legal counsel. It will only result in unnecessary expenditure of taxpayer-funded legal fees. I would suggest the Board instruct our Town Counsel not to participate."

Davenport next said "the notion that Hampden, as publicly stated by a member of the Wilbraham Select Board is somehow, 'holding Wilbraham hostage' is disingenuous at best."

"The facts have been and remain: The Hampden Selectboard, in conformance with the Settlement Agreement, has actively participated in and has supported many of the proposed changes in the Regional Agreement. Including the latest proposed change to Section IV paragraph E. The Hampden Selectboard has supported and continues to support the Regional School Committee's decision to seek acceptance into the CORE Program to assist in determining the future of

Wilbraham Middle School," Davenport said. "At no time did the Hampden Selectboard indicate that it would not be party to the implementation of any CORE Program decision as to the future of the Wilbraham-owned Middle School building."

He also emphasized that "Hampden has and continues to pay its fair share of all costs for the operation and routine maintenance of all the Regional Schools including the Middle School through the annual regional assessment."

"The Selectboard's position is simply this: It is well documented and recognized that a number of deficiencies that existed for years in the Wilbraham-owned Middle School building have gone unaddressed. Deficiencies that existed long before Thornton W Burgess was closed and before Hampden Students were transferred to the Middle School. Many if not all those deficiencies exist to this day," Davenport said. "The Regional Agreement and the lease agreement between the Town of Wilbraham and the Region requires the owner of the building, in the case of Wilbraham Middle School, the Town of Wilbraham, be solely responsible for the costs to remedy those identified deficiencies. The Town of Hampden has long advocated for those repairs to be made for the health and safety of the students, teachers and staff."

Davenport ended his remarks with this.

"The only stumbling block to moving forward in my view is the reluctance of the Wilbraham Select Board to take a leadership role in ensuring that the necessary

steps are taken to formulate and implement a plan to mitigate those long-standing identified deficiencies for the benefit and safety of the students, faculty and staff, at the Middle School while CORE Program proceeds," Davenport said.

He then presented a motion for the board to direct their town counsel to not participate in the meeting "at this time."

Flynn then asked this. "Are we interested in, then, we feel that fruitful discussions can be handled by us, rather than involving legal support?" Flynn said.

Selectboard Member Erik Vanderleeden offered his perspective.

"I would say if they want to talk to their attorney and send something our way and if we feel like it needs legal review, then from that we can engage," Vanderleeden said.

Davenport added with the regional agreement—as it stands now—"is fine."

"Let's see what the CORE program says. The program may say, 'You need a new middle school.' It may say, 'No, you have to put an addition on this school and then we could talk about, okay, how are we going to pay for this?'" Davenport said.

"Right," Vanderleeden said.

"But, that's three or four years down the road," Davenport said.

After Vanderleeden seconded Davenport's motion, the board voted unanimously to not have their town counsel participate in the meeting with the Wilbraham Select Board and School Committee's attorneys at this time.

Vegetable Gardening Class at the Wilbraham Library

WILBRAHAM— No experience? No problem! The Wilbraham Public Library will host Blackstone Valley Veggie Gardens on Monday, March 30 at 6 p.m. for their presentation, Veggie Gardening for Beginners. Get some tips from a pro as they discuss how to

grow healthy, tasty vegetables from your own backyard.

Registration is appreciated for planning purposes, but seating is available on a first come, first served basis. This free program is sponsored by the Wilbraham Friends of the Library.



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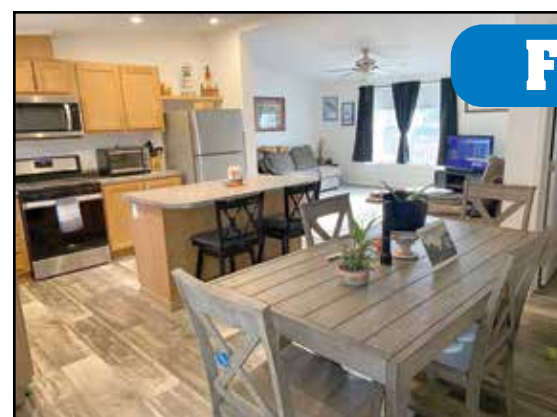
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Sensory Street coming to Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Parade

By **Brendan Rooney**
Correspondent

HOLYOKE — A new addition is coming to the 73rd Annual Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Parade, as the St. Patrick's Committee of Holyoke is partnering with the Miracle League of Western Mass (MLWM) and Magic for Maddie to introduce 'Sensory Street' along this year's parade route, which offers and provides a lower-stimulus viewing option for visitors with sensory sensitivities.

Providing insight into how this came together was Holyoke City Council President Tessa Murphy-Romboletti, who explained that the inspiration came from a trip to Ireland last year.

"Last year, a group of city officials and Parade Committee members took a trip to visit our sister city of Tralee, Ireland. We marched in their parade and saw that their parade offered a 'sensory-friendly' area for spectators, and we thought it was such a great idea," Murphy-Romboletti said.

She explained that she pitched the idea to the Parade Committee, and they followed

through. "Our 2026 Parade President (Jim Wildman) and volunteers took the initiative and made it come to fruition, with the support of some amazing sponsors," Murphy-Romboletti said.

It was also revealed that Wildman then reached out to Kerry Parsons, a board member for the MLWM, who loved the idea.

"We're so excited, because this is such an incredible inclusion to the parade," Parsons said, something that Murphy-Romboletti also bestowed praise towards.

"This addition is a great way to make sure everyone gets to enjoy the parade, including families with children and individuals who may not love the big noises that can happen during the parade," Murphy-Romboletti said. "Simply, it's just another way for our city to say, 'you are welcome here.'"

Echoing similar thoughts was Wildman.

"This is a huge step for us, because I don't believe there is another St. Patrick's Day Parade that does this type of activity, and to have this area be inclusive for all these kids and

adults who have issues with all the lights, sirens, and the noise, and for them to come in and join us is heartwarming," Wildman said.

Wildman added that the social media response and reaction to the announcement has been beneficial and surprising.

"For example, this past week, we had our social media go out, and we had almost 500 likes and close to 1K comments within 24 hours," Wildman said. "We gained interest and traction from groups we've never heard of, who have shared the announcement, that are all talking about coming, and so we're hoping for a very, very good first year, and for people to show up and enjoy this with their families."

According to details, the full Sensory Street zone runs from Appleton Street, Elm, Maple Street, and the wind-down begins to take shape at Walnut Street before the traditional parade experience returns on High Street. Both zones will be marked with signs along the route and highlighted on the official parade map.

No reservations are required to access Sensory

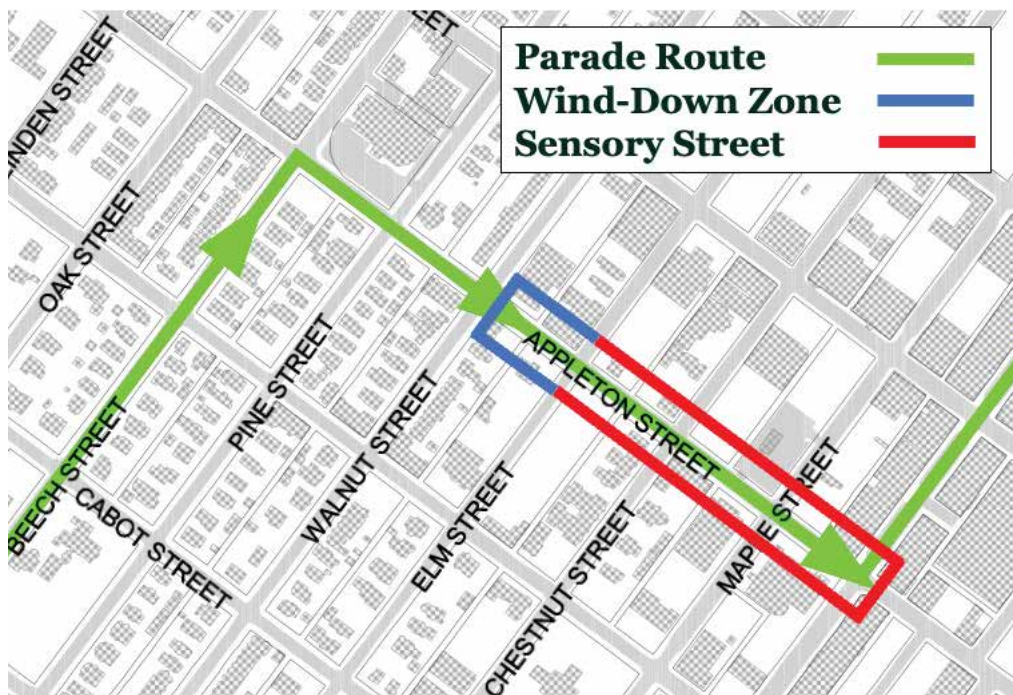


Photo courtesy of the Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee

Map of the Sensory Street Designated Zone .

Street, and the zone will be open to all spectators. Offering an in-depth analysis of what families can expect was Murphy-Romboletti.

"During the couple of blocks of 'Sensory Street,' folks can anticipate no emergency or flashing lights, no sirens or amplified alarms,

bands will feature strings only (no percussion or brass), as well as reduced loud or sudden vehicle noises," Murphy-Romboletti said. "I think it's great that we can join others in these efforts because true inclusivity isn't about taking away an experience from anyone else; it's about

creating new opportunities that encourage bringing more people into the fold."

The new initiative is believed to be the first of its kind for any major event held in Western Massachusetts.

The Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Parade kicks off later this month on March 22.

Wilbraham United Players presents 'The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged) [revised] [again]'

WILBRAHAM - Wilbraham United Players presents "The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged) [revised] [again]" by Adam Long, Daniel Singer and Jess Winfield, with new revisions by Daniel Singer and Jess Winfield, March 20-22, and March 27-29, 2026 on the stage at Fellowship Hall. Deb Trimble will direct.

The show is an irreverent, hilarious, high-speed

ramp where three talented performers weave their way through all 37 of Shakespeare's comedies, histories, and tragedies in one wild ride that will leave audiences breathless and helpless with laughter. The performers are Craig Duda, Kevin Bechard and Joe Lessard.

With its inclusion of pop culture and audience participation, the production is a clever and painless way to in-

troduce Shakespeare's plays to new audiences while being Shakespeare-smart enough to delight long-time fans. You will not want to miss this one!

Tickets can be purchased online at www.wilbrahamunitedplayers.org/buy-tickets. The performances will take place on the Stage in Fellowship Hall at Wilbraham United Church, 500 Main Street, Wilbraham, MA 01095

CLEAN-UP from page 1

site will link to ours just so that everybody can find information quickly. It's a Google site. It's always been there and there's a Facebook page to follow as well," Harrigan said.

