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Puppolo welcomes Coakley-Rivera

at Pizza with Puppolo

By Kristin Rivers

Editor

krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - A special edition of State Rep. Angelo Puppolo Jr.'s (D-Springfield) Pizza with Puppolo event took place at the senior center on Aug. 4 with Cheryl Coakley-Rivera and her team from the Hampden County Register of Deeds.

The event focused on title fraud prevention, deed theft, the Homestead Act, the Massachusetts Consumer Notification System and other resources available to the community to protect property ownership.

Attendees also had the opportunity to receive a complimentary copy of their property deed.

The pizza was provided by Pafumi's on Main.

Residents can visit hampdendeeds.com to look up their property or call Coakley-Rivera at 413-454-2550 for assistance. The Hampden County Register of Deeds is located at 436 Dwight Street, Room B042 in Springfield and 59 Court Street, Room 104 in Westfield.

Puppolo was thrilled to have Coakley-Rivera, who's also a longtime friend and served with her in the past, at the event.

Please see **PUPPOLO**, page 10



Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

Cheryl Coakley-Rivera from the Hampden County Register of Deeds and State Rep. Angelo Puppolo Jr. (D-Springfield) take a photo with one of the attendees.



Photos courtesy of Rachel Hapgood

Teens are hard at work drawing seashells.

Teens draw seashells

at WPL workshop

By Noelle Hisgen

Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - Ellie Trudeau with Art Lessons with Ellie visited the library to host a Teen Drawing Workshop on July 28.

This session, the teens drew various kinds of seashells.

This program had 16 students learning how to use different kinds of sketching styles, along with adding depth and shading, to draw seashells. They learned about the basics of graphite drawing, shading, and the materials that they used in the workshop.

There were seashells for reference the teens used so

they could replicate them onto their papers.

Trudeau, who has been running art workshops previously at the library, spoke about the night's program.

"I always love coming here. It's a great space to teach in, and they have such a great following here. And this program is unique because we got a grant to do something a little different, and we're using some nice supplies here that we were able to get from the grant," Trudeau said.

Speaking on behalf of the program are Library Director Melissa Harter and

Please see **SEASHELLS**, page 9

School Comm. approves regional agreement draft revisions

By Kristin Rivers

Editor

krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - The School Committee approved revisions to the regional agreement draft in a 6-1 vote on July 30.

The decision comes after a

joint board meeting held between the Wilbraham Select Board and Hampden Select-board on July 23.

Superintendent Dr. John Provost noted paragraphs D and E were the only changes for section IV, while everything else was the same.

"As you know, we had made changes all throughout

this document over the course of many iterations and many months and had essentially been stuck for—more or less—18 months around this issue of paragraph D, which has to do with the status of the middle school," Provost said. "Things started to shift when the decision was made to move the middle school

into the Core program. There was—in my opinion—a very productive joint board meeting in early May where there was sort of a framework of an idea of how we might want to approach paragraph D."

Provost said on the recent July 23 meeting, "I think even more detail was put together towards how we might want

to approach paragraph D."

"Since that meeting, I've been working with Doug and with Attorney Sweeney to try to just sort of capture what was said within that meeting in language that could be shared with the two towns and their legal counsel for feedback, for incorporation into a possible agreement," Provost

said. "Because the towns have a goal—which I'm very excited about—of getting this into Fall Town Meetings, which means that we're coming up against deadline because they'll be putting together their warrants in short order."

Please see **AGREEMENT**, page 9

Intersection project update shared

By Kristin Rivers

Editor

krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - A new update was shared in relation to the Stony Hill Road and Springfield Street intersection project during the Aug. 3 Select Board meeting.

Since June 23, there's been work done at the Springfield Street at Stony Hill Road intersection due to an intersection and sidewalk improvement project. Throughout the summer, residents have been advised of travel lanes being closed with alternating traffic from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in this area as the work commences.

The improvements include widening the east-bound approach to improve the alignment and visibility of the left-turn lanes on Springfield Street, installing a new concrete sidewalk along the north side of Springfield Street extending from Town Hall to Stony Hill School and upgrading the traffic signal to include dedicated turning signals and

pedestrian crosswalk signals.

Substantial completion of this is expected by Aug. 28.

Town Administrator Nick Breault explained to the board that there was a request from the contractor, which DPW Director Tonya Capparello had brought to his attention.

"So, what they want to be able to do is to start work for a brief period of time—probably, in total, five days—to have the ability to start working at 5 a.m. with staging starting even earlier," Breault said.

Breault said there could be a possible, brief shutdown of the road "on or around" Aug. 26.

"The timing of this could be anywhere from the 20th of August through the end of the month. Maybe a couple of days on either end. But the 20th through the 26th—so could be the 18th through the 24th," Breault said. "Tonya thinks she'll have a better idea come the Select Board's

Please see **PROJECT**, page 2

Summer reading celebrated with finale party

By Kristin Rivers

Editor

krivers@turley.com

HAMPDEN - The community gathered in the Rochford Reading Room on Aug. 1 for the Adult Summer Reading Finale Party at the library.

