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Meet the Wilbraham Select Board candidates

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - There are two candidates on the ballot for election to the Select Board in this year's town election.

The two candidates are Michael Squindo, the current chair of the Select Board, and challenger Ryan Costello.

This year's election takes place on May 16.

Michael Squindo

Squindo, who was first elected to the Select Board in 2023, said serving for a second term "would be both a privilege and an honor."

"I bring a combination of technical experience and firsthand community perspective that prepares

me well for this role. Professionally, I have 13 years of experience in municipal government, including 9 years as a Department Head. In that capacity, I have developed budgets, drafted policy and responded to constituents' inquiries and concerns. During my time on the Select Board, I have made it a priority to provide timely and meaningful responses to residents. Over the past two years, I have also worked to

strengthen Wilbraham's budgeting process by implementing a three-year budget-to-actual review. This has improved transparency and helped identify efficiencies without reducing services, including \$89,900 in reductions in the FY27 budget at my request," Squindo said. "Equally important is my experience as a resident raising a family

Please see **CANDIDATES**, page 8



Michael Squindo



Ryan Costello

Wilbraham Troop 359 cleans up Old Meeting House Museum

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - Members of Wilbraham Troop 359 took time out of their Saturday to volunteer to help clean up the Old Meeting House Museum on April 18.

Throughout the afternoon, the members assisted Local Historian David Bourcier, who's also president of the Atheneum Society of Wilbraham, in cleaning the museum's basement, including removing dirt, rearranging chairs, vacuuming and more.

As readers know, this place, located on Main Street, is the home of the Atheneum Society of Wilbraham, which was first formed back in 1963 as a nonprofit organization to preserve artifacts and memorabilia relating to the people and history of the town of Wilbraham.

Some of the community events that take place here in-



The members of Wilbraham Troop 359 with David Bourcier, the president of the Atheneum Society of Wilbraham, in a group photo. Turley photos by Kristin Rivers

Please see **CLEAN UP**, page 10

School budget discussed

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com

HAMPDEN - The school budget was discussed during the April 21 Selectboard meeting when the Advisory Committee held its public hearing on the town meeting warrant.

The item was presented during the review of Article Seven for the Town Meeting Warrant.

After Advisory Committee Doug Boyd shared the assessment request from the schools was \$9,424,428, Superintendent Dr. John Provost had explained the current financial concerns many communities in the state—and school districts—are facing.

"Earlier in the process, we began with the goal of bringing forward a level services budget. Brought forward a budget that, receiving feedback from the town, as we could see, was not going to fit..." Provost said. "Between the months of January and March, we reduced that level service budget by \$2.9 million. That included 10 positions..."

Provost said the week before, an additional 19 pink slips were administered "in case the budget doesn't pass."

"I just wanted to say that for everyone here supporting this budget, I remember coming to the district, sitting in the Old Town Hall, and Mr. Davenport saying, 'Okay, Mr. Superintendent, now is the time for us to begin bringing this district to number one in the state.' Well, at that time, Green Meadows was about in

Please see **BUDGET**, page 3



ACS sells raffle baskets for Catellier Family. Turley photo by Selena Nguyen

Minnechaug softball's 'Bat for Pink' raises \$600+

By Selena Nguyen
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM — The Minnechaug Varsity and JV Softball Team hosted their first-ever "Bat for Pink" — a fundraising event centered around raising money for cancer causes on April 20. When facing off Hopkins Academy, players wore spirited light pink jerseys to represent the team's support for Breast Cancer, securing a swift victory over the Academy on the way.

"We've seen Pink Out from other sports events, so we decided that we wanted to do something like that," Senior Captain Alexa Sherman said.

Sherman worked closely with her Varsity Teammate, Abby Camire, and Chloe Robins, President of the American Cancer Society (ACS) at Minnechaug,

to successfully organize the event. Sherman went on to explain further why they decided to make Breast Cancer a focus in the fundraiser, mentioning how common the disease was.

"I mean, everyone knows someone with Breast Cancer. My aunt was recently diagnosed with Breast Cancer, so we wanted to do a Pink-Out game for that," Sherman said.

Players and families prepared sweet treats to be sold by ACS members during the game in a donations-based fashion, meaning buyers were able to donate any amount of money in exchange for any number of treats. All the money made from the Bake Sale was given to the American Cancer Society to donate to Breast Cancer research.

"Many people will give

Please see **BAT FOR PINK**, page 13

Hill Climb takes place May 9

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - The 2026 Wilbraham Hill Climb will be taking place on May 9 with a variety of festivities for all to enjoy.

The event will feature vintage race cars, vintage motorcycles, show cars for the car show, demo race cars, on-site restaurant,

breweries and food trucks and various vendors, giveaways and craft sales.

The museums include Heritage Museums & Gardens, Owls Head Transportation Museum, Audrain Auto Museum, Seal Cove Auto Museum and the New England Racing Museum.

Also, special guests Wayne Carini, the TV host of "Chasing Classic Cars," and Steve Magnante, Bar-

rett-Jackson Host and YouTuber.

Like last year, there will also be spectator parking and shuttle stops at Minnechaug Regional High School and Memorial School.

Changes this year include the library is closed the day of the event, the start and finish lines being moved

Please see **HILL CLIMB**, page 8

Hampden Garden Club hosts Paint & Plant event

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com

HAMPDEN - The Hampden Garden Club hosted a Paint & Plant event to mark Earth Day at the senior center on April 22.

During the event, attendees had the opportunity to paint a flower pot and plant herbs to take home and enjoy for their homes and gardens.

Lil Fedora, president of the Hampden Garden Club, explained how the club wanted to do a community project and was approached by Assistant Director/Outreach Coordinator Wendy Cowles.

"Not just seniors," Fedora said. "We had a young teenager here, who was a granddaughter of one of our members. So, we were like, 'Well, let's do a plant and paint,' and so we used magic markers and some stencils to do this

project and everyone could just do whatever they wanted."

Fedora said the variety of approaches include free hand, stencils and more. Also, an assortment of herbs and flow-

ers for attendees to pick from for their plants.

She's looking forward to seeing photos from everybody when everything blooms.

"It was just a great community project to do. There

was no cost," Fedora said. "Everyone had a great time, and we hope to do it again next year."

She added that doing the

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A group shot of the attendees and Hampden Garden Club members. Photo courtesy of Tina Doran

COMMUNITY

Scantic Valley YMCA held their annual Healthy Kids Day

By Selena Nguyen
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM – On April 18, the Scantic Valley Branch YMCA hosted their annual Healthy Kids Day – a national YMCA initiative centered around promoting healthy, active summers for children and educating families on communal resources.

“What we’re hoping to do is show children and their families how they can have a healthy, active, and safe summer. During the summer months, kids typically use that structure. So, we come together with like-minded organizations to showcase what we have to offer, but also what’s available in our community,” Deb Kelder, executive director of the Scantic Valley Branch, said.

Lots of stations and tables were set up, indoors and outdoors, consisting of various interactive activities provided by the Y and the vendors themselves, such as face painting, rock climbing and crafts. Tables were also giving out informational pamphlets and take-home freebies for the families.

For example, Dr. Ana Serrenho, owner of Pop Orthodontics, gave out goodie-bags containing toothbrushes and floss.

“Our goal is to provide high quality orthodontic care to the community, and our goal for coming here today is to spread the message of the importance of oral care,” Dr. Serrenho said.

Local vendors running these stands came from diverse companies and businesses with different messages to share, but one alike purpose –



Country Bank Representatives rock their Tagline T-Shirts.

Turley photos by Selena Nguyen

serving the community.

The Wilbraham Branch Country Bank’s Assistant Vice President and Retail Banking Officer Tracey Perry put an emphasis on the company’s tagline: “Made to Make a Difference”, also expressing the importance of events like these for the public to directly connect with families.

“It’s free for the community and I think it’s great. Typically, there’s about 200 kids and their families that come through this event, and I think it’s a great opportunity to connect with them and talk about being active. And just being a part of the community, honestly. There’s all kinds of great

resources here,” Perry said. Perry referred to included the Wilbraham Fire Department,



Pop Orthodontist Owner Dr. Ana Serrenho handing out stickers.

resources here,” Perry said. Perry referred to included the Wilbraham Fire Department,

who brought in one of their very own fire trucks to show off their specialized equipment.

Deputy Fire Chief Patrick Farrow, who’s also Captain of Fire Prevention and Education, mentioned the Department’s Fire Safety Education Program that attends events such as the Healthy Kids Day year-round across town with the purpose of, “informing the public of the current fire safety tips, being present with the community, and letting them know the services we provide on the daily.”

When asked about his thoughts on events such as Healthy Kids Day, Farrow said this.

“I think it supports a great initiative to stay healthy as our youth, as a community. And for families to find services that they may have not known existed,” Farrow said.

Similarly, Coalition Coordinator of the Hampden-Wilbraham Partners for Youth (HWP4Y) Jackie Hafner, also shared how valuable she thought the event was to families and their children.

“Our young people are our future, and the more we can expose them to different resources and ideas, to empower them for their future,” Hafner said.

This is not the first time the HWP4Y have collaborated with the YMCA. Just in January of this year, the HWP4Y hosted a “Night at the Y” event, targeted towards teenagers.

Thanks to the HWP4Y’s connection to Minnechaug, many high school students attended and were able to enjoy a fun-filled Friday night. Similarly, several high school

students were able to support the Healthy Kids Day event as volunteers, representing Minnechaug’s National Honor Society.

“The Y is the heart of the community. I think the Y is a great resource for young people,” Hafner said.

As Hafner said, the Scantic Valley YMCA has become a significant part of the community, working to support people of all ages in any way they can.

For example, the Y plans to hold their first ever “Parkinson’s Walk” which is aimed towards raising money for their year-round instructor-led Parkinson’s Disease Support Class.

“Anybody who would like to do the walk to support Parkinson’s can choose to either walk half a mile or a mile. The reason we’re having it be such a short walk is that we want anybody who has Parkinson’s to be able to join in and do the walk too,” Kelder said.

As for children and young teenagers, the YMCA is also promoting their Summer Camps (Stony Brook, Camp Webber, Fun City) for ages four to 15.

“I think it’s the best way to create memories, to meet new people and meet new friends. And to have an experience just creating long-lasting memories that they’ll never forget about,” Caleb Wales-Petit, Director of Stony Brook, said.

The Summer Camp is just one of the many ways the YMCA works to enforce those active summer and communal values the Healthy Kids Day emphasizes, and that the Y consistently works towards every day.

WILBRAHAM ANNUAL TOWN MEETING Monday, May 11, 2026, 6:30 P.M. Minnechaug Regional High School Auditorium

All Wilbraham voters are encouraged to attend the Annual Town Meeting.

The meeting will start at 6:30 P.M. Please arrive early as the Meeting will begin on-time as soon as a quorum of fifty voters are present.

