

TOWN
5K Trail Race
Page 22

SPORTS
Girls lacrosse gets win
Page 17

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Hartsprings Drive collects 4,531 pounds in donations

Event supported senior center building fund

By Kristin Rivers
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HAMPDEN - Residents stopped by the senior center from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on April 6 to drop off donations for the Hartsprings Truck Drive.

During the drive, residents dropped off varying donations including books, clothing, dishes, towels, sheets, bedspreads, glassware, sporting equipment, suitcases in good condition and small kitchen items including microwaves, toasters and toaster ovens.

Hartsprings Foundation, Inc. is a nonprofit organization focused on repurposing, recycling and reusing gently-used clothing, linens, small household items and more, supporting Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Joan Shea, vice president of the Friends of Hampden Senior Citizens, explained the truck drive is a fundraiser for the building fund for the senior center.

The 4,531 pounds collected comprised 2,329 pounds for clothing, 1,601 pounds for miscellaneous items and 601 pounds for books.

Shea was thrilled to see peo-

Please see **HARTSPRING**, page 9



Turley photos by Kristin Rivers

From the left, Claudia Kapinos, Adriano dos Santos, Joan Shea, Domenic Fantone, Emilio, driver for Hartsprings Foundation, Linda Nichols and Mike Shea in a group photo during the Hartsprings Drive at the Hampden Senior Center. Kapinos, dos Santos, Shea, Nicols and Shea are members of the board for the Friends of Hampden Senior Citizens while Fantone was doing community service for the Boy Scouts.

WPL celebrates volunteers during Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast

By Kristin Rivers
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WILBRAHAM - Residents gathered inside the Brooks Room from 10 a.m. to Noon on April 13 for the library's Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast.

During the event, attendees enjoyed a spread of banana nut bread, blueberry coffee cake, cherry cheese danishes, chocolate chip muffins, a fruit spread and more with orange juice, coffee or tea.

The spread was sponsored by Big Y and the Polish National Credit Union.

Cheryl Wesolowski, a Library Board of Trustees board member, thanked the volunteers for their support and expressed how much the trustees appreciate them.

Wesolowski said 57,000 visitors came to the library last year, comprising more than 150 visitors every day.

"The library and the grounds are as inviting as they can be because of our volunteers. We could never be what we are without you, so we are ever so



Turley photos by Kristin Rivers

A group photo of the volunteers, staff and members of the Friends of the Wilbraham Public Library and the Board of Trustees during the Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast on April 13.

grateful," Wesolowski said.

Wesolowski explained no matter what a volunteer does, whether stocking shelves, gardening or facilitating fundraising events, they make a difference.

"There are so many opportunities to help here at the library and we know that this library continues to thrive because of your volunteerism," Wesolows-

ki said. "Something that I always like to think about is that ordinary people can do extraordinary things, and the work that you do is extraordinary."

Assistant Director Mary Bell also expressed her gratitude to the volunteers.

"It means a lot. The people that volunteer at the library are,

Please see **WPL**, page 4



Turley photos by Dalton Zbierski

School Committee tables Elementary School Grades Choice vote

The committee will review the budget before moving forward

By Kristin Rivers
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WILBRAHAM - School Committee voted to table a vote on Elementary School Grades Choice on April 4 pending a review and discussion of the budget.

Superintendent Dr. John Pro-

vost explained how he received communications from members after a vote at the last meeting when they realized "denying the school choice recommendations for the elementary school grades would result in us collapsing the three classes that are currently in that bubble group at Green Meadows (Elementary School) into two classes."

"We just had some conversation about bringing it back up as a potential vote so that people are clear and if anyone wishes to

Please see **SCHOOL**, page 5

Greater Springfield Habitat hosts “Hang with Habitat” April 18

WILBRAHAM - Join us and “Hang with Habitat!” The event is Thursday, April 18, from 6 to 8pm at Fieldcrest Brewing Company at 2343 Boston Road in Wilbraham. The low-key and chill evening is an opportunity for the general public to get to know and network with Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity (GSHFH) staff and board of directors.

There is no cost to attend nor a registration form to complete, just an open invite to join us for a drink or an appetizer, and learn more about what we do, and, of course, hang out.

“I love the sense of camaraderie this brings out when we get together with our neighbors,” said Olga Calligos, GSHFH Homeowner Programs coordinator. “We’re laid back and fun, so this is a way for us to show that as well as we are accessible to our community.”

The idea for Hang with Habitat began with Olga who wanted to incorporate more social outreach events into the day-to-day calendar. The first get-together was held in September 2023 at Dewey’s Jazz Lounge on Worthington Street in Springfield. In honor of GSHFH, Dewey’s staff created a Hab-

itat-themed cocktail called “Habitat Hammer.”

On April 18, GSHFH Hops for Habitat beer passports will be available for purchase at the event. Passports are \$50 each. The initiative invites passport holders to visit nine local breweries and purchase a pint, have their passports stamped, and receive a gift from the brewery of equal value to their purchase. After the passport holder has received nine stamps - one for each brewery - they can return the passport to GSHFH or one of the listed breweries by June 30, 2024, to be entered into a raffle for a chance to win the grand prize.

GSHFH is dedicated to strengthening communities by empowering low-income families to change their lives and the lives of future generations through homeownership and home preservation opportunities. Since 1987, Greater Springfield Habitat has built or repaired 129 homes in Hampden County.

For more information, contact Olga Calligos, Homeowner Programs coordinator, at calligos@habitatspringfield.org or (413) 739-5503 x1003.

Hampden Historical Society opens April 20

HAMPDEN – The Hampden Historical Society will be opening its museum for the season on April 20.

The museum is located on 616 Main St. in Hampden and will be open from Noon to 2 p.m.

The focus of the Hampden Historical Society is to preserve Hampden’s history with displays and artifacts of the town and its families’ heritage information.

For questions, call Linda at 413-566-8447.

‘The Mystery of Edwin Drood’ stirs intrigue, mystery and audience voting power

By Kristin Rivers
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WILBRAHAM - “The Mystery of Edwin Drood” amazes in a production full of mystery and haunting performances that will stay with you after the final bow.

Directed by Deborah Trimble, the production was interactive from the start as you entered the Fellowship Hall Stage at Wilbraham United Church, cast members greeting you in character with a share of laughs, handshakes and conversation.

From there, the audience was transported to a story within a story experience with “There You Are” from the Chairman/Mr. William Cartwright, played by Craig Duda. Duda’s welcome provides a light-hearted, sit-back-and-relax atmosphere as you’re transported to the Victorian Era and its world of murder, romance, intrigue and drama in spades.

From there, the story of Edwin Drood, in a charismatic and indomitable performance from Carina Gonyer, who also plays Dick Datchery and Miss Alice Nutting, unfolds with a cavalcade of characters trying to go on about their lives until murder grinds everything to a halt, while interspersed with actor roles trying to tell the story of Charles Dickens’s final unfinished novel.

One thing that blew the audience, and myself, away was when the cast sang their respective parts all at once, creating a chorus filled with unwavering energy, passion and drama reminiscent of a favorite soap opera leaving you on the edge of your seat.

The “Both Sides of the Coin” performance from David Leslie’s John Jasper/Mr. Clive Paget and Duda’s Chairman still astounds me post-performance, the players matching their steps and words in a sequence of pure synchronicity that makes you forget they are performing a role and are, instead, providing a masterclass in showmanship. How Leslie and Duda said their lines at such a rapid pace without breaking a sweat emphasizes that masterclass ten-fold.

In another showstopping scene, “No Good Can Come From Bad” comprised of Carolyn Averill’s Rosa Bud/Miss Deirdre Peregrine, Gonyer’s Edwin Drood, Leslie’s John Jasper, Christopher Härtel’s Bazzard/Mr. Phillip Box, Alexandria Escribano’s Helena Landless/Miss Janet Conover, Steven Close’s Neville Landless/Mr. Victor Grinstead, Glenn Leslie’s The Reverend Mr. Crisparkle/Mr. Cedric Moncrieffe, Patti Colkos’ Miss Violet Balfour and Bethany Fitzgibbons’ Miss Sarah Cook brought the house down with fear, rage and anxiety, foreshadowing the dark times to come.

I also have to note “Jasper’s Vision/Smoke Ballet” for its use of dance and stagecraft as the room grows eerily silent with John Jasper lost in desire and longing for Rosa Bud, while dancers illustrate the opium haze with carefully maneuvered steps.

Very haunting, indeed.

One scene-stealer from this show was, also, Härtel’s stirring performance of “Never the Luck,” who wants his moment in the spotlight and to entertain the audience before him. Härtel’s vocals were heart-stirring, thoughtful and delicate, with the uproarious applause he received after singing the final note very well deserved.

Another was Mona Tiglio as The Princess Puffer/Miss Angela Prysock in every scene she was in, from “The Wages of Sin” leading to bawdy laughs and blushing faces to “Garden Path to Hell” drumming up tragedy and sympathy, capturing so many facets of one fascinating, complex character with more to her than meets the eye.

For “The Name of Love/Moonfall (Reprise),” suspense and loads of drama were at hand with Averill’s Rosa Bud and Leslie’s John Jasper singing with a plethora of fiery passion, aggression and disgust about love and its meaning, leaving the audience on the edge of their seats in a slow-burning dance of words and song. The captive cast members behind them bring more tension to the unfolding suspense.

You also cannot review this performance without highlighting the audience interaction throughout, with the cast members holding number signs and trying to get the audience’s attention as they chose the evening’s murderer, cast members leaving the stage--as Gonyer’s hilarious Edwin Drood/Dick Datchery/Miss Alice Nutting does at one point--to the music hall girls picking random audience members to help cast votes. Having the power to decide the murderer, the lovers and who is Dick Datchery brings a sense of power to the audience to decide the future, a plot device you don’t normally see in musicals but brings a refreshing air to the production.

This mystery buff is truly satisfied.

If you’re a fan of Dickens, love musicals or enjoy getting to decide characters’ fates, this show is a mind-blowing experience you won’t soon forget.



GRAND OPENING

New Wilbraham Senior Center

Saturday - April 20, 2024 10:00 am



Join us as we celebrate the long awaited Grand Opening of our new Senior Center! Come see our new commercial kitchen and multi-purpose room (for luncheons, large meetings, rental opportunities, and more), café, fitness/exercise and wellness rooms, game room with billiard tables, library lounge, activity rooms, outside patio and bocce court. And so much more!!!

Day 1 ~ Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting

WHERE: 250 Springfield St - Behind Town Hall
WHEN: **Saturday, April 20, 2024**
TIME: 10:00 am Ribbon Cutting
Open House to 1:00 pm
PARKING: Senior Center Parking Lot and Town Hall Parking Area

Day 2 ~ Open House

WHEN: **Sunday, April 21, 2024**
TIME: 11:00 - 1:00 pm

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Questions - Call 413-596-8379

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Hampden Selectmen discuss fire department's new generator

Police chief, town agree on new contract

By Dalton Zbierski
Correspondent

HAMPDEN – The fire department's need for a new generator has been a topic of conversation at Board of Selectmen's meetings since 2021, and the discussion continued April 8.

Board Chair Don Davenport spoke on the status of the fire department's new generator, which hasn't been set up yet.

"All I know is we have a \$35,000 generator sitting in the back of the fire station for six months, and it's still not installed," Davenport said, joking that he predicted it would take more than a month, so he'd have to be okay with waiting.

The item was brought to the table during the report that Town Administrator Brian Domina gives near the end of each meeting. He said he spoke with the engineer to get an update and was told the town must choose a location for the generator before the process can proceed.

