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Music & Movement

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Falcons take Division A

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The Wilbraham-Hampden

TIMES

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Hampden Senior Center hosts

Summer Luncheon, Ice Cream Social

By Noelle Hisgen
Correspondent

HAMPDEN - The senior center hosted a Summer Luncheon along with an Ice Cream Social with musical guest Rick Gilday on July 17. On the lunch menu for the senior center was an assortment of beans, potato salad, and a sloppy joe. Attendees were also able to enjoy some ice cream for dessert at an ice cream bar, sponsored by

Vantage Health and Rehab of Hampden.

Tina Doran, program and volunteer coordinator at the senior center, spoke about the luncheon, and would like to give her heartfelt thanks to Gilday for performing and Vantage for sponsoring the ice cream bar.

"It's just a fun thing to do, who doesn't love ice cream? So, if we have somebody sponsoring it where people don't have to pay for it, it's

a nice thing to do for someone," Doran said.

Attending the luncheon was Sue Driscoll, who came to the lunch to interact with her friends and neighbors.

"It's good socialization for people. And it provides varying interests for different groups. So there's something here to fit everybody," Driscoll said.

The senior center also had a very special guest attending the luncheon: State Sen. Jake

Oliveira (D-Ludlow), who was here for a visit along with working with the senior center on their Healthy Incentives Program.

"Well, part of the reason is that we really enjoy going to the various different senior centers within the district. In fact, my office hosts office hours once a month, right here at the senior center. So, Jen from my staff,

Please see **LUNCHEON**, page 9

Declaration of Independence presentation held

By Harold Anderson
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - Around 20 people were gathered in the Brooks Room at the Wilbraham Public Library on Saturday, July 25 to hear Rich Howell, a lifelong Wilbraham resident who has spent nearly four decades as a historical researcher and 23 years as a reenactor, give a presentation about the people, historical background and events leading up to a pivotal part of American history, the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

The nearly two-hour presentation entitled "The Declaration of Independence: Origins, Text and Meaning" was the latest in a long-standing collaboration between the Old Meeting House Museum and the Wilbraham Public Library.

Emilie Lang, Adult Services Librarian at the Library, remarked on how pleased they were with this collaboration.

Please see **DECLARATION**, page 5



Turley photo by Harold Anderson
Rich Howell performs his dramatic reading of the Declaration of Independence at Crane Park.

Boards discuss interim plan for WMS

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - The Select Board and Hampden Selectboard held a joint meeting to discuss an interim plan for Wilbraham Middle School on July 23.

Select Board Chair Marc Ducey explained the board wanted to hear Hampden's perspective on the questions sent to them.

"We too have some concerns with the regional agreement. It was mainly the fact that it was all centered around if we get into the Core program, what happens? Our thought was, what if we don't get into the Core program?" Ducey said. "And I think the question isn't really whether or not we get into the Core program. It's when do we get to the Core program. But the question is what happens in the interim and that didn't get addressed in the regional agreement at all."

Hampden Selectboard Chair John Flynn noted how both boards "were very clear" about the major concern being "the children over the next five to seven years at the middle school are going to have a good educational experience without, honestly, as you said, we said, breaking the bank, if you will."

"Because, if we're in the Core program, you're not building a brand new penthouse. You're maintaining at a good, safe environment for education," Flynn said.

Assistant Superintendent for Finance, Operations and

Please see **INTERIM PLAN**, page 10

Knights of Columbus 10195 honor first responders

By Noelle Hisgen
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - The Knights of Columbus 10195 hosted a special recognition ceremony on July 21.

The ceremony honored members of the Wilbraham Fire Department, Police Department and the Scantic Valley YMCA.

This was a special ceremony the Knights had a part in, as one of their Knights, Tom Garvey, faced a heart attack at the YMCA in April. YMCA Employee Adam Krutka found Garvey unconscious and called 911 to the fire and police departments to get him to the hospital very quickly and professionally.

It should also be noted that 911 dispatchers from the Wilbraham Regional Emergency Communications Center also helped that day in providing life-saving instructions and vital information. They were Juliet Brown, David Squires and Sidney Shaffer.

Brown was the one who took the call-provided in-

structions. She has since resigned and now works in another field.

Anthony Gentile, the regional dispatcher's executive director, praised the team for

their efforts on that day.

"In a critical medical emergency, every second counts. The 911 telecommunicators who answered the initial call from the YMCA

and began providing life-saving instructions before any unit arrived played a vital

Please see **FIRST RESPONDERS**, page 8



Tom Garvey stands with the first responders that helped save his life.

Turley photo by Noelle Hisgen

When life gives you lemons

By Riddhi Patel
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - When life gives you lemons, make lemonade and give back to your community.

A group of six girls - Jaylyn, Annabelle, Katie, Emery, Emma and Maddy - turned a classic lemonade stand into a community fundraiser, donating all of the money earned to the Wilbraham Public Library in order to support reading and give back to the community.

The check was presented to the library on July 10, with the girls comprising three local families coming together for a good cause: Whitcomb, Pessolano and Maloney.

The girls had spent a hot summer day serving free cups of lemonade while also providing fresh goods, such as lettuce or cider donuts, for



Turley photo by Riddhi Patel

The Wilbraham Public Library received a special donation on July 10.

sale. By the end of the day, their hard work and teamwork had paid off.

Together, they raised \$150, which they donated

all to the Wilbraham Public Library. Their contribution

Please see **DONATION**, page 8

Burk to participate in Jimmy Fund Walk

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - Susan Burk is gearing up to take part in this year's Jimmy Fund Walk for Dana-Farber in Boston on Oct. 4.

The iconic fundraising walk supports the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute to support all forms of adult and pediatric care and cancer research.

Participants can choose from four different distance options, which are the following.

- **5K:** Starting at Dana-Farber's Longwood Medical Campus
- **10K:** Starting in Newton
- **Half Marathon:** Starting in Wellesley

- **Marathon:** Starting in Hopkinton

The final destination for the walk is at Boston Common.

Burk explained this will be her 35th year taking part in the event and shared what inspired her to participate.

"It's a combination of things. The year before I started, I saw there was a 10-mile walk for multiple sclerosis, and I thought about Jacqueline Dupre," Burk said. "That inspired me to do that and raise some funds, and I think the next year is when I first heard about the Jimmy Fund Walk, so it didn't really start out so much as

Please see **JIMMY FUND**, page 3

Save our Sign Fundraiser

HAMPDEN – The S.O.S. Save Our Sign Fundraiser will be taking place at the VFW Post 9397 on Saturday, Aug. 15, at 3 p.m.

Tickets are \$25 at the door, \$20 in advance and \$5 for kids under 12.

There will be entertainment with DJ Bob playing tunes, games, raffles, face painting and henna tattoos.

Food will be served from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. and the menu comprises BBQ Beef Chicken, Corn on the Cob, Baked Potato, Burgers, Dogs, Salads and Desserts.

There will also be a cash bar and raffle prizes.

All proceeds will go to the S.O.S. Fund.

An evening with Paul Revere at WPL

WILBRAHAM– Michael Lepage, historical interpreter and re-enactor, will portray Paul Revere at the Wilbraham Public Library on Monday, Aug. 10 at 6 p.m. Revere’s name evokes images of the famous “Midnight Ride” of April 18-19, 1775. Hear his story, culminating with that night in April when he spread the alarm “to every Middlesex village and farm” that the regulars were coming out!

This free program is open to all and is sponsored by the Wilbraham Friends of the Library. Registration program is appreciated for planning purposes, but seating is available on a first come, first served basis. Sign up at wilbraham-library.org, or call 413-596-6141.

SB approves food operation license for start-up business

By Ben Hernandez
Staff Writer

WILBRAHAM – The Select Board heard local resident Michael Branchesi’s application request for a food operation license for his start-up business “One Eye Wanda’s Coffee Roasters” on July 20.

The business is named after his cat, who was rescued after being hit by a car. The establishment would run from a current residence at Three Sandy Court with the goal of providing fresh, local, free trade coffee for the region.

“I started roasting coffee with my dad,” Branchesi said. “It was like a hobby for us to spend more time as I got older. I ended up adopting a cat named Wanda, who is the face of the company.”

Branchesi explained he intended to use the company as a means to raise funds for Thomas J. O’ Connor Animal Control and Adoption Center’s various events.

He also expressed intent to raise funds for his friend’s organization the Miracle League, an adaptive baseball organization which offers children and adults with disabilities the chance to play baseball and get involved with the local community.

Also, in being the primary coffee provider for the program and wanted to offer a potential opportunity for program participants.

“Hopefully, the long-term goal is to eventually open up a cafe to help with special needs kids to have a place for them to work at when they graduate from the Miracle League,” Branchesi said.

Branchesi intended to start slow, using it as an opportunity to “spend time with

my dad” and to sell mostly to small farmers’ markets. Though coffee roasting remains a hobby with him for a few years, he wanted to start an official business to share his passion with others.

For now, the idea is to roast coffee on-site at his parents’ home.

Vice Chair Sue Bunnell asked if there would be any issues with production smell, given the business would operate on private residential property. She cited an issue reported in East Longmeadow, where residents complained about the smells coming from a local roaster.

Branchesi replied while production took place “right in the back of the kitchen,” there was enough ventilation fans to push the odor “right out the back of the window.”

As he works a full-time job, the roasting would take place at night.

He stated his parents had a good relationship with the neighbors and he didn’t see any potential complications scaling the already existing operations. If there were issues with roasting, he added, he would be sure complaints would be addressed “adequately” and emphasized he didn’t “want to make anybody not happy.”

“Especially in the place where you live,” Branchesi said. “That should be your home. That’s where you want to be happy and I don’t want to ruin anything.”

After Clerk Michael Squindo asked if there was any intent to scale the operation in the future and if Branchesi saw the business growing out of the home, Branchesi reiterated he saw roasting as a hobby and he was focused on just having something to take to the

farmers’ markets and his earlier points on TJO and Miracle League.

He added there was no serious intent to grow the business for now, as he was working full-time.

“If I ever get to that point, I would have to get a food permit license and stuff like that and obviously we would talk about getting out of my parents’ house,” Branchesi said.

“You’re maintaining the scale, basically,” Squindo said to summarize the pitch. “You’re just looking to formalize it.”

Branchesi also mentioned the home was on a cul-de-sac and the next-door neighbors on either side were “50, 60 yards” out from their property. The next street was “100 yards to James Circle” according to Branchesi and “about 100 yards straight to the back right” of the parents’ lot, meaning there would be little chance of odor pollution emitting from the back of the homestead.

“Again, you’re maintaining the scale, basically,” Squindo said. “You’re just looking to formalize it.”

Branchesi affirmed yes and reiterated the neighbors were aware.

With the proposal out of the way, the Select Board granted application approval to the young coffee roaster to operate as “an annual food establishment” and “residential kitchen-bakery.”

The status pends on receipt of all application documents, fees and a favorable health inspection.

The vote was unanimous.

“Congratulations, good luck to you,” Chair Marc Ducey said. “Maybe we’ll see you back when you expand.”

Honoring Purple Heart Day in the town of Wilbraham

From the Select Board

WHEREAS Purple Heart Day is observed annually on August 7th to commemorate the establishment of the Purple Heart medal by General George Washington in 1782, recognizing the extraordinary sacrifice and valor of American service members wounded or killed in action; and

WHEREAS the Purple Heart is awarded to those who have been wounded or killed while serving in the United States Armed Forces, serving as a powerful symbol of courage, resilience, and the profound cost of defending our nation’s freedoms; and

WHEREAS the Town of Wilbraham, does not have any residents who are Purple Heart recipients, and we give thanks while remaining ever mindful of the heavy price paid by others in service to our country; and

WHEREAS we pause to honor and remember all Purple Heart recipients through-

out the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and across the United States, with special reverence for those to whom the medal was awarded posthumously, whose ultimate sacrifice reminds us of the debt of gratitude we owe to all who have defended liberty.

NOW, THEREFORE, The Select Board in the Town of Wilbraham, Massachusetts, does hereby proclaim August 7th as

Purple Heart Day

in Wilbraham. We call upon all residents to reflect on the bravery of our nation’s wounded and fallen heroes, to honor their service and sacrifice, and to support the veterans and military families in our community and beyond.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Town of Wilbraham to be affixed this August 7th in the year of Two Thousand Twenty-Six.