After Jeff Smith requested that the event also be put on the town calendar if possible, Harrigan added the DPW will be helping out at the event again this year, along with the police department.

Smith said there will be tours of Memorial School during the event as well, offered by the Parks & Rec Department.

"There seems to be a lot of interest in that facility lately, so for people that may not be aware of what it's like on the inside, the Rec Department will be there to take people around the building to have a peek at it," Smith said. "And, we're going to bring in sanicans and stuff, so that we're

not using the system there because some of the bathrooms aren't functioning, so we'll have our own facilities set up."

"And a hand-washing station, as always, because we're dealing with trash," Harrigan said. "Gloves, grabbers, buckets. We're going to order more vests this year. Some walked away from the property last year, mainly because we had the snow and then we had multiple events and then we had all sorts of things. So, new vests. Keep up with the demand and hope for good weather."

Smith said since the event's inception, there were over 10,000 pounds collected off the sides of the road, "which is disturbing and impressive at the same time."

On Chair Michael Squindo's question on if the trash collected each year grows or lessens, Smith said it depends on the weather.

"Last year was weather-re-

lated and then sometimes it's tricky because if a couch gets thrown in, the DPW weighs it. We had a weight bench one year, we had a kitchen sink one year, so we are finding things large, but hopefully, it stays down just to the little stuff," Harrigan added.

The goal was this. "The goal is we go to do this and there's nothing there. We haven't achieved that yet," Smith said.

"And we are getting messages all year round from people saying that they're collecting and they just wanted to give a shout-out and things, so there are people collecting on non-Earth Day days, and it's fantastic," Harrigan said.

Readers can learn more about this year's event at <https://sites.google.com/view/wilbraham-earth-day-cleanup/home>.



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C4R watershed council to hold gathering March 22

PALMER – We have all heard Carpe Diem-seize the day, well our local rivers need us to step up to care for them as we enjoy their beauty.

Join the Chicopee 4Rivers Watershed, C4R, group as its members seek to continue their efforts to do that.

The first gathering in 2026 will be held on Sunday, March 22 from 2-4 p.m. in the Palmer Historical Cultural Center, 2072 Main St., Three Rivers.

Come hear what C4R has accomplished and how you can help to keep it going.



They will review water quality monitoring, paddling trails, clean ups, trail stewardship, leadership needs, and more.

For more information, email chicopeewatershed@gmail.com.

The GFWC to hold Annual Bunny Breakfast

WILBRAHAM - The GFWC Wilbraham Junior Women's Club is ready to welcome spring with its much-loved Annual Bunny Breakfast on Saturday, March 28 from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. at St Cecilia's Church Parish Center located at 41 Main Street in Wilbraham.

Families are invited to start their day with a "Bunnylicious" Breakfast of freshly prepared pancakes, sausage, fresh fruits and their choice of orange or apple juice, coffee, tea, milk or water.

The Easter Bunny will be hopping by to visit and take photos with the kids. Guests

can enjoy Free Face painting, Temporary Tattoos and a variety of seasonal of Arts and Crafts activities! Raffle tickets will be available for purchase for a chance to win beautifully themed baskets for both children and adults.

The GFWC Wilbraham Junior Women's Club would like to thank our sponsors The Joseph and Anna C. Dias Jr Family Foundation and Luso Federal Credit Union. Luso's representatives will be distributing Easter-themed items to all of the children!

The Bunny Breakfast is a long standing, cherished community event. Be sure to Hop on over! Tickets are \$8 for adults and \$6 for children 1-12 and those under 1 are free. Tickets can be purchased at the door via cash, check or Venmo or online at www.Wilbrahamjuniorwomens.org via PayPal or Venmo. For more information, please contact Michele Mariani at Shellsteno@charter.net or (413) 531-1621.



Wilbraham Junior Women's Club announces scholarship available

WILBRAHAM - The GFWC Wilbraham Junior Women's Club is pleased to announce the availability of its annual scholarship for graduating seniors at Minnechaug Regional High School.

In keeping with the Club's mission to strengthen the community through volunteer service and sup-

port of others, a \$1,000 scholarship will be awarded to a student who exemplifies these values and plans to attend a two-year, four-year, or other accredited institution of higher education.

Scholarship applications are available through the Minnechaug Regional High School Guidance Of-

fice. Completed applications must be postmarked by April 1, 2026 and mailed to Katy Reed, Scholarship Committee, 490 Glendale Road, Wilbraham, MA 01095. Students are encouraged to apply and take advantage of this opportunity to support their postsecondary educational goals.

Hampden Rabies Clinic for Dogs and Cats

HAMPDEN - A Rabies Clinic will held at the Hampden Veterinary Clinic at 28 Somers Road, on Saturday, April 4, 2026 from 9 a.m. to Noon.

The cost will be \$25 per cat or dog for a one (1) year.

You may have heard rumors of rabies vaccine causing cancer in cats. The Hampden Veterinary Clinic carries the Purevax Rabies vaccination. It is the only nonadjuvanted rabies vaccine available for cats and

kittens and is specifically designed for cats. The cost for a three-year vaccine is \$50 and the cost for a one-year vaccine is \$25.

By Massachusetts state law, all cats over six months of age should be vaccinated.

A Rabies vaccination is good for one or three years, depending on the dog's or cat's previous vaccination history.

Make sure you bring your two most recent rabies certificates for the doctor to

review. ALL CATS SHOULD BE IN A CARRIER. ALL DOGS MUST BE ON A LEASH.

Our Town Clerk, Eva Wiseman, will be available to sell dog licenses. The license costs \$10 for male or female dogs and \$5 for neutered or spayed dogs. A rabies certificate is required to obtain a dog license.

For more information, please call the Board of Health office at 566-2151 ext. 102.

Spring Sports Swap at WPL now through March 27

WILBRAHAM - From March 21 through March 27, the Wilbraham Public Library is accepting donations of youth sports equipment for the following spring-season sports: baseball, softball, lacrosse, soccer, tennis, volleyball, golf, and track & field (please hold on to your equipment for sports from other seasons for future fall and winter equipment swaps).

Items should be gently used, clean, in good condition, and should comply with current sports equipment standards.

Examples of items the library will accept: baseball and softball bats, gloves, cleats (please label with sport & size), helmets, and balls; lacrosse sticks, chest and arm pads, gloves, helmets, cleats and turf shoes (please label with sport & size), goggles; soccer balls, cleats and turf shoes (please label with sport and size), bungee ball net kickers, small practice cones, goalie gloves, pop-up goals (must be collapsed and secured); tennis racquets, racquet bags, racquet string, balls, shoes (please label with

sport & size); volleyballs, spike challengers, volleyball blocking pads, shoes (please label with sport & size), golf clubs, bags, gloves, footwear (please label with sport and size), balls; track spikes (please label with sport & size), discuses, shotputs, relay batons, turbojavs.

We cannot accept: jockstraps, cups, mouth-guards, soft and absorbent knee-pads or shin-guards, full-size javelins, anything visibly dirty, anything stained with mold or mildew, anything damp, clothing including jerseys, socks,

Teen Clay Gnomes Workshop

WILBRAHAM— The Teen Department at the Wilbraham Public Library is excited to announce a Clay Gnomes Workshop on Tuesday, March 24 from 5 to 6:30 p.m.

Taught by Master Potter Rick of Pied Potter Hamelin, this teen workshop is where creativity knows no bounds! While exploring hand-building techniques such as pinch pots, coils and slabs, teens will work with white clay and transform it into an adorable gnome.

Each teen will paint their creation, and then take it home at the end of the workshop. No experience necessary and all supplies will be provided.

This workshop is for students in grades 6-12 and registration is required as space is limited. To sign up, please contact the library at 413-596-6141, or visit the Event Calendar at www.wilbraham-library.org. This program is sponsored by the Wilbraham Friends of the Library.

pants, shorts, any equipment for sports not listed above (check back this summer for the date for the fall equipment swap), large or non-collapsible goals or rebounders.

Saturday, March 28, from 10 a.m. until Noon, parents and guardians of youth athletes are invited to shop the donations – this event is free!

Equipment will be set up in the Brooks Room, organized by sport. At the end of the event remaining equipment will be donated or otherwise disposed of by library staff.

You are cordially invited to celebrate

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VIEWPOINTS

SOCIAL SECURITY

Matters

By Russell Gloor

Is there income tax on Social Security benefits?

Dear Rusty:

The Trump Administration is saying that now there will be no taxes on Social Security benefits. Since we're getting ready to start our 2025 income tax return, can you explain how this all works?

Signed: Confused Taxpayer

Dear Confused Taxpayer:

You are obviously referring to the so-called "One Big, Beautiful Bill" and how that bill affects income tax on your Social Security benefits. And this is because of the publicity surrounding the so-called "one big, beautiful bill" enacted last year, which claims to "eliminate income tax on Social Security benefits." Well, that bill did, yet technically didn't, fully eliminate income tax on benefits. Allow me to explain.

The OBBB does eliminate income tax on most SS benefits, but it does so in a somewhat unique way – by providing an additional \$6,000 (per person) deduction to your federal taxable income as reported to the IRS. Thus, you will pay less total income tax when you file your taxes with the IRS because of that additional deduction to your taxable income.

The extra deduction is available to those over age 65 and is meant to offset the income tax which will still be levied by the IRS on the SS benefits you received in 2025. Essentially, the rules governing income tax on Social Security benefits have not changed.

The IRS will still levy income tax on your SS benefits if your combined income from all sources (known as your "provisional income") is over \$32,000 as a married couple filing jointly or more than \$25,000 if you file as an individual. If your provisional income is below the threshold for your IRS filing status, you will pay no income tax on your received 2025 SS benefits.

But if your provisional income exceeds the threshold for your IRS filing status, then somewhere between 50% and 85% of your received SS benefits will be taxed (how much SS income to be taxed depends on your combined income in 2025). By now, you should have received form 1099-SSA which advised of your 2025 Social Security income, including any income tax you had withheld from your SS benefits.

This income should be

reported when submitting your 2025 income tax return. If your "provisional income" is over \$32,000 as a married couple filing jointly (or over \$25,000 as an individual filer), then your 2025 SS benefits will still be taxed by the IRS. But when completing your 2025 Income Tax Return, you will also be able to claim an additional \$6,000 per person (\$12,000 if you file jointly), which will likely offset any income tax you must pay due to the SS benefits you received in 2025.

If you use a tax preparer or tax preparation software, they will guide you through this calculation. Note, too, that the \$6,000 per person deduction amount will be less if your combined taxable income is more than \$150,000 as a married couple (or more than \$75,000 as a single filer).

Be aware, though, that the OBBB is temporary tax accommodation which expires after tax year 2028. And that's because the process used to pass the bill in Congress (a "budget reconciliation" process) didn't actually change SS law; rather it provided a way around it to offset income tax paid on SS benefits.