The 43 Warrant Articles for consideration include:

26 Budget and Consent Agenda Articles including a \$57,018,471 Proposed Budget Appropriation for FY27

6 Community Preservation Act Projects, including: Community Preservation Program Budget; CPA Project for Adam’s Cemetery Historic Gravestone Restoration; CPA Project to Improve McLaughlin Softball Field at Spec Pond with the addition of Dugouts and Outfield Fencing; CPA Project for Perimeter Fencing for Soule Road Elementary School Play Spaces; CPA Project for Playground Equipment Replacement at Soule Road Elementary School; CPA Project for Memorial School Heating System Replacement and System Upgrades

1 Article for the Acceptance of Deeds

2 Articles for Land Taking for Sidewalk Improvement Projects at the Intersections of Stony Hill Road and Springfield Street Road and Stony Hill Road and Boston Road

4 Articles for renumbering and recaptioning, and amending the General and Zoning ByLaws as presented by the ByLaw Study Committee, and in the new General Code format

1 Article for a Zoning By-Law Amendment – Regulation of Accessory Dwelling Units

1 Article for a General By-Laws Amendment—
Local Licenses and Permits; Denial, Revocation or Suspension for Failure to Pay Municipal Taxes or Charges

1 Article for a General By-Laws Amendment—
Snow Removal on Private Roads

1 Petitioned Article Relative to a Public Shade Tree General By-Law

Look for the Town Meeting Workbook
in this week’s edition of The Wilbraham-Hampden Times.
Visit the Town’s website for the Workbook, Warrant, Exhibits and related documents at: www.wilbraham-ma.gov

COMMUNITY

Caltabiano running for Water Commissioner

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - John Caltabiano is running for Water Commissioner in this year's town election.

The town election takes place on May 16.

Caltabiano, a resident for over 25 years, is also a member of the St. Cecilia Parish Finance Council, Knights of Columbus Council 10195 and is one of the many gardeners with a growing plot at the Wilbraham Community Gardens. He's also a retired business executive and has over 40 years of leadership, innovation, agriculture, banking and financial services experience.

In addition to his Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Economics and Plant Science from Cornell University and MBA from the Fuqua School of Business at Duke University, Caltabiano is a graduate of LEAD New York, the Empire State Food and Agricultural Leadership Institute and served as president of its board. He is, also, a past director of the Northeast

Agricultural Education Foundation.

He shared what makes him qualified to serve.

"I understand the criticality of maintaining a safe, clean, reliable, sustainable and cost-effective water supply for town residents and businesses. From my early roots growing up on a vegetable farm, which relied on water to grow our crops, to working with businesses and populations across the country that rely on water to maintain health and prosperity, I am tuned into managing the needs, challenges, supply and delivery of this precious resource," Caltabiano said.

Caltabiano added he was first elected as a Water Commissioner in May 2025 when he filled a vacant one-year term. This year, he's seeking the three-year term.

"I've been an active commissioner for almost a year now and have participated in every scheduled Board of Water Commissioners meeting and public hearing to date.

I've brought fresh and unique experiences and perspectives

to the Board of Water Commissioners, along with a disciplined financial approach," Caltabiano said.

On what inspired him to run, he explained that, for a long time, he's been "intrigued with the region's, particularly Wilbraham's, history and relationship with its water resources."

"I've engaged with town residents, Water Department staff and Commissioners in exploring the challenges and opportunities in maintaining our water access, infrastructure and delivery in a safe and cost-effective manner," Caltabiano said. "I think it is important that, as citizens, we all get involved in ways that can help maintain and enhance the quality of life in our community. I see the role of Water Commissioner as a way for me to use my expertise and experience to do that."

Reflecting on the past year, Caltabiano shared the

successes and what he'd like to see improve.

"For several years, the Wilbraham Water Department has been recognized as a top-notch provider, winning numerous awards for water quality and service. It is critical to be informed and act on, when appropriate, new opportunities and innovations that can enhance and maintain our high-quality water, water delivery and service, while keeping our rates in check," Caltabiano said.

On his vision for his next term, he summed it up as this.

"The collective experience, oversight and the direction provided by the three Water Commissioners is key as the Water Department increases investment in infrastructure to ensure long-term access, reliability, quality and security of our water supply," Caltabiano said. "In short, working with fellow Commissioners and department staff to continue to make sure that we have clean, safe, reliable, sustainable and cost-effective water for residents, businesses and fire safety needs."



John Caltabiano

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the middle. You get a ranking every year. Between that time and now, the ranking has gone from, say, middle of the pack, to the 77th percentile," Provost said.

Provost emphasized his concern about those 19 additional positions if the budget does not pass.

"So, it's really important that this budget passes and thank you for supporting it. I just hope everyone supports the budget at town meeting," Provost said.

On Boyd's question on the 10 positions, Provost said they include three instructional coaches, one physical education position and "a number of positions that happen to be vacant at the time because of retirements or transitions that we decided to not fill," including some in the Maintenance Department and others to, hopefully, put in next year to address overcrowding at the middle school.

The 19 additional positions that would be cut if the budget doesn't pass are teachers who were hired after Aug. 25, the start of the current school year.

As residents asked questions and expressed their thoughts, Boyd noted there's a Finance and Operations Subcommittee with representatives from Hampden and

Wilbraham, along with the administration and School Committee that typically start meeting in December.

"We start having these discussions at a pretty granular level in terms of what each community is going to be able to support in that year, so this is not the first time when we received this assessment letter that we see a number. The regional agreement calls for the allocation between the towns to be determined by the enrollment split as of Oct. 1 each year. For years and years and years, that was 25%/75%. With the shifting of Thornton Burgess to Green Meadows and to Wilbraham Middle School and the initiation of litigation, that shifted and it dropped down to last year—or maybe it's this year—just over 19%," Boyd said. "Each 1% shift in the budget is roughly \$360,000, \$380,000, something like that."

This year, he added, "that pendulum started swinging back in the direction of Hampden."

"So, the assessment we received has roughly a 1% in it or above the normal assessment," Boyd said. "The other half of that statement is for the past three or four or five years, Wilbraham has been experiencing the same thing. The pendulum was going in their direction, so they were picking

up a larger and larger share of the increase in the assessment. So that's why this year, Hampden's ability to contribute to the school budget is the limiting factor in the school's budget. The last few years, Wilbraham's ability to pay was the limiting factor."

Boyd ended his thoughts on the public education support at the national level.

"A larger and larger share of the responsibility for paying for education has shifted to the cities and towns. We are what's known as a hold-harmless district because we have declining enrollment. What that means is that the increase that we receive through the state school funding, it's a flat figure. The governor put in a request for \$75 per student increase in the budget," Boyd said.

After noting an increase to \$160 per student is being sought, he added it still doesn't cover the increase in cost to educating students.

"Do remember when it's time to vote that the people who are representing us could be doing a better job. The amount that we as a town can afford to pay is being stretched to the limit and, assuming that we can pay it, that we have the capacity within the budget to raise the funds," Boyd said.

Boyd said another consideration is the impact on people

who are paying the bills, with taxes in Hampden having gone up about 10% this current year.

"We don't have a projection yet in terms of what this will do to the budget. It's not going to be 10%, but it will still be a substantial increase. It'll be more than 2.5%, that's for certain, and that's with these reductions in schools and level service and other town departments," Boyd said.

Advisory Committee Member Kathy Pessolano said it was "important for people to remember that" the Advisory Committee "makes recommendations," and how the budget sheets, as people came in, were missing one column, which represents the Advisory Committee's recommendation on an item.

Pessolano said the decision is up to the voters at Town Meeting.

"The final say is going to be May 11 at 6:30 at Town Meeting. That is going to approve the budget based on the recommendations or make a motion from the floor to increase a line item on the budget or decrease a line item on the budget. But, it's important to remember that it's the voters. Not the Advisory Board, not the Selectboard, but the voters who are ultimately going to decide what gets financed, where do you want your money to go," Pessolano said.

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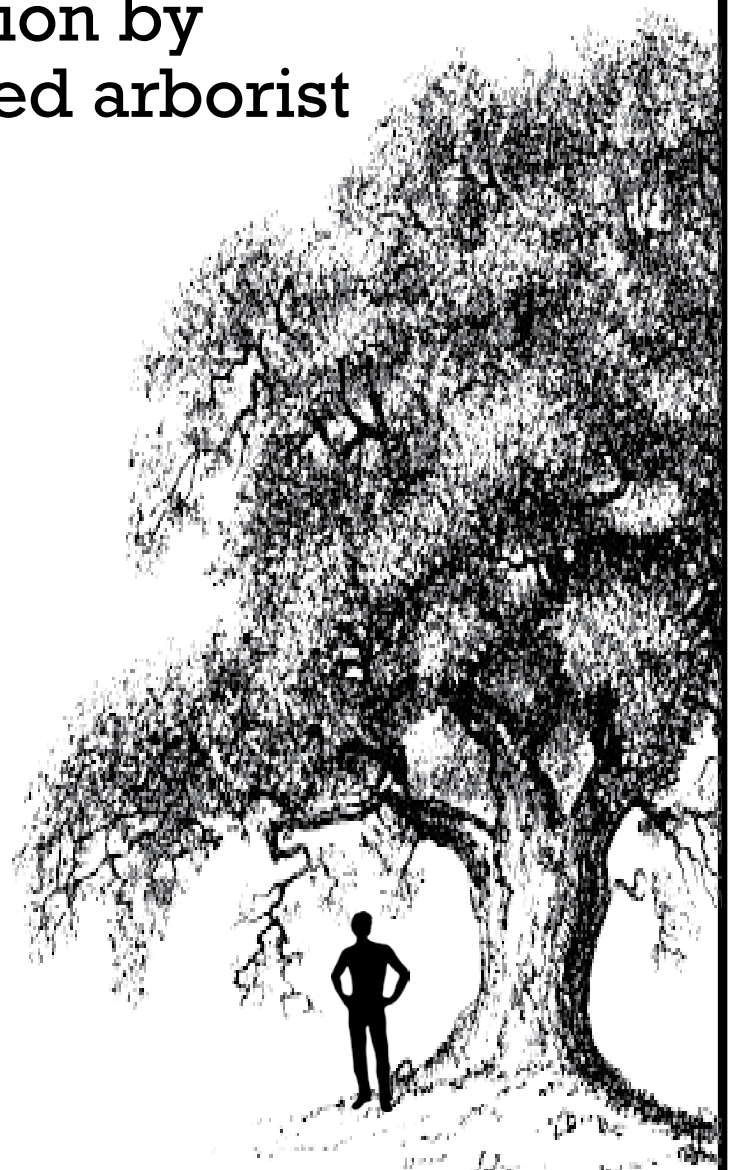


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Hampden Garden Club announces upcoming events

HAMPDEN – The Hampden Garden Club would like to announce the following upcoming events.

