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A look at the other election contests in Wilbraham

Election takes place May 18

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
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WILBRAHAM - As residents head to the polls on May 18, we're highlighting the other races going on this election cycle.

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

Jane Clark is running for town moderator, Lawrence La-Barbera is running for reelection as assessor and James Dunbar is running for reelection as water commissioner.

Jane Clark

Clark moved to Wilbraham with her family nearly 30 years ago, working as director of external affairs at Wilbraham & Monson Academy, where her son later attended.



Jane Clark

Her two daughters also attended schools in Wilbraham and her husband is a former educator and union leader who worked in the Chicopee Public Schools.

Please see **ELECTION**, page 7



Photos courtesy of Peter Camyre

A group photo of Miss Western Massachusetts 2024 Meghan Kalbaugh with participants during the "Cycle for the American Heart Association" fundraising event at eCycle in Wilbraham on May 11.

Miss Western Massachusetts fundraiser cycles for American Heart Association

Also supports Miss America Scholarship Foundation

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
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WILBRAHAM - Miss Western Massachusetts Meghan Kalbaugh was at eCycle on May 11 for a fundraiser to support

the American Heart Association and Miss America Scholarship Foundation.

The fundraiser comprised two indoor cycling sessions at 8:30 a.m. and 10 a.m. with Kalbaugh, the eCycle team and participants to support the movement to end heart disease and provide tuition scholarships.

Kalbaugh, a cardiovascular nurse, explained how cardiovascular disease is the number

one killer of women in the United States.

"This mission is really important to me as I firsthand see the effects of cardiovascular issues on people, and I think it's so important to live a heart-healthy, active lifestyle to reduce those adverse-cardiovascular outcomes down the road," Kalbaugh said. "Exercise and eating well and taking care of yourself can help people live longer, happier lives."

Kalbaugh said the participants comprised residents, regular students at eCycle who take part in the Saturday classes and friends, thankful for the support at not only the event, but since winning Miss Western Massachusetts.

"It has made me realize the true significance of community and I'm so grateful for that, for everyone who supported me along this way," Kalbaugh said.

Please see **MISS**, page 9

Senior center expansion and renovation defeated at Annual Town Meeting

Ballot question also removed after vote

By Kristin Rivers
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HAMPDEN - The proposed town warrant article for the expansion and renovation of the senior center was defeated at a contentious Annual Town Meeting on May 13.

The proposal, listed as article 11 on the town warrant, focused on the town voting to appropriate \$6,600,000 by borrowing to expand and renovate the senior center, generated a 50-plus-minute discussion among attendees.

The vote was contingent upon approval by voters at the election of a Proposition two and a half

debt exclusion, allowing Hampden to raise the money needed to repay its borrowing share outside the limits established by the proposition.

Town Moderator Richard Green clarified the proposal would be to borrow to expand and renovate the senior center and explained the voting process.

"Know that the vote tonight is only part one. You will go to the ballot next week, the actual ballot, and cast your vote for or against it as well. So this is a two-part program," Green said.

Rebecca Moriarty, executive director at the senior center, provided an overview of what the senior center has been doing and the proposed plan, explaining how 39% of the population is over the age of 60 in Hampden



Turley photos by Kristin Rivers

Rebecca Moriarty, executive director at Hampden Senior Center, delivers a presentation ahead of the discussion on the Hampden Senior Center expansion and renovation during the May 13 Annual Town Meeting.

and the budget has hit two percent of the town budget.

"So, we're serving 39% of the population with two percent

of the budget. We actually just hit two percent this year, we've always been one percent since I've been here over 21 years," Moriarty said.

Moriarty said in addition to its activities, the senior center is involved in activities behind the scenes, including combatting food insecurity, emergency fuel and fuel assistance, renewing licenses and more.

"So, that's a lot that's going on behind the scenes," Moriarty said.

For the expansion and renovation, she said how the senior center would like to have more space for programming, including private space for foot care, strengthen transportation and mental health programs and space for a gift shop and a cafe.

Please see **ATM**, page 8

7th Annual Above the Influence Club Walk for Partnership to End Addiction

WILBRAHAM – The 7th Annual Above the Influence Club Walk for Partnership to End Addiction takes place on Saturday, May 18, from 9 a.m. to Noon at the Minnechaug Outdoor Cross Country Trail. The trail is located near the far corner of the teacher parking lot.

Donations are welcomed but not required, lunch will be provided and there are shirts for first 120 participants.

Donations can be made through cash or check made out to HWRSD with Partnership to End Addiction in the check memo.

Annual Spec Pond Fishing Derby May 18

WILBRAHAM – The Annual Spec Pond Fishing Derby takes place on Saturday, May 18, from 9 a.m. to Noon.

The event is presented by the Friends of Recreation, the Parks and Rec Department and the Massachusetts Department of Fisheries and Wildlife.

For the event, no fishing license is required and all ages are welcome. Fishing instructors will, also, be onsite and bait will be provided.

Trophies will be awarded to the first 30 kids (12 and under) to catch a fish. The grand prize will be a \$100 Dick's Sporting Goods gift card awarded to the largest fish caught by length, courtesy of DSG.

Free coffee, donuts and water courtesy of Rice's Fruit Farm will also be available.

A \$2 donation per person or \$10 max per family will be accepted.

This year's main sponsor is Westfield Bank, with supporting sponsors Rice's Fruit Farm, Dick's Sporting Goods, Country Bank, Secure Energy and Rooney's Insurance & Financial.

Frogtown Mountain Puppeteers return to Hampden with 'Legend of the Banana Kid'

HAMPDEN – Hampden Parks & Recreation is thrilled to announce an enchanting evening of puppetry with Frogtown Mountain Puppeteers, "Legend of the Banana Kid" on May 17 at 6 p.m. The show will take place at Thornton Burgess Middle School's auditorium at 85 Wilbraham Rd, Hampden, MA. This captivating event promises to delight audiences of all ages with its spellbinding performances.

Featuring beautifully handcrafted puppets and storytelling techniques, Frogtown Mountain Puppeteers transports audiences to a world of wonder and imagination. From whimsical tales to heartfelt narratives, each puppet show is a testament to the artistry and creativity of the performers.

"We are excited to bring the magic of puppetry to the Hampden community," said Robin Erlandsen of Frogtown Mountain Puppeteers. "This event is a celebration of storytelling and creativity, and we can't wait to share these captivating performances with our community."

Audience members can expect to be

dazzled by colorful characters, intricate puppets, and mesmerizing performances that bring stories to life in unexpected ways. Whether you're a fan of classic fairy tales or modern adventures, "Legend of the Banana Kid" offers something for everyone to enjoy.

Tickets for "Legend of the Banana Kid" are available for purchase online or at the door. Don't miss this opportunity to experience the magic of puppetry at Thornton Burgess Middle School on May 17th at 6:00 PM.

For more information and ticket purchases, please visit <https://hampdenma.myrec.com> or contact Hampden Parks & Recreation at (413) 566-2151 ext. 108

Wilb. Veterans Services Memorial Day Ceremony

WILBRAHAM – The Town of Wilbraham Veterans Services Memorial Day Ceremony will be taking place on Sunday, May 26, at 11 a.m.

Join the Wilbraham Veteran Services to remember and honor our fallen.

The ceremony will take place at Crane Park Veteran Memorial.

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If you have any questions please contact Bree Berneche, Coalition Director, at bberneche@hwrso.org or 413-279-3837.

www.HWP4Y.org
Facebook.com/HWP4Y

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.

velope.

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.

GFWC Wilb. Junior Women's Club meets May 21

WILBRAHAM - Do you have a desire to get involved in our community and volunteer? GFWC Wilbraham Junior Women's is a volunteer organization providing services and programs in Arts & Culture, Civic Engagement & Outreach, Education & Libraries, Environment and Health & Wellness. This month we are will be doing an activity to decorate a small, biodegradable container and then putting some free succulents (Hens & Chicks) into it or, you can bring a small container of your own. Membership is open to any woman over 18 years old, living in Wilbraham or any other community that doesn't have its own GFWC Club. Our next meeting is Tuesday May 21 at the Senior Center. 6:30 p.m. Social Time, 7 p.m. Meeting. We are meeting at The Wilbraham Senior Center at 250 Springfield St., Wilbraham, MA. See our website for more information WilbrahamJuniorWomens.org. We can't wait to meet you.

Hampden VFW Post 9397 Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony

HAMPDEN - The Hampden VFW Post 9397 invites you to the Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony on Monday, May 27.

The parade kicks off at 10 a.m. as it steps off from Saint Mary's Church and travels down Main Street to the center of town.

Tentative of the parade, the Memorial Day Ceremony kicks off at 11 a.m. at the Veteran's Memorial.

Stop by the VFW 9397 for light refreshments and pizza!

Hampden Garden Club Memorial Day Plant Sale May 27

HAMPDEN - On Monday, May 27, The Hampden Garden Club, Celebrating its 92nd year, will be hosting our Annual Memorial Day Plant Sale from 8 a.m. - Noon on the lawn of Academy Hall Main St. Hampden. We have plants that beautify your yards and gardens. Come join us and bring a friend. Any questions call Lil at 566-1137.

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Minnechaug Land Trust Maintenance Day takes place May 18

WILBRAHAM - Minnechaug Land Trust Volunteer Maintenance Day at Westbrook Spring is here, and with it comes Minnechaug Land Trust's biannual trail maintenance day!

Come join us on the beautiful, serene Westbrook trails at Memorial Park in Hampden, Saturday May 18 from 9 a.m. to Noon.

If you or someone you know is interested in taking an hour or two to help adjust our current trail maps of Westbrook and Goat Rock trails, we would love to have your help. Please meet us at the trailhead in the Memorial Park parking lot at 9 a.m. Memorial Park is located at 495 Main St., Hampden.

Volunteers are welcome to meet up with us on the trails anytime between 9 a.m. to Noon. A digital copy of the trail map can be found at www.minnechauglandtrust.org/goat-rock-trail/ or looking up Westbrook Trail on the Alltrails App. Sturdy shoes, clothes that can get dirty, gloves, water, bug spray, and a backpack are recommended, other tools will be provided.

Questions can be sent to jenn.bage@gmail.com.

Thank you for your support. Without you, our lovely trail systems, serene woodlands, and iconic views would not exist. Volunteer trail days are a great way to get outside and give back within the community. Fingers crossed for good weather; we hope to see you there!