The fun included raffle prizes for gift cards from Casa Bella, Village Food Mart, Gio's, La Cucina, Spartan Auto Care Center and Mountain View Restaurant, raffle baskets and books and a special cupcake cake to celebrate Mary Haseltine's birthday.

Library Director Ellen Moriarty said over 100 patrons signed up for summer reading this year and they read over 500 books, adding she was happy everyone went home with a prize.

"We have our five star section which is very popular. That will be our recommendation shelf for next year. Our party today was great," Moriarty said. "When the people read a book, they fill out a review and on the bottom of the review is the raffle ticket entry."

Moriarty added summer

Turley photos by Kristin Rivers

Caryn Greco and Allison Vanderleeden went home with these gift baskets from the Summer Reading Finale Party. AT LEFT: Mary Haseltine, who was celebrating her birthday at the Summer Reading Finale Party, with her raffle prize, a gift card to Casa Bella.

reading was a big success, also, because of the community support.

"The summer reading program is always a big success. We're getting ready for the fall with our book clubs.

We have an author talk in October, which is Suzanne Strempek-Shea," Moriarty said. "We're for-

Please see **FINALE**, page 8

Parks & Recreation announces Adaptive Soccer Program

WILBRAHAM - Wilbraham Parks & Recreation, in partnership with Futsal & Street Soccer, is pleased to announce a new Adaptive Soccer Program for children ages 4-10. This inclusive program is designed for participants with disabilities, including Level 1 Autism, and provides a welcoming environment where every child can learn, play, and succeed.

Led by experienced Futsal & Street Soccer coaches, the six-week program emphasizes soccer skill development, teamwork, confidence, motor skills, and social interaction through adaptive coaching techniques that meet the individual needs of each participant.

The goal of the program is to create a positive experience where every child feels sup-

ported, included, and excited to participate. Soccer is for everyone, and happy to offer a program that helps young athletes grow both on and off the field.

Program Information
Dates: Saturdays - Sept. 13, 20, 27, Oct. 4, 11, and 18
Time: 11 a.m. - Noon
Location: Front Field at Wilbraham Middle School
Ages: 4-10
Fee: \$140 for Wilbraham residents | \$150 for non-residents

Registration:
through Sept. 7
Participants should bring a water bottle, athletic clothing, shin guards, soccer cleats, and a soccer ball.

For additional information, please contact Alfred at info@futsalstreet.soccer.

HSC 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

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.

NEW OFFICERS

from page 2

Hampden County Sheriff's Office, Auger has worked as both a corrections officers and as a sheriff's deputy in Springfield and Palmer, as well as a stint in Forest Park where he "assisted Springfield Police."

"I also assisted Palmer Police when they had a little bit of a shortfall on staff," Auger said. "I've spent a good amount of years as a corrections officer, which is my current assignment right now. I currently work second shift at the main institution in Ludlow, the men's jail."

Auger cited his four-year degree in criminal justice, which he earned at Westfield State University. He stated he was drawn to work as a police officer, as he always felt policing was something he always wanted to do and had gone to the police academy—sponsored by the UMass Amherst Police—in 2023 and then went back to the Sheriff's Office as a corrections officer and later went back out on the street with his current roles.

He also mentioned he had history with the previous applicant selected for the role.

"So, I am fully post-certified and I have had some experience on the street. I've actually worked with Kyle on many occasions at the Park," Auger said. "He was my partner there on times. So yeah,

unfortunately the law enforcement division was shut down because of funding. I know that was in the news recently. But I know that I would really like to continue the work that I've done out in the community. I feel like that's where you get to be the best version of yourself. I really enjoyed it..."

Auger also served in the Air Force Reserves as a photojournalist, which has helped him with writing and communication skills and prepare for "a job like this."

When Chair Marc Ducey asked Auger about the most

Help find a missing friend

WILBRAHAM – The police department is asking for the public's help to find a child's missing friend.

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satisfying part of his current job, he shared it was the individuals he connected with inside the jail reach out to him when he's out on the street patrolling.

"They feel like I'm an approachable person and I think they would speak highly of my time both inside and outside the facility. So, I think the relationship that I've maintained with the inmate and the population out in the community is the thing that makes it most satisfying," Auger said.

With unanimous votes and recommendations from

Police Chief Ed Lennon, both potential officers were hired for full-time police officer roles for the town of Wilbraham. Both will be appointed to the town pending pre-employment medical screenings, psychological assessments, a physical abilities test required by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, a pending background investigation conducted by the police department and the appointment date to be determined by the police chief.



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Wilbraham Public Library announces new logo

WILBRAHAM - Wilbraham Public Library is excited to introduce its new logo! Created by Allesandra Corbett of Homegrown Studio, a graphic designer from Wilbraham, MA, the logo features a beautiful and full tree filled with many animals reading books.