Davenport was not thrilled by the engineer's answer. He questioned why the individual hadn't taken more initiative in communicating with the town about the generator.

"I'm sorry, I don't understand why the consultant waited until today when you called him to say, 'Oh, we need to have a location.' Don't

you think you'd get your (butt) out here and take a look at it and say, 'Before we do anything, we need a location,'" Davenport said.

Selectman John Flynn said the situation is "predicated on what the expansion is," noting that the town could prepare for where the generator will ultimately end up.

"You don't want to move it after all of a sudden doing it (in one place)," Flynn said. "My question is, okay, why don't you look at your worst case, and put it out from there. Okay, so it's an extra 30 feet. That's why you have wire and go from there."

Domina offered his advice, sharing an option to position the generator somewhere it won't be a nuisance to neighbors.

"My suggestion in the email was that it be set further back toward the Highway Department. It allows room for expansion and, also, centers it. I think there's houses in either location so when it kicks on at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, people won't hear it or will hear it less," Domina said.

Last Monday, Police Chief Scott Trombly made his way to Town Hall to see his contract extension become official. The contract is three years in length, but the Selectmen did not talk money or terms during that segment of the meeting.

Davenport noted that, by law, the Selectmen had to vote in public session regarding the contract. He also gave Trombly his seal of approval.

"I think it's only fair to say, I think we all agree the chief has done a good job, particularly bringing us through the pandemic and going through whole bridging process and dispatch too. We appreciate that," Davenport said.

On April 8, Flynn announced that the Senior Center Building Committee is preparing to host an information forum on April 30 at 6 p.m. at the senior center on Allen Street. He said the forum will be the second to occur, and the committee will look to answer questions raised at the first gathering.

The committee hopes the April 30 forum is well attended and is taking measures to promote it.

"The committee is looking at putting up yard signs around town. I believe the Friends of the Seniors are looking to work on those charitably, and we appreciate their help on that," Flynn said.

According to the town's website, the forum will introduce the work of the Senior Center Building Committee and its consultant regarding the planned renovation and expansion of the center.

The committee will present a short presentation of the "results of their year and a half review of the current and future needs of the senior center."

A tour of the center will follow the forum, and committee members will participate and answer questions.

CORRECTION

In our April 11 story about the Hampden Government Study Committee community forum, a few items of clarification:

- Keith Pixley led most of the discussion
- John Flynn did not attend as a "Selectman" but rather as the Zoom operator for the Forum; he did field questions from attendees.

The concern of someone outside of Hampden becoming a future Select Board member is not a concern

We apologize for these errors.

Hampden Garden Club meets April 18

HAMPDEN – The Hampden Garden Club will be presenting a program on Beekeeping 101 by guest speaker Lee Duquette on Thursday, April 18, at 7 p.m. at Academy Hall at 625 Main St.

Lee is a local beekeeper who has been keeping bees since 2009. He is learning and teaching as much as he can about the honeybees to contribute to the local agriculture and to spread the bee love.

For more information, call Lil at 566-1137. The guest fee is \$5.

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Turley photos by Kristin Rivers

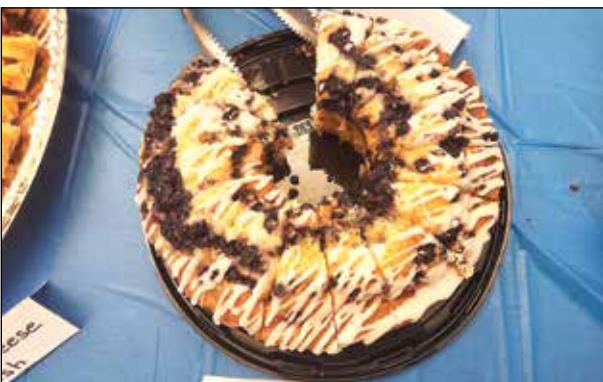
Attendees partake in the breakfast spread during the Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast at the Wilbraham Public Library on April 13.



Cheryl Wesolowski, a member of the Library Board of Trustees, provides remarks during the Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast at the Wilbraham Public Library.



A crowd shot of attendees enjoying breakfast and conversation during the Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast at the Wilbraham Public Library.

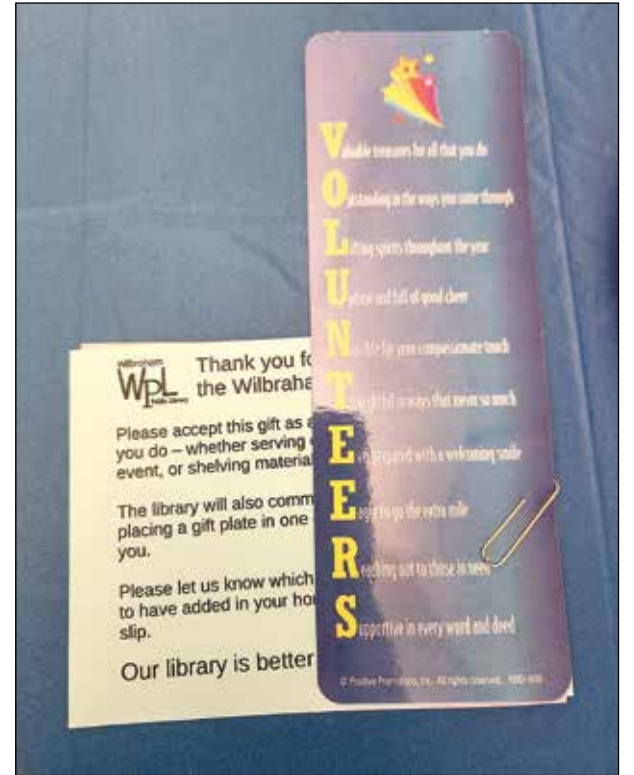


Close-up shots of the blueberry coffee cake and cherry cheese danish enjoyed by attendees.



From the left, Melissa Carney, Carole Alderman and Kay Guilbault smile for a group photo during the Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast at the Wilbraham Public Library.

A volunteer-themed bookmark and a form to do a bookplate in a library book were the gifts volunteers received during the Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast at the Wilbraham Public Library. There was also a plant centerpiece giveaway at the event.



WPL from page 1

really, our biggest cheerleaders. They know a lot about what we do and they really support it," Bell said. "So, having them come out for something like this really shows their support as well and it's a great collaborative effort that way."

Bell said the breakfast provides an opportunity to thank the volunteers, adding how they enjoy being involved in the community.

"It can be a thankless job, so it's great to have a way to recognize what everybody's done and celebrate what they've done in the past year," Bell said.

Maria DeAngelis, a volunteer, was looking for people to help at the upcoming Friends of the Wilbraham Public Library Book Sale on May 1 through 4. The hours are 9 a.m. through 5 p.m. on May 1-3 and 9 a.m. through 1 p.m. on May 4.

DeAngelis explained the event is the Friends' biggest fundraiser of the year with books at inexpensive prices, with May 3 and 4 as bargain

days where attendees fill a bag with books for two dollars.

"It's an opportunity for everyone to clean their bookshelves, donate books that they've read and reread and are now ready to give them up

and a chance for everybody to purchase books for their home libraries," DeAngelis said.

DeAngelis looks forward to seeing her fellow volunteers and interacting with customers at the event.

"I find that I go to these book sales and end up with a list of books that maybe I'd like to read and I find them. It's a chance for me, after I read them, to recycle them, so we're having a good time with reading, which is always a wonderful pastime," DeAngelis said.

DeAngelis was touched by the breakfast, saying the town is fortunate to have many people give of their time.

"It's not taking time out. It's giving of yourself to the community. The library here gets a lot out of the volunteers," DeAngelis said. "Anybody that volunteers here gets a lot back internally."

Bell wants the community to know the library is always looking for volunteers, encouraging them to reach out to Wesolowski or a Friends board member about their gardening and fundraiser opportunities.

For volunteering in the library, the next training takes place in June.

"We're happy to do it. We're happy to have all these folks supporting us," Bell said.

DeAngelis encourages the community to support the library and volunteer.

"Come join us. Come be a volunteer, help out. Give an hour a week. It's not a big time commitment," DeAngelis said.

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SCHOOL from page 1

discuss the implications of that further, there's an opportunity to do that," Provost said.

Sherill Caruana asked about the grade levels that would be affected and the class sizes, with Chair Michal Boudreau replying second grade "currently" and Provost looking up enrollment numbers for this month, comprising 52 students.

"They are currently spread over three classes. Those same 52 would go into two classes, so that would be starting with 26 per class," Provost said.

Caruana next asked about the teachers.

"What happens to the job of the teacher whose job will be distinguished?" Caruana said.

Provost said, "We don't know what would happen."

"Certainly, there are sometimes opportunities for people to move to other positions within the district," Provost said. "I don't know there would be, necessarily, any automatic bumping that was created by that, but certainly, there would be a reduction in force, there would be one less position and whoever is in that position would either have to find another job within the district or another job somewhere else."

William Bontempi said there were three teachers at the second-grade level currently.

"This obviously comes down to money, right? So where is the salary coming from for that third teacher for this year?" Bontempi said.

Aaron Osborne, assistant superintendent for finance, operations and human resources, explained the district absorbs that position.

"One of the things we authored last year was that we would put up 11 school choice seats in that class, the committee agreed to that," Osborne said. "We were

only able to fill four of those seats, so we have a shortfall in funding that position. We had a shortfall, we absorbed that cost, but in this year's budget we can't absorb that cost, so the effort in this case was to spread those seats out a little bit."

Bontempi called this "a slippery slope" and "new territory" for the committee and district.

"We've never used school choice as a way to support the addition of teachers. We did last year with the assistant principal position here, but we've always done it to fill space," Bontempi said.

Bontempi exercised caution to the committee because "we are now adding school choice to basically fund a position."

"With only four people coming in, that's \$20,000," Bontempi said. "One of the things that we've talked about with school choice is that we're never accepting school choice children and then using that money to turn around to add teachers, which we're kind of doing here, and I think that's a slippery slope because it changes the measure of how we've looked at school choice up until this point."

Bontempi added how the committee has told the towns that school choice isn't impacting the budget "at all because these are spaces that would just otherwise remain empty," but here, "the need to add all these elementary school positions are to basically fund another teacher."

Michael Tirabassi addressed overcrowding concerns.

"We can't say we're overcrowded in the middle school and then go accepting school choice students into the grade schools. We just can't. It's either we need more students in the school district or we're overcrowded in the middle school," Tirabassi said.

Tirabassi encouraged the committee

to find a way to keep the third teacher and absorb them into the budget.

"That would be my thought. Maybe we don't buy as many new projectors. I think a living, breathing teacher is a lot more valuable than projectors," Tirabassi said.

Caruana agreed with Tirabassi, adding a clarification about the fiscal side.

"I don't see it as fiscal, I see it as educational," Caruana said.

Boudreau then provided a review of the available seats.

"At Green Meadows, we're looking for two choice seats and there were two METCO seats. Grade two, we were looking for three choice seats. Green Meadows grade four, we were looking for three choice seats. Soule Road, we were looking at nine choice seats," Boudreau said.

Vice Chair Sean Kennedy wondered about the seats for Soule Road for grade four or under, with Osborne reviewing that information.

"That number would come up to 154, so that would be 22 in a class," Osborne said.

Lisa Murray shared how "small class sizes are better," but agreed it should not be funded with school choice.