Artifacts come out of storage for ‘Treasures & Trivia’

WILBRAHAM — Join the Old Meeting House Museum on Aug. 9, from 2 to 4 p.m., for Treasures & Trivia, a free afternoon featuring artifacts not normally on display, followed by a round of local history trivia with prizes at 3 p.m.

Visitors can see pieces the museum has preserved for decades but rarely shows: Victorian bustle skirts and hand-beaded bodices, a Civil War sewing kit carried by a Wilbraham soldier, a 45-star American flag, and more.

“We have way more in our collection than we could ever properly display” said Lindsey Bourcier, OMH Marketing Director. “Most of it lives in boxes in the storage room, well cared for but out of sight. This event is our chance to bring some of it out. But the trivia is what people really show up for... We give out prizes for the top three, and folks get pretty competitive about it. Wilbraham knows its history and is not shy about proving it!”

Treasures & Trivia is free and open to the public. All ages are welcome. Visit TheOMH.org for more information.

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ACT	39 Higher St., Ludlow	6 room, 3 bed, 1f, 0h bath Ranch	\$385,000	
ACT	420 Lower Hampden Rd., Monson	9 room, 4 bed, 0h bath Gambrel/Dutch	\$495,000	
ACT	96 Stafford Hollow Rd., Monson	6 room, 4 bed, 3f 0h bath Ranch	\$625,000	
ACT	1030 Pine St., Palmer	9 room, 4 bed, 2f 0h bath Victorian	\$429,900	
PCG	16 Park Pl., East Longmeadow	7 room, 2 bed, 1f, 1h bath Bungalow	\$334,900 ▲	
PCG	53 Hampden Rd., East Longmeadow	5 room, 3 bed, 3f, 1h bath Ranch ■	\$499,000 ▲	
UAG	580 Parker St., East Longmeadow	5 room, 2 bed, 1f 0h bath Ranch	\$450,000	
UAG	817 Somers Rd., East Longmeadow	7 room, 3 bed, 1f 0h bath Ranch	\$520,000	
UAG	412 Wilbraham Rd, Hampden	5 room, 3 bed, 1f, 0h bath Ranch	\$319,900	
UAG	169 Greenacre Ave., Longmeadow	7 room, 3 bed, 1f, 1h bath Colonial	\$469,900	
UAG	28 Brittany Rd, Longmeadow	8 room, 4 bed, 3f, 1h bath Colonial	\$750,000	
UAG	258 Silver Street, Monson	9 room, 3 bed, 2f 1h bath Colonial, Contemporary	\$599,900	
UAG	43 Pine Hill Rd., Springfield	East Forest Park, 8 room, 4 bed, 1f 1h bath Cape	\$339,900	
SLD	140 Chestnut St., East Longmeadow	5 room, 3 bed, 1f 0h bath Ranch	\$314,900	\$330,000
SLD	320 Maple St East Longmeadow,	5 room, 2 bed, 1f 0h bath Ranch	\$320,000	\$317,000
SLD	24 Dewey Ave., East Longmeadow	7 room, 3 bed, 1f 1h bath Colonial	\$362,000	\$360,000
SLD	24 Speight Arden, East Longmeadow	7 room, 4 bed, 2f 0h bath Cape	\$415,000	\$421,000
SLD	68 Baldwin Dr., Hampden	5 room, 3 bed, 1f 0h bath Ranch	\$309,900	\$309,900
SLD	161 Raymond Dr., Hampden	7 room, 3 bed, 2f 0h bath Ranch	\$349,900	\$400,000
SLD	185 N. Monson Rd., Hampden	6 room, 3 bed, 2f 0h bath Cape	\$359,900	\$350,000
SLD	69 Cherry Ln., Longmeadow	6 room, 3 bed, 2f 0h bath Ranch	\$599,000	\$582,500
SLD	233 Cedar Swamp Rd., Monson	10 room, 3 bed, 2f 1h bath Colonial	\$430,000	\$415,000
SLD	267 Connecticut Springfield,	4 room, 2 bed, 1f 0h bath Cape	\$262,900	\$262,500
SLD	115 Pasadena St., Springfield	6 room, 3 bed, 2f 0h bath Bungalow	\$274,900	\$274,900
SLD	77 Fresno St., Springfield	6 room, 3 bed, 1f 1h bath Victorian	\$324,900	\$332,500
SLD	51 Hartford Ter., Springfield	E. Forest Park, 7 room, 3 bed, 1f 1h bath Colonial	\$374,900	\$365,000
SLD	25 Piper Cross Rd., West Springfield	5 room, 2 bed, 1f 1h bath Ranch	\$321,000	\$255,000
SLD	7 Brewster Rd., West Springfield	8 room, 4 bed, 2f 0h bath Cape	\$600,000	\$590,000
SLD	19 Overlook Dr., Wilbraham,	9 room, 4 bed, 3f 1h bath Colonial	\$637,900	\$655,000

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Wilbraham’s Jen Nowak installed as GFWC Treasurer at 2026 Annual Convention

WILBRAHAM — The General Federation of Women’s Clubs (GFWC) has announced Jennifer Nowak, of Wilbraham, Massachusetts, was recently installed as GFWC Treasurer of the GFWC at the 2026 Annual Convention, held June 26–29 in Scottsdale, Arizona, at the Westin Kierland Resort & Spa.

Nowak has been a member of GFWC since 1994, serving through GFWC Wilbraham Junior Women’s Club. Over

the course of her 32-year membership, she has held leadership positions at the club, state, and regional levels, including GFWC Massachusetts State President, GFWC Massachusetts Director of Junior Clubs, and GFWC New England Region Protocol Chairman. Professionally, she works for New England Promotional Marketing (NEPM), and she was a long-standing member of the former Wilbraham Community Association, the organization that hosted

the Wilbraham Peach Festival for 25 years. She and her husband Mark reside in Wilbraham and have three daughters and three grandchildren.

In this role, Nowak will serve as a member of the GFWC Executive Committee alongside GFWC International President Wendy Carriker of North Carolina. The Executive Committee serves as the governing leadership of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs, a women’s volunteer organization found-

ed in 1890 that today unites clubs in every state and more than a dozen countries. Together, they set the strategic direction for more than 60,000 members whose work spans education, the arts, environmental conservation, healthy lifestyles, and the fight against domestic and sexual violence. Through that leadership, the Executive Committee helps translate the federation’s mission into meaningful impact in communities across the country and around the world.

JIMMY FUND from page 1

anything more than a personal challenge to myself. Could I do 26.2 miles and I discovered, yes I could.”

Another inspiration was family.

“Both my mother and Ray, my husband’s brother, both died of cancer many many years ago, and as my father used to poignantly say many years later, ‘If mommy were alive now, she’d still be alive.’ Meaning that there’s been tremendous progress, but more progress is still needed. So, between that and the fact that my father walked 10 miles a day until he was 95, it was sort of like a dual-inspiration,” Burk said. “They died very very long ago, but I do like to remember them and honor them and, of course, since then I’ve known so many people who have both been able to live with cancer—which has made me feel very very good about the progress—and I’ve known a lot of people whose story did not end as well and I want to honor and remember them, and I know a lot of people who feel the same way and they’re kind enough to donate at my fundraising page. So, between all of us, it becomes a natural fit.”

She added how she trains for three months to prepare for the event and plans to continue participating every single year.

Her fundraising goal is \$8,035.

“Because I turned 80 and this is my 35th year, my goal is \$8,035. I don’t always make my goal, but I like aiming for it, and for me, the fundraising part has become increasingly



Photo courtesy of Susan Burk

Susan Burk, a resident of Wilbraham, will be participating in the Jimmy Fund Walk for Dana-Farber later this year. Burk is pictured here during last year’s walk.

important with the dynamic ways funding has changed. It becomes more and more important for people to provide individual donations and every little individual donation adds up,” Burk said.

Over the years, Burk has participated as an individual walker, had a team as part of a work group and her daughter and longtime boyfriend walked with her for several years.

This year, her daughter will be joining her and she will do the 13.1-mile distance route.

“You meet people along the way and I now have a little routine. I have a sign which says how many years I’ve walked and people will comment on it,” Burk said. “Provide them with that kind of encouragement.”

For Burk, it’s humbling to participate in this event and

raise funds for the cause.

“It’s a way to be useful. It’s a way to do something small and have it turn into something big and Dana Farber has been a significant contributor to both the research and treatment for cancer patients and their objectives are to focus both on research and patient care and I think that’s very, very important,” Burk said.

For anyone interested in donating, visit danafarber.jimmyfund.org/ and look up “Susan Burk.”

As of July 31, Burk has so far raised \$2,378.43.

She also noted that other folks in Wilbraham and Hampden participate in this event too.

Burk looks forward to seeing what things are different and new on the walk and how the route changes.

“What I do is, anyone

who actually donates on my page, afterwards I send them a little walk-a-log. So, I take pictures along the way of the things I see and so that way they can be on the walk with me,” Burk said. “There’s been some very interesting ones.”

Her advice for anyone who wants to take part—especially for the very first time—is “don’t underestimate what you need to do beforehand” and have blister bandages and body glide on hand and to enjoy the experience of walking with so many people.

“You really do need to train, but you don’t need to train all the way up to that mileage. They provide a handbook which gives some suggestions, but for anybody doing 26.2 miles, my personal experience if they can get up to 15 miles three weeks before the walk, they’ll be fine. If they’re doing 13.1, if they can do 10 miles three weeks before the walk, they’ll be fine,” Burk said. “And for someone doing 6.2 or a 10K, if they can do four miles three weeks before the walk, they’ll be fine.”

Burk thanked the community for their support.

“It’s become a tradition that I put one foot in front of the other in support of Dana-Farber and their researching treatments,” Burk said. “I’m very grateful for so many people who stuck with me all these years and I’m grateful for the people who bounce in and out, and I’m grateful for the people who hear about me and then contribute to somebody else on the walk. Whatever monies come to Dana-Farber are going to something that’s very good and very important.”

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Puzzle Palooza galore at HSC

By Noelle Hisgen
Correspondent

HAMPDEN - The senior center hosted their monthly annual Puzzle Palooza on July 21.

Attendees were randomly assigned into groups of three and were given a time limit of two hours to complete a 300-piece puzzle.

The day's winners were Diane Marhelewicz, Sue Nichols, and Sally Nauman, who won Dunkin' gift cards as well. However, everyone was able to have a special treat of cupcakes courtesy of All American Assisted Living in Enfield, Connecticut.

Puzzle Palooza was started in May in honor of Older Americans Month. With its success, it soon became a monthly event for the senior center.

Program and Volunteer Coordinator for the senior

center Tina Doran spoke about the history of the event.

"We started off with just two people to solve the puzzles. We're three people to a puzzle today. And the thing is when we first started, people came with their friends, and they were just doing the puzzles together. We ended up having a couple of people here that were winning every single month. So we said: 'We need to change this up,' which is what we did today," Doran said.

Assistant Director and Outreach Coordinator Wendy Cowles was running the event, and also spoke about Puzzle Palooza.

"It started a few months back because our director Becky and us all love puzzles. And we thought there's got to be other people that like this as well. So, we decided to bring this event to the senior center. People really seem to

enjoy it, and they keep coming back every month, so I think it's a win," Cowles said.

Puzzle Palooza also had a special guest join them for the day: Audra Lauf, the director of community relations at All American Assisted Living. Lauf a visit and also participated in the puzzle competition.

While All American sponsored the treats for Puzzle Palooza, All American also plans to sponsor the entirety of Puzzle Palooza going forward.

It was a great afternoon filled with friendly competition and fun all around, all the while enjoying a good puzzle.

For more information about All American, check out their website at www.allamericanatenfield.com.

As for the next Puzzle Palooza, that will take place on Aug. 25 from 1 to 3 p.m.



(L-R) Diane Marhelewicz, Sue Nichols and Sally Nauman won Puzzle Palooza and celebrate with Audra Lauf from All American Assisted Living.

Turley photos by Noelle Hisgen
LEFT: Patriotic cupcakes were provided for attendees.



DECLARATION from page 1

"The Old Meeting House is such a wealth of information, especially from a local history perspective," Lang said.

Lindsey Bourcier, Marketing Director for the Old Meeting House Museum, agreed, noting that, "The Old Meeting House Museum has done events here in the past 'cuz we've kinda outgrown our space for bigger things. The Wilbraham Public Library has collaborated with us for a few years on hosting events, but this is the first event this season that we're co-hosting Rich and his presentation."

