

**POLICE**  
Hockey for Heroes support  
Page 13

**SPORTS**  
Blair spins perfect game  
Page 19

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Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

From the left, Charlie Bennett, Times Editor Emeritus and vice chair of the Historical Commission, Peter Ablondi, secretary for the Historical Commission, Ted Malysz, member of the Historical Commission, and Roberta Albano, chair of the Historical Commission, in a group photo at the restored memorial marker for the first location of the Old Meeting House in Wilbraham.

## Hampden residents celebrate 'Pet Day'

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
krivers@turley.com

HAMPDEN - Residents gathered at the Federated Community Church of Hampden from 1 to 3 p.m. on May 4 for their 3rd Annual Pet Day event.

The event, held outside the church, featured K9 demonstrations from the Hampden County Sheriff's Department in Ludlow and the Massachusetts State Police and a Blessing of the Animals ceremony led by Rev. Kwan Kim.

It also coincides with National Pet Month, a celebration recognizing the benefits pets bring to people's lives, and people to pets' lives, along with supporting animal welfare.



Turley photos by Kristin Rivers

A close-up photo of K9 Knox watching his ball during a break from K9 demonstrations during the Pet Day event at Federated Community Church in Hampden.

Beth Algie organized the event, expressing joy in seeing people coming out with their pets.

"It's a beautiful day and time for everybody to get together with their pets," Algie said.

Please see **PETS**, page 8

## A legacy carved in granite

By Kristin Rivers  
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WILBRAHAM - The memorial marker for the first location of the Old Meeting House in Wilbraham had its restored marker unveiled on May 1.

The engraved Vermont granite marker is located on Tinkham Road next to a stone wall west of the blue Victorian house at 1347 Tinkham Rd. It was restored after the original had deteriorated due to weather, acid rain, road sand and salt.

The old marker will be moved to

the Athenium Society of Wilbraham after Memorial Day for preservation by the Historical Commission and the Department of Public Works.

According to the Historical Commission's proposal, the marker marks where the first Meeting House was on Wigwam Hill, built in 1748 to serve settlers who traveled nine miles each Sunday to Court Square in Springfield for worship.

The Meeting House was located 30 rods south of the intersection of Tinkham and Bolles Road, equating to a little less than half a football field.

"It is estimated the structure was

located close to the rear of the current blue Victorian house that was the home of one of the family members of the Bennett Turkey Farm," it reads. "The meetinghouse was located to the rear of the house where a barn was later located. The first minister at the meetinghouse was Rev. Noah Merrick who had built his home in what is now the northwest corner of the junction of Bolles and Tinkham Road."

According to town history, the last Indigenous American to live in Wilbraham was Weshaugan, who

Please see **GRANITE**, page 4

## Three candidates on the ballot for appointment to the School Committee

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - Residents will have three candidates to choose from for appointment to the School Committee in the May 18 election.

Voting takes place from 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. at Minnechaug Regional High School.

The three candidates are Lisa Murray, Timothy Collins and D. John McCarthy.

Lisa Murray currently serves on the School Committee as secretary/clerk and is up for reelection.

School Committee member William Bontempi is not running for reelection.

**Lisa Murray**

Murray originally ran for School Committee to serve as a role model for her children and students on how to be civically engaged and give back through volunteering, having served as an educator in public schools since 2004.

Murray's prior teaching roles include a grade three through five Special Education teacher, a Sheltered English Immersion teacher for grades one, two and five, a special education inclusion classroom teacher for grades two and three, and a Kindergarten through second grade English Speakers of Other Languages teacher. She is currently a kindergarten through fourth grade English as a Second Language teacher for Agawam



Lisa Murray

Public Schools and serves on teams and committees in that district as well.

She also serves on the School Committee's Curriculum Sub-



Timothy Collins

committee and is vice chair of the Executive Board for Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative.

"Because of my work on



D. John McCarthy

those committees and as an ESL teacher, I have comprehensive knowledge of state and federal educational requirements and

Please see **SCHOOL**, page 14



# Two candidates on the ballot for Library Trustee

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
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WILBRAHAM - There are two candidates for Library Trustee as residents head to the polls on May 18 for town election.

The two candidates are Karen Grycel and Barbara Galanek.

Grycel is up for reelection and has served two terms.

## Karen Grycel

Grycel explained her years as trustee "have been instrumental, as far as my appreciation and understanding of the operation of our library."

Having a background in social work and serving adolescents and their families has also helped her work for policy, advocacy and communication.



"Some of my most meaningful volunteer experiences in Wilbraham have been literacy-related, including co-chairing the elementary Book Gift Giving program for nine years and serving as a coordinator of library volunteers at Stony Hill and Soule Road Schools for four years," Grycel said. "Other HWRSD roles that have added to my experience include being a founder and board member of the Minnechaug Music Association and serving on district hiring and curriculum committees and three school councils."

Grycel, who moved to Wilbraham in 2001 with her family, shared the library helped everyone acclimate to the town through their programming, enrichment

and materials and connections.

"Given my appreciation for our library and involvement in other reading-based initiatives, it made sense for me to apply for a seat when an unexpected vacancy occurred in late 2017. Following my appointment by the Select Board in February of 2018 I quickly became immersed in learning the nature of board duties and relationships between town entities. Per agreement with the BOS and board of trustees, I sought official election to the seat in May of 2018 and then ran for reelection in 2021," Grycel said.

Grycel cited many successes during her tenure have been group and individual efforts.

"As a board we work cooperatively and in conjunction with library director Karen Ball to make budget decisions that most effectively use our resources while being mindful of fiscal realities and constraints. As advocates for budgetary considerations in the service of protecting our state accreditation the trustees are also invested in productive dialogue with the Finance Committee," Grycel said.

Other successes include a new security camera policy, updating the Internet and computer use policy and improving the library grounds.

"Initiated by my colleague Cheryl Wesolowski and under the supervision and expertise of Master Gardener Toi Graham, the trustees collectively did a substantial cleanup of the library grounds. Planting, pruning, watering and ground clearing/maintenance have been conducted routinely by Mrs. Wesolowski, fellow trustees Linda Dagradi, Christine Goonan and myself. More specifically, Toi and I work regularly to continue making the grounds inviting and useable, including lawn seeding and maintenance of the Story Walk," Grycel said.

Grycel's most recent success has been serving as a liaison to the Friends of the Wilbraham Public Library.

"It has been inspirational to see their effectiveness and dedication to fundraising result in the abundance of programming, museum passes, reading initiatives and improvements to the library space. Working closely with the Friends has been truly rewarding and their successes benefit our community as a whole," Grycel said.

On improvements, Grycel wants to help support and implement the updated strategic plan currently being developed and enhance the board's connections with the library staff, Teen Advisory Board and the town's boards and civics groups.

"General and more focused advocacy for the library remains a priority for me including the importance of access to information and services and supporting our librarians and the mission of Wilbraham Public Library," Grycel said.

Grycel's vision is this if elected again. "I am honored to have the opportunity to serve as a Library Trustee and plan to continue my work on the Policy Subcommittee, as a library grounds caretaker and as liaison to the Wilbraham Friends of the Library," Grycel said.

## Barbara Galanek

Galanek spent 25 years teaching students about books, thinking deeply, researching and understanding varying points of view as an English teacher, explaining her earliest memories of reading at her local library and love for learning inspired her.



"The drive to open the doors of empowerment and knowledge for others has not diminished since my retirement from teaching. It has fostered the desire to give back to the community where my family grew up and we have lived for almost forty years. Learning does not have an expiration date, so I hope to nurture it further through my willingness to partic-

ipate, my desire to be of service, and my deep appreciation for the work accomplished by our library staff," Galanek said.

It's that love for reading and teaching along with the library's programs that inspired her to run for this position, along with a desire to give back to the community.

"Bringing my children to the library from the time they were toddlers and throughout their school years gave me a deep appreciation for the programs and opportunities offered to our young people. Beyond the books and programs offered to young people, the library garnered my eternal gratitude when I would "escape" the chaos and constant activities of a busy household to study for advanced degrees," Galanek said. "The library was a quiet, welcoming and nurturing home away from home where I could research, read, write and focus. Even now as I walk through the doors to sign out a book, a sigh of relief escapes. It's like home."

Galanek said the trustees "have shown their support and responsiveness to the needs of the Wilbraham community."

"From the ongoing repair of the library's roof to the new improvements to the Brooks Room, the trustees have shown their willingness to maintain and improve the physical environment. In addition, the programs offered through the library such as the Story Walk and the Teen Loft are just two areas that create a space and program for Wilbraham's children that is both fun and instructive. In addition, the book clubs offer adults a chance to share their thoughts and insights on a number of intriguing subjects," Galanek said.

If elected, Galanek wants to continue the trustees' work as the library "moves forward into the future."

"By keeping open lines of communication between the staff and the Board of Trustees, the needs of Wilbraham can be well met. In addition, I would like to explore interactions between the new Senior Center and the Wilbraham Public Library in order to better serve the senior population of the town. Expanding on programs for teens could also be an area that would benefit the young people of Wilbraham," Galanek said.



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## 2024 Wilbraham Town Election Candidate Forum May 13

WILBRAHAM - Wilbraham's annual town election is approaching quickly. Learn about candidates who may be making decisions that will have a major impact in our community. The 2024 Wilbraham Town Election Candidates Night, sponsored by the Wilbraham Democratic Town Committee, will give you an opportunity to hear directly from candidates about their vision for our community. Your vote on May 18 really matters so make it an informed one!

The event takes place at the Wilbraham United Church from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

## Celebrity Bartender Event takes place May 16

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham-Hampden Academic Trust will be hosting a Celebrity Bartender event on May 16 from 5 to 7 p.m. at The Local Table n Tap on Boston Road.

Attendance is free! Celebrity bartenders include Heidi Mark Pafumi, Lauren E Dones Azevedo, Dave O'Brien, Pat Farrow, Brian Hoar and others--and proceeds will go to WHAT-funded projects!

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- \*The new library at Soule Road Elementary School
- \*A visit from NASA astronauts at Minnechaug Regional High School
- \*New Teeter Totter, Gaga Ball Pit, Funnel Ball and Peace Path for Stony Hill School's playground.
- \*New 3D printer at Green Meadows School
- \* New follow spotlights for the theater group at Wilbraham Middle School

To learn more, contact Linda Ezziddin at linda.zebian@gmail.com.

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# Marc Ducey running for Select Board

By Kristin Rivers  
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WILBRAHAM - Marc Ducey is a candidate to run for the Select Board in this year's town election.

Chairman Theresa Goodrich is not running for reelection.

Ducey, who moved to Wilbraham in 2004 with his wife, Valerie, and their two sons, was later appointed to the Finance Committee in 2005.



"I have served on the Finance Committee as both member and chair for 19 years, essentially uninterrupted, except for the three years I served as both a member and chair of the School Committee. During these years, I also served on several other town or school subcommittees, including capital planning, various selection committees and the school budget subcommittee," Ducey said.

Ducey added he has nearly 20 years of experience working with Town Hall.

"I know the people involved and I have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of Town Hall," Ducey said.

On what inspired him to run for the Select Board, Ducey explained how volunteers fill most town committees and they "generously take time away from their home lives to make Wilbraham a better place."

"As a longstanding member of the Finance Committee, one of my key roles is to reach out to others to get involved. I will have a broader reach, appeal and public position as a Select Board member. This will allow me to have more touchstones with more residents and opportunities to get residents involved in our town. One of my primary responsibilities will be to create a bench so others will be well-qualified to be my successor," Ducey said.

Ducey shared how Wilbraham "is a great place to live," with "many things to be proud of," including people wanting to move to the area.

"Our neighborhoods are safe, our schools give our kids opportunities to succeed, we have the benefit of an outstanding open space and recreational opportunities for the residents and we should be proud of our brand-new senior center," Ducey said. "If you haven't taken the opportunity to tour the new senior center, do it; I am confident you will be impressed. The Select Board was instrumental, or at least had their fingerprint, on these issues and many more."

On improvements, Ducey would like to focus on the following areas.

First, increasing strate-

gic planning for the town.

"We need to bring back the Major Projects Committee or task the Capital Planning Committee with creating a five to 10-year plan for what projects lie ahead. There is never enough money in the budget for everything. It's all about priorities, but how can you prioritize if you don't know what's next? I will do my best to change this," Ducey said.

Next, improving communication with the residents through more involvement at Annual Town Meeting and creating a social media presence.

"Our current town meetings are often long, tiresome and not well attended, but they are critically important to our town's governance. We need more residents to attend and get involved in Town Meetings. How can this be accomplished? We must make it more meaningful, understandable and convenient. Staying focused in meetings longer than three hours, let alone four to five hours, is challenging," Ducey said. "Why not have the May Town Meeting concentrate on the issues we must address for the beginning of the fiscal year and convene a Fall Town Meeting for the remainder? Hopefully, we can get increased participation if we kept Town Meeting under two or three hours."

On social media, Ducey explained he's "a proponent of communicating with people where they are," and social media "is one of the best ways to notify residents of future events."

"The Wilbraham Police Department does a great job of keeping residents informed through its social media page, but unfortunately, the town as a whole does not have an active presence. We should re-examine this," Ducey said.

On what he envisions if elected, Ducey cited several ideas including a master plan, following processes and fiscal responsibility.

For the master plan, Ducey shared how there was discussion at the town level on renewing this, adding how it was last addressed several decades ago and overdue for renewal.

"I envision a Master Plan deal-

ing with high-level visionary issues, similar to what the schools just went through in developing a strategic plan," Ducey said. "However, as a town, we need to go beyond that. We need to present a roadmap for future projects to the residents. My idea of a roadmap would look five to 10 years ahead and give us a solid understanding of what new projects we envision and their construction and operating costs. Over the last few years, we have primarily gone from project to project, which I find short-sighted."

On following processes, Ducey stressed the importance of ensuring those are followed.

"Why is this important? It generates trust. More specifically, when the town government shortcuts the expected methods, it raises questions and trust erodes. Many of the processes could be more convenient; they're often cumbersome," Ducey said. "But we must maintain the residents' and taxpayers' trust at all costs. We must make painstaking efforts to be entirely transparent."

For fiscal responsibility, Ducey said this.

"Nearly all the money the town has in its budget comes from you. Fiscal responsibility is a must, it's simply non-negotiable. We must be mindful of every dollar spent, ensure that we use these dollars wisely and efficiently and answer your questions about how it was spent," Ducey said.

Ducey said these three primary areas will drive him as Select Board member.

