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Turley photos by Kristin Rivers

Members of the Cannellos, Gray and Breglio Families pose for a photo with the Easter Bunny during this year's Bunny Breakfast at the St. Cecilia Parish Center on March 23.

Senior Center serves up treats at Easter Breakfast

By Harrison Giza
Staff Writer
hgiza@turley.com



Baline Vartanian was a hit at the Easter breakfast, hopping from table to table with delicious chocolates and candles for seniors.

HAMPDEN - The Hampden Senior Center was packed with people on March 27, with many ecstatic faces eager to take part in their annual Easter Breakfast.

"A lot of people have come in," said Administrative Assistant & Volunteer Coordinator, Tina Doran. "It has been great so far. We have a table reserved at the front for Spectrum and their news team. We also have the State Senator coming with their representatives."

Executive Director Rebecca Moriarty was also thrilled to announce a \$5,000 donation from Spectrum, Charter Communications, as well as over 15 brand new tablets for the seniors to use in the center's technology education programs.

"You'll be able to use a tablet here at the senior center to be able to take those classes," Moriarty said. "We are very thrilled that Spectrum is here and that they have recognized Hampden for the hard work that they do and the technology education that we are promoting to you and to the community."

The crowd broke out into applause.

"We have our Easter Breakfast every year," said Activities Coordinator Diane Marino. "As we always like to do, we want to bring people together for some type of event and having delicious food today is a part

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Wilbraham celebrates Easter at Bunny Breakfast

By Kristin Rivers
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WILBRAHAM - Families visited the St. Cecilia Parish Center from 8 to 11 a.m. on March 23 for this year's Bunny Breakfast.

The event was presented by the GFWC Wilbraham Junior Women's Club and supported by LUSO Federal Credit Union, with proceeds supporting community projects.

Throughout the morning, families enjoyed arts and crafts, face painting and temporary tattoo stations, raffle baskets, a photo with the Easter Bunny and a breakfast spread of pancakes, sausage, fruit, juice and

coffee.

Lorie Bonavita, president of the GFWC Wilbraham Junior Women's Club, explained the club has sponsored the event for over 25 years.

"We sponsor a lot of stuff in town. We donate to schools, we donate to areas like homeless shelters. We just do a lot of community service. We have one big fundraiser every year which is our Pocketbook Bingo that we hold in the fall," Bonavita said. "We raise money and we just help local food banks, shelters and we just do various things that we can to help the community."

Bonavita enjoys how the Bunny Breakfast brings families together.

"It's just great to see all of these

families come together and have so much fun. Just to see the smiles on all of the kids' faces," Bonavita said. "It's a great event. We just love having it every year for the families in town and the surrounding towns."

Cailey Mingolla oversaw face painting, sharing she's come to the event since she was a child.

"I used to look forward to it every year. It was always a lot of fun. We would stay here for the whole time and now I'm here face painting where I used to get my face painted," Mingolla said.

Mingolla said volunteering at events for families is rewarding.

Please see **WILBRAHAM**, page 4

285 Three Rivers Rd. solar project: an investigation

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
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WILBRAHAM - After learning about a solar project on 285 Three Rivers Rd. during the March 4 Select Board meeting, the Times wanted to investigate further.

On March 22, we got a firsthand look and learned how it's impacting residents from public safety concerns to health and quality of life.

Mura Bacon-Erickson provided the project timeline, explaining the solar company, named AMP US at the time and later named PureSky Energy, approached the town to propose a 20-acre solar field and remove the mature timber on the property.

The town denied the request.

"So, the solar company went through Land Court and won against the town. We



Photos courtesy of Joe Roberts

A close-up aerial shot of the construction site for the 285 Three Rivers Rd. solar project.

have a bylaw from 2021 --which I later found out--that would have controlled

some of the solar issues here. They would only be allowed to have 25% of the 20

acres paneled," Bacon-Erickson said. "But, unfortunately, because they went through Land Court and lost, they are following a very old bylaw. So they are not following the new bylaw the town has approved."

Bacon-Erickson shared she got involved when she researched what Hampden was doing with their solar fields, later seeing Allison Ouellette's posts of moose and "very loud horrible, noise, drilling noise" on the Wilbraham Open Community Forum on Facebook.

"I, also, in the interim, had, twice, log trucks going up and down Maynard Road where I live that took out my cable line just underneath my electric line. We repaired it and they took it out again and I was like, 'Where were all these trees coming from?'" Bacon-Erickson said. "So that all happened at the same time.

Please see **SOLAR**, page 7

Oliveira charts new ground with Spectrum Communications

By Harrison Giza
Staff Writer
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HAMPDEN - While the Easter breakfast was certainly a highlight on March 27, a new beginning for the technological side of the senior center was also a huge moment to celebrate.

Representatives from Spectrum, Charter Communications stopped by to deliver a giant check of \$5,000, set to go towards the center's technology education programming. However, Executive Director Rebecca Moriarty was keen to tell attendees even more good news.

"They have also gifted us 15 tablets that we can use in house for people who are coming in to take some of our technology classes. You will be able to use a tablet here at the Senior Center in order to take those classes," Moriarty said.

Moriarty then introduced Jennifer Young, director of State Government Affairs at Charter Communications.

"It is a pleasure to be here today representing Charter," Young said. "We work with a variety of organizations like the Hampden Senior Center, lending support to the important work they do in the community every single day. It is our mission to build stronger communities making a positive impact where our customers and employees live and work. I am delighted to be here today to share the announcement about our new partnership with the senior center."

Young addressed the crowd directly.

"As technology becomes more prevalent in our day to day lives, it is a reminder that those who don't have access to broadband or don't have access to run the technology run the risk of being left behind and disconnected," Young said. "Charter has a history of hoping to close the digital divide with a comprehensive approach that addresses



From the left, Town Administrator Brian Domina, State Sen. Jacob Oliveira (D-Ludlow), Director of State Government Affairs at Charter Communications Jennifer Young and Rebecca Moriarty, executive director of Hampden Senior Center, holding a donation from Charter Spectrum on March 27.



The room was filled with people as well as anticipation as State Sen. Jacob Oliveira (D-Ludlow) prepared to speak to attendees during the Easter Breakfast at the Hampden Senior Center on March 27.

Turley photos by Harrison Giza



State Sen. Jacob Oliveira (D-Ludlow) spoke to the decorated and Easter-savvy crowd about the donation from Charter Spectrum on March 27.

education classes and technology labs for thousands across the country... and that's why we are here today."

State Sen. Jacob Oliveira (D-Ludlow), ate breakfast beside Hampden Town Administrator, Brian Domina, before speaking to the packed audience.

"Truly it is an honor to be here in the town of Hampden," Oliveira said. "to celebrate access to something I consider now an essential utility and that is access to broadband and that is affordable internet access."

Oliveira continued to speak his mind as attendees ate breakfast.

"I want to commend Spectrum for coming here today" Oliveira said. "For presenting a \$5,000 check but also access to tablets. You know, I come from family that had some digital divides for a long time. My grandmother who just passed away was 98, passed away this January, but in her later years in life she wasn't as mobile as she

broadband access, adaption, and digital literacy."

Young elaborated on how Charter gives back.

"Charter strives to provide philanthropic support to every family in America regardless of income, as well as increase general access to those without technology," Young said. "They help to provide computers, digital

wanted to be or could be. And what gave her access to the outside world was having her tablet, having the ability to connect with friends through Facebook and other social technology that she did not have before."

Oliveira's remembrance of his grandmother made the room silent as he opened up to the crowd further.

"Instead of having a collection of books, she had a collection of books on her tablet," Oliveira said. "Ensuring that communities have access to this now vital utility, like water or access to electricity, that is how broadband is becoming in our society as essential things that all of us rely on today. From doing our shopping to our medical appointments as well... telehealth has increased a lot over the past couple of years since the pandemic... and if you don't have access to Wi-Fi or you do not

have access to a tablet or you don't have access to a computer, then it can become increasingly more difficult over time."

Oliveira was thankful for Spectrum and their ability to help seniors learn with technical flair. He asked the room one more question before he finished speaking.

"Do we have any Vietnam Veterans here?" Oliveira asked.

A few hands shot up. Some attendees made a slight noise.

"I just want to say from the bottom of my heart... I want to thank all of you men and women for your service to our country," Oliveira said. "A lot of times that is left forgotten and I just want to recognize you for the service that you gave in defense of your country. So once again, thank you and have a wonderful breakfast."

HWRSD holds public hearing for FY25 Budget & METCO students

By Harrison Giza
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WILBRAHAM - The School Committee came together on March 21 to hold a public hearing on the fiscal year budget for the district in 2025 and METCO students.

Assistant Superintendent for Finance, Operations and Human Resources Aaron Osborne began the night by explaining pending developments for urban students in the METCO Program, one intent on bringing students from urban centers to suburban school districts.

"(It) provides opportunities for students from those urban centers to experience a different environment in a suburban setting," Osborne said. "It affords the opportunity of the suburban school the opportunity to diversify their population, and so the Western Mass program is affiliated with Springfield...we're one of, I think it is, seven or eight districts out here that take METCO students. In the past, prior to my arrival, we had not done anything to sort of maintain our METCO program, so we were down to, I think, one or two students at one point and that left us in danger of losing our METCO funding which is \$130,000."

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Mass Audubon Society provides project ideas, updates to Board of Selectmen

By Kristin Rivers
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HAMPDEN - The Board of Selectmen heard from the Mass Audubon Society on March 26 regarding potential projects at Laughing Brook.

Jonah Keane, the point person for Mass Audubon for Laughing Brook, began by addressing dead-standing trees after Laughing Brook experienced spongy moths killing many hundreds of trees a few years ago.

"So, we've been assessing as they've been rotting a bit over the last few years and getting less stable. We've been assessing the safety hazard and we were out there a few weeks ago and have decided that we're going to need to be closing the sanctuary with a little more frequency based on wind speeds or heavy snow or heavy rain," Keane said.

Keane said the gate would be closed with a sign and stressed the concerns about the dead trees.

"The winds in the woods there are hazards with that, but we're just especially concerned because of just the large number of dead trees that are along the trail system currently that's really far more than you would normally see and we don't want anybody to get hurt out there on the trails," Keane said.

Another project pertains to a parcel owned by the town.

cel owned by the town.

"The project that we're looking at is on that slope, that west foot facing slope, and the project area is both on Mass Audubon land and, if possible, would extend onto town land," Keane said. "So one idea that we're floating out there is that we're interested in, if the town is interested, in creating, potentially, a management easement or a management agreement with Mass Audubon that we could do some habitat management extending onto town land."

Keane stressed Mass Audubon is "not yet at the point" to move it forward and "not officially requesting this."

"It's more just a time to discuss it and think about if this is something that we should even consider. We're not far enough along in our project yet to actually be implementing anything," Keane said.

Another project involves the management of trees to potentially create a pitch pine ecosystem with dense blueberries in the understory, a habitat more commonly found in the eastern part of the state.

Selectman Craig Rivest asked what Keane was referring to in terms of rare.

"Are you saying rare to this area meaning it's normally here or rare that it should be protected?" Rivest said.

Keane replied yes to both questions.