"I feel like there's other ways that it could be manipulated to have a third teacher if need to be, but I just can't agree to it when the middle school is built right now," Murray said.

After further discussion, the motion to approve eight school choice seats at Green Meadows Elementary School, but not approve the nine at Soule Road Elementary School was presented but did not receive a second.

After Tirabassi suggested reviewing the budget before moving forward on the available seats, the Elementary School Grades Choice vote was tabled 6-0 pending further review.

Healthy Kids Day at the Scantic Valley YMCA

WILBRAHAM - The YMCA sets kids up for success this summer at Healthy Kids Day!

Free and open to the public, this annual event features a day of fun-filled activities to celebrate kids being kids.

The Scantic Valley Y is hosting the Y's annual Healthy Kids Day® on Saturday, April 20 from 10 a.m. to Noon located at 45 Post Office Park in Wilbraham. This event features a variety of family-friendly activities to encourage healthy kids, healthy families, and a healthy start to the summer season.

"It is so important for kids to stay active over the summer, both physically and mentally," said Deb Kelder, Executive Director at the Scantic Valley Y. "At the Y, we believe in providing resources to families to ensure that their children have access to what they need to reach their full potential, no matter the time of year. Healthy Kids Day is a fun, free community-wide event that encourages families to take advantage of all the great summer resources that the Y, and other local, like-minded organizations, has to offer."

For more information, contact the Scantic Valley YMCA at 413.596.2749.

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VIEWPOINTS

Asparagus plants- upkeep, harvest and oddities

It was so much fun to be outdoors on Easter Sunday.

I enjoyed just sitting on the deck, talking with family and moseying around the yard while the little kids enjoyed an Easter egg hunt. It's funny that being outside is one of those things that once you do it, you want to do it more often.

It got me thinking of some of the tasks back home I have to do to get the gardens ship-shape.

One of the tasks concerns my asparagus bed. The grocery stores are teasing us lately, with spears from Mexico making an appearance in the sales circular.

I usually hold off buying it, preferring my home-grown to anything store-bought. I never did get to cut back the foliage in the fall after the first frost.

Presently, its laying down in the beds, making a catch-all for leaves. I'll get in there with a pair of sharp clippers, cutting away the foliage, then with a rake to further tidy up.

Once complete, I'll sprinkle lime on the beds, followed by some compost, since asparagus prefers fertile soil on the alkaline side.

It'll be a few weeks still before the spears start to poke through the surface. Since my beds are several years old at this point, I will be able to harvest for a good eight weeks.

Be on the look-out for the asparagus beetle midstream and the black eggs that are laid horizontally shortly thereafter, usually apparent on the upper portion of the spears. I monitor my beds often and flick the bugs into a yogurt



container of soapy water while squishing the eggs in-situ.

I don't do more than that in terms of pest control and I'm able to keep populations down.

Weeds are another foe. It's important to keep the beds weeded – especially free of perennial grasses, and you will likely have a productive asparagus patch for decades to come.

I usually harvest asparagus with a knife, so that the cut is clean. If the spear has gotten a bit too tall, but the buds haven't opened too much, I will still harvest it at the appropriate length of 6-8" long, and cut the rest of the stem off at ground level.

If the buds have opened and are too far gone to be edible (at least in terms of looking like traditional asparagus) I will just allow the foliage to grow, figuring that the photosynthesizing will benefit the roots in the long run, just as later foliage does after the harvest period is over. I usually let really skinny spears go to

foliage as well – they are usually kind of tough.

Speaking of tough, what about those really thick spears, the kind that are "thumb-thick?"

If you notice the base of these spears to be woody and tough in appearance, get out the potato peeler and remove the outer skin, revealing a much more tender interior portion. An old friend taught me this trick, and it works out pretty well.

I'd be in remiss if I didn't address the stinky smell associated with eating asparagus.

Yesiree, it can happen even 15 minutes after ingesting it. Use the bathroom and voila, your urine will have a pungent, asparagus-like smell. Only maybe worse.

Our bodies convert asparagusic acid into sulfur-containing chemicals that are volatile enough to fly from the toilet up your nose, that is, if you have the ability to perceive it. Some people don't.

Call them lucky, perhaps. I consider myself lucky to have such an amazing vegetable growing right in my backyard, stinky or not.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 31 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.

Letters to the Editor

Vote 'No' on Hampden Senior Center expansion

To the Editor:

I urge our community to vote "No" on the proposed \$6.6 million expansion of the Hampden Senior Center. While I support the renovation and some expansion of our senior center, the current proposal is not a prudent use of our resources.

The Selectmen appointed a committee with the charge of evaluating options for renovation and possible expansion of the existing building. However, the proposal

suggests a significant departure from this initial plan. The proposed project aims to nearly double the size of the center despite the fact that the Hampden Senior Center is open only 30 hours a week and the population of our town has decreased over the past 25 years. This expansion includes reconfiguring most of the existing infrastructure.

With only 37% of Hampden seniors* utilizing the center, it calls into question whether a \$6.6 million investment in expansion is

justified.

The proposed override article is not a responsible use of taxpayer money. We must prioritize projects that offer the most benefit to our community while being mindful of fiscal responsibility. While supporting our Hampden seniors is crucial, we must ensure that we do so in a manner that is both cost effective and efficient.

I urge my fellow community members to carefully consider these points and to vote against the override article for the Hampden

Senior Center construction project, both at Town Meeting on May 13th and at the override election on May 20th. Vote "NO".

Thank you.

Duane Mosier, Hampden

Sources:

*750 seniors in Hampden: source, 2020 census; 37%, Hampden Sr Ctr database provided to Building Committee

Election letters to the editor welcome

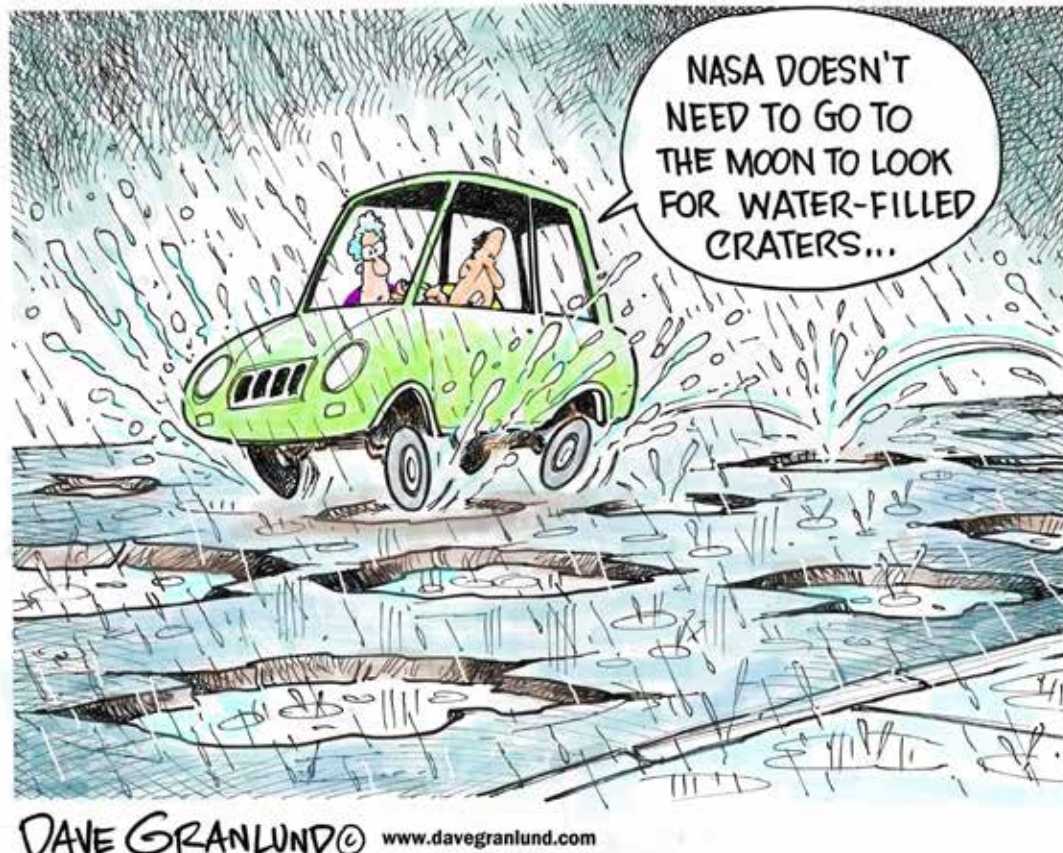
The Wilbraham-Hampden Times welcomes readers to participate in this year's election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to Wilbraham-Hampden 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.



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Correction Policy

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

The Wilbraham-Hampden TIMES is published every Thursday by Turley Publications, Inc. One year out of town subscriptions are available at \$45, out of state \$50 by calling 800-824-6458 Ext. 201. The deadline for submission of news material, letters to the editor and photos is Monday at 12 p.m. The TIMES is not responsible for submitted photos.

Government Study Committee report: a closer look

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com

HAMPDEN - After the Government Study Committee held its latest community forum at the Town House Auditorium on April 4, we're taking a closer look at the recommended town warrant articles and other recommendations.

The report's town warrant recommendations are changing the number of members from three to five for the Board of Selectmen, the Board of Selectmen changing their name to Selectboard, changing the town clerk, treasurer and town collector roles from elected to appointed, combining the town collector and treasurer positions into one and enabling electronic, handheld voting for town meetings.

Other recommendations are defining the role of Board of the Selectmen and the town administrator.

Board of Selectmen: Three members to five

First, the Board of Selectmen is comprised of three members, currently. If the number of members increases to five, it would follow similar trends many towns have taken on.

As the GSC heard from residents on both sides and researched other towns similar to Hampden in organizing their report, the thoughts included how easier it is to obtain a consensus with three members, creating a

broader representation and diversity of viewpoints if there were five members and having five members would allow any two Selectmen to discuss an issue without Open Meeting Law violation concerns.

"Debate and decision-making would be more spirited and dynamic. A single member would need to convince at least two members to take an action," the report reads.

On how the number of members would affect town candidates running for the position, the report stated an advantage would be how it "might attract more candidates to run as the workload and time commitment might be less," while a disadvantage is concerns around "there won't be interested residents willing to run for the additional two seats."

The important item to note is this would be put on the 2025 town election ballot if passed at the 2024 Annual Town Meeting.

From there, if placed on the town election ballot, three new selectmen would be voted in to serve alongside two of the members not up for election that year: one for a one-year term, one for two years and one for three years.

After each term ends, the successors would be elected for three-year terms.

Board of Selectmen to Selectboard name change

Second, the town's government is known as the Board of

Selectmen, established in the town bylaws. A warrant article would need to be presented and approved for the town and Zoning bylaws to be changed to reflect the new name of Selectboard and Selectboard member.

Wilbraham is a recent example of changing from Board of Selectmen to Select Board.

"Simply stated, times have changed. There have been several female Hampden Selectmen over the decades since the Town's founding and, presumably, there will be more," the report reads. "It may seem a minor issue, but we do not want to discourage anyone from running for the position in the future."

The timing of this item to be voted on is stated as follows.

"Timing for notices and scheduling of a public meeting by the Planning Board may not allow this warrant article for the May 2024 meeting. If this is the case, we recommend it be put before the town at (the) Fall 2024 Special Town Meeting," the report reads.

BOS Role Definition

Outside of town warrant articles, one recommendation from the GSC is the Board of Selectmen's role would be defined to have them "only involve itself in administration and personnel issues when necessary" and "should focus on reviewing performance of key management, participating in and guiding the planning and implementation of a long-range plan and addressing

core structural issues."