The Hampden Garden Club will be hosting Jacqueline Clark, the owner/operator of Garden Designs by Jacqueline, LLC on Thursday, May 21, at 7 p.m. Jacqueline has been gardening and lec-

turing for over 23 years and will be presenting her program “Gardening for Four Seasons”.

Jacqueline specializes in design and monthly maintenance of all types of landscaping. The program will be at our NEW meeting location at the Town Hall (formerly Thornton W. Burgess Middle

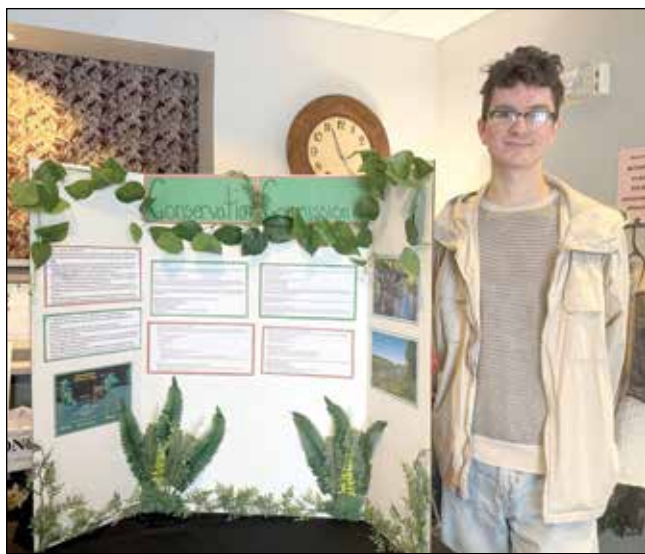
School), 85 Wilbraham Rd, Hampden, Room A7.

Guests are asked to use the Library Entrance. There is a \$5 fee for non-members of the garden club. New members are welcome! Membership fee for the year is \$15 and includes admission to all programs.

The Hampden Garden

Club’s Memorial Day Plant Sale will be held on Monday, May 25, at the Academy Hall on 616 Main Street from 8 a.m. till Noon. There will be a wide variety of plants to purchase.

Make sure to stop by and check out our raffle prize table and purchase raffle tickets for a chance to win.



Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

Conservation Agent Joe Zeno with his poster board about the Conservation Commission and wetlands at the Hampden Senior Center on April 22.

Conservation Agent Joe Zeno visits HSC

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com

HAMPDEN - Conservation Agent Joe Zeno visited the senior center on April 22 to meet with residents and share information about the Conservation Commission.

Zeno explained he visited the senior center, specifically, as many residents come there, expressing excitement at the opportunity to connect with the community and share what the Conservation Commission is and what they do.

“Already, talking to people today, we’ve heard some people haven’t even heard of the Conservation Commission, so I think it’s really important that we kind of educate the public about environmental conservation in town and what the environmental law of Massachusetts and Hampden regulates in terms of the environment,” Zeno said.

Other conversations, he added, included residents sharing their experiences in their parts of town, which will help the commission work with them to learn more and investigate. If the concerns are under their jurisdiction, they would be enforced with the Wetland Protection Act.

In addition to educating the public, Zeno said the opportunity also helps the commission gather resources and information.

“We rely very heavily on residents to let us know about what is going on in town and what environmental concerns might be going on,” Zeno said.

Zeno shared he has a degree in Botany and Ecology and was always interested in this area and after being appointed to the Conservation Commission a year ago, they expressed to him how they need an agent “to lead the commission and work with the public a little bit more.”

“I’ve been loving the work that I’ve been doing and I’ve been engaging with a lot of research aspects, grant aspects and working with the state and local communities and it’s been a really good way to progress

myself as an environmentalist, but also to increase the town’s education and access to environmental knowledge,” Zeno said.

Noting April 22 was Earth Day, Zeno said how this observance has “become a very prominent day in the U.S.”

“I wanted to come here specifically today to let people know what we’re doing on a local level to really protect the earth around us, and the Conservation Commission is taking a lot of specific initiatives to advance how we protect the land, especially wetlands in town,” Zeno said. “And so, it’s great to be here on Earth Day Week and really appreciate the Earth around us and realize that we’re not separate from nature. We’re all part of the same cycle. So, I think it’s really important that we highlight that.”

Zeno said he enjoyed meeting the residents.

“They always let me know what they’re experiencing in their specific part of town or what they’re experiencing in their life, and that’s not something I can ever know without them telling me so I really want to come to where they can congregate and have them tell me what they need and what they want to see in town,” Zeno said. “So, I think it’s really great to have these conversations with residents.”

He also hopes to get more involved in community events—he recently appeared at the Eco Expo at the library on April 25—and grow membership and get involved in more grants and environmental conservation issues in town.

“So, I really want to maximize what the commission is able to do with the potential and maybe do more than just address wetland violations, but also do things like education in town and work with other towns, the Land Trust in town. So, I think it’s great to do that, and also, I really would like to do a lot more events like this where we can build a community of residents that really cares about the envi-

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event on Earth Day was the important—and awesome—part.

“We were like, ‘Okay, well, we need to do something that’s plant-related. Keep people outside? No, let’s do it, an inside project right now.’ Especially in April,” Fedora said. “It was really good and we hope that everyone observes Earth Day in their own fashion. Go out in your gardens, maybe plant a few seeds, have something fresh and wonderful for the summer.”

Fedora said the Hampden Garden Club has been established for 94 years.

“So, looking forward to our 100th whenever that happens! It’ll be here before we know it,” Fedora said.

On the event, she said this was the first one the Hampden Garden Club has ever done.

“We’re glad it was a success. We hope to do some more in the future,” Fedora said. “I know that we do have an event going on, it will be for Garden Club members only and we’re going to actually be doing stepping stones for our gardens, and we want to see how that goes and may be able to offer it to the public next year. I’m glad that I’m part of the Garden Club and we have some wonderful members.”

For anyone who wants to join the Hampden Garden Club, Fedora said it’s \$15 for the year and everyone gets to participate in the events that the members do from garden tours to special events.

“Of course, our Plant Sale is coming up on Memorial Day. 8 a.m. to Noon and we’ll be at Academy Hall,” Fedora said.

Her message for the attendees was this. “I’m excited for the people that did come out today. The range of ages. You can be planting when you’re a young 70-year-old or even a very young 14-year-old. So, I love the idea that people don’t mind getting to be a little dirty in the dirt. It’s okay, but it’s a great thing,” Fedora said.

To learn more about the Hampden Garden Club, visit hampdengardenclub.org, visit the town website or check out their Facebook page.

“We’re looking for another exciting year and beautifying the town,” Fedora said.



The Hampden Garden Club, led by President Lil Fedora.



Photos courtesy of Tina Doran

The event was open to all, no matter how old or young.

Ballots available for Annual Town Election

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham Town Clerk’s Office announces that early vote by mail/absentee ballots are now available for the upcoming Annual Town Election scheduled for Saturday, May 16, 2026.

A request in writing is required for obtaining a ballot. An application to request a vote by mail/absentee ballot can be found on the Town Website or by going here: <https://www.wilbraham-ma.gov/934/Vote-By-Mail>. You may also apply online for a vote by mail ballot here: <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/MailInRequestWeb/MailIn-Ballot.aspx>.

The last day and time to apply for a vote by mail ballot or absentee mail in ballot is Monday, May 11, 2026, 5 p.m. The last day and time to apply for an in-person absentee ballot is Friday, May 15, 2026, Noon. Please call 596-2800, ext. 200 if you have any questions.

Mother's Day Specials

Appetizers

- Prosciutto Wrapped Asparagus
balsamic drizzle
- Sausage Stuffed Mushrooms
sausage stuffing, topped with cheese

Entrées

- Haddock Francaise
rice pilaf, spinach
- Baked Stuffed Shrimp
seafood stuffing, rice, asparagus
- Mom's Petite Filet Mignon
6 oz filet, red wine demiglace, fingerling
- Salmon Hollandaise
seared salmon, hollandaise, asparagus, mashed potatoes
- 12 oz French Cut Pork Chop
fingerling potatoes, green beans
- Rosemary Garlic Half Chicken
mashed potatoes, squash medley

Plus Our Famous Salads:

- Cobb
- The LOCAL

9 AM
Brunch Begins

11:30 AM
Last Brunch Seating

NOON
Specials and Regular Menu Available

Our Famous Brunch: Sat & Sun 9am-Noon

SUN 9:00am-9:00pm
Mon-WED 11:00am-9:00pm
THURS-Fri 11:00am-10:00pm
SAT 9:00am-10:00pm

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VIEWPOINTS

SOCIAL SECURITY

Matters

By Russell Gloor

Must I set up a Social Security account to enroll in Medicare?

Dear Rusty:

I turn 65 this November 2026. Someone told me I need to set up a Social Security account at least three months ahead of time before applying for Medicare for the first time. I do not intend to take any Social Security benefits until, perhaps, age 67 or later. Please advise and thank you.

Signed: Looking Ahead

Dear Looking Ahead:

You don't technically need to "set up" an online SSA account to enroll in Medicare, but it would be more efficient to do so. We always recommend creating your online "my Social Security" account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount well before you are ready to claim your Social Security benefits. That's because you can monitor your projected Social Security benefits to help you decide when to claim, but it also facilitates other things you might need to do at the Social Security Administration such as claiming your SS retirement benefits online and enrolling in Medicare online.

As for Medicare, you can enroll in Medicare up to three months before the month you turn 65, and you can contact the Social Security Administration by phone up to three months prior in order to schedule an appointment to enroll over the phone (call 1-800-772-1213 to make the appointment). You can enroll via telephone, even if you don't have your "my Social Security" online account set up.

However, an advantage to creating your personal online Social Security account is that you could then enroll in Medicare online as described at this link: www.ssa.gov/medicare/sign-up. And you can, as you wish to do, enroll only in Medicare without also taking your

Social Security benefits at this time.

I want to also make you aware that if you are still working and have "creditable" healthcare coverage from your employer ("creditable" is an employer group plan with at least 20 participants), then you can delay enrolling in Medicare until your employer coverage ends (thus saving the usual Medicare Part B monthly premium). When your employer's healthcare coverage ends, you will enter a Special Enrollment Period during which you can enroll in Medicare without incurring a Late Enrollment Penalty.

Finally, please be aware that whenever you claim your Social Security benefits, you will be automatically enrolled in Medicare Part A (inpatient hospitalization coverage) and Part B (coverage for outpatient medical services). Since there is a monthly premium associated with Medicare Part B (but not with Part A), you can choose to decline Part B if you are still working and covered by your employer's creditable healthcare plan, until your employer's healthcare coverage ends.

The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. This article is intended for information purposes and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

Letters to the Editor

John Flynn for Hampden Selectboard

To The Editor:

I look forward to an opportunity to continue to serve my friends and neigh-

bors and the community of Hampden.