"So the community or the ecosystem there is rare to this area. It's more common in Eastern Mass or on the Cape," Keane said. "But it's not as common in this part of the state."

Chair Donald Davenport wanted to clarify how there's no plan yet.

"I mean, you're just thinking about it," Davenport said.

Keane affirmed yes, explaining "It's something we're hoping to do" and noted how the area is shared between Mass Audubon and the town.

"We thought the best potential of it would be to include the town as a partner in that project," Keane said.

"So, as we get more information and more detail, we can definitely share that is what the plan, more specifically, would look like, but just wanting to plant the seeds now."

Davenport then said this.

"I can't speak for the board and there's no plan for us to decide on. But, I think it's fair to say that the town and Mass Audubon have a long and friendly and helpful relationship on a number of topics. I'm sure we can work something out if you need to use our land," Davenport said.

The conversation concluded when Keane said he would share more as it develops, including after looking and applying for funding.

Hampden Government Study Committee presents proposals to Selectmen

Committee will hold a public forum Thursday at 6:30 p.m.

By Dalton Zbierski
Correspondent

HAMPDEN - The Government Study Committee presented several proposals and notes to the Board of Selectmen on Monday evening.

The proposals will be voted on by residents at the Annual Town Meeting on May 13 at Thornton W. Burgess School at 7 p.m.

The committee will hold a forum on Thursday, April 4, at 6:30 p.m. in the

Town House to share its findings with members of the public.

For the past year, the committee has been tasked with researching the best practices for town governance, authority and functions. Monday's meeting marked the first opportunity the committee had to bring its recommendations to the Selectmen, although they previously presented them to former Town Administrator Bob Markel.

Committee member Keith Pixley said the group met every other week for most of the past year, but for the past two months, it met almost every week while preparing to make recommendations for next month's town meeting.

"We kind of got a little surprised by how quickly the end came. When we found out that the warrant was closing, we started meeting every week basically to try to get this done so that we could put something forward, but we did get it done," Pixley

said.

Pixley noted that the committee's recommendations aren't a referendum on how the town has performed in past years or how competent current town employees are.

"It's saying what will work best going forward in the future," Pixley said.

Board Chair Don Davenport said he read over the group's recommendations and considered the list very "comprehensive." He thanked the committee members for their effort and commitment over the past year.

Three-person Board of Selectmen vs. five-person Board

The first recommendation discussed on April 1 was the committee's proposal to expand the Board of Selectmen to five people, whereas it has traditionally been a three-member

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Owen and the Easter Bunny smile for a fun photo during the Bunny Breakfast at St. Cecilia Parish Center.



Siblings Adam, Amelia and Cole enjoy their breakfast during the Bunny Breakfast at the St. Cecilia Parish Center on March 23.



From the left, Audrina, Erica Pafumi, Luciana and Frankie Pafumi take a family photo with the Easter Bunny during the Bunny Breakfast at the St. Cecilia Parish Center on March 23.



Rihan McCarthy, a volunteer, paints a rainbow on Hailey's hand during the Bunny Breakfast at the St. Cecilia Parish Center on March 23.



Elizabeth and Juliet pose for the camera as they work on their coloring pages during the Bunny Breakfast at the St. Cecilia Parish Center.



Celia Fernandes and Lynn Gomes of LUSO Federal Credit Union smile at their table as they wear festive bunny ears during the Bunny Breakfast event at the St. Cecilia Parish Center on March 23.



A group photo of volunteers and members of the GFCW Wilbraham Junior Women's Club who took part in this year's Bunny Breakfast.

Turley photos by Kristin Rivers

WILBRAHAM from page 1

"Everybody who wants to be here and enjoy the day also gets the benefit of supporting the local families and stuff like that," Mingolla said.

Erica Pafumi saw the signs all over town advertising the event, coming with family to meet the Easter Bunny, enjoy the crafts and get temporary tattoos.

Pafumi was thankful for the event and for the junior women's club sponsoring it.

"I think it's a great thing. I think there should be more events like this to bring knowledge to groups like that," Pafumi said. "Because I never even heard of them before."

Pafumi added events like this forge memories for families.

"It's a good memory for the kids and it's nice when it's a yearly event because it becomes a tradition for us," Pafumi said.

Alicia Belden enjoyed how family-friendly the event was along with the friendly people.

Belden heard about the event through her in-laws, who attend St. Cecelia Church, and decided to check it out.

"It's definitely for the kids in an enclosed space where you can keep an eye, but they have the freedom to do what they want," Belden said. "You don't really find that anymore, so it was really a nice event for smaller kids and even the older ones."

Belden said community events like this help families meet one another.

"It makes for more outings that you get to know about and just brings everybody closer together," Belden said.

Mingolla encourages the community to support organizations like the junior women's club by attending their events, adding that there's something for everybody.

"Even if you just simply come and eat breakfast, it's a way to get out of the house and get over to meet some people," Mingolla said.

Bonavita said the junior women's club is always looking for new members to join.

"We're looking for people to join with new ideas and fresh minds and we would love for people to check us out," Bonavita said.

To learn more, visit wilbrahamjuniorwomens.org.

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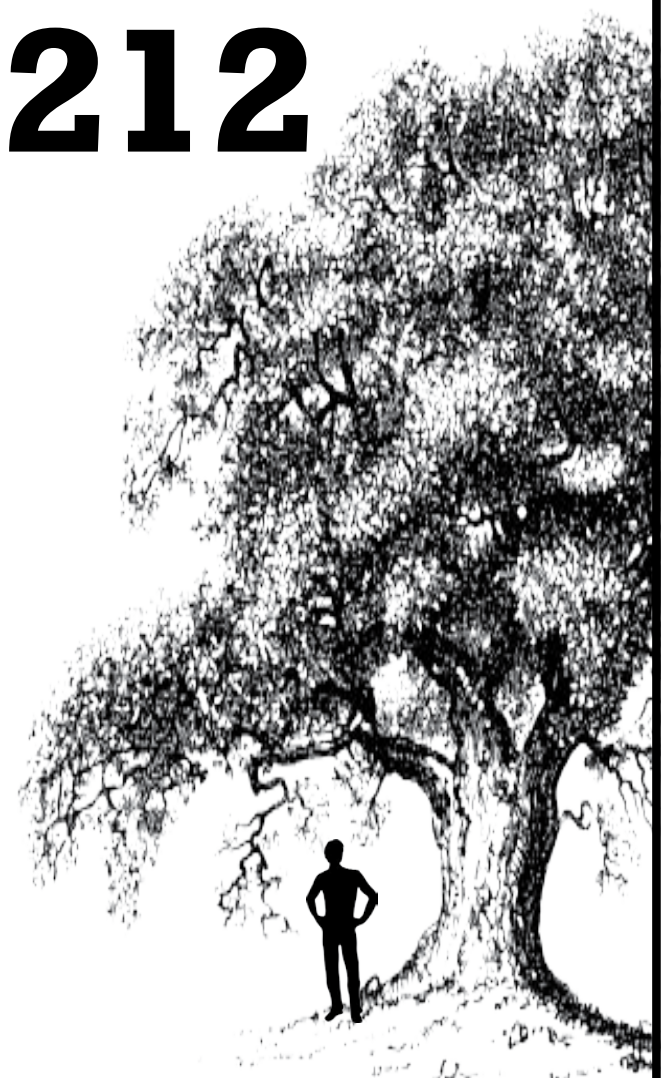
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VIEWPOINTS

Meet our families: The faces behind the Habitat homeownership mission

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

WEST SPRINGFIELD - Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity (GSHFH) recently celebrated its newest homeowner. Single mother Antonia Santos purchased a 1,500-square-foot colonial home in Holyoke for herself and her four youngest children. Like her predecessors and someday successors, Antonia came from a challenging background in which homeownership would not be attainable through traditional means.

Greater Springfield Habitat believes its homeownership mission is a crucial foundation for any family. By moving out of substandard housing and into a Habitat home, homeowners and their families become more likely to improve their health, attain a better education, and increase their safety and personal wealth.

"I think we all gain inspiration from our partner families to continue helping others become homeowners," said Olga Callirgos, GSHFH Homeowner Programs coordinator. "It isn't easy to overcome language barriers, health issues, domestic violence, or any other bumps in the path of life, but yet it has made our partner families more driven and dedicated to a fresh start."

Antonia and her children are survivors of domestic violence. After leaving an abusive husband, Antonia sought help from non-profits to get a fresh start. She found counseling, training, and employment. She learned to live by a budget, save regularly, give back to the community, and build a support system through her work and church families.

"It has been a hard road, but I made it. No, we made it, my family and me," said Antonia at the Valentine's Day dedication, a ceremony celebrating the completion of the new home's construction. She closed on the house the next day. "God is good. He has blessed me tremendously, especially with my family and the opportunity to partner with Habitat for Human-



Antonia's keys to new house.



Driss, Madja, whole family by banner.



Valentine home photo shoot 11/12.

ty to help make my dreams come true."

In January 2023, Greater Springfield Habitat sold a home, which neighbors Antonia's resi-

idence, to a family of four. Life-long renters Juan Gonzalez and Ireydiza Perez purchased the home to give their two young children better lives.

Several years before they partnered with GSHFH, Juan and Ireydiza dreamed of purchasing their first home through traditional means. Then, tragedy struck. A workplace injury disabled Juan, the breadwinner. Following several surgeries and two strokes, their dreams were put on hold. Juan was unable to return to work. Ireydiza left school to become the sole breadwinner, and create time to care for their children and her recuperating husband.

"I know we all experience unexpected hardships in our life and these times are when our trust in God is tested," Juan said. "After my stroke and losing my career, my family and I got tested. I didn't think getting a house for them would be possible. Thanks to Habitat for Humanity, y'all are making our dream come true. ... Not only do you build houses and sell them at affordable prices, but you also save lives through this program. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for giving us the opportunity to be homeowners."

In September 2023, Greater Springfield Habitat accepted the newest family into the homeowner program - Driss and Majda Errahali with their four children. The family emigrated from Morocco in 2018 in search of better opportunities. They lived in a house in West Springfield until a car crashed into the home causing structural damage. It was condemned and the family was moved to a tiny two-bedroom apartment in the same town. The girls who are 8- and 11-years old share one bedroom, while the Driss, Majda, and the two youngest boys share the other bedroom.

"We applied through the homeownership program to get a home so that our children would have a better life," said Driss, the patriarch who works as a truck driver, while his wife Majda cares for the children. "My dream is for my children to be good people and useful to society and do good deeds for the environment and achieve their dreams."

Construction on Driss and Majda's home is scheduled to begin this spring.

