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Enjoy a night of laughter, heart and entertainment with 'JERRY'S GIRLS'

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
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HAMPDEN - If you haven't had a chance to grab your tickets for the Theatre Guild of Hampden's production of "Jerry's Girls," you better get them very soon because this is a can't-miss production.

Directed by Mark Giza with Parker Eastman as music director and Gail Weber as stage manager, "Jerry's Girls" is a musical review of songs from classic Jerry Herman musicals, including "Hello Dolly!", "Mack & Mabel," "A Day in Hollywood/A Night in the Ukraine," "Mame" and more.

The cast features Becca Greene-Van Horn, Katie Johnson, Kathy Renaud, Dr. Andrea Stolar, Robyn Scott, Dina Del Buono, Margie Secora, Jessica Glasser and Amanda Emert, a standout group ensemble that will blow your mind from the first opening number on with their singing, dancing and costumes and props.

Also, I would be remiss if we did not give a shoutout to Eastman who stole the show throughout the night as he manned the piano.



The cast of "Jerry's Girls" pose for a group photo after a successful opening night on April 25.

Turley photo by Noelle Hisgen

All performances are taking place at the Hampden Senior Center, with the next shows on May 2, 3 and 4. The showtimes are Friday and Saturday at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday Matinees at 2 p.m.

Tickets are \$30 for adults and \$25 for seniors and students and can be purchased at

theatreguildofhampden.org.

With our Times Correspondent Noelle Hisgen--a fellow theater enthusiast--joining me for the fun, we entered a senior center set up with a rolled-out red carpet and a Times Square backdrop that transported attendees even before the show began

to our own little Broadway right here in Hampden, with a cabaret-style setup providing a more intimate feel to the production.

But the real fun began when the lights came down,

Please see **JERRY'S GIRLS**, page 8



Margaret Bagge



Amelia Holstrom



Ron Haislip-Hansberry

Meet the Library Trustee Candidates for Wilbraham

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
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WILBRAHAM - The upcoming town election will have three candidates pursuing roles on the Library Trustees.

Margaret Bagge and Amelia Holstrom will be running for three-year terms and Ron Haislip-Hansberry will be running for the one-year term.

The three-year terms currently have two spots open.

The town election takes place on Saturday, May 17.

Margaret Bagge

Bagge is the head of a local private school and has worked closely with a Board of Trustees, understanding their role as "a supportive group to my position."

She hopes to offer the support she's learned to the library director to help "continue building on the amazing existing services offered to the people of the community" along with working with the other trustees "to make fiscal decisions appropriate to the ongoing success of the library."

"A committed board is crucial to ongoing success and preservation of all that a library represents. I believe it is a neutral space for anyone of any age to find the support of their community, whether in books, music, children's literature, and a lending Library of Things," Bagge said. "Libraries are a sharing opportunity for all people of all ages, and I want to contribute to its ongoing success."

Please see **TRUSTEES**, page 4

Meet the Water Commissioner Candidates for Wilbraham

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
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WILBRAHAM - The upcoming town election will have candidates running for a three-year term and a one-year term as Water Commissioners.

The town election will take place on Saturday, May 17.

The candidates are Rik Alvarez who will be running for the three-year term, while John Caltabiano will pursue the one-year term.

Rik Alvarez

Alvarez has been a resident of Wilbraham for 10 years and opened and owns two businesses, Frame & Picture Shoppe and HasBeen Collectible Toys & Comics on Boston Road.

He has, also, served two prior terms on the Board of Water Commissioners.

"The past six years has taught me a deep understanding of what the needs of Wilbraham are in relation to balancing the water department's enterprise fund, with

the infrastructure needs of the town, keeping an eye on future use while maintaining the lowest possible rates," Alvarez said. "As a parent, water customer and local business owner, I hope this small commitment on my part will once again earn the trust of my neighbors to look at for them and for Wilbraham."



Rik Alvarez



John Caltabiano

"Living in Caracas I witnessed less fortunate people forced to collect and use gray water to survive. Those images always stuck with me and when the opportunity presented itself, I know I wanted to help with the Water Department," Alvarez said.

Alvarez said. "I believe water isn't a partisan issue. At the local town level, it doesn't matter if you're right or left, red or blue, everyone wants the infrastructure kept up to date and billing processed efficiently."

Alvarez's main goal is pursuing coming projects to keep things running smoothly.

"Looking towards the future, there are several projects we're considering to ensure that 20 years from now Wilbraham is in an excellent position to keep the infrastructure functioning," Alvarez said.

rez said. "Unlike some other communities, Wilbraham has the chance to look that far into the future and make a plan for the next generation."

John Caltabiano

Caltabiano has been a resident for over 25 years and is also involved in the community through the St. Cecilia Parish Finance Council, Knights of Columbus Council 10195 and a gardener with a plot at

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Wilbraham Women's Club hosts Fashion Show Luncheon

By Noelle Hisgen
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - On April 24, the Wilbraham Women's Club hosted their annual Fashion Show Luncheon at the Fellowship Hall at St. Cecilia's Church.

The event started with a social hour, where people entered and were able to purchase raffle tickets for a chance to win one of many raffle baskets and prizes that were offered. They were also able to enjoy a variety of hors d'oeuvres.

The attendees were then welcomed by Women's Club President Maureen Mikuszewski, which then went into the luncheon which consisted of a salad, an entree choice between chicken or salmon and finished off with a fun dessert. All of the food was catered by the Elegant Affairs team.

After the luncheon, it was time for the Fashion Show. The outfits were provided by J. Jill Women's Clothing,



Maureen Mikuszewski (Left) and Michele Axtmann (Right) have worked very hard to organize the luncheon.

Turley photo by Noelle Hisge

located in the Longmeadow Shops in Longmeadow, and the models for the Fashion Show consisted of Wilbraham Women's Club mem-

bers Amy Basile, Patty Fois, Ginny McGovern, Joyce

Please see **FASHION SHOW**, page 14

Selectboard member Rivest resigns

Reflects on his service to Hampden

By Kristin Rivers
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HAMPDEN - Selectboard Member Craig Rivest has announced his resignation from the Selectboard after four years of service to the town of Hampden.

The resignation was first announced by the Selectboard on April 14 after a letter from Rivest was shared with the board on the decision. Selectboard Member John Flynn and Selectboard Chair Don Davenport also reflected on Rivest's impact on the board and thanked him for his service to the town.

Rivest's resignation is effective May 19 and a special election will be held on June 23 for a member to serve the rest of his term through May 2027.

He was first elected to the Selectboard in 2021 and then served again after reelection in 2024.

Rivest explained how his family "has always been my top priority" and "as our needs have grown, I realized that I needed to dedicate more time and focus to them."

"At the same time, my business has continued to grow, requiring additional attention as well. After careful consideration, I concluded that I could no longer give the Selectboard the full commitment it deserves," Rivest said. "Out of fairness to the board and to the community, I felt it was the right decision to step aside. Moving forward, I plan to focus on supporting my family and managing the growth of my business."

Rivest was proud of his time serving the town, reflecting on his accomplishments.

"I'm proud to have been part of a board that worked hard to prioritize transparency, communication and thoughtful decision-making. Collaborating on important



Craig Rivest

topics that helped strengthen our town, the people who live and work here and supporting our municipal departments was incredibly rewarding. Being part of that team effort is something I'll always value," Rivest said.

As for the lessons, Rivest said he learned the most about collaboration and patience.

"One of the biggest lessons I learned is the importance of collaboration and patience. Progress in local government often comes through persistence, respectful dialogue, and most importantly, a willingness to listen and adapt. Serving on the board reinforced how important it is to work together to find common ground, even when perspectives differ," Rivest said.

He, also, gained a better understanding and appreciation for town government and how it operates, along with the many people who keep it

Please see **RIVEST**, page 3

Selectboard Chair Don Davenport running for re-election

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com

HAMPDEN - Selectboard Chair Don Davenport will be seeking reelection to the Selectboard in the upcoming town election.

The Hampden Town Election takes place on Monday, May 19.

Davenport previously served two terms as a member of the Selectboard and also has a wide background in business, government, professional and educational experiences.

“By profession I am a pharmacist, I served a number of years as Chief of Staff for two Massachusetts Attorney Generals. I have a Masters Degree in Business Administration, was on the adjunct faculty of Emerson College and served for eight years on the Hampden School Committee,” Davenport said. “I am able to draw on all these experiences when it comes to making decisions for the benefit of the Town.”

Davenport has also been a resident of Hampden for 50 some years.

“Like so many other residents I greatly appreciate and want to maintain our safe streets, good schools, clean air, quiet and natural surroundings, clean water and small-town neighborliness,” Davenport said. “As a Selectboard member, I believe I could help preserve those val-

ues while balancing the need for growth and the challenges posed by state mandates that all towns are currently facing.”

On the board’s successes, Davenport credits the residents and working with the town department heads, boards and commissions for their collaboration and support.

“To highlight a few recent successes, we have seen the implementation of regional dispatch, 24/7/365 ambulance service, the establishment of a Municipal Building Improvement and Utilization group, regaining full control of the former Thornton Burgess School with a clear plan for utilization, and the hiring of well-qualified individuals to fill vacancies due to retirements in the important administrative positions of Town Administrator, Administrative Assistant to the Selectboard and Board of Health Coordinator,” Davenport said.

On improvements, Davenport’s goals include the budgeting process, improving communication and encouraging residents to participate in town government.

“Going forward, I would like to improve on the budgeting process by creating processes whereby there is a more comprehensive analysis of each departments’ needs

and how those fit into a total budgetary goal for a particular year,” Davenport said. “I would also like to improve our communications to--and with--residents to encourage participation on Town boards, commissions and committees.”

As for what he envisions accomplishing for the town in a new term on the Selectboard. Davenport listed many goals ranging from transitioning the town offices to the former TWB to the implementation of the Master Plan and bringing in high-speed fiber optic services.

“My goals, to name a few, for the next three years would be to see the successful transition to the former Thronton Burgess School of the Town Administrative offices. In addition, utilizing the former school will provide space for an expanded library, a community center, and expanded recreational and meeting facilities for the community,” Davenport said. “I look to a continued focus on developing a long-term cost-effective municipal building improvement and utilization plan. Progress on implementation of the Master Plan recommendations particularly those that pertain to preserving Hampden’s uniqueness and bringing high-speed fiber optic service to residents and businesses.”



Don Davenport



Charles F. Bennett photo

Rotary President Peter Salerno (left) is greeted by Jakes staffer Nichole Spaulding in preparation for the Rotary Club's Dine Out fundraiser on Thursday May 15.

‘Dine-Out Day’ at Krazy Jakes May 15

WILBRAHAM – The Wilbraham-Hampden Rotary Club will hold Dine Out Day at Krazy Jake’s, 2537 Boston Road on Thursday May 15 all day according to Rotary President Peter Salerno.

Krazy Jakes will donate 10 percent of their customers’ meal check to the Rotary Club to support community services. The Dine Out event runs from 9 a.m. until closing,” said Salerno.

Diners must present a special upon entering the

restaurant.

All proceeds from the Dine Out will go for community services that benefit everyone from school children to senior citizens. Some of the programs the club offers are the Dictionary Project where each third grader in Wilbraham and Hampden is given a hard copy of their own dictionary. The club also gives out nine \$2,000 scholarships to high school seniors at Minnechaug Regional High School, Wilbraham & Monson Acade-

my and Pope Francis Prep School who are residents of the two towns.

Other Rotary projects include the annual Christmas Tree Lighting and equipment helping the Community Survival Center supply food and other items to local needy people.

The Rotary Club’s motto is “Service Above Self”. For more information about the Dine Out Day call club President Peter Salerno at 203-214-7954 or email PSalerno1@aol.com.