"All three fit together like pieces in a puzzle. We need a roadmap, we need a plan. We must follow the established processes and be transparent to ensure we maintain the taxpayer's trust. Thirdly, we must maintain a high level of fiscal responsibility," Ducey said.

Ducey ended his thoughts by encouraging residents to go out and vote on May 18.

"Please vote and I hope I earn your vote," Ducey said.

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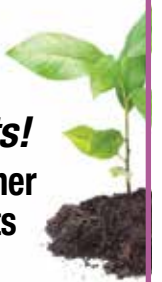


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## Monson Road Hill Climb Road Closures

WILBRAHAM – The police department released the following information on road closures ahead of the Wilbraham Hill Climb on Saturday, May 11 from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.:

“Monson Road will be closed from Main Street to Ridge Road, absolutely no traffic will be allowed to flow on Monson Road. Upper Tinkham Road will be closed from Main Street to Monson Road, resident traffic will be allowed, no through travel will be possible. Main Street from Faculty Street to Tinkham Road will only be open for southbound travel. Please plan accordingly, seek alternate routes, and expect congestion & delays.”

## Hampden Garden Club presenting Shade Gardening program

HAMPDEN -The Hampden Garden Club celebrating its 92nd year will be presenting a program on Shade Gardening Thursday, May 16 at 7 p.m. at Academy Hall, Main Street, Hampden. Guest speaker Toi Graham, a local Master Gardener, will help us find the best ways to create shade gardens with New England plants in our existing soil conditions. Guest Fee is \$5.00. For more information call Lil Fedora at 566-1137.



Photo submitted by Charles Bennett

An overview of Wigwam Hill in Wilbraham.



Another shot of restored memorial marker for the first location of the Old Meeting House in Wilbraham.

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### GRANITE from page 1

had lived in a wigwam by a brook at the bottom of Wigwam Hill. Historian Chauncy Peck reported Weshaugan's home was 50 to 80 rods--or about two and a half football fields--from the Meeting House.

"It was decided to move the meetinghouse down the mountain to the Center Village which was easier for worshipers to access. The last parish meeting in the Wigwam Hill building was on April 18, 1794, and the structure was moved to a plot of land on Main Street where Gazebo Park is now. A historical marker was erected on the south side of the top of Tinkham Road to commemorate the location of the first meetinghouse," it reads.

Charlie Bennett, Times Editor Emeritus, serves as vice chair for the Historical Commission, explaining the Community Preservation Committee approved the restoration project in 2022.

"We did a lot of research. We pored through the local history section of Wilbraham Library. We couldn't find any reference to when that old marker was installed, so we decided to write what we thought it should say and added a little bit about the Historic Commission, rededicate it, which is what we did today," Bennett said.

Bennett said the Historical Commission's goal is to preserve the town's history, expressing gratitude for the town's support for restoring the marker.

"I think it's important to leave our marks behind, a legacy. At the Atheneum, we keep talking about working with the kids in town, instructing them on history," Bennett said. "There is a lot of people who are history buffs in town."

Bennett stressed the importance of historical preservation, especially for the next generation.

"When you leave things behind for the next generation, you want to leave something that's meaningful and you want to know the story about it. It's not just going through the old history books. It's reading the articles in the Times, seeing that we're working on putting up a new memorial, working on a second memorial," Bennett said.

Bennett wants the community to know the Historical Commission took care of this project and had support through CPA Funds from the Community Preservation Committee.

He encouraged the next generation to recognize the importance of this unveiling and check out the Historical Commission.

"I know there are young people in Wilbraham that have an interest in history and we could probably help them along on projects like this," Bennett said.

Bennett thanked the Community Preservation Committee and residents for their support.

"They're a group of citizens from different aspects of the town, different committees. Planning Board, Selectmen, different groups, conservation, they approve these projects on behalf of the town, but the town meeting has to vote on them," Bennett said.

Bennett said the Historical Commission is here for the residents on all things history.

"We're glad to talk to people and be a resource," Bennett said.



# Two candidates on the ballot for Planning Board

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - Residents will consider two candidates for the Planning Board when they head to the polls on May 18.

Voting takes place from 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. at Minnechaug Regional High School.

The two candidates are Mary McCarthy and Bradley Gregory.

## Mary McCarthy

McCarthy, a resident of Wilbraham for over 25 years, shared she has seen significant land changes in town that were “most thoughtfully planned and executed,” with hopes to continue that trend if elected.



“I want to continue this trend and foster economic growth with strategically planned businesses, housing, recreational and cultural land use in adherence with zoning that enhances property values and avoids overdevelopment via the latest ‘building density mantra,’” McCarthy said.

McCarthy explained her biggest concerns are on state mandates for solar farm development and the next land use mandate for battery energy storage systems.

“I am concerned about the state’s mandates for solar farm development that has deforested acres and wreaked havoc to abutters and wildlife. I am deeply concerned about the state’s next land use mandate – Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS), large lithium battery fields to store solar energy. FEMA deems them prone to ‘hard to extinguish’ fires that can release toxic gases,” McCarthy said.

She also wants to use her economic and SBA experience to encourage businesses to open along Route 20.

“I want to plan correctly for future housing that enhances

property values while bringing in new families and is not behold to the state’s grant handouts that dictate prescribed land use and rezoning that can lead to property devaluation and higher taxes,” McCarthy said.

On what the role entails, McCarthy reflected on how the Planning Board drafts zoning by-laws, issues special permits and manages land use, emphasizing the board’s role in developing the Master Plan “which can dictate the future development and prosperity of the town.”

“My more than 30 years of business expertise including strategic planning and market research acumen, economic development proposal and grant writing, deep involvement at the Chambers of Commerce of Greater Springfield and Chicopee, federal small business SBA experience, knowledge of economic development issues and prior service as a Library Trustee and Water Commissioner makes me uniquely qualified to serve,” McCarthy said. “I am able to dedicate significant hours to planning board initiatives. If elected, I pledge to work unbiasedly and tirelessly for the good of the town, its residents, and businesses.”

McCarthy cited the Planning Board making zoning changes “methodically and deliberately” as a success.

“This fantastic town has been shaped from a rural farming community to a suburb due to the strategic insight of the board. Successes include our sustainably built Minnechaug Regional High School, state-of-the-art Fire/Police/EMT Complex, incredible recreational development from the Spec Pond Sports Complex to the Rice Nature Preserve, our new senior center, Mixed Use Main Street Brewery/Market Rate Apartments and the Memorial School Recreation and pickleball courts,” McCarthy said.

McCarthy stressed the importance of acting “strategically with long-term goals that look to the future and improvement that is cautious regarding rezoning and land use.”

“I would encourage addition-

al collaboration with other town departments and committees such as the Economic Development Committee. I would encourage implementation with a mindset to preserve the character of our classic New England town – not turn it into a sprawling, overpopulated, overdeveloped community,” McCarthy said.

Another thing she envisions is taking a closer look at the northern border.

“Not many realize this, but our entire northern border is water. The Chicopee River runs along our border with Ludlow from Palmer to Springfield. I believe this is an under-realized and under-utilized resource. The Collins Mill complex has over 1000’ of frontage on the Chicopee River. The property has been through multiple owners with minimal success in redevelopment. Why can’t this be the next ‘Ludlow Mills’ or ‘Pleasant Street Mills?’ I believe working with our town departments and volunteer committees can make projects like this come to life. This would be a huge benefit to the tax base and business opportunities in Wilbraham,” McCarthy said.

Lastly, McCarthy clarified the Planning Board also has no impact on sidewalks in town.

“The placement of sidewalks although wonderful is misguided--aside from the development of subdivisions, the Planning Board has no impact on sidewalks. This issue is driven by budgetary factors and handled by the Select Board,” McCarthy said.

## Bradley Gregory

Gregory explained how paying attention to one’s environment and the details that improve one’s well-being is important, looking for any by-law, land use or development



pattern to support it.

“Every day that we interact with our built environment, we have an experience. Oftentimes we don’t even consciously notice the experience; the smell of asphalt after rain, the shade from the trees on a really hot day or the quiet calm of a trail walk,” Gregory said. “I design experiences for a living and have learned that some of the best-designed experiences are the ones you don’t even notice. You don’t notice them because they feel so natural and right.”

On what inspired him to run, Gregory shared how the built environment of a suburb shaped the way he experienced and viewed the world, including the impact on his emotional and psychological well-being.

“My awareness of planning topics grew when I realized how the rest of the world develops their built environment. I often pondered how we ever ended up in a place where we separated and isolated ourselves into suburban islands, with no easy access to other neighborhoods or daily needs, and it baffled me,” Gregory said. “Aside from the lack of connectedness to our daily activities, I was disheartened to also learn how financially fragile our built environment has made towns across America. However, I began to see hope in the fact that for hundreds of years (until about 1950) we’ve known how to build towns in such a way that depended on being more self-reliant, and that we just have to re-learn those same principles and apply them to our modern context. Wilbraham has so many unique and beautiful characteristics, including the people. I’m inspired to do my small part in preserving and enhancing what makes this place great.”

On successes by the board, Gregory cited the Center Village project.

“Mostly because of the efforts that went into upzoning and having a mixed-use building. This is a great example of how to use land more effectively, and providing a variety of uses all in one place; no longer adding to the separation of places for people to live, and places for them to

recreate,” Gregory said.

For improvements, Gregory stressed improving land use “by making it more repeatable, and not just one-off projects that might work the way we want.”

“It’s more costly than it needs to be. We need to streamline a lot of our development policies that will incentivize homeowners, small developers, and local capital partners to invest in our community,” Gregory said. “While fixing many policies will help achieve this, we also need an updated Master Plan to coordinate our strategy across town government bodies and bring our residents along for the process.”

If elected, Gregory hopes to empower residents “with a better understanding of the problems our town is facing from a planning perspective.”

“Planning is not an easy function for most of us to understand, and the large impact it has on our day-to-day lives. I hope to bring more residents along for the ride and empower them with the knowledge and ability to articulate what kind of town we want to build going forward,” Gregory said.

For the master plan, he said this.

“Our 1963 plan served the needs and aspirations of residents at that time. We need an updated plan that reflects our current needs and aspirations,” Gregory said.

Gregory noted mobility options as another vision he’d like to pursue.

“Improving mobility options that we aren’t always stuck with one choice of how to do our daily activities. This means completing disconnected sidewalks, building more “complete” streets and roads when it comes time to repave them, improving the safety of shared mobility spaces,” Gregory said.

He ended with this thought. “Advocating for aesthetic beauty that harmonizes with the unique character and history of Wilbraham. It really matters to create an environment that inspires and uplifts those who live here, and passers-by,” Gregory said.

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# VIEWPOINTS

## Letters to the Editor

### How Deep Is Your Well?

**To the Editor:**

In February 2024, the EPA proposed a \$25,000 fine to Navisun, LLC, a solar company,

for failing to control stormwater discharges from their project site in Acushnet, Massachusetts.

Navisun cleared 16 acres for an approximate 1.76-megawatt solar array in late 2022... and that's when the problems began.

Poor stormwater planning resulted in an ocean of water flowing relentlessly over streets, parking lots, and surrounding properties. A new "brook" swept over, under, and beside Main Street. The town of Acushnet was worried the road would be washed away.

Neighbors felt unsafe on their property due to uncontrollable water. One abutter stated she couldn't reach her hayfields because of mud. Her pond was filled with silt. A 30-year resident said he had never experienced flooding to this extent before, calling the runoff a "marsh." 60 gallons of water a day was pumped from this gentleman's basement over a period of four weeks between February and March.

The worst of these casualties was the pollution of a neighbor's well. Stormwater runoff from the Navisun site was proven to have contaminated the well with E. coli, which resulted in the home having to be immediately connected to the town's public water supply.

During the planning stages of this solar array, Acushnet residents were told by the developer's engineer that water "would be kept on-site" and "not flow onto neighboring properties." They were assured this development wouldn't upend their lives. Instead, this project became another dire example of solar gone wrong in Massachusetts.

Almost all of Hampden's residents rely on private wells. If permitted to be constructed, the proposed commercial solar array at 530 Glendale Road, located upland, could compromise downhill wells. Does the town have the resources to provide clean and reliable drinking water in the event that this should happen? Even one contaminated well is too many.

The next Hampden Conservation Commission meeting for the proposed commercial solar array at 530 Glendale Road is scheduled for Wednesday, May 15th at 6pm, Town Hall. Please attend!

**Gina Stabilo**  
Hampden, MA

### Vote 'No' on Senior Center Expansion

**To the Editor:**

Back to the drawing board! Let's get creative and add on 630 square feet to our Senior Center - enough for four small offices to be used by our Veterans' agent, nurse, personal services and staff. Exterior storage can also be provided. The Cost? About \$500,000. That's a lot less than \$6.6 million.

Town	Population	Square feet	Sq. ft. per resident	Notes
Hampden	4,966	6,867	1.38	largest space/ smallest population
Wilbraham	12,571	2.53		if addition built newly built
Belchertown	14,600	15,000	1.03	built 2000
Ludlow	15,300	16,356	1.07	built 2020
Monson	21,002	17,691	.84	
Palmer	8,150	5,226	.64	
Ware	12,337	5,916	.48	
Dover	10,061	8,908	.89	

Dover - the wealthiest town in Mass. - does not have a Senior Center. COA offices and some activities are located in the Community Center with additional activities held in schools, churches etc.

Manchester by the Sea 5,395 At Town Meeting in April, 2024 it was voted to spend \$1,000,000 in fund balances and taxation to purchase part of the Mason Building (a Masonic Lodge). Fundraising will provide the additional \$2,000,000 needed. Seniors will share space with the Masons in a condominium agreement.

Please study this data and vote NO on \$6.6 million Senior Center addition.

**Connie Chapin Witt, Hampden**  
Sources: U.S. 2020 census, Assessors Records, Town Reports and for Wilbraham, The Republican.

### Vote 'Yes' on Hampden Senior Center expansion

**To the Editor:**

The Hampden Senior Center is a wonderful place for people of all ages. The building is not only utilized by the older adult population but is also utilized for Intergenerational Programs and is the home of the Scantic River Artisans. This Artisans group includes artists ranging in age from 15 to 85, and their art shows at the Senior Center brought in over 2,000 people, of all ages, last year! Senior Center programs and services are open and available to everyone in town, and the building is available to be rented after hours and on the weekends. Just recently, the Senior Center welcomed Green Valley Preschool students to participate in a Wildlife on Wheels program; the building was recently rented on several weekends for family

gatherings following funerals and for a youth hockey awards banquet. The Senior Center is working on a new evening class program schedule coming in the fall. Stay tuned. The Senior Center is a place for everyone to come and enjoy all there is to offer. With more space added to the Senior Center, more programs will be available for everyone to enjoy.

