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JUNE 11, 2026

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## MINNECHAUG

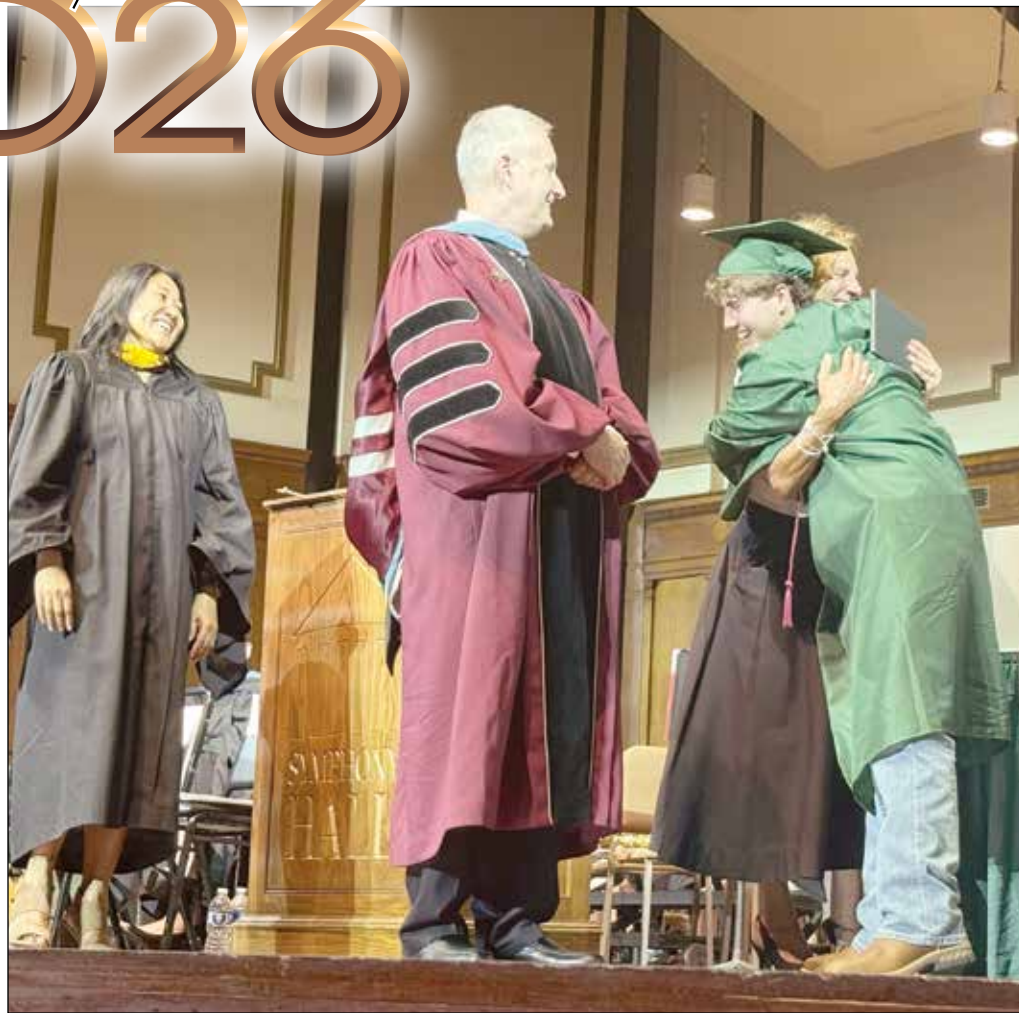
Class of  
**2026** celebrated

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - Minnechaug Regional High School's class of 2026 was celebrated on graduation day on June 5 at Symphony Hall in Springfield.

The ceremony included remarks from Principal Dr. Steve Hale, Superintendent Dr. John Provost, School Committee Chair Michal Boudreau, 2026 Class President Anthony Cianflone, Aiden Whitaker—who served as this year's graduation speaker—and performances of the National Anthem and the song "Dust in the Wind" by Kansas sung by the Minnechaug Regional High School Choir and Band and select graduating members and "Vienna" by Billy Joel sung by Laila Hosnander.

Please see **CLASS OF 2026**, page 10



David Preston hugs Assistant Principal Joanne White after receiving his diploma.

Turley photo by Kristin Rivers



Photo courtesy of Amy Porter

Mother Amy Porter stands behind Cody's Bench with her fiancé Michael, whom Cody lovingly called his brother.

## Porter honored in dedication ceremony

By Noelle Hisgen  
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - Family and friends joined together with the Wilbraham Fire Department to celebrate the life of Cody Porter on May 16, coming together a year after his passing to dedicate a tree

and a bench on the department grounds in his name.

Since he was five, Porter loved to visit the fire department every weekend, and over the past 25 years, the members of the fire department grew to have a strong

Please see **PORTER**, page 8

## HPD discusses full-time officer candidates

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
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HAMPDEN - The police department discussed a full time officer candidate—or candidates—during the Selectboard's May 26 meeting.

Chief Dan Bruno explained how there's been a vacancy for the last several months and did advertising for it, electronically, which led to a pool of applicants.

"About a week and a half ago, we narrowed that list down and a week and a half ago, we held interviews for our top three candidates. So, that's taken place. That was myself, my sergeants and an outside lieutenant from another agency," Bruno said. "So, we did that. We've sort of come up with our ranking and our top candidates."

Bruno outlined the couple of potential issues were one candidate being a full-time certified police officer that's already been through the Police Academy and another top candidate is a non-certified person who would need to go to the Police Academy.

"As you know, hiring right now is pretty difficult. Even finding good applicants is difficult," Bruno said. "So, where we're at is the potential with a person who would go to the Police Academy. The next opening at the Holyoke Academy, which is our local academy, is in September. It's about the second or third week of September. That puts us with a tentative graduation date of February. After

Please see **HPD CANDIDATES**, page 3

## Petal It Forward

By Riddhi Patel  
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - In 2021, the Above the Influence Club at Minnechaug Regional High School partnered with an organization called Petal it Forward, distributing positivity through flowers and kind messages.

This organization has also partnered with schools in Arizona, Colorado and Massachusetts. Their goal is to improve the mental health of students going through tough transitions in high school. The founder of the organization, Sarah Busbey, donates flowers and notecards to all partnered schools in the memory of her daughter, Ashley Busbey. Busbey was a freshman in college when she died by suicide in 2018.

In 2019, her mom founded the organization to spread the message of



Turley photo by Riddhi Patel

The flowers and notes remind teens and young adults they are not alone.

kindness and positivity that her daughter embodied.

Busbey was the type of girl who would seek out kids who felt alone or

Please see **PETAL IT FORWARD**, page 9



Turley photos by Noelle Hisgen

(L-R) Scholarship recipients Cody Erskine, Michael McGrath, and Joseph Slattery stand with Josh Mitchell and Thomas Wadzinski in front of the Knights of Columbus banner.

## KofC 10195 hosts scholarship dinner

By Noelle Hisgen  
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham Knights of Columbus 10195 held their Annual Scholarship Dinner inside of St. Cecilia's Church to celebrate their three 2026 scholarship recipients on May 19.

This year, the Knights cel-

ebrated three seniors: Cody Erskine, Michael McGrath and Joseph Slattery.

Every year, the Knights hold a special dinner where the scholarship recipients and their families can enjoy a dinner cooked by members of the Knights themselves. After the dinner, some of the Knights take a moment to introduce

each recipient and highlight their scholarship essays.

From there, recipients took their turn to say a few words.

Grand Knight Josh Mitchell took a moment to talk about this year's scholarship class.

Please see **SCHOLARSHIP**, page 9

## The story of one resident's green thumb

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
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HAMPDEN - Edward Salerno, a resident of Hampden, is a man with a green thumb and a love for gardening.

Visiting his house on Wilbraham Road, Salerno has developed a vast nursery with over 100 plant varieties of Hosta, Daylilies, Astilbe, Sedum, Peonies and many more.

Recently, Salerno held a Plant Sale/Garden Tour on May 24 and plans to hold the Plant Sale/Garden Tour every Memorial Day weekend when he can.

Salerno explained he started it in the early 2000s and his wife, Laura, also

started buying catalogue plants, which were planted and later eaten by animals such as voles. From there, he began a nursery in his backyard.

"Started developing more and more and that kit turned into a little plant giveaway for all my coworkers that I worked with at MassMutual, so once a year I would do a little plant giveaway and have about 20 or so people come over. They'd say what they'd like, we'd dig it up, they would take it home," Edward Salerno said.

After the nursery was formed, Salerno said he developed the plants "a little more" and donated some to his mother, the Hampden Garden Club, Suffield Garden Club and bartering with

local nurseries.

"I would give them plants and they would, in return, give me credit so that I could, in turn, buy my vegetables," Edward Salerno said.

On the plant sales, he did one about four years ago with 700 to 800 plants. This year, he did between 400 to 450 plants.

"A lot of variety of Hosta. There's probably about 30 plus variety of Hosta," Edward Salerno said.

Please see **GREEN THUMB**, page 19

Turley photo by Kristin Rivers  
Edward Salerno, a resident of Hampden, has a green thumb and love for gardening.



# Memorial School boiler, heating decided during ATM

By Reese Magee  
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - On May 11 during the Annual Town Meeting, an important article was discussed on Memorial School.

Article 32 was a Community Preservation Act(CPA) project for Memorial School to get a new heating system, with a transfer of \$100,000 from the FY27 Community Preservation Historical Fund Undesignated Fund Balance and \$340,000 from the FY27 Community Preservation Undesignated Fund Balance to design, engineer, procure and replace the inoperative boiler along with replacing other critical heating system components.

Those components include the condensate system and energy management system.

\$33,000 of previously approved capital funding is also included for the condensate return system, creating a total project cost of \$473,000.

The Finance Committee did not recommend approval 9-0.

When Town Moderator Jane Clark opened the floor for discussion, many town residents voiced their opinions about the project for Memorial School.

The first comment came from resident John Hegarty.

"I think Memorial School needs to continue as is for the time being even though a decision has not been made on the future of Memorial School. If you shut that boiler down, you're going to be cutting off all access to the programs that are currently in place at Memorial School. The kids are there playing basketball, they have indoor pickleball, they have wrestling. There are classes held there for kids. I think we real-



Turley photos by Kristin Rivers  
**Facilities Director Sam Boyd shares information on costs.**

ly need to just spend the money, get that boiler fixed and if the building for some reason is sold in the future, at least the boiler will be fixed and that won't be an added expenditure," Hegarty said. "Now if we try to sell the building a year from now and the cost of the boiler increases—which costs have been going crazy for everything mechanical related—it could cost us another \$100,000 at that point, so I rise in favor of spending this money from the Community Preservation Act."

Jeff Smith, the chairman of the Building Utilization Committee—formed to evaluate town buildings—stated how the committee proposed this application.

"The genesis of this comes from, basically, hearing that we had these capital expenditures kind of hanging out there for Memorial School. It's been a hot topic for probably going on a decade now... The can has certainly been kicked down the road as far as making a decision on how we're going to use this facility moving forward," Smith said.

Smith said the committee identified the capital expenditure for the boiler.

"This building is a historical asset that is locally significant by our Historical Commission. It's also on the State Register of Historical Properties, so it qualifies for Community Preservation Act money. Our committee voted unanimously in favor of bringing this forward to the Community Preservation Committee. Your Community Preservation Committee voted unanimously to move this forward to you, the legislative body, for voting on," Smith said. "Your FinCom voted 9-0 against it and I don't blame them. They're doing FinCom things. Again, they haven't had a solid position from the town on the disposition or use of this property."

Smith emphasized that because the building is still actively used by the community and other programs, replacing the boiler will keep the building functional and safe for use.

Robin Viscop emphasized how the Rec Department utilizes the space and that Memorial



**Robin Viscop voiced her support for the boiler and heating for Memorial School.**

is needed in the community.

"The Rec Department is using this building right now and it seems like if there is cooperation and collaboration going on, the Rec Department is a great cooperater in that whole discussion. Why wouldn't we try to keep this asset workable for the Rec Department, for the town and for the children and adults in town that use the building on a regular basis. We hear pickleball from dawn to dusk next door. It is being used, it is needed," Viscop said.

Finance Committee Chair Todd Schneider explained the collaboration between FinCom, Select Board and Rec Department was in relation to Memorial School and the expenses. Expenses to the town budget for that right now are \$60,000 and how there was discussion of wanting to go up to \$100,000.

Schneider also explained the alternative options at Memorial School.

Option One: finding a third-party company to build a butler building down by Spec Pond with state of the art facility and indoor pickleball courts

"Then we would get the taxes for that and we would get new basketball courts. Everything that we would need would be in a butler building down by Spec Pond, making that a rec center. We would then rent that from somebody versus owning a building with future deferred maintenance," Schneider said.

Option Two: it was agreed upon that the town would get a presentation "as to how much it would cost for the town to renovate Memorial" which a first cost from study done seven years ago ranged from \$5 to \$15 million

Option Three: a third-party company having expressed



**Finance Committee Member Xiomara Albán DeLobato explained the committee's recommendation.**

interest to Wilbraham "to purchase Memorial and make it everything that we need through the building utilization" whether putting in IT, dispatch or all of Parks & Rec and it would be leased back to the town at a 30-year lease.

"The questions around that is to have a third-party do something with that building versus us doing it reduces your cost by about anywhere from a half to three-quarters of the cost," Schneider said.

Schneider highlighted those three options and that there's no set direction that the community wants to move in on Memorial School currently—while acknowledging the boiler is working and at the end of its life span—is why the Finance Committee members voted no.

Mike Pelletier brought attention to the condition of Memorial School—citing a building study from 2023—and how an RFI was sent out about six to eight weeks ago about interest in purchasing or leasing the building from the town.

"If we're going to continue using that building, we're going to need a sprinkler system, we're going to need to come up to ADA regulations, we're going to need to redo all the bathrooms, we're going to need to deal with the pooling water on the roof, so is this \$400,000 today in 2026 going to become another \$300,000 in 2027 and another \$300,000 after that? Because in 2023, the cost was about \$1.3 million," Pelletier said.

Schneider responded, "the roof is going to need to be done at about \$350,000 within a year and a half."

Smith later clarified that the RFI is a request for information to see if anyone has any interest or ideas, but there are no timelines or numbers



**Mike Pelletier offered his perspective.**

currently. The municipality would take the next step "to further engage on that request for information" along with additional steps before conducting any further action.

Also, how there is "a little more gray area" on the three alternative options, which Schneider agreed was correct and those options were discussed with the FinCom, Parks & Rec Commission and Select Board meetings and included the BUC.

Sam Boyd, the facilities director, also elaborated on the costs and the upcoming roof cost.