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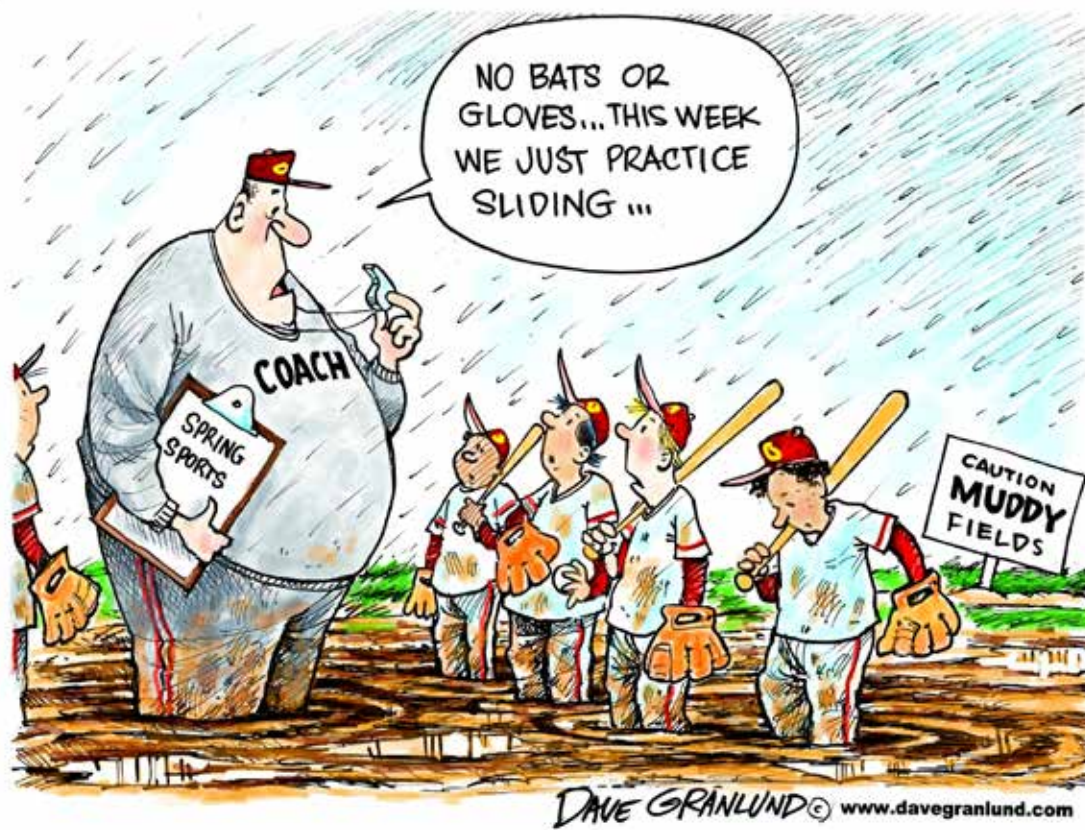
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Hampden Government Study Committee hosting Community Forum on April 4

HAMPDEN - Hampden's Government Study Committee (GSC) will host its second Community Forum on April 4 from 6:30 8:00 p.m. in the Town House Auditorium.

At the October 2022 Special Town Meeting, "The Town voted to authorize creation of a Government Study Committee, appointed by the Moderator, to review all aspects of Hampden Town government and to issue a report with any recommendations to the Annual Town Meeting in May 2024." That report is complete.

The intent of the forum is to provide residents the opportunity to review the report and engage in discussion prior to Town Meeting. The committee will briefly present the results of their year-long study with findings and recommendations.

The report can be found on Hampden's website. Residents are encouraged to read the report and participate in the discussion.



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 shot of construction vehicles working with piles of boulders and dirt in the construction area of the 285 Three Rivers Rd. solar project.

SOLAR from page 1

Ally was posting the noise and I had realized those trees were coming from this area."

Ouellette, an abutter, who has lived in the area for 35 years, said it was "very emotional" to see the trees cut down and the loss of wildlife.

Redistributing animal migration patterns is also a concern.

"It was devastating, to be honest with you," Ouellette said. "I retired two years ago, so for me, with this going on, with all the noise and stuff, it's been bad. It's just been bad. I don't want to be home, it's too loud."

After Ouellette and Bacon-Erickson connected to see what they could do, Bacon-Erickson then learned about Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40a, Section Three, established in 1985 and known as the "The Dover Amendment."

"What it is is to loosen up zoning for schools and churches," Bacon-Erickson said. "What they've done at Boston level and why we lost in Land Court is because they've added solar fields, now, to that."

From there, she examined Hampden's bylaw, which was tested, for solar fields and later organized a petition for a warrant article to be put on Town Meeting to put Hampden's bylaw in for Wilbraham.

Wilbraham also has three other solar fields, which were approved before the new solar bylaw was approved.

"Ours is good. It's just this is not under the bylaw, which I was not aware of," Bacon-Erickson said.

William Jebb got involved five years ago, explaining in the last few months there's been a rock pile right behind his house due to boulders being crushed.

"The noise is relentless from

7:30 in the morning to about 3:30, 4 p.m. in the evening, every day, non-stop, to the point where it was so disturbing, I had to make a phone call and file a complaint with the town," Jebb said. "My house is vibrating. I got dust all over my car from the smashing of these rocks, all over the house."

Ouellette later added the noise level was 86 decibels.

This equates to the sound of a hairdryer, blender, forklift, lawn mower or subway train.

Jebb said in addition to these concerns, the unknowns greatly worry him, including the potential effects on wells, his septic system and foundation and the overall value of his house.

Public safety is another issue concerning a walking path for foot traffic.

"I'm concerned that, potentially, people could fall victim walking on that bike path. People could become victims with their houses broken into, have easy access in and out based on that bike path alone," Jebb said. "So there's just so many unknowns, so many factors that we're starting to look into."

Jebb stressed he wants to meet with the developer and stay on top of this to "try to avoid some of those concerns" along with documenting them.

"I've lived here for almost 30 years, and in 30 years, I've been able to enjoy peace and tranquility, watch nature at its best," Jebb said. "It's all just a beautiful environment that is now gone."

On the walking path, Bacon-Erickson explained the residents learned about this during the March 21 Zoning Board of Appeals meeting, adding she wished the public had an opportunity to learn more.

"It's felt, to me, like I've had to pull teeth to get the information, that it was not free-flowing information. There's not a place for people to voice opinions, there's not a



Photos courtesy of Joe Roberts

An aerial shot of the land cut down for the 285 Three Rivers Rd. solar project.

place for people to voice concerns," Bacon-Erickson said.

Currently, at the state level, House Bill 3230 from State Reps. Aaron Saunders (D-Belcher-town) and Joanne Comerford (D-Northampton) and Senate Bill 1319 from State Sen. Jacob Oliveira (D-Ludlow) would change MGL Chapter 40a, section three if passed.

"It's not anti-solar. It's just to return zoning back to the local people," Bacon-Erickson said.

The bills, Bacon-Erickson explained, are currently stuck in the Telecommunications, Energy and Utility Committee, overseen by State Sen. Michael Barrett (D-Middlesex), and would need to be petitioned to get them out of committee and on the floor for a vote around mid or late April.

"It's already been looked at by the House and Senate and then it went back into committee. Those happen in a year cycle. If we don't get it out of that and into a vote and have it vote in the affirmative, we would not have a chance for another year," Bacon-Erickson said.

On the current solar project, Bacon-Erickson said the focus would be to keep safety and health "under control," citing small signs poorly placed about the construction site and the number of trucks on residential streets carrying or delivering materials.

During our visit, one of these trucks was on the road, struggling to back up and turn around.

"I am asking that the town and the DPW increase signage with the construction manager and they do a safety audit of the area," Bacon-Erickson said.

Going from here, all three residents are looking for the community to reach out to them through the Wilbraham Open Community Forum or individually to share their concerns.

Residents can also email their testimonies and concerns to noah-green@mahouse.gov.

Ouellette stressed the developer would need to work with and listen to the residents, hoping they do.

"We didn't want this to begin with and it's here. It's here, but at least make it less traumatic for the people that have to look at it, that have to deal with this. Have some compassion," Ouellette said.

Jebb stressed he understands the construction and hopes it ends soon, but the concerns about the long-term effects are important and need to be heard.

"We don't know what we don't know and that's part of why we're starting to activate more now than before. Because they won in a lawsuit, they're developing that, we can't control that. But there are some components of this project that we would like to get under control and that's where we're at right now," Jebb said.

Bacon-Erickson encouraged anyone being affected to document everything, also hoping the developer will listen to the abutters.

"As I speak, I bet 80% of this town does not know this is here," Bacon-Erickson said.

Jebb summed it up best on the importance of being concerned and speaking up.

"I'm not looking for support from the residents in town. I'm looking to ensure that the safety and peace and tranquility of the abutters in this general area is somehow maintained," Jebb said.

Updates

Since this report, the Times received several updates. They are the following.

On March 26, signage was put in, rock removal began on March 27, plans for a walking path will not be taking place at this time, well testing for abutters will be paid for by the solar company and additional shrubbery for abutters will be considered for anyone after the buffer is installed.

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OBITUARIES

Death Notices

Mary Hullinger Polom

*Died March 30, 2024
Services April 12, 2024
Wilbraham Funeral Home*

Mary Hullinger Polom 1924-2024

Mary Hullinger Polom died March 30, 2024, at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield. Hers was a life lived in continual gratitude for its abundant blessings. Born to loving parents Dorothy and Ora Merle Hullinger January 31, 1924, in Newark, NJ, Mary was predeceased by brothers Lewis and David and sister Barbara Wallace.



Mary was brought up and educated in the Midwest, having graduated from Bexley High School, Columbus, OH in 1942, and Meredith College, Zanesville, OH. She came to Palmer, MA in 1952 after her marriage to her late dearly beloved husband and soulmate, Dr. Anthony Polom. She is survived by a loving and devoted family: daughter Sarah Dufault of Lancaster, PA, her husband Gil, and their children Lauren Belice (Josh) also of Lancaster and Ryan Dufault (Kelsey) of Denver, NC; son Francis Polom, his wife Sandra of Wilbraham and their children Cara Raccis (David) of Mansfield, MA, and Corey Polom (Sarah) of Sherrills Ford, NC; and great-grandsons Brooks Dufault, Emmett Belice, and Jayce Dufault. Mary is also survived by 11 nephews and 9 nieces, and a godson Sarath Ton of Orlando, FL. Four nephews predeceased her.

An avid baseball fan, Mary easily transitioned from supporting Chicago Cubs to Boston Red Sox: both were in losing mode. Happily, she lived to see both clubs achieve world championships. Of far more enjoyment to her was being in the cheering sections for her grandchildren and their friends as they played soccer, basketball, softball, baseball and lacrosse.

In her middle years, Mary served as a volunteer for Massachusetts Association for the Blind, American Red Cross, ACTS inner-city tutoring program and delivering meals to the homebound in Wilbraham. A strong advocate for peace with justice (Shalom), she was a member of the reconciliation-focused Community of the Cross of Nails and supported the non-violent vision of Agape Community in Hardwick, MA.

A communicant of the parish community of St. Cecilia in Wilbraham, Mary was pleased to be part of its Spiritual Growth Group led by Sister Mary McCue.

Mary was an integral part of the family production of Amen Corner Heavenly Maple Syrup of the Dipping Hole Road Minor Sugarbush, as quality control and bottling specialist.

Calling hours at Wilbraham Funeral Home are Friday, April 12, 4 - 7 p.m.

The Liturgy of Christian Burial will be celebrated at St. Cecilia Parish on Saturday April 13, 10 a.m. A burial will follow at Glendale Cemetery in Wilbraham.