In his talk, Howell, dressed stylishly in a period costume known as a Court Suit, gave an impassioned and often stunning overview of the time leading up to the colonists formally voting for their independence from England and explaining in a subsequent declaration their many grievances and reasons for doing so.

In an interview, Howell commented that the basis for this presentation was from original sources.

"I like to go with primary sources... You can see exactly what they wanted to do, why they wanted to do it," Howell said.

For anyone expecting a simple rendition of the typical stories of this moment in history as learned by school children for a number of years, many surprises awaited them.

The tone for the presentation was set early by Howell in a brief interactive session with the audience where he read off three quotes from prominent people of the time and asked the audience, "Where did they sound like they came from?"

Even though the quotes sounded like they could have come from the colonists, one person in the audience correctly determined that they came from England. In fact, Howell confirmed that the quotes "came from members of British Parliament."

From that point on, citing many other such quotes from dignitaries from both sides of the ocean, Howell took the audience on a whirlwind ride through the many historical events of the period as well as a review of the social and political concerns and con-

flicts that were expressed over those issues both in England and the Colonies. Howell explained that the history of England leading up to this time helps with an understanding of events.

A few of the more astonishing facts that Howell highlighted in an interview about his talk included "the support in Britain and in England for the American Revolution and those who supported them, whether they were members of the military officer corps or they were members of Parliament in the House of Lords and the House of Commons... We talk about the Loyalists and the Tories here. We had more support there percentage wise than they had here. Now, they had some, there's no question, but that story's not told, or the numbers of British sailors who deserted to join our ranks."

Howell mentioned in his talk that the first major body to openly call for their delegates to support independence in the Continental Congress was from the colony in North Carolina in a document known as the Halifax Resolves and that this was later followed by pronouncements

from some other colonies.

Locally, he noted in the interview, "the people living here, like Wilbraham and Hampden, who, at the time you go through the notes we do have of the town meetings, they were talking about these issues and weighing in on them. Weighing in on the subject of independence."

Howell continued, "I think the story that gets missed more than anything was this wasn't a decision taken for them. This was something they wanted to do... 'cuz that's where it emanated from... the citizenry on up. That's the big story."

"On July 2, 1776, they (the Continental Congress) have a vote, voting on what's known as the Lee Resolution, because Richard M. Lee from Virginia rides it in," Howell said.

With most colonial delegations voting overwhelming-ly in favor of the resolution, two others, Pennsylvania and Delaware finally joined the others in making the vote unanimous in a 12-0 vote with one abstention.

Even though the resolution was passed on July 2, Howell stated that it did not become official until it was signed by the President of the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776.

"Nobody celebrates the bill signing on the day it passes," Howell said in his talk. "They celebrate it on the day they sign the bill. That's why."

Howell added that, "between the second and the fourth (of July), the delegates said 'Okay, to make this official, we also need a declaration to the rest of the world... more importantly, we want to

tell our people and the people over in the former empire that we used to belong to why we're doing what we're doing."

The presentation ended with Howell going over the clauses of the Declaration of Independence one by one and explaining the meaning behind each of them. He stressed the importance of understanding the clauses, "what they mean, ...why they were put there. When we read them, we're sitting there, we're enthralled, we're happy, we know we should appreciate it. But we don't know what it means."

After the presentation and a short Q&A, Howell invited the audience to join him outside for his dramatic reading of the Declaration of Independence in nearby Crane Park.

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VIEWPOINTS

Guest Column

A veteran finds peace of mind through home repairs

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

WEST SPRINGFIELD -Wayne, a 72-year-old Navy veteran, enjoys life's simple pleasures: tending to his garden, mowing the lawn, spending time with his service dog, Maxine, and savoring a mug of coffee on his deck. But in recent years, those moments have been overshadowed by concerns about safety.

The deck outside Wayne's West Springfield mobile home had become increasingly unstable, with rotting planks and a leaking sliding door that let rainwater seep inside. The deterioration had become so severe that Wayne worried about falling through the deck. In fact, his cane had already poked through some of the weakened boards and Wayne feared he might lose his home altogether.

Earlier this year, Wayne reached out to Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity (GSHFH) and spoke with Executive Director Aimee Giroux, after learning about the nonprofit's Veterans Build Home Preservation program from his peers at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). With support from The Home Depot Foundation, GSHFH is repairing Wayne's deck and damaged sliding door, helping him remain safely in the home he loves.

"I'm very thankful to get these things fixed. I was worried about the house being condemned and being forced to move out," said Wayne. "Working with Habitat has been a very good experience. It's been a pleasure to work with Aimee."

GSHFH's Veteran Home Preservation Program is a part of a national initiative to provide housing solutions

to US veterans, military service members, and their families. Services include accessibility modifications for bathrooms and kitchens, ramps, roof repair/replacement, weatherization, heating system upgrades, porch/stair repairs, and hard surface flooring to help with mobility.

Wayne and his wife, Linda, purchased the mobile home in April 2017. They had moved to Western Massachusetts two years earlier from Charleston, South Carolina, to be closer to Linda's family.

In recent years, Linda moved in with her mother to provide around-the-clock care, but the couple who are parents to six adult children remain close. These days, Wayne spends much of his time with Maxine, his trained American Pit Bull Terrier service dog, who he rescued nearly four years ago from Thomas J O'Connor Animal Control & Adoption Center in Springfield.

"She's very protective of me and is blind in the right eye, like I am," Wayne said speaking of Maxine's missing right eye, which she lost after she was hit by a car. "That's what caught my eye."

Wayne is legally blind and lives with Parkinson's disease, which he says hasn't advanced significantly thanks, in part, to the active lifestyle he developed during his years in the U.S. Navy. Wayne served more than a decade in the Navy, where he worked in technology and later became a journeyman electrician after he was medically discharged.

"Every veteran deserves a safe place to call home," said Aimee. "Thanks to Team Depot's support, Wayne can remain in the home he loves with the safety, independence, and peace of mind he deserves."



ABOVE: Edgar measuring deck: Edgar Herrera of Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity's construction crew works on the new deck.

RIGHT: Wayne homeowner on deck: Wayne gives a thumbs up on his new deck as he poses on his new deck at his West Springfield home.



Wayne's new deck while it's under construction.

Letters to the Editor

Our State Rep. Puppolo is a strong advocate for making Health Care Affordable

To The Editor:

Representative Angelo J. Puppolo, Jr. knows the crippling effect of the high cost of health care and is doing something about it, despite the false claims of a recent letter writer. Representative Puppolo was a strong advocate and voted in favor of H.5618, An Act strengthening primary care and advancing health care affordability. This landmark legislation strengthens primary care, lowers prescription drug costs, supports hospitals and community health centers, and invests in Massachusetts' health care workforce. With his support, this bill invests \$25 Million to recruit, train, and retain health care professionals across the Commonwealth, lowers out-

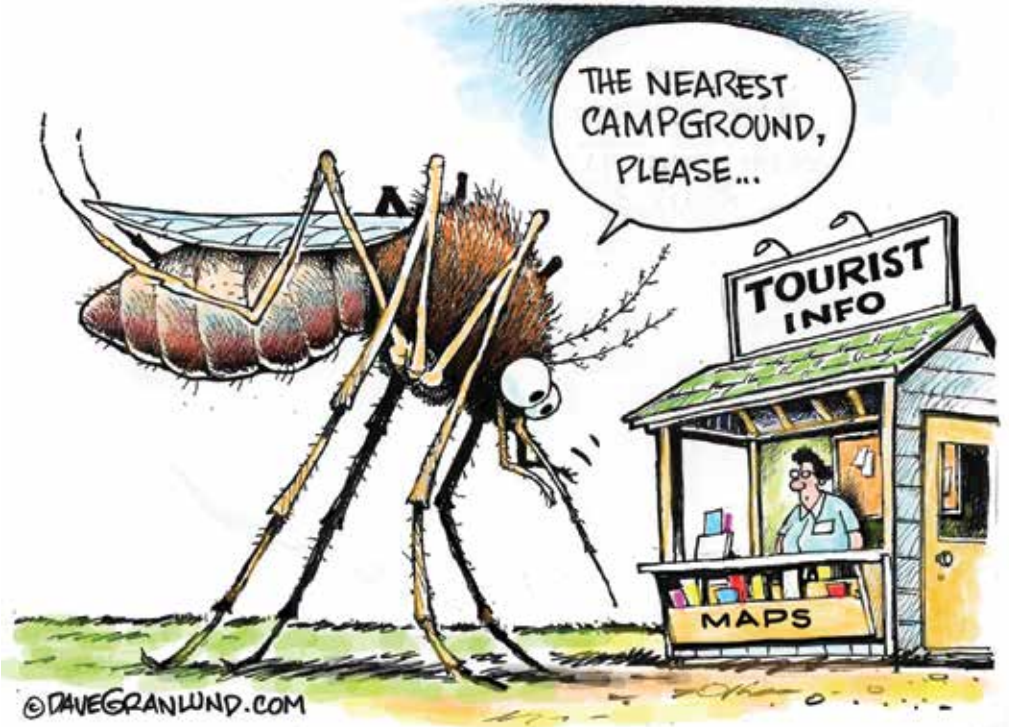
of-pocket prescription drug costs by requiring manufacturer rebates to be applied directly at the pharmacy counter, expands access to mobile integrated health services and other community-based models of care, strengthens hospitals and federally qualified community health centers, and increases transparency and patient protections governing the use of artificial intelligence in health insurance utilization review.

Additionally, despite other false claims, Rep. Puppolo worked closely with the Chair of the House Committee on Health Care Financing, John Lawn, on releasing H. 5590 legislation that would establish a commission for the implementation of a single payer health care system.

This is a significant step and is based on a thoughtful data driven approach to further strengthening our health care system - which Puppolo supports. Access to affordable, high-quality health care for all is a priority of Rep. Puppolo and these are just two examples which he has taken to help build a healthier Commonwealth by focusing on prevention, improving patient outcomes, and ensuring our health care system works better for families, seniors, patients and providers. We need continued strong leadership that has our best interest in Boston always - Angelo Puppolo is that person.

Sincerely,

Katherine Carpenter
Wilbraham



A Belchertown resident shared this photo of a glossy ibis he took at Lake Wallace.

The glossy ibis is a medium-sized wading bird, 18.9 to 26 inches long, with compact body, long neck, long legs and long, curved bill.

The plumage appears dark, almost blackish, at a distance or in poor light. Up close, the body is maroon with wing coverts showing a metallic green, bronze and violet tones.

Juveniles are a duller brown color with some white streaking on their neck

Glossy Ibis occur in flocks, both at nesting colonies and when foraging. They typically feed by lowering the bill into water, mud or soil, to feel for prey.

In addition to consuming animal matter, plants may constitute a major portion of their diet during some seasons.

They frequent almost any wetland environment with shallow water or exposed mud and also readily feed in farm fields or open areas where soils are moist.

They inhabit shallow freshwater wetlands as well as brackish and saltwater wetlands, mangroves, and rice fields. Over much of its range,

When flying, the glossy ibis has its neck stretched forward and legs straight behind it. The glossy ibis does not call often, but may make murmuring sounds while foraging.

During the breeding season, glossy ibises will court one another by preening and touching bills. Males and females will work together to build a large nest.

Nesting in tight colonies, glossy ibis nests are often no more than 2 feet away from each other. The female will lay three to four eggs and incubate them for 20-22 days.

Glossy ibises can be found across the globe. Their range has greatly expanded in the 20th century in North America.

This species has gone from a rare and local Florida species to regularly breeding as far north as Maine and occasionally along the east coast of Canada. The first Massachusetts nests were

found at coastal sites in 1974.

The oldest recorded glossy ibis was at least 21 years old and lived in Virginia between 1971 and 1992.

Sutton birds

Recently, my brother and sister-in-law hosted a pool party. My brother, Ted, puts out grape jelly for the Baltimore orioles and a nectar feeder for the ruby-throated hummingbirds on his deck.

Birds included male and female ruby-throated hummingbirds for the nectar feeder. Baltimore orioles, red-bellied woodpecker, downy woodpecker and a scarlet tanager came to the deck.

They also have a pond that abuts their backyard. They have a pair of mute swans on the pond. They raised a family for several years in a row.

Great blue heron

I often see a great blue heron wading in Long Pond in Rutland. Every time I drive along Route 122 by the pond, I look for the heron.

People may report a bird sighting by emailing edowner@turley.com or calling or texting 774-262-5882.