Town Seal on vote early postcards

WILBRAHAM - Carole Tardif, Town Clerk, has informed Nick Breault, Town Administrator, of a postcard sent via U.S. Mail that displays the Wilbraham Town Seal. This is not an authorized use of the Town Seal. The Town Clerk is the Keeper of the Seal and permission must be granted by the Town Clerk for its use. Permission to use the Town Seal was not sought in advance of the mailing of this postcard.

The postcard urges voters to vote early and along party lines. The public is advised that this postcard is in no way an endorsement of any political party or candidate by the Town of Wilbraham. The Town Clerk has contacted the State Ethics Commission to report this unauthorized use of the Town Seal, and anticipates working with the Commission to investigate and address this matter.

Wilbraham Lions Dine-Out and Raffle

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham Lions Club will be holding a Dine-Out and Raffle at Crazy Jake's, 2537 Boston Road Wilbraham, MA between the hours of Noon and 7 p.m. on May 21. 10% of the food total will be donated by Crazy Jake's to the Lions Club. There will also be a raffle and a 50/50 to raise funds to support community programs.

Information on upcoming Hampden Town Election

Voters head to polls May 20

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
kristin@turley.com

HAMPDEN - The town will have their say when they head to the polls on May 20.

Voting takes place at the Town House Auditorium from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. On the ballot are the following candidates and positions:

- Richard Green for town moderator, one-year term
- Philip Schneider for the Board of Assessors, one-year term
- Norman Charest for the Board of Assessors, three-year term
- Craig Rivest for Board of Selectmen, three-year term
- Michal Boudreau for School Committee, three-year term
- Kathleen Rochford for Library Trustee, three-year term
- David Demers for the Planning Board, five-year term
- Sheree Butts for the Housing Authority, five-year term

Green, Rivest, Charest, Boudreau, Rochford and Butts are running for reelection in their roles while Schneider and Demers are newcomers to their roles.

Boudreau, also, currently serves as chair of the School Committee.

On ballot questions, that area looks like this.

Question 1 about the town being allowed to be exempt from the provisions of proposition two and one half, so-called, the amounts required to pay for the bond issued in order to expand the senior center will not be on the ballot as the question was defeated in a two-thirds vote at Annual Town Meeting, meaning this will not be voted on during the election.

Question two for the town to be exempt from provisions of proposition two and one half, so-called, the amounts required to pay for the bond issued in order to expand the Scantic Valley Water District will not be on the ballot as no action votes passed by majority vote.

The possibility of questions three and four, meanwhile, is now clear after this year's Town Meeting.

Question three on voting for the town clerk to become an appointed role as opposed to elected will not be included as the item was given no action votes on May 13, the motion passing unanimously.

Question four on having the elected town treasurer and elected collector of taxes become an appointed treasurer/collector of the town will, also, not be considered due to no action votes, also passing unanimously.

To be on the ballot, these questions had to be passed at Town Meeting as part of a two-step process for approval.

The Times will have the results from this year's election next week.

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‘Pasta for a Purpose’ for recovering Wilbraham officer exceeds expectations



Turley photos by Harrison Giza
Cam's father, Larry Prosperi, was one of the members of The Geezer Band playing that night.



Two attendees getting down to some late 70's rock n roll, courtesy of The Geezer Band.



Officer Prosperi's mother, Sue, alongside his cousin, Josette. The pair's high spirits were refreshing at the AmVets 74 benefit.



Members of The Geezer Band playing that night to entertain the attendees.



President and Vice President of the Three Rivers Chamber of Commerce, Matthew Lemieux and Carol Seaver.



Officer Tony Juozaitis could be found protecting attendees outside the event, talking to local journalists about his trip to Lithuania.



From Rondeau's Dairy Bar to Villa Rose restaurant, the amount of support put towards the fundraiser was great to see.



The Williams were a pair of young marines helping out at the event, bringing food, desserts and conversation to each table they served.



The room was packed with people, press and delicious food. If you found a seat, you were as lucky as the raffle winners.

By Harrison Giza
Staff Writer
hgiza@turley.com

THREE RIVERS - The atmosphere at AmVets 74 this weekend was inspiring, with hundreds of people all coming out to support Wilbraham police officer and Three Rivers native, Cameron Prosperi.

Prosperi exchanged gunfire with Michael Ortega, and was shot. He suffered injuries he is working through today.

Matthew Lemieux, President of the Three Rivers Chamber of Commerce, was attentive throughout the event, making sure every moment went according to plan for both attendees and his volunteers.

"As President of the Chamber I couldn't have asked for a better turn out," said Lemieux. "The chamber has been around since the early 1900's and we have been helping local individuals and businesses throughout the years. So when we heard that there was a need for this event to happen, we jumped right on board and all of the local businesses that are a part of the chamber decided to get together, get involved and we made this huge event happen with awesome raffle prizes. The band is amazing and... yeah it has just been great."

The group Lemieux mentioned is The Geezer Band, a local rock 'n' roll group, that Officer Prosperi's father, Larry, plays guitar for.

While his son was not able to attend the event, the support for his service was celebrated everywhere that afternoon, with his mother, Sue, brightening up the room with her presence. When asked what

it is like to have a husband that "shreds on guitar," Prosperi laughed.

"It's been more than 40 years," Prosperi said. "It's been so long that I would have to grab a calculator to figure out all the years he has been doing this stuff. So, to me, it is kind of typical and you get used to it. Although we are getting older now so it is kind of hard to say 'yeah I want to go see you play every weekend' you know?"

With more than 40 years together, Larry and Sue have been a positive force of change just by being themselves. They brought Cameron into this world and are thankful that the Three Rivers community cares about their son's well-being as much as they continue to.

"We are forever grateful," said Prosperi. "We were overwhelmed and still are overwhelmed. You never think something like this would happen to you, but he has been so grateful even though he couldn't be here today. He felt bad that he couldn't, but he will be there next week. I mean there just has been incredible support from the community, friends, family, our police departments and our first responders that are around, the kids, the clowns. I am not sure I have ever seen this many people here for a turnout."

A following benefit organized by Cameron's cousin, Josette before, will take place this Saturday at Pulaski Park from 2 to 9 p.m. It is sure to be another Three Rivers barnburner.

"It will be an all-day event," said Before. "We want it to be a huge family friendly event so we are going to have a bounce house, a face painter, there will be

three different bands - The Geezer Band, The Allen Brothers, and we will also have MassHats. We are also going to have the same amount of raffles as we do here tonight, some food trucks that are serving pizza, street tacos, hot dogs, hamburgers, all sorts of snacks and stuff. It is going to be a full day filled with fun, for sure."

Before is a supporter of her cousin and was in awe of all the AmVets 74 attendees that day.

"It is obviously amazing to see all the support that we have today," said Before. "With him living here for his entire life he has a huge support system regardless of what has happened... so when all of it did happen with everything hitting the fan, everybody was reaching out trying to figure out how to help, how to show up and what they could do. So to me, it really is incredible to see all these people. It is good for him too, you know? He's such a humble, quiet kid and he really appreciates this like we all do."

The amount of business owners and chamber of commerce members in attendance was staggering to see, with a surplus of volunteers supporting Cameron's small-town service.

"Cameron lives in our community," said Lemieux. "That is the biggest thing and he is actually part of Three Rivers, right here, where our chamber has always



The Next Generation of Volunteers, as one mother stated, this crew of helpers could be found out front of the event, selling tickets and smiling the day away.

been historically, so even though we are encompassing more of Palmer, the roots of our organization have always been here in Three Rivers. Because Cam is a resident of Three Rivers, we figured that it was even better to step up and help him with whatever he needs and do an event like this where we can raise some money to help him feel better about financially where he is going to be because he is not sure yet, you know, with his injuries and everything that he going through right now or even when he is going to be able to return to work."

Lemieux thanked and credited Chamber of Commerce Vice President, Carol Seaver for the event..

"This whole thing was the brainchild of Carol," said Lemieux. "It was her idea to start this entire event and because of her, everybody jumped on board and wanted to help us."

VIEWPOINTS

Letters to the Editor

Vote Yes on Senior Center

To the Editor:

Hampden seniors represent 39% of town residents, a 63% increase over the past 14 years. They have not asked for much over the past 25 years, and the 25-year-old Senior Center has served the town well over those years. But the center is now inadequate to serve the growing senior population. There is need for renovation and expansion to adequately serve this expanding population. The seniors have, over the years, supported many capital town projects. Please support them in their time of need.

Don Collins
Chairmen, Senior Center Building Committee

Vote "YES" on the Hampden Senior Center Expansion

To the Editor:

Our town needs the expansion of the Hampden Senior Center to accommodate the increasing senior population. We may be getting up in age, but we are very active in our later years; the addition of more programming at the senior center will enhance our lives. More programming means more room. The tax increase for expansion will be minimal and the senior center has been operating on a slim budget for the past 25 years. It's time to prepare for at least the next 30 years rather than limit the expansion and run out of room in 5 years. Please VOTE YES!

Bobbi Grant, Hampden

Support Diana DiZoglio for State Auditor

To the Editor:

This morning, I signed the petition calling for State Auditor, Diana DiZoglio to Audit our State Legislature. A little background on Diana DiZoglio; She worked as an aide for a Republican Legislator when in college and was sexually molested while working there. She was denied her last paycheck until she signed a non-disclosure agreement. She later ran, as a Democrat for a seat in the House of Representatives and served two terms. She then ran for State Senate and served two terms in the Senate. Now Diana DiZoglio is Massachusetts' State Auditor and wants to audit our State Legislature, as previous State Auditors have, and they don't want her to do that. Auditor DiZoglio wants Transparency, to allow the public to see what their State Representatives and Senators do and vote on, not always recorded, and to be able to hold them



accountable.

When you see someone like Travis Greer, shown in this photo, outside the Big Y in Wilbraham, collecting signatures, please sign the petition showing support for our State Auditor, who is working hard for You, to be able to be more informed when you vote for your State Representatives and Senators.

Don Flannery, Wilbraham



When should my wife claim her Social Security benefit?