If you were considering a floral tribute, a donation to Parish of St. Cecilia (memo HOPE/Haiti) 42 Main St., Wilbraham would serve a greater need.

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 \$225, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph.

Death Notices & Paid Obituaries

should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

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

Hartsprings Drive coming to Hampden Senior Center April 6

HAMPDEN - A Hartsprings Drive will be taking place at the senior center on Saturday, April 6 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., rain or shine.

The Hartsprings Truck will be at the Hampden Senior Center, 104 Allen St., Hampden to collect your items that may be too large to put in the bin. As you begin your spring cleaning, please save all your unwanted clothing, books, dishes, towels, sheets, bedspreads, glassware, sporting equipment, suitcases in good condition. However, we cannot accept bed pillows or baby items such as car seats or toys. We accept small kitchen items, such

as toasters, microwaves and toaster ovens

If you have any questions in regards to what you may bring or if assistance is needed, please contact Joan Shea at 566-8224. The Hartsprings Bin will remain in place before and after the Truck Drive in the parking lot of the Hampden Senior Center. This special pick-up will assist you with the many bags you may have or if they are large in size.

Again, thank you for your continuing support of this special fundraiser which raises money for The Hampden Senior Center Building Fund.

Republican Town Committee holding town caucus April 11

HAMPDEN - The Republican Town Committee in Hampden will be holding a caucus in the Town Hall, 625 Main St, Hampden, on April 11 from 4 to 6 p.m. for the purpose of nominating candidates for the Annual Town Election.

Democratic Town Committee holding town caucus April 12

HAMPDEN - The Democratic Town Committee in Hampden will be holding a caucus in the Town Hall, 625 Main St, Hampden, on April 12 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. for the purpose of nominating candidates for the Annual Town Election.

OPRO performing at Minnechaug on April 5

WILBRAHAM - The Old Post Road Orchestra (OPRO) will perform on Friday, April 5, 7:30 pm, at Minnechaug Regional High School in Wilbraham.

Our spring concert, titled "Bohemian Landscapes (in the European Mountains)", will include selections from Strauss, Sibelius, Smetana and Mahler. Please join us!

This concert is sponsored in part by a grant from the Wilbraham Cultural Council, a local agency, which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency. AND the generous donations of our audiences and program book advertisers.

GOVERNMENT from page 3

ber board.

"We went back and forth on it a bunch, but in the end when we had all our information and looked at it, as a whole, our feeling was that it could be better with a five-person board for a variety of different reasons. If the town doesn't want that, they don't want it," Pixley said.

Committee member Donna Hatch said the board was "on the fence" regarding the issue for most of the past year but ultimately thought that a five-person board was more conducive to concentrating authority and power amongst more people.

Committee member Eric Brewer noted that the workload assigned to the current board seems "fairly large" and that dividing it among five people would mean less work for each Selectman.

"Plus, the obvious (thing is) that it would allow two people to actually talk. I'm sure you guys occasionally run into each other at the grocery store, and it seems stupid that you're not allowed to talk to each other (because of Open Meeting Laws)," Brewer said.

Selectman John Flynn weighed in, noting the law against strategizing outside of a public meeting exists so that board members don't make decisions without being in an open meeting.

"If I bumped into Craig (Rivest) or Don (Davenport) and said, 'Next week, can we talk about the Mill Pond,' and Don would say, 'Good idea, let's put it on the agenda,' in my mind, that's not a violation of Open Meeting (Law). Maybe it is strictly, but I don't think in any sense it is," Flynn said.

Flynn noted that the addition of full-time Town Administrator Brian Domina has lessened the workload of the board. Whereas Markel worked only 24 hours per week, Domina works a full week.

Flynn feels the added presence of a supervisor in the town offices has benefited town employees. It has also aided the board because Domina runs day-to-day operations, allowing the Selectmen to "concentrate our workload on more important things."

"In my mind, there doesn't need to be five because we have a (full-time) town administrator," Flynn said, speaking about Domina's addition. "(The town) is paying six figures to somebody to do that job. I worry that it might be perceived that we need to get more Selectmen because this full-time guy can't handle it, and we don't think that's the case at all."

Rivest, a Selectman, played "devil's advocate" and worried that a five-man board could create alliances. Pixley thinks it would create the exact opposite because three mem-

bers must agree for any motion to pass.

Pixley believes a five-member board would be better for the future. Beyond sharing the workload, if one person missed a meeting, he said a five-member board would be able to function in an easier capacity.

Residents will have the final say in May.

Town Clerk: Elected or appointed

Residents also can vote on if the Town Clerk position should be elected or appointed. The committee recommended making appointments, and Davenport agreed.

"We've had people who have served many years and have done excellent jobs and they're great at it, but again we're talking about the future," Davenport said. "Who knows what the future brings. I think if the board can appoint someone, it gives us more flexibility to get a professional in there. It's the same thing with the treasurer and collector."

Flynn pointed out that the town has been very fortunate that the individuals elected to positions have done a great job, and he said nothing prevents the Selectmen from appointing the same people who have served.

Hatch added another benefit.

"The biggest gain for the town is that by going to appointed, you are no longer limited to someone who lives in Hampden," she said, noting that skill sets, training and experience can all be found in a wider candidate pool.

Electric Counters

The committee recommends making it possible for electric counters to be used to monitor votes at town meetings, adding that just because the warrant item passes doesn't automatically mean the town will use them.

"This is one of those ones where there's no harm to putting it in. It expands our abilities," Flynn said.

Pixley spoke about determining how many people come to the town meeting on average and leasing the electric counters based on that figure. He emphasized that passing the item will only open the possibility; whether they should be used is another conversation for another day.

Selectboard vs. Selectmen

The committee also recommends changing the title "Board of Selectmen" to "Hampden Selectboard."

"From the onset of our time together, this seemed to us to be a no-brainer. It seems like it's got a lot of heartburn from people, but to us it's like we're trying to move the town forward. If you look around at other cities and towns, it's quite often (the case)," Hatch said.

A public hearing would be required, and the name change must pass through the state legislature after the town votes to make the change. Approximately 100 Massachusetts communities, including Wilbraham, have made the change in recent years.

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Volunteer Jim Dupuis with Activities Coordinator and friend Diane Marino.



Administrative Assistant & Volunteer Coordinator Tina Doran, laughing along with one of her Easter attendees.



Angie Jacque handing a meal to a fellow volunteer as Executive Director Becky Moriarty debates fixing herself a plate.



The packed crowd was hungry for conversation as much as they were fresh breakfast.

Turley photos by Harrison Giza

HAMPDEN from page 1

of that. Becky Moriarty and Wendy Cowles (Outreach Coordinator) cook the food for today's event and we did have a sponsor, Bluebird Estates, who brought over a big, beautiful fruit salad that they prepared and brought out to the tables."

With eggs, crisp hash browns and a sheet of blueberry muffins, it is no wonder the breakfast continues to grow each year.

The dedicated staff at the senior center aim to please, with Marino, staff and volunteers taking pride in their work to help out attendees however they may need.

"We just like to make it festive and enjoyable," Marino said. "We really want to get the seniors out and about and to be able to celebrate something."

Down the street at St. Mary's Church, a group of people have made table decorations as well as sent bags of candy to the senior center each year for the event. Things like chocolate eggs, jelly beans and peanut butter cups have now become early breakfast favorites.

"We are so thankful for St. Mary's and what they do for this," Marino said. "It really goes a long way and our seniors love getting their treats."

Marino has seen the senior center grow quite a lot during her two years at the center.

"I feel that it has grown quite a bit," Marino said. "The important thing is that people need to come in and see what we are doing so that people realize, wow this really is a great place to be."

The Hampden Senior Center strives to make members with care and support. The Center is located at 104 Allen St., Hampden, MA and is open weekdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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Submission of an application will not guarantee housing for occupancy. There will be a screening process. Once the initial lease up has been completed, your housing application lottery placement number will become your waitlist number for future occupancy. Once completed and signed, applications will be considered for the lottery.

Anticipated occupancy is September 2024. For more information or reasonable accommodations, call The Residences at Mill 8 at 413-308-5300, TTY/TDD: (800) 439-2370 or email mill8@winnco.com.

Applications will be available April 15, 2024, through June 15, 2024, at the following locations:

- **The Residences at Mill 10 Leasing Office:** located at 68 State St Ludlow, MA 01056, Mon-Fri 9:00AM-5:00PM
- **Hubbard Memorial Library:** 24 Center St Ludlow, MA 01056, MWF 9AM-5PM, T/TH 9AM-8PM & Sat 9AM-1PM
- **Ludlow Housing Authority:** 114 Wilson St, Ludlow MA 01056, M-TH 8:30AM-12PM and M-TH 12:30PM-4:30PM
- **You may also request an application by emailing mill8@winnco.com or calling 413-308-5300. Visit www.livemill8.com for more details.**

Informational Public Meeting:

Springfield Central Library located at 220 State St Springfield, MA 01103: Wednesday, August 9, 2023, at 5PM-7PM.

Housing Lottery:

Springfield Central Library located at 220 State St Springfield, MA 01103: Thursday, September 7, 2023, at 10AM. Applicants and the public are welcomed to attend. Applicants are not required to be present.



A COMMUNITY GALLERY



Photos and caption courtesy of Wilbraham Fire Department

“The Wilbraham Fire Department and Ludlow Fire Department attended four days of RIT training practicing skills needed to rescue a down firefighter. This class also concentrated on the roles of the incident commander and RIT team leader. The training was provided by P.L. Vulcan Fire Training Concepts LLC.”



Life in &

WILBRAHAM

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

Maddie Roos celebrated her fifth birthday on March 29! Happy Birthday Maddie!

Photo submitted by MJ Roos

Soule Road School grand opening of the “new” library!

Soule Road School would like to thank W.H.A.T. for their generous grant to renovate the library to nurture a lifelong love of reading.

Photos and captions submitted by Cheryl Erskine



The students are so appreciative of your generosity for transforming our library.



Ribbon cutting ceremony with the BIG scissors.



Beautiful furniture to curl up and read a



Thank you cards from the students at Soule Road School.



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Band and Chorus perform at the Grand Opening

The Hampden Fire Department responded to a call for a loose horse on March 21: "We don't only respond to fire or medical incidents! Early this morning a concerned citizen stopped at our station to report a loose horse in the road causing traffic issues. Car-1 responded to help assist Hampden Police Department and Hampden Animal Control with corralling the horse and escorting it safely back to its home."

Photos and caption courtesy of Hampden Fire Department



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Hampden Selectmen hold public hearing for septic variance

Potential three-year ambulance contract extension also discussed

By Dalton Zbierski
Correspondent

HAMPDEN – When the Board of Selectmen met on April 1, its first order of business was a public hearing for a septic variance on Main Street.

The property of concern was 405 Main St., and the request was a reduction of the wells of three abutting properties to leach field at 405 Main St., said Finn McCool, Hampden's health agent.

A leach field is a major component of a septic tank that serves as a disposal filter for organic material. Most leach fields include an underground system of perforated pipes that lie adjacent to a septic tank.