The Building Committee also received public input at two recent forums held at the Senior Center. The Building Committee will present the results of over two years of study and discussion, and will ask for the support of those in attendance. A "YES" vote on May 13 and on May 20 will insure that the needs of our seniors and many town groups will be met for the next 50 years.

**Thank you for your support.**  
**Bobbi Grant, Hampden**

### Women's Club thank you to donors

The Wilbraham Women's Club would like to thank the following local businesses who contributed prizes and gift cards to the club's fashion show held on April 25.

The generosity of these small businesses is greatly appreciated: Armata's Village Food Mart, Bilton's Mountainside Orchards, Center Square Grill, Country Bank, Country Club of Wilbraham, Delaney's Market, Flower Shed, Flowers Flowers, Frame &

Picture Shoppe, Gilded Lily, Gio's Pizzeria, Graziano Gardens, Crazy Jakes Restaurant, Luso Federal Credit Union, Mandarin Wilbraham, Monson Savings Bank, NEPM, Pafumi's To Go, Pane Dolcetti, Pioneer Valley Financial Group, Randall's Farm & Green-

house, Rice's Fruit Farm, Route 20 Bar & Grill, Scented Garden Gift Shop, Simply Electrifying, Sixteen Acres Garden Center, Stop & Shop, The Local Table N Tap, Theme Cakes by Joelene, Village Store Cafe, Wilbraham Flowers, Wilbraham Funeral Home, and

Wilbraham Tanning Salon. The proceeds from the raffle supports the club's scholarships and other charitable endeavors. Thank you!!

**Sue Agnew, Wilbraham**



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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.  
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# Select Board approves entertainment licenses for Pafumi's

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM -Select Board approved entertainment licenses for Pafumi's on May 6 after their hearing was continued last week.

Pafumi's had an application for an annual Monday through Saturday entertainment license and annual Sunday entertainment license.

Sue Bunnell had no concerns about having indoor entertainment. However, outdoors, she thought, "is a slightly different issue."

"I know you talked about the fact that your speakers are in this office and that, at least from your experience, that it made a big difference to the amount of noise that traveled. My experience

seeing licensed entertainment in other places is that, generally, a musician would bring their own amplifier, which is generally something that connects to them or in front of them and that goes everywhere," Bunnell said.

Mark Pafumi agreed, saying they are not looking for amplified music.

"Radio music, yes, there would be a speaker," Pafumi said. "The person, the one-piece band, would not have a speaker outside. Would they have one inside? Possibly, but there's a whole different thing."

Pafumi clarified what he would have for outdoors.

"For music outside, I got a one-piece acoustic," Pafumi said. "No speaker."

Marjorie Pessolano expressed concerns about noise and possi-

ble disorderly situations.

"What if there are violent or disorderly situations? What if we have an attitude from the manager who was threatening to walk away if he doesn't get what he wants? What would you do? That's what I want to know. What are our options after that?" Pessolano said.

Chairman Theresa Goodrich pointed out how "it happens at businesses all around, all the time, those sorts of instances."

"It happens everywhere. If there's a disorderly person, the police department's called and they're dealt with," Goodrich said.

Pessolano next asked about who would be responsible for security.

"Would we be paying the town offices to police their

place?" Pessolano said.

Michael Squindo had asked a similar question last week about the board's authority if they were to issue a license and something to Pessolano's concerns took place.

"I think, basically, that we as the licensing body continue to have the authority to readdress these if complaints continue to come in, if there are continued issues, if there are violations of any such license agreement," Squindo said. "We have the ability to call back any of the licensees of anywhere in town and address it with them at another public hearing or some fashion around and make a decision from there what to do."

Police Chief Ed Lennon explained noise complaints do come up, but not in recent mem-

ory, with the department having a decibel meter they bring to address complaints.

"If that does happen, we will go out, we will do readings and we'll figure it out and if need be, we bring it back to the Board of Selectmen for a hearing," Lennon said.

The motion to approve a new annual Monday through Saturday entertainment license and Sunday entertainment license to include indoor entertainment from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday with indoors having live recorded music, amplified music, DJs, trivia and karaoke and outdoors one-piece acoustic music only with no amplification, with forwarding the Sunday license for final review and approval passed 3-0.

# Hampden Highway superintendent lays out projected 2024 projects

The projected total cost of the 2024 projects proposed is \$781,246.

By Dalton Zbierski  
Correspondent

HAMPDEN – Highway Superintendent Mark Langone appeared before the Board of Selectmen on Monday evening to lay out the Highway Department's projected roadwork projects moving forward in 2024.

Langone predicted that the cost of the 2024 projects he proposed will be \$781,246. Factoring in the Highway Maintenance Paving Account, 2024 state aid, 2023 fair share tax allotment and 2024 rural roadways funding, the department has \$779,953

to work with; \$519,953 comes from state funding.

"The first couple projects will be state funded for the milling and paving because it's quite a bit. That section of Allen Street and then all of Mill Road," Langone said.

The Allen Street mill and pave project will begin at Circle View Drive and go to East Longmeadow Road, covering 17,067 square yards. The scope of the work includes a 1.5-inch mill and pave job and adjusting lawns and driveways as needed.

The cost of the project will be \$278,365.

The Mill Road work will involve the same 1.5-inch mill and pave and driveway adjustments and cover 18,342 square yards, going from Somers Road to the East Longmeadow town line. The cost of the project will be \$298,713.

"Then, I was looking to do Oak Knoll (Drive) and Fernwood (Drive). Now, both roads are in rough shape," Langone said. "We've put off Fernwood for a number of years because of the drainage. I still don't know where we're going to go with that drainage or what we can do with it."

Langone said the town missed out on an opportunity to purchase a piece of property in the area that would have allowed them to better manage the drainage; the property has since been sold.

He did note that, albeit slow, the drainage in the area does work, and his department hasn't fielded many complaints about it.

"The draining is working, but I would like to address the surface of those two roads," Langone said. "A gutter mill would

actually accomplish a couple things; it would reprofile the road to give it a good crown in the middle and lower the gutters a little bit to allow the water to drain off the middle of the road, and, also, it would save us a lot of money in matching up the driveways as the company goes through."

The work at Oak Knoll Drive will cover 7,630 square yards and cost \$108,235. The project at Fernwood Drive will cover 4,240 square yards and cost \$64,225.

Langone also mentioned work his department will contract for at Riverside Drive, covering a 1,620 square yard distance and costing \$31,708.

"Another thought I had is Riverside Drive; it would be a small job, but I've got a resident there who has taken a lot of water. I want to try to reprofile that road a little bit. Maybe add some

berm," Langone said, noting that he would direct the water toward other basins in the area.

When he finished presenting the primary projects, Langone added several more for potential consideration.

"Then, there's alternate projects I would like to include if there's anything extra," Langone said, noting these projects did not factor into the budget but might be accomplished if there is extra money available.

These projects include overlaying the road to the transfer station for \$17,315, milling and paving the highway garage driveway and center section for \$19,630, and also milling and paving a 6,467-square-yard stretch of Glendale Road for an estimated \$78,630.

## 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, 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.

## Wilbraham Troop 359 Annual Mother's Day Plant Sale May 11

WILBRAHAM - Wilbraham Troop 359 will have their annual Mother's Day Plant Sale on Sat, May 11 in St. Cecilia's Church parking lot from 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Sales and donations help pay for camping equipment, supplies, program materials, registration and activity fees throughout the year. People come and shop the troop's plant sale year after year. The generous community support is greatly appreciated. Thank you from Troop 359. For more information, contact Lorna Lawrence 413-214-8771.



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Marissa Vancini from the Hampden County Sheriff's Department K9 Unit speaks with attendees during the Pet Day event at Federated Community Church on May 4.



Pastor Kwan Kim leads attendees in the Blessing of the Animals ceremony during the Pet Day event at Federated Community Church.



A photo of attendees enjoying the Pet Day event at Federated Community Church in Hampden.



A member of the K9 unit shows their tongue during the Pet Day event at Federated Community Church in Hampden.



Nick D'Angelo of the Massachusetts State Police and Jonathan Mach from the Hampden County Sheriff's Office in Ludlow showcase a K9 demonstration during the Pet Day event at Federated Community Church in Hampden.

**PETS** from page 1

Algie said the K9 demonstrations were a hit with attendees, with demonstrations including a pat down, article searches, criminal apprehension and more.

"We were lucky enough to get four from the Ludlow Sherriff's Department this year and two from the state police. They did an awesome job, they were very knowledgeable and answered everybody's questions and put on a fantastic demonstration," Algie said. "And it's just a great day for bringing community together."

Algie, an avid pet lover who bred, raised and showed Great Danes for 30 years, shared how the event first came together.

"May is Pet Month, so three years ago, I was trying to think of events to put on here," Algie said. "I've just been

in the dog world pretty much my whole life and I thought 'Pet Month, hmm, why don't we have a Pet Day?' I've seen other churches with their signs out saying 'Blessing of the Animals' and (thought), 'Let's do that.'"

From there, Algie's idea grew when she considered adding K9 demonstrations to the event.

"Then I thought, 'Hey wouldn't it be cool if we could get some K9 demonstrators?'" Algie said.

In years past, she added, the event included a traveling zoo.

"The last two years, we also had a traveling zoo and they had baby goats and baby pot-bellied pig, some rabbits and ducks," Algie said. "It was great for all the kids because they could sit in with them and pet them and all that, but wasn't able to get them this year. They were



Turley photos by Kristin Rivers

Jonathan Mach from the Hampden County Sheriff's Office in Ludlow performs another K9 demonstration during the Pet Day event at Federated Community Church in Hampden.

already booked. So, we'll put in extra early for them next year."

Algie enjoyed how the event brought the community together along with their pets.

"The comradery, everyone just able to be together as a community and share their stories about their pets," Algie said.

Pamela Rogers hopes attendees took away an appreciation for their local first responders.

"A greater understanding of that," Rogers said.

"And to bring us together as a community," Algie added.

Rogers also enjoyed how community events like this bring people together.

"It shows common interest with our religion obviously, regardless of what religious background people have, but with the community, the love of animals," Rogers said. "There's a lot that the animals gave us. The pastor's prayer about how the animals are supporting us I thought was very good. It truly points out to what happens with the police animals too."

Algie encourages the community to check out the event next year.

"It was a nice day for everybody to get together with their pets," Algie said. "To build friendships and just the being of togetherness."

Algie thanked the sheriff's department and state police for stopping by and participating, adding the congregation appreciated Sheriff Nick Cocchi and enjoyed learning about the canine resources provided by the department.

"The demos were fantastic. They were just great," Algie said. "They were really, really great and very professional."



Dr. Christopher J. Root  
DMD MAGD



Dr. Mary Chalino  
DMD



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# New stickers on sale starting May 20 for Hampden Transfer Station

HAMPDEN - Transfer Station stickers are going on sale starting May 20. Prices for stickers/permits for the Hampden Transfer Station are as follows: For Residents under the age of 65 the cost will be \$60 for the first vehicle, \$30 for each additional vehicle within the same household and Seniors (anyone 65 years of age or over) \$25 for the first vehicle, \$10 for each additional vehicle. Stickers valid July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025 will be available for sale at the Board of Health office in the Town Hall and at the Transfer Station starting May 21th. However, residents are encouraged to purchase it by mail.

To have your sticker mailed to you, you must mail ALL the following to the Board of Health office at 625 Main Street, Hampden, MA 01036.

- Name, Address, Phone no., License Plate no. of your vehicle
- Payment made to the Town of Hampden: Residents under age 65 \$60 for the first vehicle; \$30 for additional vehicles within the same household.
- Seniors (over 65 years of age) \$25 for the first vehicle; \$10 for additional vehicles within the same household.
- Self-addressed and stamped envelope.
- Your current Transfer Station sticker/permit expires on June 30, 2024.

FYI bag costs are as follows, a roll of ten (10) Large bags (approximately 33 gallons) will be \$30 and a roll of ten (10) Small bags (approximately 16 gallons) will be \$15.

Call the Board of Health office at 566-2151 ext. 102 if you have any questions. Board of Health office hours are Monday-Thursday, 7:30 a.m to 3:30 p.m.

# Great Songs from Great Movies at the Wilbraham Public Library

WILBRAHAM— Instrumentalist and vocalist David Polansky will perform “Great Songs From Great Movies” at the Wilbraham Public Library on Monday, May 20 at 6 p.m. In addition to taking audience requests, his concert will span several decades of film history, from *Singin’ in the Rain* to *Star Wars*. An accomplished musician, David is in constant demand throughout the New England area. Loved by everyone from preschoolers to grandparents, his songs have been compared to those of Stephen Sondheim and Tom Lehrer. He has performed at the Wilbraham Library since 1997.

Registration for this free event is encouraged and space is limited. To register, please contact the library at 413-596-6141 or visit the Event Calendar at [www.wilbrahamlibrary.org](http://www.wilbrahamlibrary.org). This program is sponsored by the Wilbraham Friends of the Library.

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# Select Board approves license application for Scantic River Brewery

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
[krivers@turley.com](mailto:krivers@turley.com)

WILBRAHAM - Select Board approved a license application on May 6 for Scantic River Brewery after their public hearing was continued last week.

The hearing was continued after issues with audio for attendees listening online, significant public input and the board wanting time to review further.

Scantic River Brewery LLC, located on Burt Lane, had an application for a new annual Liquor License; Farmer Series Pouring Permit (malt only) for a Sec. 19C License holder.

An entertainment license request would be considered at a later date.

Sue Bunnell asked David Avery, the brewery’s manager, and his business partner, David Buel, about the hours, seeking clarity on where that stood since the last discussion.

Avery replied, “You have to base that on the people.”

“Most likely it will be closed Monday and Tuesday but I can’t say for certain,” Avery said.

After Michael Squindo sought

clarity on the brewery’s vision, Avery expressed frustration, asking how they could have a full liquor license and a package store in the back.

“We spent \$4 million on this building, a quarter of a million dollars of our money just to open it, and we get to the end and it’s a surprise that we can’t open?” Avery said.

Squindo clarified he was looking for details about the hours and vision to help the board and public understand what Avery and Buel are looking for.