Dear Rusty

I just saw an article which said that certain spousal options were going away, but there are still good options for when a spouse can claim. I am filing for my Social Security to start in October when I turn 70. My wife's Full Retirement Age is in December, and she now plans to file then for half of what my FRA benefit would have been (our original plan was for both to file in August). My wife's main reason for delaying until her FRA is to lock her into my maximum benefit if she has to someday change to Survivor's Benefit. Will this be gone for us? Neither of us was born before Jan.

1, 1954. Please advise.

Signed: Planning for Both

Dear Planning

I expect that the article you refer to was speaking of the option to claim only a spousal benefit first and allow one's personal SS retirement benefit to grow. That option was available only to those who were born before 1954 and had reached full retirement age. As you now know that option is not available to you.

Assuming your wife's highest benefit entitlement will be as your spouse, your current strategy – you claim your maximum benefit to start in October at age 70 and

your wife starts her benefit in December at her FRA is a good one which will yield the maximum possible monthly benefit for both of you. But for clarity, your wife's survivor benefit as your widow has nothing to do with when she claims her spouse benefits now.

The only thing which will affect your wife's benefit as your surviving spouse is her age when she claims the survivor benefit. If she has already reached her FRA of 66 years and 8 months when you pass, she will get 100% of the amount you were receiving when you died, instead of the smaller spousal amount she was receiving while you were living. Her survi-

vor benefit would only be less than 100% of yours if she claimed it before reaching her full retirement age (which, of course, we hope would not to be the case).

Just so you have the complete picture, your wife could, if desired, claim her Social Security to start at the same time as you in October but, since that would be earlier than her FRA, the amount she would get would be less than 50% of your FRA entitlement. Her spouse benefit would be reduced by 0.694% for each month earlier than her FRA it starts.

Please see **SOCIAL SECURITY**, page 14

Election letters to the editor welcome

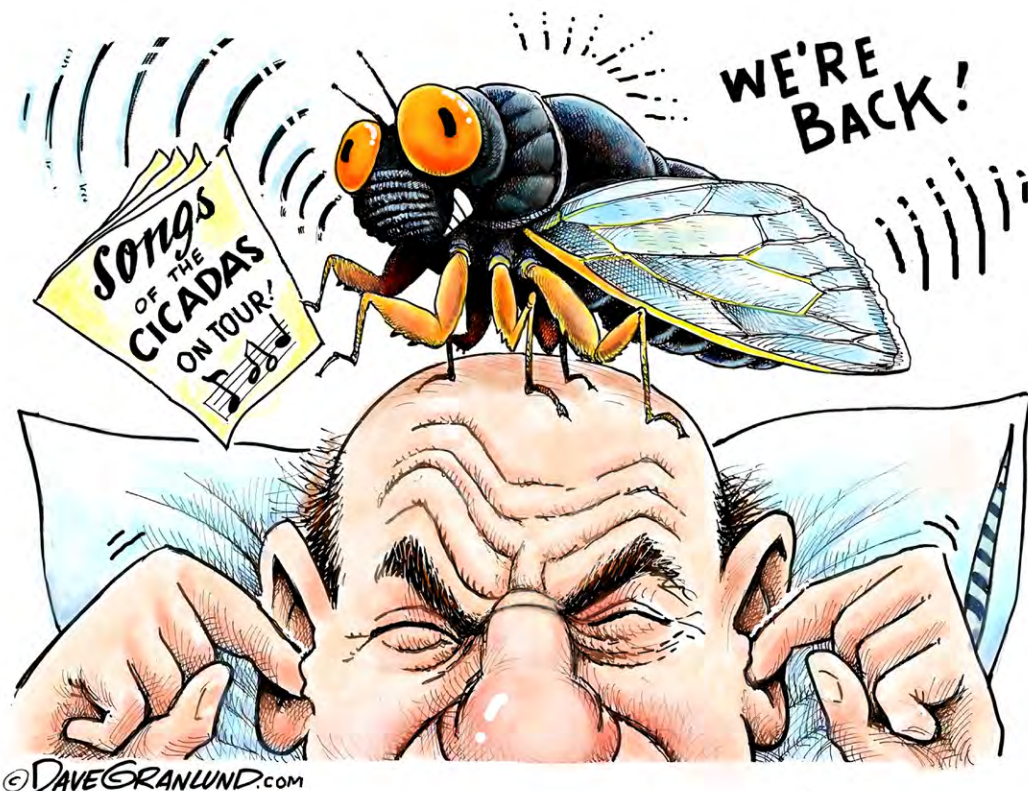
The Wilbraham-Hampden Times welcomes readers to participate in this year's election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to Wilbraham-Hampden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

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

Campaign news

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

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



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Letters to the editor should be 350 words or less in length. No unsigned or anonymous opinions will be published. We require letter writers to include his or her town of residence and home telephone number. We must authenticate authorship prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions deemed to be libelous or contain unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks, defamation of character and offensive language. All unknown or alleged facts and quotations offered by the author need to cite credible, unbiased sources. Send letters to: Editor, Wilbraham-Hampden Times, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-682-0013 or via e-mail to dzbierski@turley.com. The deadline for submissions is Friday at noon.

Correction Policy

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

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

ELECTION from page 1

She explained how her background will add to the town moderator role.

"During my years as a private school admissions officer, development professional, freelance musician, organist and choir director, I developed the skillset to establish and implement guidelines, strategize and plan meetings, and more importantly, keep meeting participants on task," Clark said. "It takes presence of mind, focus, and attention to detail to manage a meeting. Everyone present deserves respect. Time is valuable - and it should not be wasted."

As town moderator, Clark hopes to utilize those skills to help Annual Town Meetings run smoothly.

"I will keep the meetings concise and productive. To that end, I will offer a tightly formatted agenda, encourage discussion that is directly related to the warrants, and set and enforce speaker time limits. Because I value our Democratic town governance system, I will moderate town meetings that move purposefully from one agenda item to the next," Clark said.

For her biggest goal, Clark looks to improve how town meetings are run, making it a smooth, easy process for the community.

"I hope that you agree. It is time to get our meetings under control," Clark said.

Clark encouraged everyone to get out and vote on May 18.

"I ask you to vote for Jane Clark for Moderator for your support on May 18," Clark said.

Lawrence LaBarbera
LaBarbera, in his candidacy announcement, explained he has served as assessor for 22 years and is seeking reelection for a new term.

Assessors serve a three-year term in Wilbraham.

LaBarbera, also, is the current chairman for the Board of Assessors and



Lawrence LaBarbera

has over 50 years of experience in the public and private sector as an assessor and appraiser.

"He is currently the Consulting Assessor for the Town of Windsor, Connecticut. Prior to that he was the Assessor for the City of Hartford and worked 21 years for a national revaluation company. He is designated as a Senior Appraiser with the American Society of Appraisers and is certified as an Assessor or Appraiser in three New England states," the announcement read. "He is currently a member of the Massachusetts Assessor's Association (MAAO) and as well as the State of Connecticut Assessor's Association (CAAO) and the Northeast Regional Association (NRAAO)."

LaBarbera shared what inspired him to run for another term.

"Due to the annual fiscal constraints and upcoming major projects the Town is considering, the next few years will be a chal-

lenge to the Board of Assessors and the town in general. I have the ability to utilize my knowledge of assessing to benefit the citizens and the Town of Wilbraham. I will accomplish this by ensuring that assessments on all property are fair and equitable," LaBarbera said.

Outside of his assessor role, LaBarbera is also involved in the community as a fourth degree member of the Knights of Columbus and member of St. Cecilia's Parish. He resides in town with his wife, Anita, and daughter, Celia.

James Dunbar

Dunbar shared he's served as water commissioner for the last 18 years, with his curiosity about the stewardship of the town's water supply drawing him to the position.

"My time and tenure since joining, is now what qualifies me most. I have learned from serving the people of Wilbraham on this Commission, as well as numerous town officials I have served alongside, to provide an effective, efficient and integral public benefit of a quality water system and department," Dunbar said.

On what inspired him to run again, Dunbar explained he believes "it is my civic duty to be active within the community I reside."



James Dunbar

6th Annual Juried Art Show takes place on June 1 and 2

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 or email us at: info@scanticriverartisans.com.

"This Commission allows me to participate in decisions that affect everyone on the water system in town," Dunbar said.

Dunbar stressed the importance of supporting and maintaining the town's water supply.

"We are lucky to receive our water from one of the most pristine aquifers in the country, the Quabbin Reservoir. However, ensuring that high quality makes it from source to the tap in our homes and businesses is the job of our Water Department and this three person Commission," Dunbar said. "We have successfully accomplished this with the great effort, knowledge and care from our Water Department, DPW and town engineers. We have also done so with great economic efficiency as we have not raised water rates since 2014. Each year is a challenge to predict trends, provide the highest quality service and do so in good fiscal times as well as challeng-

ing ones."

Dunbar looks forward to continuing his work as water commissioner.

"I look forward to continuing to improve our infrastructure for the future of Wilbraham's water system, ensuring the reliable delivery of the highest quality of water and to do so with a fiscal responsibility to the voters of Wilbraham," Dunbar said. "I appreciate your vote and look forward to continuing to serve the people of Wilbraham."

Other positions on the ballot

Finally, voters will also decide on the town clerk and cemetery commissioner.

Deborah Brennan is on the ballot for town clerk, an open position with the retirement of Carole Tardif, while Todd Michael Magill is running for reelection for a new three-year term for cemetery commissioner.

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Chris Wante, associate principal at edm Design Studio, provides information on the proposed Hampden Senior Center expansion and renovation during the May 13 Annual Town Meeting.



Residents raise their cards to cast their vote at Thornton W. Burgess Middle School on Article 11 for the Hampden Senior Center expansion and renovation during the May 13 Annual Town Meeting.



Mary Ellen Glover shares her point of view on the Hampden Senior Center expansion and renovation during the May 13 Annual Town Meeting.

Randy Rivest asks his questions about the Hampden Senior Center expansion and renovation during the May 13 Annual Town Meeting.



ATM from page 1

“Those two things would be revenue-generating for the senior center throughout the year, so that could help offset our budget and our programs,” Moriarty said.

Moriarty said \$50,000 is currently set aside by the Friends of Hampden Senior Citizens in a designated building fund.

“They also have a commitment to go out for a capital campaign to help bring in some more donations to help offset the costs if this project is approved,” Moriarty said.