"There are further capital costs down the road for sure, the roof being the biggest, and for the roof, we're starting around \$500,000, \$600,000 if we're lucky, likely pushing closer to \$1 million and that's only for the rear section of the building. Of course, we have the operating costs of the building—the operating budget. This new boiler and condensate return system won't make the building any warmer because I don't have the operating budget to pay for more heating oil," Boyd said. "So, this is just one step in improving Memorial if that's the way this body—or the town—decides to go, but certainly there are future Capital costs and operational budget concerns to upkeep this building."

Chris Duby said this. "The building that I see—and I have attended many things there—I see it's being utilized by a lot of different programs. It's, in my opinion, a mistake to not put upgrades into the building because if for—God forbid—the boiler that is the backup boiler they've been using for almost a decade goes and they have to mothball the building, it's just going to put the building

Please see **ATM**, page 4

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## Musical Storytelling & Folk Songs by Eli Elkus

WILBRAHAM - The Musical Storytelling & Folk Songs with Summer Reading Program theme: "Plant A Seed, Read," will take place at the Wilbraham Public Library on Wednesday, July 1, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Tales of travel, humanity, and treasures of the natural world; told, sang, and fingerpicked by Eli Elkus. This Musical Storytelling program weaves themes of the iREAD 2026 Summer Reading Program; "Plant a Seed,

Read," exploring culture, history, science, and human connection. Rekindled works of Folk, Country Blues, and Americana tell stories of humanity and our relationship with the land and its inhabitants throughout history. Original Songs & Stories crafted by Eli in various parks, forests, and towns in the Americas bring these themes into present day, telling tales whose merit fosters reverence and respect for the earth and dignity and liberty

for all its inhabitants, ecologically and socially. This family friendly program is layered in ways folks young and old can enjoy and participate in, singing and playing along to part of the program. Songs & Stories for the young, old, and young at heart.

This program is supported in part by a grant from the Wilbraham Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

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# Angelo J. Puppolo, Jr. running for re-election as State Representative

Cites resources, accessibility and need for continued strong, experienced leadership

SPRINGFIELD, EAST LONGMEADOW, MONSON, WILBRAHAM - State Representative Angelo J. Puppolo, Jr. officially announced that he is running for re-election to the 12th Hampden District, citing his ability to bring state funding to his district and his record on constituent services and accomplishments as hallmarks of his service in the Legislature. Puppolo also cited the need for strong, experienced leadership in this time of uncertainty.

The 12th Hampden District includes all of the Town of Wilbraham and parts of Springfield, East Longmeadow and Monson.

"I am seeking re-election to the House of Representatives to continue the progress we have made. I have the experience and the relationships in the Legislature to continue bringing more resources to our area, and I am not afraid to speak up and fight when it comes to advocating for our District. I have been able to make generational progress on some of the biggest challenges facing our district and the Commonwealth; but that work continues, and we need a proven leader who knows how to get real results. I'm energized to continue working for our district and be your voice fighting for all of us — as it's important that we continue to have experienced, strong leadership in Boston — now more than ever," stated Puppolo.

"I also believe it is incumbent upon elected officials to

be accessible and responsive to the people we serve. It is for this reason that I established, since day one, a full-time local constituent service office in Wilbraham to assist constituents with issues and to help get the answers and services we deserve. I am always available to respond to constituent needs and concerns and to help," added Puppolo.

Puppolo, a lifelong resident of the City of Springfield, received his law degree from Western New England University School of Law and is admitted to the Massachusetts and Federal Bar of the United States District Court, Federal Appeals Court and the United States Supreme Court. He also received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science from American International College and an Associate's Degree in Business Finance from Springfield Technical Community College. Puppolo is involved in the community in many civic and charitable organizations, including: The Springfield Elks, Moose Lodge, UNICO Club, Sons of Italy, ITAM Vets, Italian Cultural Center, Benefactor of the Irish Cultural Center, Meadows Lodge of Masons, and the Melha Shriners. He is a former member and past president of the Springfield City Council.

Puppolo has been a successful advocate on many issues for his district and his constituents, including increased funding for education, special education and school transportation; expanded access to free community college and high-quality, affordable preschool; no-cost school meals; child welfare protections, the PROTECT Act, increased programs and support for seniors and veterans, such as the new Veterans Home in Holyoke; senior

transportation, expansion of meals on wheels and senior stay-at-home programs. Puppolo was critical in securing funding for the new state-of-the-art Senior Center in Wilbraham and senior transportation vans in East Longmeadow and Monson.

"I know how to get things done, fight for issues that are important to our district and be the strong, common-sense voice at the State House. I am in close contact with my constituents and I will continue to fight for and address affordability issues, protecting our residents, better health care options for everyone, holding public utilities accountable to consumers and rate payers, West-East Rail, making sure a new courthouse is built in Springfield and dealing with the never-ending unpredictability from Washington D.C.," stated Puppolo.

Puppolo has also successfully supported projects that have driven economic development in his district, such as the newly-developed Springfield Crossing at the former Eastfield Mall that created hundreds of employment opportunities. Puppolo also helped secure \$5.5 million in funding to redevelop the former Monson Development Center. A new Minnechaug Regional High School was also built during his tenure, and a new East Longmeadow High School is currently under construction. Puppolo has also supported key legislation and funding to expand clean, green, affordable energy such as wind, solar and hydroelectric programs and



Representative Angelo Puppolo Jr.

rebates; initiatives that address affordability, climate change and rate payer protections.

Other issues that Puppolo has successfully supported and that are important to him are protecting and expanding election processes, including support of the Votes Act, and he is an advocate for same-day voter registration. Puppolo also continues to prioritize public safety and support of police, firefighters and EMTs; expanded access to high-quality, affordable health care; equal protection for all and marriage equality; increased cybersecurity privacy laws and guide rails for Artificial Intelligence usage and protection; and safe, affordable housing for residents.

Puppolo is a strong advocate for West-East Rail—a gamechanger for western Massachusetts jobs and further increased economic opportunities—and is working with State and Federal officials, such as Congressman Richard Neal, to make it a reality.

Throughout his tenure, Puppolo has been appointed by the Speaker of the House to serve in various leadership capacities, including House Chair of the Technology Committee, House Chair of the Export Development Committee and currently serves as House Chair of the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee. He is currently the Dean of the entire western Massachusetts Delegation, adding to his impact in Boston.

Puppolo is married to his wife, Isabel, and has two daughters.

## HPD CANDIDATE from page 1

that, potential 12-week field training portion before they are actually set to go on their own, on the street. About a year from now and that's unfortunately, that's the reality we face."

Bruno did note, however, if the candidate was presented to the board and tentatively approved with a conditional offer based upon acceptance into the academy and the psychological and medical examinations, "if that were to happen right now, there are plenty of seats in the academy."

"I've already confirmed with the director in Holyoke, so that's not an issue. We could get a seat," Bruno said. "The good thing about that if we go that route is that person's start date is not until day one of the academy. So, there's no salary, there's no cost going out. Also, as you know, contractually with the union, education incentive that's a once-a-year thing. We're beyond that period if we go with that person. So, potentially, that saves the

town quite a bit of money. It just involves waiting a longer period of time to get them on the street."

Chair John Flynn then asked Bruno about the vacancy's impact.

"How has the department been affected by not filling that spot?" Flynn said.

Bruno replied, "we're starting to feel it now" due to the end of the fiscal year and end of vacation periods, personal time and holidays, which he also wants to make sure his officers take.

"May and June are always the tough times. People are trying to burn down their time off. It's hard to fill those spots. Those cost overtime. So, we're at minimum with the 9 officers and we've been without this person for a long time," Bruno said. "I've not been able to fill my detective position, which is also the court position. Already this week I've had to send officers to court, had to do it last week several times for all the court activity, the hearings. I have to cover it myself sometimes. If we have an arrest, somebody has to bring that body to

court and I simply don't have it because I don't have my detective position filled. That's sort of the catch-all for that Monday through Friday. So, it comes at that expense. It's a difficult place to be."

On Flynn's question of how many in the reserve force, Bruno said six people, with hopes to increase this as well.

"Difficulty there is most full-time officers because of now post-certification, you have to be certified to do that. So, I can't just fill that like the old days with anybody who wants to be a part-time officer," Bruno said.

On Flynn's other question about why not bring in the officer who is already certified, Bruno explained "that's a discussion to have."

"Obviously, I have not made my final decision yet," Bruno said. "In the end, the cost is going to be about the same. So, this person starts now, and they start drawing salary and everyone who came into the interviews had at least a Bachelor's degree. So, a cost there in terms of education incentive—you

understand, you've seen the contract—so that cost and bringing that officer in versus bringing somebody new and the cost of the academy but not paying them for a period of time and then they're starting at—you know obviously—a step one there's a different rate of pay. It's negligible either way. It's simply when can they start."

Bruno again reiterated a final decision has not been made yet, and "it could go either way."

After further discussion, Flynn noted how Bruno had the three "viable candidates," including one "that would solve the vacancy thing in a much quicker manner."

Bruno then said this. "Hampden Police Department is a unique place. Like each individual police department, I want the person who's going to be best for the town and be best for the police department," Bruno said.

He hopes to come back to the board for their next meeting the following week with the candidate and decision, with more to come soon.

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## 'Dine-Out Day' at Krazy Jakes is June 17

A part of the fabric of the community

WILBRAHAM – The Wilbraham-Hampden Rotary Club will hold Dine Out Day at Krazy Jake's, 2537 Boston Road on Wednesday, June 17 all day according to Rotary Vice President Peter Salerno. Salerno said the Dine-Out Day is part of the fabric of the community when local businesses give something back to the community.

Krazy Jakes will donate 10 percent of their customers' meal check to the Rotary Club to support community services. The Dine Out event runs all day until 9 p.m.," said Salerno.

Diners must present a special coupon that they will receive upon entering the restaurant.

The Rotary Club said local, hometown restaurants remain deeply woven into American culture, with the majority of adults continuing to prioritize dining out, even when budgets tighten. And the community gets to benefit from the generosity of Jakes.

All proceeds from the Dine Out will go for community services that benefit everyone from school chil-



Rotary Vice President Peter Salerno (right) is joined by Krazy Jakes staff (left to right) Silvana Stawas, Scott Stawas and Nichole Spaulding in preparation for the Rotary Club's Dine Out fundraiser on Wednesday, June 17. (Charles F. Bennett photo)

dren to senior citizens. Some of the programs the club offers are the Dictionary Project where each third grader in Wilbraham and Hampden is given a hard copy of their own dictionary. The club also gives out nine \$2,000 scholarships to high school seniors at Minnechaug Regional High School, Wilbraham & Monson Academy and Pope Francis Prep School who are resi-

dents of the two towns.

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

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

## Puppolo announces grant awarded to the WFD to improve firefighter safety

BOSTON - State Representative Angelo J. Puppolo, Jr. is pleased to announce that the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety & Security and the Department of Fire Services has awarded the Town of Wilbraham's Fire Department a \$16,675.37 grant for the purchase of firefighter safety equipment. The grant will allow the de-

partment to obtain necessary personal protective and safety equipment that will make impactful improvements to the safety and long-term health of their personnel.

"I am pleased to support this funding which will help the Wilbraham Fire Department keep our dedicated firefighters safer," stated Puppolo. The grant program, now in

its 6th year, reimburses Massachusetts fire departments for a wide variety of equipment to protect firefighter safety/health and bring fire departments into compliance with national standards as defined by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

## Representative Puppolo announces \$120,000 for computer upgrades in Hampden-Wilbraham School District

BOSTON – State Representative Angelo J. Puppolo, Jr. is pleased to announce that \$120,000 has been secured for the Hampden-Wilbraham Regional School District. The funding will support district-wide computer replacement efforts and upgrades to computer graphics classrooms, ensuring students and educators have access to modern technology and learning resources.

"Investing in educational technology is an investment

in our students' future," said Representative Puppolo. "These funds will help provide students with the tools they need to succeed in today's increasingly digital world while supporting educators with updated classroom resources. I am pleased to see this funding included and remain committed to supporting investments that strengthen educational opportunities for students in our communities."

The funding will assist the district in maintaining

and upgrading essential technology infrastructure, helping to ensure that students have access to reliable equipment and enhanced learning environments.

This funding reflects Representative Puppolo's continued commitment to supporting local schools and advocating for state investments that improve educational resources and opportunities for students throughout the 12th Hampden District.

## Hampden native earns Doctor of Podiatric Medicine Degree

GLENDALE, AZ - Layla Mary Galavotti, D.P.M., of Hampden, Massachusetts, has completed the Doctor of Podiatric Medicine (D.P.M.) degree at the Arizona College of Podiatric Medicine (AZCPM) of Midwestern University. Confering of degrees took place in a graduation ceremony held at Midwestern University's Glendale Campus Auditorium on June 2, 2026.

Dr. Galavotti is the daughter of Hampden residents Capt. Louis (Joe) and Dr. Cynthia Galavotti. She graduated from Minnechaug High School in 2016 and



Layla Mary Galavotti

earned a B.S. in Biology from Sacred Heart Universi-

ty in 2020. After graduation, Dr. Galavotti plans to complete a podiatric residency program at Boston Medical Center in Boston, MA.

AZCPM's inaugural class graduated in June 2008. The four-year program trains Doctors of Podiatric Medicine (D.P.M.s) 3/4-physicians and surgeons who practice on the lower extremities, primarily on feet and ankles. It is the first podiatric medicine program in Arizona, where active lifestyles and the aging population contribute to the need for more podiatric physicians.

## Hampden Garden Club thank you

HAMPDEN - On behalf of the Hampden Garden Club, Lil Fedora, club president, would like to thank all that supported the

Hampden Garden Club by donating plants and allowing club members to dig plants from your gardens. Thanks to you, we had a

great selection and variety of perennials for our Memorial Day Plant Sale.

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ATM from page 1

into further disrepair and it'll at some point be at a point of no return," Duby said. "I feel like we got to stay in there to keep things going and keep it running. If we're not in there, it's just going to get worse. I fully support voting yes on this. I do believe that there's a lot of really good programs that are being held there and it would be a shame to see those go."

The final comment on Article 32 came from Kevin Farrell.

"I believe the weekly foot traffic into Memorial School is over 1,000 people each week are going there. So, as somebody who's actively involved in the extracurriculars of kids—as one of the many coaches who are here today—and understanding the importance of having a good facility for our kids to go play sports in and this includes the baseball fields which are part of that land. Mothballing that building and losing that building would lose a critical resource and access point for all the young athletes, not just basketball and wrestling. Pickleball inside the build-

ings, but there's also baseball that happens outside as well," Farrell said.

Farrell added it's time to support any plans the Parks & Rec Department may have, praising Director Bryan Litz for the work he oversaw with Spec Pond.

"I know he has plans. I would like us to get to a point where we can hear them out because I believe he's going to make the same thing happen again," Farrell said.

Finance Committee Member Xiomara Albán DeLobato explained the FinCom recommendation.