John Flynn,
Hampden

In honor of Mother Earth

This week, we celebrate Earth Day. Lots of towns host bulk waste days or a town-wide clean up as ways to note the day.

While most of us garden with great intentions such as beautifying our yards or producing home grown vegetables, it is important to note that the gardening/greenhouse industry hasn't always been what you'd call "earth-friendly." From mountains of plastic pots not rotting away in our landfills to story after story of chemical misuse, we inadvertently hurt the very source of our pleasure.

So, in honor of Earth Day, read from the archives eight easy things we can do as gardeners to tread a bit more lightly on 'ole Mother.

Feed the soil, not the plant

Have your soil tested and ask for organic recommendations to correct nutrient deficiencies. Replenishing your garden with amendments like rock phosphate and greensand will help to create long-lasting nutrient storehouses.

Healthy soil will produce plants that are less prone to insect and disease problems.

Start a compost pile

Layer your vegetable and yard waste, keep it moist and give it a turn. After a short time it will decompose, leaving behind a great source of organic matter.

No matter how you garden, be it vegetables, flowers, herbs, fruits or even shrubs, each benefit from a yearly top dressing of "black gold."

Make compost tea

Are your transplants looking a little pale? Rather than sprinkling them with "blue water," perk them up with

home-brewed compost tea.

Mix one part well-rotted compost or manure to five parts water and allow it to sit for a week or more. Strain before foliar feeding your plants.

the imagination. If you must choose a chemical option follow the manufacturer's recommendations. Assuming that more is better is outdated and dangerous thinking!

Conserve water

We all know that watering during the heat of the day results in lots of moisture lost to evaporation while watering in the evening can make plants more prone to disease. What to do?

For happy, hydrated plants water in the early morning hours instead. Hand watering at the base of each plant or using soaker hoses or drip irrigation is far better than overhead sprinklers when it comes to conservation and disease prevention.

Extend the harvest

Do you know how far most fruits and vegetables have to travel to reach the local supermarket? Probably far more than the average American travels in a year's time. Frustrated? Then read up on various methods of extending the use of your own garden bounty past the growing season.

This could mean growing a few veggies like winter squash, onions or garlic – all of which store well. It could also mean trying your hand at freezing or drying some of your produce for use in the off-season.

Few of us can feed ourselves entirely, but whatever we can grow offsets the rest.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 34 years, she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.

Reduce, reuse, recycle!

I first became familiar with this catch phrase back in 1990, when Earth Day celebrations went global. In the context of plastic pots and other containers used to grow or move plants, I'd like to think that the local Mom and Pop shop would take back the pots you bought their plants in and use them to grow next years crop.

If not, maybe you could reuse them to start some homegrown seedlings and recycle the rest. An even better solution for earth conscious growers would be to replace plastic with fiber (stronger than peat and made from recycled materials to boot).

Use least toxic measures to control bugs and other garden thugs

Beer to trap slugs, and baking soda for black spot – the list of remedies to fight garden maladies is numerous and not always a stretch of

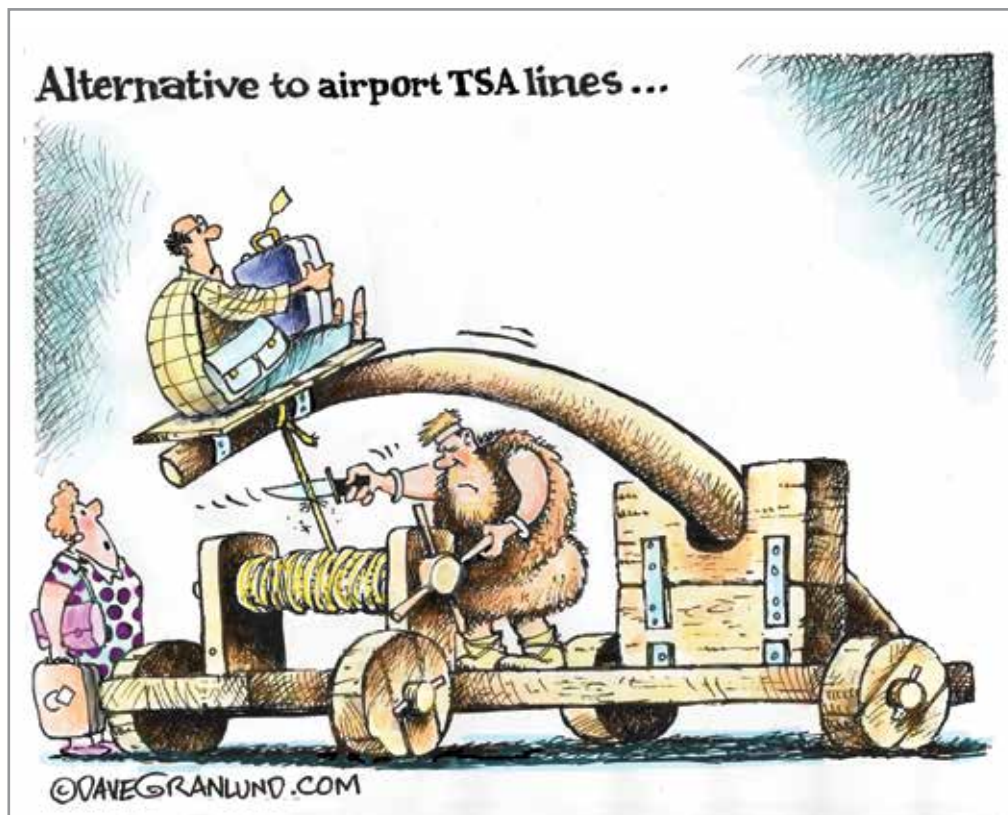


by Roberta McQuaid

Shop Mom and Pop

Buying local, direct from the grower usually means a knowledgeable sales team! Form relationships and learn from their expertise.

Ask them to carry organic seeds, potting soils and pest control options.



By Ellenor Downer

Red-breasted nuthatch

Last Wednesday, April 8 while waiting at the bus stop for my grandson, I saw two red-breasted nuthatches in a small grove of pine trees near the road.

They were going up and down several pine trees most likely in search of insects. The red-breasted nuthatch is about 4.3 to 4.7 inches long and exhibits the typical head-down nuthatch behavior of its larger cousin, the white-breasted nuthatch. Male and females are similar with a black eye stripe, white eyebrow and

buff orange underparts. It has a blue-gray back.

They inhabit conifer forests and in winter may be found in other trees. They nest mostly in conifers such as spruce, fir, hemlock.

Both sexes excavate a nest cavity in a rotten stub or snag, usually five to 40 feet above the ground. Sticky pitch is smeared around the entrance of the nest hole possibly to prevent other creatures from

entering. Adults avoid getting stuck in the pitch by flying straight into the hole. Sometimes they are seen with pitch on their feathers.

The female lays five to six white, spotted eggs. The female incubates the eggs and the male brings food to her. Both parents feed the nestlings. Young nuthatches leave the nest about two to three weeks after hatching.

They have a soft, musi-

cal song used especially in courtship by the male. These nuthatches eat insects, spiders and seeds in summer. In winter they eat many seeds especially those of conifers.

Nesting bluebirds

On Saturday, April 11 I received an email from a Hampden resident. She said, "Our bluebirds are back and have completed their nest. We are awaiting the first egg. I'm surprised they use mostly pine needles constructing the nest."

Brimfield birds

A Brimfield resident said he saw a female brown-headed cowbird in his yard. He said it was unusual as he usually sees the male before the female.

He said, "On Sunday I did a tour of local ponds. There was a pair of ring-necked

ducks on Sherman Pond in Brimfield and several on a pond in Warren. Also in Warren I saw an osprey at the pond where they have nested for several years. I've been checking the pond since early March and this is the first sighting of an osprey this year. I hope its partner shows up soon."

He also said, in Warren, there was a bald eagle at a pond on New Reed Street. There has been one or two there frequently during March. A pair of eastern bluebirds was seen perched on two different trees with holes possibly suitable for a nest. I often see bluebirds using nesting boxes, but have never seen them using a natural cavity. I'll keep checking to see if they nest in either tree."

Please see **BACKYARD**, page 9

The Wilbraham-Hampden
TIMES

We Want to Hear From You

EDITOR

Kristin Rivers
krivers@turley.com

ADVERTISING SALES

Jocelyn Walker
jwalker@turley.com

SPORTS EDITOR

Greg Scibelli
sports@turley.com

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WEB
wilbrahamhampden.times.turley.com



PHONE
(413) 283-8393



ADDRESS
24 Water Street
Palmer, MA 01069

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Correction Policy

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

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

Election letters to the editor welcome

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

For more information, call the editor at 413-283-8393.

Campaign news

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

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

A COMMUNITY GALLERY

WILBRAHAM HAMPDEN

Life in &

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



Daffodils in bloom

Submitted photo and caption Susan Austin

The beautiful spring display of daffodils on the hillside of The Old Cemetery on Chapin Road in Hampden is a memorial to those lost on 9/11. According to club historian, Connie Witt, the club planted 911 naturalizing, mixed bulbs symbolizing the different nationalities lost that day. The Hampden Garden Club has planted 20,000 bulbs throughout Hampden since 1999 and the memorial planting at the cemetery was planted in 2002.

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

Send us in your announcements!
Happy Birthdays, Anniversaries, etc.

We will pick one each week to run here free of charge, please keep it to less than 50 words.
Please send to krivers@turley.com



Photo and caption courtesy of Hampden Police Department

HPD Autism Awareness patches

The Hampden Police Department shared on Facebook that their Autism patches are available for purchase. \$10 each and are available for pick up at the police station.

POLOMS RUN IN BOSTON MARATHON



Submitted photos Sandy Polom



Sandy Polom shared with the Times that her son and daughter-in-law, Corey and Sarah Polom, ran with the Dana Farber team during this year's Boston Marathon on April 20. This was the couple's first marathon, with Polom sharing how proud she

was of them. Both Wilbraham natives, the couple now lives in Kennebunk, Maine. Polom also shared the couple ran in memory of her brother, Jeff Coelho, who was a Dana Farber patient and passed away in 2023 at the age of 56

after battling melanoma. Through their training and fundraising, the couple raised nearly \$40,000 for cancer research. Anyone who wishes to donate can still support the team at danafarber.jimmyfund.org/goto/polompurposesteam.

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HILL CLIMB from page 1

closer to Main Street and an automated signal to inform racers when they reach the finish line.

This year's sponsors include Stonewall Insurance Group, Lia Auto Group, LUSO Federal Credit Union, 97.7 FM WARE, Bonhams, Hagerty, Sampson Funeral Homes, the Joseph and Anna C. Dias Foundation and more. Sponsorships are still available and for anyone who is interested, call 413-531-3991.