After Don Collins, chairman of the Senior Center Building Committee, provided additional information, Chris Wante, associate principal at edm Design Studio, said the proposed new space would be over 12,500 square feet and would need a sprinkler system to comply with Massachusetts General Law requirements.

Several residents on both sides spoke, with Randy Rivest beginning the debate, looking for confirmation from the town clerk and the Advisory Committee on the numbers.

Rivest said his numbers for senior center usage data—or the number of people who utilize the senior center per day—came out to 103 people per month for Hampden, equating to 3.3 people per day.

“With all towns accounted for, 183 people per month or an average of six people per day,” Rivest said. “My question to the clerk is, can the clerk confirm the participant data received from the senior center, as collected by the My Senior Center tracking software? And then my question to the Advisory Committee is, can they explain the tax burden for individuals in the town and is there any debt offset by other towns for this \$6.6 million?”

Moriarty shared she couldn’t give a specific number, but argued more than six people come in to the senior center daily.

“I could say our average lunch attendance is 20 a day...but we do have more than six people on a daily basis. I would say that

we’re averaging between 50 and 70 people on a daily basis,” Moriarty said.

On the taxpayer costs, Treasurer Richard Patullo explained he’s gotten questions on the cost basis, saying “It’s a municipal bond project, not a mortgage” and “hard to predict.”

On municipal bond projects like this, Patullo said they borrow short-term notes called bands or bond-anticipation notes at the going rate as the project is built.

“Then when the absolute last penny is spent and the architect gets his final check, then we go out and go through this listing where we sold municipal bonds,” Patullo said. “The reason I’m telling you this is you’re asking to predict interest rates three years from now.”

After naming varying scenarios, Patullo guessed the cost, with an average house, it would be \$257.30 a year for 20 years if they’re lucky or if not lucky, \$361.45 a year.

When Rivest again asked about the usage data, Town Clerk Eva Wiseman clarified the only information she provided was regarding the number of seniors versus the total population of the town.

“With regard to attendance or anything else I wouldn’t have any idea, that would be more a question for the senior center,” Wiseman said.

Mary Ellen Glover said it’s difficult to speak against the proposal as she appreciates what all the seniors do for the community and what the senior center does for everyone.

However, Glover said the stewardship of resources was her biggest concern, citing the percentage of residents who use the senior center and how Longmeadow and Wilbraham now have new senior centers that “can impact participation and usefulness.”

“While these may all be legitimate concerns, we should meet them in a more fiscally responsible way. \$6.6 million will nearly double the size of the Hampden Senior Center,” Glover said.

Glover is also concerned about taxes and other pressing projects for the fire department, the Town House, the library, sidewalks and bridge repairs and others.

“With all these needs, we should prioritize maintaining the values and character of our town for future generations, remembering the challenging fiscal times in which we live,” Glover said. “I plan to vote against this proposal because its cost, size and especially complete failure to analyze and prioritize the needs of our entire town. At present, and with everything we need, it just doesn’t seem that a \$6.6 million senior center should be our top priority.”

Selectman John Flynn acknowledged there are other pressing projects in town, arguing how the town has “never denied supporting any project moving forward” and always recognized important needs for school expansions, highway department expansions and water expansions.

Flynn added maybe the reason people don’t go to the senior center is “because they know it’s crowded,” and when more space is added, more can come.

“I think there’s an opportunity for the town to address the needs moving forward. The Senior Center Building Committee, consisting of your neighbors, who many of whom on the committee have never served or volunteered in public service before, sat in those rooms for over a year, talked to everybody, learned as much as they could and they came back with this recommendation,” Flynn said. “I think they deserve a chance to make their case. I thank them for their service and I think it’s incumbent upon the town to look at what they brought to you and say, ‘Is this the direction we want for Hampden? Is that how we want to respond to another demographic like we’ve done before?’”

Flynn stressed, “It’s a project we can afford.”

“The town of Hampden has always stood up and taken care of its needs,” Flynn said.

Gary Weiner, a member of the Senior Center Building Committee and a senior, encouraged residents to read what the senior center is doing in their newsletter to see the activities they do.

“There is no way that only three people walk through that door on any given day,” Weiner said.

Weiner emphasized how everyone has appropriated \$144 million for the police and fire departments, schools, children and the senior center.

“Through all those ten years, including this budget, the seniors participate and they didn’t back away. Out of the \$144 million that have been spent in this town in the last 10 years—or will be spent—the senior center took \$1.9 million out of that \$144 million,” Weiner said. “And I don’t think that \$6.6 million is an overly large money to spend on more than 35 and 36 or 38% of the population because we’re all getting older and we’re all looking for needs either for ourselves or for our parents as time goes on. So, I would ask you to vote yes.”

Connie Witt said, “There are many different opinions on the senior center,” having done research for weeks on other senior centers across the state, including in Western Massachusetts.

With the addition, Witt said, the senior center would be 2.76 feet per resin and become the largest senior center in the area.

“There are a couple of other reasons why we shouldn’t do this. We have to be very careful with our money right now because we have a lot of projects that we absolutely have to do. There are health and safety issues that are going to cost a lot of money. We’re not even sure how much money we’re going to have to spend on water. Water is an absolute necessity. A senior center addition renovation is not,” Witt said.

Witt offered a possible solution after doing her research: add 630 square feet to the west side of the senior center for three offices, a veteran’s service agent, room for a nurse, personal care

and purchase a shed for storage.

She also noted how some communities utilize community resources for programming.

“Get creative. Use Zoom, use Thornton Burgess, use the police station, use Bethlehem Baptist Church for programs. That’s what other communities are doing,” Witt said. “Adding on that addition would be half a million dollars and I think we could do that.”

It was after Witt spoke that Green stepped in to move the meeting along and close the discussion.

“I feel it’s equally balanced,” Green said.

After everyone raised their hands and the two-thirds vote was collected, residents started seeking a vote count.

After 10 people raised their hands requiring a count, a manual count took place, with the number coming out to 125 in favor and 75 not in favor for a 62.5% vote.

The two-thirds vote was not carried to the audience’s shock, thereby, the motion was defeated.

After seeking clarification from the Advisory Committee, Green confirmed the ballot question would, also, be removed.

The proposal will not be on the ballot for the May 20 town election as it needed to be approved at Town Meeting in order to move forward in the two-step process for approval.

After the vote, a few residents demanded a recount, with some arguing how some people had left.

The recount, however, was declined.

“I’m sorry, the count’s been taken and we historically have not done a motion reconsideration. I’m sorry, the question fails,” Green said.

In a closing note, the Times will take a closer look at the entire Annual Town Meeting warrant results—and thoughts from residents on the other town warrant articles—starting next week.



Miss Western Massachusetts 2024 Meghan Kalbaugh holds hands with Madison Matthias during the "Cycle for the American Heart Association" fundraising event at eCycle in Wilbraham on May 11.



A wide shot of participants being led by Erica Gonzalez, owner of eCycle in Wilbraham, during the "Cycle for the American Heart Association" fundraising event on May 11.



Miss Western Massachusetts' Teen 2024 Maddie Mathias and Miss Western Massachusetts 2024 Meghan Kalbaugh strike a pose with their banners during the "Cycle for the American Heart Association" fundraising event on May 11.



From the left, Ashley Fenton, Miss Western Massachusetts 2024 Meghan Kalbaugh and Meghan McDonough smile for a group photo during the "Cycle for the American Heart Association" fundraising event at eCycle in Wilbraham.



Erica Gonzalez, owner of eCycle, leads participants in an indoor cycling session during the "Cycle for the American Heart Association" fundraising event at eCycle in Wilbraham on May 11.

Miss Western Massachusetts 2024 Meghan Kalbaugh smiles for the camera during the indoor cycling sessions for the "Cycle for the American Heart Association" fundraising event at eCycle in Wilbraham on May 11.



MISS from page 1

Kalbaugh loved how the fundraising event brought the community together.

"I think more so than ever before, our country and communities everywhere (are) becoming more divided and, I think, we really need to bring people together. So, having events like this does so and that's great," Kalbaugh said.

Erica Gonzalez, owner of eCycle, was elated to partner with Kalbaugh as it helps raise awareness for cardio and heart health and showcase her business.

A spin instructor for 21

years, Gonzalez opened eCycle in 2021, located in Post Office Park, which offers beginner and advanced cycling classes, a strength and spin combination class and a kickboxing class.

"It's a great community. Everyone here supports one another from beginners to advanced to anything. Men, women, even got kids that come," Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez stressed the importance of raising awareness for causes and giving back to the community.

"I think it's just very important we keep pushing this awareness and notice how important it is that we need to keep going and keep pushing and keep trying to

fight this disease because it kills a lot of people, young women, men," Gonzalez said. "Something like that needs to be talked about more."

Kalbaugh wants the community to be aware of their health and make those changes to live a more heart-healthy life.

She also encourages aspiring contestants to participate in future pageants.

"Do it. Thousand percent I would encourage everyone who's eligible to sign up. Being in pageants, specifically the Miss America organization has changed my life for the better. It has given me so many valuable skills and opportunities such as

the opportunity to win scholarship money, the opportunity to make life-long friends, the opportunity to make a difference in your community and do community service and, also, just networking skills and public speaking skills and interview skills," Kalbaugh said. "All of these skills we'll take with us forever with jobs and just in life, and I feel like it truly has made me a better, more rounded person, so I would highly encourage everyone to do it."

Gonzalez thanked Kalbaugh and the participants for taking part and holding an event to support cardiovascular health.

"I'm blessed. I'm lucky to

have these people in my life, so I give them a lot of credit for the amount of work that they put into this. I know it's a lot of energy and a lot of time to do something," Gonzalez said. "I'm very happy they made me a part of it and I'm just happy to be a part of it today."

To learn more and donate, visit missmass.org, heart.org or connect with Kalbaugh on Facebook and Instagram at @Miss-WesternMassScholarshipOrganization.

To learn more about eCycle, visit ecyclewilbraham.com or check out the Mindbody app.



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Feast in the East showcases local delectables



Turley photos by Alisiana Marshall
Tammy Bordeaux, a representative of People's Bank, cuts the ceremonial ribbon to welcome guests to the event.

By Alisiana Marshall
 Correspondent

HAMPDEN – The East of the River Chamber of Commerce held the Feast in the East: A Celebration of Small Businesses and Community Support, at The Starting Gate at Great Horse on April 30.