Wilbraham Troop 359 holding Hill Climb hamburger stand

WILBRAHAM - Wilbraham Troop 359 will be selling hamburgers at the Hill Climb on Saturday, May 10 at Gazebo Park from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Troop 359 thanks you for your generous support as it helps support our scouts and their activities. Stop by, say hello and check out the amazing Hill Climb!

For more information, contact John Guerin 413-388-3545.

Town Budget meeting taking place May 7

WILBRAHAM - How will the Town Budget affect your taxes in Wilbraham this year?

On May 7, at 7 p.m. at the Wilbraham Middle School, members of the Assessors and Finance Committee will explain to the community:

How does your vote at the Town Meeting affect the budget?

How much will my tax-

es increase this year?

Understanding the terminology used in the budgeting process

How your vote at Town Meeting can help prevent a 2 1/2 override

Please join us so that with the facts you, the Wilbraham citizens, can make an informed decision about our financial future.

Facilitated by the WRTC

Evangel Assembly announces Tournament of Champions, A Grand Medieval Themed Feast

WILBRAHAM – Evangel Assembly is thrilled to invite the community to the “Tournament of Champions: A Dinner Theater”, an evening of revelry, feasting, and merriment that promises to transport guests back to the age of knights and nobility.

This enchanting event will take place on May 16 at 6 p.m., May 17 at 6 p.m. and May 18 at 4 p.m. at Evangel Assembly of God on Stony Hill Road, offering an unforgettable experience filled with noble company, delightful fare and immersive entertainment.

Guests are encouraged to embrace the spirit of the

era by donning medieval-inspired attire, though costumes are optional. The festivities will commence with doors opening 45 minutes prior to the show, allowing early arrivals to soak in the sights and sounds of a bygone time.

The feast will feature a sumptuous menu befitting royalty, accompanied by lively performances that capture the magic of the medieval period.

To secure a seat at this grand table, attendees are requested to make reservations online at <https://evangelassembly.churchcenter.com/people/forms/933285>.

Proceeds from the event will support Evangel Assembly’s youth mission trip to work with the children in Ireland this summer, fostering meaningful experiences for young members of the community.

For additional information or inquiries, please contact Lori Phillips (lphillips@evangelassembly.org). Don’t miss your chance to join this splendid gathering and partake in an evening like no other.

Tickets only sold in advance (payment taken at the door). The hall is wheelchair accessible.

Early voting now available

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 17, 2025.

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 can also apply online for a vote by mail ballot here: [https://www.sec.state.ma.us/MailInRequestWeb/Mail-](https://www.sec.state.ma.us/MailInRequestWeb/MailInBallot.aspx)

[InBallot.aspx](https://www.sec.state.ma.us/MailInRequestWeb/MailInBallot.aspx). The last day to apply for a vote by mail ballot or absentee mail in ballot is Monday, May 12, 2025, 5 p.m. The last day to apply for an in-person absentee ballot is Friday, May 16, 2025, Noon. Please call 596-2800, ext. 200 if you have any questions.

HIGHWAY LABORER

The Town of Hampden Highway Department is seeking qualified applicants for the position of Highway Laborer. This position is responsible for the general maintenance of Town roads, Town sidewalks and Town properties under the direction of the Highway Superintendent. The successful candidate will be required to operate light motorized and hydraulic equipment and to participate in snow removal and sanding work as assigned. All applicants must possess a valid Class B CDL, 2B Hoisting License, and OSHA 10 certification. Qualified applicants must possess the skills and knowledge necessary to perform general road and grounds maintenance along with the ability to operate and maintain all associated tools and equipment. Applicants with the skills and experience to perform maintenance/repairs on trucks and equipment, welding, and the use of other garage tools, along with light construction and snowplowing experience will be favorably considered. The position is regularly scheduled for forty (40) hours per week (Mon.-Fri. 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.) with occasional weekend and evening hours as required. Excellent retirement and health insurance benefits are provided. Starting base compensation is \$28.73 per hour plus overtime rates when applicable. A complete job description is available at www.hampdenma.gov. Interested applicants should email a cover letter and resume to highway@hampdenma.gov. Please call the Hampden Highway Department at (413) 566- 8842 with questions.

The Town of Hampden is an equal opportunity employer.

Chicopee Register OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

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

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Update on Wilbraham’s search for new human resources coordinator

Three to five candidates will soon be brought to the Select Board

By Dalton Zbierski
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM – At last Monday’s Wilbraham Select Board meeting, Town Administrator Nick Breault announced several updates regarding the town’s search for its next human resources coordinator.

“We closed the applicant period on Friday [April 11]. I am forming a Screening Committee, and the intention of the committee is to go through that process with candidates,” Breault said.

Breault added that he would like to bring a mini-

mum of three candidates and a maximum of five to interview with the Select Board.

Sue Bunnell, chair of the Select Board, responded by saying, “I take it you have a substantial pool!”

Breault responded by confirming this is true, as he shared information regarding the backgrounds of the candidates.

“We do have a substantial pool,” Breault said. “I’ve only done a very cursory look at the qualifications, but there’s been interest, and it appears at first glance there are qualified candidates, although maybe not necessarily municipal experience in most cases probably. There is some municipal experience mixed in with that, but there’s also relevant HR experience from private sector.”

Breault said he and his team are very hopeful that

they will find a suitable candidate to fill the role currently occupied by Herta Dane, who will retire at the end of June.

Select Board Clerk Mark Ducey asked Breault if municipal experience is critical to performing the job. Breault said that it doesn’t hurt, expressing its importance.

“I would say so, yes. It would give a candidate a certain leg up because of the way municipalities operate, particularly when it comes to a union setting,” Breault said. “Remember, we have four unions here, and they’re not all quite the same in how we handle things. So, a municipal HR person would understand that.”

According to a job posting on the town’s website, whoever lands the position will make between \$77,337 and \$101,490 annually, working Monday through Friday

from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. That’s just 35 hours a week, although the job posting said some overtime might be required.

The role entails handling all aspects of human resources management for over 200 employees. Responsibilities include strategic planning, policy development, recruitment, discrimination prevention, performance management, employee relations, safety, OSHA and work-related injury, collective bargaining, compensation, benefits programs, training and employee relations.

The Select Board members expressed excitement regarding the progress being made in the search for a new human resources coordinator. They hope to meet candidates in the coming weeks.

Run for Rice’s 5K Road Race set for June 7

WILBRAHAM - The 13th annual “Run for Rice’s 5K Road Race” will be held on Saturday, June 7, 2025 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 \$20, while day-of-race registration is \$25.

Ages 18 and under registration is \$15 including day-of registration.

The first 150 registered runners by May 13, 2023 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 pro-

ceeds benefit the Minnechaug Land Trust.

Race day registration will be open from 7:30 a.m. until 8:45 a.m. Online registration is available at RunSignUp.com.

COMMISSIONER
from page 1

the Wilbraham Community Gardens.

A retired business executive, Caltabiano shared he understands 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 main-

tain health and prosperity, I am tuned into managing the needs, challenges, supply and delivery of this precious resource,” Caltabiano said.

He added being intrigued with the region—including Wilbraham’s—relationship and history with its water resources, having discussed “the challenges and opportunities in maintaining our water access, infrastructure and delivery in a safe and cost-effective manner” with the Water Department staff and the commissioners.

“I think it is important that, as citizens, we all get in-

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,” Caltabiano said.

Caltabiano is also proud of the town’s water division, stressing the importance of information and pursuing opportunities when appropriate.

“For several years, the Water Division 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 costs in check,” Caltabiano said.

On his vision, Caltabiano said this.

“In short, working with fellow commissioners and department staff to continue to ensure a safe, clean, reliable, sustainable and cost-effective water supply for town residents and businesses,” Caltabiano said.

nity first. Every decision matters, and while the work can sometimes be challenging, it’s also rewarding. Stay true to your values but also lean on your team and never lose sight of why you chose to serve in the first place,” Rivest said.

RIVEST from page 1

running every day.

“I was truly struck by how much happens behind the scenes to keep a town running smoothly. There’s an incredible amount of work, thought and care that goes into every decision, big or small,” Rivest said. “It gave me a new appreciation not just for elected officials, but for all the town employees and volunteers who quietly make a difference every day.”

Thinking of his fellow Selectboard members, Rivest had this message for Flynn and Davenport, which also extended to everyone who serves the town.

“I want to sincerely thank not only John and Don, but

everyone on the team that I’ve had the pleasure of working with. It’s been an honor to serve alongside people who are so committed to Hampden’s best interests,” Rivest said. “I truly appreciate the professionalism, the dedication and the collaborative spirit that I was part of during my time on the board.”

As for the community and residents of Hampden, his message was this.

“To the residents of Hampden, thank you for trusting me with the responsibility of serving you. It has been a true privilege. Our town is special because of the people who live here, and I encourage everyone to stay engaged, stay involved, and continue supporting one another. Hamp-

den’s strength has always been its sense of community,” Rivest said.

He also shared this advice to whoever succeeds him on the Selectboard.

“Listen carefully and be open-minded, public service is about putting the commu-

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Learn, practice and enjoy one to six new low or non-impact sports

WILBRAHAM - The Massachusetts Senior Games (MASG), a nonprofit organization dedicated to encouraging health and camaraderie for older adults through hosting individual and team statewide tournaments, is offering a new Sport Clinic for folks to learn and practice six different low or non-impact, fun activities at the Scantic Valley, Wilbraham YMCA.

1) Pickleball, 2) Disc Golf, 3) Power Walk, 4) Basketball Shoot, 5) Cornhole and 6) Shuffleboard. These events all have MASG tournaments happening later in the year across the state.

It is a wonderful way to try new activities, stay active and be social. Try one or all six.

Since 1991, the Massachusetts Senior Games organization has been running annual tournaments for those who are 40 and older, with Springfield College as its birthplace.

Those who are 50 and older are awarded gold, silver and bronze medals in 5-year age brackets, allowing the competition to be very fair, especially for those upper years. The top 4 in each age category and each event are invited to then compete in the National Senior Games, an event with over 11,000 competitors in 25 sports. Many of the MASG tournaments take place in the Springfield area, with four (Basketball, Track & Field, Power Walk and Swimming) happening on June 14 at the Springfield College campus. Sixteen softball teams from Cape Cod to the Western Massachusetts Relics will be coming to Blunt Park August 8 to 10, along with Mayor Sarno for a three-day tournament, complete with food trucks and other fun events. Disc golf, ball golf, bowling and billiards are also close by.



For the New Sport clinic at the YMCA, please plan to just come and try one or all of them out: Thursday, May 8, 1



p.m., Scantic Valley Y, Post Office Park, Wilbraham, MA. For questions and registration, visit MASeniorGames.org or call Joanie at (413) 366-1147.

Spring Fundraiser Workshop at Hampden Senior Center

HAMPDEN – Come join on May 16, 2025 from 6 to 8 p.m. for a program of working with polymer clay to create a unique—everyone will be different—pendant.

Class will be conducted by artist Nan Hurlburt. \$25 includes class and supplies.

All ages are welcome. Call the Hampden Senior Center at 413-566-5588 for more information. Proceeds of this event will benefit the programs offered at the senior center.

TRUSTEES from page 1

Bagge shared that as a child, the library “was a depository of riches at her disposal.”

“Spending time in the library and being allowed to bring books home to relish and devour was a gift unlike any other. To now have the time in my life to give back is more a gift for me than from me. I am an avid reader; I believe that reading exposes us to lives we could never encounter, and introduces us to not only knowledge, but empathy and understanding of cultures and peoples beyond our own,” Bagge said. “I look forward to being part of a system that enables this rich world of possibility.”

Bagge looks forward to contributing to the trustees and bringing her love for libraries to the table.

“I hope, as a trustee, to collaborate with fellow trustees and the director to both work toward, and to achieve, a financially viable library that serves the Wilbraham community in ways we may not yet know,” Bagge said. “I plan to be open and receptive to new ideas and paths toward an ongoing supportive framework that will exist far into the future.”