"One of the things that our financial body is responsible for ensuring, that we are investing appropriately for the present year for budgetary and also for the future years and we take that responsibility very, very seriously and making sure that we're forecasting for the next several years ahead, so we're looking at the various capital projects, various expenses that we will be seeing coming down to Wilbraham and how we need manage to that budget," DeLobato said. "So, that specific capital project is one."

After noting the budget

items and uncertainties mentioned earlier, DeLobato said this.

"For me as a resident and as a taxpayer here in town, I would prefer for our levels of investment going into our schools, going into the other buckets that are necessary for our municipality to function. And this does not really resonate as a type of expense that carries a lot of uncertainty when we need to invest in various other projects, like the middle school, for example, which will be coming down the line where we will have to have some major improvements next year and in the following," DeLobato said. "So, I would like that half a million and plus to go to some of those needed buildings, those needed assets in our community, especially when we're very uncertain about this property..."

After Stanley Soja suggested FinCom be present and come to future CPA meetings, Article 32 passed by majority.

As a result, residents will continue to access Memorial School as is right now for the many programs held there including sports and classes.



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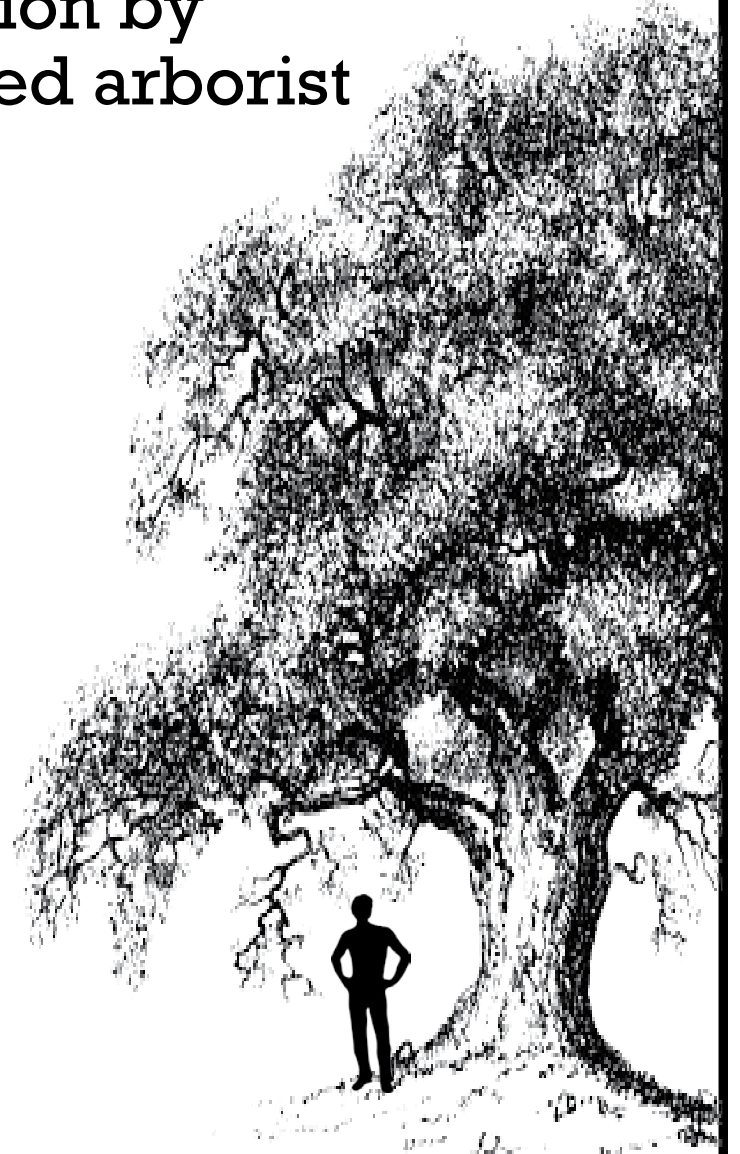


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**VIEWPOINTS**

**SOCIAL SECURITY Matters**  
By Russell Gloor

**I'm being released from incarceration. What are my Social Security options?**

Dear Rusty:

In a previous column, you wrote about people who filed for Social Security late in life.

I am currently incarcerated and will be filing for Social Security in the fall of 2029. I will be 74 years old in the first week of January 2029. Unless I read it wrong, could I be eligible to collect the previous six months?

If this is so, how would that work? Would I get that all at once or incrementally? According to the chart we once got in the mail, I should be collecting the maximum amount. I've worked all of my life and never collected Social Security before. Also, my ex-wife remarried and has since passed away. Do I qualify for part of her Social Security?

Signed, "D" in Danbury

Dear "D" in Danbury:

I'm afraid you cannot receive Social Security benefits while you are incarcerated, even if you are eligible for them prior to your release.

Thus, you cannot get retroactive Social Security benefits for any period you were still incarcerated. For clarity, although most who apply at a later age (e.g., in their 70s) do have the option to claim retroactive benefits, you cannot get any SS benefits for any month you were still incarcerated. Further, you will not get credit for delaying your application for SS benefits while you are incarcerated (you won't earn Delayed Retirement Credits during your incarceration).

Assuming (from what you shared) that you expect to be released from incarceration in the fall of 2029, you can apply for your SS benefits to start upon your release. Be aware, however, that it usually takes several months for your application for SS benefits to be processed and you can specify the month you

wish your benefits start.

Your benefit amount will be based upon your average monthly earnings for the 35 highest earning years over your lifetime. But you cannot get retroactive SS benefits for time prior to your release from incarceration. Since Social Security does not pay benefits for partial months, you can file for your SS benefits to start effective with the month following the month in which your incarceration ends. Be sure you have your official prison release documentation (parole or discharge papers) in hand when you apply for your Social Security benefits.

FYI, some correctional facilities have a "Pre-release Agreement" with Social Security, which may enable you to file for your SS benefits three to four months prior to your release from incarceration. Be sure to check with your facility to see if they have such an agreement with Social Security and, if so, use it to apply for your benefits in advance of your release. This will facilitate your SS benefits starting more quickly upon your release.

You did not ask about healthcare coverage, but since you will be eligible for Social Security, you will also be eligible for Medicare upon your release. When you apply for your Social Security benefits, you can also apply for Medicare Part B (coverage for outpatient medical services), the premium for which will be deducted from your Social Security payment. FYI, Medicare Part A (coverage for inpatient hospitalization services) is free and automatic because you are also eligible for Social Security.

Finally, regarding survivor benefits from your ex-wife, you can only get a surviving ex-spouse benefit if you were married for more than 10 years and

Please see **SSI**, page 19

**Bingo, brews and big queen energy are back!**

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

WEST SPRINGFIELD - By the time the first bingo number is called, the room at Fort Hill Brewery is already buzzing.

Friends clutch colorful bingo cards while balancing pints of craft beer. Someone in the corner is debating lucky numbers. Laughter cuts across the crowd as drag queen Tytannia Lockhart works the room in towering heels and a sparkling outfit. She roasts guests one minute and hugs supporters the next.

For Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity (GSHFH), "Bingo and Brews with the Queens" has become much more than a fundraiser. It's a celebration of the kind of community Habitat works to build every day — one where people feel welcomed, connected, and valued.

Back by popular demand, the event returns Sunday, June 14, from 12 to 3 p.m. at Fort Hill Brewery in Easthampton in partnership with House of Hors, a Western Massachusetts entertainment group known for creating accessible events that spotlight queer performers and local community causes. This year, Fanny Midnight Lockhart joins Tytannia.

What started as a creative collaboration quickly became one of Habitat's most talked-about events.

"It's just pure joy," said GSHFH Executive Director Aimee Giroux. "People come for the bingo and the queens,

but they leave feeling connected — not only to each other, but to Habitat's mission."

That mission has guided Greater Springfield Habitat since 1987. Over the past 39 years, GSHFH has built or repaired 135 homes throughout Hampden County, helping families achieve stability through affordable homeownership and home preservation programs.

But Habitat leaders say community-building happens long before walls go up or keys are handed over.

Events like Bingo and Brews create space for people from different backgrounds to come together in a way that feels relaxed, welcoming, and genuinely fun. It's part fundraiser, part social gathering, and part reminder that affordable housing work touches everyone.

For House of Hors co-founder Hors D'oeuvres, the partnership felt natural from the beginning.

"Drag has always existed in community spaces," Hors said. "There's joy in it, but there's also advocacy and visibility. Partnering with Habitat allows us to bring people together while supporting something that truly impacts families locally."

Guests can expect multiple rounds of bingo, prizes, craft beer from Fort Hill Brewery, and plenty of audience interaction from the emcees — whose quick wit and playful banter often become as memorable as the games themselves.

And while nobody takes the bingo too seriously, competition can get fierce.



Tytannia performs at last year's "Bingo and Brews with the Queens" event at Fort Hill Brewery in Easthampton.

"There are definitely people who come ready to win," said Olga Calligos, GSHFH Homeowner Services manager. "You'll hear cheering one minute and dramatic groans the next."

Organizers say the event's popularity reflects a growing appetite for community-centered experiences that feel authentic and inclusive rather than formal or transactional.

"It doesn't feel like a typical fundraiser," Olga said. "People are laughing, meeting new friends, and having a genuinely great afternoon — and at the same time, they're helping local families build brighter futures."

Tickets for Bingo and Brews with the Queens are \$30 and are expected to sell quickly. To purchase tickets, visit: [bit.ly/40NiUid](http://bit.ly/40NiUid).



**A question and an answer?**

Carole, who faithfully reads the column in the Wilbraham-Hampden Times each week, wrote in with this question for the Garden Lady:

"I am hoping you can provide me with some advice as to how to rid my garden of an incredibly invasive plant. It is called Houttuynia cordata or chameleon plant. I bought a single variegated plant about 25 years ago and now I literally have hundreds of them in my gardens and lawn. The plant is no longer variegated but reverted to green with red around the edges. For at least three or four years, I have been trying to dig them

out one by one which has been extremely difficult due to the long roots — some can be over a foot long — which become intertwined with other plants, choking them. I have not been very successful, despite spending hours at a time. And I painstakingly try to get every piece of root out. I am not sure if they are spreading solely through the roots or also from the flower pod seeds.

roots. Yet, at this point, I am open to the idea. I look forward to any suggestions you may have.

Incidentally, I just learned from the internet that it is considered to be a medicinal herb, which I find quite shocking, given how much I have come to dislike them! Thank you very much for your time and assistance."

Happy to help, Carole! It's funny you mention that this plant is a medicinal herb.

Some years back I was taking extract of Japanese Knotweed, another invasive plant, in my quest to cure late stage Lyme Disease. I guess most plants have some merit although some times it's hard to want to admit it, especially in the situation you are in.

While I have never grown Houttuynia cordata, I have dealt with similar invasive plants. Not always have I been successful, but here are a few tactics you can try.

If there is a way to smother, go for it. Try black plastic, a thick tarp or cardboard covered in mulch.

Eventually, if the plant can't photosynthesize, it will

die.

You are smart to try and remove every little bit of root when hand digging it out; it's kind of amazing how a tiny piece will start a whole new plant. For that reason, never take the rototiller to a patch of any invasive plant, especially those that spread by rhizomes. The roots will be dispersed throughout the garden.

I also read about cutting the stems of the plants and then "painting" the open cuts with herbicide. To me that sounds like a smart plan to get the chemical right to the roots. Time consuming, but targeted.

I'll be curious to know how you make out trying to rid your landscape of this plant.

Diane, who gardens in West Chesterfield, had a possible solution for my hyacinths getting cut off at the soil line.

"We had a great disappointment this spring when something chopped off most of our cultivated black berries. When I was trying to prune what was left and save

something I found the stalks laying on the ground but the tops were eaten. It looked like someone took a clean angle sweep with a hatchet to cut down the stalks. Then one evening at dusk we saw the culprit. It was about a 60 pound porcupine! He was chomping on our wild white rose bushes. He would bite the stalks off but since the rest of the bush wouldn't let the branch fall, he couldn't eat the top. What a mess. When I read your article I was thinking this might be the answer to the mystery."

Hmm, I will have to keep on the look out for a porcupine; you never know.

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

**The Wilbraham-Hampden TIMES**

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

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**Correction Policy**

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

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

**Election letters to the editor welcome**

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

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

**Campaign news**

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

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

*Life in &*

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

# WILBRAHAM HAMPDEN

## High Tea at HSC!

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Submitted photos and caption Wendy Cowles  
 On Monday, May 11, we had a High Tea at the Hampden Senior Center. Emily Vanasse from the Old Mill English Tea Room in Somers, CT came to the center to talk about the history of the Old Mill English Tea Room and about proper tea etiquette.

As you can see, we were decorated perfectly for the event and had tea sandwiches, desserts, tea and scones and clotted cream which was provided by the Tea Room.

## HAMPDEN MEMORIAL DAY WREATH



A Memorial Day wreath was presented by the Hampden Garden Club to the Hampden VFW 9397 during the ceremony held at the Hampden firehouse on Memorial Day. Club member, Cheryl Perrault, created the wreath and presented the wreath along with Lil Fedora, club president, to David Demers, chief commander, of the Hampden VFW 9397.

Submitted photo and caption Susan Austin



## Fishing Derby WINNERS

Submitted photo and caption Miranda Mues

This past weekend—Memorial Day Weekend—Wilbraham resident Marley Winship competed and won the prestigious Lady Ginger Carp Derby by catching a 37lb 11oz carp! Pictured is Marley and her dad Logan with the derby winning carp.

## Paint Sip Fun at WPL



The Wilbraham Public Library hosted two Paint Sip Fun workshops for children and adults on May 26. Erin Boughamer of Paint Sip Fun hosted the events, with fun had by all.

Submitted photos Emilie Lang



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Turley photos by Noelle Hisgen

Fire Capt. Dan Corliss speaks about Cody at the podium with the Porter family by his side.

**PORTER** from page 1

bond with him. They would do activities together such as taking rides in the firetrucks, washing the fire equipment and throwing a football in the parking lot.

Porter passed away unexpectedly at 31 years old, and at his service, members of the fire department stood next to his coffin and lined the sidewalk. The department also made him an honorary fireman and presented the Porter family with a plaque.

The tree was purchased by donations from coworkers of Cody's mother, Amy Porter, where they reached out to the fire chief to plant it at the station grounds.

At the dedication, members of the fire department, such as Captain Dan Corliss and Private Jeff Kristek, spoke on their experiences with Porter during his visits, reminiscing about all of the fun times they have had, and the positive impact that he has had on the station.

Along with the fire department, Porter's family members, including mother Amy Porter and sister Mavkenxie Dwarska, spoke about the impact he has had on them,



Cody's sister, Mavkenxie Dwarska, takes a moment to talk about Cody's life and impact on her.



Private Jeff Kristek takes a moment to talk about his experiences with Cody at the dedication.

and while he is not here physically, they always feel his presence with them each and every day.