"The board should continue to exercise management authority over Town business, including approving the Town's proposed operating budget, appointing employees, approving contractual agreements as per its obligation to the town, set policy, decide strategic direction and planning and implementation of a long-range plan, and work through the town administrator. Day-to-day management should be delegated to the town administrator," the report reads.

The GSC recommended this be added to the town's general bylaws along with the next GSC further examining the role of each board member's assignments as liaisons and its impact on government and community.

Town Administrator: better defining the role, responsibilities, and authority

The next recommendation concerns the town administrator. The town of Hampden recently hired a new town administrator, Brian Domina, after the retirement of longtime Town Administrator Bob Markel.

Before the hiring, the GSC was already working on how to better define the town administrator role and its responsibilities, including supervising daily operations, budgetary and financial oversight and personnel administration.

The committee's findings also included a better understanding of daytime and nighttime government, with daytime

about the town administrator and those who work full-time in the town hall during the day and nighttime for governing bodies like the Board of Selectmen.

In their findings, one major highlight is including Human Resources for the responsibilities.

"We heard many times that Hampden's employees lack an HR resource. Increased incorporation of HR into the town administrator's responsibilities should ensure consistent management for all town employees," the report reads.

How town business is conducted would also be considered in better defining the town administrator's role to help improve the approval process, difficulties with reporting structure and when decisions aren't issued promptly.

"We believe one contributing factor to this frustration is a lack of clarity in the responsibilities and authority of the town administrator. The GSC discussed at length that establishing clearer reporting relationships as well as lines of authority and responsibilities would help to alleviate this frustration," the report reads.

"The powers and responsibilities of the town administrator should be clearly articulated and documented in a bylaw. Further, the board needs to allow the town administrator to perform the duties with the authority provided the position and for the function-

Please see GOVT., page 14

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OBITUARIES

Death Notices

James P. Connors

Died on

March 21, 2024

Services April 27, 2024

Wilbraham Funeral

Home

Leonor Díaz de Ariza

Died March 23, 2024

Services are private.

James Phillip Connors

January 18, 1934 - March 21, 2024



James P. Connors, aged 90, of Wilbraham, Massachusetts, passed away on March 21, 2024.

Jim was born in Springfield, Massachusetts on January 18, 1934, to Joseph and Mary Connors as the youngest of 13 siblings.

He graduated from Cathedral High School before enlisting in the Navy in 1956. At age 21, he married the love of his life, Gabrielle Connors (née Marchand), and went on to raise two beautiful daughters together.

Jim spent many years working as a Union Officer for the United States Postal Service in Washington, DC before returning to Wilbraham. A frequent traveler, Jim fulfilled his lifelong dream of exploring the Emerald Isles of Ireland in a once-in-a-lifetime international adventure. In 2018, he relocated to sunny Tequesta, Florida, where he lived until the end of his life.

A devout Catholic, Jim was an active member of St. Cecilia's Church in Wilbraham for many years and made many lasting connections with fellow parishioners from the church. After his move to Florida, he became a member of St. Jude's Catholic Church where he continued to grow in his faith and expand his circle of friends.

Jim was known for his phenomenal cooking, his fun-loving attitude, his endless generosity



and the love he had for his family and friends. He loved to play cards with his buddies, tend to the beautiful flower garden in his yard, host dinner gatherings at his home and watch his favorite sports teams on TV.

Jim was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Gabrielle; his parents, Mary and Joseph; and his older siblings. He is survived by his daughters and their spouses, Lynne Connors (James Barrett) and Dawn Connors (Vincent Washington); his granddaughters, Elizabeth Barrett and Sarah Washington; his many nieces and nephews; and countless close friends and loved ones who will miss him and cherish his memory.

A Memorial Mass to celebrate the life of James P. Connors will be held on Saturday, April 27, 2024 at St. Cecilia's Church in Wilbraham at 10 a.m. Following the Mass, family and close friends are invited to a lunch reception at La Cucina di Hampden House in Hampden at Noon. Wilbraham Funeral Home is assisting the family.

In lieu of flowers, please consider making a charitable donation to St. Jude's Children's Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105-9959 or online at www.stjude.org in memory of James P. Connors.

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.

Leonor Díaz de Ariza

1919-2024

Leonor Díaz de Ariza, 104, passed away peacefully on March 23, 2024. She was the loving wife of the late Antonio Ariza Tapias, and the fifth of seven children (deceased) of the late Bernabé Díaz de Díaz. She was born in Oiba, Santander, Colombia, on Oct 1, 1919. Leonor is survived by her three loving children: Angel de Jesús Ariza Díaz and wife Ana Beiba Galvis, Javier Antonio Ariza Díaz and wife Nelly Herrera, and Luz Smith Bearnse and husband Steven Bearnse; her ten cherished grandchildren: Angel Darley Ariza M., Edgardo de Jesús Ariza M., Wilson Alexis Ariza M., Rommel Armando Ariza M., David Ariza G., Katherin Milena Ariza H., Sheila Viviana Ariza H., Mónica Alexandra Ariza H., Diego Martinez, and Adriana Marie Bearnse; fourteen great-grandchildren:



Roosevelt, Edith, Henderson, Daniela, Bryan, Shirley, Kimberly, Elizabeth, Camila, Esthefany, Javier, Daniel, Jessica and Danna; eight great-great-grandchildren; and one great-great-great-grandchild. Leonor was a parishioner of Saint Cecilia's Parish in Wilbraham.

She was a very friendly, caring person who loved praying and spending time reading her Bible. Leonor had a great memory. At 103 years old she was still able to pray Psalms 91 and 23 among many other prayers that she had perfectly memorized. She also enjoyed telling histories from her past, reciting poems that she learned since she was seven years old, listening to Colombian music, crocheting, embroidering and cooking. She will be greatly missed by all her family and friends and she will always be in our hearts. All services are private.

Hampden Public Library hosting Earth Day Eco-Expo

HAMPDEN – The Hampden Public Library will be hosting their annual Earth Day Eco-Expo beginning at Noon on April 20.

The event features useful recycling and gardening tips, educational games and activities and lots of eco-friendly giveaways to help the whole family live more sustainably! This is your opportunity to "talk trash" with industry professionals and local eco-enthusiasts. We'll cover all things sustainability, including swapping single-use for zero-waste, recycling food scraps, propagating plants and more—you won't want to miss it!

Town departments include the Hampden Public Library, Friends of the Hampden Public Library, the Hampden Garden Club, Park & Rec, the Hampden Conservation Commission, the Hampden Senior Center, Hampden Board of Health and the Hampden Fire Department.

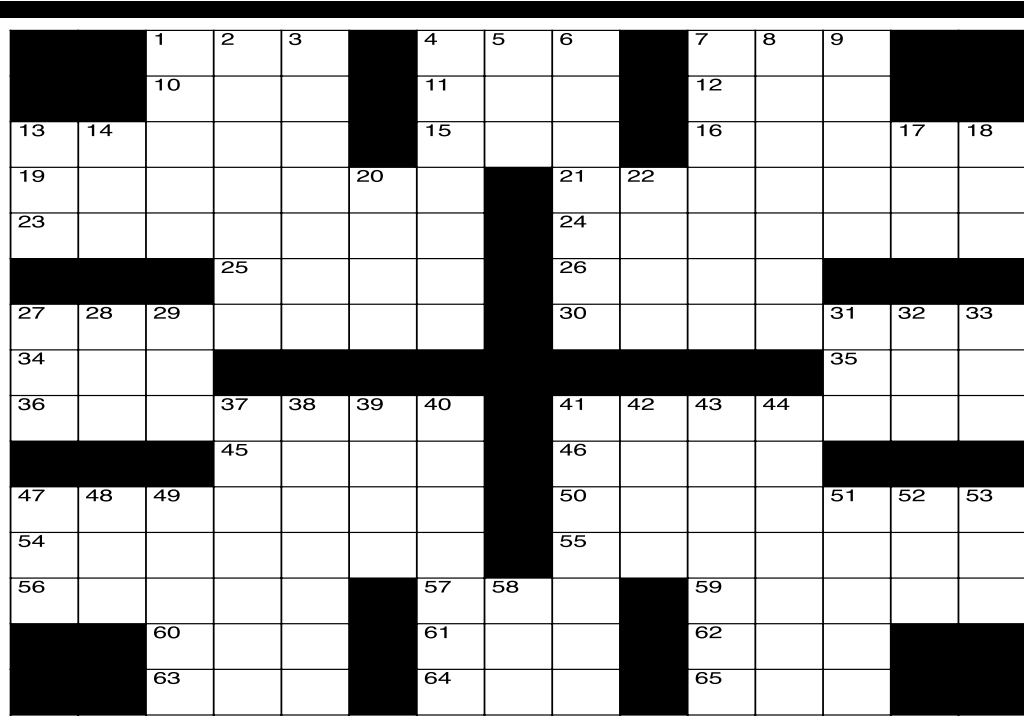
The activities include solar

oven and solar generator demonstrations, a BagShare sewing workshop and vendors such as Ferrindino Maple, Commonwealth Sustainability, Honey Bear Tea, Lee's Bees, Richard Muse doing wood crafting, Mark Gurney with clay creations, local author Sandra Howell, Mindy Meeker with massage, ArborTech Tree, D & R Farm with baked goods and produce and Forastiere with green burials.

Also, an opportunity to meet the Mass Audubon Society mascot, Peta the turtle!

Free refillable water bottles from Hampden Public Library, sprout seed pencils from the Hampden Garden Club and saplings from ArborTech Tree Services are available while supplies last.

To learn more, visit www.hampden-library.org/events/earth-day-eco-expo/.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Midway between south and southeast
4. For each
7. Airborne (abbr.)
10. Photographs
11. They ___
12. It's important in respiration (abbr.)
13. Monetary unit
15. Cool!
16. A son of Jacob
19. Cut off
21. Devour
23. Agent of one's downfall
24. Best
25. Network of nerves
26. Partner to "oohs"
27. Origins
30. Sewing utensil
34. Alias
35. Swiss river
36. Greek mythological figure
41. Type of whiskey

CLUES DOWN

45. Lay to rest
46. "Rule, Britannia" composer
47. Select jury
50. Feeling
54. Action regarded as morally wrong
55. Makes angry
56. Act incorrectly
57. Defensive nuclear weapon
59. Class of escort aircraft carrier
60. To what degree
61. Buzzing insect
62. The human foot
63. "The Leftovers" actress Dowd
64. A place to stay
65. Sun up in New York

3. Cuts out surgically
4. Can't move
5. Baseball stat
6. British soldier
7. Traditional medicine plants
8. Political party controlled by managers
9. Hebrew prophet
13. Supporter
14. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
17. Liberty Mutual mascot
18. Georgia rockers
20. A place where building is done
22. Large, deep-bodied fish
27. Clothing retailer
28. Supplement with difficulty
29. Annoy constantly
31. Founder of Babism
32. Indigenous person

- in parts of Asia
33. Sea eagle
37. Leave behind
38. Time of day
39. Colorless crystalline compound
40. They lay out course requirements
41. A diamond has three
42. Algerian coastal city
43. Remove cover
44. Rechristened
47. Distinctive practice
48. Defunct phone company
49. Turkish officer of high rank
51. Eliminate from the body
52. Witness
53. Soviet Socialist Republic
58. Founding Father Franklin

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A resident drops off donations as Joan Shea, vice president of the Friends of Hampden Senior Citizens, talks with her during the Hartsprings Drive at the Hampden Senior Center on April 6.