As announced at the April 6 Select Board meeting, a parking ban will be in place on May 9 from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. for the following streets.

1 Main Street between Tinkham Road and Wright Place Street

2 Springfield Street between Main Street and Ripley Street

3 Burt Lane
4 Crane Park Drive
5 Bolles Road
6 Pomeroy Street
7 Hunting Lane
8 Miles Morgan Court
9 Willow Brook Lane
10 Woodland Dell Road
11 Brookmont Drive between Main Street and Hill-top Drive



An action shot from last year's event.

Mountain Road between Main Street and 509 Mountain Road

13 Ridge Road between Monson Road and 200 feet north of Ridge Road

14 Peak Road between Monson Road and 200 feet south of Peak Road

15 Monson Road between Main Street and Ridge Road

The northbound lane of Main Street will also be closed to traffic between Tinkham Road and Faculty Street, along with Monson Road between Main Street and Ridge Road.

The event is also free to attend.

Jeff DeMarey, who co-organizes the event alongside Ed Cenedella and is the founder of the Springfield to



Photos courtesy of Jeff DeMarey
Nolan checks out one of the cars.

Boston Education Foundation, expressed excitement and shared how engineers from MIT, Boston University,

UMass Amherst and Western New England University will also be bringing their prototype cars to race up the hill at the event, another new offering this year.

"It's really cool that these guys and gals are coming to run up the hill," DeMarey said. "That's where the Hill Climb came from."

DeMarey noted 51 cars would be racing up the hill this year.

"We've got six—what they call—cycle cars, and the cycle cars are these little mini, little race cars that do 50 miles an hour top speed, but they're all mini cars of the era. One is called the Beast of Turin," DeMarey said. "Then a little Bugatti and some other cute things, so those guys are all going to go up like a swarm. They're not very fast or anything, but they're really unique."

Other vehicles to note include a 1952 Cunningham C4RK Coupe, a 1932 Ford Big Sprint Car, a 1928 4 1/2 Liter Bentley, a 1929 Duesenberg Model J, a 1929 Bugatti 37A, a 1915 Stutz Bearcat and 1940 Mercedes-Benz 170 VR.

DeMarey said Wilbraham & Monson Academy is also

lending its support once again for event space.

"We can use any of their property. Pretty much going to be on that soccer field," DeMarey said.

Another supporter on the vendor side is Fieldcrest Brewing Company.

Also, plenty of free handicapped parking.

"We have two spots for them. If they have a placard, they're going to park right behind the old bank that's in the middle of town and then if they don't have a placard... they're going to park down in front of The Sugar Chalet and the orthodontist and LUSO in there," DeMarey said.

DeMarey also clarified the car parade that was mentioned at the April 6 Select Board meeting.

"We were working on it to go up the hill, but with all the race cars, all of the race people said, 'You're never going to get them all to go up the hill,'" DeMarey said. "We are going to do a moment of silence for George Holman, who helped start this. We're going to do the National Anthem and then the moment of silence is going to be his Stutz Pikes Peak Racer is going to go up the hill in a moment of silence."

So, you'll hear it hammering up the hill while everybody's quiet. That would be George. He wouldn't want quiet, he'd want that engine noise going up the hill, so that's kind of where we've come to that."

DeMarey said he's looking forward to seeing the community come out for the event.

"I just want a lot of people to come and enjoy themselves," DeMarey said.

His goal is also to bring smiles, educate the next generation of aspiring race and car enthusiasts and bring in and support the local businesses.

"I just love the smiles," DeMarey said. "Get rid of the politics...and just have a good day. We need more of that."

The message?

"Come and enjoy it," DeMarey said. "If you've got any kids interested in cars, get them in touch with me. We'll show them what a Packard is, we'll set them up with a design. Anything that has to do with automotive, that's what the foundation is all about and getting the kids involved."

To learn more, visit springfieldtoboston.com/wilbraham-hill-climb/.

CANDIDATES from page 1

in Wilbraham. My family and I actively participate in town programs—from library activities and children's events to Parks and Recreation programs and local playgrounds. These experiences give me a current, practical understanding of what residents value and what makes Wilbraham a vibrant community. Together, my professional background and lived experience provide a well-rounded perspective that enables me to serve effectively and thoughtfully as a member of the Select Board."

Squindo explained he was inspired to run again because he believes "Wilbraham benefits from experienced, thoughtful leadership and meaningful choice in its local government."

"With only three members on the Select Board, each seat carries significant influence, and it's important that a range of perspectives is represented in the town's decision-making. Through both my time on the Select Board and serving as an employee of other municipalities, I've seen firsthand how impactful local decisions are and how important it is to approach them with both expertise and compassion," Squindo said. "At the same time, as a resident raising a family in Wilbraham, I have stayed closely connected to the community and the priorities of our residents. These experiences motivated me to run to ensure voters have a meaningful choice and that our town continues to benefit from informed, compassionate, and community-focused leadership."

He shared several successes the Select Board accomplished.

"The Select Board's successes are often shared with the community and Town Meeting, which ultimately approves major policy decisions. Two clear examples

are the reduction of the town-wide speed limit from 30 to 25 miles per hour and the adoption of enhanced benefits under the Hero's Act, including the Gold Star Family exemption. The speed limit change, driven by resident input and advanced through the Board, improves roadway safety and reflects a strong commitment to protecting residents. The Hero's Act adoption provides meaningful, lasting support for veterans and their families. These policy decisions reflect the values and priorities of our community," Squindo said. "Another important success has been the Board's increased focus on setting annual goals. This has helped establish clearer priorities and a more intentional approach to governance. The Board has strengthened long-term planning through the creation of the Sustainable Budget Committee and the Building Utilization Committee. These efforts have brought together representation from multiple boards and community stakeholders to evaluate town-owned land and facilities more strategically, reflecting a more coordinated and proactive approach to balancing fiscal responsibility, preservation of Wilbraham's character, and thoughtful growth."

As for improvements, Squindo said this.

"Moving forward, the Select Board should operate with greater discipline and accountability in its internal processes. That includes finalizing a formal policy for volunteer board appointments, ensuring meeting minutes are consistently completed and up to date, and clearly designating the town website as the official posting location for agendas. These are fundamental standards of transparency that should be consistently met," Squindo said. "Finally, the Board must take a more active and

directive role in the budget process. As the town's executive body, it has a responsibility to set clear financial priorities and provide strong guidance to departments and committees. The budget is not just an administrative document—it is the town's annual policy statement. The Board should lead that process more intentionally and ensure it is aligned with long-term goals and community priorities."

If elected, Squindo said he envisions several priorities over the next three years and beyond, with the first focusing on Memorial School.

"First, after more than a decade of study and discussion, the town must move forward on a clear, actionable plan for Memorial School. Following the work of the Building Utilization Committee, the Select Board should ensure that a final recommendation is presented to Town Meeting by Spring 2027. While there may be differing views on the outcome, it is essential that we move from analysis to decision. We have already invested significant taxpayer resources and volunteer time, and it is time to provide a clear direction for one of our key town assets," Squindo said.

Another focus on continued collaboration with the town of Hampden, School Committee and regional partners.

"Second, Wilbraham must continue working collaboratively with Hampden, the School Committee and our regional partners to address the long-term challenges facing the school district. This includes the future of the middle school, potential updates to the regional agreement and ongoing concerns about inadequate state and federal funding," Squindo said. "The district's pursuit of the MSBA Core Program represents an important step toward evaluating facility needs and long-

term solutions. Any project of this scale will require careful planning, including a formal needs assessment and significant investment—potentially exceeding \$100 million, with partial state reimbursement. In the meantime, we must also pursue short-term improvements and advocate collectively at the state level to address chronic underfunding and unfunded mandates that impact districts across Massachusetts."

The final priority was this.

"Finally, I believe Wilbraham must take a more proactive approach to housing and affordability. This includes developing a Housing Production Plan and recognizing that we currently fall below the state benchmark for affordable housing under Chapter 40B. Addressing this gap is important not only for compliance, but for ensuring that residents who grew up in Wilbraham—or who want to move here—can afford to stay here," Squindo said. "We should also explore targeted solutions such as expanding the Senior Work-Off Program abatement from \$1,500 to \$2,000, which provides property tax relief to seniors in exchange for volunteer service and benefits the entire community. Additional solutions may require home rule petitions or state legislative action, and I look forward to engaging residents and bringing forward practical proposals for consideration. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve the residents of Wilbraham, and I respectfully ask for your support to continue this work. For more information, please visit www.electmikesquindo.com."

Ryan Costello

Costello reflected on his qualifications that would help him serve on the board.

"I believe an effective Select Board member combines

real-world experience, sound judgment and a genuine commitment to listening to residents. I've built those qualities over a 20-year career as an international lawyer, executive, and board member, along with my most important role as a father of three amazing kids. In my professional work, I navigate complex legal challenges, balance competing priorities, and help organizations make clear, data-driven decisions. I've also served on nonprofit boards and supported community initiatives, giving me hands-on experience with governance, collaboration, and leadership," Costello said. "Finally, living and working abroad for many years has shaped my view on the immense importance of transparency, accountability, and clear communication. I'll bring a practical, open-minded approach to decision-making—one that I believe is essential to serving the residents of Wilbraham effectively."

Costello said his hometown of Wilbraham is what inspired him to run.

"Wilbraham is my hometown. I graduated from Minnechaug in 1999, and after many years living in Italy, I returned in 2025 with a strong desire to give back to the community that helped shape who I am," Costello said. "I want to ensure Wilbraham remains a place where families choose to live, businesses can grow and residents feel heard. I'm running because I believe I can bring a thoughtful, solutions-driven approach to the Select Board—and make a meaningful contribution to the town's future."

On the Select Board's successes, Costello said, overall, he's been "really impressed with the current Select Board."

"They have made important progress in advancing key initiatives around infrastructure planning, exploring options for the middle school

and beginning conversations around economic development and town center revitalization. These are complex issues, and it is encouraging to see them being addressed thoughtfully," Costello said.

On improvements, he said this.

"At the same time, there is an opportunity to build on this progress by increasing transparency, enhancing communication with residents, and accelerating decision-making where appropriate," Costello said.

If elected, Costello said his term would focus on three core initiatives.

"First, I will prioritize advancing key sidewalk projects, including the Stony Hill School connection to Boston Road and improvements on Springfield Street near Town Hall. Sidewalks do more than connect streets—they improve safety, strengthen community and enhance the character of our town. While these projects depend on grant funding, I will work closely with the DPW to move them forward and deliver lasting benefits," Costello said. "Second, I will focus on smart, targeted economic development. Through my experience working across different markets, I understand what drives sustainable growth. I support thoughtful development in areas like the town center—strengthening our local economy while preserving what makes Wilbraham special. Third, I will work to improve transparency and resident engagement. My campaign is built around the idea of 'One Wilbraham'—bringing together residents of all backgrounds and perspectives around a shared vision for the town. I want people to feel informed, included, and heard, with clearer communication and meaningful opportunities to participate in decision-making."