With a mission to honor local small businesses during Small Business Week, ERC5 Executive Director Grace Barone organized an evening full of confections, savory selections and live music.

Guests walked around the grand hall meeting taste-testing samples from local businesses from Longmeadow, Wilbraham, Palmer, Springfield, Hampden and other surrounding areas. Among the businesses was Iron Duke Brewing, a vintage brewery and pub located in the Old Ludlow Mills.

“We have been in business for a little over eight years now. We started off really small – just a tiny tap room. But we have expanded out very big,” explains Iron Duke Brewery sales representative Bri Ralston.

General manager Victoria Dinatale explained how the small family business is expanding,

“We are currently in renovations. Right now we’re working on an outdoor patio. We are doing a whole new outside area with a two-tiered deck,” Dinatale said.

The brewery has hopes of opening the outside dining experience this summer. Iron Duke Brewery’s outdoor experience expansion is perfect for those who would like to visit their food truck opened from Thursday through Sunday.

Standing behind a perceivably sugary sweet table was Allison Henry, the owner of The Sugar Chalet, a bakery with a storefront opening at 1 Crane Park Drive in Wilbraham in June.

Henry, who has been baking cakes and other confections for family and friends since she was a child, is looking forward to the menu changes the venue change will allow her to make.

“We will serve breakfast, lunch and late-night snack



Local hot spot Mandarin Wilbraham serves freshly made Japanese and Chinese cuisine to patient guests.



The ERC5 was thrilled to announce Feast in the East, which happened April 30, at The Starting Gate at Great Horse, located at 128 Wilbraham Rd. in Hampden.

treats! My chocolate chip cookie is usually people’s favorite but I like switching up all the different stuff I make. I am excited to be able to change the menu a lot,” Henry said.

Event guests, also, mingled at the open bar, stopped to take pictures at the provided photo booth and patiently waited their turn to sample Mandarin Wilbraham’s freshly made Japanese and Chinese cuisine.

Whether you wanted to sample Palmer’s famous Steaming Tender restaurant or Village Food Mart’s baked-to-order desserts, there was a flavor catered to every food lover imaginable.

But one table was not like the others.

Behind this table stood Jodi Falk, executive director of Rachel’s Table. Falk played an important role in the night’s festivities – it was her job to ensure any extra food made its way to one in three food-insecure families in Western Massachusetts.

Falk explained the prevalence of the work done at Rachel’s Table.

“We work with over 65 agencies that are soup kitchens, pantries, senior centers, after schools, places for people in recovery – we work with many different populations and ages and the places that serve them. They are telling us all the time that their lines are growing longer.



Victoria Dinatale (left) and Bri Ralston (right) representing Ludlow’s Iron Duke Brewery with the pub’s hard seltzers on display.



Friendly faces from Village Food Mart’s bakery pose with their always made fresh desserts.



Owner of The Sugar Chalet Allison Henry serves peach bourbon upside-down cake with a side of ice cream to guests.



East Longmeadow’s sugary safe haven Pete’s Sweets presents a Wonka-themed cake.

That people are in much bigger need than they seem, even bigger need than they were at the height of the pandemic,” Falk said.

Falk detailed how Rachel’s Table is working to reduce the one in three statistic and make food more accessible to those in need throughout Western Massachusetts.

“We have three different programs, the rescue program is what we are doing tonight. We are rescuing food from not going into a landfill, but instead going to people because it is good food. We also purchase food, we glean from the local gardens, harvest from the local farms, and we grow food. We even help people grow their own food at home There’s so many ways we’re trying to change that statistic,” Falk said.

Falk could not understate the vital role that our local small businesses play in addressing food insecurity, by regularly donating extra food to those in need.

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Hampden celebrates Mother's Day



Jean White and Ann Albert smile for a photo during the Mother's Day Lunch and the Lunch & Learn with the FBI at the Hampden Senior Center.



An attendee asks a question during the Q&A session with the FBI after the Lunch & Learn on May 10.



Activities Coordinator Diane Marino presents slices of cake to attendees during the Mother's Day Lunch and the Lunch & Learn with the FBI event at the Hampden Senior Center.

Turley photos by Kristin Rivers

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com

HAMPDEN - The community gathered at the senior center on May 10 to celebrate Mother's Day and have a Lunch & Learn with the FBI.

The meal was a pot roast dinner provided by Greater Springfield Senior Services, with dessert sponsored by Polish National Credit Union.

Spectrum was another sponsor for the event.

For the lunch and learn, the presentation centered on preventing elder fraud and abuse and was presented by Special Agent Casey Anderson and Kristen Setera, public affairs advisor for the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Helen Ambrogi, the aunt of Activities Coordinator Diane Marino, was enjoying time with

friends from her building.

"You meet a lot of nice people," Ambrogi said.

Ambrogi said she was looking forward to the event and was happy to see the huge turnout.

"I've been here before and they always have a nice crowd. It's always a nice crowd," Ambrogi said.

Outreach Coordinator Wendy Cowles explained the event came together when she saw the FBI at a conference last October and thought about bringing them to Hampden.

Cowles was glad to have a big turnout.

"Any time we have a big turnout, we're obviously pleased because that means we've made somebody smile for the day or gave them good information. We're always happy to see a good crowd," Cowles said.

Cowles added other programs

are taking place throughout May in recognition of Older Americans Month including, brain health, retirement and wills and more.

For Mother's Day, Cowles stressed the importance of moms feeling appreciated and loved.

"Everyone likes to feel appreciated, so it's really great that they can all get together. Any social event is important," Cowles said. "It gets people out of the house, it gets them to socialize, have a good time, enjoying a luncheon, being celebrated and getting some good information too. So, it's a win-win."

Jean White and Ann Albert enjoyed the lunch and said the event was informative.

"It's a shame that people our age fall for something like this," White said. "There are so many elderly people who have no idea."

"A lot of the elderly who live alone are anxious to talk to

someone and interact with the person on the phone and they'll trust them, and that's too bad. We can't," Albert said.

White and Albert were thankful to the senior center for holding an event that gets people out in the community while providing important information.

"It's great for elderly people because we don't get out that much and it's nice to be with our age and enjoy themselves," White said.

"We need to learn because a lot of people aren't aware that happens," Albert said.

White and Albert want the community to know how important the senior center is to them and the seniors.

"I think the senior center is very important for elderly people. It makes us feel good," White said.

"Doing events like this gets us

all together where we can discuss it and think about it and keep it in the back of our mind," Albert said. "I enjoy being here."

Cowles wants the community to know she hopes attendees took away tips to prevent fraud, stressing that it can happen to anyone.

"Come on down. We have a really busy month with a lot of programming and we try to give people information, like I said, to keep them socialized, to come down and socialize with people, to get out of the house," Cowles said. "But, also to learn things that will keep you healthy while you age, keep you strong, keep your credit cards safe. So, we try to address that throughout Older Americans Month and also celebrate older Americans and the wonderful resource that they are."

White's message was this. "Keep up the good work! We appreciate it," White said.

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A COMMUNITY GALLERY

Veterans of Senior Center Committees...



Dennis Lopata and Norma Bandara get reacquainted at the Major Donor Reception April 19 after serving on various committees to get the new senior center built. Dennis chaired the Needs Committee and Norma served on the committee in 2012. Dennis chaired the Feasibility Committee 2013-2019, on the Building Committee in 2019 and emceed the Ribbon Cutting April 20. (Charles F. Bennett photo)



Maria and Luis Cacela join in the celebration at the Major Donor Reception of the new Wilbraham Senior Center April 19. (Charles F. Bennett photo)



Arnold and Sarah Shtrax (left), Theresa Munn of the Council on aging and former chairman of the Council, Atty. Trant Campbell, schmooze at the Major Donor Reception April 19. (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 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.


WILBRAHAM



Photos submitted by Betsy Flores

The Rick's Place 5K Run was a huge success on April 27. Enjoy some additional photos from the event!

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Community Bulletin Board

Happy 13th Birthday
Alison Aucoin

Love Mom, Dad, Danny and the Whole Family XOXO

Send us in your announcements!
Happy Birthdays, Anniversaries, etc.
We will pick one each week to run here free of charge, please keep it to less than 50 words. Please send to krivers@turley.com



Photo courtesy of Wilbraham Fire Department
The fire department's Engine 2 and Car 2 lent a hand on May 8 assisting the Ludlow Fire Department as they responded to a house fire.



Experiencing the Northern Lights in Hampden

Photo courtesy of Hampden Police Department
The Hampden Police Department shared this photo of the Northern Lights in the early morning hours of May 11.

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SOCIAL SECURITY from page 6

For example, if your wife starts her spousal benefit in October when your benefit starts, she will get about 98.6% of the amount she would get if she waited until December to start her benefits. That's a permanent reduction, so if your

wife's life expectancy is at least average about 87, it's likely still wisest for her to wait until her FRA to start benefits. But in any case, when your wife claims her spousal benefit now will have no effect on the survivor benefit she will get as your future widow.

The Association Mature Citizens

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tion's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

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SPORTS

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Zach Kozub tries to keep Longmeadow away from the goal.



Sean Murphy is closely pursued by a Longmeadow defender.

Falcons suffer tough loss to Longmeadow

WILBRAHAM – Last Tuesday evening, Longmeadow came to Minnechaug and handed the Falcons a tough 19-2 loss. Minnechaug’s only goals came from Matt Beaudin. The Falcons are now 6-6 on the regular season.

Turley photos by Sofia DiGrande



Matt Beaudin holds the ball away form the opposition.



Ayden Sackrider looks to block an opponent.



Nick Patrakis makes a block on defense.

Boys volleyball makes state tournament



Turley photos by Sofia DiGrande
AJ Szapkowski sizes up a bump. More on page 16.

Falcons fall at home to Agawam

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

WILBRAHAM—Whenever the Agawam varsity softball team has scored 10 or more runs in a game this season, they’ve celebrated a victory.

The Brownies won their seventh double digit game, and they also swept the season series with Valley League rival Minnechaug Regional by posting a 13-6 road victory, last Friday afternoon.

“Our bats came alive in today’s game, which is always great to see,” said Agawam head coach Kathy Georgina. “Everyone made a contribution offensively and it was a very good team win for us.”

The Brownies (8-8) scored 13 runs on 14 hits against Minnechaug junior righthander Abby Peyman, who also started the first meeting of the regular season between the two squads on April 13. The Brownies squeaked out a 15-14 home victory in that contest.