So, to recap, the IRS can still levy income tax on your received Social Security benefits but, because of the OBBB, you will likely also (depending on your provisional income level) receive an extra deduction which offsets any taxes calculated on your Social Security benefits.

Finally, be aware that if your first husband also predeceases you, you will then become eligible for a surviving ex-spouse benefit from him, even if he has remarried.

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 ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

HWEA asks for support to schools

In communities across Massachusetts, public school budgets are facing devastating cuts because of the limitations imposed on municipalities by the revenue-limiting Proposition 2 1/2.

In the Hampden Wilbraham Regional School District, however, elected officials have inflicted pain on students and families by intentionally choking off potential revenue available to public schools.

While other communities are passing overrides to make sure students have access to the education that they deserve, in Hampden and Wilbraham regional schools, town officials are creating a budget crisis by not raising revenue that is allowable under the provisions of Prop 2 1/2.

In Wilbraham historically, the gap between what is raised and what could be raised is \$1.3 million. That figure in Hampden is more than \$420,000.

In addition to the reluctance to raise sufficient revenue for town services, Wilbraham has been shrinking the portion of municipal spending devoted to education. If the town had continued to fund public schools at a percentage of municipal spending we saw a decade

Letters to the Editor

ago, we would have been able to invest approximately \$700,000 more per year in education.

The Hampden Wilbraham Education Association supports fiscal responsibility. But that responsibility cannot be interpreted as "spending as little as possible." To those of us teaching in the district, "responsibility" means strategically investing in the education our students need to thrive.

The proposals under consideration to accommodate unnecessary budget cuts will undermine our work as educators and shrink opportunities for students. Raising fees for students to participate in athletics and other activities will create financial barriers for some families. Cutting spending on staff and resources will lead to larger class sizes, fewer extracurricular activities, and schools not as well equipped as they should be to deliver a modern education. Capping salaries for new hires will deter good, qualified educators from seeking jobs here.

Students will lose individualized attention and support.

And we do not say these things to stir fear; we say them because some of these negative impacts of underfunding for education are al-

ready plaguing our schools. We urge town officials to demonstrate leadership that will reverse that trend, not contribute to it.

It is a sad irony that as lawmakers on Beacon Hill just spent months debating and eventually passing a bill aimed at boosting literacy, here in our district we are down to having just one licensed librarian and the library in the middle school is being used as classroom space – meaning students in grades 6, 7 and 8 lose their access to books. Having understaffed and closed libraries in public schools directly links to reading difficulties in our student populations. This is just one example of what happens when we start to devalue and underfund all that goes into making a powerful and successful public education program.

Town officials need to do what is right for the families we serve and adequately generate the revenue needed for our schools to deliver a high quality education to the students in the Hampden Wilbraham Regional School District.

Sincerely,
Hampden-Wilbraham
Education Association

An herb catalog and a favorite herb

One of my favorite seed and plant catalogs of all time is Richters Herbs (richters.com). I look forward to the paper copy arriving in the mail by early December.

The company is out of Ontario, Canada, and offers over 1,200 unique varieties, mostly herbs of all kinds with a few vegetables thrown in for good measure. I've ordered from them for well over two decades and think their products are just great, everything from common culinary herbs to unique medicinal plants and everything in between, even dye plants and ornamentals.

I love how the seeds are packaged in foil lined envelopes and quantities are liberal, often giving you enough seed for two or three years of sowing, depending on the variety. On occasion I have had to order plants that I couldn't find locally and despite the distance, they arrive in good shape.

Basil (*Ocimum* spp) is one plant in particular that we typically order seed of, and we will soon be starting it indoors. The Richters catalog boasts 29 varieties, and we grow nine of them in the Paul Rogers Herb Garden at Old Sturbridge Village.

A trip to our herb garden in season is really worth-

while. Who doesn't like Italian or Genovese basil? Picture the pesto!



But in addition to our old favorites, there is lemon, anise, cinnamon and spice, each with fragrant leaves. Looking for unique foliage? Try dark opal, whose leaves are tinted dark purple or bush basil, whose tiny leaves altogether make a round globe of a plant, and who could leave out lettuce leaf, with its crinkled pale green leaves.

Over the years I have found that there are just a few obstacles to growing great basil. Seeds should be planted indoors – rarely will they do well from an outdoor sowing.

Start basil about the same time that tomatoes are sown, in mid to late March. Make shallow furrows and space the seed one-eighth of an inch apart in rows within a small pot or seed pack. When true leaves form pluck out the tiny seedling and transplant it into a cell of a four or six pack, or an individual tiny pot.

Grow on indoors until the weather improves. Basil is particularly cold sensitive, so be sure that all danger of frost has passed before transplanting it into the garden.

Downy mildew disease was discovered to be prevalent some years back. While I don't take any particular precautions, and my basil shows little sign of the familiar leaf blotching, Richters does offer seeds of resistant varieties for you to try if this disease has been troublesome in your garden.

Basil foliage has also been known to burn if planted outdoors without a period of hardening off. For this reason, gradually get seedlings used to bright sun and wind over the course of a week before planting in the ground.

Provide your transplants with fertile, well-drained soil in a sunny spot. If, over the course of the summer you notice that the leaves are no

longer grass-green, but instead are pale or even turning brown, your plants may have a nitrogen deficiency. I usually have

had to "top dress" my basil twice after planting, each time with a sprinkling of balanced organic fertilizer and some aged compost. Usually they green up in a matter of days.

Basil has the insatiable desire to flower. We must "deadhead" or the plant will fulfill its earthly desire to reproduce by making and dropping seed, all at the expense of foliage production.

Since we grow this plant for its leaves and not its seed, or its flowers for that matter, clip away the buds at the first sign of them. Another challenge to basil growing has been the Japanese beetle.

Basil leaves riddled with chew marks should best be removed. Japanese beetles are relatively easy to hand pick in the morning and at night.

A gentle tap on a leaf will easily knock beetles into a wide mouth jar of soapy water positioned underneath. Ideally, basil leaves should be harvested after the dew has dried in the morning but before the sun shines too brightly; at that particular time its oils are the most pungent.

Enjoy the new catalog recommendation and be sure to get those basil seeds started by the end of the month.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 34 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.

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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 800-824-8458 Ext. 201. The deadline for submission of news material, letters to the editor and photos is Monday at 12 p.m. The TIMES is not responsible for submitted photos.

Election letters to the editor welcome

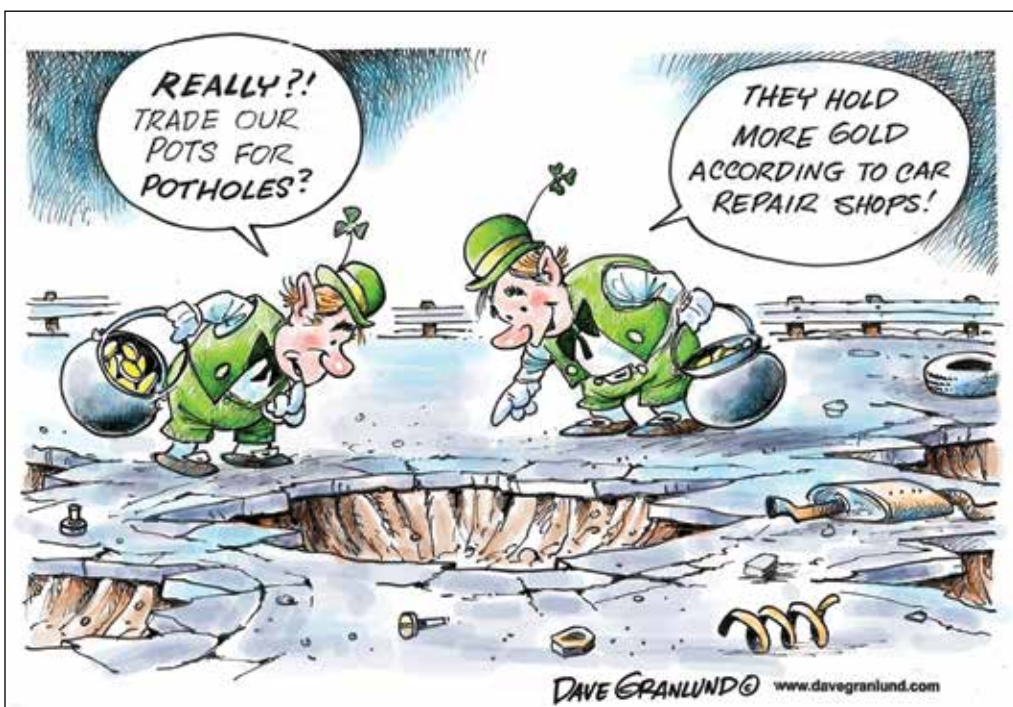
The Wilbraham-Hampden Times welcomes readers to participate in this year's election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to Wilbraham-Hampden Times, care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to krivers@turley.com. 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.



A COMMUNITY GALLERY

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

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

WPL Winter Program Reading Winners



Congrats to the Wilbraham Public Library Winter Reading Program winners!

Submitted photos Melissa Harter



Photo courtesy of Wilbraham Fire Department

WFD supports local boy battling leukemia

Cristiano is an amazing third-grade boy who was recently diagnosed with B-Cell Lymphoblastic Leukemia. Even in the midst of this journey, he continues to shine with joy, determination, and incredible strength.

Cristiano is the middle child of three boys—big brother Aidan (4th grade) and little brother Mason (4) and this family is navigating long days filled with appointments, treatments, and hospital visits.

On March 11, members of the Wilbraham Fire Department IAFF Local 1847 Wilbraham Firefighters participated in the meal train, providing the family with dinner.

Editor adventure in Boston

Wilbraham-Hampden Times Editor Kristin Rivers took a rare day off on Feb. 18 to head out to Boston for American Idol Season Seven Runner-Up and The Masked Singer Season 9 Runner-Up David Archuleta's book tour for his new memoir, "Devout." The memoir was released on Feb. 17 and chronicles Archuleta's life including his time on American Idol, leaving the Mormon Church after he came out as queer in 2021 and other stories revealed for the very first time.

The Boston Book Tour Stop was at WBUR CitySpace and was moderated by WBUR Host and Senior Producer Amory Sivertson and featured Archuleta performing two songs from the "Devout" EP that was included in purchases



Photo courtesy of Kristin Rivers

of the audiobook.

A book signing also took place after the event, where Rivers and Archuleta reunited in person for the first time in over three years, as she's been

a longtime fan of Archuleta's music and has continually supported him.

The memoir later became a New York Times Bestseller a week later.