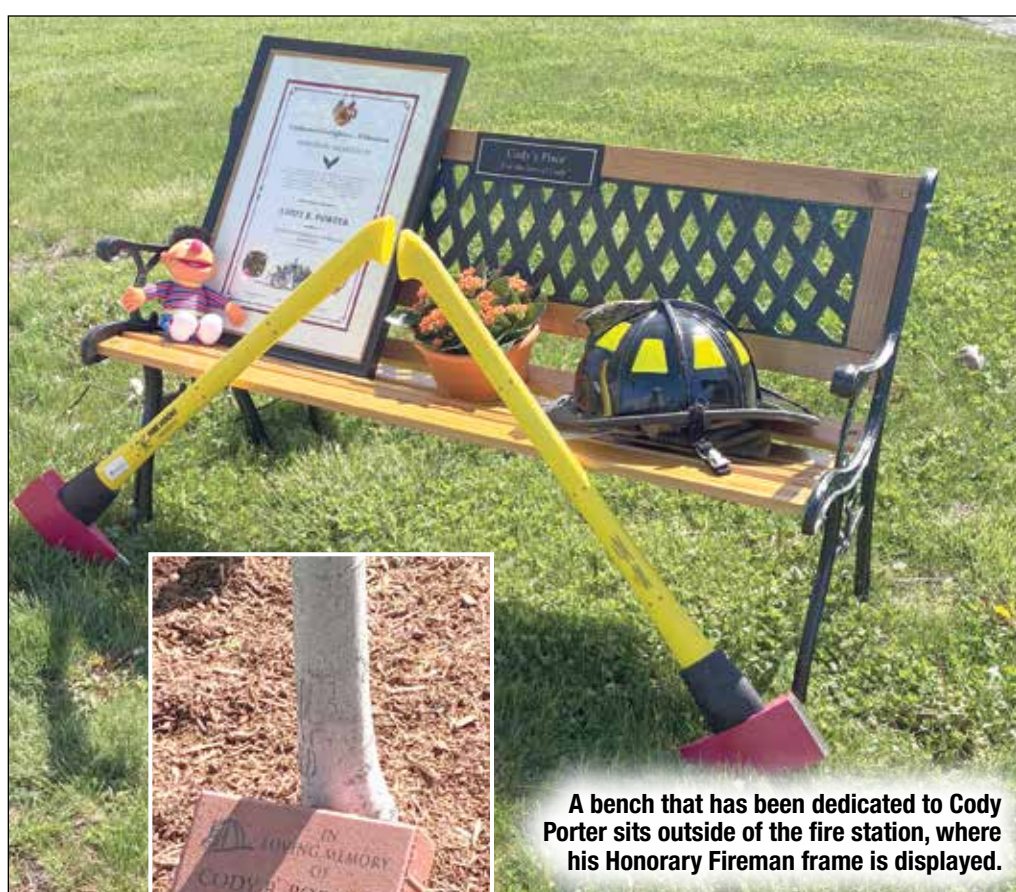
The dedication also featured speeches from Cody's past teachers and workers, such as Sandy Yarmac, one of Cody's teachers from Memorial School, and Erin, one of Cody's case workers from Sunshine Village, who talked about the positive experience that Cody has had in the classroom.

All of which wanted to ex-

press how much of an impact Cody has had on their lives, and how they want people to remember his humor, enthusiasm, and always contagious smile.

Fire Chief Michael Andrews took a minute to talk about Cody's impact on the station.

"Cody was somebody that came to visit the station for many, many years of his life," Andrews said. "He would come in here on the weekends, hang out with the fire-



A bench that has been dedicated to Cody Porter sits outside of the fire station, where his Honorary Fireman frame is displayed.



A tree is planted outside on the fire station grounds and a brick is placed honoring Cody.

fighters. He was a friend to everybody. It was a big part of the station. He came in to visit everybody, and they enjoyed having him here. After he passed, we wanted to do something, and we planted a tree in his honor. We thought it was the least we could do. It would be a reflection of him always being here. He was just somebody that made everybody happy when he came to the station. The firefighters don't deal with the best of things in their job, but having Cody come into the station all the time made things good and made us happy. He was always a welcoming presence in the station to bring happiness to everybody."

The ceremony ended with turning the firetruck lights and siren on, something that Porter always loved when he

entered the station and was with the fire department.

It was a beautiful dedication celebrating someone who has made such a profound im-

act on many members of the Wilbraham community, and will always be remembered by his friends at the fire department.



The crowd cheers as the fire department turns on the siren and lights on one of their firetrucks to honor Cody Porter.

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**SCHOLARSHIPS**  
from page 1

“They do a lot,” Mitchell said. “Whether it’s in their schools, sports, extracurriculars, but mainly our focus is involvement in the church, and these three gentlemen have been doing outstanding work in the church. It’s good to see that there’s Catholic young men that are interested in their faith and expanding their faith, and that these three exemplify that perfectly.”

The Knights have a Scholarship Committee, which is led by Chairperson Dr. Thomas Wadzinski.

“Certainly every year we get a large collection of applications,” Wadzinski said. “Something this year that kind of stood out with these three candidates is more of a theme of religious inspiration, and building a relationship with God and Jesus through their service to other people.”

Cody Erskine will be graduating from Minnechaug Regional High School, where he plans to attend the College of the Holy Cross in the fall this year.

Erskine’s essay highlighted the value of family helping drive his faith and church service.

“I’m very grateful for receiving this scholarship,” Erskine said. “I’m very grateful for the Knights of Columbus for selecting me.”

Michael McGrath will be graduating from Deerfield Academy, where he will be going to the College of the Holy Cross this fall. He will be majoring in economics and accounting, while also being a part of the golf team. McGrath’s essay highlighted the strength of his faith, and



**Scholarship Chairperson Dr. Thomas Wadzinski welcomes everyone to the scholarship dinner.**



**Joseph Slattery thanks those in the Knights and informs the audience about his future service endeavors.**



**Turley photos by Noelle Hisgen  
Cody Erskine thanks the Knights of Columbus at the scholarship dinner.**



**Michael McGrath takes a moment to talk about his faith at the scholarship dinner.**

how he always knows God’s presence will always be with him.

“I’m very blessed. I’ve put a lot of work into my community, and I’m glad that I was able to receive this scholarship, it means a lot to me,” McGrath said.

Joseph Slattery will be graduating from Pope Francis Preparatory School, where he will be going to Texas A&M University majoring in aerospace engineering. Slattery’s essay highlights volunteer

service, and how his faith pushes him forward too.

“It’s really a blessing. It’s absolutely amazing the things that these people (The Knights) do for our town, and just the recognition of other services that I’m going through at this time at Pope Francis,” Slattery said.

It was a wonderful evening to celebrate three high school seniors who have made significant efforts of service in their school, town and church communities.

**Art Show at Hampden Senior Center**

HAMPDEN - Spring is here and summer is just around the corner. So is the 8th Annual Juried Art Show of the Scantic River Artisans. The title of the show is “Celebrate Art”. It will be held in the Community Room of the Hampden Senior Center on June 13 and 14. Hours on Saturday are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Sunday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. There will be a free art raffle for a painting by member, Joyce Donavan. Refreshments will be available on both days with live music on Sunday. A reception with many of the artists will be from noon to 2 p.m. on Sunday, with awards being presented at 2 p.m. The Senior Center is located at 104 Allen Street.

Judges for this year’s show include Alex Ranniello an award-winning artist from Enfield, CT, with a focus on portrait and figure painting. He has been featured in over 120 group and solo shows in the Tri-state region. The other juror is Elisa Moser, a contemporary painter originally from Springfield, MA, whose works reflect classical realist methods. She has studied this method extensively and has a studio in South Hadley, MA.

Only jury selected works will be on display at this show so you can be sure of the high quality of the art. All works are original and



will be available for purchase.

Scantic River Artisans have participated in numerous shows and won many awards. The June 2026 show will include wall art in Oil, Watercolor, Acrylic, Pastel, Mixed Media, and Sculpture. Something for everyone to appreciate. Many SRA artists were featured at the recent Monson Arts Council juried show. SRA member Brian McQuillan won 1st Place for sculpture “Ma”. Honorable Mention went to Donna Villamaino for her painting “Path to Memories”. Works from these artists will like-

ly be found in the upcoming show at the Senior Center.

Scantic River Artisans mission is to connect the community through diverse, dynamic, and creative experiences. SRA provides opportunities for local artists of all ages and skill levels to explore, develop, and market their creations. The group has over 65 members from Wilbraham, Hampden and surrounding towns.

For more information about the Scantic River Artisans visit their website at <https://www.scanticriverartisans.com/>

**Summer Kick Off Luncheon set for June 12**

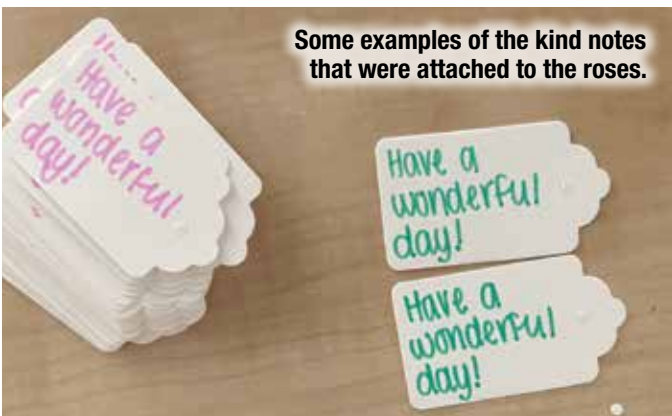
HAMPDEN - The senior center is hosting a Summer Kick Off Luncheon & 250th Celebration of America Friday, June 12 at Noon.

Enjoy a delicious lunch

of BBQ Chicken, Potato Salad, Corn and Cornbread provided by Greater Springfield Senior Services and stay for musical entertainment provided by “The Boomers”.

Cost is \$6 (\$3 suggested donation for lunch and \$3 for entertainment)

Please RSVP by calling 566.5588 today!



Some examples of the kind notes that were attached to the roses.

Turley photo by Riddhi Patel

**PETAL IT FORWARD**  
from page 9

were a little bit quieter. She wouldn’t hesitate to go out of her way to make someone else’s day a little better.

One day, Busbey noticed a girl who was sitting alone at lunch, and sat with her and started a friendly conversation.

After she passed away, the girl from lunch approached Sarah Busbey and told her how she was going through a rough patch that day. Her daughter’s act of kindness helped her through her situation.

“Not all hurts are evident,” Sarah Busbey said. “You have no idea the impact you have with a smile or kind gesture.”

Every year, the students of Above the Influence Club at Minnechaug and their advisor, Jay Dalessio, connect with Sarah Busbey through a Google Meet as she shares the purpose of the organization and her story. She also donates 500 roses and notecards

every year to Minnechaug.

Members of the club come together to assemble the roses and handwrite gentle notes. The roses and notecards are then distributed during the last full week of school for seniors. Each person gets two flowers: one for themselves and one to give to another person. Thus, the name: Petal it Forward.

“We’ve heard so many stories afterwards about students who kind of felt invisible and this made them actually feel like they were part of the community,” Sarah Busbey said.

The idea is to spread acts of care, improve mental health and is meant for anyone who will benefit from a kind gesture. As seniors transition into college, they may go through challenging moments during which small acts of kindness can make a huge impact.

The roses are a way to send them off with positivity. Nevertheless, the flowers are meant for anyone who is in need of a little kindness and gratitude from friends.

S	W	A	K		S	U	B		B	E	R	N					
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**Aug. 3-7:** Step Into The Movies  
**MISS GRACE & MRS SHANNON**

**Aug 11-14:** Itty Bitty/Mini/Jr. Team Intensive (5-8:pm)  
**ALL TEACHERS**

**Aug 17-20:** Teen/Sr. Team Intensive (4-8pm)  
**ALL TEACHERS**

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**JULY 7-30**

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**WEDNESDAY**  
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5:00 Predance/Ballet Fairytales (age 3-6)  
6:00 Ballet/Jazz/Tap/Acro (4 -7)  
6:00 Tap (age 7+)  
7:00 Ballet/Technique (age 8+)

**THURSDAY**  
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5:00 Hip Hop 2 & 3 (age 11+)  
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7:00 Jazz Style & Strength&Conditioning (12+)

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# Congratulations Minnechaug Regional High School Class of 2026

**CLASS OF 2026** from page 1

2027 Class President Lucy Haile served as this year's Class Marshall.

There was also a moment of silence held in tribute to Elijah Moskvitch, a senior who passed away in April. This year's rope to note the reserved seats for the graduating seniors were paper streamers filled with words and messages of kindness from the MRHS student body in his memory; this was later presented to the Moskvitch Family, who were recognized at the ceremony.

Hale also read Moskvitch's name as the first graduating senior of this year's class in his honor as well.

This year's valedictorian is 2026 Communications Officer Aidan Dzierwinski, who is graduating with a 4.81 GPA and will attend the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The salutatorian, meanwhile, is 2026 Class President Anthony Cianflone, who is graduating with a 4.79 GPA and will attend Brown University.

Cianflone reflected on how the last 12 years went by "in the blink of an eye," from sitting for read-alouds of Dr. Seuss in first grade at Mile Tree to walking into the first day of freshman assembly at Minnechaug.

"In a blink of an eye, we arrived here. As your worlds grow brighter, it's important

to remember those dreams you dreamt. If these past few hours have taught me anything, it is that we have to step away from those distractions and savor the time we have together. So when you wake up, whether it be tonight, or when you graduate from college, or when you turn 80 years old, pay attention. Look at the way the sun glimmers off the morning dew. Smile and chat with the cashier at Big Y. Or go out and invite a friend for a cup of coffee," Cianflone said. "We will have our struggles. We live in a world with formidable challenges. In many ways, we are a nation divided. But, don't be discouraged. Pay attention to the world on your horizons. Your day, from this night onwards, is determined by what you make of it."

Boudreau emphasized the power of perseverance and how it's actually "not one dramatic moment, but a thousand small ones that mostly went unseen," shared by parents and families to teachers, coaches, counselors, staff and friends.

"You did not get here alone, you did not get here perfectly, but you got here together. Whether your memories were made in classrooms, on fields and courts, on stage and clubs or simply in the hallways between them, you have helped shape this school. All of those moments and all of those places are the spirit



From the left, 2026 Class President and Salutatorian Anthony Cianflone, 2026 Vice President Callan Blanchard, 2026 Class Secretary Molly Kinsman, 2026 Communications Officer and Valedictorian Aidan Dzierwinski, Graduation Speaker Aiden Whitaker and Vocal Performer Laila Hosnander.

of Minnechaug and it's yours to carry with you now," Boudreau said.

Whitaker had the audience do an experiment of rock, paper, scissors to show how you both need hard work and luck

for success.