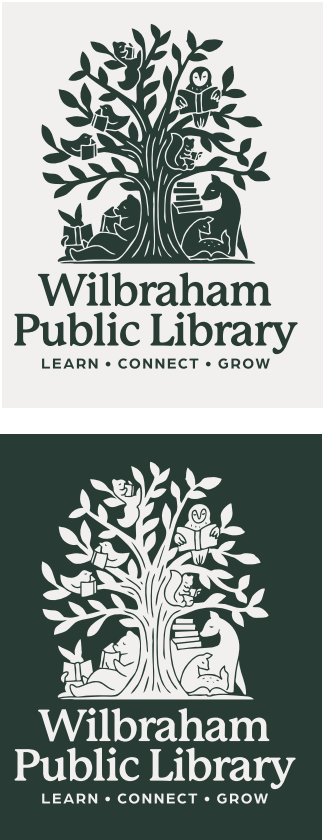
Her design was the winner of a logo contest open to residents of Wilbraham from high school age and up. Over twenty artists entered logos into the running, and the winner was selected by popular vote from members of the staff, Wilbraham Friends of the Library Board, the Wilbraham Library Board of Trustees and the Wilbraham Select Board.

"We were so impressed with the caliber of artists who entered their logo designs in this contest! It was hard to choose who to vote for," commented Director Melissa Harter.

The \$250 first prize provided by the Wilbraham Friends of the Library was generously donated back to the public library by Ms. Corbett.

Harter said "Allesandra's kindness to the library is so very appreciated. Her thoughtfulness will positively impact the entire community of Wilbraham and will help to grow a whole new generation of readers."

The logo is being deployed over the next few months. The staff were the first to wear t-shirts adorn-



ing the new logo and have received many compliments. The Wilbraham Friends of the Library will soon be making the new logo shirts available for purchase at the library, as well other items. "This whole experience demonstrated how many talented artists there are in Wilbraham, how generous the community is, and the extent to which Wilbraham will go to love and support the library. We are grateful and could not be more thrilled with how this turned out," said Harter.

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.

Teens take part in Candy Sushi workshop

By Noelle Hisgen
Correspondent

HAMPDEN - A Candy Sushi workshop was held for teens at the Hampden Free Public Library on July 25.

Teens were able to use a variety of candy for their sushi: They used candy such as Swedish Fish and Life Saver gummies to mimic the inside of sushi and fruit roll ups for seaweed, along with using Rice Krispie treats to represent the rice.

Teens made a wide variety of different kinds of sushi using references and their own imaginations.

Needless to say, it was certainly a packed house in the Sheila R. Flynn Teen Center while everyone made their own rendition of candy sushi.

Young Adult Librarian Maxine Girard spoke about the day's program.

"This is one of the biggest turnouts we've had this summer. And really, there's nothing better than candy and sugar, and feeding the children with all of this stuff," Girard said. "Anything really that has candy and sugar is a big hit, so we like to bring that out when we can."

The library has done Candy Sushi a couple years ago, and it was a huge suc-



Teens hold up their candy sushi.

Turley photos by Noelle Hisgen



A group of teens have fun as they show off their candy sushi.

cess. Because of it, they decided to bring it back.

Previously, the teen programs have included vari-

ous sweet activities such as Jell-O aquariums and gingerbread houses.

It was a very fun and de-

licious day for everyone to make their own kind of sushi using candy.

Recycling fundraiser Aug. 22

HAMPDEN - Green Day Recycling is hosting an electronics recycling event fundraiser, and we invite everyone to participate.

Located at the Federated Community Church, 590 Main St., Hampden on Saturday, Aug. 22 at 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. (rain or shine). Some items are free to recycle, while others range from \$5 to \$40 each.

A portion of the proceeds will benefit the hosting parish.

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, wheth-

er that be books, clothes, games, furniture and other household items.

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

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VIEWPOINTS

SOCIAL SECURITY Matters

By Russell Gloor

When should my wife file for spouse benefits?

Dear Rusty:
My wife is 66 (born February 1960) and started taking Social Security retirement benefits just over one year ago at age 65.
She was a stay-at-home Mom for most of her adult life. I turned 62 this past March and received my first SS payment recently for a May 2026 start. We are scheduled to meet with SSA in late July to initiate spousal benefits because my wife's current benefits are less than 50% of mine.
We also have an adult disabled son, who receives Supplemental Security Income and Social Security benefits (this split in benefit sources happened after my wife filed - that whole process was confusing and we don't understand it).
My question relates to spousal benefits (I was a career finance person but don't completely understand these rules). We were going to file in July but is there any benefit to waiting until she turns 67? And will her 50% benefit be 50% of my lower benefit due to my filing at 62 or is that based on another amount?
Signed: Confused Finance Guy

Dear Confused:
First, be aware that your wife's spousal benefit will be based on her age when she claims it, and half of your Full Retirement Age, (although you claimed at 62, her benefit as your spouse will still be based on your FRA entitlement).
Because she claimed her SS retirement at 65, your wife will not get 50% of your FRA entitlement; rather she will get her own reduced SS retirement benefit (which was reduced by about 13% from her FRA entitlement) plus a "spousal boost." The amount of that "boost" will be the difference between her own FRA entitlement and half of your FRA entitlement, but that boost amount will also be reduced because she will be claiming in July before her FRA.
Your wife will reach her FRA in February 2027, so by claiming her spousal boost in July her boost amount will be reduced by about 5% and the "boost" will be added to her already reduced SS retirement about. The result will be your wife's benefit as your spouse will be less than 50% of your FRA entitlement. And, FYI, your wife will be automatically deemed to be filing for her spousal benefit, she will not be able to defer claiming it.
As your son is now collecting SS benefits based on your wife's personal SS record, you should ask Social Security to switch him over to payments based on your record because you have the higher SS benefit.