DAR Good Citizen Award presented

On March 7, 2026, Mercy Warren Chapter DAR presented Christian Lowe Jr. with the DAR Good Citizen Award. Chris is a senior at Minnechaug Regional High School and plans to attend college at the University of Vermont.

The DAR Good Citizens Committee seeks to illuminate high school seniors who help to renew and strengthen the democracy achieved by the Patriots of the American Revolution through the qualities of dependability, service, leadership, and patriotism. DAR seeks to recognize and uplift these young citizens as a shining example to others.

The DAR Good Citizens from all 41 Massachusetts DAR chapters are invited to tour the State House in Boston as special guests of State Representative David Vieira on April 29.



Submitted photo and caption Margaret Superneau

L to R: Margaret Superneau, Regent of Mercy Warren Chapter DAR, Jasmin Lowe, Christian Lowe Jr and Christian Lowe Sr.

HPD has St. Patrick's Day shirts



Photo and caption courtesy of Hampden Police Department Our St. Patrick's Day shirts are available! \$20 each and are available in all sizes.

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<p>Saturday March 21 BAIRD SOUL</p> 	<p>Saturday March 28 LUTHER</p> 	<p>Saturday April 4 PETER NEWLAND</p> 	<p>Saturday April 11 FRANK SERAFINO</p> 	<p>Saturday April 18 ATOA RIPLEY</p> 

College NEWS

Worcester Polytechnic Institute announces Fall 2025 Dean's List

WORCESTER - Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) has announced its Dean's List for academic excellence for the Fall 2025 semester.

The criteria for the WPI Dean's List differ from that of most other universities as WPI does not compute a grade point average (GPA). Instead, WPI students are named to the Dean's List based on the amount of work completed at the A level in courses and hands-on projects.

"WPI's academic programs are rigorous and require a level of independence beyond what is required in traditional courses. WPI students work on real-world, open-ended problems on campus and in communities around the globe. Far from being simple academic exercises, the projects students complete have genuine and lasting impacts in our partner communities," said Provost Andrew Sears.

"Some of this nation's best and brightest students come to WPI to study engineering, science, business, and the humanities. Those named to the Dean's List have excelled in all of their work, and we are exceptionally proud of these outstanding students."

The following students were named to the Fall 2025 Dean's List:

William Bao of Wilbraham, , class of 2029, majoring in Electrical and Computer Engineering

Siena Dansereau of Wilbraham, Massachusetts, class of 2028, majoring in Chemical Engineering

Samuel Manteria of Wilbraham, Massachusetts, class of 2027, majoring in Chemical Engineering

Maggie Michels of Wilbraham, , class of 2029, majoring in Computer Science

Molly Olsen of Wilbraham, Massachusetts, class of 2027, majoring in Computer Science and Data Science



Children's Librarian Kate Rumpik shows off a children's book inside the new Kid's Playroom of the Hampden Free Public Library.



Paul Gonzales shows off his kindness coins and a copy of the Wilbraham-Hampden Times when he was featured in a prior edition in 2025.

OPEN HOUSE from page 1

Hampden Library Trustees and the Friends of the Hampden Library for their guidance and support during this transition," Moriarty said. "Most of all, thank you to all of our library patrons for their patience and kindness and continued usage of our library."

Moriarty shared what comes next.

"Now that we are settled in our new location, we will continue to be an essential resource for our residents and provide information, entertainment and support for all patrons. Hampden Public Library serves as an important cornerstone institution for the cultural and educational needs of our town," Moriarty said. "A very special thank you to Ellen Bump and Joe Green for all of their help with our local history collection."

Cathy Rochford, a member of the Friends, was excited for the turnout at the open house and to see people check out the new Rochford Reading Room, a space dedicated to her mother, Children's Librarian Margaret "Peg" Rochford.

"It's been a very good turnout. I think the library looks spectacular. Everyone has worked very hard to get this up and going. The painting, new flooring, it's really



From the left, Jean Hall, Cathy Mahoney, Joan Shea and Cathy Rochford, the members of the Friends of the Hampden Free Public Library, in a group photo in the Rochford Reading Room.

Turley photos by Kristin Rivers

Evan Sullivan named to Ohio University's Fall 2025 Dean's List

ATHENS, OH - Ohio University Scripps College of Communication student Evan Sullivan of Wilbraham has been named to OHIO's Fall 2025 Dean's List.

The Dean's List recognizes undergraduate stu-

dents who complete a particular semester with a GPA between 3.5 and 3.999 with a minimum of 12 credit hours attempted for letter grades that are used to calculate GPA.

University of Rhode Island names local to Fall 2025 Dean's List

KINGSTON, RI - The University of Rhode Island is pleased to announce that several area students have been named to its Fall 2025 Dean's List. Among them are:

HAMPDEN
Casey Bottass

WILBRAHAM
Zack Capen, Madelynn Grono and Caeli Whitcomb

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WISDOM OF EVE
from page 1

"It's a great, great outlet, it's a great way to meet new people, a great way to spend some time," Stolar said. "It feels so good. There's no replacing what it feels like to feel on stage."

Verrill said Lloyd is the author of the play in the production. He wanted to work with Giza again after several other productions in the past, including "Sweet Charity," "Picnic," and "Doubt."

"The cast is awesome. I love working with Jeannie. When he asked me to come on board, I was very excited about it," Verrill said.

He shared his favorite parts of playing Lloyd.

"I get to do a little mean guy act on the show. I get to fall in love, I get to fall out of love, so I get to kind of do the whole spectrum. He's a lot of fun," Verrill said.

Verrill also emphasized the importance of community theater.

"A lot of people, they think of professional theater, but the community theater that we have in Western Mass is incredible. There's multiple theater groups, but I love working with the Theatre Guild of Hampden. It's a tight group," Verrill said. "It's kind of like a family, almost. It's just a lot of fun, so enjoy going to rehearsals and sad when the show's over with."



The cast ready for showtime during the final week of rehearsals.

Reardon, who readers may remember from "Oklahoma!" in 2024, said playing Eve "has been a whirlwind of a role."

"She has quite the progression as a character. She's evil, so that's been kind of fun to play because it's such a transformative part, so it's

been fun," Reardon said.

Reardon shared she's seen the movie and when she heard about the production, she thought it was "a cool story."

"So, I was very interested in auditioning because I just thought it was a very fun little story," Reardon said.

She encouraged anyone interested in theater—or the arts themselves—to "just do it."

"If you have any sort of interest in anything art-related, just



Photos courtesy of Mark Giza
The cast gets into character in this scene.

LEFT: Jeannie Wysocki performs a monologue as Margo.

go out and do it. Don't even think about it, just seek your passion and get after it. Life's too short," Reardon said.

Godeck is new to the Guild and auditioned after a friend told him about the production. He's

playing Clement, the husband of Margo and a director and producer, who gets "tangled up in the web of the directing and producing of two different shows and the transition of Margo and Eve."

"As everybody jokes, I'm like the only nice guy in the show. I have morals, I have values, I love my wife, so I'm the only nice guy in the show," Godeck said.

He's done nearly 50 productions on stage throughout his career and independent film work, sharing there's many opportunities to get involved onstage or off.

"I enjoy it. I direct, produce, act. So, I've been involved in a couple of theater companies," Godeck said. "I

have seen so many different theater groups, but it's nice just to get a home-grown group of folks who are dedicated to the craft and just want to enjoy the experience. There's no pressure, we're not beating each other up and everyone just gets along. It's a great environment, and that's what I enjoy. I really enjoy that. I've always met the nicest people in theater, especially local theater, and everybody knows somebody that knows somebody. You build a new family, that's what it's about. So, I enjoy that process."

Godeck's message was this.

"There's some great dialogue in it. It's a very well-written play, but it tells a story and it's very poignant. It's about what people are willing to do to get ahead, especially in theater. It looks at relationships and how those dynamics work across many different angles, so I think it's an opportunity to come out and just sit and listen," Godeck said. "Listen to the dialogue, what's being said, how it's being said, what the dynamics are changing throughout the entire show because they constantly change and then just enjoy it."



A group photo of the cast during the March 15 rehearsal, in full costume.

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WPL holding contest for a new logo

WILBRAHAM - Wilbraham Public Library is looking for a new logo! The library is hosting, with sponsorship from the Wilbraham Friends of the Library, a new logo design contest. To enter, the artist must be a resident of Wilbraham, Massachusetts from high school age and up.

Entries must be original artwork, of scannable quality, and on 8x11.5" paper. The logo entry must include an animal, or animals, reading a book or books. It must also display the words 'Wilbraham Public Library.'

"We are excited to open up this opportunity to artists in Wilbraham! The library is a community center, and as such, it is fitting that our new logo come from a resident. What a great way to celebrate how important our library is to Wilbraham!" - Melissa Harter, Library Director.

Submissions will be accepted at the Library Service Desk until April 15. The design chosen will win a prize of \$250. The winner will be announced on April 25, 2026.

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www.turley.com

SHAKESPEARE

from page 1

daughter is not a fan of Shakespeare's works.

"We were rolling on the lawn laughing," Trimble said. "It was so funny. Ever since I saw that show, I was like this is on my list of shows that I would like the players to do. And here we are."

Kevin Bechard, a long-time actor for the company, stated that he watched a version of the play in Longmeadow in 2016 and was inspired to join the production after Trimble reached out.

"It became immediately on my bucket list," Bechard said. "When I found out this show is happening, I was all in from the get-go."

Bechard mentioned that the play is everything he ever wanted to do from a comedy perspective.

"This is right up my alley," Joe Lessard chimed in, a self-described Johnny-come-lately actor who caught the acting bug later in life.

Lessard's first performance was in 2014, a production of "The Man Who Came to Dinner" directed by Trimble.

He added with a mischievous smile, "This is everything I want to do as a performer and everything I wish I could do in public but can't get away with."

Craig Duda, a theater actor that has performed roles in television and movies since his start in 1995, stated that he joined the production because he wanted an opportunity to work with Lessard and Bechard again. The synergy between the company is ap-

parent.

"I feel loved, that was beautiful," Lessard interrupted and elicited a laugh from the group.

Duda continued. "Kevin and I have worked together on shows before. Joe and I have worked on shows before and just the opportunity to work with this kind of talent is something you got to do," Duda said.

The show itself is an extension of the eccentric cast, who rush across the stage in colorful outfits frenetically covering pivotal moments across all of Shakespeare's works. Satire and slapstick abound as Bechard and company play both literary snobs and fools that both entertain and educate the audience. Call and response is a cornerstone of the play, enticing the audience to become a supporting character to the events that unfold.

Trimble reflected on how the play calls upon that unique interactivity of local theater to carry the script. To her, it is a production that highlights the strength of and is indivisible from its community theater origins; direct audience participation.

"When you get the audience into the room, the circle closes and that energy transmits from the stage into the audience and back up to the stage. You only get that experience in local theater," Trimble said.