"In the real world, you're going to get 'crushed' like rock, 'cut' like paper, or 'covered' up by challenges. But the key is that you keep playing the game, even when the hand

you're dealt feels like a losing one. That persistence is what turns a regular rock into every single person I see in front of me today," Whitaker said. "The piece of paper we receive tonight isn't just a re-

ward for 12 years of school, but a promise fulfilled. A pact that was written in stone. You made it to this point in the

Please see **CLASS OF 2026**, page 11

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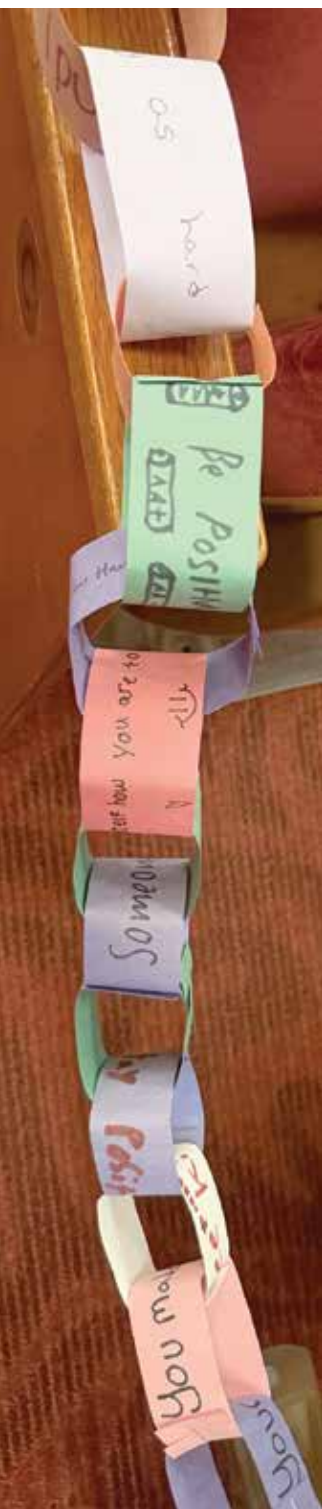
# Minnechaug Regional High School



Isabella Boudreau and her mother, School Committee Chair Michael Boudreau, hug.



A graduate shakes hands with School Committee Member Sean Kennedy.



### CLASS OF 2026 from page 10

journey, where you learned how to be a functioning citizen in society. But tonight you make a new promise. A vow to make a positive impact, whether it's alongside each other or alone, it is a promise not to give up."

After noting the numerous talents and accomplishments of the 2026 class, Hale brought up Elizabeth Johnson, Gabriella Bermudez, Callan Blanchard, Issiah Carattini, Mason Jones, Chloe Kuklinski, Emily Benoit, Zachariah Kozub, Nina Semanie and Matthew VanDerBeken to compete in "Are You Smarter Than A School Committee Member?" against the School Committee and district admin team, with Cianflone and Dzierwinski as scorekeepers. The students won and received personalized MRHS hackey-sack balls.

Hale noted this in his principal's message.

"So, why do we do these crazy things?" Hale said. "You do something that's strange to help you remember this moment in time. There's 3,000 people in this room who are so proud of you, love you so much and we talked at rehearsal today. It's a hard moment for the adults, because

they see this as the end of your childhood. It's a hard transition for us old people, but just know that everything that we do here—as crazy it might be—it's all because of how we care about you."

Provost noted the class graduating weeks ahead of America's 250th birthday and shared the stories of Sybil Ludington and John Greenwood, two ordinary teens who left extraordinary impacts. He advised the class to listen to their inner voice.

"Whether you are motivated by what you see in the world or your own inner calling, the most important thing is just to pick a direction and start traveling. You don't have to have it all figured out. None of you has a crystal ball. Ludington couldn't have known whether the militia would respond to her call to arms. When Greenwood started his long walk with no money and no real skills, there's no way he could have known that he would end up as the Presidential dentist. And none of you has the slightest inkling what life has in store for you. So just pick a direction that seems sensible and start," Provost said.

After the diplomas were handed out with tears shed, selfies taken, cheers and applause, Hale ended the ceremony with this.

"Ladies and gentlemen, it is my honor to present the newest alumni of Minnechaug Regional High School, the Class of 2026!" Hale said.

Turley photos by Kristin Rivers

A closeup of the messages the Minnechaug Regional High School student body left on the paper streamers in tribute to Elijah Moskvitch.



A graduate shakes hands with School Committee Member Sherill Caruana, who was beaming with pride and excitement.

Savannah Loubier walks back to her seat while holding her rose.



As graduates went down the line, they received a final hug from Principal Dr. Steve Hale.

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# Minnechaug Regional High School



The graduates cheer after receiving their diplomas.



ABOVE: It was a surreal night for graduates as they took group photos together on graduation night.



Time for a family photo!



Ahead of the doors opening, seniors gathered outside Symphony Hall for group photos with friends and classmates.



Elizabeth Woytowicz waves.



Laila Hosnander performs.



2026 Class President and Salutatorian Anthony Cianflone presents his speech.

*Congratulations*  
**Nylie**


We are so proud of you. You worked extremely hard to graduate early and get accepted to the college of your choice. We wish you the best at Elms College. Keep working hard.



Love, Mom & Dad

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**Congratulations Class of 2026!**



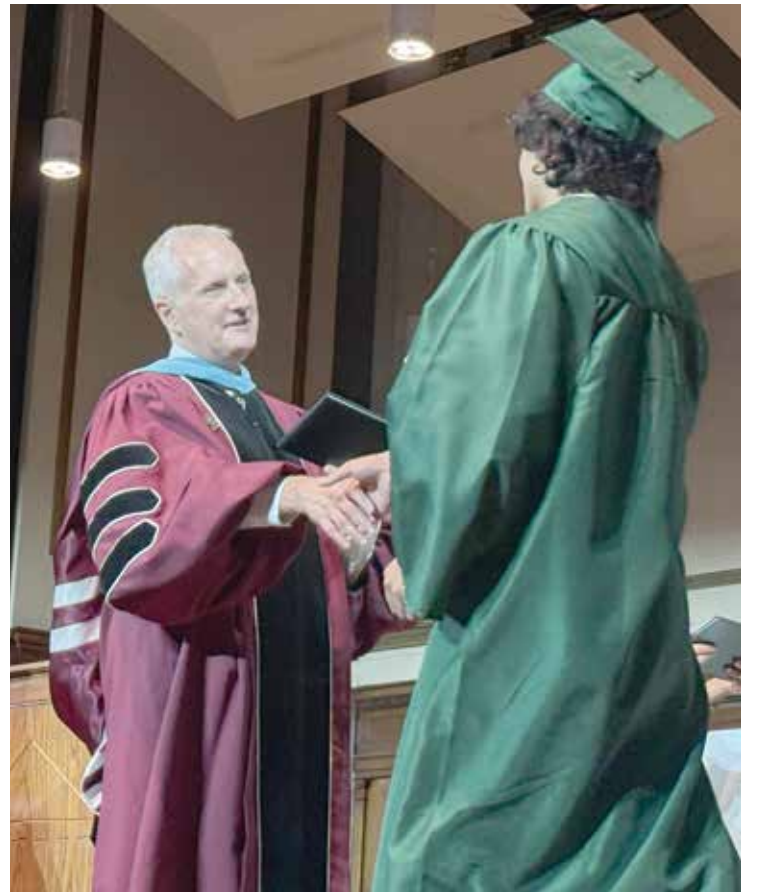
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# Minnechaug Regional High School



School Committee Member Timothy Collins shakes hands with Elizabeth Johnson during the "Are You Smarter Than A School Committee Member?" matchup. Johnson won her round answering a question about what a 14 line form of poetry is, which is a sonnet.

The walk to the diploma also provided an opportunity to acknowledge the audience of classmates, family members and friends.

Superintendent Dr. John Provost shakes hands with one of the graduates.



ABOVE: Also can't forget the selfie moment, as Benjamin Latourelle did here.



Lisa Curtin, director of curriculum, shakes hands with Issiah Carattini during the "Are You Smarter Than A School Committee Member?" matchup. Carattini won his round answering a question about the name of the first computer virus, which was "The Creeper."


Maxwell Baroni begins his walk to receive his high school diploma.

Desyrée Charles smiles as she walks to get her diploma.

Journey Waters-Brown begins the walk to the diploma.



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**CLASS OF 2026**

**Congratulations GRADUATES**

We wish you all the best in your future endeavors!

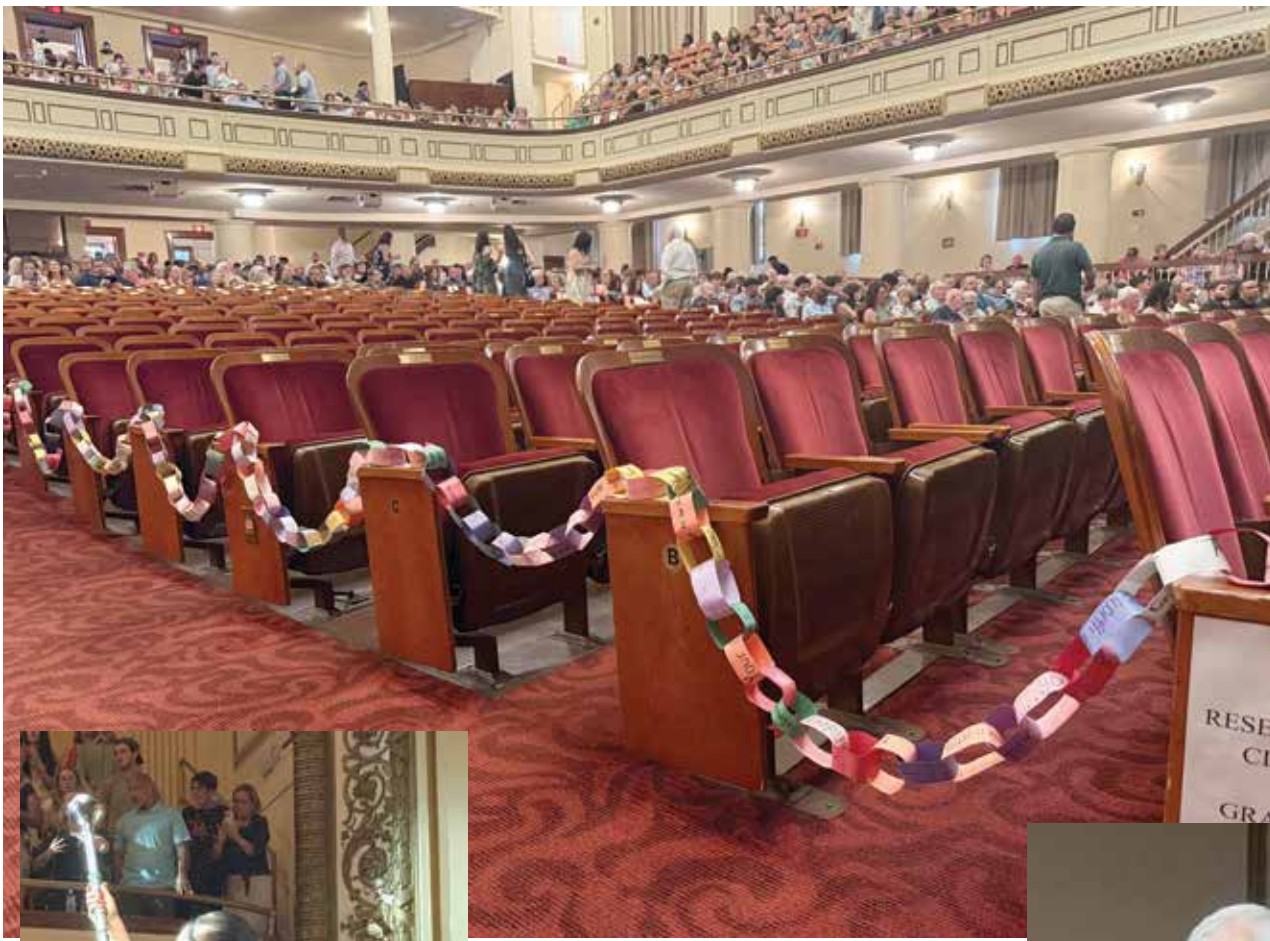
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# Minnechaug Regional High School



Graduation Speaker Aiden Whitaker shares his thoughts on 80% hard work and 20% luck being the secrets of success, along with always learning along the way.

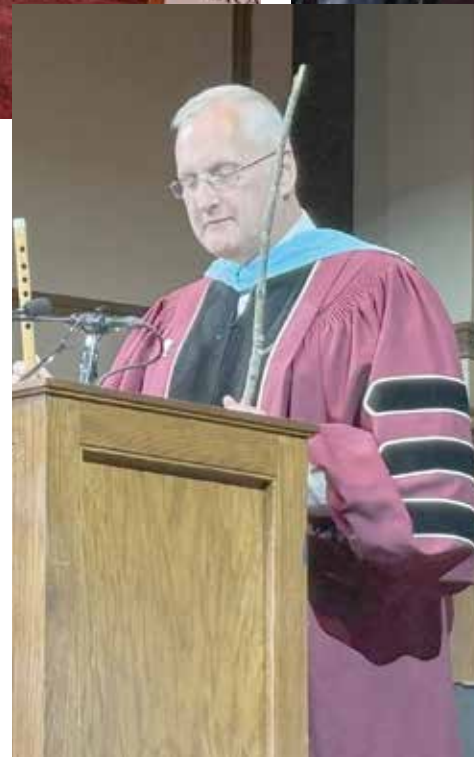


2027 Class President Lucy Haile served as this year's Class Marshall.

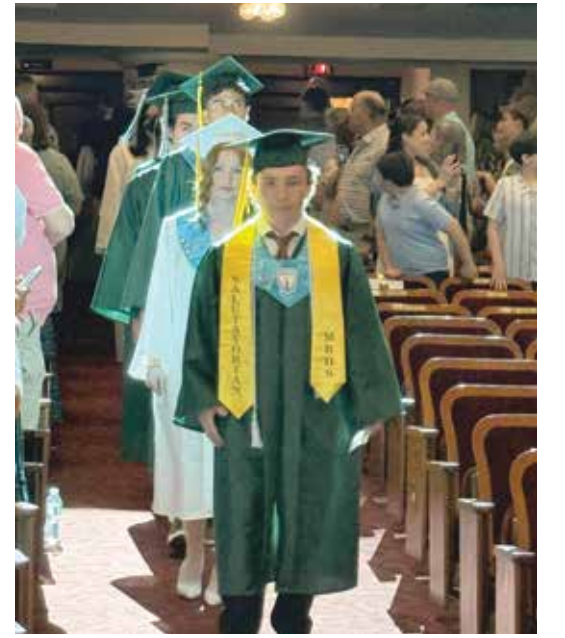
The paper streamers alongside the reserved seating for this year's graduation in memory of Elijah Moskvitch, a senior who passed away in April.