“I think when you have good, concerned citizens about the operational commitment, I think it’s helpful for them and for us to hear like ‘Here’s what we’re thinking. We’re asking for this because...’” Squindo said. “At least for me, I’m not saying I don’t support this, I’m just saying it’s helpful for us to be able to know exactly or to what extent...”

Sharon Kipetz asked Avery and Buel about their footprint and occupancy numbers.

“How many people can be there at any given time in terms of a party and then if it’s just traffic coming in to have a drink, how many people can actually sit in your place?” Kipetz said.

After the board looked over the special permit, it was stated as 200 people standing, with a seating capacity of 100, for the occupancy.

John Tousignant asked about the parking given the occupancy numbers.

“So they’re not going to be parking on Burt Lane and Main Street?” Tousignant said.

Police Chief Ed Lennon clarified that the area by the brewery is posted as no parking, with no ability for cars to park there.

Avery said neighbors have been coming by to see what they’re doing.

“If you’re concerned about something, come down to see us,” Avery said. “We’re part of your community now. We need to work together and make this a fun place for people and not be concerned (about) how we’re operating.”

The motion to approve the application for a new annual Liquor License; Farmer Series Pouring Permit (malt only) for Scantic River Brewery LLC with Avery as the manager with hours of Noon to 10 p.m. daily and forwarded to the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission for review and final approval passed 3-0.

# Theatre Guild of Hampden seeking directors

HAMPDEN – The Theatre Guild of Hampden is looking for directors for our 2024-2025 season.

For more information, call Mark Giza at 413-204-5333.

# Dine-Out to benefit Wilb. Lions May 21

WILBRAHAM – There will be a dine-out event to benefit the Wilbraham Lions at Crazy Jake’s on May 21.

Crazy Jake’s is located at 2537 Boston Rd. in Wilbraham. 10% of your food total will be donated to the Wilbraham Lion’s Club.

**Saturday, May 18th**  
**Gates open at 9:00am**



# Military Appreciation Day

Our mission is to give Veterans an unforgettable track experience.



Veterans and their families are invited to join us for a day of racing fun as we celebrate Military Appreciation Day at PMP. Ride along in amazing race cars with Palmer Club drivers and experience the thrills of racing. There will be food and beverages, static displays, and so much more! Sign in with your valid military ID at 9:00am and let the fun begin.

**Location:** Palmer Motorsports Park  
**Address:** 58 W Ware Rd, Palmer, MA 01069  
**Start Time:** 9:00am  
**Event Signup:** <https://palmermsp.com/vets/>





# OBITUARIES

## Death Notices

**Robert Leo Quintin**  
Died April 5, 2024  
A celebration of life is planned for September 29, 2024

## Robert Leo Quintin 1948-2024

Robert Leo Quintin passed away peacefully and bravely on April 5, 2024 surrounded by his four loving children.

Robert (Bob) was born in Springfield, MA on April 25, 1949 and graduated from Classical High School. He attended Jones College in Florida and Western New England College for his MBA.

Bob began his career at Ford Motor Company then FLEXcon as the Director of Information Technology. He was also an adjunct professor for University of Phoenix and Holyoke Community College. In his younger years

he worked at Danny Seagrill and often shared fond memories from his time there.

Bob served the town of Wilbraham for over 20 years as Chair of the Capital Planning Committee and Finance Committee. Bob spent a majority of his life in Wilbraham before moving to Merritt Island, FL in 2013 for his much earned retirement.

Bob embraced his nickname, "BBQ" for Big Bobby Quintin. He was larger than life with a heart of gold. He loved many things including family vacations to Cape Cod and Florida. He had a passion for golfing and was a longtime member of the Wilbraham Country Club, where he got a hole in one! He was a huge fan of sports, especially the Boston Red Sox. He was also an active parishioner of Georgianna United Methodist in Merritt Island.

Bob was preceded by his mother and father, Leo and Alice Quintin of Springfield and his sister Linda Quintin of West Springfield.

He is preceded by his wife since 1978, Lynne Quintin who passed in 2021. Lynne and Bob were the epitome of true love. Set up on a blind date in 1977, they were a model couple and enjoyed doing everything together as a team. They will now finally be together in eternity.

His greatest joy was the close-knit family that he created with Lynne. He was always so loving and so supportive to each of his four children: Emily Quintin Carlson and her husband Scott of Longmeadow, MA, Elizabeth Quintin Hanks and her husband Kevin of Wilbraham, MA, Chandler Quintin and his wife Alaina of Central Falls, RI, and Audra Quintin Thompson and her husband Kyle of Palm Bay, FL.

Bob was a tremendous father and had the best sense of humor. He always went above and beyond to make sure each of his children felt special. He took great interest in supporting their colleges and passions.

In addition to his children, Bob adored his grandchildren and was the best Papa. He will be missed deeply by each of them: Carter Hanks, Ruby Hanks, Sawyer Hanks, Quintin Carlson and Beckham Carlson. Family was everything to Bob.

We would like to thank East Village Place, his Baystate Medical care team and Baystate Hospice for their tremendous support and loving care.

Bob would always tell his four kids that they were his favorite, turns out, he was our favorite too.

A celebration of life is planned for September 29, 2024 at Wilbraham Country Club. Please head to [www.bob-and-lynn.com](http://www.bob-and-lynn.com) to RSVP.



## OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

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

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$225, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph.

**Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: [obits@turley.com](mailto:obits@turley.com).

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

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## WFOL to hold Spring Plant Sale

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

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

We are offering annuals - Begonias (pink or white) and Petunias (blue). These are large plants in five-inch pots that are ready to plant and show off. Plants are \$5 each and available by pre-order only. Deadline for orders is May 15 and orders will be available for pick up Saturday,

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

Pick up an order form at the library or download from online. You can also request an order form by emailing [friends@wilbrahamlibrary.org](mailto:friends@wilbrahamlibrary.org). Return your order with payment to the library during regular business hours.

The sale is sponsored by the Wilbraham Friends of the Library which was established in 1973. The Friends of the Library fund programs for children, teens, and adults, as well as the library's popular Museum Pass program, furnishings and other library equipment.

For more information, contact the WFOL at [friends@wilbrahamlibrary.org](mailto:friends@wilbrahamlibrary.org).

## Bobbi's Senior Trips - Hampden

HAMPDEN - The following senior trips are made available through the Hampden Senior Center. A minimum of 40 travelers are needed for any trip to run. All prices include a driver's tip. Flyers are available at the senior center on Allen Street. Coach seat assigned as your \$20 deposit is received (unless otherwise noted).

Please write a separate check to Bobbi for each trip; note trip name in the check memo.

JULY 4, Thursday - Tanglewood lawn seats, James Taylor concert, fireworks; \$100 per person. Full Payment Due June 7.

JULY 10, Wednesday - Log Cabin

'Margaritaville' Jimmy Buffet Tribute featuring "Changes in Latitude", Twin Lobster or Prime Rib; Self-Drive \$92 per person. Full Payment Due June 14.

AUGUST - Mt. Washington Cog Railway, stop in Manchester halfway, lunch; Cost, date to be announced.

AUG. 26, Mon - Newport Playhouse "Nonsense: A Musical" buffet lunch, show, cabaret; \$125 per person. Full Payment Due Aug. 7.

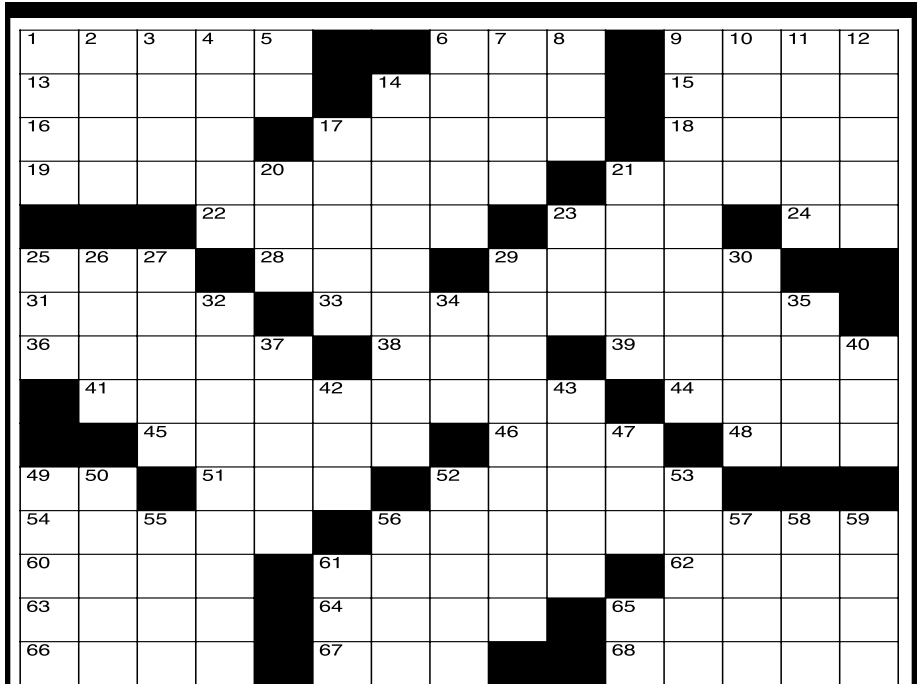
Any questions / to sign up, call Bobbi @ 566-8271 or email [bobbijg2@charter.net](mailto:bobbijg2@charter.net).

## 6th Annual Juried Art Show takes place

HAMPDEN - Celebrate Art! The Scantic River Artisans will be hosting their 6th Annual Juried Art Show on June 1 & 2, 2024. The times will be: June 1 (12 - 5) and June 2 (11 - 3). There will be a reception with refreshments and entertainment on June 2 (12 - 2) with awards at 2:00. The show will be held at 104 Allen Street, Hampden, MA (The Hampden Senior Center).

Join us for a celebration of creativity with paintings, jewelry, pottery, metalwork and a local book author book signing. Uncover unique treasures and purchase the craftsmanship of talented artisans.

For more information, please visit: [www.scanticriverartisans.com](http://www.scanticriverartisans.com) or email us at: [info@scanticriverartisans.com](mailto:info@scanticriverartisans.com).



### CLUES ACROSS

1. It wakes you up
6. A place to sleep
9. Czech village
13. Appetizer
14. African country
15. Dark brown or black
16. Parent-teacher groups
17. Saturates
18. ESPN personality Kimes
19. Songs to a lover
21. Cavalry-sword
22. Begat
23. Patriotic women
24. Famed Princess
25. One who does not conform
28. Neither
29. Nigerian monetary unit
31. Body parts
33. Hit Dave Matthews Band song
36. Depicts with pencil
38. Make into leather without tannin
39. Plants grow from them
41. Alias
44. Fingers do it
45. More dried-up
46. Clod
48. Senior officer
49. A way to listen to music
51. The bill in a restaurant
52. Historic center of Artois region
54. Cyprinid fishes
56. Poisonous perennial plant
60. Scottish Loch
61. Heads
62. Extra seed-covering
63. Wings
64. Britpop band
65. Forearm bones
66. Small immature herring
67. Female sibling

### CLUES DOWN

1. Vipers
2. Not on time
3. Resembling a wing or wings
4. Tears down
5. Professional designation
6. Noise a sheep made
7. Type of lodge
8. Speak poorly of
9. Ties the knot again
10. Apron
11. Studied intensively
12. City in Finland
14. One who monitors
17. 18-year astronomical period
20. Trent Reznor's band
21. Takes to the sea
23. Split pulses
25. Valentine's Day color
26. Wyatt \_\_\_
27. Type of rail
29. One from the Big Apple
30. Asteroids
32. Made more sugary
34. Change in skin pigment
35. Mild yellow Dutch cheese
37. Koran chapters
40. A place to relax
42. Young woman ready for society life
43. Female horses
47. Half of Milli Vanilli
49. Icelandic poems
50. Indiana town
52. Golden peas
53. Closes tightly
55. It's mined in mountains
56. Cliff (Hawaii)
57. Ribosomal ribonucleic acid
58. Monetary unit
59. Primordial matter
61. TV station
65. Rise

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# A COMMUNITY GALLERY



Wilbraham-Hampden Rotary Club president Don Flannery welcomes guest speakers to the club's April 24 meeting at the Country Club of Wilbraham. Colleen Goodreau (left) and Jackie Hafner of the Hampden-Wilbraham Partners for Youth Coalition talked about teaching kids to lead a productive life. They described the scope of services provided to students and their families and the issues they are facing. (Charles F. Bennett photo)

*Life in & HAM*

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

# WIL HAM



Photo courtesy of Cheryl Erskine



## Soule Road Elementary School donates to Cradles to Crayons

Thank you Soule Road Family for your generous donations! Cradles to Crayons is so appreciative of your support!



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Photo... The Hampden... construction... words on their... finished const... department. T... apparatus. It... deploying a h...

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# WILBRAHAM HAMPDEN



Photo and caption courtesy of Wilbraham Police Department  
The Wilbraham Police Department  
presented Officer Prosperi with a custom  
hockey jersey to show their support for Officer Prosperi by presenting him with a custom  
hockey jersey proceeds from the benefit hockey game played last month.



A group shot of Cub Scout Troop 177 in front of the fire truck during this year's Egg Drop event.

Photos submitted by Carianne Stebenne

Cub Scout Troop 177 took part in an annual Egg Drop event recently where members design structures to keep an egg from smashing when dropped at different heights. Members of the fire department then dropped watermelons, including one strapped with a helmet, for a lesson on wearing your helmet.



Vinny Lauziere, Joseph Stebenne and Owen Courtney with Firefighter Patrick Farrow after winning the egg drop.



Photo and caption courtesy of Hampden Fire Department  
The Hampden Fire Department completed  
a prop for training, sharing these  
photos on Facebook: "Our day crew recently  
constructed this prop for training for the  
department. This prop simulates a hose bed on an  
apparatus and will allow our members to practice  
pulling a hose line from a fire apparatus."



Photo and caption submitted by Sue Agnew  
Models for the Wilbraham Women's Club fashion show with fashions by Chico's are  
(left to right): Cheryl Wesolowski, Pat Serra, Amy Basile, Deb Campfield, Kathy Perry,  
and Patty Fois. The show was held April 25 before a full house at the St. Cecilia Parish  
Center. The event was a fundraiser for the club's scholarships and other charitable  
endeavors.



Photos courtesy of Wilbraham Fire Department  
Members of the Wilbraham Fire and Police Departments  
joined other agencies around the area for a recent  
three-day training to become certified child passenger  
safety technicians. The certification enables members  
to provide car safety installations and safety  
inspections.