"The Complete Works of Shakespeare [Abridged] [Revised] [Again]" debuts on March 20 at 7:30 p.m. at the Wilbraham United Church Fellowship Hall with subsequent shows happening on March 21, 27, and 28 starting



Turley photos by Ben Hernandez

Craig Duda, Joe Lessard, and Kevin Bechard entertain while in their element.

at 7:30 p.m. Earlier times air on March 22 and 29 at 2:30 p.m.

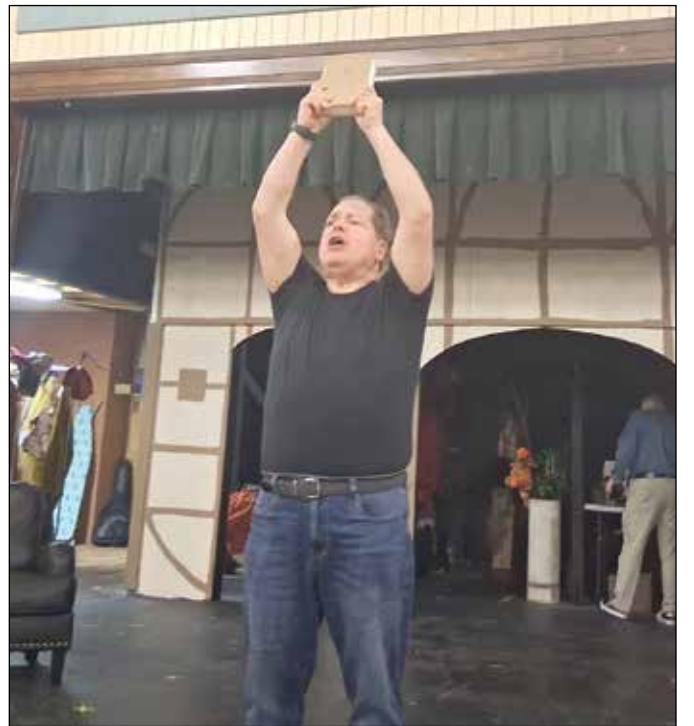
When asked for their thoughts on the show or any closing statements, Duda offered a turn of phrase typical of his profession.

"I'm not going to say come see the show unless you want to have a good time, you want to laugh with other people, and you just want to see Joe just do some messed up stuff," Duda said.

Bechard, in response, offered a quote from Jaques's monologue from "As You Like It."

"In one man's time he plays many parts." After a moment's pause, he added. "Come see the show. It's really fun and entertaining. It's a very unique show."

For tickets, visit wilbrahamunitedplayers.org.



Craig Duda poses with the Complete Works of Shakespeare book in the play's beginning act.

COLLEEN

from page 1

Assemble the Colleens

Every Colleen and their courts introduced themselves to the attendees, and first to kick off was the Holyoke contingent, which was led by the 2026 Grand Colleen Jadyn Lois Christie, who touched upon the importance of the gathering, while celebrating her Irish heritage, and previewed what she was looking forward to on Parade day.

Holyoke

"I felt today's event went

so well, and bringing all the communities together, and getting to dance, and hang out with everyone was just incredible to be a part of and watch," Christie said. "As Grand Colleen, it's such an incredible honor getting to represent my Irish ancestors, and to ensure their history is always remembered, is just a special moment to reflect on."

She also brought focus to the inclusion of the new Sensory Street addition to the parade.

"I'm really looking forward to seeing how the Sensory Street designated area is

in action, because it's such a great concept, which will invite so many new faces and families who haven't had the opportunity to come to the parade due to other intellectual disabilities, and it's just great to see a sense of inclusivity on the biggest stage possible, which brings the community together, regardless of ability," Christie said.

Rounding out her court were Paige Brady Leahy, Bridie Bowler, Anna Mary Evans and Olivia Rose Royland.

Agawam

Next up was Agawam, who was led by 2026 Colleen Ava Levesque, and her court Zoie Leopardi, Samantha Machos, Hannah Newsome, Summer Smith and Madelynne "Mad-die" Szemela.

Levesque shared this was a moment she had waited all her life for.

"To, actually, be the Colleen is insane; it's been extremely competitive, all the girls are talented, and it's such an honor to represent my Irish heritage. And this event has been a great way to network, and everything has been amazing, and I can't wait till Parade Day," Levesque said.

Chicopee

Following afterwards was Chicopee, who was introduced by 2026 Colleen Charlotte Rae Fields and her court: Mila Dillard, Gracelyn Jarry and Shannon Caloon. Fields said that her highlight of the gathering was getting to know all of the other Colleens and she's excited for Parade Day, discussing what it means to be an ambassador for the Chicopee community.

"Everyone is really nice and sweet, and it's great to see everyone share the same morals that we do," Fields said. "I can't wait to see everyone in the crowd, and to take in the moment with my court, in front of everyone, is going to

be really exciting. Also, being an ambassador means a lot to me, and I'm really excited to hopefully help bring this community together and just better Chicopee as a whole."

West Springfield

Representing West Springfield were 2026 Colleen Siobhan Erris Ginty and court: Grace Kennedy Atwater, Saoirse Bacon, Ava Dominguez, Kenzie Candon, and Kellen Ross, who were also in attendance and partook in the festivities.

Westfield

In attendance for Westfield was 2026 Colleen Reese O'Connell, who led her court into the spotlight as Giara Curran, Maggie Leen, Savannah Mazeika and Angelica Madison Racette followed behind.

Springfield

Finally, the last ensemble was Springfield, represented by 2026 Colleen Anna O'Toole, who is from Wilbraham, and a Minnechaug Regional High School senior, and her court Anna Flanagan, Siobhan MacDonnell, Emma Westbrook, and Sophia Dow.

O'Toole expressed what this honor truly means to her and revealed a deeper meaning.

"I'm very excited to be this year's Springfield Colleen, and it honestly means more

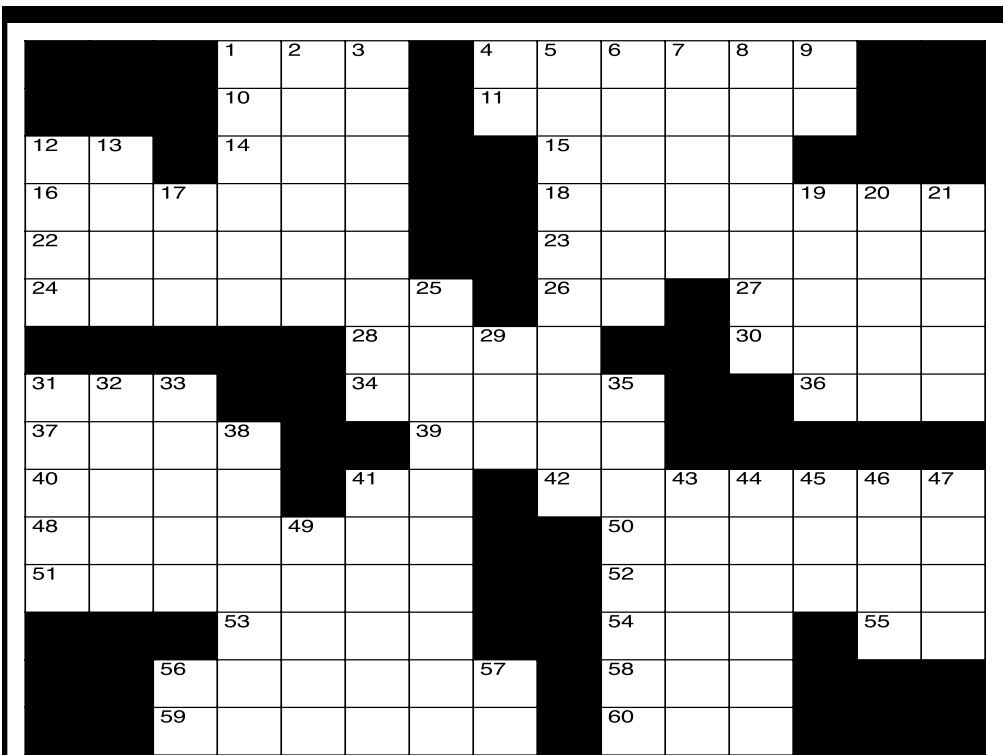
than just a title to me, because I get to represent my grandparents and their heritage, and I wouldn't be here today if it weren't for them," O'Toole said. "Also, I want to add that representing Springfield is so great because all of the little kids get to look up to me, and say she's unafraid to represent her heritage, so why can't I do the same thing, and that means the world to me because I want to be a good role model, and ambassador for the community."

She also provided insight into what this title means to her hometown of Wilbraham.

"So, as you know, under the umbrella of Springfield Colleen and my court, we also get to represent the other contingences such as East Longmeadow, Longmeadow and Wilbraham, and being from Wilbraham, it's great because I get to be a liaison of my school, being Minnechaug, and to be able to represent my school pride and heritage within Springfield is pretty cool," O'Toole said.

Parade Day is almost here

Officially now only under two weeks away, and fast approaching is the 49th Holyoke St. Patrick's Road Race, which kicks off on Saturday, March 21 and closing out the holiday weekend is the 73rd Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade on Sunday, March 22.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Inclined to do
4. Sketches
10. Book of Chronicles (abbr.)
11. Atomic #58
12. Dorm official
14. Small Eurasian deer
15. Southern constellation
16. Workers' groups
18. Former
22. Excellent
23. Romance language related to Spanish
24. Reference
26. Equally
27. Dirty towels
28. A cargo (abbr.)
30. Ammunition
31. You get one in summer

34. Slang for trucks with trailers
36. Swiss river
37. Exchange rate
39. British School
40. College teacher
41. Foreign Service
42. Horse gear
48. Cost to fly
50. A salt or ester of boric acid
51. Mocking
52. One who bird-watches
53. Concluding passage
54. A major division of geological time
55. Sodium
56. A way to produce
58. Soak
59. Laughed loudly and harshly
60. Affirmative

CLUES DOWN

1. Moth species phalonia ___
2. Quantum of energy
3. Break the law
4. Location of White House
5. Official cancellation of a decision
6. Where rockers work
7. Cut of beef: ___ mignon
8. Nocturnal burrowing reptile
9. Atomic #62
12. Genus of evergreen shrubs
13. Flowering plant of the legume family
17. Inches per minute (abbr.)