Juvenile glossy ibis

Photo by Doug Moore

The Wilbraham-Hampden
TIMES

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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 800-824-8458 Ext. 201. The deadline for submission of news material, letters to the editor and photos is Monday at 12 p.m. The TIMES is not responsible for submitted photos.

Election letters to the editor welcome

The Wilbraham-Hampden Times welcomes readers to participate in this year's election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to Wilbraham-Hampden Times, care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to krivers@turley.com. Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by noon Monday to be considered for that Thursday's newspaper. No attack letters will be printed. No letters written by candidates supporting their own candidacy will be printed. If the volume of letters received is larger than the space available in the newspaper, or if the letters become repetitive, the newspaper reserves the right to print a representative sample. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last edition before the election.
For more information, call the editor at 413-283-8393.

Campaign news
As part of its election coverage, the newspaper plans to print stories about contested races for Congress, state Senate, state House, district attorney and Governor's Council during the weeks leading up to the election, as well as a question-and-answer voters guide. In order to ensure fairness to all candidates, no political press releases will be printed, nor will reporters cover political rallies or fundraisers.
Candidates who wish to further publicize their candidacy, beliefs and events may contact advertising, 413-283-8393 about paid advertising in Wilbraham-Hampden Times.

Life in &

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

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Neighborhood Block Party brings community together

The weather cooperated on Sunday afternoon, July 19, when the residents of Ridge Road, Glendale View and East Brook Drive in Hampden joined together for their first neighborhood block party. Close to 50 neighbors brought their smiles and a side dish to complement the burgers and hot dogs provided, for a fun filled

afternoon, complete with music, a make-your-own Sundae Bar and a bounce house for the kids! While differences can divide people, this was certainly not the case for this happy group who left feeling incredibly lucky to have gotten to know their neighbors better. It was agreed that this should become an annual event!



Submitted photos and caption Angelika Melien



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Monthly Highlights for August 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.

NEW PROGRAM! Line Dancing with Mikki

Thursdays,
2:15 to 3:15 p.m.
FREE Demo class on Thursday, Aug. 13
Classes will continue every Thursday beginning August 20th.
Join the fun and learn line dancing or build on the skills you already have! Line dancing is a great way to stay active, improve balance and coordination, meet new friends, and enjoy music.
No partner is needed — just bring your enthusiasm and get ready to have fun!
Cost is \$5 per class, paid directly to the instructor.

Hawaiian Shirt Day Lunch & Ukulele Concert

Friday, Aug. 21 at Noon
Join us for a delicious lunch of Hawaiian Chicken Salad, Ginger Lime Cole-slaw, Macaroni Salad, a Ha-waiian Roll and Pineapple provided by Greater Spring-field Senior Services, as we celebrate National Hawaiian Shirt Day.
Wear your favorite trop-ical or Hawaiian shirt and listen to the sounds of the Hampden Senior Center Ukulele Group. Cost is a \$3.00 suggested donation for lunch.

PUZZLE PALOOZA:

Tuesday, Aug. 25
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 fast-est. Prizes will be awarded!! Puzzle Making is good for

you! It can help improve your memory and reduce stress! Refreshments spon-sored by All American As-sisted Living at Enfield.

Friends Across Generations

Wednesday, Aug. 26
at 10 a.m.
A Program connecting 4th grade students at Green Meadows School with the Hampden Senior Center.
Do you remember receiv-ing handwritten letters in the mail? It seems that these are few and far between now that email and text messages are available. We are bringing back the handwritten letter and joining with 4th-grade students at Green Meadows School for an educational letter-writing opportunity for the students and for you!
Join us for an informa-tion session about this fun program where you can bring a smile to a 4th grad-er's face when you write them a letter and tell them what life was like when you were growing up. The com-mitment is only 3 letters during the school year, and we have a guide you can use if you need help. Join us on Aug. 26 to learn more about the program and to sign up to be a pen pal. Can't make the meeting? Call to let us know you're interested in participating, and we will get information for you.

Take A Chance Tuesday

Come to lunch at Noon on any Tuesday in August, and your name will be en-tered into a drawing to win a \$50 Big Y gift card! Sounds easy, right? That's because it is!! The more Tuesday lunches you attend, the more chances you have to win!
Cost is a \$3.00 suggested donation. Lunches are pro-vided by Greater Springfield Senior Services (GSSSI).
You must sign up for Tuesday lunch by 11:00 AM the day before.

Medicare Open

Please see SENIORS, page 13

FIRST RESPONDERS

from page 1
role in the chain of surviv-al. Their calm, professional actions that day helped give the patient the best possible chance. The men and women of the Wilbraham Regional Emergency Communications Center do this work quietly and around the clock for the communities of Wilbraham, Hampden, Belchertown, and the surrounding areas. To those dispatchers, and to ev-ery telecommunicator who answers when someone needs help - thank you. Your work matters," Gentile said.
After the first responders brought him to the hospital, Garvey was in a coma for a week before he woke up, and today he is up and walking and talking like normal.
The ceremony started with a dinner for everyone, con-sisting of grinders and salads, along with an assortment of cookies and brownies for des-ert.

After dinner, Garvey told his story to all the attendees. Then, Grand Knight Josh Mitchell and the Knights re-cognized each person involved in helping Garvey by giving them a certificate of appreci-ation for their work.
The Knights recognized Adam Krutka and Debbie Kelder from the YMCA, Ofcs. Taylor Beaudry and Marc Schlosser from the po-lice department, and Fire-fighters Kevin Brown, Owen Shaw, Renee Forgues and Julia Noel (In absentia.) from the fire department.
Garvey himself reflected on the ceremony.

"I feel honored that all of these people have come out for myself and my family, and it's very humbling for me. It was such a traumatic event that sometimes you just would seem like you'd want to move on with life. But the Knights are just a great orga-nization in town. They're very active in charity and it's their fundamental mission," Gar-vey said. "They approached me and said: 'We want to do something to honor the first responders.' Which I was immediately on board with. These people were super professional, they respond-ed immediately. And so, for me, they say I'm the guest of honor. It's not me. I don't give



Renee Forgues from the fire department shakes Garvey's hand as she receives her certificate of appreciation.



Turley photos by Noelle Hisgen
YMCA employee Adam Krutka receives his certificate of appreciation from the Knights.



Police officer Taylor Beaudry shakes Garvey's hand as she receives her certificate of appreciation.

myself that. I do it for all of them."
The Garvey family was also in attendance; speaking about the ceremony was Gar-vey's daughter, Taylor.
"I think it's really inter-esting, and it's just been a really cool experience to see everybody kind of come to-gether, and all the people that had a really big impact on saving dad's life. I like to call it the perfect storm because I think about it like if he had the heart attack, every single person was in the right place at the exact right time to be able to come together and to save his life and to make this miraculous recovery happen," she said. "So, it's really re-warding to see everybody just kind of actually get credit for what they're doing, because

to them, it's just another day, but to us, you look at it, and you're like, holy crap, you've saved his life. So, watching them get these awards and these ceremonies and getting that recognition is a really good, feel good moment and opportunity for everyone, too. And really just cool to see it all, too, and witness it from a daughter's perspective of the person that they saved, and just being able to really appreciate and meet all the people who had such a good impact on it."
Grand Knight Josh Mitch-ell also reflected on the cere-mony.
"So, it's a very special night. This is an incredible story that you think is from a movie or a book," Mitch-ell said. "The sequence for

him to get to the hospital and to have his life saved and be back on his feet and walk, talk and do everything is truly in-credible."
Also speaking on behalf of the Knights is Financial Secretary Jim Rooney.
"Our first responders in town did a wonderful, amaz-ing job keeping him alive to get him to the hospital," Rooney said. "As Catholics, I think we all believe that the hand of God was there guiding these people. It's an amazing story. We don't have enough positive stories in our world today. And this is a way of showing the world the good that is in the world and recognizing the people who participate in that."
Receiving one of the many certificates of appreci-ation was YMCA Executive Director Deb Kelder.
"I am incredibly proud of Adam. He's a young staff per-son, but has been with us for quite a few years. And at the time when this happened, he was the only staff person in the building. And he handled it so amazingly in the steps that he took in making sure he grabbed the phone, called 911, and then returned back and started CPR. Now, we ask our staff to be CPR and first aid certified, and this is a real-ly good reason why," Kelder said.
It was a special evening celebrating local heroes in our town.

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DONATION from page 1
er.
will help support the library's programs and resources, re-flecting the girls' commit-ment to encouraging literacy and strengthening a place that brings the community to-gether.
In a post on the WPL's Facebook page, the library expressed their gratitude to the girls.
"We would like to thank the Whitcomb, Pessolano and Maloney families for do-

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nating the proceeds of their lemonade stand to the library! What an impressive group of young leaders— we appreci-ate your support!" they said.
Their fundraiser is a re-minder that small acts of kindness can have a big im-pact. With creativity, deter-mination, and a shared goal, these six girls transformed a simple summer tradition into an opportunity to make a last-ing difference in their home-town.

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HPL holds ‘Music & Movement’ event

By Noelle Hisgen
Correspondent

HAMPDEN - Children came together at the library for Music & Movement with Jennifer Bilodeau on July 20.

The program was for toddlers and children ages two to five. Music & Movement was brought to the library in partnership with Pathways for Parents.

It combined different songs with dancing, movement and singing. All of the segments feature a song along with movement for the children with a theme of body awareness.

Pathways for Parents is very involved with the Hampden Library, hosting a playgroup once a week during the school year. They also helped run a yoga program previously this year. Pathways for Parents provides programs for adults with children from birth to five years old.

Youth Services Librarian Kate Rumprik spoke about the program including the Pathways for Parents organization.

“Pathways for Parents is a fabulous group,” Rumprik said. “It is very well-run. We have lots of great people who come and do programs with the kids, very age-appropriate programs, which sometimes are difficult to find for that age group for the little ones. And it’s very helpful for me to have them come in and do programs and work with us.”

The Music & Movement program was run by Pathways for Parents co-coordinator Jennifer Bilodeau. She developed the program when she started working with Pathways for Parents in 2021.

“We focus on following directions. We focus on knowing our body parts, we focus on participating together, taking turns, and being aware of what’s happening around us,” Bilodeau said. “Miss Kate here at the library is always



Children play with a parachute.

wonderful. She’s willing to host any one of our groups that we have offered through our program. And she’s really great about working alongside us and helping us to decide what’s the best type of groups to run for the age ranges that they serve here.”

It was a great day for children and their families to come together and have fun moving around to music.

Jennifer Bilodeau holds up the book “Barnyard Dance,” which she uses in one of her segments of Music & Movement.



The children come together holding a boat and pretend to row it.

Turley photos by Noelle Hisgen

Hampden Cultural Council accepting September grant applications for FY 2027

HAMPDEN - The Hampden Cultural Council is looking for applicants! Each year, the Massachusetts Cultural Council works with local cultural councils around the state to award more than \$7 million in grants to more than 7,600 community-based cultural programs. Over the past 28 years, volunteers on Hampden’s Cultural Council have been able to disperse over \$137,000 in funding for arts, science, and cultural programs and projects for our residents. In 2025 alone, the Hampden Cultural Council awarded \$6,500 in grant funding to local organizations and individual artists, benefitting our local community and enriching life within the town of Hampden.

Since 1998, the Hampden Cultural Council has helped fund cultural-centered experiences that include performances, workshops and lectures, in-school and out of school programming, historical preservation, public murals, music and drama production materials, and seasonal, arts and cultural festivals. Cultural groups have given performances on Native American culture, Irish American culture and music, and Tai Chi. The Hampden Cultural Council has also provided support in sending our Hampden students to the Springfield Symphony Orchestra, Old Sturbridge Village, Museum of Fine Arts Boston, and the Berklee Performing Arts Center in Boston.

To give you a broader idea of individuals and groups who have been awarded grants, some of our previous awardees

have been mural painters, storytellers, musicians and multicultural performers, puppeteers, and enrichment program leaders. Other awardees have given lectures covering local history, WWII history, women in history, and the underground railroad. Additional recipients have lead workshops focusing on topics such as music, creative writing, painting, pastels, photography, woodworking, STEM, deafness and deaf culture, mindful practices, nutrition and health, and environmental conservation with aid of cultural council funding.

So, who can apply? Grant applications are accepted from individuals, public schools, libraries, municipal organizations, private organizations, and nonprofit organizations. The Hampden Cultural Council gives preference to qualified local organizations or individuals that show a clear benefit to the Hampden community. Groups who work with a Hampden sponsor or venue such as the library, school, senior center, or other community organization are preferred. Programming that is available to a wide range of participants or multiple generations of participants are considered ideal. Grants awarded by the Hampden Cultural Council should not be the sole source of funding for these events but rather should help offset the costs of bringing a program to our town. Eligible programs are awarded reimbursement grants after the event has taken place.