School Committee Chair Michal Boudreau provided remarks on perseverance.



Superintendent Dr. John Provost holds up a stick and a fife, objects symbolizing the stories of Sybil Ludington and John Greenwood.



2026 Class President and Salutatorian Anthony Cianflone leads the other processional as the graduation ceremony begins.

**Congratulations to the MRHS Graduates!**

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# SPORTS

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## Season ends for Chaug girls lacrosse in state tourney



Peyton Lee makes a run for the goal.



Aubrey Stachowicz takes a shot.

WILBRAHAM – The Minnechaug Regional High School girls lacrosse team had a very busy tournament season. The Falcons would reach the Western Mass. finals on May 19, falling to East Longmeadow 10-6. The Falcons then moved into the Division 2 State Tournament. They first started with a matchup against Plymouth North, winning 17-5 to open the Round of 32. But Minnechaug's season came to an end against Reading Memorial 13-0. Minnechaug finished with an overall record of 13-8.



Olivia Gaudreau gets ready to head up the field.



Sophia Kozub receives a pass.

Turley photos by Sofia DiGrande

Sophia O'Connor tries to defend against an opposing player.



## Tri-County Baseball season opens up

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

THORNDIKE—PeoplesBank has captured the Tri-County League championship title the past twelve years.

Teddy Bear Pools and Spas and the St. Joseph's Saints are two of the TCL teams looking to end the PeoplesBank dynasty this summer.

The first meeting of the regular season between the two squads was an old fashion slugfest.

Teddy Bear Pools pounded out 17 base hits leading to a 12-6 victory over the Saints at St. Joe's Park, last Friday night.

"It's always a lot of fun whenever we play against St. Joe's, especially at this field," said Teddy Bear Pools player/coach Ryan Magni. "We had trouble scoring runs last year, but we did the job offensively, which made the difference in tonight's game."

The road win improved Teddy Bear Pools record to 2-0.

Before moving to Teddy Bear Pools, Magni played eight seasons for St. Joe's. His brother, Brandon, is listed on the Saints roster, but he didn't play in last Friday's game.

"I played eight seasons for St. Joe's," Magni said. "I'm still friends with a lot of their players."

One of those players is St. Joe's player/coach Brian Hayes.

"Ryan and I are good friends," Hayes said. "We talked on the phone for an hour earlier today. I also have a batting cage at my house that he uses."

St. Joseph's entered the home game with a 3-0 record.

The winning pitcher was Matt Drobiak, who graduated from South Hadley High School. The righthander allowed four runs on six hits during the first four innings. He walked one and struck out one.

"In the Tri-County League, a starter only needs to go four innings to be the winning pitcher," said Magni, who pitched the final three innings to earn the save. "Matt pitched very well in tonight's game. I also coached him at Holyoke Community College the past two years."

Magni, who began last Friday's game at second base and had two base hits, took over as the baseball coach at HCC in 2022. He isn't going to return to that position next spring.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Matt Drobiak delivers a pitch home.

Drobiak had a 3-0 lead to protect before throwing his first pitch in the bottom of the first inning.

Teddy Bear's first three runs against righty Jack Feltovic scored on RBI singles by catcher Willie Landman (3-for-5), third baseman Ramon Jimenez (3-for-4), and centerfielder Xavion Maldonado, who also finished the game with three base hits.

Feltovic worked the first three innings. He was replaced on the mound by Trey Yesu, who was the ace of the Bridgewater State University pitching staff during the past couple of years. Yesu graduated from Monson High School.

The home team responded in the bottom half of the opening frame with a double by centerfielder Pat Fitzgibbons (2-for-4), which scored shortstop Devin Slattery, who leadoff with a single to left.

Slattery, who graduated from Ware High School, was named as the Tri-County League MVP last year. He led his team with three base hits against Teddy Bear Pools.

The visiting team put two more runs on the right field scoreboard with two outs in the second inning.

Shortstop Ray Toth, who graduated from Granby High School, doubled home the first run. He scored when Jimenez blasted a triple to right field.

Teddy Bear Pools, who are playing their home games at South Hadley High School, scored another run in the third giving them a 6-1 lead.

St. Joe's, who had nine

Please see **TRI-COUNTY**, page 16



Jenna Kalwa settles the ball.



Laci Lewis turns play around.



Caleigh Foley sends a quick pass away.

## Busy schedule continues for Mutiny

LUDLOW – The New England Mutiny continues double duty, playing in both the UWS and USL-W leagues. Last week, they were in action for two games, facing both the Maine Mystics in a UWS game, then followed that with a USL-W game against rival AC Connecticut. Neither final score was reported. The Mutiny were in action earlier this week against Hudson Valley and next face the Maine Footy on Saturday, June 13.

Bella Meadows, of Chicopee, gets the stop.



Kendall Bodak, of Monson, tries to settle the ball.

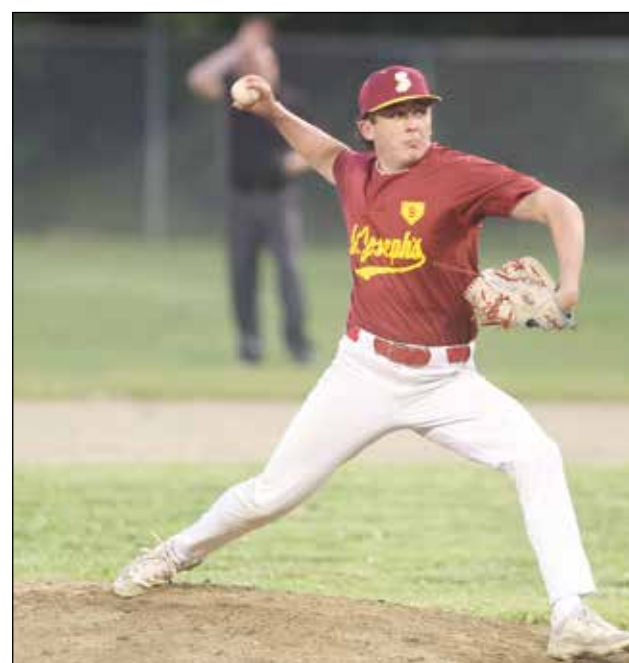


Rachel Marchini winds up for a free kick.



Kayleigh Lukasik rears back for a touch.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com



Trey Yesu pitches for St. Joe's.

## SPORTS

# Blue Sox grab win over Ocean State

HOLYOKE— Through four innings on the Valley Blue Sox's Hall of Fame Night on Saturday, the difference between the Blue Sox and the Ocean State Waves was largely on the mound. Ocean State (0-3) used a pair of walks and a hit by pitch to spark a four-run fourth inning and take a 5-1 lead. Valley (1-0-1) answered in the eighth, scoring four runs with help from an error, two hit by pitches, a walk and a wild pitch, to complete a 6-5 comeback in the ninth at Mackenzie Stadium.

The full nine innings offered an early-season snapshot of the realities of summer baseball. Pitchers and hitters alike are adjusting to new roles, players have to click with new teammates almost immediately and it is the first competitive action many have seen in weeks.

For the Blue Sox, the turning point began after starter Jackson Hinchliffe navigated five innings despite running into trouble in the middle frames. After retiring six of the first seven batters he faced, Hinchliffe allowed five runs across the third and fourth innings, accompanied by two walks and a hit by pitch.

Rather than making an early move, Valley allowed the right-hander to finish out five innings and throw a total of 75 pitches. The decision proved significant as Gregory Bruno, Maddex LaBuda and Jake LeFrancois combined for four scoreless innings out of the bullpen, limiting Ocean State to one hit and walk while keeping the deficit at four runs.

"We kept it there," Blue Sox head coach John Raiola said. "Bruno, LaBuda and LeFrancois came in and kept it at five runs, giving us a chance." That chance came for Valley in the eighth.

Ocean State reliever Max Marchetti entered after Sawyer Deering delivered four scoreless innings in relief. Marchetti pitched just 0.1 innings for Northeastern this spring and did not appear during the previous two seasons while redshirting.

Valley's rally began with-out a hit. Scott Donahue reached on a throwing error by shortstop Justin Hackett before Anthony Tirado was hit by a pitch, leaving two ducks sitting on the pond with no outs.

After both runners advanced, Anthony Grabau drove in the Blue Sox's second run of the game with an RBI groundout. Trevor Harmon followed with a single to center field that cut the deficit to 5-3.

Ocean State's command troubles continued from there. Eddison Esquivel was hit by a pitch, and Chris Carson worked a walk to load the bases. Brett Rogers then brought home another run with a groundout before a wild pitch allowed Trevor Harmon to score from third and Esquivel to score from second, tying the game at 5-5.

By the time the Waves' Andrew Jacobs entered to relieve Marchetti and record the final out of the inning, Valley had sent eight batters to the plate and scored four runs on just one hit.

"When you have traffic on the bases late in the game, it just creates some pressure," Raiola said.

The sequence continued an uneven opening week for Ocean State's pitching staff. The Waves entered Saturday having issued 13 walks in a 20-1 loss to Danbury on Friday, and they also allowed runs to score on wild pitches in Thursday's game against Bristol.

Raiola said both teams are still adjusting to the unique circumstances of summer baseball.

"All of our guys are in unfamiliar spaces [and] so are they," Raiola said. "You see some guys pitching in spots or playing positions that they don't normally play a lot at school."

The Blue Sox completed the comeback in the ninth when Nico Soul singled, advanced on an error and scored on Tirado's RBI single to secure the 6-5 victory.

# WMass Pioneers score shutout of Rush

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW—Ben Alexander and Martin Echarren are two of the first-year members of the Western Mass. Pioneers.

The duo played key roles in the Pioneers 1-0 shutout victory over the Connecticut Rush before a large crowd at historic Lusitano Stadium, last Friday night.

"We really needed to win tonight's game, especially after we lost our last game," said Pioneers head coach Federico Molinari. "We just need to keep up with the other teams that are ahead of us."

The home win improved the Pioneers season record to 3-1-0. Their only setback came six days earlier at home against NEFC, 4-2, who's currently sitting in first place in the USL League Two Northeast Division table.

NEFC, who's a second-year member of the USL League Two, had a perfect 6-0 record after their first six matches.

Vermont Green FC, who are the defending National Champions, are sitting in second place with a 4-0-0

record followed by the Pioneers in third place.

The Pioneers won't be facing NEFC again during the regular season. Their only meeting versus the Vermont Green is slated to take place at Lusitano Stadium on July 10, which is the regular season finale.

The Conn. Rush are sitting in fourth place with a 2-2-1 mark.

The top two finishers in the league standings will qualify for the USL-League two playoffs in July.

The Pioneers began the regular season by playing three of the first four matches in front of their faithful supporters.

Alexander, who's the Pioneers starting goalkeeper, posted a 1-0 road shutout against the Seacoast United Phantoms on May 20. The Western Mass. squad posted a 4-2 win over the Albany Rush in the season opener.

The only goal of last Friday's match was scored on a penalty kick by Echarren during the 39th minute of the opening half.

Referee Carlos Garcia awarded the PK after Thomas Wadas, who graduated from Ludlow High School a year ago, was fouled in the

box after stealing the ball away from a Rush player.

Echarren stepped up to the spot and lined a shot into the upper right corner of the net past goalie Michael Sipples. It was his third goal of the season.

"I had a lot of confidence that I would be able to make the PK," Echarren said. "I made a couple of penalty kicks for my college team."

Echarren, who's from Tandil, Argentina, was a freshman on the University of Charleston men's soccer team last fall. He was selected as the Mountain East Conference Freshmen of the Year after scoring nine goals. He also had four assists.

The Pioneers managed to hold onto the 1-0 advantage for the rest of the match.

Alexander made a total of nine saves in recording his second shutout.

"It felt really good to post another shutout," said Alexander, who's from Chilliwack, British Columbia, Canada. "During the course of the game, I did a lot of talking with my defense. I just wanted to make sure we were on the same page. I've really enjoyed playing for the Pioneers."

The Pioneers defensive

unit is led by Jaiden Willems, Dylan Hunston, Vasco Teixeira, and Yigit Kilic.

Alexander began his collegiate soccer career at the University of South Carolina.

The Gamecocks are a member of the SEC in every sport, including the women's soccer team, except in men's soccer. The men's soccer team are members of the Sunbelt Conference.

"Not a lot of the SEC schools have a men's soccer team," Alexander said. "That's why the South Carolina men's soccer team compete in the Sunbelt Conference."

After two seasons playing at South Carolina, Alexander decided to transfer to Boston University.

"It was just time for a change," he said. "The B.U. soccer team has been doing very well during the past couple of years."

Alexander will be playing one more season for the Terriers before he graduates.

The Rush outshot the Pioneers, 9-8.

The Pioneers will be playing four straight road matches before returning home to face the Boston Bolts at 7:30 pm on June 19.

# Stafford hosts Casella Waste SK 80 event

STAFFORD SPRINGS, CT – Stafford Speedway was back in action on Friday, June 5 with the Casella Waste SK 80, the \$3,000 to win first leg of the Sign Pro Triple Crown. Jon Puleo was the big winner of the night, using a dominating drive to notch his first win of the 2026 season in the Casella Waste SK 80. Michael Bennett was a Late Model winner for the first time in nearly 5 years at Stafford, Jason Finkbein came out a first-time SK Light feature winner after an eventful finish, Rich Hammann scored his first win of 2026 in the Limited Late Model feature, and Ryan Waterman took down what is already his fourth win of 2026 in the Street Stock feature.

In the Casella Waste SK 80 feature, Glen Reen charged around polesitter Jon Puleo to take the early race lead. Puleo came right back to the inside of Reen on lap-2 to move to the front. Bryan Narducci was third in line with Marcello Rufrano in fourth and Michael Christopher, Jr. fifth. The caution came out with 4 laps complete as Frank Ruocco got into the turn 3 wall and the cars of Wade Gagner, Josh Zentek, and Ethan Durocher all spun.

Reen took the lead back from Puleo on the restart but again Puleo took one lap behind Reen before he went back into the lead. Narducci took second with Rufrano and Reen now wheel to wheel for third and Christopher

in fifth. Narducci made a move to the inside of Puleo on lap-9 but Puleo still had the lead by a nose at the line and he went back in front of Narducci on lap-10. Rufrano won the duel with Reen for third but he now had Christopher to his inside and Christopher took third place on lap-11. Reen was still fifth with Tyler Chapman, Noah Korner, Andrew Molleur, Mikey Flynn, and David Arute making up the top-10.

Puleo was starting to stretch out his advantage over Narducci in second and with 22 laps complete the running order was Puleo, Narducci, Christopher, Rufrano, Reen, Chapman, Molleur, Flynn, Korner, and Arute. Nickolas Hovey spun in turn 2 to bring the caution flag out with 26 laps complete.