19. Tropical fruit
20. Hot fluid beneath the earth's crust
21. James ___, painter
25. Popular dessert
29. Payment (abbr.)
31. Cuisine style
32. Genus of true flies
33. City in western France
35. Arrogance
38. One holding a position of command
41. Weekday
43. An evening party
44. Print errors
45. Not good
46. Egyptian Sun god
47. East German town
49. Olfactory property
56. Atomic #37
57. "Pollock" actor Harris

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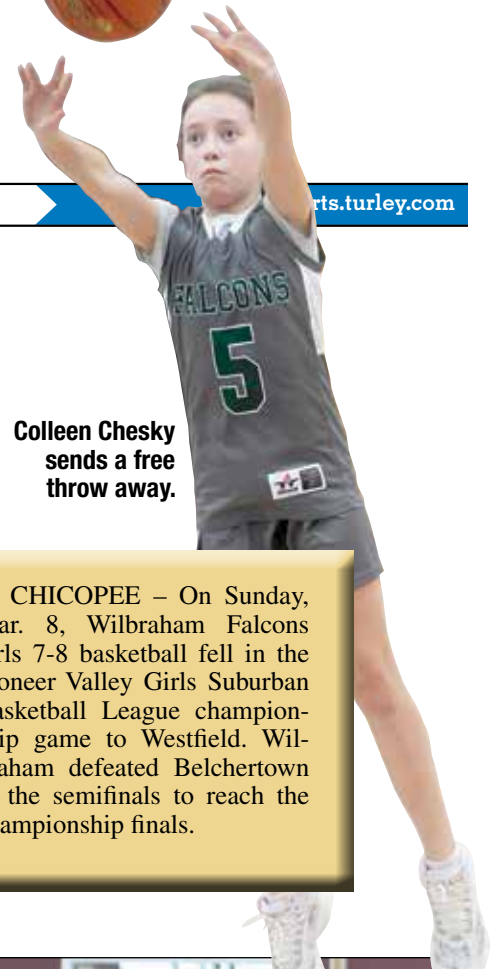
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SPORTS



Colleen Chesky sends a free throw away.

CHICOPEE – On Sunday, Mar. 8, Wilbraham Falcons girls 7-8 basketball fell in the Pioneer Valley Girls Suburban Basketball League championship game to Westfield. Wilbraham defeated Belchertown in the semifinals to reach the championship finals.

Falcons fall in winter finale



Alexandra Blasenak heads down the court.



The 7-8 Falcons girls basketball team was the runners-up this year in the Pioneer Valley Girls Suburban Basketball League.



Michelle Kyei-Ohemeng takes a shot.



Audrey Scott gets around an opponent.



Brooke Kmelius tries to keep possession of the ball as she enters the arc.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Julia Magee floats a shot past an opponent.

Wrestling season nets many championships

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

The high school wrestling season has come to an end, with many individuals and teams in Western and Central Massachusetts bringing home titles.

At the All-State Tournament held on Mar. 1 and 2 right in Springfield at the MassMutual Center, Agawam High School girls wrestling captured the All-State title with 86 points. Ludlow was 11th overall at 46 points. Stella Christopher captured the All-State title at 165 pounds, defeating Jordyn Reynolds of Greater Lawrence. Gabriella Ramos was a runner-up at 145 pounds. For Ludlow, Ella Libiszewski was the runner-up at 114 pounds. In the mixed-gender all-state event, Agawam would place 16th with 33.5 points. Minnechaug scored 26 points and both teams crowned an all-state champion. Jordyn Agosto was Agawam's all-state champion with a top finish at 144 pounds. Minnechaug's Kai Ly also took an all-state title at 138 pounds.

Ludlow High School captured the Division 3 state girls wrestling championship with 97.5 points, crowning four state champions. Quabbin Regional High School was ninth overall with 36 points. South Hadley finished with 18 points and Holyoke with 16 points

in the meet.

Ludlow's champions were Libiszewski at 114 pounds, Samantha Bertini at 120 pounds, Ellianna Williams at 145 pounds, and Riley Morais at 152 pounds. Quabbin had one champion with Kailynn Schuster scoring the win at 138 pounds.

Agawam took second place in the Division 2 state girls tournament, scoring 94.5 points. Christopher had the big performance by placing first in the 165-pound bracket. Ramos placed second at 145 pounds and Madison Minalga also had a runner-up finish at 185 pounds.

In the Division 2 state championship, Agawam was the second-best finisher from Western Mass., finishing fourth overall with 96 points, and crowning one runner-up in the field. Minnechaug was a distant 14th with 52 points. The Falcons' Ly won the state championship at 138 pounds, while Agawam's Ryan Sexton placed second.

In the Division 3 state championship, Holyoke placed ninth overall with 69 points, Ludlow was 25th with 28 points, Quabbin 26th with 27 points, and South Hadley and Belchertown also registered points in the competition. Holyoke would place two wrestlers as runners up. Steven Santiago was the second-place finisher at 120 pounds and Parker Brunelle was the runner-up at 285 pounds.



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Annastacia Dixon sends a pass away.



Tatiyana Zuniga heads across the court.



Ware's Emily McGrail reaches out for a rebound during recent play.

Women's basketball season comes to a close



HOLYOKE – Earlier this month, Holyoke Community College Women's basketball saw their stellar season come to a close on Sunday afternoon, Mar. 1, falling to top seed CC of Rhode Island in the New England (Region XXI) championship game. The #2 seed Lady Cougars played well in their attempt to win a regional title but were on the wrong end of the 86-51 final score.

Holyoke had a tremendous season overall, finishing in second place in the regular season New England standings before their runner-up finish in the regional cham-

LEFT: Johnays Andrades gets the open layup.

RIGHT: The Cougars face off with Bristol Community College early in the playoffs.

pionship tournament. Their postseason and title game appearances were the program's firsts since the 2010-11 campaign. Women's basketball finishes the year with an 11-4 regional record and a 15-8 overall record. They were 13-4 against fellow NJCAA teams. Eight players from this year's squad can return to play next season.



SPORTS

Thunderbirds inch closer to .500 with big comeback

SPRINGFIELD - The Springfield Thunderbirds (24-27-6-2) rode their veteran forwards to a thrilling, come-from-behind 4-3 win over the Providence Bruins (45-12-1-0) on Sunday afternoon inside Amica Mutual Pavilion.



Springfield's special teams continued a strong first period, as the man-down unit successfully fended off two Providence advances to keep the deficit at just one goal heading into the second.

With a carryover power play to begin the second, Dillon Dube nearly got Springfield even with a one-time slapper that beat Zajicek but caught the iron. Romanov, meanwhile, had a strong showing in the period, especially early in the period, keeping his team within a goal by making nine stops in the period.

Zajicek and the Providence penalty kill stiffened on a third man-down scenario near the midpoint of regulation, and the 2-1 score remained intact heading to the third.

The third period began with Springfield penalty kill once again answering the bell on back-to-back Providence power plays to keep the score at a manageable 2-1.

As the third passed its midpoint, the T-Birds' most experienced leaders took

over, beginning at the 10:36 mark when Chris Wagner's torrid weekend continued as he threw a shot off a defender and past Zajicek to tie the game, 2-2.

Just 1:50 later, the T-Birds flipped the game upside-down when Wagner won an offensive zone draw directly back to Dillon Dube, who snapped a perfect shot under the crossbar to give Springfield its first lead, 3-2.

Romanov and the T-Birds' defense locked things down in the defensive zone, and Alek Kaskimaki hit an empty net after a clutch shot block from Wagner at 18:53 of the third. Blumel would get his second of the night for Providence, but only three seconds remained at the time of the goal, making it too little, too late for the Bruins.

The T-Birds' comeback marked the first time all season that the Bruins failed to win when leading after two periods. With their victory, the T-Birds now sit in the sixth and final playoff spot in the Atlantic Division with 13 games remaining in the regular season.

The T-Birds take a trip north of the border for their next two contests on Friday and Saturday in Laval and Belleville, respectively.

This week in recreation

WILBRAHAM - I'm sure I can speak for most everyone when I say we are ready for this snow to melt and see some grass again. It has certainly been a tough, old-fashioned winter.

Throughout the season, the Parks Department has been busy assisting the DPW with snow removal. Our staff plows all town facilities, shovels sidewalks, and salts areas as needed. During this time, we have also serviced all of our grounds equipment, painted goals, and cleaned and organized sports equipment and supplies.

Recently, our staff attended the New England Regional Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show at the Rhode Island Convention Center in Providence. This conference features

seminars on golf course maintenance, sports field management, landscap-

seasonal employee, Bill Brenner, recently completed the prestigious UMass



Ron Dobosz, Parks Forman

ing operations, and equipment repair. We attended sessions on topics such as organic sports field care, integrated pest management, soil surfactants, aeration techniques, sports field safety testing, and incorporating pollinators into landscapes. These seminars help us stay current in our field while earning credits toward pesticide application certifications and my Certified Sports Field Manager status.

I am also proud to announce that our veteran

International Turfgrass Winter School. This six-week program covers all aspects of turfgrass and field maintenance, including weed science, insect and disease manage-

ment, soil science, irrigation repair, and turf physiology. Bill completed the program with excellent grades, further strengthening the expertise within our department.

My staff and I look forward to getting back on the fields and continuing to provide safe, high-quality facilities for all who use them. Thank you to our residents for your continued support of our small but important operation. See you at the Parks!

More players wanted for Pioneer Valley Baseball League

SOUTH HADLEY - The Pioneer Valley Baseball League, an adult baseball league for players who are age 18 and over, is now fully open for registration for the 2026 season.



The adult league will be administered by the Quabbin Valley Baseball League, and a registration link is on the home page of the league's website www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org. Thought it will be under the Quabbin umbrella, there will be no major changes in how the league is operated.

This year, the PVBL will have a 22-game regular season schedule followed by a double-elimination playoffs. The league, which had five teams last year and had to utilize multiple byes throughout the season, will be fielding a sixth team this season.

There are several spots open for that sixth team, so players interested in joining the league should get signed up as soon as possible to claim a spot.

The league is a wood-bat only league utilizing play-

ing under regular baseball rules though all players do bat. The league operates on a Saturday-Tuesday schedule. Games are played on Saturday mornings with 10 a.m. starts typical and on Tuesday evenings with start times in the 5:30 to 6 p.m. range. The league will start play in late April and run through the end of August. There are slots open for both full-time players and part-time players. The fee for full-time players will be \$260 with part-time players getting up to 11 games for \$130. Fees paid go toward the operation of the league, paying for insurance, umpires, fields, and baseballs. No one profits in any way.

In addition to the new sixth team, there are limited open roster spots on the other teams in the league, so get your registration in as soon as possible to participate in this season.

Games are played at ballfields throughout the region from as far south as Southwick's Whalley Field, through South Hadley's Beachgrounds and up north at Frontier Regional High School in South Deerfield.

For any questions, please go to the league website for more information. The league hopes interested players will come out and join the fun this spring and summer.