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## Heidi Pafumi

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**SCHOOL** from page 1

mandates. I also have two children, a daughter at Minnechaug and a son at Wilbraham Middle School, which allows me the perspective of a parent with children attending district schools," Murray said.

Murray explained being a voice for students, families, educators and staff inspires her, adding she has more reasons to run after serving three years.

"I have enjoyed the interaction that I have had with students whether it was hearing them present research and civics projects, listening to chorus and band concerts, or watching them receive recognition or awards for academics as well as for character," Murray said. "Hearing about the curriculum and ongoing work from various departments at the high school to elementary grade levels demonstrating their lessons and sharing their materials has also led me to want to continue serving on the HWRSD School Committee."

On successes, Murray shared many and credited district staff, educators, administrators, town committees, family and community members for their work.

"I think some of the greatest accomplishments have been settling the lawsuit and completing the Strategic Plan, which is on year two of implementation. The district has also hired a new superintendent who shares our vision for excellence in education, as well as a new executive director for LPVEC, and a new student services director. New literacy and math curricula have successfully been implemented at the elementary level, providing our students with a strong foundation for academic success," Murray said. "Last but not least, providing vocational opportunities for 9th grade students, ensuring equal access to career-focused education. I would really like to thank the administrators at Minnechaug for making this possible as they had to essentially create a program of studies for 11 technical programs that met all state requirements and earned enough credits to graduate, making it possible for the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year."

For improvements, Murray wants to find a solution to the overcrowding concerns at Wilbraham Middle School "that meets the developmental needs of students while also providing educators with an appropriate space to teach" and more.

"I am eager to hear the possible solutions and input from various stakeholders. Though I am excited for CTEC's new criminal justice program starting next year, I would like to support LPVEC as they pursue various grant opportunities and use their innovation to secure funding in order to expand technical education opportunities," Murray said.

Murray stressed her continued commitment to the district and residents "to uphold the highest standards of education, foster a culture of collaboration and excellence, and ensure that every student has the opportunity to thrive."

"I am committed to ensuring that every student in our district receives a high-quality education that prepares them

for success in college, career, and life. This includes advocating for resources and support to enhance academic and vocational programs, provide equitable opportunities for all students, and support the social-emotional well-being of our students. In addition, I will continue to actively engage with residents, parents, and educators listening to their input so we can work together to create a positive and inclusive school environment that meets the needs of all stakeholders. This will involve promoting transparency and communication, soliciting feedback, and collaborating on initiatives that benefit both the schools and the broader community," Murray said. "Furthermore, I am dedicated to addressing any challenges or concerns facing our schools, whether it's addressing infrastructure needs, supporting educators and staff or navigating changes in state and federal education policies. By advocating for evidence-based solutions and prioritizing the best interests of our students, I believe we can continue to strengthen our school district and ensure it remains a cornerstone of our community."

**Timothy Collins**

Collins has 45 years of experience, including two decades serving as president of the Springfield Education Association, which provided him insights into policy-making, advocacy, and community engagement.

He stressed striving to ensure equitable quality education.

"My proven track record of leadership, collaboration and advocacy positions me as a valuable asset to the School Committee. I am committed to advocating for policies that support the holistic development of every student in our district and addressing longstanding underfunded mandates. In retirement, I am eager to continue serving my community by leveraging my skills to craft policy, advocate for equitable resources, and foster a brighter future for all students," Collins said.

On what inspired him to run, Collins shared family and colleagues encouraged him to, having recognized "my potential to contribute meaningfully to our community."

"Additionally, witnessing the turnout and engagement at the two community forums for the district's strategic planning reaffirmed my belief that our community is passionate about ensuring the best outcomes for our students. I have always prioritized the well-being and success of students, recognizing them as the cornerstone of our future," Collins said. "This dedication, coupled with my extensive experience in education and advocacy, fuels my commitment to serving on the School Committee and advocating for policies that support the needs of every student."

On successes, Collins was impressed with the school district's proactive response to setbacks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Their implementation of diverse tiered interventions and collaboration with non-profit agencies to provide supplementary resources for students have been notable

successes," Collins said. "If elected, I am committed to further exploring avenues to address any remaining learning gaps and support the diverse needs of all students. Establishing partnerships to expand educational supports for both students and families will be a priority, ensuring that every individual receives the necessary assistance and resources to excel academically and thrive personally."

On improvements, improving learning conditions is his biggest goal to ensure students "have a safe, supportive, and enriching environment."

"If elected, my focus will be on improving infrastructure, resources and student support services to unlock every child's potential. This involves ongoing efforts to recover from the pandemic's impact and balance learning conditions in both under-enrolled and overenrolled schools. Research underscores the importance of class size in student success. Updating the Regional Agreement and using resources effectively are critical steps in this endeavor. Each school requires the right student-teacher ratio, necessitating a careful reassessment of available space," Collins said. "Given the demographic shift, especially with an aging population, accurately predicting future student numbers is crucial. Furthermore, maximizing the current infrastructure's utility requires careful examination to meet the evolving needs of the community. My approach includes gathering feedback from various stakeholders, ensuring transparency, and being proactive in addressing challenges and opportunities. This way, we can adapt and thrive in the face of change."

If elected, Collins also wants to expand course offerings "to encompass a diverse range of hands-on learning opportunities."

"This includes reinstating courses such as shop and home economics and expanding music and art courses which have been reduced or eliminated due to the overemphasis on preparing for the MCAS," Collins said. "By doing so, we can provide educators with the flexibility to move beyond teaching solely for test preparation and instead engage students in critical thinking and lifelong learning. This approach will foster a more enriching educational experience and better prepare our students for success beyond the classroom."

**D. John McCarthy**

McCarthy has lived in town for almost 28 years and has personal experience with the district through his son attending from second grade through high school, later becoming a dual graduate from Minnechaug Regional High School and Holyoke Community College, a nephew who attended schools in the district and graduated from Minnechaug and an exchange student from Moldova who did her senior year at Minnechaug.

He also served on the School Committee before as a member, executive committee and committee chairman.

"So, I can hit the ground running as I understand what a committee can and can't do as defined by the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993," McCarthy said.

McCarthy elaborated on his educational background and how it can add to the position.

"While I was never a certified classroom teacher, I have a master's in education, MEd, from UMass Amherst and

years of experience teaching continuing education classes at schools and universities. Even as an undergraduate at the Rochester Institute of Technology, I did an independent study working with elementary school students in the Rochester NY Public Schools," McCarthy said. "I taught classes and workshops for professional photography associations all over the US and in Europe and earned my Photographic Craftsman Degree and Certification as an Instructor and Business Instructor from the Professional Photographers of America. My teaching experiences have given me a solid background in education."

McCarthy also has a business background.

"I earned my master's in business administration, MBA, from the Isenberg School of Business at UMass Amherst. I worked in technical support, sales, and marketing for 28 years with Fujifilm so I have a good understanding of writing and working within budgets," McCarthy said.

McCarthy was inspired to run to improve the schools and academic standards.

"I want to help stop the slide. Our schools are good, but our ratings compared to other school districts in the area have slipped in the past ten years since I served on the school committee," McCarthy said. "Some of the problems may be blamed on the Commonwealth's abandonment of our own high standards under the reform act of 1993 in favor of watered-down Common Core inspired lower academic standards that started under the Obama and Patrick Administrations. But as a district, we should have our own more rigorous standards."

Another big concern for McCarthy is around controlling the budget.

"We have to prevent already high tax increases so seniors can stay in their homes in the town. The current HWRSD budget request from Wilbraham is about twice as high as any other town department budget request," McCarthy said. "In the past, the committee found \$109,000 for a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, DEI, study by an outside vendor and money has been spent on other DEI training in the district when there are pressing needs for infrastructure, technology and other more important things."

For successes, McCarthy noted the girls' Field Hockey team making number one in the Massachusetts West Division.

"Congratulations to them, way to go girls," McCarthy said.

Besides working on a reasonable budget for the district, other improvements McCarthy would like to pursue include motivation for the superintendent "to improve our ratings compared to other schools in the area to match the success of our girls' Field Hockey team" and solve overcrowding after the closure of Thornton W. Burgess Middle School.

He also stressed the importance of the curriculum.

"I would like to motivate the superintendent to have a rigorous curriculum. Look for other income sources besides choice students to name a few things I would like to help improve," McCarthy said.

If elected, McCarthy would like to see more emphasis on English, math and history in the classroom by the superintendent and the committee focus on ways to improve a student's education.

"Unlike some that want to end MCAS and other testing, we need to give our students a great educational background that will be reflected in higher scores without teaching to the test," McCarthy said. "The tests not only measure how well our students are doing, they are a measure of how well our teachers and staff are doing. They can be used to show where more work needs to be done and as a way of judging wage increases based upon merit."

Another vision is ex-

Please see **SCHOOL**, page 15



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**SCHOOL** from page 14

panding educational options beyond college.

"I would try to find ways for all of the students to explore more educational options than only making attending university a goal," McCarthy said. "For example, offer more vocational education choices, dual enrollment options, online virtual courses that aren't offered now and early graduation for more students."

He also suggested the committee explore innovative ways of generating income "that could reduce reliance on taxpayer dollars."

"Instead of relying on school choice as an additional income source, how about exploring inviting F1 visa students that would come to the district for a year and pay full tuition generating nearly four times more revenue than a

choice student does," McCarthy said. "I would like to see the district offer adult education and continuing education classes as a service to the district communities and others as an additional income source. Classes in a variety of subjects from foreign languages, history, ESL, woodworking, etc. could be offered and taught by our teachers and qualified others not on our staff."

Other ideas include offerings in the summer to support students and supplement town programs.

"I would like to see a summer school program for students from in and out of the district that would like to make up for failing or low grades in subjects that they had difficulty with during the regular school year," McCarthy said. "Fee-based summer athletic classes that would generate a profitable income for sports like tennis,

track, etc. should be offered, not to compete with, but to supplement town programs."

Applying for grants is another potential income source McCarthy would consider.

"But the fine print has to be looked at carefully as some grants only pay for the first year or two and then the district is stuck paying for it forever after," McCarthy said.

McCarthy again stressed the importance of examining the budget.

"I would work to have the committee take a very close look at what is really important in our budgets, maybe even try a zero-based budget for a year," McCarthy said.

McCarthy's message was this. "I would work to pass policies to achieve our goals," McCarthy said.

## Wilbraham-Hampden Scholarship Foundation Annual Raffle Drawing

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham-Hampden Scholarship Foundation has mailed raffle tickets to every home and business in the town of Wilbraham and Hampden. You should have received your golden tickets in the mail last week! All proceeds go to our scholarship fund which benefits the seniors of Minnechaug Regional High School. Tickets are \$25 and are tax-deductible as our organization is recognized under Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code. Prizes include a \$1000 gift certificate to Manny's TV and Appliance, a 1-year Family Membership to the YMCA, Red Sox tickets, \$300 Big Y gift card and other fabulous items and gift cards, donated by local businesses. If you didn't receive a ticket in the mail or would like to purchase more, please email wilbrahamhampdenscholarship@gmail.com. For more information, please visit our website at Wilbraham-hampdenscholarshipfoundation.org.

### PET OF THE MONTH

#### Meet Bernadette & Taffy-Apple!

The two feathered friends are Benji Yannacopoulos's fancy pigeons, Bernadette (left) and Taffy-Apple (right). They are a mated pair, and a happily "married" couple. They spend their days flying around Benji's room, preening one another, and collecting whatever paper scraps and nicknacks they can to make their monthly nest. They both badly want to hatch a baby of their own, but Benji is not ready to be a grandpa yet so they've been sitting on plastic eggs.

Both were rescues from the lovely Great Lakes Pigeon Rescue located in Chicago Illinois.



# PET PAGE

## READERS!

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



### Are Dogs & Cats Affected by Seasonal Allergens?

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- Rubbing or scratching the ears with the paws or against furniture.
- Hair loss and redness around the muzzle, chin, and eyes.
- Waxy ear discharge with a foul odor.
- Brown discoloration or bald spots on the body due to excessive licking.
- Reddened, scaly skin.
- Foot inflammation due to excessive licking.

Many of the allergy symptoms cats and dogs show are similar to those of other health issues. So, it can be tricky to recognize them for what they are, but you must do so. As cats and dogs scratch their itchy places, they can create shedding, hot spots, and baldness. These can develop into infections and open sores. Your pet will only become more miserable without treatment. If you suspect your pet is suffering from seasonal allergies a visit to your veterinarian is important to help diagnose and correctly treat their symptoms.



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# Community comes together to 'Plow the Community Garden'



A plow horse in action during the Plowing Community Garden event in Wilbraham on May 4.



A close-up of a plow horse during the Plowing Community Garden event in Wilbraham on May 4.



Melissa Graves, the founder of the event, celebrates the 14th successful year of the Plowing the Community Garden.



The founders of the Earthen Apothecary and Woodcrafts impress consumers with their works of art.



MurphySz performs their folk-like takes on the classic songs.

Turley photos by Jason DeGray

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By Jason DeGray  
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - Starting at 11 a.m. on May 4, the 14th Annual Plowing the Community Garden took place at Monson Road in Wilbraham, MA.

This event features small local businesses, horses, bulls and food trucks. For the 14th year, the people of Wilbraham, Hampden and neighboring towns were able to show up at this event.

This event originated with the ideas of Melissa Graves.

Graves has been working with the town of Wilbraham for more than 20 years providing local agriculture and entertainment to people which inspired this event. What was once a chicken farm, Graves has been able to turn this piece of land into the Wilbraham community garden.

For the past 13 years, this event has been exponentially growing in its popularity providing those within the community with something to do.

Happy that this event is going into its 14th year, Graves was ecstatic with the amount of people who turned out this year/

"The atmosphere is perfect," Graves said she was inspired to make this event from when she was growing up, often around horses and on the farm.

The people who help make this event happen are friends of Graves who live in Belchertown, Monson, and even a couple of towns in upstate Connecticut.

Being the only public event that the community garden holds, Graves, like other years, was "very happy with this years' turnout."

Like other town events, the event was able to support small, pop-up businesses providing people in the community with food, decorations and other goods. Some businesses included Sandy and Sue's Soap, Earthen Apothecary and Wood-

crafts, Spa & Grow Garden (who served flavored lemonade), T.T. & J Applyc, Dog Eat Dog World and Little Oak Farm.