Please see **GRANT**, page 15



Pam Carney, Sue Driscoll, Pat Howe, Kathy Broska, Ann Hadank, and Meredith Wilson enjoy their lunch together.

Turley photo by Noelle Hisgen

LUNCHEON from page 1

who’s with me today, typically comes here, but we like to pop in at least once or twice a year into each community, including to the senior centers, to say hello, to find out what’s on people’s minds, but also to participate in some pretty cool activities,” Oliveira said.

Oliveira explained what the Healthy Incentives Program entails.

“So, obviously, today is a special day, because there’s an Ice Cream Social and Luncheon, which is my personal favorite of mine. But, also, because Becky, the executive di-

rector here, also has been really promoting and was with us yesterday in another part of my district in Granby. And we were celebrating the Healthy Incentives Program, which allows people to receive public benefits. So, essentially, food scans, SNAP systems, they get extra dollars that they buy from local farms, and a lot of those farms are right here in Western Massachusetts,” Oliveira said. “So, I’ve also been leading on something called the Senior Farm Share Program, which allows Western Mass seniors to access farm fresh foods from the local farms right here in Western

Mass. So, every year in the budget, I put in some money for that program, and it’s continued to grow. So, Hampden Senior Center has participated and has worked with a lot of folks that are here to be part of the Healthy Incentives Program, but also part of the Senior Farm Share Program.”

It was a great day with great company all around to eat some fun food with friends at the Hampden Senior Center.

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Sgt. Michael Cygan retires from Wilbraham P.D.

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham Police Department proudly congratulates Sergeant Michael Cygan on his retirement after 21½ years of dedicated service to the Town of Wilbraham, Massachusetts, USA.

Michael joined the Wilbraham Police Department in 2005, bringing with him nearly a decade of prior law enforcement experience. Before beginning his career, he studied Criminal Justice and Fisheries & Wildlife Law Enforcement at Franklin Pierce University, UMass Amherst, and Hesser College. He is also a graduate of the 11th MPOC

at the Mptc Regional Police Academy-Boylston.

Over the past 21½ years, Michael has worn many hats within the department. He has served as a Patrol Officer, Court Officer/Investigator, R.A.D. Women’s Self-Defense Instructor, Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) member, Field Training Officer (FTO), Drug Abuse Response Team officer (DART), Acting Sergeant, and ultimately Sergeant after his promotion in February 2024.

Beyond his official duties, Michael has been a tireless advocate for his fellow officers. He served as President of the

The New England PBA, Inc. Local 120 for 11 years, President of the Wilbraham Police Relief Association, a representative for the Massachusetts Police Association, and organizer of the now-annual WPRA Golf Tournament. His leadership, dedication, and willingness to serve extended far beyond his daily responsibilities.

While careers are often measured in years, Michael’s legacy will be measured by the people he mentored, the officers he supported, and the countless members of the community whose lives he touched along the way.

#CYGANOMICS

Michael, thank you for your unwavering commitment to the Town of Wilbraham, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, your fellow officers, and the law enforcement profession. Your service has made a lasting difference, and your presence will be missed.

Congratulations on a well-earned retirement. May this next chapter be filled with family, friends, new adventures, great rounds of golf, successful hunting and fishing trips, and plenty of time around the smoker perfecting your next masterpiece. You have certainly earned it.



INTERIM PLAN from page 1

Human Resources Dr. Douglas Slaughter provided an overview of the interim plan.

“Some things are currently being funded, and so there’s sort of the question of building security doors and that sort of thing that Wilbraham’s already funded, so we’ll do that and there’s a little bit more in this plan to make sure that the doors we have on the building secure it and control the environment a bit better. There’s some associated things with that,” Slaughter said. “It’s an older building. It has asbestos tiles and, again, there was some funding that, actually a few years ago, relative to the remediation and management of asbestos in the building and so that’s another area that we’re going to do some work on during the summer. There will be a small amount of money remaining into that that will help us maintain those spaces and that type of flooring over the next few years.”

Indoor air quality is also part of the three core items.

“So, we got some mechanisms that we put in place over the last couple of years to try to keep the air quality in good order, manage humidity and mold in the building. Just some other filtering, that sort of thing,” Slaughter said. “And so, the idea with what some of what we’re looking at was taking those kinds of things we’ve been doing that have been keeping the air quality at a somewhat satisfactory manner and bolstering them just a little bit to make them work a little more efficiently and a little bit better for us, attends those needs



Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

The Wilbraham Select Board and Hampden Selectboard held a joint meeting on an interim plan for Wilbraham Middle School on July 23 as a decision on the school entering the Core program awaits.

around air conditioning, in particular, for student need and support building.”

Slaughter added what’s hopeful is for the mini-split type units, “if we are fortunate to get into the Core program in a shorter period of time, there’ll be some useful life of those.”

“We can repurpose those within the district...” Slaughter said. “So, there’s a longer-term ability of being able to reuse some of that expense and leverage that.”

On the numbers, Slaughter said it was “fairly modest” at \$85,719 due to what the district has on hand and what could be done moving forward.

“Hopefully it’s a number that’s workable for the two communities as an interim amount, work and investment that will sort of stretch that building a little bit further until we can get a little bit deeper renovation or replacement in place,” Slaughter said.

After discussion regarding how to get that money, Hamp-

den Selectboard Member Don Davenport noted the middle school is currently owned by the town of Wilbraham per the regional agreement, and the lease says the town is responsible for capital expenses over \$35,000.

“You have \$105,000 in maintenance. Is any of that money going to go towards that?” Davenport said.

Slaughter noted the likelihood of things that could surface or come up to accommodate that operating budget number for the building to help cover that.

“As it’s strictly written currently, it might need a separate side agreement for that purpose. If you do it as an adjustment to the operating budget, which you kind of could, I think there’s some of those things that are harder to classify as operating expense because singular purchasing is a little bit larger...” Slaughter said. “I think that’s part of the conversation tonight, perhaps, is the best way to fund this. I will say this. The soon-

er we can receive and have appropriated funding for that regardless of what mechanism it is, the sooner we can approach the problem.”

Chair Marc Ducey said the items do not exceed the \$35,000 threshold. If grouped, they do.

“So, potentially one of the options we would have is just to increase—or for us—to supplement the budget by \$85,000 in an operating expense and we could use it and put it in maintenance?” Ducey said.

Slaughter said that could be one way to approach it.

“Either of these funding mechanisms requires a partnership with the School Committee to actually vote to amend the budget. They wouldn’t do that without having a good sense from this group—any action taken by you—and then town meeting support would be something that would be to put it into the budget,” Slaughter said.

Hampden Selectboard Member Erik Vanderleeden

said he was concerned if everything’s “roped up into one big purchase, that’s what may make people kind of get uncomfortable.”

“So, if there’s a way, personally, to segregate this, it would probably be optimal. But I think that the number is very reasonable to take a remediation step to make this transition period happen. It’s great, I think it is great,” Vanderleeden said. “If there’s any way to cleanly present this, possibly separately, that would be great. But also with the cost of things going up, this is also kind of going to get wrapped into that for the next ask.”

After Superintendent Dr. John Provost said the district ended up getting \$160 per pupil from the state—they had budgeted for \$150 per pupil—Vice Chair Sue Bunnell said she understood the many concerns as they existed when her son was at WMS 30 years ago.

“I mean, it kind of feels like short money to get us through whatever it takes to get us to being able to present a much bigger conversation and bigger decision,” Bunnell said.

Vanderleeden shared his two children will be heading into eighth grade and he’s heard things, agreeing with Bunnell that it wasn’t a lot of money. He emphasized this.

“We’re going to have to make a decision and say, ‘Hey, this has been weighing on my mind. We need to kind of make a line in the sand if you will’ and say, We need to kind of put aside our differences and move forward for the betterment of the children if we cannot come to an agreement,” Vanderleeden said. “So, this seems like a fair agreement to me. I just want to present it to the people of Hampden in a manner that they can thoroughly understand what we’re trying to accomplish at the end of the day...”

Davenport pointed out Hampden’s share of \$17,000 “isn’t a lot of money.”

“The feedback will be, ‘You sold us down the drain. It’s not our building and you’re fixing up their building and we don’t want to pay for it.’ A small group of people, but it depends on who turns out at the Town Meeting and how angry they are about something else that’s going on,” Davenport said.

After further discussion, Bunnell shared how doing work while the school is empty would be best and asked how much people are willing to go out “on the hope and expectation that in fact this modest amount of investment to make sure the kids that are in middle school in this district are safe and healthy is going to be approved at the respective Town Meetings.”

Provost said the plan was to work on the projects all year and then others once funding was available. He added projects could be done during the school year and door projects “we could probably do during a winter break.”

The mini-split installation, however, would have to occur next summer.

“Because that involves drilling through the exterior envelope of the building and

that’s a long process,” Provost said.

Flynn then said how the entire town hall in Hampden was done “within a week.”

“It could easily be done during a break,” Flynn said. “It doesn’t need to wait until next summer is my point, I don’t think. If this is a priority, I don’t see why we don’t make it a priority.”

As discussion continued, Flynn then said this.

“It’s a hard thing to say, and this sounds weird, but if we were to say, my gosh, this is a priority and we’re going to get it done next year. How do you balance the two things together?” Flynn said.

Select Board Clerk Michael Squindo then spoke up.

“To be fair, though, it’s a six- to 10-year priority,” Squindo said.

“I understand, but we’re also saying we’ve gone to what we think are the number one things to do,” Flynn said.

“Reading the memo, this was the budgeted plan for six to 10 years,” Squindo said.

“I get it, but we also have to say, cut everything off. These are the number one things that you need to do. It’s part of our presentation. We believe this, we believe it the whole way,” Flynn said.

Squindo then said this.

“I hear that and I guess I just want to make sure that we’re really saying we’re having a difference of timing over less than \$10,000 on a less than \$100,000 10-year plan when we’ve already told the schools that the money that they’ve asked for this year wasn’t awarded at the needed request that was provided. Then we’re going to ask them to nickel and dime from the budget that is this year for a 10-year plan,” Squindo said.

Ducey clarified this was not said.

“I think we said we’ll give it to them at the Fall Town Meeting, but they could get it done sooner...” Ducey said. “I don’t think this is a big ask and I don’t think this would be a difficult thing to promote at town meeting.”

“I think it bolsters the case of town meeting of such a priority. They got it done right away and they’re looking for validation, if you will,” Flynn said.

Slaughter later said the execution of the plan can happen “over the course of the next 12 months with a lot of it being much much sooner than later.”

“We’ve got some capability of managing those places and spaces that are needing the mini-split type installations. We got mechanisms to manage that in the short-term until we get the opportunity to do the installation of something like a mini-split unit,” Slaughter said.

Provost said this would be something needing direction from the School Committee.

“Essentially, what we’re hearing from the two boards here is that you’d like us to essentially deficit spend in anticipation that there’ll be more funding in a few months. I think we have to find out whether the School Committee has an appetite for that,” Provost said.

The boards both agreed they approved of the plan and moved on to discussing the regional agreement.

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SPORTS

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SEND US YOUR SPORTS SUBMISSIONS

Falcons capture A Division championship

By **Tim Peterson**
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW— After surviving consecutive overtime battles in the Pioneer Valley Summer Soccer League quarterfinals and semifinals, the top-seeded Falcons girls’ team made sure the championship match didn’t require any extra drama.

Balanced scoring and a composed defensive effort carried the Minnechaug Regional based Falcons to the A Division crown, as

they earned a 3–1 win over sixth-seeded Enfield (Conn.) last Saturday afternoon at historic Lusitano Stadium in Ludlow.

“Every player on this year’s team made a key contribution and I’m very proud of them,” said Falcons summer league coach Karl Labadorf. “I’m also very glad that today’s match didn’t go to overtime like our previous two playoff games did.”

It was the first time the Falcons played in the PVSSL finals since losing to Monson

in 2022.

The players listed on the Falcons 2026 summer league roster are Anna Oravec, Izzy Horne, Addison Derosia, Paige Holt, Ainsley Holden, Stephanie Labadorf, Avery Knox, Maya Usher, Alex Jaslanek, Taylor Bartosz, Carson Humphries, Isabella Usher, Gabrielle Cooper, Kyla Sacco, Kaitlyn Labadorf, Emerson Atkin, Alivia Lema, Lillian Sergienko, Katelyn Hoar, Makenna Sacco, Liv Busone, Sophia O’Connor, Carly Coughlin, Brooklyn Manning, Kate Degray, Lauren Hoar, and Lyanna Hodge.