Railers split weekend in Reading

READING, PA - The Worcester Railers HC (26-24-5-2, 59 pts) split the weekend against the Reading Royals (30-20-6-1, 67 pts) by a 4-2 final on Sunday, March 15th, in front of a crowd of 3,066 at Santander Arena. The Railers are back in action this Friday at the DCU Center in Worcester, MA against the Maine Mariners for a 7:05 p.m. puck drop.

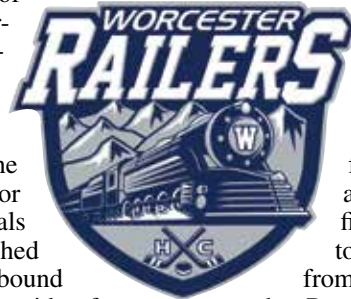
Reading came out firing in the first with three unanswered goals. Connor Kurth (1-0-1) kicked things off for the Royals at 2:09 with a slapshot into the top corner of the net (0-1). Connor McMenamin (1-0-1) scored a rebound chip over Thomas Gale as the puck came loose in the crease at 8:29 (0-2). A third goal from Reading at 14:39 closed the period with the Royals up three-nil. Brandon Saigeon (1-1-2) finished off an initial drive from Vincent Sevigny at the outer edge of the zone. Ross Mitton (1-0-1) broke the scoreless drought for the Railers with an early third-period goal off a faceoff (1-3). Michael Suda (1-0-1) narrowed the Royals' lead down to a single goal with 61 seconds left on the clock with a shot that sent the puck past Keith Petruzzelli (2-3). A final empty net goal from Ben Meehan (1-0-1) at 19:35 in the third extended the Royals' lead back to two goals and cemented the 2-4 final.

The Royals openend a three-goal lead in the first frame. Connor Kurth (11th)

drove the puck home with a slapshot to the top corner of the net at 2:09 on Reading's first shot of the afternoon. Connor McMenamin (10th) made the game 2-0 for the Royals as he finished off a rebound along the far side of the crease and chipped the puck high as Gale dove to cover. Brandon Saigeon (12th) closed out the period with a third goal on the power play, another rebound play set up by Vincent Sevigny on the outer edge of the zone. Worcester trailed in shots on goal with six to Reading's 10. Each team picked up one penalty in the first twenty minutes.

It was a scoreless second period for both sides as neither team was able to break past their respective goaltenders. Despite not finding the back of the net, both teams kept the energy going with continuous conversations and physical blows. Cam McDonald collected a roughing call just as the period turned to its second half. MacAuley Carson dropped the gloves against former-Railer Artyom Kulakov. Both men earned themselves a double minor in the final five minutes of the frame. Reading outshot Worcester by one, nine to eight. Worcester led in penalties with three to Reading's two.

The Railers managed to narrow the gap created by Reading in the first, as Ross Mitton (5th) scored the first goal of the game for Worcester at 4:22 in the final frame. Mitton's shot came from a faceoff win by Ryan Miotto, who maneuvered the puck behind him at the near faceoff dot in the Royals' zone. Mitton quickly steadied the puck and skimmed the crossbar as he fired high on Keith Petruzzelli (3-1). Worcester continued to chip away in the offensive zone as Gale was called to the bench for the extra attacker. Michael Suda (3rd) nabbed a second goal for the Railers from the left point, his shot sent past Petruzzelli for a narrow 2-3 game. An unexpected turnover in Reading's zone, as Declan McDonnell's stick snapped while he tried to maintain puck possession, led Ben Meehan (9th) to a fourth and final goal for the Royals. Meehan sent the puck sailing from along the near boards into the unattended Railers' net as the final seconds of regulation ticked away. Final shots were 29-27 in favor of Reading. Worcester led in shots for the period with 13 to 10. MacAuley Carson and Jacob Frasca earned the sole penalties awarded to each team in the period.



Registration now underway for QVBL

SOUTH HADLEY - Registration has opened for the Quabbin Valley Baseball League, an over-28 recreational league, held its first meeting of 2026 to prepare for the upcoming season.

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

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

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

For returning players to the league, the deadline is Mar. 22 at 12 noon to be registered for the 2026 season in order to be guaranteed a ros-

ter spot. There will be open practices for all players but specifically targeted at new players scheduled for March 29 and April 4 at times and locations to be announced. The draft is currently scheduled to take place on April 4 following that practice.

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

The registration is live at www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org. Players must register and then pay the league dues via Venmo or contact the league leadership if an alternate form of payment is needed.

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

This is the 30th season for the league and league offi-

cials are looking to celebrate the anniversary with a couple of events.

Advertisement for 90 Meat Outlet featuring various meat products and prices. Includes 'INFLATION PRICE BUSTERS' and 'PRICES IN RED ARE AT OR BELOW LAST YEAR'S PRICES!' sections. Lists items like Pork Loin Ribend, Beef Tenderloin, Chicken Wings, and Crab Cake Bites with prices.

Friends of Wilbraham-Hampden Veterans



VSO advisers Jered Sasen and Patrick Renna.

WILBRAHAM/HAMPDEN - The newly formed "Friends of Wilbraham-Hampden Veterans" group has again met.

The meeting on March 11 was held at the Wilbraham Senior Center. Lead by co-chairpersons Donna Gregory and Joseph Bonilla and VSO advisers Patrick Renna and Jered Sasen, the Friends are making headway in supporting local veterans and

their families. The collection of Veterans and non-veteran advocates have formally approved a mission statement and aligned themselves with various local veteran activities.

The Friends are in the early stages of affiliating with local veteran groups including the Hampden VFW. Several upcoming events were cited.

On Saturday March 28 from 9 to 11 a.m. the Vietnam Veterans Day Coffee Social (open to everyone) will be held at the Hampden VFW, 190 Main St, Hampden, MA. On May 20 from 4 to 8 p.m., the ECI Technologies and Route 20 Bar and Grille are teaming up to support the Wilbraham Veterans Assistance Fund at Route 20 Bar & Grille 2341 Boston Road, Wilbraham. Other activities include Veterans wreath laying, Memorial Day ceremonies, 17th Annual Run to Home Base, and various Outreach projects.



Co-chairpersons Donna Gregory and Joseph Bonilla.

The mission of the Friends of Wilbraham-Hampden Veterans group is to support veterans, their families, and the Veterans Services Department of Wilbraham by fostering connection, camaraderie, and awareness of available benefits and resources. Through outreach and volunteer-driven activities, we aim to identify those in need, reduce isolation, and strengthen

community support for those who have served and now reside in Wilbraham, Hampden, and across the region.

The next meeting of the Friends is scheduled for April 8 at 5 p.m. at the Wilbraham Senior Center. The "friends" are hoping to increase membership and all interested parties are encouraged to attend.



A shot of the group discussing topics.



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OBITUARIES

Joanne Wynande Rostowski (Zimmerman)

Joanne Wynande Rostowski (Zimmerman) (known as Anita) was born June 13, 1947 to the late Albert and Johanna (Zondag) Zimmerman, in Arnhem, The Netherlands.



She was one of five sisters, all born in the Netherlands. Elizabeth (Elly) Vanderleeden, Jantina (Ina) Kolstee, Anne-Marie Voigt of the Netherlands and Maria (Marijke) Brown of Wilbraham.

The Zimmerman family later immigrated to West Springfield, sponsored by Mr. Van Deene, who owned Book Bindery on Park Ave, West Spfld, who was a friend of the family while living in Holland (The Hague).

Joanne moved to Wilbraham in 1970, and devoted 36 years to the Wilbraham school system, including tutoring many students. A very beautiful and beloved person who was loved dearly and will be missed by her beautiful smile and caring personality. Joanne loved people and always enjoyed conversation, a very kind and special person. She touched the lives to all, with her warmth, strength, compassion, encouragement and her beautiful smile.

She enjoyed her home, goldfish pond, Dutch flowers & trips to Dover Vermont to be with her daughter.

She loved to email her sister (Anna-Marie Voigt) & family in Holland every

night also loved to talk to her daughter Gina every night. Great memories with her Grandson Matthew & wife Emily, and her three great grandchildren. Joanne was proud to always host family parties to keep the bond of family. Joanne leaves behind her Husband, Donald Charles Rostowski Sr. as they met in the halls of West Springfield High after immigrating to America. Married 60 wonderful years; her daughter, Gina Anne Desautels and her husband Dr. Robert Desautels of Wilbraham and their son Matthew and his wife Emily and their beautiful children, Abigail, Lily and Thomas of Hatfield; her son Donald Rostowski Jr., and his wife Tracy of Wilbraham and their son's, Joshua Rostowski and Brian Rostowski.

She is predeceased by her sister's Elizabeth Vanderleeden and Jantina (Ina) Kolstee. She is survived by her sister Elizabeth's family Alfred and Ruth Vanderleeden of East Longmeadow and their children, Lisa, Lynn and Erik Vanderleeden; Dr. Marc and Joyce Vanderleeden and their children; Clara and Dean Parker and their son David of Longmeadow; her sister Jantina's family Anja and David Sweetland of Cape Cod, Linda and Haluk Ozkaynak of California and their son Paul, Ellen and Marc Majewski of California and their son Jona-

than. She is also survived by her sister Anne-Marie Voigt, from Heilo The Netherlands and her family Ingrid and Peter Beukers, Linda Beukers, Irene Voigt, Miguel and Esther Voigt of Amersterdam and their children; Arijan and Denise Beukers of Belgium and their children. She is also survived by her sister Maria (Marijke) Brown of Wilbraham and family, Vera and Tony Tosoni and their children Maria Roberts and her husband Lou and Alyssa Tosoni; Karen and Dan Fritz and their children Kara and Cody Titus and Brian and Jessica Fritz; and Maria's son Donald Brown. She also leaves her sister-in-law, Carole Anne St. Marie, belated husband Ronald St. Marie and their children, Wayne, Kim, Michelle and Rene, as well as many nieces and nephews.

Special thanks to those who stepped up to make my wife more comfortable (Anja-Ruth-Joyce-Nora-Doctor Fanti, PA. Andrea, Doctor Rodriquez) and to my daughter Gina, thank you.

Donations if you wish, best friends for animals or the Shriners in name of Joanne Wynande Rostowski.

Services will be held on Saturday, March 21 beginning with visitation from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at Sampson's Family Chapels, 21 Tinkham Rd. in Springfield. Funeral Liturgy 11 a.m. at St. Cecilia's, Main St., Wilbraham. Burial will follow at Gate of Heaven Cemetery in Springfield.

Sheila Marie (Boilard) Duquette, 1947-2026

It is with heavy hearts that we share the passing of Sheila Marie (Boilard) Duquette, beloved wife, mom, and Nana. Sheila grew up in Indian Orchard, MA where she worked from an early age at the family business, Boilard Lumber.



Sheila and Patrick lived in the Orchard until they moved to Monson in 1976.