Sandy and Sue Soaps is one of the pop up businesses that were able to show up this year. Sandy Hyszacck, one of the business owners, was able to participate in making the event great, show support to the community garden and the event.

The business has been active for the past eight years and this is the first time they showed up at the event for the town.

Another business that was made to impress was the Earthen Apothecary and Woodcrafts. This booth set up scents and soaps leaving a forest-like scent on people for whoever bought them. However, what mainly caught the eyes of buyers were the wood paintings and stains on cut up tree stumps. These crafts were impressive to many people.

The people running the stand said that this is their first and definitely not last year they will be attending this event.

The folk music, provided by the local band MurphySz, featured covered songs from the 1960s and 1970s, providing guests with the music from Creedence Clearwater Revival, The Beatles, The Rolling Stones and other influential bands. However, this band took these songs and music and turned this into a folksy sound which was soft on those who decided to reach out to this event.

One thing that was inevitable to ignore was the large food truck with the name "Dog Eat Dog World (and Lobster)." This food truck, as the name suggests, served hot dogs and beverages to consumers.

Overall, the event was a way to provide locals with entertainment along with informing people about the community garden and its usefulness for the town. The support for the small businesses and local farms, also, helps people support local town events by providing entertainment to families.



# WFOL holds annual book sale



Mary Lou Sanderson and Maria DeAngelis welcome customers to the Friends of the Wilbraham Public Library Book Sale on May 4.



Rachel Smythe, assistant children's librarian at the Wilbraham Public Library, holds up a book she has bought, "Great Thumbprint Drawing Book"



The outdoor/travel section is filled with books for people interested in traveling during the Friends of the Wilbraham Public Library Book Sale. Turley photos by Noelle Hisgen



Various attendees at the Friends of the Wilbraham Public Library Book Sale look for interested books to read. (right) Many people look in the fiction section for something to read.



By Noelle Hisgen  
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - The Friends of the Wilbraham Public Library partnered with the library for their annual book sale which lasted from May 1 to May 4.

The book sale was sponsored, in part, by the Friends of the Wilbraham Public Library/

The room was filled with books: from fiction, to recipe books, to informational nonfiction. The book sale had a story for everyone.

Even dividing the books from hardcover and paperback, each book was in very good condition for new buyers to take a book for themselves to read.

Thousands of books were displayed in the Brooks Room, with labels for attendees to find the perfect story for them, or even something from a different genre that they were intrigued in while inside the sale.

Despite the large quantity of books, the most expensive novel was only one dollar to make the sale more accessible to everyone.

Susan Magee, a volunteer at the book sale, was very passionate about the event and was excited about the book sale's success over the week and the benefits of having books at a low price, making reading more accessible to the community to learn about something that they never would have expected through taking a book at the sale.

"Financially you can't buy books very cheaply now, and here's access to proven popular books. Everything from "how-to's" to "Whodunnits," Magee said. "By coming here they have a choice of maybe buying books in an area that they wouldn't want to spend \$16-\$17 a piece but they've always wanted to read something."

All of the books in the book sale have been donated to the library. The volunteers have spent three days collecting the books and sorting them by paperbacks, fiction and other various sub-categories

such as biographies, religion and planting that would be recognizable.

This year, the library was able to get 3,000 books that were in good condition to be sold at the sale.

With the wide variety of books, everyone could be able to easily access books that they are interested in without any financial struggle. And with that variety, there is something for everyone. Whether they want something similar to their taste in books, or if they want to read something new.

Rachel Smythe, a long-time attendee of the book sale, was very interested in the selection of books over the week. She has attended the book sale every year.

Smythe said she "always finds something interesting. And I always look forward to coming to the book sale."

Smythe, also being the assistant children's librarian for the library, also expressed the importance of book sales.

"It's wonderful, the proceeds definitely benefit the library. Our programming is often supported by the Friends financially and it enables us to do more and bigger things than we would be able to do otherwise," Smythe said.

Smythe took a book called "Great Thumbprint Drawing Book" to further her hobby of doing art and making crafts in her spare time.

The book sale was a place for everyone. It had a category for every book possible.

The sale was open to everyone to find something similar to what they are interested in, or maybe find something new. Attendees of the book sale could be able to find anything they could and potentially enjoy.

It was a well-organized way for the Friends of the Library to bring people together with their love for books, bringing their love to new and long-time readers in the community. The book sale truly shows the capability of bringing people together through books.

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## SCHOOLS

# Minnechaug Regional High School Honor Roll

WILBRAHAM – Minnechaug Regional High School recently named the third term Honor and High Honor Roll.

**Grade 9 Honors:** Lilianna Bennett, Bryana Blaser, Angelina Bontempi, Abigail Camire, Lilianna Celetti, Ivy Christensen, Ely Christenson, Ismael Colon, Kiera Connors, Elijah Corbin, Emma Dalessio, Addison Derosia, Tucker Derosia, Ava Disa, Andrew Dolaher, Braedon Donahue, Brady Dones, Barba Dos Santos Costa, Darren Duah, Angelina Dunn, Isaac Echeverria Diaz, Elizabeth Espinal, Liam Faneuff, Alyssa Fortune, Nicholas Garib, Jasmine Gaspariano, Kaden Gralia, Emma Grover, Emma Grzebiernowski, Ryan Haber, Jacob Hall, Eric Henderson, Jacob Hisgen, Katelyn Hoar, Ainsley Holden, Paige Holt, Kadence Ilig, Ryan Jacobsen, Joel Johnston-Rivera, Kalhan Kar, Ethan Kelliher, Lowell Key, Abyaan Khan, Gabriel Kishinevski, Ryan Knox-Nelli, Sophia Kozub, Isabella Lafield, Drew Lang, Peter Langone, Leah Lomascolo, Molly Lynch, Andrea Lyon, Nola Malmborg, Mia Manseau, Alec McInnes, Molly Michels, John Morley, Madilyn Ortiz, Shiv Patel, Ainsley Patterson, Nicholas Pelletier, Natalie Petit, Anthony Powers, Haley Powers, Jaison Richard, Sydney Rocha, Emanuel Roman, Brooklyn Rosas, Jillian Rubner, Quinn Salerno, Adelyn Scarfe, Moira Shannon, Benjamin Stebbins, Sophia Sundheim, Tyler Supczak, Kaleb Sweetman, Autumn Thompson, Hope Trombly, Owen Tzoumas, Luis Vega, Max Waskiewicz, Kei Williams, Jade Wong-Vallejo, Thomas Wurm

**Grade 9 High Honors:** Gana Abuata, Raymond Adorno, Katherine Britt, Darby Burgmyer, Samantha Catellier, O'brien Chen, Annabella Cianflone, Gavin Coughlin, Catherine Dickson, Jonathan Dyer, Nehir Elcin, Isabella Esteves, Marion Fil, Brielle Foisy, Ella Gagliarducci, Olivia Gencarelli, Brooke Germain, Naomi Griffin, Eliana Gunn, Lucy Haile, Liam Harrigan, Caitlin Hebert, Madelyn Hoskinson, Amelia Kellogg, Isabella Kirton, Teagan Lawor, Abigail Lee, Reese Magee, Caroline Maloni, Liam Metzger, Mason Mish, Jasper O'Connor, Chelsea Ortega, Riddhi Patel, Collin Purcell, Lauren Roberts, Karolina Robles-Maurer, Jack Rumprik, Cameron Salvador, Jolena Sanchioni, Ava Scatolini, Dillon Shaughnessy, Savannah Sheerin, Gracie Smith, Norah Smith, Alison Souza, Andrew Stark, Grayson Sweet, Logan Thomas, Faith Trombly, Grace Trombly, Brayden Tugie, Isabella Usher, Ariella Velez, Sar-

ah Rose Walsh, Drew Weinberg, Azary Wheeler Montanez

**Grade 10 Honors:** Angelina Acevedo, Victoria Ambrose, Emma Balog, Logan Barcome, Maxwell Baroni, Gabriella Bermudez, Callan Blanchard, Alec Boilard, Corinne Brewer, Lila Britton, Kennedy Burgmyer, Trinity Burgmyer, Alyssa Capen, Isabella Carlin, Hayden Carlotto, Lilianna Catellier, Irene Chen, Logan Clark, Steven Cocchi, Caleigh Conboy, Jonathan Correa, Kelly Cronin, Cody Erskine, Zayde Facchetti, Jacob Fahy, Margaret Fulton, Khaliyah Gagner, Yong Ming Gao, Mateo Garcia, Anthony Garib, Eliana Gaudreau, Ryan Giombetti, Madyson Giroux, Andrew Grasso, Giselle Harris, Brody Harrison, Chase Henderson, Zeirra Hernandez, Laila Hosnander, Laya Ibrahim, Lana Johnson, Maeghan Joyce, John Kavanagh, Kathryn Kennedy, Brady Laliberte, Mai Le, Aidan Lee, Jacob Long, Kaitlyn Lopez Pham, Benjamin Lopez, Savannah Loubier, Christian Lowe, Jack Lucarelle, Avery Lucas, Kai Ly, Natalie Madison, Ava Manning, Austin Marques, Michael Mazzaferro, Nolah McConnell, Riley McLeod, Sean McSwain, Jordan Miller, Jacob Moore, Daniella Moraru, Anastasia Mutti, Alina Narvaez, Lyric Nelson, Hao-nam Nguyen, Vinh Nguyen, Alexandra Nichols, Alyssa Nogueira, Cailin O'Brien, Luke O'Connor, Anna O'Toole, Cora Pace, Alexander Parent, Zachary Parent, Nico Penna, Zoe Pinnock, Grayson Placzek, Katelynn Pronovost, Natalie Proulx, Hannah Przechocki, Cameron Rodriguez, Maisen Rosado, Mostaffa Saleh, Shawnee Santiago, Nina Semanie, Alexa Sherman, Biaunca Stewart, Isabella Strand, Lilianna Sullivan, Yazmin Tafolla-Chapin, Ezekiel Vargas-Nunez, Madisyn Vazquez, Dylan Walker, Journey Waters-Brown, Nathan Wesloski

**Grade 10 High Honors:** Lucas Akers, Ian Angelica, Adam Arce, Ali Awkal, Colleen Basch, Anthony Cianflone, Natalia Clarke, Maliha Daubon, Allison Demetri, Madeline Dos Santos, Aidan Dzierwinski, Samuel Eaton, Miles Fergus, Noemi Fraga, Lucas Fyntrilakis, Tyler Jaslanek, Ava Kearney, Molly Kinsman, Hannah Luff, Jaymiel Martinez, Arianna Morales, Ava Moretti, Cambria Norval, Mia Peck, Chloe Robins, Aezlin Rost, Annabella Rostek, Connor Seymour, Colin Sheehan, Linda Stanco, Owen Sullivan, Ella Trosky, Elijah Webster, Elizabeth Woytowicz, Josiah Zayas, Nicholas Zayas

**Grade 11 Honors:** Alexsa Abeid, Jo-

seph Aguiar, Hannah Alves, Emmamarie Annear, Kyle Atkin, Lilliana Barkyoub, Cayla Bartosz, Matthew Beaudin, Bryan Beckel, Nicholas Benninger, Sadie Blair, Joseph Bonavita, Alani Botas, Evan Bowler, Abigail Branham, Noah Brathwaite, Bryanna Brown, Jake Burnett, Jeremiah Campbell, Margaret Capuano, Noah Caress, Olivia Christenson, Luca Colon, Julia Crooks, Zoe Dansereau, Noah DeGray, Elizabeth Dickson, Paul Diehl, Jordan Dietz, Joshua Disa, Lukas Dzierzowski, Maxyne Evon, Samuel Ey, Amanda Fenyes, Aaron Foy, Molly Gallagher, Wen Xi Gao, Deacon Gardner, Aaron Gasteyer, Jaidyn Gaudreau, Noelle Giombetti, Hunter Gormally, Alexander Gormley, McKenna Hale, Noelle Hisgen, Ryan Ice, Audrey Izzo, Kalli Joyce, Ashley Kane, Nora Kennedy, Layla King, Taylor Labadorf, Arthur Lam, Morgan Lape, Myah Larimore, Olivia Lefsyk, Matthew MacPhail, Jeremiah Martin, Aidan McMinn, Elizabeth Nguyen, Tiffany Nguyen, Alyah Nogueira, Kelvin Ohe-meng, Ryan Oldread, Brayden O'Sullivan, Thomas O'Toole, Makenzi Pastreck, Parth Patel, Mallory Poulin, Emma Powell, Gus Przybyl, Ethan Purcell, Sophia Rachele, Ciara Reilly, Alexander Rice, Dawson Rice, Liam Richard, Aiden Rodrigues, Madeleine Rooney, Mialece Rosado, Brandon Rosas, Sydney Roy, Matthew Ryan, Christopher Salvi, Zoe Sanders Walter, Ella Sarno, Gianna Siciliano, Corey Smith, Chloe Sullivan, Isabella Tirabassi, Johanyliz Torres, Rylee Welch, Caeli Whitcomb

**Grade 11 High Honors:** William Bao, Bryce Barlow, Mackenzie Barlow, John Bermudez, Audrey Bernard, Marissa Bontempi, Samantha Burnham, Kayla Coolbeth, Mackenzie DaFonseca, Saniyah Dawkins, Lucie Dones, Grace Fallon, Nina Gallagher, Victoria Gonzalez, Renee Goulet, Alivia Grono, Giana Hall, Jaiana Hall, Sarah Henderson, Alita Johnson, Skylar Knybel-Grant, Andrew Lang, Joshua Lawrence, Alayna Lucas, Isabelle Manning, Antonia Mascaro, Makenzie McEwan, Alexander Melluzzo, Collin Meunier, Taylor Meunier, Margaret Michels, Ava Ofcarcik, Ava Peabody, Laura Pecoy, Nicole Pollard, Marily Remaly, Hayden Richard, Gabriella Robinson, Rafa Rodriguez Alvarez, Sean Rooney, Sheyenne Smith, Landon Smith-Devenitch, Jack Sullivan, Brady Suomala, Quinn Symington, Leah Tassinari, Angela Verdon, Sofia Villanueva, Ian Wall, Alexander Wietecha, Domenic Yacovone