Humphries, Holden, and Isabella Usher were the captains of the Falcons summer league team.

“It just feels great to win the championship game,” said Humphries while holding the championship trophy. “I’m very happy that we were able to do this while I’m still in high school. All of us work very well together and we’re a big family.”

The Falcons, who finished the summer league regular season with a 9-0-2 record, defeated eighth-seeded South Hadley, 2-1 in the quarterfinals in overtime. They then dispatched fourth-seeded Ludlow, 1-0, in the semifinals, which was also decided

Please see **FALCONS**, page 12



Lillian Sergienko circles around the ball.



ABOVE: Gabrielle Cooper looks for an open teammate.

Turley photos by David Henry
www.sweetdogphotos.com



RIGHT: Kyla Sacco clashes with an opponent.

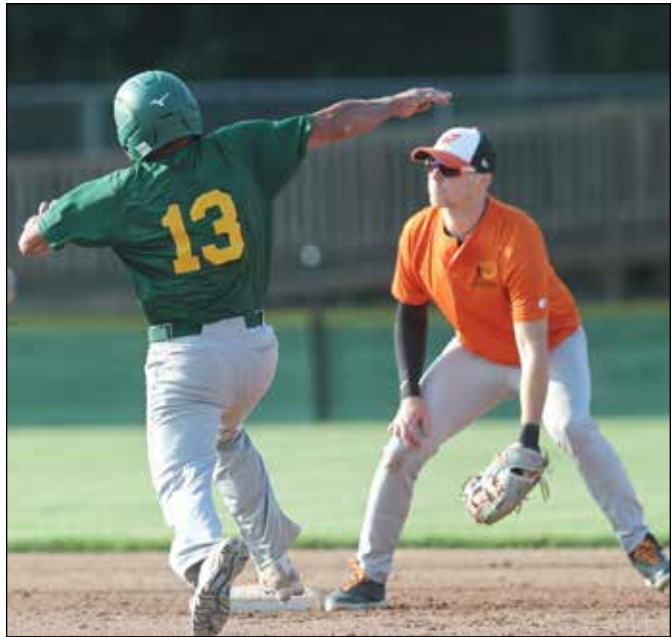
Carson Humphries advances up the field during playoff action last week.



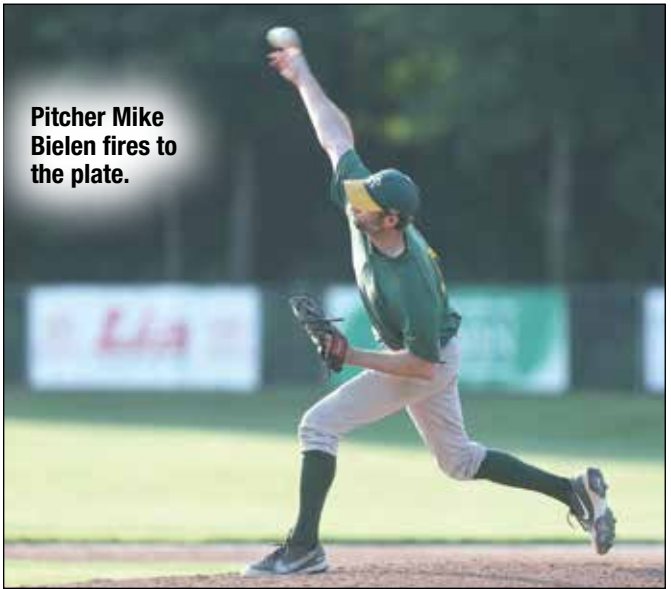
Nate Woodland makes a catch for the A's during regular season action in the Valley Wheel league.

Valley Wheel regular season concludes

WILBRAHAM – The regular season has concluded for the Valley Wheel Over-28 Baseball League, one of several adult baseball leagues that plays in the region. This year, with play concluding this past Sunday, the Angels were able to finish the regular season with the top record, going 11-4. The Angels matched the Twins with the same record, but won two out of three head-to-head for the tiebreaker advantage in the playoffs. The Orioles finished third and the Cubs overcame the A's by tiebreaker for the final of four playoff spots. The semifinals for the league are set for this Sunday at Spec Pond in Wilbraham. In the first matchup, the No. 2 Twins host the No. 3 Orioles at 2:30 p.m. Then, the top-seeded Angels face No. 4 Cubs at 6 p.m. The championship game will be held on Sunday, Aug. 16 at Spec Pond at 3 p.m.



Ken Schubert heads into second base.

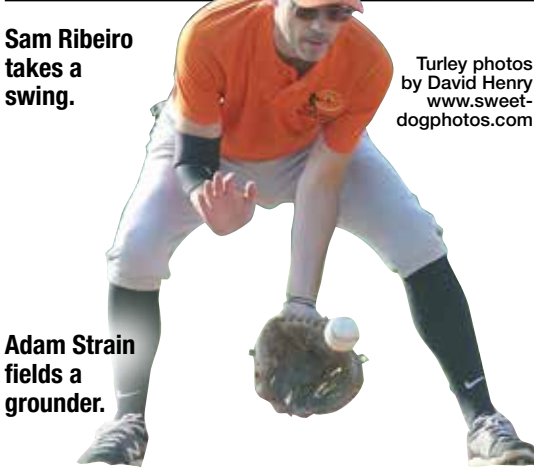


Pitcher Mike Bielen fires to the plate.



Sam Ribeiro takes a swing.

Turley photos by David Henry
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Adam Strain fields a grounder.



Mike Burgos pitches in a game for the Orioles on July 26.



SEE MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE 12.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Ryan Sunshine socks a free kick away.

CF Arbor reaches semifinals

SOUTH HADLEY – In last week’s PVSSL summer playoffs, the CF Arbor Men’s soccer team, which was the No. 4 seed in the playoffs, was able to advance into the semifinals and took on Mt. Carmel,

which defeated CF by a score a 2-0, ending CF Arbor’s chances of reaching the championship game this year. Mt. Carmel would capture this year’s men’s championship.



Troy Remillard outplays an opponent for the ball.

SPORTS

Blue Sox fall in Game 1 of first playoff series

SANFORD — The Valley Blue Sox (0-1 postseason) dropped Game 1 of their first-round NECBL playoff series against the Sanford Mainers (1-0 postseason), 5-2. This marks the first time that the Blue Sox have lost to the Mainers this season, as Valley won the two previous outings.

The first inning remained scoreless for both teams, but the Mainers got themselves on the board in the second. Nater Watcher (UConn) hit a 2-run home run out to left field with Steven Kraus (Binghamton) on base to give Sanford an early 2-0 lead.

Valley, however, was able to tie the game back up shortly in the fourth after Mainers’ pitcher Andrew Middleton (Maryland) had a lackluster inning, allowing 2 runs and 3 hits.

Nick Spaventa (UPenn) got the first run to score when he singled to the shortstop, who made an error, which allowed Esteban Garcia (Boston College) to score and Spaventa to advance to second.

Anthony Tirado (Penn State) then hit a sacrifice fly to right-center, letting Spaventa make his way around the bases to tie the game 2-2.

While it seemed like it was panning out to be a close game, Sanford broke things

open in the sixth. Kraus was up to bat with the bases loaded when he singled to third base, sending Albert De La Rosa (Maine) and Brian Connolly (Rhode Island) home to score, breaking the tie 4-2.

The Blue Sox loaded up the bases once again for Sanford, but it was Valley who sent the run home for the Mainers when Michael Goodman (UMass) hit Brennan Stauble (Elon) with a pitch, forcing in the fifth tally for the Mainers.

While the Blue Sox still had plenty of time to mount an offense, the Mainers’ pitching staff locked it down, retiring batters in order over the final three innings.

“You got to tip your cap when [Sanford’s pitching] does their job,” said head coach John Raiola postgame. “We had some tough at-bats; it’s tough to string a bunch of hits together against guys like that.”

Though it was not the result the Blue Sox were looking for, Raiola still has full confidence in his team’s ability to win Game 2.

“The fun thing about getting to this time of the year [is] it truly can be any random person who puts one good swing on a ball that changes the game.”

TBirds pick up new goalies coach

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds announced today that the club has hired Brandon Wildung as Goaltending Coach.

Wildung, 32, joins the T-Birds and replaces Dan Stewart, who was appointed Goaltending Coach by the New Jersey Devils earlier this month. Wildung most recently served as Associate Head Coach for the USHL’s Sioux Falls Stampede from 2024-26, where he helped the Stampede to a Clark Cup championship this past season.

Prior to his coaching career, the Nassau, Minn. native stood between the pipes for four NCAA seasons with Mercyhurst University from 2014 to 2018 before skating in seven pro games with the ECHL’s Utah Grizzlies and Manchester Monarchs.

Wildung began his junior coaching career as an assistant coach with the Stampede in 2022-23, then served as an assistant coach in 2023-24 for Augustana University, the program’s first season as an NCAA Division I school.

Senior Class tag sale fundraiser

WILBRAHAM – The Minnechaug Regional High School Senior Class Council will be holding a Senior Class Tag Sale Fundraiser on Saturday, Oct. 17, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the school.

The Senior Class Council is inviting local businesses

and community members to rent a parking space for \$30 to sell their items, whether that be books, clothes, games, furniture and other household items.

To learn more, contact Michele Magee at mmagee@hwrdsd.org.

with Jason followed by a light lunch.

Thank you for being a part of “The Journey”.

Please let Wendy know you’re coming at 413.566.5588.

Hampden Senior Center Memory Café to celebrate 10 years

HAMPDEN - Join us as we celebrate the Hampden Senior Center Memory Café on its 10 year anniversary.

Friday, Aug. 28 starting at 10:15 a.m.

Enjoy a Drumming Class

This week in recreation

Erin Carroll, Assistant Director

WILBRAHAM - We hope everyone is having a fantastic summer filled with fun, friends, family, and lasting memories! While summer is still in full swing, it’s never too early to start planning for the fall. Several of our fall sports programs are now open for registration, with even more opening soon, so don’t wait to sign up!

Registration for **Flag Football (Grades K-4)**, **N Zone Junior Sports (Ages 2-3)**, and **Pre-K Soccer (Ages 4-5)** opened on **July 21st**. Coming up on **August 4th**, registration opens for **Cross Country (Grades 5-8)**, **Fall Volleyball (Grades 2-9)**, and **Fall Tennis (Grades**

2-12). Registration has ended for Fall Soccer (Gr K-8) and Field Hockey (Gr 3-8) but please reach out to the WPRD office to inquire if any spots remain.

If you’re still looking for ways to enjoy the rest of your summer, **Spec Pond Beach** is open daily through **August 16** and features Amy’s Splash Park, a concession stand with ice cream and other refreshments, and plenty of opportunities for summer fun. We also have openings remaining in several of our weekly summer programs.

For more information about all of our programs or to register, please visit wilbrahamrec.com.

CF Arbor reaches semifinals



Owen Dieterle heads up the field.



Landry Kwawu goes to meet up with a loose ball.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Tyler Lewis advances up the field.

FALCONS from page 11

in OT.

The Falcons also squeaked out a 1-0 win against Enfield (7-5-2) during the PVSSL regular season.

“We beat them a couple of weeks ago, so we knew that today’s game was probably going to be a hard-fought battle,” Humphries said. “We just played very well.”

Humphries is one of the Falcons defenders, along with Sergienko, Atkin, Holden, and Bartosz.

The Falcons only allowed two goals during the PVSSL regular season.

Bartosz was selected as the Most Valuable Player of the A-Division championship match.

“I’m grateful to be selected as the M.V.P., but everyone played well today’s game,” Bartosz said. “We do have a very strong defense. Izzy is also an outstanding goalie.”

Horne made a couple of outstanding saves late in the second half, which helped the Falcons to hold onto the



Brooklyn Manning looks to send the ball up the field.

lead.

“One of our goals was to win the summer league championship,” Horne said. “It’s very excited to accom-

plish it. I’m also glad today’s game didn’t go to overtime because there was a lot of pressure on me.”

Manning, who scored

both Falcons overtime goals, gave her team a 1-0 advantage against Enfield following an unassisted goal eight minutes into the opening half, which is 35 minutes in the summer league.