Amelia Holstrom

Holstrom moved to the

area in 2017, works as a labor and employment attorney at a local law firm and is a mother to two children.

Noting Director Karen Ball’s upcoming retirement this summer, Holstrom explained how the Board of Library Trustees will interview finalists and select the next director.

“This is a big decision as the Library Director will lead our library and be an integral part of our community. I believe I have a unique skill set that will be beneficial as the trustees conduct this search. As an employment attorney, I regularly advise clients on how to properly interview and evaluate candidates for various positions, while complying with all employment laws. I also served on a CEO Search Committee in the Fall of 2023. As part of that committee, I evaluated applicants, participated in extensive interviews, and helped to identify the most qualified candidate for the position,” Holstrom said.

Holstrom added the trustees are tasked with supervising the director and providing feedback about performance “at set intervals and ensuring the library operates within budget.”

“In my professional life, I frequently advise clients on management-level performance evaluations. I have also personally conducted

performance evaluations. It is something that I have a wealth of experience doing,” Holstrom said. “Additionally, as a partner at my firm, I understand the complexities associated with managing a budget and I am confident I can apply those skills as a trustee.”

She also hopes to bring her perspective as a parent to the role.

“As a parent to two children, now seven and 10, I strive to teach my children how important the library and its mission are to the community,” Holstrom said. “As someone who regularly utilizes library services with my young family, I have gained valuable insight into how programs and other offerings at the Library currently serve young families in the community and can offer practical insights related to additional or modified programming to support families.”

On what inspired her to run, Holstrom emphasized community engagement, having previously served on the Personnel Advisory Board and the Commission on Disabilities. When the Select Board sought applicants for a vacancy to the trustees in Fall 2024, she applied and was appointed.

“I have decided to run to continue serving as Library Trustee because I believe deeply in the value our li-

brary brings to the community. Some of my fondest memories as a child involve visiting the local library with my grandmother. Now, as a parent, I get to experience the library with my children. You’ll often find us at the library, browsing the stacks, enjoying activities, and leaving with armfuls of books. My children adore the library and ask to visit multiple times a week—it’s a place of discovery, imagination, and community for my family,” Holstrom said.

On the board’s successes, Holstrom listed developing and beginning the process to select a new director and participating in a subcommittee to review the Safe Child Policy with fellow Trustees Karen Grycel and Cheryl Wesolowski.

Her goals include more family-friendly programming during non-work hours including Saturdays and weeknights and improving advocacy by “better educating the community about all the Library has to offer” through more library cards for children and ways for the library to engage with the town.

Holstrom also stressed the town continuing to meet the Municipal Appropriation Requirement—or MAR—to receive state aid and make the library accessible to more people.

“The Library provides a

safe space where all are welcome and gives the public access to information and other important services, including but not limited to, books, educational events, discount museum passes, video games/consoles, tablets, and more,” Holstrom said. “I want to ensure that the Wilbraham Public Library remains an accessible, welcoming, and essential community resource for generations to come.”

Ron Haislip-Hansberry

Haislip-Hansberry’s background includes being a librarian himself, receiving his Masters in Library Science at UNC-Greensboro and working as a news librarian, public health librarian, and most recently as a substitute reference librarian in Springfield.

He’s also served as President of the Friends of the Wilbraham Public Library and volunteered in the school district’s school libraries.

“I decided to run for this position because I am extremely concerned about library funding. State Aid to Public Libraries has specific budgetary requirements we must follow and we must absolutely maintain our membership in C/W MARS,” Haislip-Hansberry said. “It allows our community to share library resources with 150+ other libraries and to access many of our digital

resources, including Libby and multiple databases and research tools.”

Community engagement for strategic planning with feedback received “from hundreds of participants” has also been important to him.

“It has helped us identify strengths and weaknesses on which to focus. We’ve also had important facilities and policy improvements. We must continue to request feedback from our users and non-users alike. It is the only way we will strengthen our overall impact,” Haislip-Hansberry said. “We must ensure that the valuable resources and opportunities found at the library are shouted from the mountaintops.”

On the biggest goal for the trustees and what he envisions, Haislip-Hansberry noted choosing the next library director.

“I expect that will take a significant amount of the Trustee’s time heading into fall. With only a one-year term, I anticipate much of my time will be spent establishing a solid relationship with the new director and syncing their vision with the goals of the trustees so that we can move forward on solid footing,” Haislip-Hansberry said. “A continuation of the terrific work that is already being done is also of utmost importance.”



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VIEWPOINTS



When should my wife claim Social Security?

Dear Rusty:
My wife was born in July 1959, and her recent SS benefit estimate is \$3,337 at her full retirement age, or \$4,397 at age 70.
She is presently employed full-time and intends to continue working until she is aged 70. She is wondering when the most financially advantageous time would be to draw her SS retirement.

Signed: Planning Ahead

Dear Planning Ahead:
Obviously, the best time for your wife to get the highest possible monthly Social Security benefit would be age 70. Provided your wife's life expectancy is at least average about age 87 for a woman her current age, she will likely receive the most in cumulative lifetime Social Security benefits by waiting until age 70 to claim.

For clarity, if your wife were to choose to claim before her Full Retirement Age, her monthly amount would be less and she would be subject to Social Security's Annual Earnings Test, which limits how much she can earn before her FRA. If the AET is exceeded, SS will take away \$1 for every \$2 her earnings are over the limit (they take away by withholding future benefits until the penalty is satisfied).

The AET (\$23,400 for 2025 but changes yearly) is in effect until your wife reaches her full retirement age of 66 years and 10 months, after which she can earn as much as she likes without penalty. Since she plans to work full time until age 70, your wife should likely not claim Social Security before her FRA. As mentioned, claiming at age 70 is probably a more prudent financial option.

Since your wife expects to continue working, she should also know that her estimated benefit will likely increase assuming her more recent earnings are among the highest over her lifetime. Social Security will review current year earnings annually to see if her current earnings warrant a benefit increase (SS benefits are always based on the highest 35 years of work earnings, and that includes earnings even after SS benefit are started). Also, the estimates provided by SS do not include Cost of Living Adjustments, which typically occur annually. FYI, the average annual

COLA increase over the past two decades has been about 2.5%.

Based on her estimated FRA benefit, it is also evident that your wife will not get additional benefits as your spouse. For that to occur, your benefit at your FRA would need to be more than twice your wife's FRA amount, which it likely is not. Thus, your wife should make her claiming decision based only on her own benefit opportunity, considering her personal financial needs and her life expectancy.

FYI, your wife's "breakeven age" the age at which she will have collected the same amount of SS money by claiming at age 70 vs. claiming at her Full Retirement Age, is about 82 years of age. Thus, assuming her life expectancy is more than 82, it would be prudent to wait until age 70 to claim Social Security.

In the end, the "best" time to claim Social Security depends on a few factors – most notably, life expectancy, and financial need. If the SS money isn't urgently needed now, and your wife's life expectancy is at least "average," then it appears from what you've shared that her best choice would be to wait until age 70 to claim Social Security.

If life circumstances change over the years, your wife can take comfort knowing that she can also claim her Social Security at any time before age 70 and she will get benefits right up to the month she claims. Note that by waiting until after her FRA to claim, she will earn Delayed Retirement Credits of .667% more benefit for each month of delay about 8% more for each year of delay.

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.

A unique project brings community together, makes homeownership affordable

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

WEST SPRINGFIELD - Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity (GSHFH), Holyoke Housing Authority (HHA), and the University of Massachusetts DesignBuild program have partnered to make one local couple's dream of affordable homeownership come true.

In a unique collaboration, HHA has donated a plot of land on Chestnut Street. Greater Springfield Habitat will prepare the site and build the foundation. UMass DesignBuild professors and students will create and construct a modular home, and oversee delivery to the Holyoke site. GSHFH will then finish the inside work and sell the new home to Pedro and his wife Damaris, longtime Holyoke residents.

"I'm so excited to see what the students design for Pedro and Damaris. They were such an enthusiastic group when we recently shared the news with them and the family," said Olga Calligos, GSHFH Homeowner Programs coordinator. "The students were attentive and kind, and some even attempted to speak to Pedro and Damaris in Spanish, although it wasn't their first language. This project is a learning experience for all of us and I hope we can do more projects like this in the future."

Naomi Darling, design studio professor at Mount Holyoke College and UMass Architecture, agreed.

"There is a unanimous accord. The highlight of this project, thus far, has been seeing Pedro and Damaris react to the news that they would soon be homeowners," she said. "The joy on their faces was incredibly moving and reaffirmed our commitment to deliver a home that will house their dreams and memories for years to come."

Home design is scheduled to begin this spring with construction commencing this summer. The house is expected to be delivered in the fall. The design will emphasize the energy efficiency via highly-insulated and air-sealed exterior assemblies, triple-glazed windows, all-electric appliances/utilities, and low-embodied carbon building materials, such as wood fiber, hemp, and straw, said Ben Leinfelder, construction manager of UMass Building and Construction Technology.

"Our hope is that the students enter the workforce as ethical, responsible designers and constructors to the benefit of our communities and the people who call these houses "home," Naomi said.

While some may view the house as "tiny," the UMass DesignBuild team prefers to call it "modest." It will encompass the comfort and convenience of a larger home, but with a more compact and manageable footprint. The one-bedroom home will have full-sized appliances and fixtures in the kitchen and bathroom, and plenty of storage throughout the home.



Pedro and Damaris receive surprise good news.

"It's the perfect size for a couple or single person who wants the lifestyle and private outdoor space of a single-family home without the heating bill and added maintenance of a larger, older house," Naomi said. "This is exactly the scale of home that is missing in our housing market and for which there is an increasing demand."

Families applying for the homeownership opportunity had to be clients of the HHA's self-sufficiency program; earn between 35% and 60% of the area median income for Hampden County; have a positive credit history showing timely payments; a debt-to-income ratio of less than 43%; and the ability to pay 29% of their household income toward a mortgage.

Additionally, future homeowners are required to perform sweat equity, which is Habitat's hands-on investment. To keep costs affordable, selected Habitat families work alongside volunteers on the construction of their home, participate in office activities, or at events.

Pedro, who is retired, attended every info session, and submitted the necessary forms two days after the application cycle opened. He and his wife currently live in a one-bedroom apartment and have complained about their unfriendly neighbors who they say makes their everyday life unenjoyable. Pedro and Damaris don't have children together, but have a large blended family. Pedro has two daughters from a previous relationship and seven grandchildren. Damaris has three children and five grandchildren.

"All of our family selections are by lottery. Pedro and Damaris passed all qualifications with flying colors to be included in the lottery. They are also very dedicated to achieving the dream of homeownership, which they were starting to believe was impossible due to the current housing market," said Vivian Rodriguez, HHA Homeownership Education coordinator and interpreter for the couple.

When Pedro and Damaris received the news of their acceptance into the project, Pedro said he was quite surprised. "I didn't think they had picked anyone yet and HHA said I was just coming for an info session. This is such a dream. We were very surprised."



Deer demolishing your bulbs? Mine too. Read on

I am so sad! One of my prime gardens, a very cool multi planting of spring bulbs is showing signs of munching!

I am pretty sure deer are the culprit. What should I do?

Wipe my tears and look back in the archives to refresh my memory and maybe enlighten my readers in the various ways to send the deer on to greener pastures.

Fencing

Experts agree that fencing is the best way of keeping deer out of the garden. Nonelectric fencing options are many and include tall vertical fences, inward slanted fences, solid board fences and fences made of plastic netting.

A vertical fence made out

of woven wire and wooden posts will work well to keep deer out if it is at least eight feet tall. Slanted fences can be shorter but should extend inward at a 45 degree angle to capitalize on the deer's need to negotiate both height and width when jumping.