FYI, because your son is now receiving Supplemental Security Income, the SS disability benefit he receives will offset by his SSI benefit, and the payment amount will consist of two sources - SSI and SSDI. Nevertheless, he cannot get more than 50% of your SS retirement amount and will likely be affected by the Family Maximum, which may further reduce his SSDI entitlement.
Your wife's benefit as your spouse will also be affected by the "Family Maximum," which limits how much can be paid on any one person's SS record (on your SS record).
That also means that your wife will not get a full 50% of your FRA entitlement; rather she will get less because the family maximum limits how much all your dependents can receive to somewhere between 50% and 88% of your FRA benefit amount (after subtracting your own SS entitlement).
That also means that your son's SS payment, as well as your wife's SS payment as your spouse, will be reduced to less than 50% of your FRA entitlement. SSA will be able to guide you through the Family Maximum calculations for both your son and your wife when you meet.
To recap all of this: a) your wife will be automatically deemed to be filing for her spousal benefit; she cannot delay until her FRA. b) her amount as your spouse will be less than 50% of your SS FRA entitlement. And c) both your wife's and your son's SS benefit will likely be also affected by the Family Maximum and, thus, be less than half of your FRA entitlement.
Nevertheless, it was likely the right decision to claim as you have, considering that your son and wife have been receiving SS benefits for some time now, and both will continue to receive more as your dependents.

The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. This article is intended for information purposes and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadviser@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

The joys of harvest season

It's been a fun week in the garden! I love it when the harvest starts to roll in.

This week I picked broccoli, kale, green beans and zucchini. I also replanted a few crops in hopes of a second harvest prior to the first frost.

Read on to hear about my adventures.

You may remember my column from a few weeks back, where I was having a hard time getting "into it" this year. I guess like building any relationship, the more time you spend, the more time you may want to spend as things start to progress and go well.

Anyway, I am happy with my garden again and it feels good to spend time out there. Back to the harvest.

I enjoy harvesting broccoli. It's always fun to see just how big you can get the heads to grow before they want to flower.

The first one I cut was maybe six inches in diameter. Not bad, but the second one was closer to nine inches.

More heads will be ready in the coming weeks. After that I will be harvesting side shoots.

This year, cabbage moths were kept at bay by using a tightly woven bug netting draped over the plants and supported by wire hoops and secured at the base by old wooden planks or stones. So far so good; no worms of any kind in the water left over after steaming.

Kale is broccoli's cousin and is subject to the same pests. Because of that I also

grow it under the netting.

in a bottle of vitamins or with leather shoes) in a jar. If you are growing open pollinated or heirloom, non-hybrid varieties you will reliably get the same variety back again. They don't cross pollinate with neighbor beans.

This week I was happy to harvest four zucchinis with more coming. It's funny that already I see freebies at the end of driveways on my commute. I truly hope I have an abundance.

To avoid "boat-sized" squash, pick them small, say six to eight inches long. The seed cavity won't be too big that way and you will encourage the plant to keep producing.

No doubt the vine borer will do in my early sowing soon enough, but never fear, I have sown additional seeds under cover to hopefully have a later harvest once this one expires. I try and keep them covered until the plants bloom, at which time the cover needs to be removed so that the flowers can be pollinated and fruit can form.

I hope you are enjoying the start of the harvest season as much as I am.

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



by Roberta McQuaid



Juvenile brown headed cowbird

My daughter, Paula Ouimette, took this photo of a juvenile brown headed cowbird watching her run laps with her dog, Jo Jo.

The young cowbird perched on a fence near the driveway of the elementary school in Hardwick.

My daughter used the Seek app by iNaturalist to get the identification. It stayed there for about 20 minutes before flying off.

She said there were no other cowbirds around, but cowbirds lay their eggs in nests of birds smaller than then in hopes they will raise their young.

Obviously, this young cowbird looks well feed. I wonder what bird raised it, often at the expense of their own offspring.

Warblers and vireos are the most common cowbird

hosts. Their nestlings weight less than half as much as the cowbird nestling.

Some species will either push the cowbird egg out of their nest or leave that nest and start another nest.

The brown-headed cowbird is a stocky blackbird. The females do not build a nest and instead produce up to three dozen eggs per summer.

They lay the eggs in the nests of other bird species and let them raise their young, know as brood parasitism.

Brown-headed cowbirds are native to North America, but many people consider them a nuisance bird because of their parenting style.

Cowbirds destroy the eggs

and young of smaller songbirds and have been implicated in the decline of several endangered species, including Kirtland's warbler and black-capped vireo.

Adult male cowbirds have glossy black bodies and brown heads, hence their name. In poor lighting, the male's head looks brown.

The female is brown with the head lighter brown than the body. She has fine streaking on the belly/ Both sexes have thick, conical bills and black eyes.