Puleo took the lead on the restart with Christopher moving into second. Reen was side by side with Narducci for third with Molleur and Rufrano side by side for fifth place. Reen briefly took third on lap-29 but Narducci came right back and maintained the position. Reen completed a pass for third on lap-30 and the caution came back out with 31 laps complete for Durocher who spun in turn 4.

A Talladega melee broke out on the restart as Puleo didn't quite come up to speed with the cars of Tyler Hines, Arute, Alex Pearl, David Flammia, Jr., Dylan Izzo, Matt Vassar, Art Caruso, Noah Korner, Keith Rocco, and Wade Gagner all involved to bring the caution flag back out immediately.

Puleo took the lead with Christopher and Narducci right behind him. Christopher nearly took the lead on lap-33 but Puleo was able to fend off his challenge. Reen was fourth in line with Chapman up to fifth. Molleur was sixth followed by Flynn, Troy Talman, Rocco, and Owen. Molleur took fifth from Chapman on lap-38 while the same lap saw Rocco take eighth place from Talman.

With 50 laps complete Puleo was still in command with Christopher, Narducci, Reen, Molleur, Rocco, Flynn, Chapman, Talman, and Todd Owen giving chase. Puleo was starting to ever so slowly pull away from Christopher in second while Christopher was building up a margin over Narducci in third. Reen was working Narducci over for third and they made contact on lap-60 but both cars maintained position and kept on fighting for third place. Reen was finally able to make a pass on Narducci on lap-65 to take over third place while Puleo and Christopher were still comfortably in first and second.

With 10 laps to go the order was Puleo, Christopher, Reen, Narducci, Rocco, Molleur, Flynn, Chapman, Riely O'Keefe, and Talman. Chapman got loose in turn 4 which allowed O'Keefe to take eighth place on lap-71. Puleo led the field to the checkered flag to pick up his first win of the 2026 season with a dominating drive. Christopher finished second with Reen, Narducci, and Rocco rounding out the top-5.



Nate Carillon catches the ball.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com  
Dillon Slattery, of Ware, picks up a ground ball.



Ramon Jimenez fields a grounder.

## TRI-COUNTY

from page 15

base hits, answered back with an RBI single from Fitzgibbons and a sacrifice fly by first baseman Bobby Trigillo.

Both teams scored a run in the fourth inning.

Then Teddy Bear Pools pretty much put the game out of reach by scoring five more runs in the fifth inning.

Toth, who's currently a member of the Wheaton College baseball team, contributed with a two-run single. After loading the bases, right fielder Bailey Griggs cleared them with a triple to right.

Trailing, 12-4, St. Joe's could only score single runs in the fifth and sixth innings.

St. Joe's will be looking to even the season series when they host Teddy Bear Pools for the second time on June 19.



Ryan Magni makes an off-balance throw.

# HCC celebrates Phi Theta Kappa inductees for 2026

HOLYOKE - Holyoke Community College is proud to announce that 169 HCC students have been accepted for membership into the Alpha Xi Omega chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa national honor society for 2026. Students are invited to join Phi Theta Kappa when they have completed 15 col-

lege credits while maintaining a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

HCC's 2026 inductees were recognized during a campus celebration on Thursday, May 7.

**Hampden:**  
Adam Poulin.  
**Wilbraham:**  
Leah Healy  
Miranda Krauza.

## NOTICE

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# Monthly Highlights for June at the Hampden Senior Center:

Please call 566-5588 to RSVP for all events or register for classes at the senior center.

Lunch is provided by Greater Springfield Senior Services daily at Noon. Suggested donation is \$3 per meal. You must reserve lunch by 11 a.m. one day prior. Feel free to schedule reservations for the month.

### Summer Kick Off Luncheon & 250th Celebration of America

Friday, June 12 at Noon  
Enjoy a delicious lunch of BBQ Chicken, Potato Salad, Corn, and Cornbread provided by Greater Springfield Senior Services and stay for musical entertainment provided by "The Boomers".

Cost is \$6 (\$3 suggested donation for lunch and \$3 for entertainment)

### PUZZLE PALOOZA:

Tuesday, June 16 from 1 to 3 p.m.  
Join us for another fun afternoon of Puzzles! Work in randomly assigned teams to see which team can finish a 300-piece puzzle the fastest. Prizes will be awarded!!

The New England Air Museum (NEAM) will be here once again to present "The Crazy Man of the Air."  
Wednesday, June 17 at 10 a.m.

This engaging program explores the thrilling history of stunt pilots—from the first international air shows through the barnstorming era, while highlighting a local New England stunt pilot, Charles K. Hamilton of CT.

We also have a special guest, Bob Cipolli, a modern-day stunt pilot, who will share his experiences of competing in airshows.

Attendees will receive a discounted pass to visit the museum at a later date. In addition, NEAM is generously donating a pair of museum passes to be raffled off as a door prize for one lucky winner and their guest.

This program is FREE to attend thanks to Pat Sherman from Edward Jones Financial.

### Lobby Learning

Don't have time to sit through a lengthy presentation? We understand!

Lobby Learning is designed to bring valuable information directly to you in a convenient and accessible way. Local businesses and organizations will be available in the Senior Center lobby to share resources, answer questions, and provide helpful information.

You're welcome to stop in to pick up materials and speak one-on-one with representatives. Stay as long as you need to get your questions answered.

Is there an organization you would like us to invite? We'd love to hear your suggestions!

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June 11 – Legacy Monuments  
June 18 – Loomis Communities  
June 25 – FCP Live In

**MEMORY CAFÉ**  
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The Memory Café is a welcoming place for individuals with memory challenges, along with caregivers, family, or friends, to gather in a safe, supportive, and engaging environment.

Here's what's happening at the Memory Café in June:

June 12 – Drumming with Jason  
June 19 – Juneteenth – No Café  
June 26 – Music with Renee

### Beginner Summer Themed Watercolor Classes with Trish Pilon

Wednesdays, from 9:30 a.m. to Noon. Two four-week sessions.

Cost is \$40 per session if paid in full or \$12 per class. Weekly projects will be posted in the lobby. Signups start now.

Session 1 – July 8, 15, 22, and 29  
Session 2 – August 5, 12, 19, and 26

All materials will be provided. You are welcome to bring your own supplies; however, the class fee remains the same. Pre-registration is required.

Do you have a financial planning question or concern? Pat Sherman from Edward Jones will be here

Wednesday, June 17. This is a FREE service.

Pat will be here on the third Wednesday of every month by appointment to discuss retirement planning, Social Security, investments, financial goals, and more. Call to schedule a 30-minute appointment

### Greeting Cards with Ellie

Monday, June 22, from 1 to 3 p.m.

Cost is \$3 per person. All materials are provided.

Come and discover endless possibilities for creating your own personal greeting cards. Learn new techniques each month. Class will meet on the 4th Monday of every month.

### PWR! Moves Group Exercise Classes with Lisa Kern, OT, Reiki Master/Holistic Therapist

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### Living Stronger... Longer... with Lamar Moore

Tuesdays from 2:15 to 3 p.m.

Current session runs through July 7.

Cost is \$6 per class.

Learn about the importance of balance and how it impacts your overall health and wellness. Get tips on strength training and cardiovascular endurance to increase mobility and flexibility. "It's never too late to start making progress on your health span. Muscles and balance are the two things you can train and improve even as you age."

### Pickleball at Thornton Burgess, 85 Wilbraham Road

Wednesdays, 8 to 9:30 a.m., 9:30 to 11 a.m., or 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m..

This program is for anyone 60 and older who is new to the sport or at the beginner-to-advanced beginner level, who wants to learn the rules and practice playing.

Pickleball Clinics with Mary Grassetti will take a break for the summer and resume in September.

Monday Ukulele with Amy Scott - Drop-ins are welcome!

New 8-week, June 1 through July 27, (no class on 6/6).

Beginner Ukulele – Mondays, 11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. Cost is \$50 for the session if paid in full or \$7 per class.

Advanced Ukulele – Mondays, 1 to 2:30 pm. Cost is \$80 for the session.

## Dementia Advocacy Program at the WPL

WILBRAHAM— Teri Frykenberg, founder of Nurse Advocate Entrepreneur, will present Dementia: The New Pandemic at the Wilbraham Public Library on Monday, June 15 at 6 p.m.

Learn about awareness, advocacy, and most importantly, what we can actually do to better support our loved ones and one another. Whether you're a professional, a family member, or community member, this interactive program is designed to help you recognize cognitive decline and respond appropriately when abuse, neglect, or exploitation is suspected.

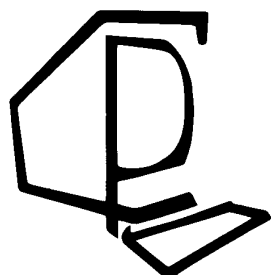
Registration is appreciated for planning purposes. Sign up at wilbrahamlibrary.org, or call 413-596-6141.

## Heritage Pops Orchestra Concert June 12

LUDLOW – The Heritage Pops Orchestra presents "Ballroom Dance," featuring Big Band Sounds of the 20-piece Heritage Pops Orchestra on Friday, June 12.

Music and dancing take place from 7 to 9:30 p.m. at the Polish American Citizens Club at 355 East St. in Ludlow. \$10 admission at the door.

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**Classified Advertising DEADLINE FRIDAY AT NOON**

### JUNK REMOVAL

#### ARA JUNK FURNITURE REMOVAL

Full house cleanouts, attics, basements, garages, pools, hot tubs, sheds, decks. Same day service. 8am-9pm. Credit cards accepted. Free estimates on phone.  
*Fully insured.*  
Call Pete 413-433-0356.

#### A Call We Haul FAST REMOVAL

Junk, Appliance, Cleanouts.  
We load it & take it.  
**413-531-1936**  
CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED

### SERVICES



#### A B Hauling and Removal Service

##### 2\*\*\*\*\*A & B HOUSEHOLD REMOVAL SERVICE\*\*\*\*\*

Cellars, attics, garages cleaned, yard debris. Barns & sheds demolished. Swimming pools removed. Cheaper than dumpster fees and we do all the work. Lowest rates. Fully insured. (413)283-6512, cell (413)222-8866.

**DRYWALL, PAINTING AND CEILINGS,** plaster repair. Drywall hanging. Taping & complete finishing. All ceiling textures. Fully insured. Jason at Great Walls. (413)563-0487

### ELECTRICIAN

#### PJ's Electrical MASTER ELECTRICIAN

*Licensed & Insured*  
Providing safe, reliable electrical services for residential and commercial projects.

##### NOW OFFERING FREE CONSULTATIONS.

Call today to schedule your appointment.  
**(413) 366-1703**  
(Lic. #24046-A)

#### DANNY'S ELECTRICAL SERVICES LLC

I offer good quality electrical work, no project too small. Service upgrades, pools, budget friendly, committed to satisfaction, dependable & insured. Master Lic. #20773-A, Business Lic. #9310-A1. Text or call Daniel at 413-218-3301 or visit my website at dannyselectricllc.com to fill an online work request

### SERVICES

#### ZEN ELECTRIC COMPANY LLC

Fully licensed and insured; Master Electrician on staff. Call for all your electrical needs. No job too small. Senior citizen and Veteran Discount. A veteran owned company. MA License #8101A1.

Call John at (413)206-6509

### HOME IMPROVEMENT

#### HOME IMPROVEMENT SPECIALIST

Decks, porches, repair service, roofing and siding contractor.  
Tim 413-563-2229. Licensed/insured. 35 year construction supervisor.

**HOME IMPROVEMENTS, REMODELING** Kitchens, baths. Ceramic tile, windows, painting, wallpapering, siding, decks. Insurance work. Fully insured. Free estimates. (413)246-2783 Ron.

### CHAMELEON PAINTING & REMODELING

INTERIOR/EXTERIOR Remodeling & Deck Specialists  
Residential/Commercial  
Fully Insured • Free Estimates  
**413-351-1147**

### LANDSCAPING

#### A+ ROZELL'S LANDSCAPING & BOBCAT SERVICE

Excavator Services  
Overgrown property?  
Extreme Brush Cutting!  
Shrub, Stump, Tree Removal  
Lawn/Arborvite Installed  
Loam, Stone, Mulch, Sand  
Storm Clean-up  
Small Demolition/ Junk Removal  
Insured  
Josh Rozell 413-636-5957

### SERVICES

**\*\*ALL SEASON\*\*** Specializing in shrub trimming, pruning, design, deliveries, loader, backhoe, insured. Professional. Please call Bob (413)537-5789.

#### MATT GUERTIN LANDSCAPING

Landscape Design and Installation  
Paver Patios, Walkways  
For more services visit  
**mattguertinlandscaping.com**  
Call or text 413-266-9975  
Insured - Commercial - Residential

### MASONRY

#### STOP WET BASEMENTS ABC MASONRY & BASEMENT WATERPROOFING

All brick, block, stone, concrete. Hatchway doors, basement windows, chimneys rebuilt & repaired, foundations repaired, basement waterproofing systems, sump pumps. BBB+ rating. Free estimates. Lic #14790. Call (413)569-1611, (413)374-5377

### PAINTING

#### DUTCH TOUCH PAINTING

Interior only \$199.00 for average 12x16 room. Very neat, references, prompt service. Serving Palmer, Barre and surrounding area. Call (508)867-2550

#### PRO PAINTING

Low, low prices. All phases interior, exterior painting and wallpapering. Also minor carpentry. 413-310-5099.

### PLUMBING

**GREG LAFONTAIN PLUMBING & HEATING** Lic #19196 Repairs & Replacement of fixtures, water heater installations, steam/HW boiler replacement. Kitchen & Bath remodeling. 30 years experience. Fully insured. \$10 Gift Card With Work Performed. Call Greg (413)592-1505

Find archives of this local newspaper at [www.newspapers.turley.com](http://www.newspapers.turley.com)

### HOME IMPROVEMENT

**Walker**  
Handyman Services  
Home Improvement  
Finish Carpentry • Framing • Drywall • Painting • and more!  
**(413) 687-5552**

### SERVICES

#### PRESSURE WASHING

**HOT WATER PRESSURE WASHING.** We use brushes and state of the art equipment. We remove grime and mold from homes, patios, fences, walkways, all decks, concrete & driveways. Senior Discounts. For free estimates call Bill (413)519-9800.

### RUBBISH REMOVAL

**BOB ROBILLARD'S RUBBISH REMOVAL** Attics, Cellars, Garages cleaned, Pools/Hot Tubs Removed. Family owned/operated since 1950 (413)537-5090

### TREE WORK

**AAA-TROM'S TREE SERVICE PROFESSIONAL SERVICE.** Residential removal of trees. Free estimates. Fully insured W/Workman's Comp. Remove them before the wind takes them down. Cordwood, stump grinding. Call 413-283-6374.