Solid board fencing can be shorter as well; if the deer can't see through the fence a safe landing is questionable, and jumping is usually avoided. Fencing made from black plastic netting has risen in popularity of late. It blends into the scenery, is less expen-

sive than other materials and at seven and a half feet tall is height restrictive.

No matter what type of fence you choose, it is best to fence first and plant later, since deer have been known to figure out all kinds of obstacles in search of a good dinner.

Deterrents and repellents These tactics work on the principle that if it's new, it spells trouble, and trouble spells predator. To be successful at this type of deer warfare, use several different options, rotate them throughout the

season and change them before they "become part of the scenery."

Scented soap repels deer because they hate its smell. Drill a hole in the bar of deodorant soap and hang it with some twine at deer height (three to six feet off the ground) on the tree or shrub in jeopardy.

Human or dog hair will likewise repel deer and is usually free for the sweeping at the beauty parlor or dog groomer. Scented dryer sheets have also been known to keep Bambi at bay, although they must be replaced after each heavy rain.

For the best measure of control, hang the sheets, bars of soap or sachets of hair three feet apart.

Commercial preparations such as Deer Off and Deer Away rely on sulfur compounds to repel deer and other garden critters. To make a homemade version of these products blend an egg, a cup of water and a couple of garlic cloves in the blender.

After a week or more of fermenting the noxious liquid can be sprinkled over susceptible plants. Don't worry; within a short time the smell will be undetectable to you, but pungent as ever to our four legged browsers.

Scarecrows work only minimally well to scare off deer, and to be the most effective, they must take the

Please see **GARDEN**, page 13

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The Wilbraham-Hampden Times is published every Thursday by Turley Publications, Inc., 24 Water St., Palmer, Mass. 01069. Telephone (413) 283-8393, Fax (413) 289-1977.



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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.

Life in &

WILBRAHAM
HAMPDEN

A COMMUNITY GALLERY

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.



Photos and caption courtesy of Wilbraham Fire Department

WFD brings safety to WMS

On April 11, members of the Wilbraham Fire Department had the opportunity of attending a vibrant glow-in-the-dark after-school volleyball event at Wilbraham Middle School, hosted by Hampden-Wilbraham Partners for Youth and the Minnechaug Above the Influence Club. Life safety educators took this unique opportunity to teach hands-only CPR to another hundred students in our district. It was a way to combine fun with important life-saving skills, all while in a glowing environment. We are proud to empower our youth with the knowledge and skills to act in emergencies, ensuring they are prepared to make a difference when it counts.



Photo and caption courtesy of Hampden Fire Department

HFD responds to brush fire

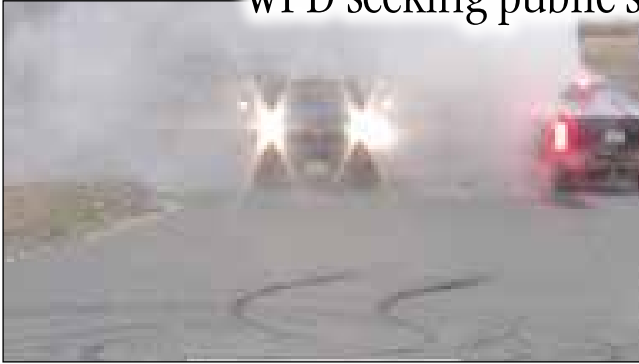
Crews were working a brush fire on Mountain Rd on April 17. The fire was burning in a remote area and UTVs were being used. The fire was contained and final size is 4.3 acres. Mutual aid was being provided by Wilbraham Fire Department, Somers Fire Department, Monson Fire Department, Shaker Pines Fire Department and West Stafford Fire Department.

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WPD seeking public's help identifying drivers



Photos and caption courtesy of Wilbraham Police Department

The Wilbraham Police Department is asking for the public's help in identifying suspects from a dangerous roadway situation that occurred during the evening of Thursday April 10, 2025 on Dollar Ave. The actions of these drivers not only endangered themselves, and the motoring public but also caused damage to the road surface. If you know or can identify the owners/operators of the trucks pictured please contact WPD at 413-596-3837 or Chief@Wilbraham-ma.gov and reference #25WIL-313-OF.



Submitted photo and caption Cheryl Phillips

Red Hat Society visits Magic Wings

This month, the Red Hat Society visited Magic Wings in South Deerfield. They enjoyed 80 degree tropical-environment, a waterfall and pond and peaceful music while surrounded by hundreds of butterflies fluttering around them. This was followed with lunch at Wolfie's Restaurant.

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Wilbraham Select Board discusses needed Memorial School improvement

Asbestos in the floors and a weakening roof are among the issues.

By Dalton Zbierski
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM – When the Wilbraham Select Board met on April 14, a letter from the Finance Committee was discussed regarding how building improvements will impact the town budget.

The police station and fire department were mentioned, but focus quickly shifted to Memorial School, the town-owned property on Main Street.

Select Board Chair Sue Bunnell requested information from the town’s Building Utilization Committee regarding the building and asked them to prioritize looking into the potential costs of needed improvements to the site.

“For myself, I think that

we are looking to get some information from the Building Utilization Committee, and we’ll be looking at the consequences of this year’s budget I suppose for Memorial,” Bunnell said. “I think it would be useful to have them maybe get on to Memorial at the front end of their work if that makes sense.”

Select Board Clerk Marc Ducey expressed his concern that there will be significant expenses associated with remediating the safety issues in the building moving forward. Ducey would like to know more about how the town will deal with them over the next 14 to 18 months.

He would also like to hear a report on the matter from Wilbraham Facilities Director Sam Boyd.

Ducey explained his reservations, noting that there are two things he is particularly concerned about.

“Obviously, number one is safety,” Ducey said. “And then, are there any envelope issues or things that we have to get addressed? I’m not re-

ally too worried about the cosmetic stuff inside or, you know, ‘Maybe the furnace doesn’t really work that well, it’s an inefficient furnace.’ I’m not really worried about that at all but more about the envelope, the security issues of the envelope and the weather-tightness of the envelope.”

Ducey added that he recently heard about an asbestos issue in the building’s floors, reiterating that “those are the kind of things that need to be addressed.”

Town Administrator Nick Breault weighed in, noting the roof has also been identified as an issue for the building too.

He said that the Building Utilization Committee is scheduled to meet at Memorial School early next month. He also confirmed Boyd will be involved in the process of preparing information about the building for the Select Board.

“The first meeting they’re going to the police station and the fire station just to sort of get a sense of what they’re

looking at, and they’re developing their own checklist just to try to keep it somewhat uniform knowing that each building will have its own challenges,” Breault said.

He estimated that they would meet at Memorial School on Thursday, May 1. Parks and Recreation Director Bryan Litz is scheduled to be there.

Breault recalled from a recent Building Utilization Committee meeting that the group is looking to organize information on the different town buildings, especially Memorial School.

“What they were trying to do was put the work into stages; first stage generally being called the gathering of information stage. I can let them know that the Select Board would be interested in an earlier report at least on that particular building,” Breault said.

Worth noting, Select Board Vice Chair Michael Squindo was unusually quiet during this discussion, only saying, “I will withhold at this point.”



Puppola presents citation to Roosters Chicken & Waffles

WILBRAHAM - Representative Angelo J. Puppola, Jr. (D-Springfield) presented an official citation from the Massachusetts House of Representatives to Sayeed Kahn at the ribbon cutting and grand opening of his new family-owned and operated business, Rooster’s Chicken & Waffles, in the Wilbraham Shops at 2341 Boston Road in Wilbraham.

Representative Puppola continues his support of local entrepreneurs by recognizing their small businesses and their contributions to the communities they serve.

Pictured, left to right, are: Sayeed Kahn, Hamad Sayeed, Humeera Naz, State Rep. Angela J. Puppola, Jr.(D-Springfield), Huda Sayeed and Muhammad Sayeed.

Scholarship Benefit Tag Sale takes place May 10

WILBRAHAM – THE DKG Society International for Key Women Educators Alpha Chapter MA will be hosting a Scholarship Tag Sale on Saturday, May 10 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Scholarship Benefit Tag Sale for Greater Springfield Area High Schools will be held at Grace Union Church at 10 Chapel St. in Wilbraham.

It will be a spring blowout sale, including clothing, toys and games, household goods, jewelry and more.

VFW Post 9397 hosting Steamers

HAMPDEN – VFW Post 9397 will be hosting Steamers beginning on May 16 at 5 p.m. until sold out.

The menu is steamers, clam chowder, clam strips, chicken tenders, French fries and onion rings. The price is market dependent.

First come, first serve with limited supply.

Wilbraham Notice to Voters: Registration

WILBRAHAM - Notice is hereby given that the Board of Registrars of Voters will be in session.

Dates Times Places
Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Town Clerk’s Office
May 2, 2025 (Friday) 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Town Clerk’s Office

(Last Day to Register for Town Meeting and Town Election)

for the purpose of registering voters for the Annual Town Meeting to be held on Monday, May 12, 2025, and the Annual Town Election to be held on Saturday, May 17, 2025 and to make any necessary corrections in the list of voters.

QUALIFICATIONS: An applicant for registration must be at least 18 years of

age by the date of the election, a citizen of the United States and a resident of this city or town.

A registered voter who chooses to adopt a new name by decree of court or as a result of marriage shall continue to be registered in their former name until June first of the following year at which time the voter shall be registered in their new name; provided, however, that if such voter appears in person prior to the close of registration for any preliminary, primary, or election to notify the registrars of such adoption of a new name, the registrars shall correct the current annual register so that such voter shall be registered in their new name. (G.L. Chapter 51, sec 2 as amended)

If a qualified voter whose name was on the voter’s list last year finds after close of registration that their name has been omitted from the current list by mistake or that there is a clerical error in the listing, they may apply to correct the omission or error. If the application is made on Election Day, they may have a certificate to vote.

Call the Board of Registrars’ Office, 413-596-2800, ext. 200, for information:

- If you are unable because of physical disability to appear in person to register, or
- If you wish to verify your voting status.

William Fogarty
Board of Registrars/
Frank Mikuszewski
Deborah Brennan

Pianist to perform at Wilbraham Library

WILBRAHAM– Pianist Richard Hughes will present The Golden Age of Silent Movies at the Wilbraham Public Library on Monday, May 12 at 6 p.m.

Hughes will highlight a selection of early cartoons, historical dramas, serial thrillers, and slap-stick comedies featuring legends like Harold Lloyd, Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton, all brought to life with sound effects and live musical accompaniment. Audience members will also have the opportunity to synchronize sound effects to a 1913 melodrama using animation devices.

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

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

JERRY’S GIRLS from page 1

Eastman played a montage of the music and we awaited the performers with a stage displaying the Broadway posters of the productions with Jerry Herman’s music. Then, just like that, the cast came out to “It Takes a Woman” and the world faded away to an evening of laughter, heart, some

tears and good entertainment.

I’ll be honest. I could probably write a separate article on every single number in this musical review because from start to finish, they were all fantastic and whether a solo number or a group number, the cast made each song their very own, creating a montage of Broadway’s finest.

What was also enjoyable

was the audience interaction when some of the cast members would come off the stage whether one by one or all at once, creating real connections with the audience members as they showcased their dance moves--for the tap dancing fans out there, you will find some tap dancing in this show too--or sang directly to you or your tablemates.

Be forewarned, you’ll

need your singing chops for one of the numbers, so be prepared to play along and sing with enthusiasm. Noelle and I were just as surprised as the audience when this bit came, and it brought a very interactive feel to the performance along with some smiles.

We won’t spoil which number so you can be surprised.

Also, it would not be a

musical review without costumes and props, with each performance--whether a group number or a solo number--utilizing a fun costume piece or prop, including a large hat, light-up Christmas headbands and sparkly garland, mini colorful umbrellas to spin, wine glasses, elaborate wigs, chairs for the movie-themed songs, feather boas and even a jukebox.