**Grade 12 Honors:** Elijah Arel, Caitlyn Barnes, Haile Barnett, Jonathan

Barton-Cimino, Jacob Bottass, Kelsey Brennan, Aren Brubach, Zoey Cardano, Lindsay Carra, Evan Cassady, Vince Chiarizio, Morgan Conchinha, Ava Connors, Benjamin Cooney, David Cordova, Sophia Crooks, Abigail Dean, Samuel Dean, Jaden Desmarais, Mackenna Donahue, Rylie Drake, David Duah, Norah Dumala, Ryan Eldridge, Emily Esteves, Bianca Facchetti, Madison Faneuff, John Finnegan, Aedan Gierlich, Sophia Gravanda, Virginia Hale, Chase Harrison, Sydnee Hartin, Mary Heinold, Dakota Joseph, Jonas Kefalas, Hunter LaDouceur, Alyssa LaMontagne, Rory Lavelle, Jolene Lewis, Sawyer Lisowski, Lauren Lomascolo, Julia Long, Taylah Lopez, Anna Lucarelle, Diella Martell, Josiah Matthews, Brendan McDonald, Presley Mish, Aviana Mitchell, Billy Montoya, Nathan Moraru, McKenzie Murray, Davis Nelson, Kate O'Connor, Caitlyn Osmani, Vyann Patel, Nicolas Patrakis, Allison Patrick, Madeline Patterson, Claire Poindexter, Ann Marie Prairie, Max Raschi, Jonah Rost, Jonas Saabye, Gabriella Salvador, Olivia Salvi, Anthony Santucci, Jenna Scatolini, Georgia Serra, Ainsley Sheehan, Bernard Shevlin, Alexander Sleeper, Carl Socha, Jack Straut, Andrew Szpakowski, Jack Tassinari, Cassidy Trask, Katherine Tzoumas, Zachary Vigneault, Alina Wawrzonek, Katja Wurm, Joseph Zaremba

**Grade 12 High Honors:** Makayla Acevedo, Timothy Arendt, Ryan Atkin, Anissa Barnes, Rose Caltabiano, Serina Chan, Lillian Christensen, Paitan Closser, Jayla Comes, Siena Dansereau, Jackson Derosia, Lilliana DiGrande, Sofia DiGrande, Nicolas Disa, Danielle Dulude, Amy Dunklee, Madison Duperre, Mia Figueroa Rodriguez, Mia Fraga, Kaliana Gagnon, Isabella Gahres, Daniel Gardner, Gavin Grout, Victoria Harrington, Paige Hebert, Mia Hickson, Lauren Kasper, Roman Kavanagh, Kayleigh Kinsman, Theodore Klostri, Mia Korzec, Lindsay Labadorf, Damon Lafreniere, Sophie Laird, Aidan Lang, Jessica Leary, Olivia Lee, Julia Lewis, Samantha Long, Grace Maloni, Alexander Maurer, Avra Mayuski, Victoria Miller, Ava Murray, Kaylne Nkwanyuo, Matthew Nordstrom, Lexee Ogoley, Matthew O'Keefe, Adison Oliveras, Owen Ordynowicz, Abigail Pastore, Trey Pavoni, Erika Przedzicki, Kylie Ray, Cameron Roy, Michael Roy, Olivia Rucki, Daniel Ryzewicz, Gianna Sakowski, Chad Santos, Derek Semanie, Aiden Sergienko, Ava Sheehan, Cecilia Sheehan, Aiden Simpkins, Ailsa Wilson, Benjamin Wilson

## Lawrence Biondo named Head Boys Hockey Coach at Wilbraham & Monson Academy

WILBRAHAM- Wilbraham & Monson Academy is pleased to announce Lawrence Biondo has been named Head Coach of the Boys Varsity Hockey program beginning with the 2024-25 season.

Coach Biondo will take the helm with a strong foundation of current and new student-athletes and support from the entire WMA community. The Titans compete as a full varsity member of the New England Prep School Athletic Council.

"Coach Lawrence Biondo is a prep school person, through and through," Head of School Brian P. Easler said. "He played at prep school, has coached at prep schools, sent all of his kids to prep schools, and now he chose



Lawrence Biondo

to return to prep school teaching and coaching after retiring from the New York City Police De-

partment. He is fully committed to WMA and the development of our hockey program for the long term, and I can't wait to see how it grows under his leadership."

Coach Biondo's hockey resume includes both playing and coaching experience at the prep school and collegiate level. As a coach, count Avon Old Farms, St. Benedict's Prep and The Harvey School in his prep school experience.

Joining Coach Biondo will be Steven McGearly as assistant coach. Formerly the Boys Ice Hockey Head Coach at Wyoming Seminary, Coach McGearly played at Bethel University (MN). Assistant Coach and Goalie Coach Brian Musa '92 will round out a stellar coaching

staff. Coach Musa has over two decades of coaching experience, played goalie at Elmira College and is USA Bronze Goalie certified.

As a player, Coach Biondo was a three-year member of a Deerfield Academy team that won the 1983-84 Prep School Championship, and he lettered all four years at Tufts University. He played on the Olympic Development U16 summer program at Lake Placid, N.Y., and the Springfield Pioneers AA Bantam championship team that included WMA alumnus Rick Bennett '86.

Already a current English faculty member at WMA, Coach Biondo retired as a lieutenant in 2023 after 20 years of service

with the NYPD. Two of his five children are recent alumni of WMA, both Class of 2021, and they are currently matriculated at United States Military Academy West Point and Florida Atlantic University.

"I look forward to building upon the hockey program here at WMA and appreciate the full support I'm receiving from the school," Coach Biondo said. "We have a solid schedule, we're expanding our off-and-on-ice program and we're eager to begin the season this November."

To learn more about WMA hockey and the Academy's other programming, visit [www.wma.us/hockey](http://www.wma.us/hockey).



# SPORTS

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## Blair tosses perfect game against Ludlow

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW—Mackenzie Blair has tossed a couple of no-hitters since becoming a member of the Minnechaug Regional varsity softball team as a freshman.

The senior righthander has also pitched a perfect game for the Western Mass. Warriors, which is her summer travel team.

Blair hurled her first perfect game at varsity level last Wednesday afternoon, as the Lady Falcons posted a 13-0 shutout victory over the Ludlow Lady Lions in a non-league contest held at the Paul R. Baird Middle School softball field.

“It just feels great to pitch a perfect game for my high school team,” said Blair following the road win which finished after six innings due to the 12-run mercy rule. “My teammates really helped me a lot out there.”

Twenty-four hours earlier, Minnechaug (4-5) lost a hard-fought battle at Westfield High School by the final score of 6-0. The Lady Falcons players made the short bus ride to Ludlow with a little extra motivation.

“We had a tough loss at Westfield yesterday. That game was a little bit closer than the final score indicates and we really wanted to win it,” Blair added. “We were determined to win today’s game.”

Minnechaug varsity softball coach Molly Cole could tell that Blair was probably going to pitch very well against Ludlow while she was warming up.

“I just heard the catcher’s glove pop when Mackenzie was warming up before the game,” said Cole, who was also a pitcher for the Lady Falcons. “She was firing the ball very hard, and I knew that she was going to be on in today’s game. All her pitches were working very well.”

Cole recalls pitching a couple of no-hitters during her varsity softball career, but she doesn’t remember ever hurling a perfect game.

Blair finished the only meeting of the regular season against the Lady Lions (5-7) with 14 strikeouts which increased her career total to 491. She struck out the side in order in the first, third, and sixth innings.

The Lady Falcons defense only had to make four plays.

Ludlow senior first baseman Debora Rosado-Pagan led

Please see **SOFTBALL**, page 16



Ethan Kay reaches out to keep the ball in play.



Hayden Richard sends a return hit in second singles action.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

## Minnechaug boys tennis edges Amherst



Merreck Epperson takes an easy swing.



Kelvin Ohemeng follows through on his swing.

WILBRAHAM – Last Wednesday afternoon, Minnechaug’s doubles teams paced the Falcons to a 3-2 win over Amherst Regional. Third singles Hayden Richard got a win for the Falcons. Merreck Epperson and Ethan Ray won first doubles and Joshua Lawrence and Alex Gormely took the second doubles match to clinch the victory for the Falcons. Minnechaug is 3-5.

## Falcons outlast Brownies in overtime



Kaliana Gagnon runs into trouble as she looks to shoot on goal.



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli  
Ainsley Sheehan attempts to clear the ball out of the defensive end.



Ella Sarno passes on the run.



MacKenna Donahue takes a side approach to the Agawam goal.



Rylee Welch shoots on goal. She has six goals against Agawam.



Madison Faneuff makes a pass from behind the opposing goal.

AGAWAM – Last Monday afternoon, Agawam trailed by a goal at halftime, and tied the score at the end of regulation, but the Falcons managed an overtime goal for a 13-12 win. Agawam was led by Emma Murray and Sarah Kriebel with three goals each. Angelina

Kozhenevsky had two goals and four assists. The Falcons got a big performance from Rylee Welch with six goals and an assist. Kali Gagnon had three goals for Minnechaug. Agawam is 3-8 on the season while Minnechaug improved to 6-7.



# T-Birds front office members wins award

SPRINGFIELD - The Springfield Thunderbirds earned their second-ever Howdy Award recognition on Monday night during the 27th annual event inside the MassMutual Center. T-Birds Manager of Brand Development and Merchandise, Drew Superior, earned the Howdy in the "Attractions" category, one of 10 local hospitality workers spotlighted on Monday.

The Greater Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau presents the Howdy Awards annually to recognize the outstanding service hospitality industry employees provide. Superior's award victory marks the second time the Thunderbirds organiza-

tion has taken home a Howdy. Team mascot "Boomer" captured the same honor in 2018.

"We want to thank the GSCVB for recognizing Drew and Lauren Blanchard from our staff as finalists for their category," said Thunderbirds President Nathan Costa. "As someone who has been with our franchise since our first day in 2016, Drew has embodied what it means to be a service champion to his customers. On top of that award-winning trait, he has been instrumental in creating some of the best merchandise lines of any team in the American Hockey League, and we could not be prouder to have him represent our organization

for this much-deserved honor."

During the T-Birds' immensely successful 2023-24 season, the box office records also translated into the brand and merchandise space. Superior's team was instrumental in generating a 10% increase in online and in-arena sales compared to the prior season. The store's full rebrand on specialty nights led to big crowds looking to stock up on T-Birds gear, including the single-game record for merchandise sales on the club's annual Ice-O-Topes Night this past February.

Since their inception in 2016, the Thunderbirds' merchandise sales have grown in each of the team's first seven

seasons of play. Total merchandise sales for the Springfield AHL franchise have grown 6x from the final year of the Falcons organization in 2015-16 to today.

"Merchandise plays a vital role in representing your brand in the area and is not just a means of generating revenue," explained Costa. "When you visit downtown Springfield on game nights, you can see T-Birds gear everywhere. People of all ages wear it proudly, which speaks volumes about Drew and his team's ability to bring in products that people genuinely want to wear and show off."

**SOFTBALL** from page 15

off the bottom of the second inning by hitting a flair which was caught by freshman second baseman Veronica Ouimet. Then Ouimet fielded a ground ball hit by senior second baseman Ariana Fitzpatrick before tossing it over to junior first baseman Abby Peyman for the second out of the frame. Blair struck out the next batter.

Two innings later, Ludlow senior shortstop Julianna Coelho hit a ground ball to Minnechaug senior shortstop Amy Dunklee for the third out.

Fitzpatrick hit another ground ball, which was fielded by sophomore third baseman Alexis Adorno, with one-out in the fifth. Adorno's throw across the diamond was a little bit high, but Peyman was able to pull it down just before Fitzpatrick foot touched the bag.

"That was a huge defensive play," Blair said. "I threw a change-up and the batter hit the ball hard. My heart skipped a beat, but Alexis fielded the ball cleanly, and Abby was able to catch it. It was just an amazing play. I gave them a high-five in the dugout."

Then Blair struck out the final four batters that she faced putting her name in the Minnechaug athletics history book.

Not only does Blair perform very well on the softball diamond, she also does very well in the classroom with a 4.0 GPA. In the fall, Blair will be attending Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT). Her major will be Mechanical Engineering and she'll also be playing softball.

While the spotlight was on Blair during last Wednesday's contest, junior catcher Angelina Cross also deserves a lot of credit for doing an outstanding job behind the plate.

"This is my third year working with Angelina," Blair said. "We always work very well together, and I have a lot of trust in her back there."

The Lady Falcons offense scored an unearned run against Ludlow freshman righty Caitlyn Peczkla in the second inning.

With one-out, Peyman reached on a throwing error by the third baseman, and she wound up standing on second base. Then Blair drove her home by ripping a single down the rightfield line.

The visitors from Wilbraham scored nine runs on six base hits in the fourth inning.

Their first run of the frame scored on a fielding error. A couple of batters later, sophomore right fielder Aezlin Rost had a two-run single to left. Cross drove home another run with an RBI single. Then a ground ball out by sophomore centerfielder Alexa Sherman plated another run giving the Lady Falcons a 6-0 lead. Peyman also had a two-run single before Adorno capped off the inning by smacking a two-run double to left.

The Lady Falcons sent a total of 14 batters to the plate in the fourth inning and it didn't impact Blair's pitching performance very much.

"I really don't think the long inning was a factor," she said. "It was actually a good break for me and it's always nice having a big lead."

After being set down in order by Peczkla in the fifth, Minnechaug scored three more times in the sixth.

## Benjamin's Star Speedway mastery continues with Spring 100 checkers

EPPING, N.H. - Travis Benjamin won two of last year's Granite State Pro Stock Series stops at Star Speedway. With only one visit to the popular bullring on the schedule in 2024, the reigning GSPSS champion made it count.

The Belfast, Maine, veteran withstood challenges from Ryan Green and Casey Call to win Saturday night's Spring 100, opening his title defense the same way he started off last year's title chase.

"I've got a wicked good car here," Benjamin told series announcer Marco Thomas in Star's winner's circle. "I can't thank

my crew enough."

Benjamin and Green flexed their muscle early, winning their respective heats to lead the field to the first green flag of the new season. Green, sporting new colors and with former GSPSS champion Joey Doiron in his pit stall, worked the outside line to take the early lead, with Benjamin haunting in second.

In a mad scramble for the lead after a lap-34 restart, Benjamin got the better of Call and Green, retaking the top spot as the field slowed for a competitor's tire trouble. Call settled into second on a long green-flag run, with Green threatening for

second.

Jamie Wright's spin on lap 82 erased Benjamin's advantage, with Green and Call poised to make it exciting in the final laps. But Benjamin cleared himself of Green, driving away from the pack to post his fourth career GSPSS win and his third Star win in the last four series races held at "The Place to Race."