According to Minnechaug head coach Molly Cole, hard throwing

senior righthander Mackenzie Blair, who’s the Lady Falcons number one starting pitcher, wasn’t available to pitch in last Friday’s game because she needed a rest day.

“Mackenzie just needed a rest day and we’re hoping that she’s ready to go next week,” Cole said. “We’ve been playing a lot of games in a short period of time. I thought Abby pitched well.”

Blair, who’s planning to play college softball at R.I.T next year, hurled a perfect game in a non-league game at Ludlow on May 1.

Despite having a .500 record the Brownies were ranked 26th in the latest MIAA Division 2 state power rankings.

The Lady Falcons, who lost their fourth game in a row, had a 4-9 overall record following the home loss. They were ranked 18th in the Division 2 power rankings.

“We do play a very difficult non-league schedule, which helps our power ranking,” Cole said. “We just made a couple of mental mistakes, which hurt us in today’s game.”

The top 32 softball teams in each of the five divisions automati-

cally qualify for the upcoming state tournament.

Both Agawam and Minnechaug should also qualify for the Western Mass. Class A tournament.

The home team did take a 1-0 lead with two-outs in the bottom of the first inning when Peyman helped herself with an RBI single to left scoring senior shortstop Amy Dunklee, who began the rally with a ground ball single into left field.

Dunklee, who hasn’t made her college decision, finished last Friday’s contest with two base hits and an RBI. In the first meeting of the regular season against Agawam, she had three hits and drove home six runs.

Both teams scored three runs in the third inning in the second meeting.

With one-out in the frame, Agawam took the lead following a two-run groundball single to center by first baseman Amber Bates, who’s the only senior listed on the Brownies line-up card.

A couple of batters later, soph-

Please see **SOFTBALL**, page 16

Boys volleyball makes state tournament



Tristen Hottin sends a serve away.



Javien Santiago flies for a hit.



Mike Bidga and Jonah Rost attempt a block.



Hunter Ladouceur sets up a possible spike.

WILBRAHAM – With wins in the past week with West Springfield and Chicopee Comprehensive, the Minnechaug Regional High School boys volleyball team has qualified

for the state tournament. The Falcons won their ninth game of the season with a 3-1 win over Chicopee Comprehensive last Monday. They did lose to Westfield last Thursday, and

have just two games remaining in the regular season, including a tough matchup with Ludlow on Thursday evening.

Turley photos by Sofia DiGrande

Thompson Speedway holds Icebreaker event

THOMPSON, CT — A much nicer day awaited fans on day two of the 50th Icebreaker at Thompson Speedway held last month. Six star-studded features took to the 0.625-mile oval on Sunday, as did the peaks of sunshine to greet the fans in the stands. While the Street Stocks were able to start their 2024 track championship season on Saturday, the rest of the track championship line-up got their year started with plenty of action on Sunday along with the roar of the mighty NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour with their return to Icebreaker weekend.

Following strong qualifying efforts in time trials, Justin Bonsignore and Jake Johnson led the NASCAR Whelen Modifieds to a short start after Bobby Santos III lost a right rear tire in mid-pack, dragging Dave Sapienza, Andrew Krause and Eric Goodale into the turn one wall. Back under the green flag, Johnson slid back to third on the restart and gave second to a hard-charging Craig Lutz with Bonsignore still at the helm. Lutz grabbed his chance to take over the lead on a lap 25 restart following a grenaded motor in the Tim Connolly machine.

A second motor expired in the first 33 laps for Trevor Catalano but Lutz again retained control ahead of Bonsignore and Ron Silk. Silk methodically made his way to Lutz's back bumper, pulling up alongside the #46 on lap 59 and using the slide job in turn one to come back and lead lap 60. The field would slow once more on lap 89 for the spinning Matt Swanson in turn four, leading to a frenzy of teams jumping down pit road for their respective tire changes. Patrick Emerling stunned the competition by winning the race off pit road followed by Silk, Johnson, Bonsignore and Austin Beers.

Silk moved up way high as they motored through turns one and two, forcing Emerling to pull back on the outside and giving him the lead. The final laps saw Emerling and Bonsignore battle for third as Silk continued to grow his lead more and more. Ron Silk took the dominant Icebreaker 150 win followed by a consistently fast Jake Johnson and a hard-charging Patrick Emerling, whose radiator sat steaming in victory lane.

SOFTBALL from page 15

omore second baseman Mia Laudato hit a double down the left field line, which scored another run.

Minnechaug, who banged out a total of 11 base hits, retook the lead against Agawam sophomore righty Avery Gordon in the home half of the inning.

Two runs scored on doubles by Dunklee and sophomore third baseman Alexa Sherman. Peyman also had another RBI single.

Agawam tied the score at 4-4 when sophomore shortstop Alex Lentes hit a sacrifice fly to center scoring sophomore centerfielder Payton Malanson, who had an infield hit leading off the frame.

Then the Brownies exploded for five runs in the fifth inning.

The trio of Lentes, Malanson, and freshman catcher Madelyn Pajer had RBI singles in the fifth.

Gordon drove home the other two runs with a single to center.

Pajer (2-for-3) had another RBI single in the sixth and she scored on a wild pitch. Freshman third baseman Kiley Ryan also singled before scoring on a wild pitch. Lentes extended the Brownies lead to 13-4 with a sacrifice fly to center.

“Once we took the lead, Avery never let them back into the game,” Georgina said. “Avery is a first-year varsity starter, and she has been pitching outstanding this season.”

The home team did score a pair of runs in the bottom of the sixth when sophomore first baseman Hannah Prechocki hit a run scoring double to center field. Junior catcher Angelina Cross also had an RBI single to left field.

Both pitchers retired the side in order in the seventh inning.

Academy names new hockey coach

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 to return to prep school teaching and coaching after retiring from the New York City Police Department. 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.”

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 Biondo will be Steven McGearly as Assistant Coach. Formerly the Boys Ice Hockey Head Coach at Wyoming Seminary, McGearly played at Bethel University (MN). Assistant Coach and Goalie Coach Brian Musa '92 will round out a stellar coaching staff. Musa has over two decades of coaching experience, played goalie at Elmira College and is USA Bronze Goalie certified.

As a player, 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, 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,” 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.”

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Jared Smith looks to send the ball deep.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Zach Sauer looks to pass.



Patrick Gryczewski attempts to get around an opponent.



Kwame Adu-Gyamfi gets ready to shoot.

Pioneers set to get regular season underway

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW—Since they joined USL League Two in 2019, the Western Mass. Pioneers have finished first in the Northeast Division standings twice. They’ve also finished in second place twice.

The members of this year’s squad will be looking to make their fifth appearance in the USL League Two playoffs. The 2020 season was canceled due to the COVID 19 Pandemic.

“We’re going to try our best to put together another winning season,” said Pioneers head coach Federico Molinari following his team’s 9-0 friendly win against 3rd Eye FC at Lusitano Stadium last Friday night. “We do have nine returning players and a bunch of new players. The older players will need to show the new guys how we do things here. Every game that we play is very important because it’s very difficult to make up points in this league.”

The Pioneers finished the 2023 regular season with a 10-1-3 record (33 points). They finished in second place, one point behind the Seacoast United Phantoms,

who finished in first place. The Pioneers lost to North Carolina Fusion U23 in the conference quarterfinals by the final score of 2-1.

The Pioneers were scheduled to kick off the 2024 campaign on Tuesday night with a road match against the Boston Bolts. They’ll be facing Pathfinder FC in the home opener at 7pm on Saturday night.

It’ll be the second game of a double-header at Lusitano Stadium. The New England Mutiny will be hosting Maine Footy at 4pm in their season opener.

Saturday will be a very busy day for Molinari. He was named as the Mutiny head coach by Joe Ferrera, who’s the General Managers for both soccer teams, during the offseason.

“I told Joe if he wasn’t able to find a head coach for the women’s soccer team, I would help him out this year,” said Molinari, who has been coaching the Pioneers since 2012. “Tomas Duben will be helping me out as an assistant coach.”

Molinari is also the Director of Coaching for the Western United Pioneers.

Dennis Gomes and Jay Willis are returning as the Pioneers assistant coaches. Duben, who played in about 30 match-

es for the Pioneers during the past several seasons, is also the Pioneers new Scouting & Tactical Analyst.

“Tomas knows a lot about soccer,” Molinari said. “He can also relate to the players very well. It’s a very good connection between the players and the coaching staff.”

Ciro Viviano has replaced John Voight as the Pioneers Goalkeeper coach.

The Pioneers’ other six regular season home matches will be against Black Rock FC (May 31), Seacoast United Phantoms (June 7), AC Connecticut (June 11), Boston City FC (June 21), Albany Rush (June 28), and Vermont Green FC (July 13).

“Every year is a new season, and you have to start from the beginning,” Molinari said. “It’s a lot of fun watching your players improve in every game.”

One of the Pioneers veteran players is Connor Hicks, who helped the Monson boys’ soccer team win back-to-back Division 4 state titles. As a senior in 2016, Hicks scored an incredible overtime goal to beat Cohasset High School in the state finals.

Hicks played college soccer at AIC and has been a member of the Pioneers since 2019.

“I’m getting a little bit older, but it’s nice to be back playing for the Pioneers again,” said Hicks, who’s one of the defenders. “We’ve made the playoffs every year that I’ve played for this soccer team. I really enjoy the atmosphere here. It’s a lot of fun signing autographs and taking pictures with the kids.”

This will be Hicks final season playing for the Pioneers, as he’s planning to move to Florida this summer.

Midfielder Khalid Rose, who’s another fan favorite, is also returning.

Alec Hughes, who was one of the Pioneers leading goal scorers a year ago, is back again this year. He was a senior on the UMass men’s soccer team last fall.

One of the Pioneers newcomers is striker Scott Testori, who was the leading goal scorer on the 2023 UConn men’s soccer team.

The Pioneer’s captain is Nicholas Oberrauch, who’s a defender.

Gianluca Cersosimo was the Pioneers’ starting goalie in the friendly match.

The tickets prices for all the Pioneers regular season home matches are \$10.

Children 6 years old and younger are free.

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 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@baystategames.org or call 781-932-6555.