Domenic Fantone brings over donations as Adriano dos Santos watches during the Hartsprings Drive at the Hampden Senior Center.



Claudia Kapinos guides a driver to the Hampden Senior Center parking lot during the Hartsprings Drive on April 6.



A close-up of some of the cars driving in to drop off their donations during the Hartsprings Drive at the Hampden Senior Center.



Linda Nichols holds a bag of donations as she volunteers during the Hartsprings Drive at the Hampden Senior Center.

HARTSPRING from page 1

ple drop off their donations.

“Every car, totally full, which is wonderful. It seems like the people wait for an event like this. I hope to have another one in October because there is a need at that time of year. It’s spring cleaning and it’s fall cleaning,” Shea said. “Helps us as a fundraiser for the senior center building and it, also, helps the clients that come in. It helps find a place to be to donate their things and they know they’re going to a very good place.”

Shea elaborated on the building fund, which will be presented to the community during the Annual Town Meeting on May 13.

“We need an addition to the senior center. We are overfull and we are looking to put (an) addition on so that we can spread out, have more events and be able to have a bit more storage space,” Shea said.

Shea added if the fund receives support from two-thirds of the town, it will also go on the ballot for a final vote during the May 20 election.

“Hopefully, we will be able to continue and start working on bigger things for the building fund,” Shea said.

Shea expressed appreciation to the

senior center, her family and the Friends of Hampden Senior Citizens for their support.

“They come in and they help at every event. Not only mine but whether it’s a dinner, we all work together,” Shea said.

Shea was also thankful for the volunteers, having several people work with her to guide cars to the parking lot or to help empty cars of the donations.

“We need the volunteers to help and that’s part of what we do,” Shea said. “People love to come and be here and help.”

Shea wants the community to know how much she appreciates their support by attending events, spreading the word or volunteering their time.

“There’s many fundraisers, whether it’s a dinner, whether it’s a breakfast, we have many fundraisers that do support different areas of the senior center,” Shea said.

Shea’s message to the donors was this. “My message is thank you for coming. I really appreciate the support, I appreciate everyone remembering it’s taking place today from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and it’s a wonderful fundraiser and I do appreciate the bin, all the donations that people give,” Shea said.

Shea added the Hartsprings bin will

be outside the senior center for anyone to drop off their donations at any time.

“If you have something that is too large that you can’t fit in the bin or it’s breakable, you can leave it at the senior center. Tell the girls in the office, they let

me know,” Shea said. “We can either help them pick it up or they can drop it off at my house.”

To learn more, contact Shea at 413-566-8224.



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School Committee continues removal of nuisance tree discussion

By Harrison Giza
Staff Writer
hgiza@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - School Committee came together on April 4 for a follow-up discussion on the future of a maple tree on the tree belt of the access road to Stony Hill Elementary School.

Superintendent Dr. John Provost began the discussion by reminding attendees about the assessment of the tree, potential risks associated with its removal as well as estimates for both pruning and general removal.

"I reached out to (Town Administrator) Nick (Breault) to ask if this matter had been taken up by the Select Board," Provost said. "As you recall, he had a proposal to, essentially, cost share the expenses of either removal or mitigation of tree danger with the School Committee. He said that they did not have a formal posted meeting, but he did express a sense of the Select Board that they were amendable to that. I had asked if they had a preference for either removal or pruning. He said they did not."

School Committee member Michael Tirabassi shared his thoughts.

"I mean, I went through the report, and it looks like a healthy sugar maple tree," Tirabassi said. "I don't really think there should be any consideration towards its removal, especially when there are whatever problems there could be mitigated by limbing the tree and putting in a support cable."

Tirabassi then added this thought.

"I'm also confused as to why they're going to be paying for it from the school budget," Tirabassi said. "I just don't foresee myself being able to support that even as a cost share because it's on town land, you know? In the future, they want us to put a line-item budget in the school budget for tree limbing and stuff and taking care of bushes on town land. I mean, I'd be open to it, but we do not

"Other departments, if the police department has a tree on their property that is affecting a neighbor or anything like that, it is town property," Kennedy said. "Is it the department's responsibility or the town's responsibility? Do you have any precedent order you know nothing about this?" Tirabassi responded to Kennedy's questions with this.



Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

An exterior shot of Stony Hill Elementary School in Wilbraham, where a "nuisance tree" has been a topic of discussion in town.

have that in the budget right now, so I am not willing for any of that money to come away from this."

William Bontempi responded to Tirabassi's concerns, framing them with a different perspective.

"If you're going to deal with a problem, I think we should deal with a problem and get rid of the tree," Bontempi said. "Otherwise at some point down the road we are going to be dealing with issues with this tree again."

Vice Chair Sean Kennedy addressed Bontempi's thoughts by turning the focus back to Tirabassi.

"You have to understand," Tirabassi said. "When you're on (Finance Committee), on a given night, you may have your budget from two or three major departments of the town, hundreds of line items and they go through it all line by line... so I might not totally say that I may not remember something, but I don't remember any line items or budgets or tree removals or tree limbing other than the tree warden budget which was for that now."

Bontempi later shared why he brought up his proposal.

"You know I love trees too," Bontempi said. "I don't think you're going to get enough I don't think draw a sap off one sugar maple to make a gown. Think even a couple maple syrup... but I will say that you know, being a tree lover, I just think that, let the town make their decision, you know? If they want to spend \$900 to prune it in three years they're going to go back and start pruning it again. That's their money, they can spend it that way, but I mean it's theirs... and Sean's point is 100% correct."

The motion to send the proposal to the Select Board to pay for the removal of the tree carried 6-0.

Register to vote in upcoming town meeting and election

WILBRAHAM - According to Wilbraham Town Clerk, Carole J. Tardif, residents who are not registered voters, who wish to vote in the upcoming Town Meeting on Monday, June 3, 2024 and Town Election on Saturday, May 18, 2024 must register to vote by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, May 7, 2024. Registration hours are daily 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. On Tuesday, May 7, 2024, the last day to register, we will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Voter registrations can also be dropped in our drop box located behind Town Hall, 240 Springfield St., or can be done online at registertovotema.com. Please contact the Wilbraham Town Clerk's Office if you have any questions at 596-2800, ext 200.

New Wilbraham Senior Center celebrates grand opening April 20

WILBRAHAM - The new Wilbraham Senior Center will be celebrating its grand opening to the public with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 10 a.m. on April 20.

Following this, there will be an open house until 1 p.m. Another open house will take place on Sunday, April 21, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Both events will take place rain, snow or shine on these days.

The senior center is located at 250 Springfield St. behind the Town Hall.



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A COMMUNITY GALLERY

Soule Road string students scope out solar eclipse



Photo and caption courtesy of Elaine Holdsworth

The fifth grade Strings and Friends students, joined by Soule Road faculty members, took time out of their rehearsal to gaze at the solar eclipse at 3:28 p.m. on Monday April 8.

Life in &

WILBRAHAM-HAMPDEN

Readers are encouraged to send in medium to high resolution photos for this page by e-mail to dzbiarski@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.




Wildlife on Wheels Program visits Hampden!

The Wildlife on Wheels Program from The Zoo in Forest Park and Education Center visited Hampden Senior Center on April 10 for an intergenerational event with seniors and the Green Valley Preschool interacting with wild animals. The program was supported by a grant from the Hampden Cultural Council.

Photos submitted by Diane Marino



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WILBRAHAM HAMPDEN



Hampden Senior Center honors volunteers



The Hampden Senior Center held its Annual Recognition Dinner on April 11 to honor their volunteers, including a rendition of "Happy Birthday" to Joyce Burt, who turned 96 years old on April 12, remarks from Executive Director Rebecca Moriarty, a performance by Alexander Sawicki of Magic AI the Magician and a full dinner with bee-themed cupcakes with vanilla buttercream. The celebration emphasized the importance of volunteering at the senior center and giving back to the community. Photos submitted by Diane Marino

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Photo submitted by Melissa Graves

Wilbraham Community Garden announces 14th Annual 'Plowing the Community Garden' event

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham Community Garden proudly announces the 14th Annual "Plowing the Community Garden" event. This event will take place on Saturday, May 4 from 11:00 a.m. - 3 p.m. at the Wilbraham Community Garden located at 700 Monson Rd. in Wilbraham. There will be several teams of Draft Horses & Oxen including Hickory Hollow Working Steers, Mainely Drafts and Cedar Knoll Farm preparing the soil the slow old fashioned way utiliz-

ing walking and riding plows. The list of local vendors grows every day including Little Oak Farm, Bryan Haleys Sauces and S & S Handmade Soap. Danas Main Street Tavern Food Truck will be on-site for lunch items for sale and the musical entertainment will be brought to you by The Murpyzs. Bring your camera and a chair and join us for a wonderful event. For more information or to be a vendor, please call Melissa Graves in the Conservation office at 596-2800, ext. 204.

GOVT. from page 7
ing of day-to-day governance."

Town Government Positions: Elected v. Appointed (Town Clerk)

Turning back to the town warrant articles, while researching how to fill vacant positions in town, the GSC sought input from residents on whether town government positions should be elected or appointed. One factor for the discussion was how many long-time town employees and officials would be retiring and wanting to prepare for how to fill the positions.

"Filling certain vacancies with appointed individuals allows the town to fill the role with the best candidate for the position by opening the town to a larger candidate pool with professional experience and with specific expertise, capabilities, education and work experience for the given position," the report

reads. "Appointed positions in no way will reduce the opportunity for residents to work for the town. Appointed positions will allow the town to pursue the best candidate for the role."

There are, also, caveats to keep in mind.

"Town personnel currently in the above positions shall be allowed to finish their terms or until they vacate their office as noted in the warrant article. Conversions would take effect in 2025 after current terms are complete," the report reads.

The GSC also recommended the next GSC "review in depth all elected positions and put forth conversion articles where it's deemed appropriate."

Like the Board of Selectmen member increase, this item would, also, become effective in 2025 upon a positive vote at Annual Town Meeting and a positive vote at the town election.

Combine Town Treasurer and Tax Collector Positions

Next, continuing with town positions, combining or consolidating the town clerk and treasurer positions was another recommendation from the GSC.

Eva Wiseman currently serves as the town treasurer and tax collector and, as her positions aren't combined or consolidated, the committee has considered making treasurer a full-time role and assuming the responsibilities of the tax collector role, also becoming an appointed role as opposed to an elected role.

The change would follow other state trends.

"Across the Commonwealth, these are the two most common positions to be combined and to become appointed. Communities are finding increased efficiencies with this statewide trend," the report reads. "The combined Treasurer/Collector would be responsible for maintaining and improving upon the efficiency and effectiveness of all areas under said direction and control. The combining of these

two departments will enable Hampden to use resources effectively, and provide a competitive edge in recruiting and maintaining well-qualified personnel."

Similar to other recommendations, a positive vote at the Annual Town Meeting and a positive vote on the ballot at the town election would move the process forward.

Enable Electronic Handheld Voting for town meetings

Lastly, enabling electronic handheld voting for town meetings has garnered consideration after the GSC began researching alternate ways to vote. The recommendation also comes after the October 2023 Special Town Meeting where a vote on requesting approval for \$8.57 million to install 71 miles of fiber optic cable failed by five votes, igniting controversy due to residents watching on Zoom could not vote.

Enabling electronic handheld voting would provide an alter-

nate option.