**AFFORDABLE STUMP GRINDING** Fast, dependable service. Free estimates. Fully insured. Call Joe Sablack 413-436-9821, Cell 413-537-7994

**DL & G TREE SERVICE** - Everything from tree pruning, tree removal, stump grinding, storm damage and brush chipping. Honest and Dependable. Fully insured. Now offering a Senior Citizen and Veteran discount. Call today for free estimate (413)478-4212

### STUMP GRINDING

**DL & G STUMP GRINDING** Grinding stumps of all sizes, insured & certified. Senior discounts. Call Dave 413-478-4212

### AUTO

#### VOLVO ENTHUSIASTS/ COLLECTORS!

1998 S-70 Volvo w/cracked engine, body/interior very good. New: radiator, alternator, remanufactured rims, good tires. \$1500 OBO. Text 413-579-2903.

### LAWN MOWER TUNE UP & REPAIR

**A & M TUNE-UPS**  
Push Lawnmowers, Riding Mowers and Small Engine Repair.  
*Work done at your home.*

**FREE PICKUP OF UNWANTED LAWN EQUIPMENT**  
Call Mike (413) 348-7967

### PETS

**GERMAN SHEPHERD PUPS.** Champion Czech and Belgian bloodlines. 30 years experience. 3M, 2F. READY NOW, \$1,200. 413-218-2321

### LIVESTOCK

#### CHICKENS FOR SALE.

Barred Rocks, Reds, Australorp, Hybred. All large brown New England type layers. \$20 each/6 for \$100. 413-218-2321

### HELP WANTED

#### SERVERS WANTED

Inquire at Girly's Grill, 1315 Park St., Palmer, MA 01069 or call 413-284-0005.

### REAL ESTATE

#### FOR RENT

**826 EAST STREET, LUDLOW.** 2 BR., 1-1/2 bath, kitchen, dinette, LR. Applications required. For more information, please call 413-583-3097.



#### EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

**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 advertised 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.

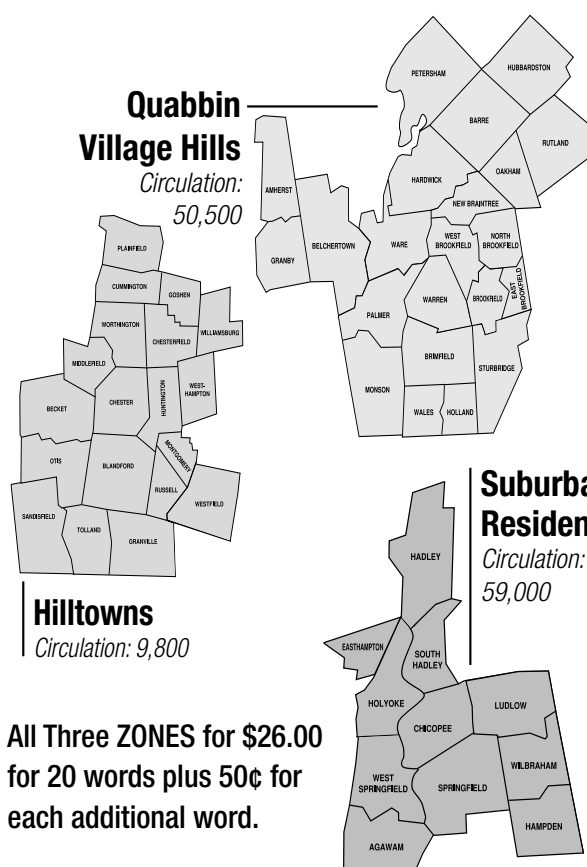
## FILL OUT AND MAIL THIS MONEY MAKER

MAIL TO: Classifieds, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069  
or call: 413-283-8393

DEADLINES: FRIDAY AT NOON

CATEGORY:			
1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20
21	Base Price \$26.50	22	Base Price \$27.00
23	Base Price \$27.50	24	Base Price \$28.00
25	Base Price \$28.50	26	Base Price \$29.00
27	Base Price \$29.50	28	Base Price \$30.00
29	Base Price \$30.50	30	Base Price \$31.00
31	Base Price \$31.50	32	Base Price \$32.00
33	Base Price \$32.50	34	Base Price \$33.00
35	Base Price \$33.50	36	Base Price \$34.00
37	Base Price \$34.50	38	Base Price \$35.00
39	Base Price \$35.50	40	Base Price \$36.00

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Number of Weeks: \_\_\_\_\_ X per week rate = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Credit Card:  MasterCard  VISA  Discover  Cash  Check# \_\_\_\_\_  
 Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ CVV \_\_\_\_\_  
 Amount of charge: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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Palmer, MA 01069

# Flag Day Picnic in the Park

WILBRAHAM – A Picnic in the Park event will take place on Flag Day, June 14, at Fountain Park from 1 to 5 p.m.

There will be food, games and fun.

Here's the schedule.

- 1 p.m. Raising of the flag
- 1:30 p.m. Patriotic Bike Parade – bring your decorated bike
- 2 p.m. Water balloon toss
- 2:30 p.m. Corn Hole "Tournament"
- 3 p.m. Community

Macarena Dance to break a record

All day events include face painting, inflatables, mini golf and more.

History Story Walk through the woods, disc golf practice basket, local crafters, Rock 102 broadcast with prizes, food trucks and Fountain Park snack bar.

Bring a lawn chair or picnic or enjoy our food trucks for lunch and dessert.

Admission is \$5 per car or Fountain Park parking pass.



A shot of some of the flowers in Edward Salerno's garden.

## GREEN THUMB

from page 1

Laura Salerno said her husband not only has Miniature Hostas and Designer Hostas, but also a hybrid Hosta.

"He married two of them, they had a baby," Laura Salerno said.

"The Hostas come in all different sizes, colors and shapes and some of the flowers that come out have an aroma to them that smell like peonies. The blues, the greens, the bright, bright yellows. There's one that comes out white it's white feather early in the spring and, as the summer progresses, it starts to fade away and it turns into a greenish color so that you got to see it early in the spring to enjoy what I call its flowering," Edward Salerno said.

Another kind is Fire Island, which comes in a "bright, bright yellow like the sun's coming out."

"It changes, it turns a little bit more of a duller yellow, but all of these have their own little personalities on how they behave," Salerno said. "You always hear that Hostas need shade. The ones that really need the shade are the blues because the blue is what gets faded by the sun. But the yellows can tolerate a little bit of sun and a little bit of heat. The limes, the greens."

Other names include Squashed Casserole, Frances Williams, Mighty Mouse, Blue Mouse Ears, Night Before Christmas and more.

"They just go on and on. Touch of Class, which is a beautiful blue with a nice yellow-red side," Edward



Also can't forget these beautiful purple flowers.

Salerno said.

Edward Salerno always tells friends before they go to the garden centers, "come see what I have," with his wife adding how multiple people call and come by to get plants.

"That's all they have to do is just call him and say, 'Hey, I'm looking for some plants. Can I come take a look?' Then he'll just walk them out and show them what's available," Laura Salerno said. "He's got quite the following going now, though, which is nice."

He encourages the community to come by and check out the garden, adding his prices are reasonable as well.

"It's a labor of love," Edward Salerno said. "It's nice to have it and nice that people know it's there. I've done one garden show with the Garden Club. If anybody ever said, 'Hey, can I take a look around your garden?' Sure, come out!"

"It's like a little hidden treasure in Hampden because there's a lot of gardeners in Hampden, but not a lot of people who are willing to sell their plants. He likes to sell them because he just wants to grow them," Laura Salerno said.

## SSI

from page 6

your own SS retirement amount is less than your ex-wife was receiving at her death. In other words, you can only get one SS benefit either your own or your deceased ex-wife's amount, whichever is higher.

The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. This article is intended for information purposes

and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit [amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at [ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org). Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

**Hampden Conservation Commission Notice of Public Hearing**  
In accordance with the Wetland Protection Act, Chapter 131, Section 40, a Public Hearing will be held by the Hampden Conservation Commission on **June 17, 2026, at the Hampden Town Hall. (85 Wilbraham Rd.) Hampden at 6:00pm.** This is for a **Request for Determination of Applicability** filed by Jonathan Mish. The property is located at 133 Somers Rd., Hampden. It is for rebuilding a home that recently burned. The hearing will be held in the Selectboard meeting room. For more information contact [Conservation@Hampden.ma.gov](mailto:Conservation@Hampden.ma.gov) 06/11/2026

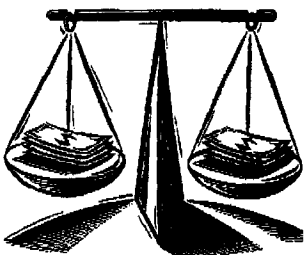
**SALE OF MOTOR VEHICLE**  
This ad is pursuant to MA Gen. Law Ch.255, Sec. 39A as of **June 26, 2026** the following motor vehicle will be for sale to satisfy a garage keepers lien:  
Vehicle: Hyundai Sonata  
VIN#: 5NPEB4AC3BH045889  
LKO: Zachari Zayas-Damiam  
519 Homestead Ave  
Holyoke MA 01040  
R & S Assoc. Inc  
PO Box 543  
Wilbraham MA 01095  
413-596-4374  
05/07, 05/14, 05/21/2026

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Probate and Family Court**  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
(413)748-7758  
Docket No. HD26P1211EA  
Estate of:  
**Sandra F Moriarty**  
Date of Death: 12/16/2023  
**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 **Marshall T Moriarty of Springfield, 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 **Marshall T Moriarty of Springfield, MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsuper-vised 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 07/01/2026. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

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

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons inter-

ested 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 admin-

istration.  
WITNESS, Hon. Claudine T. Stodumire, First Justice of this Court.  
Date: June 03, 2026  
**Rosemary A Saccomani,**  
Register of Probate  
06/11/2026

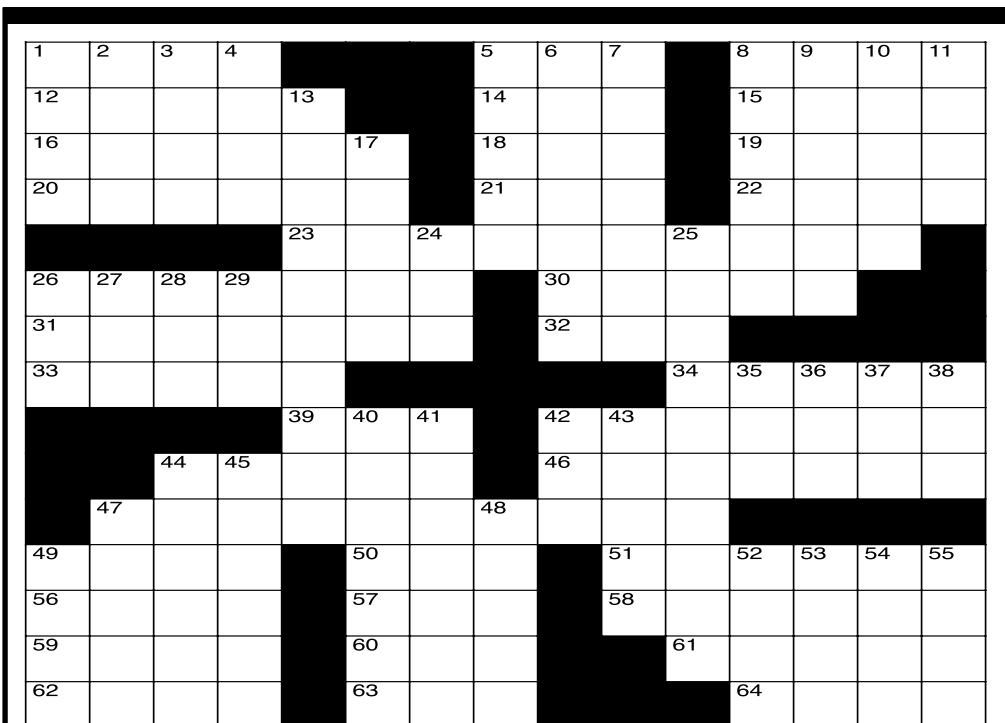
# PUBLIC NOTICES

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**Public notice deadlines are Friday at 3 p.m.**

visit [www.publicnotices.turley.com](http://www.publicnotices.turley.com)



### CLUES ACROSS

1. Sealed with a kiss
5. Large sandwich
8. Swiss city
12. Japanese persimmons
14. When you hope to get somewhere
15. Wings
16. A name of God
18. Elected official (informal)
19. Abnormal breathing
20. "Seinfeld" character
21. Yearly tonnage (abbr.)
22. Something for sale
23. Gets rid of
26. One who touts
30. Blemished
31. Less than exciting
32. Born of
33. N. German town

34. Notes
39. Move away from land
42. Vulcanite
44. More ignoble
46. Child actor Kirk
47. Written works
49. Sea vessel
50. Residue
51. Engraved
56. Having sufficient skill
57. One and only
58. Erase
59. Broad inlets
60. Nightmarish street
61. Play again
62. Formerly (archaic)
63. Add a color to change the color
64. Move swiftly and lightly

### CLUES DOWN

1. Scottish island

2. River in the Netherlands
3. Asian people
4. Fuzzy fruit
5. Ninth month (abbr.)
6. An idealistic social reformer
7. What you owe
8. Colorless mineral
9. Overjoyed
10. Rattling breaths
11. Tropical Old World tree
13. A citizen of Senegal
17. Greek mythological beauty
24. Wrath
25. Instrument to measure wind speed
26. Luxury carmaker
27. Bitterly regret
28. Not or
29. Google certification

35. Midway between northeast and east
36. Space station
37. Relating to the ears
38. Congressman
40. Yelled at
41. Rudely assertive
42. Deceased European money
43. Shared one's soul
44. Onion rolls
45. A way to state clearly
47. Relating to a lobe
48. Underlying message
49. Hollywood pig
52. Indicates pitch
53. Filament of a feather
54. Small ornamental ladies' bag for small articles
55. Diminish

# TROMBLEY

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**413-596-6992**

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# HOMETOWN

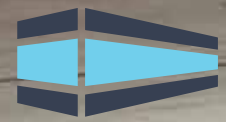
▪ EXTERIORS ▪



## Extend Porch Season with 3-Season Porch Windows.

Your porch should be a sanctuary, not a struggle with the elements. At **Hometown Exteriors**, we specialize in transforming 3-season rooms with the innovative **Expanse™ by Porchwerx**.

This one-of-a-kind design features **dual retractable top and bottom screens**, giving you amazing, uncluttered views of your surroundings. Whether you're enjoying a quiet morning coffee or a family sunset, the Expanse™ system allows the brilliance of nature to take center stage while keeping your living space comfortable and protected.



expanse

by porchwerx

a whole new way to porch

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FAMILY-OWNED.  
**IN-HOUSE CRAFTSMEN.**

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