This Week in Rec

What to know about Spec Pond Beach

Dan Beauregard
Program Coordinator

WILBRAHAM - Summer is around the corner, which means Spec Pond Beach will be opening soon. Here are some common questions we get about the Spec Pond Beach.

What are the hours for the beach? Spec Pond Beach will be opening on Saturday, June 15 with the beach season ending Sunday, Aug. 18. Beach hours are 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. June 15-July 28 and 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. July 29 - Aug. 18, and the beach is open seven days a week, weather pending.

What does Spec Pond Beach offer? Spec Pond Beach has bathrooms, changing rooms, Amy Sparkle Splash Pad, concession stand, a small pavilion, docks and certified lifeguards on duty during beach hours. Additionally, the wa-

ter is tested weekly for quality and safety.

Where is the beach located? Spec Pond Beach is located at the Spec Pond Recreational Complex at 45C Post Office Park, Wilbraham off of Boston Road.

How much does it cost to enter Spec Pond Beach? Residents and non-residents can purchase season passes or a day pass for Spec Pond Beach. Day passes can be bought at the concession stand at the beach. For residents a day pass is \$4 for adults and teens 13+ and \$3 for children 12 and under and senior citizens 62+. For non-residents a day pass is \$6 for adults and teens 13+ and \$5 for children 12 and under and senior citizens 62+. Season Passes can be purchased online until June 11 and in the WPRD Office or at the Concession Stand any time during the beach season.

Is fishing allowed? During open beach hours, fishing is not allowed from the shore or from the dock. Outside of beach hours (11 a.m. - 7 p.m.), fishing is permitted.

Can I use a kayak, canoe, or paddle board at the pond? During open beach hours, boating is not allowed from the shore or from the dock. Outside of beach hours (11 a.m. - 7 p.m.), boating is permitted.

Lifeguard Positions: As the beach season approaches we are currently looking to add a couple more lifeguards to our staff. If you or someone you know is interested please contact the Wilbraham Parks & Recreation Department at 413-596-2816.

For more information and to purchase your Season Pass online, please visit WilbrahamRec.com.

Freedom Credit Union collecting cash donations to provide a 'Bed for Every Child'

The May 'Month of Giving' campaign supports children in need throughout the Pioneer Valley

SPRINGFIELD - "Good night, sleep tight..." Freedom Credit Union believes every child deserves a great night's sleep, every night. That's why it is again holding its annual "Month of Giving" campaign to provide A Bed for Every Child throughout the Pioneer Valley. The community is invited to stop by any Freedom branch throughout the month of May to support this worthy endeavor with cash donations.

"We appreciate the commitment of our members, staff and community in supporting this important annual initiative," said Freedom Credit Union President Glenn Welch. "With ongoing support, we can help make sure all children have a warm, cozy place to dream every night."

This effort began in 2011 when the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless learned that many public-school students were not getting enough sleep because they did not have their own beds. In response, they launched A Bed for Every Child in 2012 with a mission to help children get the restful sleep they need to learn and succeed.

Partnering with schools, healthcare institutions and nonprofit community partners, each child receives a brand-new mattress and a sturdy custom wooden bed frame. On average, A Bed for Every Child receives more than 200 referrals for beds each month statewide. To date, more than 1,598 children have been helped.

Freedom Credit Union has partnered with the Pioneer Valley Chapter of the Cooperative Credit Union Association to support this initiative annually since 2017.

NOTICE

ERRORS: Each advertiser is requested to check their advertisement the first time it appears. This paper will not be responsible for more than one corrected insertion, nor will be liable for any error in an advertisement to a greater extent than the cost of the space occupied by the item in the advertisement.

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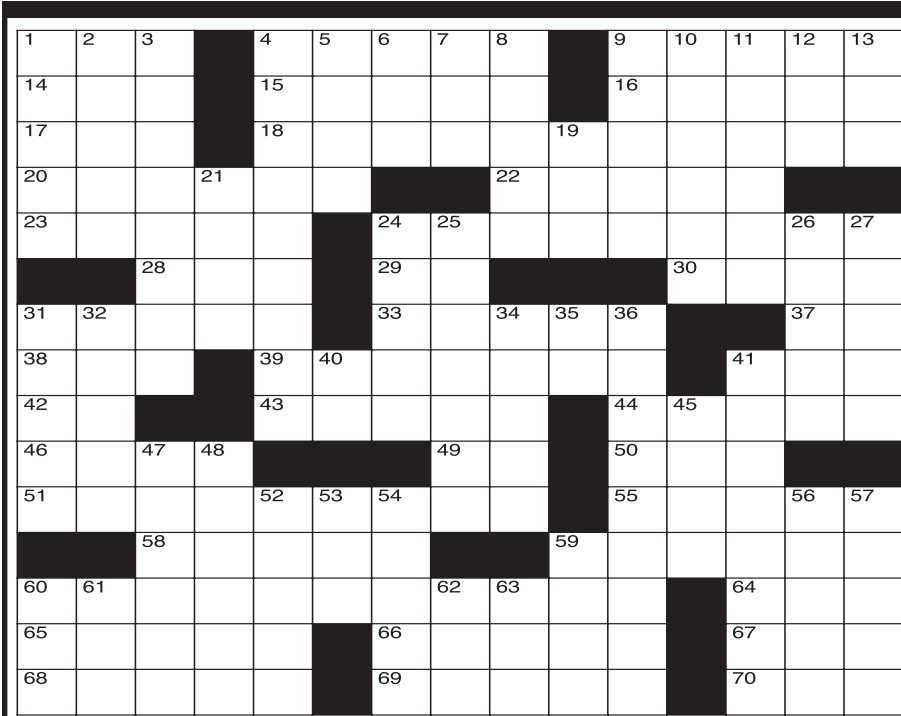
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CLUES ACROSS

1. Geological time
4. Ooze
9. A set of eight
14. Obstruction
15. Swiss mathematician
16. Philosophy
17. The night before
18. A timid person
20. Unifies
22. Gangs
23. Alternative name
24. Acumen
28. Cathode-ray tube
29. Tantalum
30. Soluble ribonucleic acid
31. Humiliate
33. Earthy pigment
37. Air Force
38. Adult males
39. Stiff untanned leather
41. Before
42. Atomic #18
43. Beer mug

CLUES DOWN

44. Nostrils
46. Type of chef
49. Midway between north and east
50. They ___
51. Splits
55. Walk in a timid manner
58. Preserved animal skin with hair
59. Popular donut shop item
60. You smear it on bagels
64. Don't know when yet
65. Equal to 10 amperes
66. Synthetic acrylic fiber
67. One point south of due east
68. Of mixed ancestry
69. Home of the Pyramids
70. A way to change color

CLUES DOWN

1. Excessive fluid accumulation in tissues
2. Untangle
3. One from the U.S.
4. Academic terms
5. San ___ Obispo, in California
6. Not healthy
7. Self-assessment questionnaire (abbr.)
8. Arugula genus
9. VIII
10. Makes a monarch
11. Tormentor
12. Commercials
13. Sprinkle
19. Make a mistake
21. Freshwater fishes
24. Vermont town
25. Man-made device
26. Entrap
27. Places to store important things
31. Accumulate
32. Greek mythological

- nymph
34. Gregory ___, American dancer
35. Denotes past
36. Becoming popular again
40. Indicates position
41. Came before
45. An extra seed-covering
47. Cheerful
48. Deli sandwich staple
52. Skateboarders love them
53. Mandela's party
54. Sierra lake
56. Nickname for Elizabeth
57. Remove from record
59. Employee stock ownership plan
60. Former NFLer Newton
61. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
62. Work unit
63. Town in Cambridgeshire

Announce Your Wedding or Engagement Share Your Joy!



Bridal GUIDE

Your wedding or engagement announcement will be included in our Bridal Guide, out September 30, 2024 for FREE!

Be sure to include the following with photograph. Deadline September 4, 2024:

Bride's Name: _____
 Bride's Town Residence: _____
 Groom's Name: _____
 Groom's Town Residence: _____
 Wedding Date: _____
 Wedding Location: _____

EMAIL TO: JAMIE@TURLEY.COM

BRIDAL GUIDE

800.824.6548 | www.turley.com

Be sure to include a high resolution, clear photograph for printing.

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2011 KEYSTONE MONTANA MOUNTAINEER MODEL RKD Length 33', 2 slide outs, rear kitchen, sleeps 4, lots of storage. **\$17,500**. Brimfield **(413) 374-1880**

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2***A & B HOUSEHOLD REMOVAL SERVICE*******
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PUBLIC NOTICES

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.**

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

P.T. CUSTODIAN POSITION AVAILABLE cleaning with our team. Experience preferred but will train. Call Pride Cleaning Contractors, **413-283-7087.**

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** to be received by May 21, 2024.

TOWN OF WILBRAHAM

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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.

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.

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

**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. HD24P1012EA**

**Estate of:
Bruce Willard Coolidge
Also known as:
Bruce W. Coolidge
Date of Death: 04/06/2024
CITATION ON PETITION
FOR FORMAL
ADJUDICATION**

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Ashley A Coolidge**

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: **Ashley A Coolidge 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 06/05/2024. 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 08, 2024
Rosemary A Saccomani,
Register of Probate

05/16/2024

LEGAL NOTICE TOWN OF WILBRAHAM INVITATION FOR BIDS PICKLE BALL COURTS

The Town of Wilbraham invites qualified firms to submit written sealed bids for the construction of six (6) Pickle Ball courts to include earthwork, court surfacing, netting, fencing, utility conduits, and associated site improvements as described herein. The location of the courts is on a Town-owned property known as Memorial School, located at 310 Main Street. Bid documents are available only by contacting Bryan Litz, Director of Parks and Recreation, via email at: **blitz@wilbraham-ma.gov**

Bidders will be granted access to a Web Portal where the Bid Documents will be available. No hard copies will be available. Once registered in the Web Portal, questions regarding the bid documents may be emailed to the Town's Consultant at: **MikeB@rlaland.com**

Town Consultant/Engineer:
R Levesque Associates, Inc.
40 School Street
Westfield, MA 01085
Phone: 413.568.0985
Fax: 413.568.0986

Bids are due in the Select Board Office, Wilbraham Town Hall, 240 Springfield Street, 01095 no later than **Wednesday, June 5, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.** Bids will be opened in the Select Board Meeting Room in Town Hall at approximately 2:05 p.m. Bids shall include **"Memorial School Pickle Ball Courts -24-008"** on the outside of the envelope. Late bids will not be accepted.