"Electronic voting at town meetings can provide an accurate and quick vote count, and a record of how each member voted. Speed, secrecy and privacy of voting is enhanced. Results can be displayed immediately and published online for public review. Handheld electronic voting has been adopted by a number of towns across the Commonwealth including, locally, Longmeadow," the report reads.

If approved, the bylaw would be changed and the handheld voting option would go into place for the spring 2025 Annual Town Meeting.

To learn more

To check out the full report, visit www.hampdenma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf656/f/news/gsc_report_to_hampden_final_032024.pdf.

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Photo submitted by Marcie Sanders

Troy Sanders matches into Interventional Radiology at Brown University

WILBRAHAM - Troy Sanders, a 2012 Minnechaug graduate, matched into Interventional Radiology at Brown! He will attend UMass Med for General Surgery for his intern year and then Brown University Hospital RI for five years of residency! Proud parents are David and Marcie Sanders and sister Courtney Sanders Knapik DMD.

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Falcons third quarter helps defeat Agawam

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent



Turley photos by Sofia DiGrande
Kali Gagnon gets ready to fire a shot on goal.

WILBRAHAM—Less than a minute into the second half, the Agawam girls' lacrosse team was only trailing Valley Wheel League rival Minnechaug Regional by a goal.

It didn't remain a close game for very long. The Lady Falcons scored the final five goals of the third period and added three more goals during the final period enroute to a 16-9 home win over the Brownies, last Thursday afternoon.

"This is a very good win for us," said Minnechaug head coach Maggie Kennedy. "I thought we played very well as a team, and this victory moves us a little bit closer to the .500 mark."

Entering the school vacation week, the Lady Falcons had a 2-3 overall record and a 1-1 league record.

After losing to Agawam three times in 2022, Minnechaug swept the season series a year ago.

Junior Rylee Welch and senior captain Kaliana Gagnon each scored five goals for the Lady Falcons in the first meeting of the 2024 regular season against the Brownies (1-2, 0-1). Five other Lady Falcons players scored at least one goal.

"Having several different goals scorers is huge for us," Kennedy added. "Kaliana and Rylee have been our leading scorers so far this season."

Gagnon entered the school vacation week with a team-leading 20 goals, while Welch scored 13 goals in the first five games of the regular season.

The other two Lady Falcons senior captains are Brenna Slattery, and Ainsley Sheehan.

The Brownies' leading scorer was senior captain Emma Murray with six goals. She scored three goals in each half.

"We rely on Emma to be one of our leading goal scorers in every game," said Agawam head coach Carla Lemnah-Warner. "She's also one of our captains. Our captains are our leaders, but the younger players are starting to step up."

Alexis Hurley and Angelina Kozhenevsky are the other two Agawam senior captains.

Please see **FALCONS**, page 17



Kelvin Ohemeng keeps the ball from going out.

Falcons sweep Brownies

WILBRAHAM – Last Tuesday afternoon, Minnechaug boys tennis swept Agawam 5-0. The Falcons are 1-1 to start the 2024 season.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Josh Lawrence winds up for a serve.



Owen Perry catches up to the ball.



Ethan Ray goes for a serve.



Merreck Epperson gets the low hit to keep the ball in play.

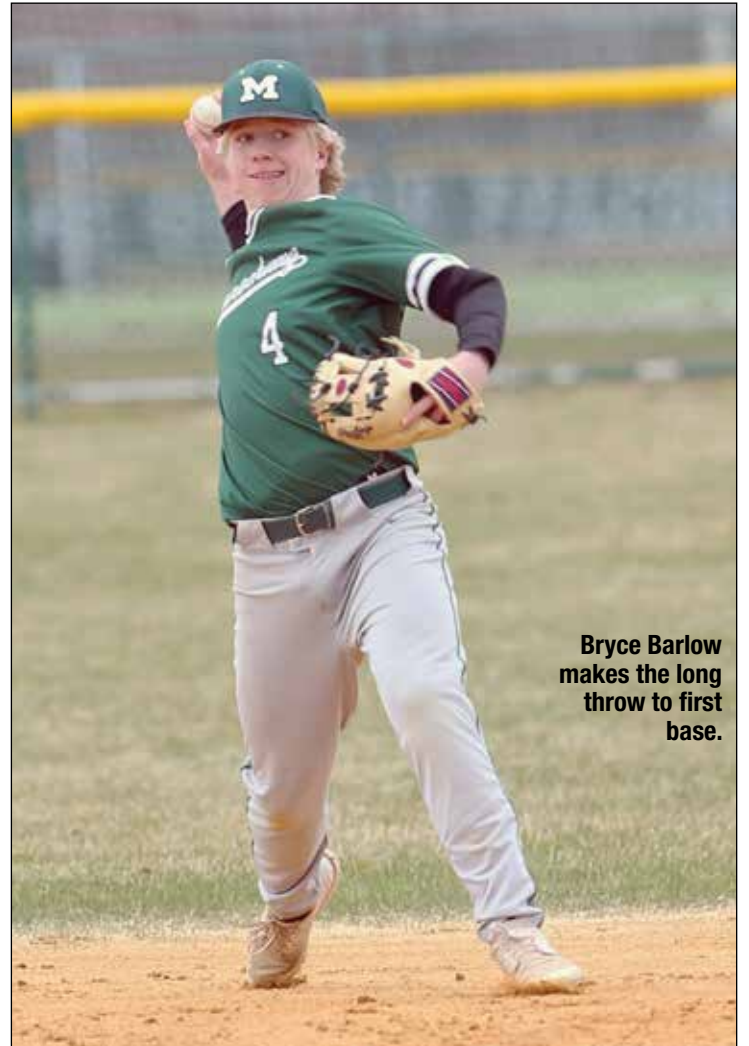


Sawyer Lisowski focuses as he fields the grounder to second.

Comeback falls short for Chaug baseball

WILBRAHAM – Last Tuesday afternoon, Minnechaug baseball rallied in the bottom of the seventh, scoring a pair of runs. But it was not enough as the Falcons fell to Westfield 6-4. In the loss, Minnechaug scored three unearned runs. Vince Chiarizio went 1-for-3 for the Falcons' offense. Minnechaug is 1-4 to start the season.

Turley photos by David Henry
www.sweetdogphotos.com



Bryce Barlow makes the long throw to first base.



Ethan Purcell pitches for Minnechaug during recent game action.



Matthew Nordstrom cleanly fields a grounder to third base.

Some roster spots still open in Quabbin Valley Over-28 Baseball League

Rosters spots are dwindling, but there are still some spots available as the Quabbin Valley Over-28 Baseball League prepares for its season opener on Sunday, April 28 featuring three games.

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

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 used as well some expansion to the surrounding area this season. The league does not play on Mother's Day or Memorial Day weekends.

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.

Win keeps playoff hopes alive for T-Birds

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds (30-35-3-2) snapped their six-game slide with a 4-2 comeback win over the Providence Bruins (40-20-6-3) on Sunday afternoon inside a sold-out MassMutual Center, the 19th such crowd this season.

The afternoon started rocky, as Patrick Brown connected on a forehand from the slot area on the day's first shot to give Providence a 1-0 lead 46 seconds into the contest.

T-Birds starting goaltender Colten Ellis put himself into a pickle at 9:24 of the first when he mishandled a puck to the side of his net. After a pair of Bruins dislodged it, the third man on the attack, rookie Jaxon Nelson, deked to the backhand to beat Ellis and give Providence a 2-0 advantage. It was Nelson's first professional goal.

Brandon Bussi drew the net for the Bruins, and after shutting out the T-Birds on March 10, he had his sights on duplicating the feat on Sunday, holding the T-Birds off

the board past the midpoint of regulation.

With their backs against the wall, the T-Birds leaned on their Man of the Year to jumpstart the squad. Off a draw at 13:08 of the middle stanza, Drew Callin pushed past his opponent to hack a shot toward Bussi's crease. The normally stout netminder sprung a leak this time as the puck sneaked under his legs to get Springfield on the board, cutting the lead to 2-1.

Following matching minors and another penalty to the Bruins, Springfield's man advantage earned a 4-on-3 opportunity, and the AHL's leading goal scorer made his presence known as Adam Gaudette rifled a one-time snapper over Bussi's glove at 14:40, tying the score off a perfect cross-ice setup by Jakub Vrana.

Special teams proved paramount for Springfield, as the penalty kill went a perfect 5-for-5, including two clutch successes in the final period. Gaudette provided more heroics at 10:32 of the third when he skated in on the right

wing on a 2-on-1 and blistered a wrist shot over Bussi's blocker to give the T-Birds a 3-2 lead on his 44th goal of the season. The two-goal day for Gaudette was his 12th such game this season.

With Providence clamoring for an equalizer in the final minute, Callin, rookie Dylan Peterson, and Kean Washkurak gutted out a defensive zone sequence to clear their end. Washkurak capped things off with an empty-netter from the red line to give the T-Birds the victory.

The T-Birds look to earn a second straight win over the Bruins when they travel to Providence for a rematch on Friday night at the Amica Mutual Pavilion at 7:05 p.m.

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HoopHall announces unique new exhibit for this summer

SPRINGFIELD – The Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame announced another brand new exhibit coming to the museum this summer titled The Vault: Boston Celtics Unlocked. This innovative and immersive experience will be unlike anything the Basketball Hall of Fame has previously produced. The Hall of Fame has collaborated with the NBA’s most storied franchise to present this inaugural installation of The Vault.

“We are excited to launch another state-of-the-art space in the world’s finest sports museum,” said John L. Doleva, President and CEO of the Basketball Hall of Fame. “The Vault: Boston Celtics Unlocked is a limited engagement that will feature a finely crafted experience that will capture the imagination of sports fans and speak to the heart of what makes basketball the world’s most popular game.”

Matt Zeysing, Vice President of Curatorial for the museum, began working on The Vault concept more than a year ago. “We knew we wanted to create something spectacular, something that basketball fans had never seen before. The Boston Celtics represent a winning tradition that is second to none and that tradition still continues today. To that end, our team has carefully curated and brought together the most sought-after Celtic memorabilia in the world.”

Set in an immersive bank vault, Celtics legends from the past and present will take visitors on an epic journey to discover the true meaning of Celtic Pride. The Vault will feature authentic game-worn jerseys, championship rings, the original ’81 NBA championship trophy, long-lost footage, and much more.

“The Boston Celtics are honored to bring their history and tradition to life with the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame in The Vault: Boston Celtics Unlocked,” said Boston Celtics Team President Rich Gotham. “We hope fans enjoy this immersive experience, which will showcase unique memorabilia and celebrate the Celtics’ storied legacy.”

Visitors will enjoy an exclusive display of Celtics memorabilia for a limited period. Tickets for the museum can be purchased online at etix.com or at the door.

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. 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.



Turley photos by Sofia DiGrande
Ella Sarno takes a close-range shot.



Nolah McConnell attempts to defend an Agawam player.



Aubrey Stachowicz fires a pass away.



Izzy Manning winds up to make a long pass.

FALCONS from page 15

The first 24 minutes of last Thursday’s match was a very close affair.

Both Agawam sophomore goalie Kilee Barna and Minnechaug junior goalie Nhi Nguyen finished the contest with eight saves.

Gagnon and freshman Sophia Kozub combined to score the first two goals of the opening period, which were both unassisted, for the home team.

An unassisted goal by Murray put her team on the scoreboard for the first time with 3:35 remaining in the opening period.

With less than three minutes remaining in the period, a goal by Sheehan gave the Lady Falcons a two-goal lead again (3-1).