"You want to get 100 feet (away), but this property is so small and tight, he's requesting to put the leach field essentially back into the same spot, which is really the only feasible location. But because it encroaches on the neighboring wells, we had to have a public hearing before you guys give the final sign off," McCool informed the Selectmen.

Selectman Craig Rivest noted that the house at 405 Main St. is considerably old and has been there for a long time.

"I think everything was built around it," Rivest said.

McCool said that the law requests 100 feet of distance but allows for variances for situations such as this. He said all abutters have been notified.

"It's not very often we come

across three properties all needing a reduction to their wells, but like I mentioned, the system's going right back into the same spot. They're going to have to dig out the whole system. It's going to be costly," McCool said.

Selectman John Flynn stressed that there's "no change in impact," as the system will be placed in the same spot; he said the occurrence was a first for his time on the board, but he could envision it happening again in the future.

"This is the first one I recall where they actually talk about digging it out in the same spot without being able to find another spot, but I think as more and more systems fail as they get older, you're going to see more of this," Flynn said.

Neil Jackson, the designer of the septic system, joined the meeting over the phone and listed the properties and what the variances would be.

The variance for the well at 405 Main St. would be to allow the reduction from 100 feet to 52 feet. The variance for the well at 413 Main St. would be a reduction from 100 feet to 60 feet, and the variance for the well at 406 Main St. would be a reduction from 100 feet to 90 feet.

The board individually approved each variance at the end of the hearing, but Jackson weighed in on the project first, noting that all the other surrounding wells are over 100 feet away. He spoke about the well at 405 Main St.

"The well onsite is buried. Basically, the cover is right at the berm of the street, so it was buried, and we dug that up and put risers on it to keep anything from getting into the well. It was not a very good situation when we started, but we got it all raised up," Jackson said.

He noted that the water was tested, and the results came back fine.

"We did everything we possibly could; the maximum feasibility... I think we did all that we could possibly do to get it in compliance. It's a tough site," Jackson said.

On April 1, the Selectmen also spoke regarding the ambulance contract. Board Chair Don Davenport gave a status update.

"We have one year that we can extend the Action Ambulance. The number that they have is \$374,794. That's the annual (cost). Then, they predict a \$60,876 rebate, which will bring our net cost to \$313,000, which is \$20,000 less than our original," Davenport said.

He asked Action Ambulance if they could work in the anticipated rebate and was told yes.

"They said if there's a three percent increase, which is \$374,000, and we predict your rebate's going to be \$61,000 basically, we can apply 75% of that to your (cost) in case it goes up or down. That would lower what you would put in the taxes to \$329,000. Then, it would be \$15,000 or \$16,000 left over just in case," Davenport said.

Davenport said the individual he spoke to also showed him what the budget and figures would look like if the town chooses to start a new three-year contract with Action Ambulance.

Rivest said he thinks the town should exercise the one-year contract but hold off on talks of the three-year contract.

"I think we should have a greater discussion around that," Rivest said.

Flynn recommended inviting Michael Woronka, president and CEO of Action Ambulance, to a Selectmen's meeting to talk about the three-year contract in person.

Select Board hears updated traffic safety plans for Wilbraham Hill Climb

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - Select Board received updates from Police Chief Ed Lennon on April 1 regarding traffic safety plans for this year's Wilbraham Hill Climb.

Lennon explained the police department, fire department, Department of Public Works and Jeff DeMarey, the event organizer, met last week to discuss this year's traffic plan.

"We're going to make a motion to the Board of Selectmen probably next week. We just want to make sure that you're comfortable with what we are going to propose," Lennon said.

Lennon said the plans include having Monson Road at Main Street to the top of the hill at Ridge Road closed off as usual. However, due to the event being bigger with more cars being displayed in front of Wilbraham & Monson Academy along with other events, Main Street northbound starting at Faculty Street going all the way to just south of Monson Road will be blocked off.

"It will probably be blocked off with cones and barricades from Faculty Street all the way up but just after Monson Road. What we'll be doing is, all of these side streets, will be coned off so that the traffic can get into those side streets from traffic going southbound and traffic that enters Main Street from any of these will have a way to get through," Lennon said. "But all of that traffic will be directed south, so there'll be nothing north."

Lennon added this allows for extra space in the northbound lanes for pedestrians, patrons, cars and more to be managed.

"Basically, what it's going to be is almost like a giant rotary, so everybody will be able to get to where they need to be. There is going to be an inconvenient factor because of the no northbound traffic, but everything will be theoretically open and able to be accessed," Lennon said.

Beyond traffic, other changes include shuttle buses leaving Minnechaug Regional High School going on to Tinkham Road, up Stony Hill Road, down Springfield Street to Faculty Street and entering the northboundmost point and dropping off attendees at a point to be determined.

"That way, the buses will be in a better place to drop off patrons and they can just continue--the buses continue--to make the loop without any issues, without having to cross backward to traffic," Lennon said.

DeMarey said another change is there will be no viewing or spectators at the midpoint for the race.

"I watched some videos of some of the race cars that were going up there and it looked like something out of an ESPN event that the idle man. There were people hanging over the road as the race cars were coming up. A couple of race car drivers came to me and said, 'Jeff, I don't want to run next year because of those people that are crazy out on the roads. I want to continue the event safely. I want to continue it for many years, and unfortunately, I got to nix the viewing in the middle of the road,'" DeMarey said. "For safety reasons, it has to go."

When Town Administrator Nick Breault later asked Lennon if there would still be access to the library and businesses in the area that day, he affirmed yes.

"If we didn't do it this way, it was going to create a significant challenge for that. This way, they will be able to with no restrictions," Lennon said. "The only restriction they're going to have is going southbound on Main and when they leave, they're going to go southbound on Main."

DeMarey said if anyone has any questions, they can give him a call at 413-531-3991.

The Wilbraham Hill Climb is scheduled for Saturday, May 11.

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BUDGET from page 2

Osbourne continued to share his thoughts on the program.

“So, I came back last year to the School Committee to take on the role of METCO director and I asked the School Committee to reaffirm their commitment to METCO and willingness to start taking students,” Osborne said. “As of now, we have six students in the program. This is an effort to sort of keep that commitment going in bringing up numbers.”

Osbourne stated he did not know the exact math but that the cost was roughly \$8,500 per student.

Vice Chair Sean Kennedy spoke about the issue of adding 44 new students in the next year to Green Meadows Elementary School.

“I’d rather have a plan and then add the school choice,” Kennedy said. “Rather than say ‘We don’t have a plan, but let’s add the school choice and they’ll just be a part of the equation that we have to solve.’”

Kennedy went on to suggest other issues down the line.

“I understand we do have one problem that we have to solve,” Kennedy said. “How we pay for that teacher... or go to Green Meadows with two classes of 26.”

School Committee member Michael Tirabassi agreed with Kennedy.

“I mean those were my exact thoughts, Sean,” Tirabassi said. “This is proposing to add 12 students to the fourth grade which will become the fifth-grade next year.”

Superintendent Dr. John Provost responded to concerns with an inquiry.

“The question was ‘were any of these positions or any of these choice seats built into the budget,’” Provost asked. “And to my understanding, although I only pick up the tail end of this because it was just before I got here, my understanding was that choice seats were added at the high school in order to add an administrative position... is that correct or not?”

Functional Area	\$ Increase	% Increase
Contractual Salaries	\$492,505	1.54%
Instructional Technology (next slide)	\$254,000	N/A
Utilities (Electric & Natural Gas)	\$123,600	10.29%
Out Of District Programs	\$146,738	4.80%
Hampden County Retirement	\$94,633	4.28%
Strategic Plan Impacts	\$52,469	104.94%
Property & Liability Insurance	\$45,000	22.50%
LPVEC Vocational Programming	\$42,203	10.38%
Non-LPVEC Vocational Programs	\$39,000	69.64%

Turley photo by Harrison Giza
A screenshot explaining the major budget increases to the FY25 budget at the March 21 School Committee meeting.

Provost turned to his right for Osbourne’s response, which his colleague confirmed.

“So, if these high schools were not filled,” said Provost, “then we would be losing the funding source of that administrative position.”

Kennedy then spoke up.

“Well, why settle when the ones we got for last year we’ll still get funding again for this year and the year after that,” Kennedy said. “I think it would be three more years before we lose that funding...we have 29 school choice that are graduating this year?”

Osbourne answered Kennedy’s concerns as best as he could.

“Typically, there were 20 to 25 taken at a grade level in the past. In working with (Principal) Steve Hale, to fund this position, Steve agreed that he would take five more per grade going up, so over the course of four years we would build up to

\$100,000, right? Build up five plus each year. We take in enough money to fund that Assistant Principal...so now, if we back off of that, over four years, we’ll be taking back that money. So, one year won’t entirely take it all away, but one year will take away 25% of it.”

As the sun began to set, topics focused towards the FY25 budget in Year 2, with a pair of key strategic initiatives.

The first, Strategic Objective 1A, intends to implement vertically and horizontally aligned PreK - 12+Curriculum over the next five years, while providing targeted professional development to maintain and sustain PreK-12 aligned curriculum (labeled Action Step F). The latter was Strategic Objective 1C, where HWRSD hopes to create system and process for evolving the educational programming to meet the needs of all learners. Then, the district would analyze and evaluate the current Vocational, technical and career opportunities and offerings to determine project growth feasibility (Action Step D).

The total Strategic Plan cost is an estimated \$102,469. However, if HWRSD were to follow the initiatives, they are estimated to save \$593,430. These savings would happen though Green Meadows School Reductions, Retiree Health Insurance scales, Thornton W Burgess Middle School, various retirements during the budget process and Student Services Staff Reduction FTE (Full Time Equivalent).

The district also led efforts to keep the Scantic Valley Regional Health Trust to a 0% increase for active employees in FY25.

After the committee thanked Osborne for his time and effort, they moved forward with their required vote, tallying a unanimous 6 - 0 sweep in favor of moving forward with FY25.

Aging Well in Wilbraham

We are a short time past the start of Daylight-Saving Time. I don’t think I know anyone who is not affected by this yearly event. While it is nice to see light outside after we eat dinner, this change often causes a lot of sleep disruption for people. For myself, I feel like it takes me at least a week or more to adjust every year, and it seems to be worse the older I get. It started me thinking- why does it seem like almost every older person complains of sleep problems? Is there a physical reason for this?

It is absolutely not true that we need less sleep as we age, and so shouldn’t be concerned if we don’t fall asleep til midnight and are up at 5 a.m. It is recommended that we get at least seven hours of sleep each night, the same as younger adults. Poor sleep is a big health concern. It can lead to daytime sleepiness, which is a major cause of car accidents and falls. Insomnia can cause depression, anxiety, confusion and memory problems. My previous article talked about the need for adequate sleep to help us fight off diseases.

Why do we have more trouble sleeping? We have an internal clock in our brains that controls our 24 hour cycles, called circadian rhythms. These cycles control when we get hungry, release certain hormones that make our bodies work and when we feel sleepy or alert. As this clock ages, it disrupts our cycles. It receives information through

Please see **AGING**, page 17

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BUSINESS

Two brother team strives to clean up New England



Submitted photos Robby McDonald Brothers Robby and Brendan McDonald flexing their official Falcon Exterior Cleaning merchandise.