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BACKYARD From page 6

Non-bird sighting
The Brimfield resident reported a non-bird sighting. He said “while driving out of the driveway yesterday I saw a small frog hopping off of the driveway. Probably a spring peeper. I’ll have to check a nearby small pond in the woods nearby to see if there are peepers there. The frog could have been a pickerel frog, we see those every year in the yard. They come in three sizes; small, medium and large. I try to be careful when I mow or weed whack to avoid them.”

Raven
My granddaughter while walking her dogs on Saturday, April 11 heard the croaking sound of a raven. It startled both the dogs and her.

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by emailing mybackyard88@aol.com or edowner@turley.com or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005. The Palmer office has a new phone system and I will be getting an extension where messages may be left. I will publish the number as soon as it is set up.

Keep Wilbraham Beautiful: 4th Annual Townwide Earth Day Community Clean-Up returns May 2

WILBRAHAM - Residents are invited to come together in community spirit and hometown pride for the 4th Annual Keep Wilbraham Beautiful Earth Day Community Clean-Up on Saturday, May 2 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Volunteers of all ages will gather at Memorial School for check-in and registration before heading out across town to help keep Wilbraham clean, green, and beautiful. Participants will receive all necessary supplies, simple instructions, and a designated area to clean.

This beloved annual event is more than just a clean-up—it’s a chance to connect with neighbors, enjoy the outdoors, and take pride in the town we all call home.

“We are so fortunate to live in such a beautiful community,” organizers shared. “This event is about coming together, having fun, and making a visible difference. Every piece of litter picked up helps keep Wilbraham looking its best.”

How to Get Involved
Volunteer: Individuals, families, and groups are en-

couraged to sign up and participate.

Form a Team: Gather friends, coworkers, or local organizations to cover more ground.

Support the Cause: If you’re unable to attend, but would still like to contribute, you can help promote the event by purchasing a Keep Wilbraham Beautiful yard sign for \$50.

Register & Learn More
Website: <https://sites.google.com/view/wilbraham-earth-day-cleanup/home>

Volunteer Registration: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScRyld_LLANYXgESj2KOWRneYOGNiHMa3odhNS0Hd_akfIX-TQ/viewform?usp=dialog

Whether you can give an hour or the whole morning, your participation makes a difference. Let’s show our pride and keep Wilbraham shining!

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Chairs were also moved around and rearranged in the basement to help reorganize the space.



Members of Wilbraham Troop 359 work on rearranging the basement.



One task involved vacuuming up dirt from the floor. Turley photos by Kristin Rivers



This volunteering opportunity gave members of Wilbraham Scout Troop 359 a chance to give back to the community.

Wilbraham Troop 359 cleans up

CLEAN UP from page 1

clude the Ice Cream Social every summer, the Christmas Tree Festival, historical talks and more.

The Old Meeting House Museum will open for the season on Saturday, May 9, during this year's Wilbraham Hill Climb.

As for Wilbraham Troop 359, they will also be holding their annual Mother's Day Plant Sale on Saturday, May 9, in the parking lot of St. Cecilia's from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

For more information on Wilbraham Troop 359 and their endeavors in the community, contact: Dr. Thomas Wadzinski via email at troop359wilbraham@gmail.com or visit www.beascout.org.



Members converse on tasks to complete.



Each of the members of Wilbraham Troop 359 took on several different tasks to help.



The basement ceilings also got some sprucing up.



Members cover a wooden object in the basement for preservation.

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Alexa Sherman makes the throw to first.



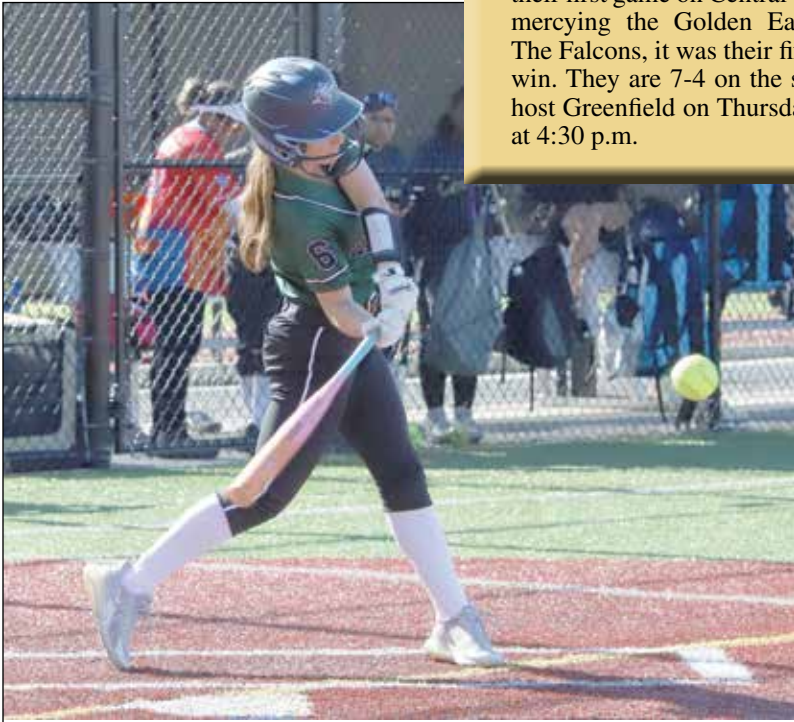
Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Veronica Ouimet gets ready to make a backhand play.



Summer McInnes rounds third and heads home.

Falcons invade Central's 'turf'

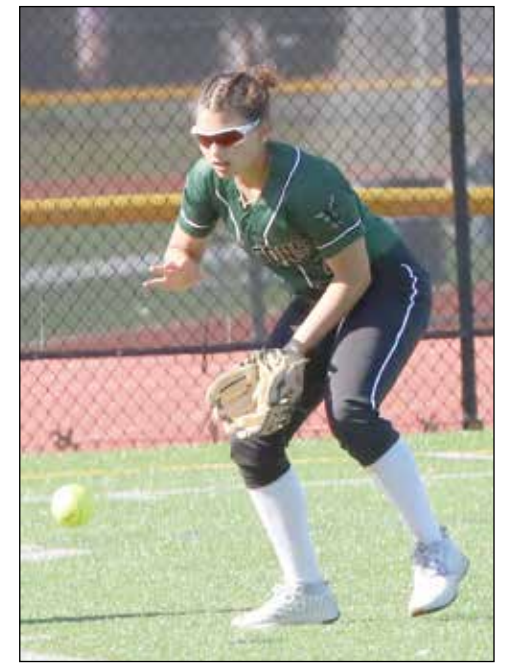
SPRINGFIELD – Artificial turf is extremely rare in high school baseball and softball, and the game definitely can be a little faster and with different hops, but Minnechaug softball was equal to the task playing their first game on Central's turf field, mercying the Golden Eagles 16-0. The Falcons, it was their fifth straight win. They are 7-4 on the season and host Greenfield on Thursday, Apr. 30 at 4:30 p.m.



Adrielle Sheridan squares up a base hit.



Kaelyn Dionne winds and fires home.



Brooklyn Rosas collects a base hit to center.

Minnechaug baseball picks up win over East Longmeadow

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

HARTFORD, CT— The third visit to Dunkin' Park in Hartford since 2023 proved to be a very successful one for the Minnechaug Regional varsity baseball team.

In their first two trips to the home field of the Yard Goats, who are the Double A affiliate of the Colorado Rockies, Minnechaug was shut out by Springfield Central.

The bus ride back to Wilbraham was a lot more enjoyable last Saturday afternoon, as the Falcons celebrated a 3-0 non-league shutout victory over the East Longmeadow Spartans.

"Every time that we've played down here, it's always the best high school baseball game we see all year," said Minnechaug head coach Mike Netkovick. "I think it's probably something to do with the setting, and the guys were excited to play here again."

Even though they're not members of the same league, it was the second meeting of the regular season between the two squads. The Falcons (5-6) suffered a 9-7 home loss to the Spartans (7-4) on April 6.

Prior to that loss, Minnechaug had won three of the previous four meetings in the series.

Senior righthander Evan Liversedge put his name in

the Minnechaug history book by becoming the first Falcons pitcher to earn a victory at Dunkin' Park.

"We lost to Central here last year, which was tough," Liversedge said. "Being the winning pitcher in today's game, especially as a senior, is very special. I've never pitched on a baseball field as nice as this one before. Everything is just perfect here."

Liversedge, who's looking forward to continuing his baseball career at Franklin Pierce University next year, didn't allow any runs on six base hits. He issued only one walk and had five strikeouts in his complete-game performance. He threw 101 pitches.

"Evan has pitched great for us all season long," Netkovick said. "He always gives us a great chance to win every time he's standing on the mound."

It didn't take the Falcons, who were the visiting team, very long to end their scoreless drought Dunkin' Park.

Liversedge drew a one-out walk against East Longmeadow junior righty Brayden Bousquet in the top of the first inning. Then junior third baseman Sam Przybyl and senior leftfielder Landyn Eldridge were both hit-by-pitches which loaded the bases. Liversedge scored

Please see **BASEBALL**, page 12



Kendall Dkaczek looks to shoot.



Caelan Luszczycki eyes a teammate across the field.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli



Sophia Kozub holds up before taking a shot.

Kozub's five goals leads the way for Falcons

WILBRAHAM – The Minnechaug Regional High School girls lacrosse team defeated Wachusett in independent action 14-4. Sophia Kozub had five goals to lead the team and Sophia O'Connor added four goals. Lillian Sergienko had three goals and an assist. Minnechaug improved to 6-3 on the regular season. The Falcons host West Springfield on Thursday, Apr. 30 at 7 p.m.

SEE MORE LACROSSE PHOTOS ON PAGE 12



Olivia Gaudreau heads through the middle of the field.

Girls Lacrosse defeats Wachusett



Oksana Dobronski cradles the ball after making a catch.



Lillian Sergienko tries to get through a pair of defenders.

T-Birds move into next round of playoffs

CHARLOTTE, N.C. - The Springfield Thunderbirds proved to be the comeback kids for the second straight night, defeating the Charlotte Checkers 2-1 in overtime in the deciding Game 3 of the clubs' First Round Calder Cup Playoff series.

For a third straight game, a Checkers blueliner broke the ice within six minutes of game action. With the teams skating 4-on-4, Jack Studnicka skated up the right side before sliding a pass across the slot to Tobias Bjornfot, who flipped a wrist shot past Georgi Romanov's glove hand at 5:58 to give Charlotte the 1-0 advantage.

As he did in Game 2, though, Romanov helped stabilize the defensive zone, turning away a sneaky backhand effort from Noah Gregor and the remaining seven shots that came his way in the opening period.