About 15 minutes later, Sacco drove down the right side of the field before firing a shot into the back of the net for the Falcons second unassisted goal.

The Falcons held a 2-0 halftime advantage.

Early in the second half, Enfield’s Desi Rodriguez stole a pass before putting a shot into the right corner ending the Falcons shutout bid.

The Falcons led by two goals again following a shot attempt by Sergienko that took a high bounce on the turf field and sailed into the net over the goalie’s head during the 50th minute.

The Minnechaug girls’ varsity soccer team is scheduled to kick off the fall season at Westfield High School on Sept. 8. They’ll be facing East Longmeadow in the home opener three days later.

Emerling picks up win at Monadnock

WINCHESTER, NH – If there’s any end in sight to Patrick Emerling’s current dominance of the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour, it wasn’t visible Saturday, July 25 at Monadnock Speedway.

The Orchard Park, NY speedster won the fifth annual JDV Productions Duel At The Dog energized by USNE Power Modified main event at the storied high-banked oval, using his third consecutive Tour victory to stay atop the points parade and, as an added bonus, picked up an additional \$5,000 check for topping the three-race JDV Whelen Midsummer Championship.

And he did it with relative ease. Beating Tyler Rypkema to the checkers by 2.321 seconds, Emerling now has 13 Whelen Modified Tour victories to his credit, two of them scored at Monadnock.

With a huge crowd on hand for the JDV Duel event, other winners Saturday at the fast quarter-mile included Granite State Pro Stock Series rocketman DJ Shaw, and third-year Pro Truck Challenge hot shoe Jason Paquette, who scored his first career Pro Truck victory in front of the thundering Duel at The Dog crowd.

Matt Hirschman set fast time in Whelen Modified

Tour qualifying, touring the high banks in 11.836 seconds. The Keystone State hot shoe was one of ten drivers in the 21-car field to turn sub-12 second laps. It was the third week in a row that Hirschman had set fast time but a top-ten redraw Saturday would place him ninth on the starting grid for the night’s 200-lap main event.

Jon McKennedy, a winner of many events at Monadnock over the years, started on the pole, with defending Tour Champion Austin Beers at his side. At their bumpers, were six-time Champion Doug Coby and Emerling. McKennedy quickly took charge.

With Coby, Beers, and Ronnie Williams riding in his shadow, McKennedy would lead the first 35 laps. Emerling, content to survey the task before him, moved up to third on lap 18.

The first lead change occurred on lap 37, with Beers low-lining to the front. Two circuits later, his mirror was filled by Emerling. He would take charge on a lap 86 restart and never look back. Beers would stay right with him on restarts, racing wheel-to-wheel with the eventual race winner, but each time Emerling would again best him and

pull away.

Tyler Rypkema, aboard the fabled Boehler Old Blue, blasted into second on lap 137, actually inching ahead of Emerling to lead lap 148 by inches, but two go-rounds later, the Empire State star was back in front to stay. Rypkema’s strong second-place performance was his third Whelen Modified Tour runner-up finish of the summer.

Beers held strong to earn the third-place hardware, followed by 15-year-old rookie sensation Paulie Hartwig III and Tommy Catalano.

Positions six through ten went to Teddy Hodgdon, Eric Goodale, McKennedy, Coby, and Stephen Kopcik. Hirschman, after his promising start, finished 12th on the night.

Second generation superstar DJ Shaw did what’s become expected of him in big northeast Pro Stock events Saturday. The Center Conway, NH ace patiently worked his way to the front in the 100-lap Granite State Pro Stock Series main event, pounced at the first opportunity, and then sped off to victory.

Teen star Cole Robie – the series’ defending champion and defending Duel at the Dog Champion – set fast time in

Pro Stock qualifying Saturday with a lap of 12.136 seconds, but a redraw put Tom Carey III and Cory Casagrande up front as the race went green.

Carey, with Casagrande glued to his bumper, had the best seat in the house for the first 72 circuits, but Shaw – from row three – was methodically working his way to the front. Taking third from points leader Jeremy Sorel on lap 11, he was content to sit there until low-lining into turn three 40 laps later to swipe second from Casagrande.

With the same move on lap 73, Shaw was at the front and off to the races, Casagrande kept it close, but there was no stopping Shaw once he was in front. Saturday’s big Duel At The Dog score was his second GSPSS victory of the summer.

With Casagrande holding strong for a close second, Carey’s strong performance brought him home third. Hudson, NH’s Joey Pole was fourth under the checkers, and Robie completed the top five.

Pro Truck Challenge driver Jason Paquette couldn’t have picked a better day to earn his first win. Racing in front of the huge Duel crowd, the Scotland, CT hot shoe took the lead from pole starter Nate Smith on lap 26 and then held ageless wonder Duane Noll at his bumper the rest of the way.

With Noll finishing glued to the winner’s bumper, Tyler Chapman was third on the day. Four-time winner and series points leader Randy Burr got as high as third before settling for fourth, and Adrien Paradis was fifth in the 16-truck field.



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SENIORS from page 8

Enrollment Update
Open Enrollment is October 15th—December 7th. This is a time to look at your current insurance plan and determine if making changes is beneficial to you. Before Open Enrollment, save the date for these programs that will help you gather more information about your insurance and make informed decisions.
Thursday, Sept. 3, 9:30 a.m.—Lobby Learning with Arielle from the Regional SHINE Program
Friday, Sept. 18, 12:30 p.m.—Blue Cross and Blue Shield present Medicare Trivia
Wednesday, Oct. 14—Round Table Q&A Session with SHINE Counselors Becky & Ann
More information about

these programs will be in the next Scribe, but be sure to save the dates!!!
Lobby Learning
Lobby Learning is taking a break for the summer. Stay tuned for a great lineup coming in September!
Is there an organization you would like us to invite? We'd love to hear your suggestions!
Common Threads led by Joan Tompkins, PhD
Mondays, from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.
Come and join this friendly group... to share memories and learn new coping skills for dealing with loss, loneliness, and adapting to life changes. There is no cost to join.

MEMORY CAFÉ
EVERY FRIDAY AT 10:15 a.m. Please call Wendy for more information.
Sponsored by: Friends of Hampden Senior Citizens & private donations.
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 in August at the Memory Café:
Aug. 7 – Summer Craft & BINGO
Aug. 14 – Music with Renee
Aug. 21 – Rhythm & Motion with Sara
Aug. 28 – 10th Anniversary Celebration! Drums with Jason

Blind Date with a Book is in full swing!
We hope you are enjoying your "blind date" and remember, if you finish your current book before the next session, you can stop in to pick up another book and go on another "date".
Next Meeting: Tuesday, Sept. 1, from 10 a.m. to Noon.
The theme for the next date is: "Walk Down Memory Lane"
Thanks to Ellen Moriarty and her team at the Hampden Public Library, to the late Cindy O'Sullivan, whose love of books, reading, and education inspires us daily, and thank you to Mary Grasseti for providing a fun and engaging experience while learning new things in a very different kind of book club. Let's see what she does next! Don't wait to sign up.

Please register for the next session by calling the Senior Center before Aug. 14.
You must register so we have an ample selection of books.
Crafts with Kim
Lighted Hummingbird Wreath
Tuesday, Aug. 11 from 1 to 3 p.m.
Cost is \$25 per project. All materials will be provided.
Floral Mirror
Tuesday, Aug. 18 from 10 a.m. to Noon
Cost is \$10. All materials will be provided.
Projects are displayed in the vestibule. Pre-registration is required.
Beginner Summer Themed Watercolor Classes

with Trish Pilon
Wednesdays, Aug. 5, 12, 19, and 26 from 9:30 a.m. to Noon.
Weekly projects will be posted in the lobby. All materials will be provided.
You are welcome to bring your own supplies; however, the class fee remains the same.
Cost is \$40 for the session if paid in full or \$12 per class. Pre-registration is required.
Greeting Cards with Ellie
Monday, Aug. 24, from 1 to 3 p.m.
Cost is \$3.00 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.

PET PAGE

PET OF THE MONTH Meet Scarlett!

She is a 2-year-old West Asian village dog from Azerbaijan. She was rescued from the city streets of Baku by Baku Street Dog Rescue. Scarlett loves hiking and playing fetch. She lives in Hampden with Ralph and Tina DeLullo.



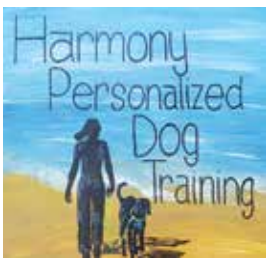
ATTENTION READERS!

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

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Hannah Belcher-Timme, DVM
Nicholas Schipper, DVM
Madison Harris, DVM
Lynn Dgetluck, DVM
Leah Guidry, DVM
Denise Chiminiello, DVM
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– Every Sunday in Belchertown behind the Police Dept. at 10 a.m.
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The Real Reasons Why Your Dog Follows You All the Time

Have you ever felt like your dog is your personal shadow? No matter where you go—the kitchen, the bathroom, or even just across the couch—they're always right behind you. There are reasons for their constant companionship. Dogs don't just follow their humans for food or fun; it's rooted in instinct, emotion, and even their well-being.
They see you as their pack leader-

Dogs are natural pack animals; in their eyes, you are the pack's leader. In the wild, sticking close to the leader ensures safety, guidance, and resource access.
They have separation anxiety- If your dog panics when you leave the house or even just leaves the room, they might have separation anxiety. Dogs with this condition feel intense distress when they're away from their human, leading them to

follow you everywhere just to make sure you don't disappear.
They're hoping for food or a treat- Let's be honest, dogs are opportunists. If you've ever handed them a treat while standing at the counter or given them a snack just because they looked cute, they've learned that following you can sometimes lead to rewards.
They want to protect you- Some dogs

take their job as your bodyguard very seriously. Whether you realize it or not, your dog might follow you to ensure you're safe.
They are imprinted on you- Puppies and young rescues will imprint on their humans. If you've raised your dog since they were young, they likely see you as their primary source of comfort and security. Imprinted dogs feel an intense attachment and naturally want to stay

close to the person they trust most.
They love you- One of the biggest reasons your dog follows you is simply because they love you. Dogs form strong emotional bonds with their humans, and staying close is their way of showing affection.
They are aging- Older dogs sometimes follow their humans more. Vision and hearing loss or cognitive issues can make them feel more

vulnerable, so they rely on your presence for guidance and comfort.
We are entertaining and they don't want to miss out- FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) isn't just a human problem—dogs get it too! If your dog thinks there's even the slightest chance something exciting might happen, they'll stick to you like glue, just in case. We are also pretty entertaining to watch as well!

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

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

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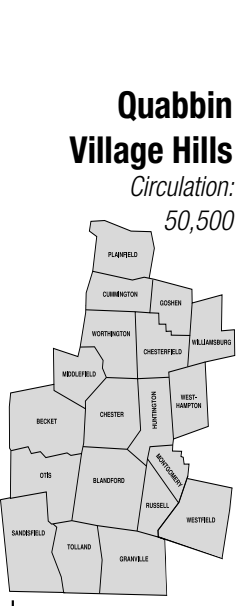
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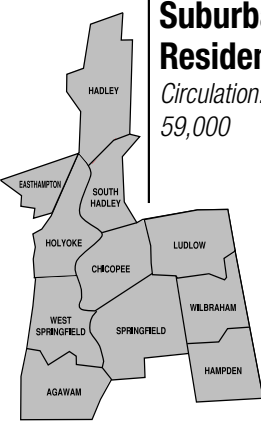
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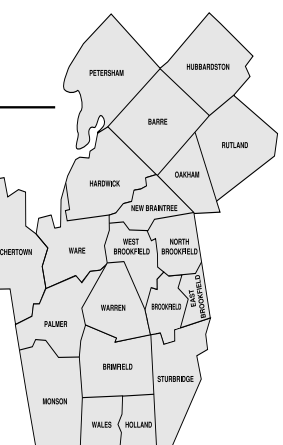
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Wilbraham in-person early voting hours

WILBRAHAM - The State Primary is being held on Tuesday, September 1, 2026. Registered voters in Massachusetts will be able to cast their ballot in-person before the State Primary. In-person early voting for Wilbraham registered voters will take place at the Wilbraham Town Hall, 240 Springfield Street, on the

following dates and times:
Hours of Early Voting:
Saturday, August 22, 2026 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Monday, August 24 thru Friday, August 28, 2026 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Contact the Wilbraham Town Clerk's Office with any questions. (413) 596-2800 x200 or Clerks@Wilbraham-ma.gov.