By Harrison Giza
Staff Writer
hgiza@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - Two brothers, residents of Wilbraham, are making strives to clean up New England through their business, Falcon Exterior Cleaning.

Robby McDonald is the owner of Falcon Exterior Cleaning, a licensed and insured exterior home care company.

Alongside his brother Brendan, McDonald has been making an impact on the lives of his New England customers.

"Last summer I finished up my associate degree in business from STCC with my brother who is still in high school," McDonald said. "We kind of just wanted to work for ourselves and we saw a demand for window and gutter cleaning services in notably Wilbraham, but all of the surrounding towns near us. We partnered up with some of our friends and one thing led to another and now we are a real formal business that is opening up for the season starting in April."

The support and positive reviews on the Falcon Exterior Cleaning Facebook page continue to grow each week.

"It is really awesome to have such great support from the community," McDonald said. "Because we definitely wouldn't have gotten this far without them. In such a short amount of time we have been able to do more than 100 jobs and we have amassed more than 50 reviews, all of them being five stars, so it is truly great having such a supportive community around us."

Falcon Exterior Cleaning focuses on a few home care services.

"I would say that we really specialize in window cleaning," McDonald said. "We offer an extensive array of window cleaning services from doing windows on houses that were just built, with windows all covered in paint, to just traditional inside and outside window cleaning. Other than that, we really only do gutter cleaning and some power washing, so I'd certainly say that window cleaning is our main gig."

When it comes to future expansion, McDonald has his eyes set toward even further communal growth.



McDonald working hard during a recent gig.

"I would certainly love to take it to the next level and expand," McDonald said. "The thing is it is, at this time, it is kind of tough because we're not really structured to do so, considering it is just me and my brother."

Despite this, McDonald is optimistic for the future, mentioning a recent venture he has set up for Falcon Exterior Cleaning.

"This upcoming week we have jobs in New York and Connecticut," McDonald said. "You know it seems like it's really far, but it is not all that bad when you have three jobs in the same exact town, even if it is an hour or two away."

One of the things that makes McDonald and his business stand out is his dedication to helping American veterans and law enforcement members. Falcon Exterior Cleaning currently offers a 10% discount to all who have served in some capacity.

"We were constantly thinking of ways that we could give back to our local community," McDonald said. "Whether it was donating a portion of our profits to a charity we care about or offering some sort of discount to veterans or our Police, we just really wanted to honor those who have served and be able to have a chance to support our community at the same time."

Falcon Exterior Cleaning aims to be the leading exterior home care company across the Pioneer Valley. To contact their home improvement services for a free estimate, call 413-222-9169 or schedule an online booking through their website www.falconexteriorcleaning.com.

PUBLIC NOTICES

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

Bach Towing Inc., 165 Benton Drive, East Longmeadow, MA is holding a private sale of the following vehicle on 4/26/24 at 2:00 p.m. to satisfy our garage keepers lien thereon for storage and towing charges and expenses of Notices of Sale.
2008 Chevrolet Impala LT
VIN: 2G1WT58NX81262860
Ada Castro
140 Chestnut St. Apt 208
Springfield, MA 01103
04/04, 04/11, 04/18/2024

**COMMONWEALTH OF
MASSACHUSETTS
THE TRIAL COURT
HAMPDEN, Div.
Probate & Family Court
Dept.**

HD24E0012PP
To Kyle Bruno of Longmeadow, in the County of Hampden, Gianna Bruno and Juan Arango, both in the County of Hampden, and to all other persons interested.

A petition has been presented to said Court by Ashley Weisse of Longmeadow, in the County of Hampden, representing that they hold as joint tenants, in an undivided part or share of land lying in Hampden, in the County of Hampden, setting forth that they desire that all of said land may be sold at private sale or public auction for not less than Three Hundred Sixty Thousand (\$360,000.00) Dollars, and praying that partition may be made of all the land aforesaid according to law, and to that end that a commissioner be appointed to make such partition and be ordered to make sale and conveyance of all, or any part of said land which the Court finds cannot be advantageously divided either at private sale or public auction, and be ordered to distribute the net proceeds thereof after full adjudication of the equitable claims contained in said petition and supplemental memorandum filed with the Court.

If you desire to object thereto, you or your attorney, should file a written appearance in said Court at **Springfield** before ten o'clock in the forenoon on the **twentieth day of May 2024**, the return day of this citation.

Witness, BARBARA M. HYLAND, Esquire, First Justice of said Court, this eighteenth day of March 2024.

Rosemary A. Saccomani,
Register
03/28, 04/04, 04/11/2024

**Town of Wilbraham
WILBRAHAM HIGHWAY
MATERIALS 2024
Notice of Invitation for Bids**

The Town of Wilbraham invites sealed bids for the purchase of Wilbraham Highway Materials 2024. Bids must be made in accordance with all applicable Federal, State and Town laws and regulations **and must comply in all respects** with the instructions, conditions, specifications and other requirements in the Invitation for Bid packages.

Bid packages can be obtained from the Department of Public Works, Town Hall, 240 Springfield Street, Wilbraham, MA 01095 (413-596-2800 x208) on Wednesday, April 3, 2024.

Bids in sealed, opaque envelopes shall be marked "Wilbraham Highway Materials 2024 Bid" and delivered to the above address by **3:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 25, 2024** where they will be publicly opened and read aloud by the Chief Procurement Officer. All bids must be submitted on the official Standard Bid Form, included in the bid packages. Bids must include the signed Non-Collusion and Non-Discrimination paperwork. No bidder may withdraw his bid for a period of forty-five days, excluding Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays, after the actual date of opening of the bids.

The Town reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive minor informalities or irregularities in any bid, and to make an award in any manner consistent with the law and deemed to be in the best interest of the Town of Wilbraham.

Tonya L. Capparello, P.E.
Director of Public Works/
Town Engineer
04/04/2024

**WILBRAHAM
PLANNING BOARD
PUBLIC HEARING**

In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 40A, Section 5, the Wilbraham Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Wednesday, April 17, 2024 at 5:45PM** in the Town Office Building, 240 Springfield Street, to give interested parties the opportunity to comment on the following proposed amendments to the Wilbraham Zoning By-Law:

A. Change "Board of Selectmen" to "Select Board" throughout the Zoning By-Law (Sections 1.3, 12.3.2, 12.10.1, 12.10.2, 13.6.2.1, 13.6.6.1.A, 15.1.1, 15.4.2.1 & 15.6)

B. Corrective Amendments related to Child Care Facilities and the Flood Plain Overlay District (Sections 1.3 & 2.3.2)

The complete text of the proposed amendments is available for review in the Town Clerk's Office and the Planning Office during normal business hours and posted for public viewing on the Planning Board page of the Town of Wilbraham website at www.wilbraham-ma.gov/123/Planning-Board. All persons interested or wishing to be heard on this matter are urged to attend the public hearing.

Both in person and virtual participation are available. To participate virtually go to <https://meet.goto.com/964983757> or call 877-309-2073 (Access Code: 964-983-757).

John McCloskey, Chair
03/28, 04/04/2024

PUBLIC NOTICE

This ad is pursuant to MA Gen. Law Ch.255, Sec. 39A as of April 12, 2024 the following motor vehicles will be for sale to satisfy a garage keepers lien:

- 2002 Dodge Ram 150**
VIN: 3D7HU18N22G123820
COLOR: Gray
LKO: Leon Ramos
Marie Yariel
155 Allen St Apt A
Springfield MA 01108
- 2004 Acura TL**
VIN: 19WA66294A069698

COLOR: Gray
LKO: Lois Batay Mulero
40 Sprague St
West Springfield MA 01089

2008 Toyota Camry
VIN: 4T1BE46K88U752541
COLOR: Black
LKO: Yogesh Dava
153 Laconia St
Springfield MA 01129

2005 Ford Explorer
VIN: 1FMZU73E65Z05200
COLOR: White
LKO: Sheila Roberts
768 Oak St
East Hartford CT 06118

2002 Dodge Ram 150
VIN: 1D7HU18N75J538070
COLOR: Gray
LKO: Kreanna A Hale
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**LEGAL NOTICE
RECORDS TO BE
DESTROYED**

Hampden-Wilbraham Regional School District Office of Student Services will be destroying records for special education students which are outdated. If you received special education services and your birth date is between January 1, 1999 and December 31, 1999, you may request to obtain these records. If you are interested in obtaining your file, please call Diane at 279-3838, to schedule an appointment to pick up your file. **Outdated records will be destroyed on April 30, 2024.**
04/04/2024

PUBLIC NOTICE

T-Mobile LLC is proposing to modify an existing wireless telecommunications facility on an existing church located at 7 Somers Road, East Longmeadow, Hampden County, Massachusetts 01028. The modifications will consist of the removal and replacement of antennas within the steeple at a centerline height of approximately 59 ft above ground level in the 70 ft tall church. Any interested party wishing to submit comments regarding the potential effects the proposed facility may have on any historic property may do so by sending comments to: Project 009409-PR - AMG, EBI Consulting, 21 B Street, Burlington, MA 01803, or at 585.815.3290.
04/04/2024

More notices
on page 19

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.

Solwazi Browne-Vargas named to Thayer Academy Honor Roll

BRAINTREE - Solwazi Browne-Vargas received made the Thayer Academy Honor Roll during its second term, having received honors.

Thayer Academy in Braintree is

an independent coed day school for grades five through 12 - recently announced its Middle School honor rolls for the second term. The middle school serves students from fifth through eighth grade.

SPORTS

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Nolah McConnell makes a pass.



Turley photos by Sofia DiGrande
Aubrey Stachowicz sends a pass forward.

Falcons prepare for regular season

WILBRAHAM – Early last week, Minnechaug girls lacrosse continued its practice to get ready for the regular season. The Falcons had an early season opening, facing East Longmeadow last Thursday and falling 17-1. Mac Donahue had the only goal for Minnechaug in the defeat. Minnechaug faces rival Longmeadow and Mt. Greylock early this week, and then they travel to Northampton on Friday, April 5 at 7 p.m. Please see more photos on page 16.



Sean Murphy makes a move toward the goal.



Turley photos by Sofia DiGrande
Ryan Purchas winds back for a shot on goal.

Boys lacrosse doubles up Wahconah

WILBRAHAM – The Minnechaug Regional High School boys lacrosse team opened up the regular season at home last Thursday afternoon. The Falcons hosted Wahconah and the offense had no trouble getting going with an 18-9 win. The Falcons are 1-0 on the season and next face Pope Francis on the road Friday, April 5 at 5 p.m.



Jackson Derosia sends a pass forward.



Matt Noonan goes for a shot.

Registration now open to take part in Bay State Games

WOBURN – Registration for the 42nd annual Bay State Summer Games is now open. The 2024 Summer Games will include thirty sports with competitions from May 11 – July 27 at venues throughout eastern and central Massachusetts including Game On in Fitchburg, Boston Sports Institute in Wellesley, Union Point Sports Complex in Weymouth, and North Star Ice Sports in Westborough. Bay State Games participants range in age from 5 to over age 75 and represent more than 300

Massachusetts communities as well as surrounding New England States in some sports. From grassroots participants to accomplished amateur athletes, the Bay State Games provide opportunities for the athlete in all of us.