Springfield's offense only got four shots on the net, but chances began to arrive late in the period, with Otto Stenberg catching the post on a sharp angle chance and Julien Gauthier forcing Charlotte goalie Cooper Black to hold the fort on two net-crashing efforts. The T-Birds also got a power play opportunity late in the period that came up empty, then carried a second man advantage into the opening 1:38 of period two.

The Springfield power play had a difficult time getting offense established, and the T-Birds were limited to just eight shots for the duration of period two, then failed to get on the board with a power play to open the third period as well.

Despite the odds, Steve Ott's club continued to dig deeper, and at 5:45 of the third, a greasy goal changed the T-Birds fortunes when

Chris Wagner rolled a puck into the blue paint, where Calle Rosen crashed the net front and tucked it across the line to even the score, 1-1.

Black and Romanov kept things locked down for the remainder of the third, forcing the winner-take-all game into sudden death overtime.

Springfield managed just two shots in the extra period, but the second of those two, at 14:54 of the frame, proved to be the dagger as former Checker Julien Gauthier power-drove the right side of the net, flipping a backhand that glanced off the post, then off Black's backside before finding its way home for the series-clinching goal.

The T-Birds now move on to face the Providence Bruins in the Atlantic Division Semifinals; Game 1 is slated for Friday, May 1 at 7:05 p.m. at Amica Mutual Pavilion.

BASEBALL from page 11

on a wild pitch giving the Falcons a 1-0 lead without the benefit of a base hit.

"Scoring the first run of the game gave us the momentum," Liversedge said. "I was able to relax a little bit on the mound."

The Spartans also loaded the bases in the bottom half of the opening inning, but they failed to capitalize.

After the first three East Longmeadow batters reached base, senior third baseman Sean Krol hit a groundball to Minnechaug junior second baseman Peter Langone. Just before Langone reached second base, the runner collided with him. Kevin Jourdain, who was the base umpire, immediately called interference. The runner who was going to second base and the batter were automatically out. The other two runners had to return to second and third.

"The interference call certainly changed how the first inning looked," Netkovick said. "It's the first time I've seen it happen this season. I know the East Longmeadow coach and I have a lot of respect for him. Their runner didn't mean to run into my second baseman."

Liversedge was able to strand both runners in scoring position following a strikeout.

The Falcons scored another run with two outs in the third.

A walk by senior catcher Alex Savlick kept the inning alive. He advanced to third base following a groundball single into right field by Langone, which was the Falcons first base hit. After Langone got into a rundown between first and second, Savlick crossed the plate following a throwing error by the shortstop.

With one-out in the fourth, sophomore shortstop

Nick Nordstrom doubled to center and he scored on another throwing error by the shortstop on a groundball hit by Liversedge.

Trailing 3-0, the Spartans had the tying run at the plate with two outs in the fifth, but Liversedge ended the threat with a groundball out.

"I just focused a little bit more in that situation," Liversedge said. "I pitched well and my teammates made the plays behind me."

Liversedge would complete his outstanding performance on the mound by retiring seven of the final eight East Longmeadow batters that he faced.

Following the game, the Falcons players took a team picture in rightfield.

Being able to win a ballgame at a minor league stadium for the first time is something those 17 players will probably remember for a very long time.

Roster spots remain open in the QVBL

SOUTH HADLEY - While the new player draft has come and gone in the Quabbin Valley Baseball League, there are still several open roster spots for players age 28-and-up. The regular season is set to get underway in a little more than a week and the six teams in the are still looking to add more players.

Players can go to the league website and fill out the registration form so they can get placed on a team immediate in front of the season opener.

For the 2026 season, the cost will be \$215 and will include a 16th game added to the regular season schedule. Those who sign up after the season begins will be charged a prorated fee

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

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

The season began on Sunday, Apr. 26, but there are still spots open and 15 games to play.

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

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

Michael Lachenmeyer gives Rep. Puppolo first primary challenge since 2006

SPRINGFIELD - Michael Lachenmeyer is running for state representative in the 12th Hampden District of Massachusetts.



Michael Lachenmeyer

Lachenmeyer, who grew up in Wilbraham, is a 27-year-old Democrat who currently resides in Springfield. He is the first Democrat to challenge incumbent Representative Angelo Puppolo in a primary since 2006, and he is the first to challenge him at all since 2018.

A graduate of Minnechaug, Loyola University Chicago, and the University of Chicago with degrees in political science, international relations, and anthropology, Lachenmeyer felt compelled to run because he believes "there can be no democracy without competition."

Lachenmeyer is a former educator, journalist, and Google subcontractor. He is also a long-time political activist, having lobbied for single-payer universal healthcare on Beacon Hill and having led chapters of the Indivisible and Sunrise movements.

Lachenmeyer is fighting to make Massachusetts more affordable for all by advocating for a statewide single-payer universal healthcare program. He also wants to expand the child and

family tax credit and offset property tax increases by providing more state aid funded by revenue raised from taxing Massachusetts's richest residents.

"Massachusetts has the second-highest GDP per capita of any state in the nation, and yet we are also one of its most unequal.

Massachusetts consistently ranks among the top states in the nation for wealth inequality. It is a travesty that residents who earn \$50,000 a year are being taxed at the same rate as those who earn \$500,000. We should tax the rich more and the working class less."

Lachenmeyer is also fighting to make the state government less corrupt and supports auditing the state legislature, banning legislators from trading stocks while in office, and banning them from becoming lobbyists for five years after their service. He also supports term limits for the Speaker of the House and seeks to eliminate redundant committees, like the House Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs, that do not consider any legislation and serve only to provide enlarged stipends for the legislators who chair them.

To learn more about the Lachenmeyer campaign, please visit electlachenmeyer.com.

The Music of McCartney comes to Wilbraham in May

WILBRAHAM - Regional musician and singer Dan Kirouac will bring his program THE MUSIC OF MCCARTNEY: The World's Most Successful Songwriter to the Wilbraham Senior Center on Thursday May 28 at Noon.

The program, delivered on piano and vocals, will explore the music of Paul McCartney from the Beatles years through Wings and into the 1980s, highlighted by

informational commentary. Dan Kirouac is a 40-year veteran of the New England music scene, and has appeared in two long-term Beatles tribute bands from 2000 to 2022.

The center is located at 250 Springfield St. The program is free and open to members of the Wilbraham senior community. For more information, please call (413) 596-8379. For more about the artist, search DAN KIROUAC MUSIC on Facebook.

Ambulance billing assistance office hours announced

HAMPDEN - Residents of Hampden will now have direct access to assistance with ambulance billing questions through newly established office hours at Hampden Town Hall.

Beginning May 12, 2026, an Action Ambulance Service representative will be available on a recurring basis—the second Tuesday of each month—from 9 to 10:30 a.m. These sessions are designed to provide residents with clear, personalized guidance on ambulance billing and related insurance matters and will be located at Hampden Town Hall in the Large Meeting Room.

Ambulance billing can often be complex and difficult to navigate. These office hours aim to simplify the process by offering one-on-one support in a convenient, local setting. Residents will have the opportunity to ask questions, review

bills, and better understand their insurance coverage and payment options.

Services available during office hours include:

- Assistance understanding ambulance bills
- Guidance on insurance coverage and claims
- Explanation of payment options
- General billing support and questions

No appointment is necessary, and all residents are encouraged to attend.

This initiative reflects a continued commitment to transparency, education, and community engagement by making knowledgeable resources more accessible to the public.

For more information, please contact: Mr. Charles Coolidge, 866-678-3200, Action Ambulance Service

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Minnechaug Softball Varsity Team post-win.

Photo courtesy of Linda Sherman

BAT FOR PINK
from page 1

us a lot of money because they really support the cause," ACS member Trinity Burgmyer said, "We've had people who give us a ton of money to only take like three things. And we try to tell them they can grab more, but they really just want to give us money to support us."

The American Cancer Society has done various fundraising events at Minnechaug in the past, such as raffle baskets at Fine Arts concerts and "Miracle Minutes" at Football games.

However, this was the first time they had ever collaborated with the Softball team.

Burgmyer also expressed how events such as "Bat for Pink" highlights a sense of unity Wilbraham and Hampden has for the sake of good deeds.

"I feel like it's kind of a way to show how the com-

munity supports each other. We're not the people affected by this, yet people are offering to give us blankets and water. Someone even donated for us just to get something, which is just really sweet," Burgmyer said.

Players also clipped dark blue ribbons to their jerseys in honor of the Catelliers, a local family undergoing treatment for colon cancer. Proceeds to the family were raised through raffle baskets, prepared by the ACS.

Originally, the event had been planned just to focus on Breast Cancer. However, upon discovering Mrs. Catellier - the mother of a player on the Softball team - was diagnosed with colon cancer, Sherman and Camire decided they wanted to do something to support her as well. Upon hearing about how the event would be held for them, the Catellier Family was filled with immense gratitude towards the team.

When asked what "Bat for Pink" meant to the Softball team, Camire said this.

"We do a lot of events with little kids, but this is something that can give back to our whole community and specifically making it a little bit about the Catelliers, which really impacts a local family who is in our program since one of her daughters plays softball," Camire said.

Not only was the Softball team able to score a spirited victory on the field, but alongside the American Cancer Society, "Bat for Pink" was able to raise over \$600 to be donated in support of Breast Cancer Research and Colon Cancer Treatment for the Catellier Family.

Minnechaug Softball hopes to hold another "Bat for Pink" next year and similar future events, in an effort to give back to the community and support significant causes, such as these.

Wilbraham Friends of the Library to hold Spring Plant Sale

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham Friends of the Library (WFOL) is holding a plant sale featuring four varieties of annuals. The sale will be pre-order only through May 9 with plant pick up Monday, May 11 through Saturday, May 17 at the Wilbraham Public Library, 25 Crane Park Drive, Wilbraham.

The WFOL is excited to once again offer summer blooming annuals to beautify your garden and benefit the Wilbraham Public Library.

We are offering annuals - Begonias (pink or white), Petunias (blue), Texas Red Salvia and Dichindra Silver Falls. These are large plants in 5-inch pots that are ready

to plant and show off. Plants are \$6 each and available by pre-order only. Deadline for orders is May 9 and orders will be available for pick up the week of Monday, May 11 at the Wilbraham Public Library, 25 Crane Park Road, Wilbraham. Exact pick-up dates and times are on the order form.

Pick up an order form at the library or download from the library's website - www.wilbrahamlibrary.org. You can also request an order form by emailing WFOL. info@gmail.com. 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 WFOL.info@gmail.com.

Run for Rice's 5K Road Race set for June 6

WILBRAHAM - The 14th Annual "Run for Rice's 5K Road Race" will be held on Saturday, June 6, 2026 at 9 a.m.