Agawam tied the score for the first time at 3-3 in the middle of the second period following back-to-back free position goals from Murray.

The Lady Falcons responded with three unanswered goals from junior Ella Sarno, Gagnon, and Welch.

With 0.4 seconds remaining on the scoreboard clock, Agawam sophomore Sarah Kriebel closed out the first half with another free

position goal.

The Brownies, who were trailing, 6-4, at the break, got a little bit closer 33 seconds into the third period when Murray scored her fourth goal, which was unassisted.

After stealing a pass, Gagnon scored the Lady Falcons first goal of the second half.

A couple of minutes later, an Agawam player received a yellow card and was sent to the box for two minutes.

The Lady Falcons took full advantage of the man-up situation, as they built a 10-5 lead following two goals from Welch and another one by Sarno.

“Scoring man-up goals are always very important,” Kennedy said. “It just helped us keep the lead.”

Minnechaug other two goals in the third period were scored by senior Mack Donahue and Gagnon.

Holding a 12-5 advantage entering the final twelve minutes of the

match, Minnechaug senior Jenna Scatolini added her name to the scoring column a minute into the fourth period.

Agawam tried to make a comeback with back-to-back goals from Kriebel and Murray, which closed the gap to 13-7.

The home team answered back with three more goals, which sealed their victory. Gagnon scored one of those goals and Welch scored the other two.

Junior Isabella Spaulding and Murray scored the final two goals of the match for the visiting team.

The Brownies will look to even the season series when they host the Lady Falcons on April 29.

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9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20 Base Price \$26.00
21 Base Price \$26.50	22 Base Price \$27.00	23 Base Price \$27.50	24 Base Price \$28.00
25 Base Price \$28.50	26 Base Price \$29.00	27 Base Price \$29.50	28 Base Price \$30.00
29 Base Price \$30.50	30 Base Price \$31.00	31 Base Price \$31.50	32 Base Price \$32.00
33 Base Price \$32.50	34 Base Price \$33.00	35 Base Price \$33.50	36 Base Price \$34.00
37 Base Price \$34.50	38 Base Price \$35.00	39 Base Price \$35.50	40 Base Price \$36.00

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Events & announcements schedule

Hampden Senior Center to host Pie Sale

The Hampden Senior Center, 104 Allen St., is having another great Pie Sale. This year, the fundraiser is offering juicy Apple, delicious Fruit of the Forest and mouth-watering Blueberry. Orders for pies at \$19 each will be taken at the senior center starting March 1, paid in full in advance. Pies will be boxed and bagged and available for drive-up pick up at the center on Saturday, April 27 from Noon to 1:30 p.m. Call 413-566-8271 with any questions.

Searching your family history with Ancestry Library Edition

WILBRAHAM – Assistant Library Director Mary Bell will give a hands-on demonstration of Ancestry Library Edition at the Wilbraham Public Library on Thursday, April 18, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

She will give a brief demonstration of how to use the online resource in the Brooks Room, followed by time in which participants use library computers or their own laptops to access the database and search for themselves. All participants will be given a starter kit with forms and tips for researching genealogy.

“Ancestry Library Edition includes records of the U.S. Census from 1790 to 1950, military records such as World War I and II draft cards, and other records worldwide. International records available include particularly good coverage in Canada and the United Kingdom,” said Bell.

Images of original records, including

immigration records and town records of births, marriages, and deaths can be saved to a flash drive, printed, or sent to your email from Ancestry Library Edition. It is accessible in-library only, but can be used through both library computers or personal devices connected to the library’s Wi-Fi.

This program is free and open to the public. Space is limited due to the number of computers available, and registration is going on now.

For more information, contact the Wilbraham Library at 413-596-6141 or visit the Event Calendar online at www.wilbrahamlibrary.org. Residents can also contact Mary Bell at 413-596-6141 or mbell@wilbrahamlibrary.org.

2nd Annual Earth Day Community Clean-Up seeking volunteers and sponsors

WILBRAHAM - The Keep Wilbraham Beautiful Committee (KWBC) has announced that the 2nd Annual Earth Day Community Clean-Up will take place on Saturday, April 20. Those interested in volunteering can report to Fountain Park between 8 - 9 a.m., where safety vests, gloves, trash pickers, and garbage bags will be provided. KWBC representatives will direct volunteers to areas of town in need of trash removal. A complimentary lunch will be provided to all volunteers at Fountain Park following the clean-up.

KWBC is appreciative of the generous continued support and collaboration of the DPW, local police, USA Waste, NEPM, and Wilbraham Select Board. Rice Fruit Farm and Friendly’s are joining the efforts for 2024, and additional sponsors are sought to offset the costs

related to the volunteer appreciation luncheon and the purchase of additional safety vests, signage, and trash pickers for the event. If you are inclined to offer monetary support, checks can be made out to the Town of Wilbraham and earmarked for Earth Day. All sponsors will be recognized both on the KWBC website and Facebook page.

KWBC is also seeking organizations who would like to host a table at Fountain Park during the event. These tables could offer information about taking care of the Earth or family-friendly activities.

For more information on how to get involved in this community event, please visit KWBC’s website: <https://sites.google.com/view/wilbraham-earth-day-clean-up/home>. KWBC can also be found on Facebook by searching “Keep Wilbraham Beautiful” or <https://www.facebook.com/groups/keepwilbrahambeautiful/>.

You can also contact Event Chair Megan Harrigan at keepwilbrahambeautiful@gmail.com.

Women’s Club hosting Fashion Show Luncheon

WILBRAHAM - A Fashion Show Luncheon featuring CHICO’S is being sponsored by the Wilbraham Women’s Club, Thursday, April 25, at the Saint Cecilia Parish Center, 42 Main St., Wilbraham. The social hour begins at 11:30 a.m. with luncheon served at Noon. The meal choices are chicken francaise and salmon with dill sauce. The \$35 donation for the luncheon also helps to fund the club’s scholarships and community service projects. In addition, there will be a raffle for many prizes. For reservations, please contact Norma Bandarra at 413-596-8173 by April 17.

5K Walk for Rick’s Place takes place April 27

WILBRAHAM – The 5K/1.5M Run/Walk for Rick’s Place will be taking place on Saturday, April 27, at 9 a.m. at Minnechaug Regional High School.

Registration opens at 8 a.m. and the Run/Walk will begin at 9 a.m.

Participants who register by April 15 will receive a t-shirt! Shirt and bib pick-up will be available on race day at 8 a.m. when registration opens.

All proceeds will support Rick’s Place and the race will take place rain or shine.

To learn more and to register, visit <https://runsignup.com/Race/MA/Wilbraham/RunforRicksPlace>.

Wilbraham Friends of the Library Annual Book Sale returns in May

WILBRAHAM - Wilbraham Friends of the Library (WFOL), are delighted to announce their annual book sale will be held May 1-4! The WFOL Annual Book Sale is a major fundraiser providing funds for programs for children, teens and adults as well as museum passes, furnishings and other library equipment.

As a thank you for their support, donors will receive a coupon good for two free books of their choice from the sale when donations are dropped off. Donations of books and materials will be accepted at the library from Friday, April 26 through Monday, April 29 during regular library hours.

For more information or questions about the sale contact friends@wilbrahamlibrary.org.

Best Friends Animal Society offers tips on how to keep your pets safe during a flood event

It’s been a rough winter so far, and everywhere are showing severe flooding.

If you’re a pet owner, that means you’ll also need to keep your pets out of harm’s way. Best Friends Animal Society, a leading animal welfare organization working to end the killing of cats and

dogs by 2025, offers the following tips to keep your pet as safe as possible:

Outside animals should be brought indoors unless evacuation is required.

Do not wait to evacuate. The longer you wait, the more difficult it will be to get out with your pets.

If evacuating, please bring your pets with you. If that is not possible, do not keep animals enclosed in a pen or crate and make sure to keep pets on the highest floor or point of your home.

Make a plan of where to go with your pet(s). Identify pet-friendly emergency shelters that may be open in your area for temporary respite. There are also pet-friendly hotels that you may be able to locate online.

Put together an emergency go-bag of all your pets’ essential items, such as medications, food, bowls, leash, crate, toys, blankets, and identification tags. It’s also pertinent to have your animal’s vaccination and medical records handy, including their microchip number, together inside a waterproof, sealed bag. Keep the bag as close to the door so that if you need to evacuate immediately, you can grab your pet and the bag and leave.

Identify a neighbor who has access to your home and can grab your pets and their go bag if you are not home during a flooding event.

Close all windows and doors.

Additional Do’s and Don’ts:

Do not attempt to walk through floodwater. As little as six inches of moving water can knock you and your pet down.



Do not allow your pet to drink any floodwater. Floodwater is polluted with chemicals, sewage and other harmful debris and foreign materials that are harmful to your pet.

Do not assume your pet can swim. Animals can panic if put in a situation that they are too stressed to handle.

Do not drive through water or even over bridges that sit above fast-moving water, as they can collapse at a moment’s notice.

Do dry off a pet as quickly as possible. Wetness can cause bacterial growth and inflammation on their skin.

Don’t have a pet? Now is the perfect time to adopt or foster a pet in need. Shelters across the country are at capacity due to less people choosing the adoption option. Every time you adopt, you are saving two lives: the life of the pet you are bringing home, as well as opening space for another homeless dog or cat to be taken in by shelters and rescue groups. To learn more, visit bestfriends.org.

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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

**Town of Hampden
Notice of Public Hearing**
The Hampden Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Wednesday, May 8, at 6:30 PM** in the Town

House, 625 Main Street, Hampden, MA on the application of Bedrock Financial, LLC, Al Joyce, for a Special Permit under Section 7.2.4 of the Zoning Bylaws for a sub-standard frontage lot within the R-6 District, Parcel ID 14-10-3 located on Chapin Road (Lot 3) owned by Bedrock Financial LLC Trustee. Information related to this application is on file in the Town Clerk's Office and is available for review by the public during normal business hours. For the Board, Madison Pixley, Chair, of the Hampden Planning Board. Published in the Wilbraham-Hampden Times (April 18 and April 25, 2024). 04/018, 04/25/2024

LEGAL NOTICE TOWN OF WILBRAHAM REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS DESIGNER SERVICES FOR A FIBER OPTIC COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK

The Town of Wilbraham, Wilbraham, MA ("the Town"), acting through the Wilbraham Select Board, invites the submission of sealed Requests For Qualifications (RFQ) for Designer Services related to the design of a fiber optic communications network ("Network") that will provide fiber optic access for next generation broadband services using municipal utility and open access models. The Service Area to be designed will include all properties located inside the jurisdictional boundaries of the Town, passing an estimated 6679 households. The RFQ may be obtained via Combuys, and the Town's website at: www.wilbraham-ma.gov ("Government, Bids") and from the Select Board's Office by request to: nbreault@wilbraham-ma.gov

RFQ's will be received until 2:00 PM local time, Tuesday, May 7, 2024, in the Wilbraham Town Hall, Select Board Office, 240 Springfield Street, Wilbraham, MA 01095. If the Town Hall is closed due to weather or other emergency, the deadline for receipt of Responses will be extended to the time posted above on the next business day upon which the Town Hall is open. Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 7C, §§44-58, the Town reserves the right to award one or more (1) Contracts, if at all, to the most qualified responsive and responsible Responder who complies with the Response Submission Requirements in Section 4 of the RFQ. The award of any contract pursuant to this RFQ shall be subject to approval by the Select Board. A contract will be awarded, if at all, on a negotiated basis, with payments for phased milestone deliverables as outlined in the Scope of Work (SOW) with a totaled fee not to exceed four hundred thousand dollars and zero cents (\$400,000.00), subject to negotiation and subject

to all procedures outlined in the RFQ, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 7C, §§44-58 and all applicable regulations and guidelines.