Seven high school showcase sports will take place for a variety of sports, including baseball, basketball, field hockey, ice hockey, soccer, softball, and volleyball. Athletes currently in grade 8-11 who live or go to school in Massachusetts are eligible

to attend regional tryouts during the month of June. These tryouts will determine teams representing the various regions of the Commonwealth that will compete against each other in July. Check each sport page for specific eligibility requirements.

The Summer Games include a wide variety of individual sports including swimming, track & field, figure skating, pickleball, wrestling, weightlifting, badminton, and more.

Please see **BAYSTATE**, page 16



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Abdel Talabi settles the ball for the Pioneers.



Tomas Duben looks to get through an opponent during an Open Cup match.

Pioneers look to keep adding



Ben Awashie works on the offensive side of the field.



Juri Schlingmann looks to avoid losing possession.

LUDLOW – With about a month remaining until the regular season begins, the Western Mass. Pioneers got a look at their potential 2024 team in the Open Cup match, a

loss, held two weeks ago. Now, the Pioneers will continue practice at Lusitano Stadium until they have a “friendly game” exhibition contest on May 10 against Third Eye FC.

The home opener for the Pioneers will be on Thursday, May 18 against Pathfinder FC, a familiar opponent for the Pioneers.

Registration now open for Quabbin Valley baseball

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

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

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

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

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

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

The league is currently in the process of preparing for the 2024 season and held a meeting on March 24 to discussion plans for the upcoming season. The next meeting will be held after the league’s open practice for all players, including players interested in joining the league. The open practice will be at Beach-grounds Park in South Hadley at 10 a.m. on April 7.

Falcons prepare for regular season



Avra Mayuski practices her ball handling.



Turley photos by Sofia DiGrande
Maddy Faneuff keeps possession of the ball, but looks to send it up the field.

BAYSTATE from page 15

These sports are open to a wide range of ages and skill levels from youth participants to masters-aged athletes. Adaptive sport divisions in archery, swimming, and track & field are offered, as well. Bay State Games also organizes tournaments for pre-existing teams in rugby, and 6v6 field hockey.

Returning in 2024, Table Tennis will take place on June 1 at PingPod in Boston after a 5-year hiatus from the Summer Games sport lineup. New venues include Babson College, which will host the Girls Basketball Showcase, and NorthStar Ice Sports, which will host Figure Skating and the Girls Ice Hockey Showcase. Game On in Fitchburg will serve as a hub venue for eight sports. Bay State Games expects 1,500 athletes and their families to attend competitions at Game On during the second week of July.

For questions, email info@baystategames.org or call 781-932-6555.

WPD warns residents of fraud scam around MRHS Booster Club

WILBRAHAM – The police department is warning residents about a new fraud scam involving the Minnechaug Regional High School Booster Club, sharing this message on their Facebook page

on March 28:

“The Minnechaug Athletics Booster Club has reported multiple fraudulent telephone solicitations locally. There are NO legitimate telephone solicitations being

conducted at this time. If you have given money to someone after receiving a phone call please contact the Wilbraham Regional Emergency Communications Center to speak with an officer.”



AGING from page 13

our eyes, and light is a powerful clue to maintain the cycles.

Many older adults have insufficient exposure to sunlight, especially early in the day, or if they live in nursing homes. Production of melatonin, a hormone produced in our brains, slows down. This hormone promotes sleep. Mental and physical conditions such as chronic pain, depression, anxiety and urinary issues disrupt our sleep. Sometimes it is our lifestyle--we no longer need to keep to a schedule so our bedtimes/awakenings can be inconsistent.

So what can we do? Exercise regularly, especially early in the day and outside in the sunlight. No TV, smartphone/tablet use or bright lights in our bedrooms. Keep a regular sleep schedule as much as possible,

AGING WELL IN WILBRAHAM

sible, and avoid napping especially late in the afternoon. Make a bedtime routine, much as you may have done for your children when they were small, using calming quiet activities. This tells your brain, okay time to relax. Avoid smoking or alcohol use before bed. Alcohol may make you drowsy at first but leads to increased awakenings later in the night. If you do wake up or can't fall asleep, give it about 20 minutes then get out of bed and do a quiet activity such as reading. No TV!

What about medications and supplements? You should never start a supplement without talking to your doctor because many of them can interfere with medications you may be taking. Even you are not on a prescription, some things

people use for sleep, such as Benadryl (diphenhydramine) or Tylenol PM or Motrin PM, which contain Benadryl, can be dangerous for older adults. It can cause confusion, dizziness and falls. It takes a long time to get out of your system and some studies have shown increased risk of dementia with long term use.

Natural supplements that help include melatonin, glycine and magnesium. Since melatonin production decreases as we age, adding it makes some sense. Its effects may decrease after several months. Glycine is an amino acid that may raise serotonin, which helps in sleep, and decreases body temperature which can help us fall asleep. Low levels of magnesium can make it hard to fall or stay asleep.

Many doctors have started testing for this as we age. You can get it from nuts and leafy greens as well as in pill form. Talk to your doctor about how much you should be taking of each.

There are herbs that can be taken in tea form, such as lavender, chamomile, passionflower, and valerian. Drinking something warm before bed can be relaxing in its own way so adding an herbal tea makes sense. Just make sure it is at least 1-2 hours before you plan to go to bed to reduce nighttime bathroom trips! Although the amount of herbs in a cup of tea is usually quite small, you should still inform your physician if it is taken on a regular basis.

As always, questions can go to seniorinfo2021@gmail.com.

Diane Weston, RN, BSN Senior Center Building Committee

PET OF THE MONTH Meet Cocoa!

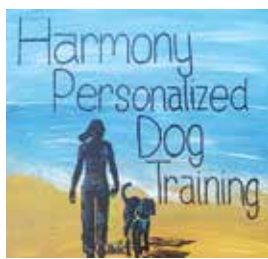
He is 12-years-old - part dachshund, part chaos incarnate. Cocoa loves to sing! When the happy birthday song starts, Cocoa is the first to chime in and the last to stop. He is a connoisseur of cozy naps and loves leisurely strolls around HIS property, relishing every sniff. He reigns as king in his loving household in Sixteen Acres, Springfield with the Hillman Family.



PET PAGE

READERS!

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



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WILBRAHAM Animal Hospital

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Wilbraham Animal Hospital 2424 Boston Road, Wilbraham, MA 413.596.8395 wilbrahamanimalhospital.com East Springfield Veterinary Hospital 525 Page Blvd., Springfield, MA 413.739.6389 • esvhospital.com (Less than 1 mile from Rt. 291) Open Evenings & Saturdays



Making a match

So you've decided to rescue a pet from a shelter! Now what?

Before you go to the shelter: Take an honest look at your lifestyle, family members, pets, activity level, housing, etc. If you're a laidback person then you don't want a cute bouncy dog barking in your face every 10 minutes needing attention. If you're a busy household with three kids and two dogs, you don't want a pretty cat who will just hide all the time.

At the shelter: Pictures are great, but the most important thing is to meet the animals. Bring your whole family to pick out your new pet. If you're adopting a dog, see if the shelter will let you bring your dog too. Be sure to ask the staff and volunteers any questions you have about the individual animals.

After you get home with your new pet: Animals are often confused when moving into new homes. They don't know your house or your rules. It is up to you to make their transition period as easy as possible. Proper introduction to your house and to any other animals is essential to making your new pet a welcome and forever member of the family. Don't be afraid to call the shelter for help if you run into any bumps in the road. Be patient. You'll be well on your way to having fantastic furry family member!



ELDOTC East Longmeadow Dog Obedience Training Club

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More notices on page 14

PUBLIC NOTICES

TOWN OF WILBRAHAM SEALED BIDS FOR LAWN CARE SERVICES

The Town of Wilbraham invites sealed bids for lawn care services of Town properties.

Bidding procedures shall be in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 30B.

Specifications and bid instructions available beginning Wednesday, April 3, 2024 and can be acquired by visiting the Town of Wilbraham website at Wilbraham-ma.gov or by emailing sboyd@wilbraham-ma.gov

Sealed bids will be accepted at Wilbraham Town Hall, 240 Springfield St., Wilbraham, MA at the Select Board office until April 17, 2024 at 12:00 PM at which time all bids will be opened and read aloud.

04/04/2024

TOWN OF WILBRAHAM PUBLIC HEARING Liquor License Amendments

The Wilbraham Select Board will host a public hearing under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 138, Section 15 on Monday,

April 22, 2024, at 7:05 PM at the Town Office Building, 240 Springfield Street, Wilbraham, to hear public comment on an application to amend a Section 15 All Alcoholic Beverage license submitted by Table & Vine, Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Big Y Foods, Inc., located at 2035 Boston Road, Wilbraham to reflect a change of Stock Interest and a Change of Officers. Anyone wishing to comment on the application will be heard. This meeting will be conducted in person and virtually (see meeting agenda for details).

WILBRAHAM SELECT BOARD LICENSING AUTHORITY 04/04/2024

Town of Wilbraham WILBRAHAM ON-CALL TREE REMOVAL AND TRIMMING 2024

Notice of Invitation for Bids The Town of Wilbraham invites sealed bids for the purchase of Wilbraham On-Call Tree Removal and Trimming 2024. Bids must be made in accordance with all applicable Federal, State and Town laws and regulations and must comply in all respects with the instructions, condi-

tions, specifications and other requirements in the Invitation for Bid packages. Prevailing State Minimum Wage Rates must be complied with as per MOL Ch 149 section 26-27d. These wage rates are contained within the contract documents

Bid packages can be obtained from the Department of Public Works, Town Hall, 240 Springfield Street, Wilbraham, MA 01095 (413-596-2800 x208) on April 3, 2024. Bids in sealed, opaque envelopes shall be marked "On-Call Tree Removal and Trimming 2024 Bid" and delivered to the above address by 3:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 25, 2024 where they will be publicly opened and read aloud by the Chief Procurement Officer. All bids must be submitted on the official Standard Bid Form, included in the bid packages. Bids must include the signed NonCollusion and Non-Discrimination paperwork. No bidder may withdraw his bid for a period of forty-five days, excluding Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays, after the actual date of opening of the bids.

The Town reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive minor informalities

or irregularities in any bid, and to make an award in any manner consistent with the law and deemed to be in the best interest of the Town of Wilbraham.

Tonya L. Capparello, P.E. Director of Public Works/ Town Engineer 04/04/2024

TOWN OF WILBRAHAM LEASE OF SPACE FOR INSTALLATION AND OPERATION OF COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT

540 Stony Hill Road, Wilbraham, MA 01095 The Wilbraham Select Board invites mobile communications firms to submit proposals "RFP" for the leasing of part of a space located at a Town-owned property, 540 Stony Hill Road, for the installation and operation of wireless communications equipment. The space is identified as an area 200 ft. X 125 ft. on Assessors' Parcel Identification Number 4885. The lease shall be for a period of twenty (20) years.