They are 7.5 to 8.7 inches long. They feed on the ground

Please see **BACKYARD**, page 8

The Wilbraham-Hampden TIMES

We Want to Hear From You

EDITOR
Kristin Rivers
krivers@turley.com

ADVERTISING SALES
Jordan Conrad
jconrad@turley.com

SPORTS EDITOR
Greg Scibelli
sports@turley.com

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WEB
[wilbrahamhampden times.turley.com](http://wilbrahamhampden.times.turley.com)

PHONE
(413) 283-8393

ADDRESS
24 Water Street
Palmer, MA 01069

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

WILBRAHAM
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Happy Birthday Harper Hatch!

Happy birthday Harper Hatch who turns 12 on August 15.

Love Mom, Dad, Charley, Jason, Grammy, Grampy, and Nana.

Submitted photo and caption Judy Hatch

Ms. Massachusetts Senior America Winner



Submitted photos and caption Mary Lee Manning
On Sunday, June 28, the 33rd Ms. Massachusetts Senior America pageant was held. The event took place at Holyoke High School.

Mary Lee Manning of Wilbraham was crowned Ms. Massachusetts Senior America 2026. Liza Zarcone of Springfield was 1st runner up. Christine Root of Agawam was 2nd runner up.



Happy Birthday Remi!

Submitted photo and caption McCartney Ford
Happy 3rd birthday to the sassiest girl we know! Love, Daddy, Momma, Mila & Enzo

Lemonade Stand



Submitted photo and caption McCartney Ford

BRUUER
BASH
YEAR TWO!

Submitted photo and caption J. Huerta
Our second Bruuer Bash on July 11, 2026 brought neighbors from Bruuer Ave. and Bruuer Rd. together for great food, trivia, and prizes. Even the hot weather couldn't keep us from celebrating friendship!

Red Hatters
celebrate summer



Submitted photo and caption Cheryl Phillips
The Red Hatters celebrated summer with a delicious luncheon at Krazy Jake's on July 8.

Mila Ford held a lemonade stand on Aug. 2 to make her own money to buy her little sister Remi a birthday present! Featured is many of the girls from the Lakeside Inn/Scags Demo Summer basketball team who stopped by to support her! From left top row Mea Scagliarini, Mila Ford, Kayla Shea, Lola Jacque, Willow Sullivan. Bottom from left Camryn Mavezzi and Autumn Sullivan holding Remi Ford.



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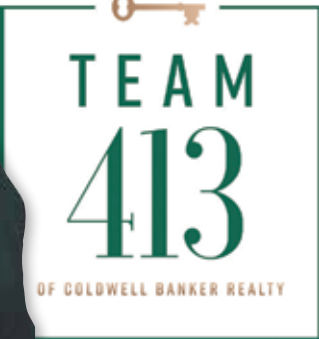
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MSB awards \$30,000 in scholarships to local high school graduates



Monson Savings Bank representatives, Corinne Sawyer, Vice President & Business Development Officer (far left); Kandy Tranghese, Senior Vice President & CFO (center); and Aimee Kohn, Business Development Officer (far right), proudly presented the local high school recipients with their scholarships.

MONSON — Monson Savings Bank continues its longstanding commitment to supporting education and investing in the future of the communities it serves. This year, the Bank proudly awarded \$30,000 in scholarships to 15 graduating seniors from local high schools in recognition of their academic accomplishments, community involvement, and dedication to personal growth.

The 2026 Monson Savings Bank Scholarship Ceremony was held on June 23, 2026 at the Scantic Valley YMCA. Scholarship recipients and their families were invited to attend a reception celebrating their achievements and the next chapter of their educational journeys. Guests enjoyed refreshments,

connected with Monson Savings Bank team members, and celebrated the students' successes.

As in previous years, Monson Savings Bank awarded scholarships to graduating seniors from area high schools. This year's recipients were:

East Longmeadow High School
Anna Flanagan
Eve Butler
Natalie DiMichele

Minnechaug Regional High School
Elijah Webster
Mia Bolduc
Molly Kinsman

Monson High School
Adam Laverety
Brady Ronaldson

Kassidy Wallace
Maddie McDonald
Mya Bridges
Shane Szado

Ware High School
Jack Gaudreau
Maia Lamothe
Olivia DiRienzo

During the event, Kandy Tranghese, Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, congratulated the scholarship recipients and their families on behalf of Monson Savings Bank.

"These students have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to their education, their communities, and their future goals," said Tranghese. "We are honored to support their continued

Please see **MSB**, page 15

Age & Dementia Friendly Wilbraham to host 'A Toast to Memories'

Wine tasting fundraiser

WILBRAHAM — Age & Dementia Friendly Wilbraham is inviting the community to an evening of connection, remembrance, and support. "A Toast to Memories" wine tasting fundraiser will take place on Friday, November 6 from 5-7 p.m. at the Wilbraham Senior Center.

Held in recognition of National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month, this event is designed to bring people together for an evening of making new memories while supporting friends and neighbors living with dementia. Thanks to support from Country Bank and The Guilty Grape, guests can look forward to wine pairings and raffles, as well as special guest speakers. Tickets are available for

purchase online at <https://square.link/u/J9Hu0DpP>, or in-person at The Wilbraham Senior Center.

"This event is a meaningful way to gather together as a community, raise awareness, and support those affected by dementia," said Katie Krupka, a representative from Age & Dementia Friendly Wilbraham. "We hope attendees will enjoy a warm and welcoming evening to support an increasingly important cause." All funds raised will support the ongoing work of Age & Dementia Friendly Wilbraham.