Call, last July's GSPSS winner at Star, settled for second, with Green matching his best career GSPSS finish in third. Dan Winter was fourth in his first series start since 2017, while Speedway 95 winner and Wiscasset Speedway veteran Josh

St. Clair managed a fifth-place run despite spinning twice early.

Title hopeful Evan Beaulieu was 11th at the finish, leaving the Durham, Maine, driver at a deficit, as Benjamin sits atop the points standings with eight races to go.

The next race on the GSPSS calendar is at Claremont Motorsports Park, as the series returns to its long-time home venue after a year's absence. On Sunday, May 26, Key Auto Group presents the GSPSS 100 with a \$5,000 share going to the race winner of the Memorial Day showdown.

## Quabbin League wants to fill remaining roster spots

Rosters spots are dwindling, but there are still some spots available as the Quabbin Valley Over-28 Baseball has begun its season. There are still several open spots to get filled despite the season being underway.

Registration for the 2024 season is now open and any interested players can go to [www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org](http://www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org) to get registered, or to seek more information or make inquiries about the league.

The league plays most Sunday from late April through late August with playoffs following that. The league plays a 15-game schedule and typically fields six teams each year. Games are usually played at 10 a.m. with fields in Easthampton and South Hadley used as well some expansion to the surrounding area this season. The league does not play on Mother's Day or Memorial Day weekends.

The Quabbin Valley league is an all-abilities league and all are welcome to join. Eligibility is players who are age 28 and over. You must be 30 to be eligible to pitch in the league. Your age for eligibility is whatever age you will turn in 2024. The league is also able to entertaining taking in an entire group as a team to add to the league. Please email the league board for to inquire about entering a team. The league can also pro-rate registration at this point. Simply contact a league board member. Contact information is located at the registration link.

## Registration now open to take part in Bay State Games

WOBURN - Registration for the 42nd annual Bay State Summer Games is now open. The 2024 Summer Games will include thirty sports with competitions from May 11 - July 27 at venues throughout eastern and central Massachusetts including Game On in Fitchburg, Boston Sports Institute in Wellesley, Union Point Sports Complex in Weymouth, and North Star Ice Sports in Westborough. Bay State Games participants range in age from 5 to over age 75 and represent more than 300 Massachusetts communities as well as surrounding New England States in some sports. From grassroots participants to accomplished amateur athletes, the Bay State Games provide opportunities for the athlete in all of us.

Seven high school showcase sports will take place for a variety of sports, including baseball, basketball, field hockey, ice hockey, soccer, softball, and volleyball. Athletes currently in grade 8-11 who live or go to school in Massachusetts are eligible to attend regional tryouts during the month of June. These tryouts will determine teams representing the various regions of the Commonwealth that will compete against each other in July. Check

each sport page for specific eligibility requirements.

The Summer Games include a wide variety of individual sports including swimming, track & field, figure skating, pickleball, wrestling, weightlifting, badminton, and more. These sports are open to a wide range of ages and skill levels from youth participants to masters-aged athletes. Adaptive sport divisions in archery, swimming, and track & field are offered, as well. Bay State Games also organizes tournaments for pre-existing teams in rugby, and 6v6 field hockey.

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

For questions, email [info@bay-stategames.org](mailto:info@bay-stategames.org) or call 781-932-6555.

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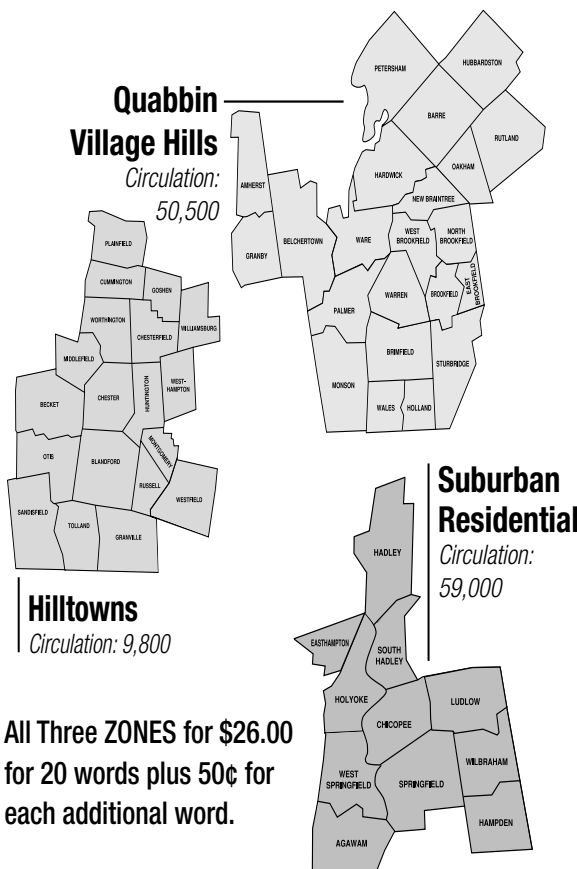
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## This Week in Rec

**Andrea Rust**  
Administrative Clerk

WILBRAHAM - I recently walked around the Spec Pond Complex watching baseball and softball games, enjoying the playground with my children, and admiring the pond. I am always amazed at how lucky we are in Wilbraham to have some of the best playing fields in Western Massachusetts and all-around park experience. We receive numerous accolades for our facilities at Spec Pond Complex from visiting teams. Our parks staff and all of the staff at WPRD are dedicated, passionate professionals and we all take great pride in our facilities and programs.

April was a month full of events including the Falcon Trail Race, Spec Pond Egg Hunt and Baseball and Softball Opening Day. The

Opening Day festivities included a player parade, 2023 championship recognition, clinics for players, skills competition, and intersquad scrimmages. The Complex was packed with families, players, coaches, and spectators. It was a wonderful experience and start to the season.

Next in the lineup of events is the Spec Pond Fishing Derby. The Derby will be held on Saturday, May 18 from 9 a.m. – Noon. The Friends of Recreation, Parks and Rec Department and the MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife have planned an event that is open to residents and non-residents of all ages. Fishing instructors will be available to assist and FREE bait will be provided. Trophies will be awarded to the first 30 kids (12 and under) who catch a fish. Free coffee, donuts, and water will be on site compli-

ments of Rice's Fruit Farm. The GRAND PRIZE for the largest fish caught (by length) will receive a \$100 DICK'S Sporting Goods Gift Certificate donated by DSG. A suggested donation of \$2 per person with a maximum of \$10 per family helps to make this event possible. Register the day of the event at Spec Pond and bring the whole family for a morning of outdoor fun.

We are extremely grateful for the sponsors, volunteers, and coordinators that make our events possible. These events would not be able to run without the dedication and generosity of those involved. We look forward to seeing everyone at the Fishing Derby on May 18!

NOTE: Visit [WilbrahamRec.com](http://WilbrahamRec.com) for program information and to register.

## Wilbraham Hiking Club posts hikes for May and June

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham Hiking Club has posted its May and early June hikes on its pages at the TeamReach App. There are exciting options, including:

- a more challenging, quicker-paced hike at the Rice Nature Preserve in Wilbraham
- a birding walk at the McDonald Nature Preserve in Wilbraham
- a quicker-pace guided hike on the "back-roads" of the Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary in Wales
- and relaxed pace hikes in Wilbraham, Brimfield, and West Brookfield

For more information or to RSVP for a hike, please check the club's pages on TeamReach. To join the club on TeamReach, use the code WHC01095. If you do not use apps, you can join the club by writing to [wilbrahamhiking@gmail.com](mailto:wilbrahamhiking@gmail.com)

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Docket No. HD24P0987EA  
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Date of Death: 02/13/2024  
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:  
A Petition for Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Alexandra D Clines of Hampden, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: Alexandra D Clines of Hampden, MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 06/03/2024. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a

written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

**UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)**

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

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

Date: May 06, 2024  
Rosemary A Saccomani,  
Register of Probate  
05/09/2024

### PUBLIC NOTICE

This ad is pursuant to MA Gen. Law Ch.255, Sec. 39A as of May 24, 2024 the following motor vehicles will be for sale to satisfy a garage keepers lien:

**2008 Acura MDX**  
VIN: 5J8TB855A007806  
COLOR: Gray  
LKO: Antoinette Trinidad 419 Montcalm St. Apt. 20619 Chicopee, MA 01020

**2010 Chevy Cobalt**  
VIN: 1G AD5F54A7114268  
COLOR: Blue  
LKO: Wyatt St. Laurent 11 Cross St. Apt. B Westfield, MA 01085  
R & S Assoc. Inc  
PO Box 543  
Wilbraham MA 01095  
413-596-4374  
05/09, 05/16, 05/23/2024

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. HD24P0723EA  
Estate of:  
Bridget W Wallace  
Date of Death: 01/13/2024  
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:  
A Petition for Fonnal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Robin W Fontaine of Hampden, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: Robin W Fontaine of Hampden, MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 05/31/2024. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

**UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)**  
A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the

estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration

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

Date: April 30, 2024  
Rosemary A Saccomani,  
Register of Probate  
05/09/2024

### Town of Hampden Legal Notice

The Hampden Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, May 28, 2024 at 6 PM** in the Town House, 625 Main Street, Hampden, MA, for those interested in the petition of owners Meggie and Vincent DeCesare for a Special Permit or Variance under Section 7.3, Table 7.2 of the Hampden Zoning

Bylaw for the side setback requirement for the construction of an accessory building at their residence located at 17 Potash Hill Lane. The petition and related materials are on file in the Town Clerk's office and may be viewed during normal business hours.

For the Board,  
L. Jed Berliner, Chair  
05/09, 5/16/2024

# Classifieds

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### HELP WANTED

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

**FULL TIME, 5 NIGHTS PER WEEK FLAT BED DRIVER NEEDED.**

Monday-Friday \$1500 per week. Must be able to remain on the property and work out of Early's Towing located at 536 Park Avenue, Worcester. We will have you responded to Worcester Police, Mass. State Police, AAA and in-house accounts and customer calls. You will be doing tows, jump starts, lock-outs, tires changes and out of gas calls. Experience is a must! You must be responsible, organized, clean in appearance and dependable. We have new trucks and equipment. We provide uniforms, benefits, paid time off, retirement plan and several other benefits. We are a family run small business looking for a team player to join our team. Please call Jim to schedule an interview **508-753-1123.**

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

**The Russell Public Library in Russell, MA is seeking a PART TIME (8 HOURS) LIBRARY CIRCULATION ASSISTANT.** Required, strong interest in working with the public, good organizational skills and solid computer skills. Bachelor's Degree with 1 year of library/administrative/ public service experience or an Associates Degree, with 2 years of library/administrative/ public service experience. For more info see library page on **Town of Russell website.** Please send a cover letter and resume to **Russell Public Library Trustees P.O. Box 275 Russell, MA 01071** or email to [rpldirector@townofrussell.us](mailto:rpldirector@townofrussell.us) to be received by May 21, 2024.

### HELP WANTED

#### DRIVERS

**INTERSTATE BATTERIES IS SEEKING A DRIVER** for deliveries in Western Mass area. Qualifications include: clean driving record; ability to lift heavy weights; stable job history; good communication skills; high work standards & strong self-organizational skills. Apply in person 8 am-5pm M-F 9am-12pm Sat. **230 Chauncey Walker Street (Rte 21) Belcher-town**

### REAL ESTATE

#### FOR RENT



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

You will find, mystical success...



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### REAL ESTATE

#### FOR RENT



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

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



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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.







# SENIORS

## Monthly Highlights for May at the Hampden Senior Center

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

### Create a Greeting Card with Ellie!

**Monday, May 6, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.**

Come and discover endless possibilities for creating your own personal greeting cards.

Meet new friends and learn new techniques each month.

Cost is \$3.00 per person. All materials are provided.

Please call 566-5588 to reserve your seat, space is limited.

### Crafting with Sheree

**Tuesday, May 21, 12:30 p.m. to 3 p.m.**

This month, we will make two Diamond Dotz Bookmarks. Cost is \$10 per person; all supplies will be provided. Please call 566-5588 to reserve your spot. Space is limited.

### Let's Go Surfin with Joe Green

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

Learn the ins and outs of surf in the web. Make a list

of your questions, and Joe will cover it all.

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

Tablets are available for you to use at the Senior Center.

### Grab and Go Dinner

**Friday, May 24, pick up from 2 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.**

Enjoy a delicious dinner of BBQ Pulled Pork, Cole-slaw, Baked Beans, and Dessert.

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

### Learn to play the Ukulele with Sue

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

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

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

### Coming this Summer ...

Ukulele Instructor, Susan Hand would like to share

her love of playing the Recorder.

She will offer half-hour lessons for \$3 a class. More details will follow.

Please call 566-5588 or let the front desk know if you are interested in signing up.

HELP US STOCK OUR SHELVES with Liquid Dish Soap!

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

### D & R Winter Farm Share

**PICK-UP is on Wednesdays, May 8 & 22 at 9:30 am.**

D & R Farm is offering fresh produce twice a month FREE with SNAP/HIP if you qualify.

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

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

### COMING in June...

#### D & R Farm Summer Farm Share

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

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

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

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

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

## HPL hosting Journalist Ruth Bass on May 18

HAMPDEN - The Friends of The Hampden Free Public Library along with the library has invited you to an author talk by Ruth Bass on Saturday, May 18 at Noon in the Auditorium at the Hampden Town Hall, 625 Main St. Hampden.

Bass, a journalist from Richmond, Ma., has published her fifth novel, "The Triangle", a Tale of Love and Death. Ruth brings her shrewd reporter's eye and well-honed writing skills to a gritty and absorbing crime novel packed with a can't-put-down plot and a cast of (mostly) misbehaving characters. This novel, just off the press.


Ruth Bass, a resident of Richmond and a weekly columnist for *The Berkshire Eagle* in Pittsfield, Ma., is the author of four other novels set in the last quarter of the 19th century, depicting the life of the fictional Hibbard family on a New England farm. The books are: "Sarah's Daughter", "Rose", "A Silver Moon for Rose" and "Sarah Meets Silas".

These books are based on Bass's father's "sort of" biography. Ruth is also the author of eight herbal-orientated cookbooks.

Bass will bring her books with her to sell and autograph. Only cash or check will be taken by the author.

You will not want to miss this opportunity to meet and greet Ruth Bass on a rare visit to our area. We look forward to seeing all of you there.

Any questions in regards to this visit, please contact Joan Shea at 566-8224, member of the Friends of The Hampden Library and the host of this program.



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