The fun of the costumes and props was you didn’t know which one would be used once a performer stepped out on the stage, leaving an element of surprise for each performance that had you waiting in anticipation.

Each performer had a standout moment more than once and then some--which is why you can’t pin it down to one show-stealing moment or one particular performer--because whether hitting the highest of high notes that left the audience in awe, expressing the happiest or saddest tones or letting the noise of tap dancing shoes do all the talking, each Jerry’s girl well deserved her own spotlight.

But, if I had to choose a few personal favorites... Renaud’s hilarious rendition of “Nelson” and Greene Van-Horn’s solo number during “Take It All Off” had

the audience nearly falling out of their seats in laughter--myself and Noelle included--and I was excited to see Renaud and Secora’s duet performance of “Bosom Buddies,” a fun number I enjoyed seeing during the cast’s rehearsal a few weeks ago.

Also, the group number segue from “It’s Today” to “Mame” was absolutely seamless, with me nearly forgetting these were two separate songs.

Another to not forget. The final number of “The Best of Times,” allowing the audience to walk away from the show with a smile, an important reminder that the best times are still to come and not too far away.

But seriously. Even though I have a few favorites, the entire cast deserves their flowers and many rounds of applause, as each performance deservedly got throughout the night.

If you plan to attend “Jerry’s Girls,” get ready for an entertaining night to remember. If you haven’t gotten tickets yet, take it from me. You need to go, and soon.

Cheers to Jerry’s Girls and let the music play on!

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Four-run third keys Falcons win

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

SOUTH HADLEY—After losing the previous three games on the softball diamond to South Hadley, the Minnechaug batters were ready to face senior righthander Isabella Schaeffer in the first meeting of this season between the two teams.

The Lady Falcons scored four runs in the third inning and added another run in the fifth inning enroute to a 5-1 non-league victory over the Lady Tigers, last Tuesday afternoon.

“We’ve faced the South Hadley pitcher several times in the past and we do have a lot of respect for her,” said Minnechaug head coach Molly Cole. “We made some adjustments, and we put the bat on the ball. We forced them to make the plays. We executed very well in today’s game.”

The Lady Falcons had a 3-4 overall record following the road victory.

Sophomore righthander Abigail Camire earned the victory in her first varsity start against the Lady Tigers. She recorded her first varsity win as a relief pitcher in a 12-9 home victory versus Monson on April 18.

“Abigail has pitched very well for us,” Cole said. “It doesn’t seem like anything bothers her out there.”

Camire allowed an un-

earned run on three hits. She only walked one batter and struck out six.

The Lady Tigers had a 5-4 overall record.

“This is a disappointing loss. We made several costly errors in today’s game,” said South Hadley head coach Junior Perez. “I didn’t expect us to play that poorly. Minnechaug played very well.”

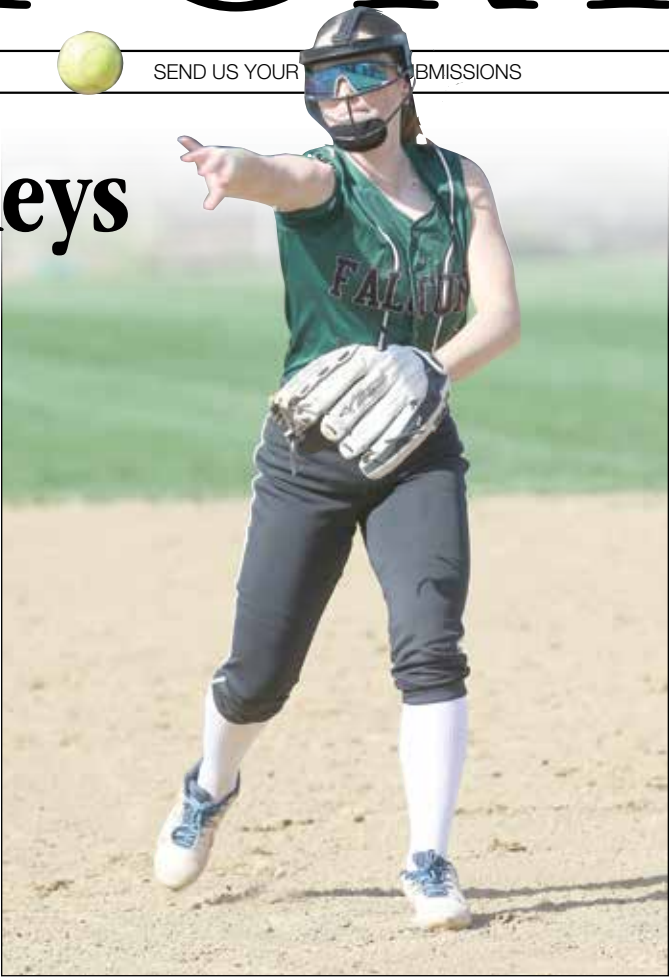
The Lady Falcons had an opportunity to take a 1-0 lead with two outs in the top of the first inning.

Sophomore centerfielder Veronica Ouimet hit a pop-up which landed untouched between home plate and the pitcher’s circle. Ouimet wound up standing on second base. She then stole third.

Schaeffer ended the threat by recording her third strikeout of the frame. The hard throwing righty, who’ll be playing softball at Westfield State University next year, finished the game with a total of 15 strikeouts. She allowed five runs on seven hits and no walks.

Junior centerfielder Karli Carmody led off the bottom of the first by hitting a ground ball back to Camire, who didn’t field it cleanly resulting in an error. Following a sacrifice bunt from eighth grade second baseman Samantha LaFlesh, Schaeffer lined a single down the left field line

Please see **SOFTBALL**, page 10



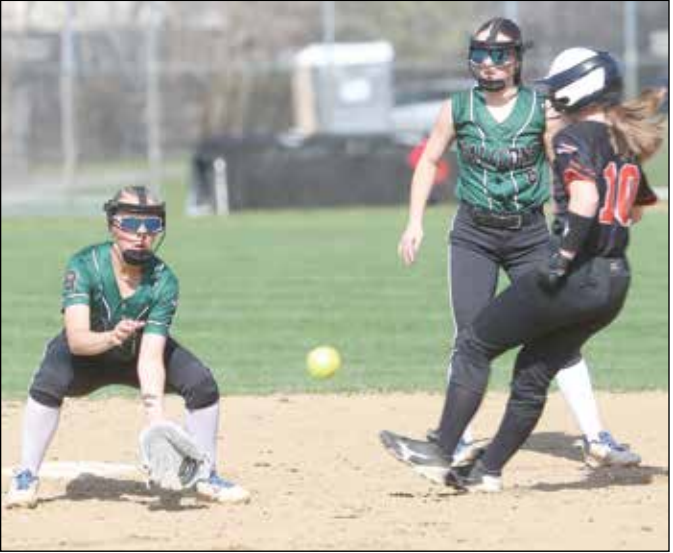
Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Gianna Fusco sends a throw to first.



Abby Peyman reaches up for a throw.



Pitcher Abigail Camire sends the pitch home.



Mylie Mittler fields a grounder.

Falcons boys lacrosse remains perfect

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

SHREWSBURY—Two of the previous three meetings between the Saint John’s and Minnechaug Regional boys’ lacrosse teams were decided by one goal.

When the two teams faced each other on a beautiful spring day at Pioneer Field in Shrewsbury last Tuesday, it was another close affair from start to finish.

The score was tied, 8-8, with less than four minutes remaining in regulation when senior tri-captain Thomas O’Toole scored a pair of unassisted goals giving the Falcons an exciting 10-8 victory.

“Anytime that you can beat an Eastern or Central Mass opponent, it always feels very good,” said Minnechaug head coach Mike Delia. “Saint John’s is a Division 1 team and they’re well coached. We knew that today’s game was going to be a hard fought battle. They’re probably the best team that we’ve played so far this season.”

Minnechaug, who’s a Division 2 team, had a perfect 7-0 overall record following the non-league victory over Saint John’s, which is an all-boys Catholic school.

“The players on this year’s team have worked very hard at practice and it has carried over into the games,” Delia added. “We did make a lot of mistakes in today’s game, especially in the second half, which we’ll need to fix. We were fortunate to take advantage of a couple of their errors late in the game.”

It was also the fourth consecutive year that the visiting team celebrated a win in the series.

The Pioneers (2-5) made the trip to Western Mass. last year and defeated the Falcons, 14-5.

Back in 2023, the Falcons pulled out a 12-11 road win over Saint John’s during the April school vacation week. Minnechaug won the first six games of the 2023 regular season before suffering a 12-6 home loss to Pope Francis.

The inaugural meeting between the two squads took place in Wilbraham in 2022. The Pioneers squeaked out a 13-12 win in that contest.

“It’s always a close game whenever we play these guys,” O’Toole said. “This was another hard fought battle.”

Following last Tuesday’s match, O’Toole received the Grind Bucket.

“Thomas played his best game of the season today. He made several outstanding plays,” Delia said. “We give the Grind Bucket to a player after every game that we win.”

O’Toole scored a game-high four goals and had three assists against the Pioneers.

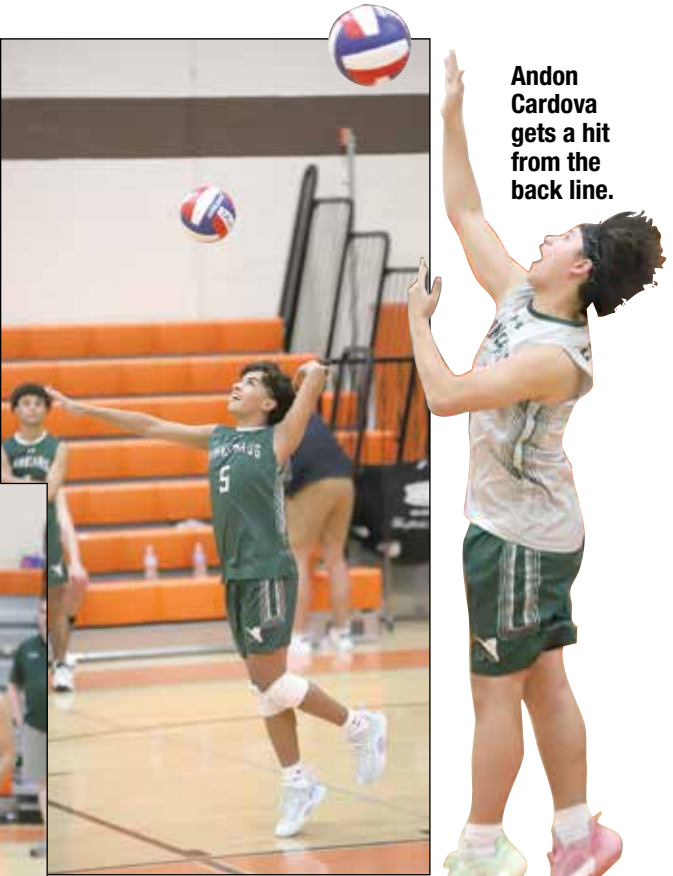
Please see **LACROSSE**, page 10

Falcons fall to Brownies

LEFT: Brennan Rost gets a set near the net.
RIGHT: Luis Vega goes for a serve.



Jonathan Correa sets from the back line.



Andon Cardova gets a hit from the back line.

AGAWAM – Last Thursday night, Agawam High School brought it Minnechaug in boys volleyball action. The Brownies defeated Minnechaug in straight sets, winning 25-14, 25-12, and 25-22. The Brownies used nearly their entire roster in the matchup, with Mike Lukomski and John Cote having four kills each. David Dzhenzherukha finishing with 15 assists. Agawam is 11-1 while Minnechaug dropped to 2-8 on the season.



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Domenic Fantone goes for a spike.

Thompson Speedway hosts Spring Icebreaker event

THOMPSON, CT — A cool spring breeze complemented the hot, on-track action Wednesday night, Apr. 16 at Thompson Speedway as the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour finally returned to Connecticut to finish off the 51st Icebreaker festivities.