For more information, please contact: Katie Krupka, Director of Placement and Aging Services, Assisted Living Locators - Western MA & Northern CT; 413-329-6730 (Text Friendly) katiek@assistedlivinglocators.com

FINALE from page 1

tunate because our summer reading program is funded 100% by local donations and we really appreciate that because we don't have a budget for programming, so all of our programming is done through the contributions of local businesses and we also get some grants through the Mass Cultural Council and the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. So, we funded all through that, which is awesome. We have a great summer reading program with tons of activities for the kids and to know that our community is so generous every year to keep donating and to keep these programs going is wonderful."

On popular reads for the adults, Moriarty said "The Whistler" by Ann Patchett and "The Correspondent" by Virginia Evans were among the favorites.

"Freida McFadden was probably our most popular this summer for the amount of books read, and some of the old standbys like Patterson and Connolly and Grisham are always there. Kristin Hannah is also very popular every year and then just a whole variety of other authors," Moriarty said.



Turley photos by Kristin Rivers
A shot of this year's door prizes of raffle baskets, books and more.

The cupcake birthday cake to celebrate Mary Haseltine's birthday.

their necklaces and the teens have been reading a lot this summer, which is very wonderful, to get them in reading because we just want them to not experience the summer slide where they might stop reading and then kind of fall behind and be a little bit behind when they start school," Moriarty said. "So, we encourage reading through the summer and what's great is to see families come with kids of all ages and then the parents reading. It's really wonderful to see them set the example for the kids that they're reading as well, so that's very encouraging to see and we have a wonderful group of seniors in this town who are avid readers and read so much regularly. It's wonderful to always see them reading too."

Her message was this.

"Keep on reading and keep coming back. We have more wonderful programs in the fall and so be on the lookout for all our free programs and keep reading," Moriarty said. "Keep supporting your local library!"

To learn more about upcoming events and more, check out hampdenlibrary.org.

prove it for the patrons and people really seem to like it, that it's all on one level and we got plenty of space. The teens, I think they had record numbers for signups this summer and they love the Sheila R. Flynn Teen Room which has been very, very popular and wonderful, wonderful events this summer," Moriarty said. "We've been using all of our spaces to the best of our ability to really make use of all of it and to make a warm and welcoming and safe space for all the people of Hampden, from kids to seniors."

As library director, she was also thrilled with the successes of the kids' and teens' summer reading programs.

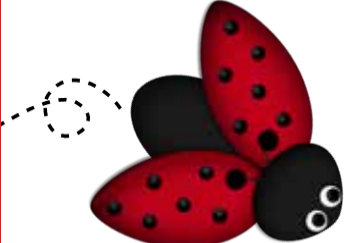
"It's always wonderful to see the enthusiasm, especially of the young kids coming in and getting their beads for

Moriarty said the library being at their new location has "been interesting to figure out the dynamics of the space" with where everything would be held from outside to the community room to the cafetorium.

"So getting used to our new space. Still working on it. Always trying to im-

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BACKYARD from page 6

and can be seen walking behind livestock to eat what their hooves stir up.

They are found in open habitats such as fields, pastures, meadows, forest edges and lawns. They also perch on a prominent branch high in a tree.

They are primarily seed-eaters and insectivores, adapting their diet based on availability and season, often gleaned from the ground or by following grazing animals. They will come to feeders as well and prefer sunflower seeds and millet.

Other Hardwick birds
My daughter, Paula, saw lots of bluebirds, swallows, robins and one hen turkey with a poult. She said there were probably more underneath the hen turkey, but only one was brave enough to come out.

Red tail hawks
I have several red tail hawks in Barre, New Brain-tree and Oakham. Recently,

one flew off and the sunshine showed off the hawks red tail. They are often seen by freshly mowed fields in hopes of featching some rodents, who stand out on a newly cut field.

Great blue heron
Long Pond in Rutland is a popular spot to find a great blue heron "fishing" in the shallows along Route 122.

Meal worms
I continue to have catbirds come for the mealworms I leave them on the picnic table. The other day I heard a catbird make its meowing call. Males use the call to establish territory and females for communication and alarm purposes.

Raven
Recently, the common raven flew overhead making its gurgling croak. I could hear it, but I was unable to see it with all the trees.

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

GFWC Wilbraham Junior Women’s Club to host Free Kids Bingo Night!

WILBRAHAM - Not sure what to do with the kids on a summer weeknight? Come Join the Fun! The GFWC Wilbraham Junior Women’s Club invites local families to a free Kids Bingo Night on Wednesday, August 19, 2026, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in the Brooks Room at the Wilbraham Public Library.

Designed for children of all ages, the event offers an evening of fun, laughter, and friendly competition. Kids will participate in five games of Bingo and Prizes will be awarded to the lucky winners! All supplies will be provided as well as freshly popped popcorn and water. All children will receive a small “lucky charm” for participating.

While the event is free, pre-registration is required



due to limited space and may be completed at www.WilbrahamJuniorWomens.org/kids-bingo.

Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult but, one adult may supervise multiple children.