Bid results will be available thereafter on the Town's website under "Bids": **https://www.wilbraham-ma.gov/Bids.** A pre-bid site visit will take place at Memorial School at 10:00 AM on May 22, 2024. Attendance is not mandatory, but all bidders are encouraged to attend. A proposal guarantee of 5% of the Bid shall be required.

Minimum wage rates have been set. Performance and Payment Bonds shall be 100% of the Contract Amount.

The Wilbraham Recreation Commission shall be the Awarding Authority. The Town reserves the right to waive any informalities and/or reject any or all proposals if, in the Town's sole discretion, it is in the public interest to do so. No bid may be withdrawn within ninety (90) days after the actual date of bid opening. Attention is called to the minimum wage rates to be paid on the work as determined by the Commissioner of Labor and Industries under the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 149, Sections 26 to 27G, inclusive. All bids for this project are subject to the provisions of General Laws, (3rd Ed.) Chapter 30, Section 39M, inclusive as amended.

**Bryan Litz, Director
Town of Wilbraham
Department of Parks and
Recreation**
05/16/2024

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

Events & announcements schedule

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.

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.

Parents, Grandparents & Friends SPECIAL 2024 Honor Your Graduate

We are offering a great deal for you to celebrate your graduate in your community graduation issue. Submit a photo and a brief message.

2 x 3 Black & White Graduation Ad
~~Regular Price \$76~~ **SPECIAL \$55**

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION
MAY 17th**

**EMAIL YOUR AD TO:
jwalker@turley.com**

HIGH SCHOOL OR COLLEGE

2 x 3 Advertisement

Congratulations
CARLY SMITH

We are so proud of you and your accomplishments. Good luck at Springfield College.



Love Mom, Dad, John and Chloe

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Palmer, MA 01069
Pay by check or credit card:
Checks Payable to Turley Publications.
Credit Cards
be sure to include:
Newspaper you would like the ad to appear,
Your Name, Address,
Phone Number,
Credit Card Number,
Exp. Date & CVV.

Police Officers and Dispatchers Awarded Commendations

LUDLOW — Police Chief Daniel Valadas is proud to announce the awarding of several commendations to officers of the Ludlow Police Department and staff of Ludlow’s Central Dispatch.

During the most recent meeting of Ludlow’s Board of Selectmen on April 16, the following Ludlow Police Officers and Dispatchers received recognition and formal commendations from their Town: Officer Michael Whitney, Officer Ryan Churchill, Officer Timothy Goodchild, Officer Adam Roach, Lieutenant David Irwin, Dispatcher Samantha Jordan, Dispatcher Linda Zina, and Dispatcher Michael Lynch

“They ran to their cruisers and they took off as fast as they could to Wilbraham to assist their fellow officers,” said Ludlow Board of Selectmen Vice Chairman Derek DeBarge, who himself is a retired police officer.

On Jan. 20, at approximately 8:27 p.m., officers responded to a call for assistance by the Wilbraham Police Department on a domestic disturbance call. Wilbraham Officer Cameron Prosperi had been injured by gunshots from a suspect barricaded in a home.

Ludlow K-9 Officer Michael Whitney, who was monitoring the Wilbraham Police Department frequency, arrived first on the scene within two minutes of the



Commending the police (from left) Dispatcher Michael Lynch, Selectman Manuel Silva, Select Board Chair Derek DeBarge, Assistant Town Administrator Carrie Ribeiro, Officer Adam Roach, Dispatcher Samantha Jordan, Officer Ryan Churchill, Officer Timothy Goodchild, Selectman Tony Goncalvez, Wilbraham Police Chief Edward Lennon, Ludlow Police Chief Daniel Valadas, and Selectman William Rosenblum.

original callout. He handed over one of his trauma bandages from his vest to be placed on Officer Prosperi’s gunshot injuries. That enabled critical first aid to be given to the injured officer and, eventually, his transfer to an ambulance.

Officers Churchill, Goodchild and Roach arrived within the next two minutes. They provided critical assistance by

securing a perimeter around the suspect’s home and property. At that moment, the suspect’s whereabouts were unknown. They needed to consider that the armed suspect was still a danger.

Enhancing the volatility and risk of the situation, the suspect’s wife and daughter were still inside the home. Ludlow officers held the perimeter in freezing cold

temperatures until they were relieved by the Massachusetts State Police Stop Team more than two hours later.

During this incident, officers faced possible deadly force from a dangerous, armed, barricaded suspect who had refused to surrender peacefully. Eventually, the suspect was taken into custody.

Ludlow Police Chief Daniel Valadas said, “I am incredibly proud of our officers, their bravery, their courage and their decisive actions. It is satisfying to see our leadership saw fit to formally commend these men and women for their service to our community.”

Wilbraham Police Chief Edward Lennon, who also attended the ceremony, said, “It is humbling to see the other police departments, all the support they gave us. It was extremely important.”

Ludlow Central Dispatch provided emergency communications for responding public safety agencies and assisted with orchestrating the overall effort. Their support was crucial to the response, coordination of resources, and command of this dangerous and volatile incident.

Following the incident, resources known as Critical Incident Stress Management were made available to those involved in the response in February.

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. This program is sponsored by the Wilbraham Friends of the Library.

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.

Scholarship Foundation Annual Raffle Drawing May 29

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

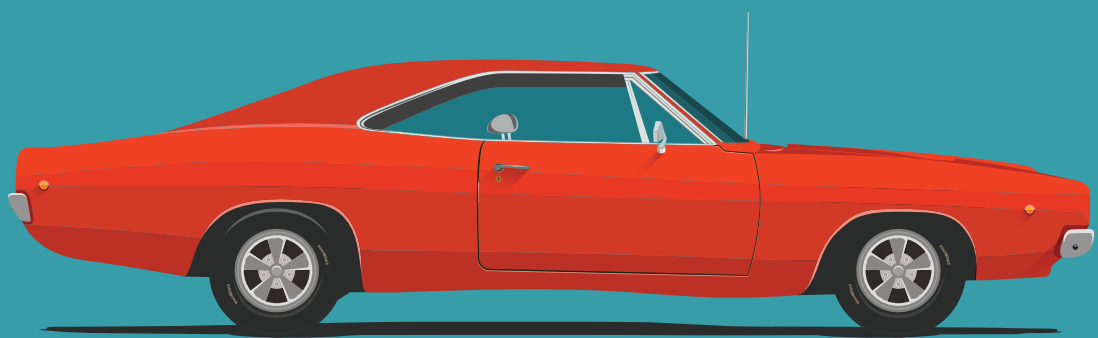
cards, donated by local businesses. If you didn’t receive a ticket in the mail or would like to purchase more, please email wilbrahamhampden-scholarship@gmail.com. For more information, please visit our website at wilbraham-hampdenscholarship-foundation.org.



ALL WHEELS CAR SHOW Wednesday, May 22nd

GATES OPEN AT 3:00PM

Benefits the Palmer Food Share and Jubilee Cupboard Food Pantry of Ware and the Springfield to Boston Education Foundation



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Admission is \$10 per car or 3 non-perishable food items. No burnouts, excessively loud cars or motorcycles.

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Families cast away at 62nd Annual Kids Fishing Derby



Families line the riverbank with fishing lines cast out.



Lucas catches a fish and brings it to be measured, in hopes of winning the prize for the day's smallest catch.



More experienced young anglers cast their lines independently.

By Alisiana Marshall
Correspondent

HAMPDEN – Mother's Day weekend is particularly special to the veterans at Hampden's Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. (VFW) chapter.

For the better part of six decades, they have maintained an annual tradition that brings families throughout the Hampden and Hampshire counties together: the Annual

Kids Fishing Derby.

"We've been doing the fishing derby for 62 years," explained event organizer Heath Joseph. "We always do it the Saturday before Mother's Day. It's free for the kids. We have hot dogs and we have cotton candy."

The event is geared towards anglers ages 12 and under, in hopes to get them outdoors and active in the community.

"Our prizes are boy's biggest fish, girl's biggest fish,

the first fish, and the smallest fish. Any money we make goes back to the veterans but normally we're here to support the community and the children, get them outside, and having a good time," Joseph said.

The fishing derby takes many helping hands to put together. Joseph made sure to thank the local businesses who assisted the VFW with donations.

"We do get a lot of donations. Granby Bait and Tackle gave us the worms, the Awards Company donated the trophies, Village Food Mart donated the hot dogs and buns, Rice's Fruit Farm donated apple cider donuts and coffee," Joseph said.

The fishing derby takes place in the Hampden VFW's backyard, which happens to have a beautiful river flowing through it. But the derby organizers had to ensure that the river was stocked with fish for the kids to catch.

"We have fish tanks that we put around town to collect money. Reid's Corner, Koffee Tyme, Village Food Mart, Grog Shop, Rice's Fruit Farm, and Crazy Jake's all allowed us to put our fish tanks there to help raise money to buy the fish," Joseph said. "We buy 300 fish from High On the Hill in New Hampshire, and then Massachusetts State Wildlife stocks the river for us, usually a day or two before we start. It's all for the town, it's all for the community to help get everybody out and enjoy a nice beautiful day."


On the day of the event, words of encouragement and congratulations periodically poured out of large speakers, courtesy of VFW member Don Talbot.

"Oh, we've got upwards of 30 fish caught today. It has been a really good day, fishing derby day is going outstanding actually we usually don't catch this many fish but they did a good stocking yesterday so I think that's why but it's been a really great day the kids have been doing a great job. They've been enjoying themselves," Talbot said.

Talbot has seen with his own eyes how the Annual Fishing Derby has instilled a love of fishing throughout



A father-son duo cast their fishing lines in tandem.



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- Podcast Club
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- Favorite movie: Lego Batman Movie

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generations. "I enjoy doing it. "I've been doing this for about 17, 18 years. There's a young man named Owen, I've known him since he was six years old, he has been fishing here. He's a great fisherman, he is a fly fisherman. He used to win the derby every year, and now he comes to help the kids. To show them what to do and help us out with the derby, every year he comes back, his grandfather is here sometimes," Talbot said. With a focus on providing youth with positive activities to participate in and fostering cooperation between local townships, the fishing derby proved to be a historic success with a record 46 fish caught by the young derby participants.