RFP's will be accepted until 2:00 p.m., April 29, 2024 at the Select Board/ Town Administrator's

Office, Town of Wilbraham, 240 Springfield Street, Wilbraham, MA 01095. Bids will be publicly opened at approximately 2:05 p.m. in the Select Board's Meeting Room at the same address. Late RFP's will not be considered.

Interested parties will be able to schedule appointments to conduct testing at the Sites the week of April 15-19, 2024. Requests may be made by contacting Nick Breault, Town Administrator, via email at: nbreault@wilbraham-ma.gov no later than April 11, 2024. A Certificate of Insurance must be provided to the Town Administrator's Office no less than two (2) business days in advance of the scheduled date of testing. See RFP for additional details.

Request for Proposals may be obtained from the Town of Wilbraham website on the Bids webpage at: https://www.wilbraham-ma.gov/Bids.aspx?CatID=19. They may also be obtained by visiting Combuys: https://www.combuys.com/bs/o/ and entering "Wilbraham" in the search bar. Questions may be directed via email to: nbreault@wilbraham-ma.gov. All questions must be

submitted in writing to the aforementioned email to nbreault@wilbraham-ma.gov no later than 4:00 p.m. on April 18, 2024. Questions that the Town, in its sole discretion, deems appropriate for a response will be answered in writing via Addenda posted on the Bids page and Combuys. No Addenda shall be issued past April 24, 2024. All bidders shall be responsible for keeping informed on Addenda.

The Town of Wilbraham, acting through its Select Board, reserves the right to waive any informality, to negotiate Lease terms with the successful proposer, to award the Lease of the Property to the proposal deemed in the best interest of the Town, and/or to reject any or all proposals if it is in the public interest to do so. Any Lease Agreement entered shall be contingent on approval by Town Meeting and the Select Board for the Lease of the property. This RFP is issued pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30B, Section 16, pertaining to lease of Real Property.

04/04, 04/11/2024

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HELP WANTED

CLASS A DRIVER. Triaxle dump trailer work. Local deliveries, minimum 40 hours, rate based on experience. RB Enterprises, Ludlow, MA. 413-583-8393.

GRANT WRITER/FACILITATOR

The Town of Brookfield is seeking qualified applicants for a part-time (15 hours per week) Grant Writer/Facilitator. See job description at brookfieldma.us. Salary is commensurate with experience. Current appropriation is \$30.28 per hour. Please submit a resume and cover letter to selectmen@brookfieldma.us Open until filled. Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer

HEAVY EQUIPMENT MECHANIC. Construction equipment and trucks. Experience required, full time. RB Enterprises, Ludlow, MA. 413-583-8393.

PART-TIME, 15 to 20 hours per week. Must be dependable and have flexible schedule. Podiatry office. Portuguese or Spanish speaking helpful. If interested send CV to podbill@aol.com or pickup application at 77 Winsor St., Ludlow, MA; 413-589-7287.

HELP WANTED

SECOND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF PALMER seeks a skilled, outgoing, and caring Church Administrator to manage the business affairs of the church and to work closely with our Pastor, Moderator, and church members to advance church missions and community outreach. The ideal candidate will have strong communication and organizational skills, be proficient in the use of computer and website technologies, and be creative in developing procedures and practices. The applicant must maintain strong, positive interpersonal relationships with members, ministries, and staff. This job is a 25-hour/week position, Monday-Friday, 9am-2pm, with PTO benefits. Pay commensurate with experience. Please email resumes to scc1847media@gmail.com.

TOWN OF HAMPDEN HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

The town of Hampden Highway Department is seeking to fill a full-time skilled worker/truck driver position. All applicants must possess a valid Class B CDL, 2B Hoisting License, OSHA 10 Certificate of Training, and a copy of current driving record. Applicants must have the skills and knowledge necessary to perform general road and grounds maintenance and the ability to operate and maintain all associated tools and equipment. The capability to perform maintenance/repair on trucks and equipment, welding, and the use of other garage tools, along with light construction and snowplowing experience, would be beneficial. Please call the Hampden Highway Department (413) 566-8842, or email highway@hampdenma.gov for inquiries and application/resume submittals.

TOWN OF WILBRAHAM FIREFIGHTER/EMT

The Town of Wilbraham is looking to fill a vacancy for Firefighter/EMT. Paramedic Certification or currently attending paramedic school highly preferred. For application and more info, visit www.wilbraham-ma.gov. Deadline 4/17/24

HELP WANTED

TOWN OF WILBRAHAM HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR 1 P/T BORROWER SERVICES ASSISTANT P/T RECYCLING ATTENDANT SUMMER CAMP COUNSELOR SUMMER LIFEGUARD

The Town of Wilbraham is looking to fill several vacancies. For application and more information please visit www.wilbraham-ma.gov. Open until filled. EOE

TOWN TREASURER:

The Town of Brookfield is seeking qualified applicants for the full-time (40-hour week) position of Town Treasurer. Full job description at brookfieldma.us. Salary commensurate with experience. Current appropriation is \$80,498.62. Submit cover letter and resume to: selectmen@brookfieldma.us. Reviews begin week of April 15th. Open until filled. The Town of Brookfield is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

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FOR RENT



All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status (number of children and or pregnancy), national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, or any intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination.

This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertising in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain about discrimination call The Department of Housing and Urban Development " HUD" toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. For the N.E. area, call HUD at 617-565-5308. The toll free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

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MSB hosting 'A Cup on Us' at Village Store Café on April 26

MONSON - As a local community bank for over 150 years, Monson Savings Bank is celebrating being a staple in the community of Wilbraham by hosting their "A Cup on Us" event, Friday, April 26, 8 a.m. - 11 a.m., at the Village Store Café, 462 Main St, Wilbraham. The Bank welcomes community members to stop by to the café for a FREE coffee, tea, or beverage courtesy of Monson Savings Bank.

Cup on Us" Friday, April 26, 8 a.m. - 11 a.m.

Village Store Café, 462 Main St, Wilbraham, MA

Additionally, all who visit Monson Savings Bank "A Cup on Us" event at Village Store Café will have a chance to win a \$250 YETI ROADIE® 24 Hard Cooler, a \$50 Village Store Café Gift Card and \$38 YETI Rambler 20 oz. Travel Mug. *

Monson Savings Bank "A

Monson Savings Bank's Wil-

braham Branch, conveniently located at 100 Post Office Park, is a dependable cornerstone in the neighborhood. Last year, the branch celebrated 20 years as a reliable, supportive, and convenient community branch. The Wilbraham Branch has an expert team of professionals who are dedicated to helping personal, business, and residential customers with their banking needs, including Monson Savings Bank Wilbraham Branch Manager Vicki Baldyga and As-

sistant Branch Manager Amber Messer.

Monson Savings Bank has consistently demonstrated its support for the Wilbraham community, contributing to various organizations, such as Rick's Place, The Scantic Valley YMCA, Wilbraham Public Library and the Bank recently supported the Wilbraham Senior Center Building Campaign with a generous donation of \$25,000.

The Bank is also a loyal sup-

porter of community happenings, contributing to the overall positive tone of the area. Alongside providing financial support for fundraisers and community events, the Bank maintains an in-person presence at events, such as the Wilbraham Summer Concert in the Park and Wilbraham Peach Blossom Festival.

"I am proud to say Monson Savings Bank is here to stay. It is unfortunate that many individuals and businesses have been experiencing their bank closing locations, merging, or exiting the area, leaving those consumers frustrated and having to travel to locations further away," said Dan Moriarty, Monson Savings Bank President & CEO. "Our roots are here, and we are not going anywhere. Monson Savings Bank is local. We are community focused. We are committed to providing our personal and business customers with the high-quality customer experience they deserve. We are ready to help."

Moriarty continued, "For us, it is an honor to serve all of our local community members and businesses." "Our Wilbraham Branch alone has a 20-year track record of support and service that we are proud to uphold, and all together Monson Savings Bank has 150 years of community banking experience. We love helping others find happiness through financial empowerment. It is what we do best."

Monson Savings Bank

A Cup On Us.

Friday, April 26, 8 - 11am

Village Store Cafe
462 Main St, Wilbraham, MA

Monson Savings Bank is celebrating being a staple in the community of Wilbraham and they want you to celebrate with them. Stop by The Village Store Cafe for a coffee, tea, or beverage paid for courtesy of Monson Savings Bank.

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FREE SELLER AND BUYER E-GUIDES

These guides provide valuable information to help you start the buying and/or seller process. For your guide - email: sarahsupport@landmarkre.com

Ready for an in person consultation? Call any agent listed below for a Free, no obligation consultation.

CALL US FOR DETAILS ON ANY OF THESE PROPERTIES				
SINGLE FAMILY LISTINGS				
STATUS	ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION	LIST PRICE	SOLD PRICE
CTG	21 Martin Farms Rd., Hampden	10 room, 4 bed, 2f, 1h bath Cape	\$399,900	
CTG	155 Lakeview Ave., Ludlow	6 room, 3 bed, 2f, 0h bath Raised Ranch	\$359,900	
UAG	174 Wilbraham Rd., Hampden	7 room, 3 bed, 1f, 0h bath Colonial, Farmhouse	\$320,000	
UAG	34 Bayberry Rd., Hampden	10 room, 3 bed, 2f, 0h bath Contemporary	\$409,900	
UAG	52 Skyridge St., Ludlow	5 room, 3 bed, 1f, 0h bath Ranch	\$260,000	
SLD	37 Vadnais St., East Longmeadow	4 room, 2 bed, 1f 0h bath Ranch	\$269,900	\$269,000
SLD	200 Poole St., Ludlow	8 room, 3 bed, 1f 1h bath Colonial	\$269,000	\$250,000
SLD	139 Stafford Rd., Monson	6 room, 2 bed, 1f 1h bath Cape	\$327,500	\$326,000
SLD	51 Squier St., Palmer	5 room, 3 bed, 1f 1h bath Ranch	\$334,000	\$333,000
SLD	4 Brows Beach Rd., Wales	6 room, 3 bed, 1f 1h bath Contemporary, Cottage	\$349,900	\$358,000
CONDOMINIUM LISTINGS				
SLD	319 Blisswood Village Dr., U:319, Ludlow	4 room, 2 bed, 1f 1h bath Townhouse	\$243,900	\$253,000
SLD	117 Nassau Dr U:117, Springfield	4 room, 2 bed, 2f 0h bath Garden	\$209,900	\$196,000
MULTI FAMILY LISTINGS				
SLD	44-46 Lexington St., Springfield	3 unit, 14 total rooms, 7 total bedrooms 3 Family	\$320,000	\$322,000
LAND LISTINGS				
ACT	Lot 2 Hilltop Park, Wilbraham	20.20 Residential acres (879,912 SqFt)	\$259,900	
UAG	Lot 1 Silver, Monson	2.50 Residential acres (108,900 SqFt)	\$84,900	

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AGENT OF THE MONTH!

Ann Marie Martin
206-1161

Dawn Rodgers
478-2605

Maria D'Angelantonio
575-2898

Eileen O'Sullivan
505-9244

John Moltenbrey
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Tom Avezzie
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Nick Ferrara
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Luci Giguere
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Kathy Esser
348-3803

Sue Rheaume
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Dot Lortie
478-1940

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