“Our goal is to bring families together for a fun summer evening while creating lasting memories in our community,” said Brenda Willard, GFWC Wilbraham Junior Women’s Club President. “We hope families will join us for a night filled with excitement, prizes, and a chance to yell ‘BINGO!’” The Wilbraham Junior Women’s Club is committed to serving the Wilbraham community through volunteerism, and charitable projects that enrich the lives of local residents.

SEASHELLS from page 1

Teen Services/Young Adult Librarian Rachel Hapgood.

“It looks like so much fun, and it’s very professionally laid out over there. You see the kids coming in, and they look really excited to be there,” Harter said.

“I’m super excited to have her, and the teens really love her teaching style. It’s very casual with her instruction but the teens like her for it,” Hapgood said. “And this is the first time she has taught still life with us in graphite, so we’re excited to have a different technique that she is teaching.”

Trudeau and the members of the Wilbraham Library are very fortunate to have the program put on by a partnership through the Wilbraham Cultural Council, who sponsored the event. Speaking on behalf of the Wilbraham Cultural Council is board member Beth McDonald, who started with the council last fall.

“I think it’s a wonderful opportunity to help the community, for them to get exposure to different arts. I think it’s awesome that we are able to help make these opportunities happen in town,” McDonald said.

It was a fun evening for teens to learn something new and artistic, while also being



Photo courtesy of Rachel Hapgood

Ellie Trudeau teaches the teens about drawing with graphite pencils.

able to show their creative side by drawing seashells.

This program was sponsored by a grant from the Wilbraham Cultural Council, a local agency sponsored by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

AGREEMENT from page 1

He added that feedback has not been received yet and there may be a possibility of doing—and requesting—another meeting “based on feedback we received to make tweaks if tweaks are necessary.”

“But, I think this is at least faithful to the conversations that took place,” Provost said.

Provost then read into the record the new proposed language of paragraph D.

“The district has submitted a statement of interest, SOI, for the Massachusetts School Building Authority, MSBA, Core program of Wilbraham Middle School. The approval process and project completion require firm financial commitments from the member towns in view of the fact that the MSBA funding is in the nature of a grant program provided a percentage reimbursement of costs paid by the district,” Provost said.

“The member towns agree that in the event that HWRSD and the MSBA become signatories to a project funding agreement for the Core program for Wilbraham Middle School, which requires as a condition precedent that member towns have appropriated the entire projected costs in the aggregate through appropriate Town Meeting votes. Wilbraham Middle School will be converted to a district-owned property and capital costs will be a portion according to paragraph E of this section. The towns agreed to cooperate in taking all steps necessary to effectuate the intent of this language, which is to transfer ownership control of Wilbraham Middle School to HWRSD. The parties acknowledge that how best to effectuate the intent of this language will depend on how the project’s code is approved by MSBA, which could include renovations to the existing building, construction of a new building on the current site or construction of a new building on an alternative site. Accordingly, the parties will, as appropriate, in view of the project scope, transfer title to the renovated Wilbraham Middle School and real estate upon which it is located to the HWRSD, establish title in HWRSD to the new building on the same site and transfer title to real estate upon which is located to the HWRSD or establish title in HWRSD to a new building on an alternative site as a necessary transfer, title to the real estate upon which is located to the HWRSD. As relates to the transfer of real estate, the parties may effectuate the intent of this language through

the conveyance of a smaller parcel than the entire approximate 63-acre parcel on which Wilbraham Middle School is located. The conversion to a district-owned property will also involve parties agreement to nullify any existing lease of the current Wilbraham Middle School to the district.”

On paragraph E, Provost said this talks about “the way costs are appropriated for Minnechaug.”

“So, to speaks for grades 9 through 12,” Provost said. “So, the change that we would make to make this inclusive of a middle school which was also regional would just change 9 to 12 to grades served by that property.”

He added if the language is acceptable to the School Committee, a vote on this to acknowledge that would let the attorney and the towns know “that this would be okay.”

School Committee Member Sean Kennedy shared he heard from members of the Finance Committee and Capital Planning Committee about “haven’t been a part of these conversations.”

“I would just say not that I think we should hold this back any longer than it’s already been held back, but I don’t think that—especially with Capital—really needs to be on board with this, or else this doesn’t make it. Doesn’t mean anything if they’re not going to abide by it.” To “I would just say not that I think we should hold this back any longer than it’s already been held back...Especially with Capital really needs to be on board with this, or else this doesn’t make it. Doesn’t mean anything if they’re not going to abide by it.”

Vice Chair Dr. Michael Tirabassi noted how FinCom and Capital Planning take direction from the Select Board as they are appointed roles and “they don’t have individual power and authority, but they do meet and discuss and go over the numbers.”

“I think it’s very important for this to get to the Fall Town Meetings. To do what you’re suggesting, this will not go to Fall Town Meetings. There’s no way that we would have stuff done before the middle of September and it wouldn’t be in time for Fall Town Meeting,” Tirabassi said. “So, I think it’s important for the committee to say ‘I think this is very well-written and it covers a number of eventualities,’ right? You don’t know how it’s going to plan out. I think it’s very well-written to cover a number of eventualities, and I’m hoping that the towns would be comfortable.



File photo

The School Committee discussed and voted on revisions for the regional agreement draft on July 30.