The SK Light Modifieds started off feature racing on Wednesday night with the #45 of rookie competitor TJ Tomasi climbing the #6 of

veteran Todd Douillard under the initial green flag start. Righted after a quick debris clean-up, Nick Hovey and Sami Anderson went head-to-head with Hovey getting the jump off turn two. Veteran John O’Sullivan also slid under Anderson to chase after Hovey as Gerard Giordano entered the picture in fourth. A quick spin caution for rookie Sophya Papp saw O’Sullivan rocket to the restart lead

around an ailing Nick Hovey but it was Hovey who powered back with a slingshot move to claim the lead and the win in the final corner. John O’Sullivan settled for second with Sami Anderson taking third after Giordano was disqualified for an unsealed engine.

Danny Cates brought the Thompson Sunoco Modifieds down the wire for the green flag in their 30 lap

main event, four cars short after Keith Rocco and rookies Cory Plummer, Nate Wenzel and Nathan Pytko got caught up in a heat-race melee. Cates would hold the lead until Todd Owen stormed around to lead lap six with point leader Jon Puleo following underneath Cates for second two laps later. A lap 21 spin for Zach Leone in turn two renewed hopes for Puleo but Owen continued to power out

ahead. Todd Owen took down his first Thompson Sunoco Modified win of the season with Jon Puleo and Danny Cates rounding out the podium.

Next up, the Street Stocks took the field with Corey Fanning and Al Stone III nose-to-nose at the line. Stone began to drop like a rock, yielding to Aaron Plemons and Ryan Waterman as they charged

Please see **RACE**, page 10

Rev Up for the Ride: St. Paul’s Church hosts Annual Blessing of the Bikes

PALMER – The open road calls, and for many riders, it’s more than just a journey—it’s a way of life. The rhythm of the engine, the wind against your face, the unbreakable bond between rider and machine. It’s a spiritual experience, a connection to something greater. And this bond is never stronger than on Blessing of the Bikes Day!

On Saturday, May 10, at 10 a.m., motorcyclists from all walks of life—cruisers, sportbike riders, touring adventurers, and everything in between—will gather at St. Paul’s Church of Palmer to receive a special blessing for both their bikes and their travels ahead. Rain date: Sunday, May 11, at Noon.

Each rider will receive an embroidered ‘Blessing of the Bikes’ jacket patch as a keepsake, along with a guardian ‘spirit bell’—a revered token among bikers, symbolizing protection, guidance, and blessings for a safe and fulfilling journey.

The event will feature The Spirit Riders CMA of Western Massachusetts, a unique motorcycle ministry dedicated to serving the riding community. Additionally, local non-profit cycle groups will be present, sharing their missions and the charitable causes they champion.

“For many, riding isn’t just transportation—it’s



freedom, adventure, and a deep connection to the road,” said Rev. Steven Sousa, minister of St. Paul’s Church. “It’s an adrenaline-fueled journey that speaks to the soul. At our Blessing of the Bikes, we pray for safety, joy, and the companionship of the road. Whether you ride a Harley, a Honda, or a custom-built chopper, you are welcome. Come as you are—leave blessed!”

Event Details Date: Saturday, May 10 (Rain Date: Sunday, May 11) Time: 10 a.m. (Rain Date: 12 noon) Location: St. Paul’s Church,

Corner of Park & Central Streets, Palmer, MA Cost: Free & open to the public

About St. Paul’s Church of Palmer
Since 1937, St. Paul’s has been a cornerstone of faith, community, and outreach in Palmer. Rooted in a message of grace, acceptance, and love, the church serves as a welcoming space for all. For more information, visit www.StPaulsPalmer.org. Kickstands up—see you there!



Ecological Restoration Projects planned for Laughing Brook Wildlife Sanctuary

HAMPDEN-A series of ecological restoration projects starting this summer at Laughing Brook Wildlife Sanctuary will mean long-term improvements to vital habitats of the 438-acre property, with short-term closures as work progresses.

Invasive plants, including Autumn Olive, have overrun areas near the trail entrance and have begun spreading into the forest. Also, the property has seen several recent trail closures due to hazardous trees weakened by the Spongy Moth infestation. The strategic renewal initiatives target both the ecological integrity of the sanctuary and trail safety, native plantings in favor of invasive species and the removal of unsafe trees combining to

restore a healthy, functioning ecosystem.

In tandem with tree removal, Mass Audubon will take this opportunity to restore a Pitch Pine-Oak Heathland, an ecologically important habitat in inland Massachusetts. This effort will improve forest resilience in the face of climate change and support a wide variety of wildlife.

Species such as the Eastern Towhee and Eastern Whip-poor-will-birds of conservation concern-as well as rare reptiles and insects that depend on the sanctuary’s expanding understory of blueberry and huckleberry.

As these projects unfold, visitors can expect to see changes across the landscape, including tree and shrub re-

moval and the use of heavy equipment. Temporary sanctuary closures may be necessary to ensure public safety. The long-term results, however, will include healthier habitats, improved biodiversity, and a more welcoming space for people and wildlife alike.

Mass Audubon thanks the community for its patience and ongoing support during this period of transformation and will keep everyone updated on project developments. To that end, there is an introductory community meeting on May 3 at 10 am at Laughing Brook so the public can learn firsthand how these projects will benefit both wildlife and people.

Anyone interested in attending must register at bit.ly/laughingbrookprogram.

Searching your family history with Ancestry Library Edition

WILBRAHAM – Assistant Library Director Mary Bell will give a hands-on demonstration of Ancestry Library Edition at the Wilbraham Public Library on Wednesday, May 14 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

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

with forms and tips for researching genealogy.

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

Images of original records, including immigration records and town records of births, marriages, and deaths can be saved to

a flash drive or sent to your email from Ancestry Library Edition. It is accessible in-library only, but can be used through both library computers or personal devices connected to the library’s Wi-Fi.

This program is free and open to the public. Space is limited, and registration is going on now.

For more information, contact the Wilbraham Library at 413-596-6141 or visit the Event Calendar online at www.wilbrahamlibrary.org.

Be safe when disposing of oily rags and applicators

WILBRAHAM/HAMPDEN - Every year in Massachusetts, the unsafe disposal of oily rags and applicators causes fires that damage homes and property.

The oils in some paints, stains, and varnishes release heat as they dry. If oily rags and applicators are left in a pile, a box, or the trash, the heat can remain trapped and cause a fire that quickly spreads to nearby combustibles. Instead, hang them outside to dry in a safe area

or spread them out flat, making sure they are weighted down. They should not be in a pile. Store dry rags in a small, airtight, non-combustible (such as metal) container with a tight-fitting lid. An old paint can is a good example. Cover the rags completely with a solution of water and an oil breakdown detergent. Do not add any other combustible material. Dispose of the container during a household hazardous waste collection event.

VFW Post 9397 hosting Bingo Fundraiser

HAMPDEN – The VFW Post 9397 will be hosting a Purse and Tools Bingo Night on Friday, May 9. The first game starts at 6 p.m.

Tickets are \$40 per person and includes 10 bingo cards for each round. Additional cards can be bought and there will also be raffle prizes.

Bring your own food ONLY. Drinks available for purchase. The VFW and Auxiliary Post 9397 is located at 190 Main St. in Hampden.

Memorial Day Plant Sale

HAMPDEN – The Hampden Garden Club’s Memorial Day Plant Sale will be taking place on May 26 from 8 a.m. to Noon at Academy Hall, Main Street, in Hampden, rain or shine.

Stop by and check out the plants!

RACE from page 9

up the outside in the early goings. With ten-to-go Fanning and Waterman began beating and banging for the lead, the two rivals switching lanes and changing paint in each corner of the 5/8-mile Thompson oval. Things went sour in turn one on lap 18 with Waterman getting the right-hook off Fanning’s nose, making for a hard hit

into the concrete for Waterman with officials promptly ending Fanning’s night. Aaron Plemons would go on to take the win over Al Stone III and Larry Barnett under the twin checkered flags.

The Thompson Late Models finished out the track championship divisions on Wednesday night with Brian Tagg in command under the green flag. Zach Robinson and Nick

Lascuola battled hard for second with Jake Johnson watching patiently from fourth. Brian Tagg would dominate the Icebreaker Late Model showdown over Jake Johnson, who eventually made his methodical way around both Lascuola and Robinson to take second with Nick Lascuola holding on to take third.

LACROSSE from page 9

Sophomore Jacob Hisgen also recorded a hat-trick for the Falcons. He assisted on O’Toole’s goal late in the second period. Senior Matt Noonan chipped in with two goals and senior Colin Meunier scored his only goal of the match with 6:31 left in regulation which gave the Falcons an 8-6 lead.

“We have six players who contribute offensively for us,” Delia said. “They played very well, especially during the first half.”

The Pioneers managed to tie the score at 8-8 following back-to-back goals by senior’s Sean Granger and Carson Reirden.

Following a Minnechaug time-out, an unassisted goal by O’Toole gave his team the lead back with 3:49 left in the fourth period. A little more than a minute later, O’Toole scored another goal on a bounce shot making the score 10-8.

“I had the opportunity and decided to take the shot,” said O’Toole, who’s planning to play lacrosse at the University of Hartford. “We played very well offensively.”

The Falcons managed to keep possession of the ball during the final minute of regulation.

O’Toole scored two goals in the first period. His first goal was unassisted. Hisgen assisted on the second goal, which tied the score with 3:13 remaining in the opening period.

The duo of Hisgen and

O’Toole would hook up again three minutes into the second stanza.

This time, Hisgen was the goal scorer giving the Falcons a 3-2 lead for the first time.

The Falcons held a 5-2 halftime advantage following two goals by Noonan.

Down at the other end of the field, Minnechaug sophomore goalie Ricky Hale made four key saves keeping the Pioneers off the scoreboard during the second period.

“I thought Ricky played very well,” Delia said. “He made a couple of nice stops and created some turnovers for us.”

Overall, Hale, who’s a first-year starter at the varsity level, made a total of 13 saves.

The Falcons back-up goalie is junior Zach Kozub, who was the starter a year ago.

“Our goalie competition is phenomenal,” Delia added. “I have a lot of confidence in Zach if he ever needed to replace Ricky.

Saint John’s, who out-scored Minnechaug, 4-2, during the third period, entered the final period trailing by only one goal (7-6). Hisgen scored the Falcon’s two goals in the third period.

O’Toole scored his final two goals during the final four minutes of regulation, which helped his team remain undefeated.

The Falcons traveled to Hopkinton High School two days later and squeaked out a 12-10 victory.

SOFTBALL from page 9

giving her team a 1-0 lead.

The Lady Tigers only had two runners who reached second base during the next six innings.

This summer, Camire will be a member of a U-16 travel softball team which is coached by Perez.

“Abigale is on my U-16 team,” Perez said. “She isn’t a hard thrower, but she just kept us off balance in today’s game. She kept throwing strikes. She’s a great kid and I’m looking forward to coaching her this summer.”

The Lady Falcons stranded another runner at third base in the second before taking advantage of a couple costly mistakes made by the South Hadley defense in the third.

With one-out in the third inning, freshman leftfielder Kaelyn Dionne hit a ground ball past the second baseman for an infield hit. After the next batter struck out, a bunt hit by Ouimet kept the inning alive.

“I can always count on

Veronica to do anything that we need,” Cole said. “She’s a very good bunter and she’s also a fast runner. She’s a very smart softball player.”

The bunt hit turned out to be a key play, as senior right fielder Ava Peabody bought home the tying run with an infield hit. Then senior first baseman Abby Peyman hit an RBI single into right field giving the Lady Falcons a 2-1 advantage. Peabody also scored on the play following a fielding error. Peyman scored the fourth run of the frame on a throwing error.

Schaeffer struck out the side in the third inning.