Electronic Recycling Fundraiser Aug. 22

HAMPDEN - Green Day Recycling is hosting an electronics recycling event fundraiser, and we invite everyone to participate.
Event Details:
- Location: Federated Community Church, 590 Main Street, Hampden, MA 01036
- Time: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. (Rain or shine)

- Date: Saturday Aug. 22
- Pricing: Some items are free to recycle, while others range from \$5 to \$40 each.
- Benefit: A portion of the proceeds will benefit the hosting parish. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Listen, pray, share & thank

INDIAN ORCHARD - A concert in Honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary will be held at Immaculate Conception Church, 25 Parker St. Indian Orchard, Ma on Sunday, Aug. 16, 2026 starting at 3 p.m.
Join our Parish Choir in singing Polish, English & Latin Marian Hymns. Guest speakers during the Concert will be Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist-

Sister Faith Marie Woolsey FSE will speak about the Rosary and its significance, and Sister Rosario Ongayo FSE will speak about real life experiences related to the mysteries of the Rosary.
Light refreshments after the concert.
Program is sponsored by Parish Rosary Sodality, Free will offering will benefit the parish.

GRANT from page 9

Our past grant recipients include the Hampden Senior Center, Hampden Public Library, Scantic River Artisans, The Theatre Guild of Hampden, the Hampden PTO, our high school, elementary and middle schools within HWRSD, One Book One Community, Old Post Road Orchestra, Pathways for Parents, Strings and Friends, and many individual artists.
The Hampden Cultural Council will start accepting online grant applications for FY27 on Septem-

ber 1st. The deadline for grant applications is October 15th, 2026. A full list of application guidelines can be found at <https://massculturalcouncil.org/communities/local-cultural-council-program/application-process/> Still have more questions or ideas for future programming for the town of Hampden? Are you interested in joining Hampden's Cultural Council? Contact our Hampden Cultural Council Chair, Virginia Blake at ginbee@charter.net.

PUBLIC NOTICES

Town of Hampden Conservation Commission
In accordance with the Wetland Protection Act, Chapter 131, section 40, a Public Hearing will be held by the Hampden Conservation Commission on **August 19, 2026 at the Hampden Town Hall, (85 Wilbraham Rd) at 6:00pm.**This is for a Request for Determination of Applicability filed by Eversource Gas Company of Massachusetts. Within Hampden, approximately 2,324 linear feet of new 6-inch HDPE gas main within Wilbraham Road roadway layout and 61 linear feet of new 4 inch HDPE gas main within Echo Valley Drive. The Hampden portion extends from 343 Wilbraham Rd to the Wilbraham town line. The hearing will be held in the Selectboard meeting room. For more information contact Conservation@Hampden-ma.gov.
08/06/2026

Wednesday, August 19, 2026, 2:00 p.m.
Voluntary site visits Thursday, July 30, 2026, 8:30 a.m. at 16 Main Street.
For full RFI document visit: www.wilbraham-ma.gov "Bids".
07/30, 08/06/2026

Sale of Motor Vehicle
This ad is pursuant to MA Gen. Law Ch.255, Sec. 39A as of August 7, 2026 the following motor vehicle will be for sale to satisfy a garage keepers lien: 2001 GMC Sierra 1500 VIN#: 1GHTHK29U31E256247 LKO: Tina Kearns 40 Sutton Rd. Millbury, MA PO BOX 181 South Grafton, MA 01560 R & S Assoc. Inc PO Box 543 Wilbraham MA 01095 413-596-4374
07/23, 07/30, 08/06/2026

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

Town of Wilbraham Municipal Facilities Reuse & Consolidation Initiative Request for Information (RFI)
The Town of Wilbraham is seeking information and conceptual proposals from qualified organizations, institutions, developers, nonprofit entities, educational providers, recreation operators, and public-private partners regarding potential adaptive reuse, redevelopment, lease, partnership, and/or purchase opportunities involving several municipal facilities.
Properties Included in this RFI are Memorial School (310 Main St), Little Red School House (28 Springfield St), Former Wilbraham Police Building (16 Main St), Wilbraham Town Hall (240 Springfield St). **Responses due**

OBITUARY

Willard W. Boss, 92

1933 – 2026

WILBRAHAM – Willard Wilcox "Bill" Boss, 92, died peacefully on Sunday, July 26, 2026, surrounded by his loved ones, at home.

Bill was born, at home, on November 13, 1933, in Ware, MA. He was the youngest of six sons born to the late Gilbert H. and Alice M. (Wilcox) Boss. The family moved from Ware to Springfield in 1939, where Bill's dad owned and operated an independent auto and truck repair business. Bill graduated from the former Springfield Technical High School and subsequent engineering courses from his employers; Chrysler Corp., Chicago Pneumatic Tool Co., Detroit Ball Bearing Co. (InVetech Corp.) and Applied Industrial Technologies. His employment required him to live in Utica, NY, Dallas, TX, Detroit, MI and Toledo, OH. Upon his retirement, he returned to reside in Longmeadow, MA. He was a 32nd Degree Mason of Esoteric Lodge A.M. & F.M., a Knights

Templar of the Morningstar chapter of Royal Arch Masons, and a member of the Melha Shriners Director Staff prior to The Vintage Auto unit to which he belonged for many years.

Bill was predeceased by his wife Susan (Butterick) Boss, brothers; Ralph, Everett, Charles, Gilbert "Harold" and Kenneth. He is survived and will be sadly missed by his daughters; Vicki L. Boss-Nunez of Westfield, W. Lynn Boss-Rowinsky (Gerry) of Methuen, and his life partner Phyllis Laplante of Wilbraham, as well as several grandchildren, great grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

At Bill's request, burial will be private and at the convenience of the family in Aspen Grove Cemetery, Ware, MA. In lieu of flowers, please consider a memorial contribution to Shriners' Hospital for Children, 516 Carew St., Springfield, MA 01104. Wilbraham Funeral Home is assisting the family.



NOTICE

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

Wilbraham-Hampden Times OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries. One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place. The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice (with a word limit of up to 500 words) and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

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



VETERANS DAY SALUTE

The Wilbraham-Hampden Times
~ November 5, 2026 ~

The Wilbraham-Hampden Times will be saluting our local veterans (from all wars and branches, including honoring deceased veterans), reservists, active duty U.S. Military members.

Please submit a photo of your veteran with his or her name, rank, branch of military and hometown by email to jamie@turley.com or drop off a photo to **The Wilbraham-Hampden Times, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069**
All photos will be returned.

Please submit your photo no later than Monday, October 27, 2026.

There is no cost to submit a photo.
No photos will be accepted after deadline.

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CLUES ACROSS
1. Bleated
6. Snake-like fish
9. Database management system
13. Social evolution
14. American rocker Grohl
15. Greek personification of compassion
16. Negatives
17. Rescued
18. Self-immolation by fire ritual
19. Assigns tasks
21. Popular type of cigar
22. Discounts
23. The whole quantity
24. New York Giants legend
25. Indicates before
28. Lentils
29. Extremely angry
31. Body part
33. "North Star State"
36. David __, US playwright

CLUES DOWN
38. Lower and raise one's head
39. Private rendezvous
41. In a way, improved
44. A place to play
45. Astronomical period of 18 years
46. Automobile
48. Something you can take
49. A radio band
51. Jaws of a voracious animal
52. Short-billed rails
54. Chinese province
56. Shameless
60. Horizontal passage from the surface into a mine
61. Indian respectful titles
62. Fail to entertain
63. Dried-up
64. Central Utah city
65. Southern U.S.
66. German river
67. Necessary for breathing
68. Put into play

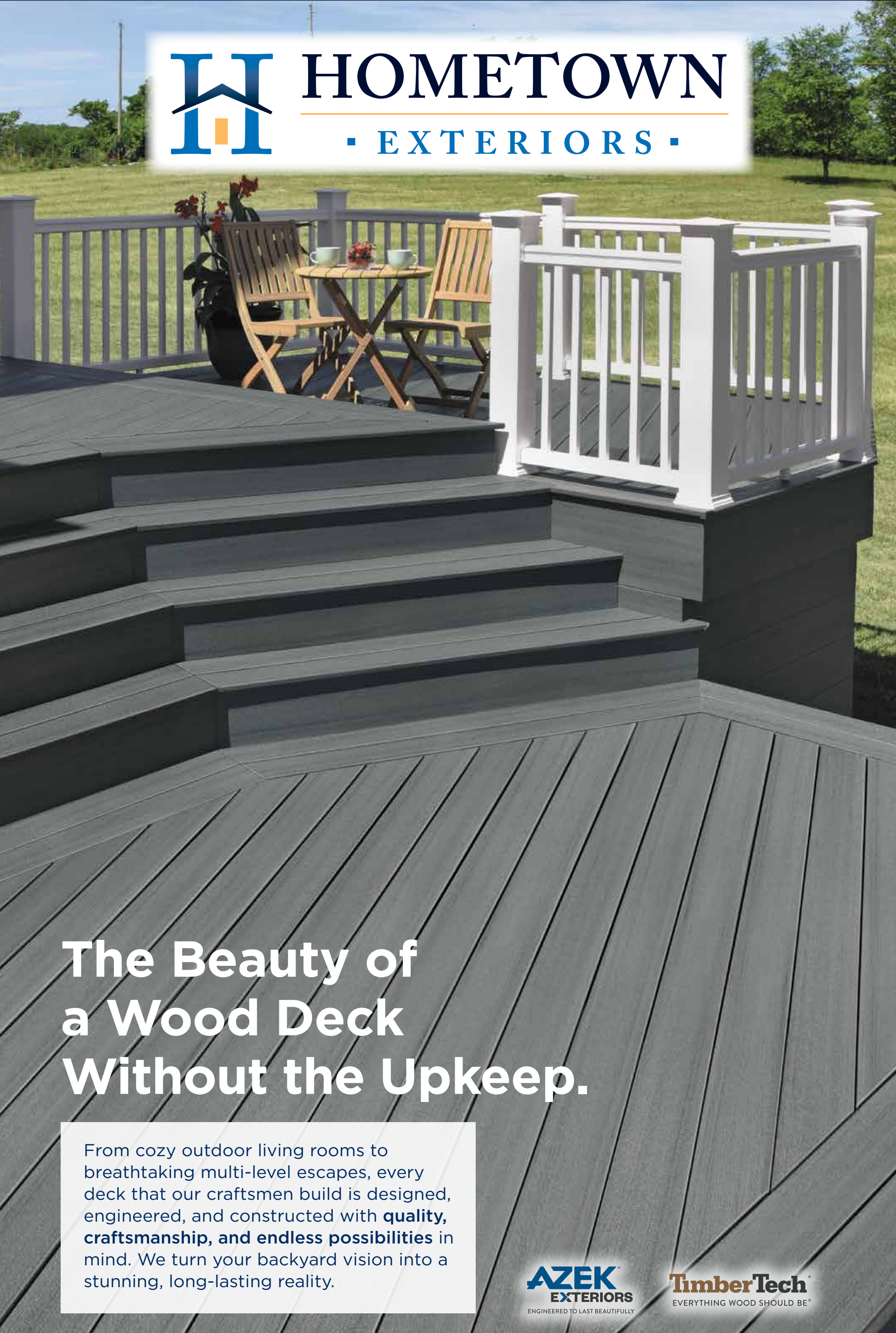
CLUES DOWN
1. Curved segment
2. Wings
3. Yellowish volatile liquid
4. Makes less severe
5. Debit note
6. Overhang
7. The nights before
8. Type of light
9. Lacking enthusiasm
10. Tattle
11. Some is "heavy"
12. One who is canonized
14. Indicates date and place of writing
17. "Peace" in Arabic
20. "Olaf" actor Josh
21. Fragmented rock
23. They __
25. Advanced degree
26. Backside
27. Influential architect and design couple
29. An act of undue intimacy

CLUES DOWN
30. Words from which later words are derived
32. 10 meters
34. Neither
35. Fungal sacs
37. The law of God revealed to Moses
40. A woolen cap of Scottish origin
42. A promise
43. Challenges
47. British Air Aces
49. Large bank
50. Served as an omen
52. Cavalry sword
53. Vaccine developer
55. Belgian WW2 resistance leader Jules
56. Italian Seaport
57. Hip joint
58. __ Clapton, musician
59. Insect repellent
61. Constrictor snake
65 "The First State" (abbr.)



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