All Responses shall comply with the RFQ issued by the Town of Wilbraham. The Town reserves the right to waive any informality in or to reject any, any part of, or all Responses in the best interest of the Town.
04/18, 04/25/2024

Town of Wilbraham WILBRAHAM LINE PAINTING 2024 Notice of Invitation for Bids

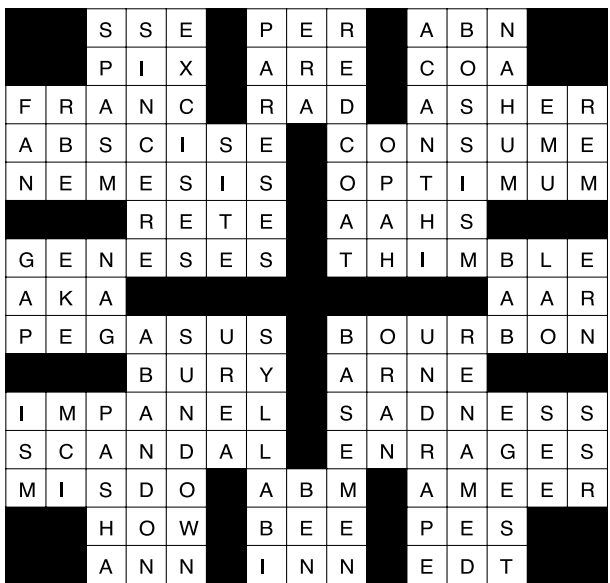
The Town of Wilbraham invites sealed bids for the purchase of Wilbraham Line Painting 2024. Bids must be made in accordance with all applicable Federal, State and Town laws and by-laws and regulations and must comply in all respects with the instructions, conditions, specifications and other requirements in the Invitation for Bid packages. Prevailing State Minimum Wage Rates

must be complied with as per MGL 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) or via email at DPW@wilbraham-ma.gov on Wednesday April 17, 2024. Bids in sealed, opaque envelopes shall be marked "**Wilbraham Line Painting 2024 Bid**" and delivered to the above address by 3:00 p.m. on **Thursday, May 9, 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, PE.
Director of Public Works/
Town Engineer
04/18/2024



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Residents go the distance at packed 5K Trail Race



Turley photos by Harrison Giza

This runner was ecstatic as he passed the finish line thumbs held high.



Two boys cheer on their friend J. as his family, Kevin and Meghan Farrell, run toward fresh orange slices and ice cold water.



Despite the amount of energy exerted, Maggie Platz was all smiles Sunday morning.



Erin and second place winner Michael Goodreau.



Mark Germain of Southwick, setting his sights on the end of his 5K race.



Briana LaChappelle slapping hands with her #1 fan.



Jack and Tamarra Lapomardo being lead by their eleven year old speedster son.

By Harrison Giza
Staff Writer
hgiza@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - The 9th Annual 5K Trail Race happened on April 14 at the McDonald Nature Preserve with crowds filled with racers, runners and support from family and close friends.

Out of 101 competitors, the winner of the 5K Trail Race was Reese Laviolette, a 31 year old Wilbraham native who clocked in an 18:17.71 chip time at a 5:54 per pace. Second place went to Micheal Goodreau, who at 34 years old ran a 20:47.85 5k at a per minute pace of 6:43.

Mark Manolakis, the president of the Wilbraham Friends of Recreation, was as thankful as ever for the amount of love and support he had seen for this communal 5K.

"So much of the credit goes to Dennis Windoloski," Manolakis said. "He designed the course and really has run point on this event each year. 4Run3 have been great partners in helping us time the participants as well as set up a great start & finish line. We also have a lot of great sponsors who we would not be able to do this race without. The

main sponsor is LUSO Federal Credit Union who we can always count on to be a great partner for our community. (Director) Bryan (Litz), (Assistant Director) Erin Carroll and the whole Rec Department always show up to help and we are very appreciative of them."

The 5K was imagined a near decade ago and this year, aimed to help supports improvements for the Town of Wilbraham and their Recreational facilities.

"This type of event shows how great of a community we have," Manolakis said. "It's always a jovial event and it's become a family event with a big chunk of our participants being families of all ages running together. It's been great to see more and more kids take part in the event every year. It's just another of a long list of offerings the department offers throughout the year. All of our partners and sponsors are key members of the community... and Minnechaug Key Club members always show up with a big smile and cheer on the runners. We couldn't do it without them."

Prizes were provided for all age groups, but one feature came in the form of custom designed moisture-wicking long sleeve shirts for

both kids and adults that chose to pre-register prior to April 2.

"We work with NEPM (New England Public Media) for the shirts," Manolakis said. "They do a great job every year with them. We always try to find a new color. I'm sure there are runners who can make quite the T-shirt rainbow from each one we've given out over the years."

Since his days at Minnechaug Regional High School, Manolakis has been a voice of positivity and small town friendship, whether in clubs, sports or teacher Mary Gardner's legendary Latin classes.

He hopes to encourage Wilbraham and Western Massachusetts natives for even more fun this summer.

"Our next big event is the annual Fishing Derby which takes place at Spec Pond on May 18," Manolakis said. "We usually have over 200 entrants in this event, it's predominately made up of local families. We are always looking for people to join our group and have a lot of fun projects to fundraiser for over the next few years. We are very excited for the addition of the pickleball courts at Memorial and can't wait to see everyone use them."

Baystate Wing Hospital Auxiliary seeks scholarship applicants

PALMER - The Baystate Wing Hospital Auxiliary is making scholarship applications available for the 2023-24 academic year.

The Auxiliary will award scholarships of \$1,000 to seniors graduating

from Belchertown, Ludlow, Monson, Palmer, Pathfinder, Minnechaug, and Ware High Schools who are pursuing higher education in a healthcare field.

The students will be chosen based on their academic excellence, volunteer

efforts and related community service, work experience, and dedication to their goals.

Applications and instructions for completing the application forms are available in each school's guidance department and must be completed and submitted by April 12. The Auxiliary Scholarship Committee will select student recipients and recommend them to the Auxiliary board for final approval.

Throughout the years, a wide variety of healthcare fields have been represented by area students who have received these scholarships, including premedical, dental hygiene, health system management, nursing, pharmacy, and radiology.

"Growing careers in healthcare is now more important than ever," said Evelyn Glabicky, president of the Baystate

Wing Auxiliary in a press release. "We are so proud when we hear from our former scholarship recipients who are now providing healthcare throughout the region and Massachusetts."

For over 65 years, the Auxiliary has been actively supporting Baystate Wing Hospital through its sponsorship of special events and management of the gift shop. This diverse group of women and men includes teachers, nurses, and business owners, both young and retirees, who live in many different communities and are united by a shared commitment to support the mission of the hospital.

"We are thankful to the Auxiliary members for their continued commitment and support to our hospital and the many communities we serve," said Teresa Grove, philanthropy officer for Baystate Health's Eastern Region.

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Wilbraham Friends of the Library to hold Spring Plant Sale

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham Friends of the Library (WFOL) is holding a plant sale featuring two varieties of annuals. The sale will be pre-order only through May 15 with plant pick up on Saturday, May 18 from 9 a.m. to Noon at the Wilbraham Public Library, 25 Crane Park Drive, Wil-

braham.

We had so much fun at the plant sale last fall we are doing it again this spring!

We are offering annuals - Begonias (pink or white) and Petunias (blue). These are large plants in five-inch pots that are ready to plant and show off. Plants are \$5

each and available by pre-order only. Deadline for orders is May 15 and orders will be available for pick up Saturday, May

18 from 9 a.m. to Noon at the library.

Pick up an order form at the library or download from online. You can also request an order form

by emailing friends@wilbrahamlibrary.org. Return your order with payment to the library during regular business hours.

The sale is sponsored by the Wilbraham Friends of the Library which was established in 1973. The Friends of the Library fund programs for children, teens, and

adults, as well as the library's popular Museum Pass program, furnishings and other library equipment.

For more information, contact the WFOL at friends@wilbrahamlibrary.org.

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AGING WELL IN WILBRAHAM

Wow, what a journey it has been!! It started over 14 years ago with an idea, a dream and it has come to fruition! The new Wilbraham Senior Center is a reality! Thanks to the dedication and work of too many to mention here, our town has a state-of-the-art resource for individuals over 60 years old. We have attempted to keep you posted about progress in this forum. We have shared photos and stories along with valuable health information in this column. Nothing we have done here will compare with seeing this building and learning about the valuable resources avail-

able in person! There will be an official opening with ribbon cutting on Saturday April 20, at 10 a.m. and open house until 1 p.m. followed by an official open house on Sunday April 21 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. If those dates don't work for you, just stop by any Monday through Friday from 8-4. The staff will be happy to welcome you and show you all that the facility has to offer. With the completion of this project, we also announce the completion of "Aging Well in Wilbraham". We hope we have achieved our goal of keeping you informed about the progress of the building and given you some

thoughtful information about your health and wellness.

Thank you for joining us on this journey. We are all better people for our commitment to this project and our community. This building exists for YOU! Learn about what is available and offer constructive suggestions on how it can better meet the needs of our Seniors.

Be proud, be involved, stay connected. It's good for our community and it's good for your health!

Linda Tatko Cooper
For the Wilbraham Senior Center Building Committee

Monthly Highlights for April at the Hampden Senior Center

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

"African Drumming" with Jason

Fridays at 2:15 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.

New 12-week session Beginning April 19 through July 12. No class on July 5.

Save money by paying for the session in full.

Cost is \$65 for session or \$6 per class.

New students are welcome.

Please call 566-5588 to reserve your spot. Space is limited.

Grab and Go Dinner

Thursday, April 25, pick up from 2 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Enjoy a delicious dinner of American Chop Suey,

Tossed Salad, Bread, and Dessert.

Cost is \$5 per person. Please call 566-5588 starting April 1st to order your dinner.

Learn to play the Ukulele with Sue

Mondays, 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

Instructor Susan Mc Hand will teach you the necessary skills to master this charming instrument.

Accepting new students. Cost is \$5 per class. Please call 566-5588 to reserve your spot. Space is limited.

Elms College Nursing Students are here

Wednesdays, 9:15 a.m. to Noon

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

STCC Dental Hygiene Program is

hosting a community dental day.

Saturday, April 27, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

at Springfield Technical Community College, One Armory Square, Springfield, MA

FREE fillings, extractions, etc. For more information and to make an appointment, please call 413-755-4900.

STCC Dental offers the following procedures:

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

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

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

HELP US STOCK OUR SHELVES

with Disinfecting Wipes!

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

COMING SOON...

D & R Farm Summer Farm Share

D & R FARM is offering fresh produce twice a month, FREE with SNAP/HIP if you qualify!

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

Please let us know if you need your shares delivered. Shares are limited.

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

New applications for Summer Farm Share are required and must be completed by and submitted to Wendy by May 15.

Coming in May...

Let's Go Surfin

with Joe Green

Tuesdays, May 21 and 28, 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Joe will be here to show you the ins and outs of surfin the web. Make a list of your questions, and Joe will cover it all. This is being offered as a FREE class. Put these dates on your calendar and sign up early.

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

Please call 566-5588 to reserve your spot. Space is limited.

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