Ouimet blasted a triple to center field with one-out in the fifth before scoring on Peyman’s infield single.

When Ouimet came to bat again in the seventh inning, she needed a home run to complete the cycle. She wound up hitting a flyball to center.

The two squads were scheduled to face each other at Minnechaug Regional last Friday afternoon, but that game was postponed.



Turley photo by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Alexa Sherman makes a play near the line.

Mandarin Wilbraham celebrates 20th anniversary

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - Mandarin Wilbraham on Boston Road celebrated 20 years of business on April 19 with a grand party inside the bar section of the restaurant.

Started by Annie Gao and her husband, Jimmy Chen, Mandarin Wilbraham offers a variety of Chinese and Japanese cuisine--also sushi- with dine-in, takeout and catering options also available.

During the grand anniversary party, customers also enjoyed a special cake and a free small appetizer with a purchase of \$50 or more with their meal.

Mandarin Wilbraham is open Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. and closed on Tuesdays.

Gao explained Mandarin Wilbraham opened on April 19, 2005, and the restaurant's success is credited to her staff and the customers.

"We are so grateful to be here. We really appreciate the loyalty, customers who continue supporting the business and then we are really grateful to our staff. They do an amazing job. Without them, we would not be here," Gao said. "Everyone works so hard."

Showing us photos from the restaurant's early beginnings, Gao said they bought the building in December 2003, spending over a year and a half remodeling the building.

"When we bought it, it was a lot of work, but we have to go through everything with the town hall, with the permits, everything," Gao said. "But, Wilbraham Town Hall they are so good to us. They all welcomed a new Chinese/Japanese restaurant to Wilbraham. They've been help-



Annie Gao smiles as she pours shots for her loyal customers and friends at the bar. Gao started the business along with her husband, Jimmy Chen.

ing a lot to process everything and proof everything. We really appreciate Wilbraham Town Hall too."

Reflecting on the journey to Wilbraham, Gao shared how her family was helping her find a restaurant with an apartment as she and her husband had two young kids at the time.

Chen was the one who found the location where Mandarin Wilbraham is to this day. There are four cottages in the back for the family as well.

"So, he found this place and then we talked to the owner and everything and then, finally, we applied and we bought this building," Gao said. "We like this place because they have a beautiful view in the back."

On the customers and staff, Gao calls them all her family. Also, her family has gotten involved in the business too.

"They are not just customers, they become family too and then they help me raise my kids here in Wilbraham also, and also, we have so many family members work

for us at Mandarin and they, also, they bring their kids in Wilbraham and bought a house in Wilbraham, raise the kids in Wilbraham," Gao said. "So I have my cousin, two cousins and my brothers, they all moved to Wilbraham too. So, it's a family-owned business also. We all work hard together and we all raise the kids in Wilbraham, so we really appreciate the Wilbraham community supporting the business."

For the staff, Gao explained some have been around as long as 10, 11 and even 15 years.

"They are all great employees and then we hire Wilbraham high school kids to work here as the drivers and hostesses. They are all great workers and Wilbraham is a very, very nice town," Gao said. "We really appreciate that too."

On a favorite dish, Gao said this.

"I would say many, many people like the Chinese food like General Tso Chicken, Kung Pao Chicken, and then, also, the sushi is very popular," Gao said.



Patrons and staff at Mandarin Wilbraham raise their glasses as they celebrate the restaurant's 20th anniversary on April 19.

There's also a food bar that's very popular with customers and brings people together.

"It's not just the bar, it's like a family-friendly restaurant and even the bar the customers are super nice as well and they all become families too," Gao said. "The customers at the bar, they all know each other too."

Maura Lessard is one of those loyal customers and was thrilled at the milestone.

"We're also celebrating the birthday of the second patron that was ever here, who is the most amazing person to everyone," Lessard said. "A dear friend to Annie and her kids and all of us."

She enjoys the salt and pepper shrimp and pineapple shrimp dishes.

"They're all good!" Lessard said. "The sushi, of course."

Lessard is also a longtime friend of Gao's and is happy for her success.

"It means the longevity of friends and the community



A shot of what Mandarin Wilbraham looks like today.

that Annie and Jimmy have created. So, we're celebrating them as well as their business," Lessard said.

Lessard encourages residents to stop by if they haven't yet.

"You have to come. You have to come," Lessard said. "You won't leave, you'll be back."

Gao encouraged the community to continue supporting their local businesses and thanked everyone for their support, adding the business

will also continue to give back to the community.

"I can't say thank you enough for all the community supporting the business," Gao said.

Lessard's message to Gao was this.

"I love you and everything that you do for all of us," Lessard said.

"We love you guys too!" Gao said.

To learn more, visit mandarinwilbrahamrest.com or call 413-596-5088.

SENIORS

Hampden Senior Center Older Americans Month Programming

HAMPDEN – The senior center will be offering programming throughout May in celebration of Older Americans Month.

The 2025 Older Americans Month theme is Flip the Script on Aging, which focuses on transforming how

society perceives, talks about, and approaches aging. It encourages individuals and communities to challenge stereotypes and dispel misconceptions. This year, join us in honoring older adults' contributions, exploring the many opportunities for staying active and engaged as we age, and highlighting the opportunities for purpose, exploration, and connection that come with aging.

Please call 413-566-5588 to register for any of the events listed below.

Fri., May 2 at 11:30 a.m.
Pizza and Proxies with Attorney Dave Carlson.

FREE Lunch/Presentation
Join Atty. Carlson to learn about the important documents you should

Pizza Lunch have in place. Complete a Health Care Proxy form and enjoy a **FREE** pizza lunch sponsored by Gio's Pizzeria, JGS Life-care & Bluebird Estates.

Thu., May 8 at 11:30 a.m.
Falls Prevention Program and FREE Lunch

FREE Lunch/Presentation
Join staff from The Reserve for a **FREE** tasty lunch and hear important

Sandwich, chips, dessert information about preventing falls. Sponsored by The Reserve.

Wed., May 14 at 9:30 a.m.
Live to 100: Secrets of the

Blue Zone Video Part 1 & Video & Presentation
Guest Speaker Sue Kent

Mediterranean Pasta Salad "Live to 100: Secrets of the Blue Zones" is a Netflix docuseries that follows author Dan Buettner as he travels to five "Blue Zones" – regions where people live exceptionally long and healthy lives – to uncover the secrets to longevity and a fulfilling life. You will watch

the first 2 segments of the documentary and enjoy a presentation from Sue Kent about how exercise and movement are beneficial to a long life. Stay for a delicious Mediterranean Pasta Salad lunch.

Fri., May 16, Noon to 2 p.m. Pro Shred Event in the parking lot from Noon to 2 p.m.

Community Event
The Friends of Hampden Senior Citizens are sponsoring this **FREE** community shredding event. Please note there is a limit of five paper boxes per person.

Fri., May 16 at 6 p.m.
Fundraising Event: Jewelry Making Class with Nan

Fundraiser Event
Join Nan Hurlburt, Jewelry Designer and Artist, to learn the art of Polymer Clay. Enjoy a glass of wine and light refreshments while you create your own unique pendant. This fundraiser event will support programs and services at the Hampden Senior Center. Cost \$25 per person.

Mon., May 19 at 12:30 p.m. Movie: Thelma, Rated PG-13 & a visit from Det. Jason Roath, HPD

Movie & Popcorn

Come and enjoy this movie about Thelma Post, a 93-year-old grandmother who loses \$10,000 to a con artist on the phone. With help from a friend and his motorized scooter, she soon embarks on a treacherous journey across Los Angeles to reclaim what was taken from her. Before the movie, Detective Roath from the Hampden Police Department will speak briefly on elder fraud and staying safe from scams.

Wed., May 21 at 9:30 a.m.
Live to 100: Secrets of the Blue Zone Video Part 2 & Guest Speaker

Video & Presentation
Tara Hammes, Nutritionist
Chef Salad "Live to 100: Secrets of the Blue Zones" is a Netflix docuseries that follows author Dan Buettner as he travels to five "Blue Zones" – regions where people live exceptionally long and healthy lives – to uncover the secrets to longevity and a fulfilling life. You will watch the last 2 segments of the documentary and enjoy a presentation from Tara Hammes, a nutritionist who will talk with you more about the Blue Zone foods and how a healthy diet can help you live a longer life. Stay for a delicious Chef Salad lunch.

Thu., May 22 at 12:30 p.m. BINGO with the Hampden Fire Department

Lunch/BINGO
Join the Hampden Fire Department for a lively game of BINGO as they educate us on fire safety and prevention, and learn about some of the programs offered through the

Please see **SENIORS,** page 13

WPD safety reminder about car break-ins

WILBRAHAM – The police department is reminding residents to lock their cars after recent car break-ins, sharing this on their Facebook page on April 13:

"Last night / early this

morning several unlocked motor vehicles were entered into and contents stolen along the Monson/Wilbraham line as well as surrounding communities. Historically, unlocked vehicles were targeted.

PLEASE take precautions, lock your vehicles, remove all times from sight, set alarms, install & maintain exterior lighting or cameras, and promptly report instances to your local police."

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Congratulations Karly Smith! We are so very proud of you and your accomplishments. Good luck at Springfield College!

Love Dad. Mom & John

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TAG SALE

WILBRAHAM DKG SCHOLARSHIP benefit tag sale. Grace Union Church, 10 Chapel St., Wilbraham. **Saturday, May 10, 9am-4pm.** Huge selection!

WANTED

OLD CARPENTER TOOLS wanted. Planes, chisels, axes, etc. Vintage hunting, camping, cast iron cookware, advertising, motorcycles, clothing. Call Ken **(413)433-2195.**

WANTED TO BUY

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Donald Roy **(860) 874-8396**

SEEKING: ANTIQUES & Old Collectables.

We are looking to buy antiques: Tobacco tins, cigar boxes, advertising tins, old coffee cans, brass figures, beer trays, beer taps, toy collections. These are just some of the examples we are looking for.
Please reach out via email or text: **teestreasures413@gmail.com 413-374-7388**
Send any photos or questions you may have.

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Exciting new book on Wilbraham's History now available

WILBRAHAM - Authored by Wilbraham resident and president of The Athenium Society of Wilbraham, David Bourcier's latest book "Historic Tales of Wilbraham" brings Wilbraham's rich history to life, offering readers a window into the experiences of early settlers and the town's remarkable growth.

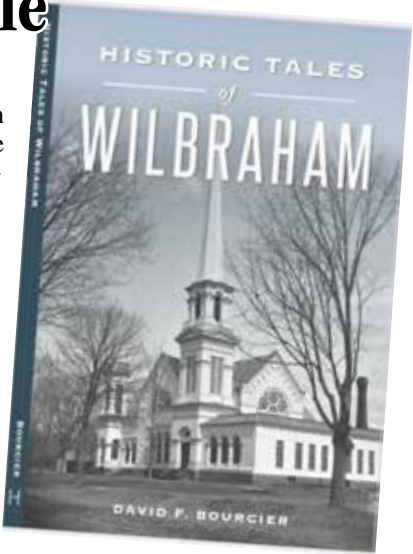
With 31 short stories he discusses popular tales that include the tragic drowning of six young people in 9-Mile Pond in 1799, Reverend Noah Merrick's love for his wife Abigail, immortalized in the poem "Parson's Rose", the heroic citizens who helped save the Federal Arsenal known as "Shay's Rebellion" in 1787, rumors of Capt. Kidd's buried gold treasure on slope Ridge Rd., the rattlesnake bite that

killed a Wilbraham resident in 1791, the Wilbraham Mountain Climb, the electric railway, tragedies at Collins Paper Mill and many more exciting lores.

David will hold a seminar and book signing at the Senior Center on May 15 at 1:30 p.m.. Pre-registration is encouraged.

Books cost \$24.95 plus sales tax and are available at the book signing or may be pre-ordered at the Senior Center. All books must be prepaid by check.