She leaves her husband of 59 years, Patrick Duquette, her daughters Joan Long and husband Lawrence Long Jr., Erin Thomas and husband Sebastian Thomas, and grandchildren Haley, Finn, and Nadine; and her sisters Patricia McCullough and husband William McCullough; Elizabeth Hurley and husband William Hurley; and brothers Carl Boilard and wife Susan Speyer-Boilard, and Edward Barboza; her brothers- and sisters-in-law Jeffrey Duquette and wife Heidi Duquette, Christine Newton and husband Ralph Newton, and Charlie Duquette and wife Jackie Duquette, and many nieces and nephews.

After graduating from the High School of Commerce in 1965, Sheila attended Northampton Commercial College. She was a lightning-fast typist and worked with Turley Publications for many years where she made lasting friendships and had the chance to work with a great team. She loved to play the piano and was known for silly dances in the kitchen - back then as kids,

we probably rolled our eyes at something called "the mashed potato", a great memory of her bringing joy to dinnertime. She and Patrick loved live music at local venues, notably Bob Dylan at Symphony Hall in Springfield in the '60s, and again just a couple of years ago - same seats!

If they weren't listening to music or watching a blues concert video, you would find them watching a Bruins game, attending a Springfield Falcons game, or packing a picnic lunch to spend the day at Quabbin or explore the back roads of western MA by motorcycle until they found a treasure like a used book store, coffee shop, ice cream stand, or random llamas and donkeys. She had a strong connection with animals, adopting cats that chose our house, visiting the "grand-dogs" and making a beeline to see the horses at Silver Bell Farm after a pumpkin-picking ride. She treasured spending time with all the grandkids whether it was crafting, coloring, visiting the brook, baking cookies and muffins, attending recitals, or just hanging out and grabbing lunch.

Sheila was the most patient person you would ever meet. Even in crazy traffic, she gave strangers the benefit of the doubt, "maybe he's having a bad day," she would say. Not even a complaint during the fight with breast cancer, non-Hodgkins

Wilbraham-Hampden Times
OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries. One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place. The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice (with a word limit of up to 500 words) and may include a photograph.

Death Notices & Paid Obituaries should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

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

lymphoma, or dementia. We would like to thank Quaboag Rehabilitation for showing such kindness and wonderful care during her stay. The quietest, toughest warrior there could ever be. A celebration of life will be held in May. In lieu of sending flowers, please support your local animal shelter-Sheila would love that as much as she enjoyed flowers.

Artists invited to exhibit in 'Tiny Art Show'

WILBRAHAM – The Wilbraham Public Library invites artists of all ages to participate in its upcoming Tiny Art Show, a creative community exhibit celebrating artwork on a small scale.

Community members are challenged to create an original work of art measuring no larger than 4" x 4" and return it to the library by Tuesday, March 31, 2026. All artwork will be displayed in the library from April 1 through April 30, 2026.

Important: Participants must use a library-issued 4" x 4" canvas to be included in the show. Canvases are available for pick-up and must be picked up in person at the

library. No registration is required. Supplies are limited and will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis while supplies last.

Artists may use any style or medium—painting, drawing, sewing, collage, or small sculpture—as long as the artwork fits within the 4" x 4" dimensions (with no more than 2" additional depth). Objects and materials may be attached (except food), but no candles or electrical or battery-operated devices are permitted. This is a family-friendly exhibit; no vulgar content will be accepted.

There is no age limit and no residency requirement to participate. Only one submis-

sion per person or group will be accepted. Each artist must complete and attach a Tiny Art ID sticker to the back of their canvas before returning it to the library by March 31.

Artwork may be picked up beginning Monday, May 4, 2026. Any pieces not claimed by Saturday, May 30, 2026 will become property of the library.

The Wilbraham Public Library is located at 25 Crane Park Drive, Wilbraham, MA 01095. For more information, call 413-596-6141.

Stop by, pick up your canvas, and show the community how creative you can be—one tiny masterpiece at a time!

Scantic Valley YMCA Health Fair

WILBRAHAM – The Scantic Valley YMCA will be hosting their annual Interactive Health Fair on March 24 from 5 to 7 p.m.

The event is free and open to the public.

Join us for this interactive event focused on healthy eating, weight management, balance, blood pressure screening, chronic disease programming and much more.

Everyone can participate in healthy meal prep options by making and taking a mason jar home.

Must register at the Scantic Valley YMCA, 45 Post Office Park, Wilbraham, MA 01095. Limited to 75 people.

Ages 40 to 100, prizes and free food.

There will be 15 vendors this year, including STCC Dental Hygiene Program,

Wilbraham Fire Department, Springfield College Department of Exercise Science Club, Big Y Supermarket, Parkinson's Foundation and Western New England University Pharmacy.

Sponsored by the Ludlow Elks and the YMCA.

For more information, contact Dawn Lapierre at dlapierre@springfieldyorg.org or 413-596-2749 X3107.

PUBLIC NOTICES

WILBRAHAM PLANNING BOARD

The Wilbraham Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Wednesday, April 8, 2026, at 5:45 PM** in the Town Office Building, 240 Springfield Street, on the application of Little Ivy Learning Academy LLC for Site Plan Approval (SPA26-01) under Section 3.4.4.4 of the Wilbraham Zoning Bylaw to allow a licensed child care facility on property owned by Theorod LLC located at 2 Crane Park Drive as shown on plans on file in the Planning Office and posted for public viewing on the Planning Board page of the Town of Wilbraham website at www.wilbraham-ma.gov/123/Planning-Board. This meeting will be conducted in person and virtually

(see meeting agenda for details). James Rooney, Chair 03/19, 03/26/2026

SALE OF MOTOR VEHICLES

This ad is pursuant to MA Gen. Law Ch.255, Sec. 39A as of March 27, 2026 the following motor vehicle will be for sale to satisfy a garage keepers lien:

2012 Jeep Grand Cherokee VIN#: 1C4RJFAG7CC115586 COLOR: Red LKO: Michael Barrett 2027 High St. Three Rivers, MA 01080

2010 Jeep Liberty Vin#: 1J4PN2GK9AW178856 Color: Tan LKO: Mozanth Nazareth

323 South St. Marlborough, MA 01752-5132

Vehicle : 2015 Honda Civic VIN#: 19XFB2F53FE220400 LKO: Edward De LaCruz 260 State St. Palmer, MA 01069 Lien Holder : United Consumer Finance 150 West Grove St Suite 16A Middleboro, MA 02346 R & S Assoc. Inc PO Box 543 Wilbraham MA 01095 413-596-4374 03/12, 03/19, 03/26/2026

WILBRAHAM PLANNING BOARD

The Wilbraham Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Wednesday, April 8,**

2026, at 6:00 PM in the Town Office Building, 240 Springfield Street, on the application of (1) The Towers BTS of Massachusetts d/b/a Vertical Bridge and (2) Celco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless for a Special Permit (SP26-01) as required under Sections 3.4.3.6 and 10.5 of the Wilbraham Zoning By-Law for the construction of a new Wireless Communications Facility on property to be leased from the owner, Town of Wilbraham, located at 540 Stony Hill Road. The proposed facility consists of a single, free-standing, 120 foot tall monopole tower with antenna and associated telecommunications equipment to be located within a 50 foot by 50 foot fenced compound as shown on plans on file in the Planning Of-

fice and posted for public viewing on the Planning Board page of the Town of Wilbraham website at www.wilbraham-ma.gov/123/Planning-Board. This meeting will be conducted in person and virtually (see meeting agenda for details).

The applicant will be conducting a field test to simulate the visual impact of the proposed tower by displaying a balloon above ground to mark the height of the highest point of the proposed tower. The field test will be performed on Saturday, April 4, 2026 from 8 AM to 4 PM with a rain date of Monday, April 6, 2026 or Tuesday April 7, 2026 from 8 AM to 4 PM. 03/19, 03/26/2026

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

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- 2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.
- 3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts' public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

Public notice deadlines are Friday at 3 p.m.

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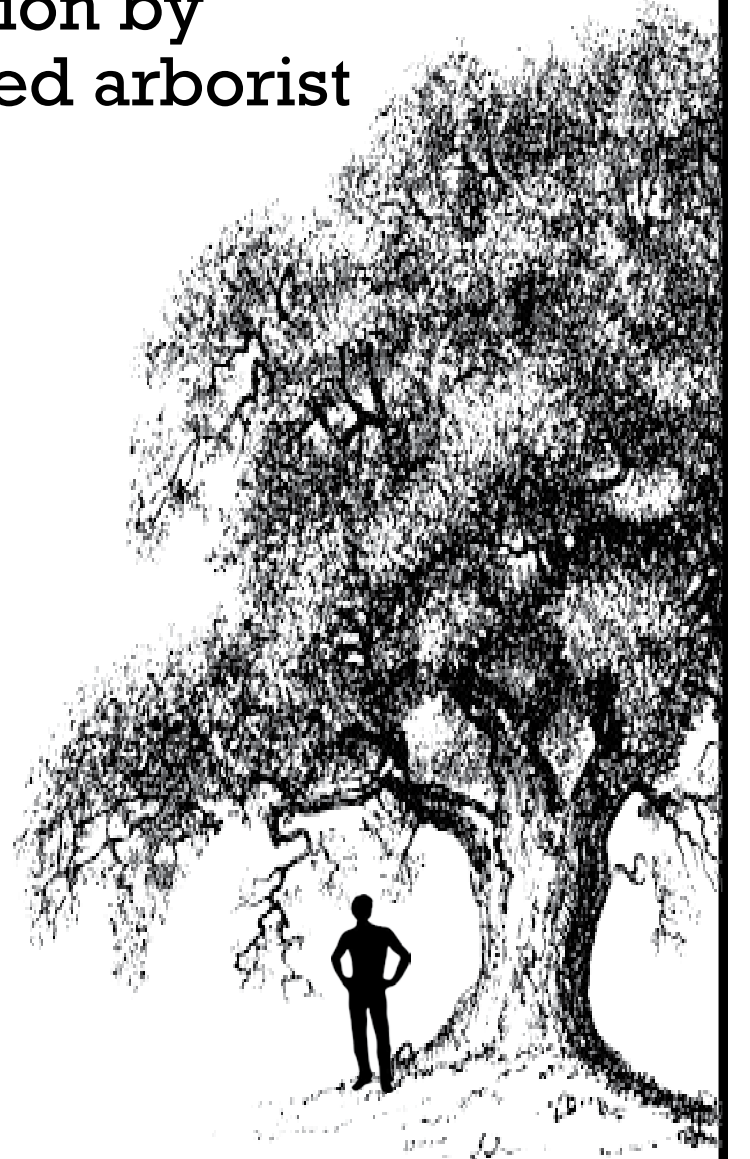


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