This popular, family-friendly 5K road race begins at Christ the King - Epiphany Church, 758 Main Street, Wilbraham, MA, and winds through a flat, fast course in surrounding neighborhoods, ending at Rice Fruit Farm across the street from the start.

Pre-registration fee for runners and walkers is \$25, while day-of-race registration is \$30. Ages 18 and

under registration is \$20 including day-of registration.

Everyone registered by May 21, 2026 will receive our famous race t-shirt featuring the "Running Apple" logo, and all registered runners will receive a free Rice Fruit Farm ice cream with their bib number on day of race only. Cash prizes will be awarded in several categories, and all proceeds benefit the Minnechaug Land Trust. Race day registration will be open from 7:30 a.m. until 8:45 a.m. On-line registration is available at RunSignUp.com.

Armchair Travel Series: Mexico

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham Senior Center's Armchair Travel Series will take an adventure through Mexico to celebrate Cinco de Mayo.

Join us for a virtual adventure fueled by authentic cuisine (light appetizers), mariachi music and festive fun! We'll kick things off with a brief presentation, then settle in for a laid-back celebration everyone can enjoy. The event takes place on Wednesday, May 6 from 2 to 4 p.m.

Call 596-8379 to register, walk-ins also welcome.

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ST. JUDE THANK YOU FOR answering my prayers. P.F.

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ALL REAL ESTATE advertised herein is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act, which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation, or discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, or intention to make any such preference, limitation, or discrimination." We will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. All persons are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised are available on an equal opportunity basis.

WEST BROOKFIELD. Clean 2 bedroom, 1 bath mobile home in over 55 park. **508-867-7972**

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

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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
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Pioneer Valley Financial Group announces Kevin Sylvester has earned his CPF®

REGION - Pioneer Valley Financial Group (PV) is proud to announce that Kevin Sylvester has earned his CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER® (CFP®) certification, becoming the firm's second CFP® professional.

Sylvester joined the PV team in 2019 and has consistently demonstrated a strong commitment to professional growth and client service. His dedication to advancing his knowledge and expertise reflects both his personal drive and PV's culture of continuous development.

"The cornerstone of PV Financial Group is our continued support of professional development for our team," said Managing Partner and Wealth Advisor Ed Sokolowski. "Kevin has shown that commitment since the day he started, and

our clients are better for it."

Before entering the financial services industry, Sylvester made a career change in 2011 and returned to school while balancing the demands of work and family. He attended University of Massachusetts Amherst, graduating in 2018 with a degree in Mathematics and a concentration in Actuarial Science. Shortly after, he began his career in wealth management, where he discovered a passion for helping clients achieve long-term financial success.

Sylvester continued to build on his expertise by earning both his Accredited Investment Fiduciary® (AIF®) and Certified Plan



Kevin Sylvester

Fiduciary Advisor® (CPFA®) designations, further strengthening his ability to serve clients with integrity and insight.

The CFP® certification is one of the most respected credentials in the financial planning industry. To earn the designation, candidates must complete rigorous education requirements, pass a comprehensive six-hour examination, gain relevant professional experience, and commit to upholding strict ethical standards.

Sylvester's achievement marks an important milestone for both his career and Pioneer Valley Financial Group's ongoing commitment to excellence.

Plow Day 2026 this Saturday

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham Community Garden proudly announces the 15th Annual "Plowing the Community Garden" event.

This event will take place on Saturday, May 2 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Wilbraham Community Garden located at 700 Monson Road in Wilbraham. There will be several teams of Draft Horses including Mainely Drafts and Cedar Knoll Farm preparing the soil the slow old fashioned way utilizing walking and riding plows. I

f you missed this event in the past, don't miss it this year as this may be the

last one. The list of local vendors grows every day including Little Oak Farm, Kaits Creatures, and Sokol Coffee Roasters. Hot Rod Dogs from Monson will be on-site with 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. This is a shine only event.

If there is inclement stormy weather, this event will be cancelled. For more information or to be a vendor, please call Melissa Graves in the Conservation office at 596-2800, ext. 204.

Blessing of the Animals at Federated Community Church in Hampden

HAMPDEN - Federated Community Church at 590 Main Street in Hampden will hold a Blessing of the Animals event on Saturday, May 9 from 1 to 3 p.m., weather permitting.

We will provide drinking water for pets, but please make sure to bring their own water dish. Dogs must be on leashes. All are welcome!

ZENO from page 5

ronments, especially wetlands as wetlands are one of the most critical, environmental protection factors in a changing climate," Zeno said. "So, I think it's really great to inform the town about that."

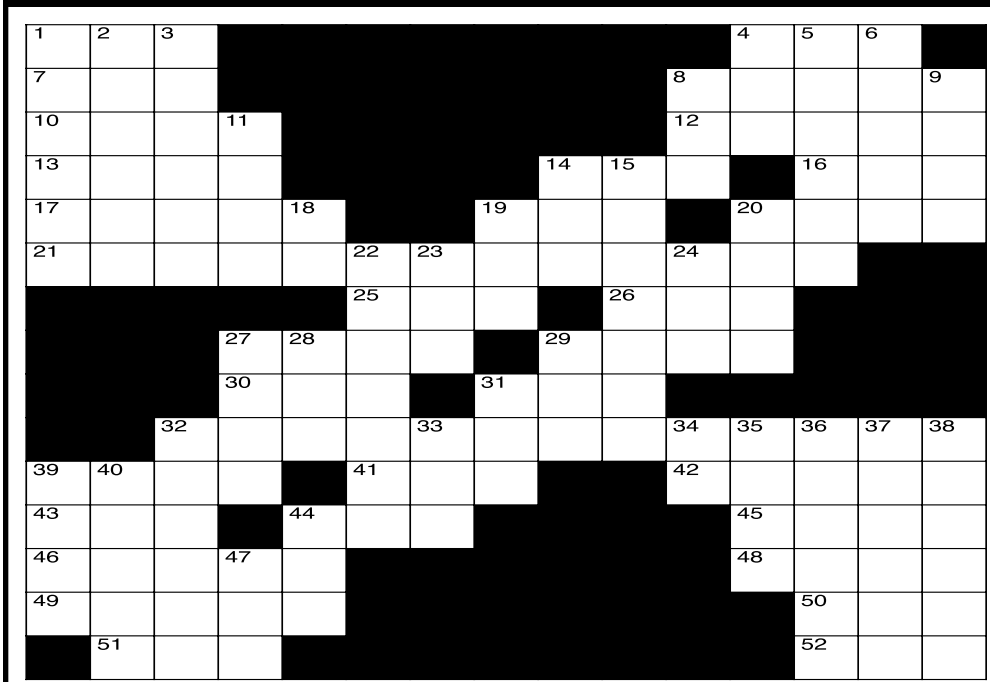
Zeno's message was this. "I really want to let the

town know that the Conservation Commission is a group of people that wants to work with you and not against you and I really want to kind of drive the point home that we're not here to scold you or get you in trouble. We really want to work with you to make sure that your land and the town's land is not being negative-

ly affected. So, if anyone is ever questioning what the right thing is to do, just give me a call and we can work out a solution together," Zeno said.

To contact Zeno, email conservationagent@hampdenma.gov or call 413-566-2151, ext. 122.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Purchase
- 4. British news organization
- 7. Midway between northeast and east
- 8. Language specialist group
- 10. Fancy automobile
- 12. Small loop or series of loops
- 13. Exploiter
- 14. Don't know when yet
- 16. Group of languages
- 17. One who's finished
- 19. After B
- 20. Angled
- 21. A place to adopt pets
- 25. Swiss river
- 26. Young boy

- 27. Unexciting comedian Vidale
- 30. Peyton's little brother
- 31. Corporate higher-up
- 32. "All in the Family" star
- 39. Strike something forcefully
- 41. Up in the air (abbr.)
- 42. Clay earth pigments
- 43. Means to record brain activity
- 44. Small constellation
- 45. Embraces
- 46. Brief description
- 48. Exclude
- 49. White (French)
- 50. Insect
- 51. A major division of geological time

- 52. Soviet Socialist Republic
- CLUES DOWN
- 1. Type of whale
- 2. In tune
- 3. A citizen of Yemen
- 4. Actress Ling
- 5. One who supports
- 6. Circus performer
- 8. Yearly tonnage (abbr.)
- 9. Quantitative fact
- 11. Utah city
- 14. Where a golfer begins
- 15. Attendant
- 18. The ancient Egyptian sun god
- 19. Book of Chronicles (abbr.)
- 20. Benedictine monk
- 22. Not turbulent

- 23. Car mechanics group
- 24. Buffer used in chemistry
- 27. Fall heavily
- 28. Pie ___ mode
- 29. The Brits love it
- 31. Children's TV channel (abbr.)
- 32. Jacksonville footballer
- 33. Helps little firms
- 34. ___ and behold
- 35. A way to resemble
- 36. Fingers
- 37. Excessive indulgences
- 38. You might be an "empty" one
- 39. "How the West Was Won" writer
- 40. European river
- 44. They begin the alphabet
- 47. The body's messenger

PUBLIC NOTICES

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No. HD22P2394EA
Estate of:
Darlene Joyce Calabrese
Date of Death: 07/09/2022
CITATION ON PETITION FOR SALE OF REAL ESTATE BY A PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE

To all interested persons:
A Petition for Sale of Real Estate has been filed by: Susan M McCoy of Springfield, MA requesting that the court authorize the Personal Representative to sell the decedent's real estate at a private sale.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 05/11/2026.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice

to you.
Witness, Claudine T. Stoudemire, First Justice of this Court.
Date: April 23, 2026
Rosemary A Saccomani,
Register of Probate
04/30/2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No. HD26P0192EA
Estate of:
Elizabeth C Hetzel
Date of Death: 11/12/2025
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:
A Petition for Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Peter P Porowski of Belchertown, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that Peter P Porowski of Belchertown, MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this

proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 06/02/2026. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Claudine T. Stoudemire, First Justice of this Court.

Date: April 15, 2026
Rosemary A Saccomani,
Register of Probate
04/30/2026

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

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

Public notice deadlines are Friday at 3 p.m.
visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

Send Us Your Community Summer Events

Turley Publications will print your Summer event **FREE OF CHARGE** in our Summer Fest Supplement which will be published June 3, 2026. Total circulation of 85,000 which reaches over 200,000 readers in the Pioneer Valley. **Event Should Be Non-Profit & Open to the Public**

FREE Calendar Listings Reaching over 200,000 Readers in the Pioneer Valley

Event Name _____
Date/Time _____
Location _____
Description _____
Cost _____
Contact name & phone number for more information _____

Please specify if you would like your name and number printed in the paper.

Deadline for Calendar submissions is May 6.

MAIL YOUR LISTING INFORMATION TO: Turley Publications, Attn: Jamie Joslyn, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069 or email* them to: jamie@turley.com *Be sure to indicate "Summer Event" in the subject line of your email.



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