Thanks to the generosity of David, the Friends of Wilbraham Seniors will receive a commission on all books only sold by the



Friends. Proceeds will support the Friends operations.

Bourcier has an intense love and passion for Wilbraham's history that is bound to keep you on the edge of your seat. For more information contact Matt Villamaino at matt01095@gmail.com

WPD provides distracted driving update

WILBRAHAM - During the first week of April, Wilbraham police officers assigned to High Visibility Traffic Enforcement details funded by Office of Grants and Research & NHTSA targeting Distracted Driving contacted 60 operators.

38 were specifically cited for violation of the Hands

Free Electronic Device law. The update surrounds the state's hands-free law where drivers are prohibited from using electronic devices like cell phones while operating a motor vehicle. Motorists stopped at a stop sign or traffic light are still not allowed to be on cell phones.

The first offense is \$105,

the second offense is \$255 and completion of a driving program and the third offense is \$505, an insurance surcharge and completion of a driving program.

The police department shared this update as April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month.

SENIORS from page 11

fire department. Lots of great prizes and giveaways!

Wed., May 28 at 9:30 a.m. Donuts with Jason Burgener, Hampden Veteran Services Officer

Stop in for a FREE Donut Dip donut and meet Hampden VSO Jason Burgener. You do not have to be a Veteran to attend this event.

Wear Red, White, and Blue for an extra ticket in the

raffle basket.

Fri., May 30 at 12:30 p.m. Drumming Concert

Lunch/Concert

The Hampden Senior Center Drumming group invites you to come and hear what they've learned in their Friday afternoon classes.

Refreshments sponsored by MercyLIFE.

All events are FREE unless otherwise noted.

Lunch is a \$3 suggested

GARDEN from page 6

animal off guard. Assemble your scarecrow with as many moving parts as possible and position it in a different spot of the yard every couple of nights.

Hinged appendages, clothing that flaps in the breeze, eyes that bobble may just send Bambi into flight. One year I filled my scare-

crow's pockets with deodorant soap for a double whammy!

Deerscape your yard

Instead of planting your gardens full of tulips or muscari, like I did, choose daffodils, snowdrops, fritillaria and alliums instead. Good luck!

Roberta McQuaid grad-

uation to Greater Springfield Senior Services, Inc. (GSSSI)

Please call 413.566.5588 to pre-register for all programs. Space is limited.

Attend any of the above programs, and your name will be entered into a raffle prize drawing.

The winner will be chosen at the end of May.

The more events you attend, the more chances you have to win!

uated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 33 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.



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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

This ad is pursuant to MA Gen. Law Ch.255, Sec. 39A as of May 9, 2025 the following motor vehicle will be for sale to satisfy a garage keepers lien:

2014 BMW XI
VIN: WBAVL1C59EVY17128
COLOR: Gray
LKO: Ludero Monterio
67 Fuller St., Apt. 1
Brockton, MA 02301

R & S Assoc. Inc
PO Box 543
Wilbraham MA 01095
413-596-4374
04/24, 05/01, 05/08/2025

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.

HD23P0765EA

Estate of:

Robin Christopher Lamica

Date of Death: 01/26/2023

CITATION ON PETITION FOR ORDER OF COMPLETE SETTLEMENT

A Petition for Order of Complete Settlement has been filed by Rosemary Simonich of Chicopee, MA and James Lamica of Chicopee, MA requesting that the court enter a formal Decree of Complete Settlement including the allowance of a final account, a determination of heirs at law and other such relief as may be requested in the Petition.

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 05/21/2025.

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, Hon. Barbara M. Hyland, First Justice of this Court.

Date: April 18, 2025

Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate

05/01/2025

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

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CLUES ACROSS

1. McCarthy acolyte Roy
5. Ancient Korean chiefdoms
10. Not soft
14. Jai __, sport
15. Philosophy
16. Do what you're told
17. Gaffe
18. Widely known and esteemed
19. Amusement park attraction
20. Popular comic strip Viking
22. Usually has a lid
23. American sportscaster
24. Lung fibrosis
27. General's assistant (abbr.)
30. Pouch
31. Upset
32. Partner to hem
35. Astronomy unit of distance
37. Witch
38. Gradually disappear
39. Regions
40. Possesses
41. Body parts
42. A way to comprehend
43. Defraud
44. Sandwich type
45. Expression of disappointment
46. Popular Dodge truck model
47. The 17th letter of the Greek alphabet
48. Soviet Socialist Republic
49. Songs to a beloved
52. Custom
55. Partner to cheese
56. West Indies trees
60. Member of a Semitic people
61. Plant that originated vegetatively
63. Squandered one's money
64. Ethiopian river
65. Excessive fluid accumulation in tissues
66. Acquire by one's efforts

CLUES DOWN

1. Currency
2. Ceramic jar
3. Reagan's Secretary of State
4. God worshipped in Kanesh
5. One thousand cubic feet (abbr.)
6. Semitic
7. About blood
8. Benign tumors
9. Move one's head
10. Hours (Spanish)
11. Hebrew calendar month
12. Advise someone
13. Colors clothes
21. The sun does it
23. Concealed
25. City of Angels hoops team (abbr.)
26. Droop
27. Away from one another
28. Challenges
29. A harsh scraping sound
32. Attaches to a wall
33. Capital of Ethiopia: __ Ababa
34. German river
36. Disappointed
37. Star Wars character Solo
38. Supervises flying
40. Not mass-produced
41. Nonsense
43. Automobile (abbr.)
44. Hoghead (abbr.)
46. Soak in water
47. Flower cluster
49. Romanian city
50. A parent is often one
51. Fencing sword
52. Body part
53. Region
54. Farm building
57. Ali's surname at birth
58. Waxy bird beak covering
59. Stiff bristles
61. VCR button
62. Small amount

CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

"I had a fantastic experience working with Maureen as my realtor. She was incredibly communicative throughout the entire process, always keeping me informed and making sure I felt confident every step of the way. What really stood out was her negotiation skills—she helped me secure a great deal on my home, including concessions to account for necessary repairs. I truly felt like she had my best interests at heart. Highly recommend working with her!"

- Brian W.

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The models Amy Basile, Patty Fois, Ginny McGovern, Joyce Rockwell, Pat Serra, and Cheryl Wesolowski modeled clothing from The J. Jill Collection.



Turley photos by Noelle Hisgen
Raffle prizes are displayed on the table.

FASHION SHOW from page1
Rockwell, Pat Serra and Cheryl Wesolowski.

The show, also, had commentary by Sue Rigney as the models showed off their outfits.

Once the Fashion Show was over, the names for the raffle baskets were picked and people were able to get their prizes.

The money raised from the Fashion Show Luncheon will be going to the Women’s Club’s Scholarship given out to a graduating senior in Wilbraham or Hampden.

Mikuszewski has been the president of the Wilbraham Women’s Club for four years.

“This event brings our whole membership together and makes us work together. It’s a family job of everybody pitches in and helps, and that’s why I like this and I like that it’s going to students in Wilbraham and Hampden scholarships,” Mikuszewski said. “All the funds we raise go to community foundations that we are involved in. We give every year to the library, Wreaths Across America. We gave to the Seeing Eye Dog program last summer. This summer, we gave money to

Christina’s House for children who live in the city, and we give a picnic and a day at the park, and that’s very satisfying for city children who have never been out of the city. So, that warms all of our hearts.”

At the luncheon was the manager of the J. Jill Collection, Christine Capoldo.

“J. Jill is special because we treat everyone equally. We have size inclusivity, we’re all about community, we’re all about making use locally,” Capoldo said.

In regards to the Women’s Club, Capoldo said this.

“They were fantastic. They were so much fun to get fit, they loved their outfits,” Capoldo said.

From the food to the fashion, everyone was able to have a good time. It was such a supportive atmosphere as people cheered and clapped for the models going down the tables during the Fashion Show, and everyone left the luncheon with a smile on their face and a full stomach.

The Women’s Club did a wonderful job putting this luncheon all together and the community looks forward to what they have in store for next year.

Fashion Show LUNCHEON



All of the tables are decorated nicely for the fashion show luncheon.



(Left-Right) Pat Serra, Cheryl Wesolowski, and Amy Basile help give out appetizers.



The room was packed as people enjoyed their luncheon.

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SINGLE FAMILY LISTINGS

STATUS	ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION	LIST PRICE	SOLD PRICE
ACT	12 Federal St. Extension, Agawam	8 room, 3 bed, 1f 1h bath Dutch Colonial	\$485,000	
ACT	26 S. Main St. Belchertown	22 room, 9 bed, 4f 0h bath Victorian, Other	\$739,999	
ACT	2 Anna Marie Lane, E. Longmeadow	8 room, 4 bed, 2f, 1h bath Colonial	\$874,900	
PCG	313 Bennett Rd., Hampden	7 room, 3 bed, 2f, 1h bath Cape	\$515,000	
CTG	34 Stony Hill Rd., Hampden	7 room, 3 bed, 1f 0h bath Ranch	\$309,900	
UAG	287 Allen St., East Longmeadow	5 room, 3 bed, 1f 0h bath Ranch	\$339,900	
UAG	129 Stafford Rd., Monson	6 room, 3 bed, 1f 0h bath Cape	\$295,000	
UAG	27 Jordan St., Springfield	5 room, 3 bed, 1f 0h bath Ranch	\$229,900	
UAG	117 Monrovia St., Springfield	6 room, 4 bed, 1f, 1h bath Cape	\$289,900	
UAG	21 Mountainbrook Rd., Wilbraham	7 room, 4 bed, 2f, 0h bath Colonial	\$460,999	
SLD	28 Dover St., Agawam	5 room, 3 bed, 1f 0h bath Ranch	\$314,900	\$310,000
SLD	90 Angela Dr., Chicopee	7 room, 3 bed, 2f 1h bath Colonial	\$475,000	\$500,000
SLD	70 Moody St., Ludlow	4 room, 2 bed, 1f, 0h bath Ranch	\$255,000	\$255,000
SLD	84 Cote Rd., Monson	7 room, 3 bed, 2f 0h bath Colonial	\$359,999	\$315,000
SLD	210 Moulton Hill Rd., Monson	7 room, 3 bed, 2f, 0h bath Colonial	\$450,000	\$435,000
SLD	128 Tiffany St., Springfield	6 room, 3 bed, 1f 0h bath Cape	\$299,900	\$304,000
SLD	170 Blanche St., Springfield	6 room, 3 bed, 1f, 1h bath Ranch	\$364,900	\$365,000
SLD	27 Oakland St., Wilbraham	8 room, 4 bed, 2f, 1h bath Colonial	\$489,900	\$479,380

CONDOMINIUM LISTINGS

SLD	5 Southwood Cir., U-5, Hampden	4 room, 2 bed, 2f, 0h bath Garden	\$399,900	\$408,000
SLD	308 Miller St., U-17, Ludlow	4 room, 2 bed, 2f, 0h bath Garden, Half-Duplex	\$408,000	\$400,000
SLD	101 Mulberry St., U-502, Springfield	3 room, 1 bed, 1f, 0h bath Mid-Rise	\$84,999	\$91,000

MULTI FAMILY LISTINGS

ACT	26 S. Main St. Belchertown	3 unit, 22 total rooms, 9 total bedrooms 3 Family	\$739,999	
UAG	141-143 Berkshire St., Springfield	2 unit, 11 total rooms, 6 total bedrooms 2 Family - 2 Units Side by Side	\$315,000	
SLD	15 Page Ct., Chicopee	2 unit, 13 total rooms, 4 total bedrooms 2 Family	\$435,000	\$400,000
SLD	13-19 South St., Palmer	4 unit, 18 total rooms, 9 total bedrooms 4 Family	\$379,000	\$310,000

LAND LISTINGS

ACT	454 Ridge Rd., Wilbraham	1.78 Residential acres (77,555 SqFt)	\$218,000	
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