By the towns, I mean the people at the town’s meeting. The Select Boards met and I think they had some degree of comfort with this. But really, it comes down to the town meeting and the members of Wilbraham FinCom and the Hampden Advisory will be at the town meetings as well to express their opinion as well.”

When Chair Michal Boudreau asked Hampden Select-

board Chair John Flynn if this was discussed with the Advisory Committee or other town boards, he came up to the table to share his thoughts. After agreeing that the last two joint board meetings were productive, he noted Hampden has not had a chance to bring in other boards.

“As Sean said, there are a lot of stakeholders in this process and we do want to

get this done. We’ve talked about that, but perhaps with the short time frame where we have to set the agenda for a Fall Town Meeting, this is a major, major step to bring in the stakeholders in a quick process over the summer might be challenging at this point,” Flynn said. “However, the step we have taken so far is to encourage the School Committee—or the district committee—to bring all lawyers into the mix and get their input on the verbiage at this point and there’ll be ongoing discussion during our board meetings.”

School Committee Member Timothy Collins said he was in favor of moving forward because “I don’t want to lose any time” or do anything that would jeopardize taking care of what needs to be done at WMS.

However, Collins was also concerned about an item on page three about exceptions.

“I just want to make sure and go on record that the assignment or reassignment being prudent means we’re not going to overcrowd a school,” Collins said. “I wasn’t here

when Thornton Burgess disintegrated but it put tremendous pressure on the middle school. I don’t foresee anything could be like that, but you never know. One of our elementaries may have a catastrophic failure and we may have to redistribute students, and it shouldn’t be just the student. It’s the whole student population that has to be considered.”

Boudreau said the committee should continue moving forward and they can await feedback from the attorneys and Provost will keep everyone updated on any new developments.

“If we have to reconvene and have further discussion, we will do that, but I think it’s a good step to be able to move forward and present to say the School Committee has voted and agreed to approve this draft and then we can bring it to the other stakeholders and the community to be able to say, ‘this is the draft,’” Boudreau said. “I think it’s important to continue moving forward.”

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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.

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 September 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.

PUPPOLO from page 1

"We do Pizza with Puppulo on a regular basis talking about legislative issues. This was a special edition," Puppulo said. "We went over a lot of stuff. I think the biggest thing is we want to make sure the seniors know the resources that are out there. My office is here 24/7, we're a valuable resource. The Register of Deeds is here 24/7, she's a valuable resource. But, we want to make sure that we get that information out there to the constituents to know a) what they can do to protect themselves, b) what to do to be proactive and c) what to do if something happens. I think that's the biggest thing."

Puppulo said the session was also an opportunity to help quell any fears constituents might have and that there are resources available if something should happen.

"While it's a very big issue, big problem, it doesn't happen that often. But when it does occur, it can cause monumental damage. You can lose your whole asset that you've saved for your entire life and we know that seniors are targeted, seniors' homes by-and-large are paid off, so there's no mortgage on them as we discussed," Puppulo said. "So, we want to make sure that we provide the information to the seniors that they know that a) there's resources out there, there's an avenue to get protection if you need it and then if something does happen, what do you do after the fact that we can kind of help."

He shared that legislation around squatters is in the works right now and hopes to have this filed next legislative session, having worked with Coakley-Rivera and the Register of Deeds on this as well.

"It's certainly become, I think, an issue in the Commonwealth. Not so much in our area, but any time there's vacant, abandoned property, it's prone to squatters. What we're trying to do is file legislation in the Commonwealth that's going to deal with squatters in a much more efficient and faster manner. So, we're trying to put language in there and try to put legislation in there that classifies a squatter



A group photo of Cheryl Coakley-Rivera and State Rep. Angelo Puppulo Jr. (D-Springfield) with the team at the Hampden County Register of Deeds.



Turley photos by Kristin Rivers
State Rep. Angelo Puppulo Jr. (D-Springfield) in conversation with a resident.

not as a tenant so they don't have that sort of ability to be able to say that they live there. They won't have the ability to sort of capture that place that they're in under that sort of residency or tenancy status," Puppulo said. "So, if you're a squatter, if you're there illegally, if you don't have the right to be there, when they find you—because they will find you—you're not going to have any rights under the law as a squatter."

Puppulo was thrilled with the turnout and the audience engagement.

"This is one of the biggest Pizza with Puppulo's that we've had of all time here. I think it was a great success. I think everybody enjoyed great pizza, great conversation and I think the seniors really appreciate the fact that I'm here. People know where to find me, I'm in the district all the time. I think it shows that, again, people want to learn, people want to have the resources," Puppulo said. "My office has been here in town from day one. I'm here to serve my constituents and I think constituent service is

my number one priority and continues to be."

On the Pizza with Puppulo event itself, he said he enjoys the opportunity to connect with the constituents.

"I think that's the number one thing. I really enjoy, as I said, constituent service has been my hallmark. I really enjoy conversing with constituents, but helping people. That's the biggest thing. Whether providing information like it was today or helping a constituent with a handicap placard or helping a constituent with a Department of Revenue or Department of Transportation issue or an employment issue, I'm here, my office is here, people know where to find me," Puppulo said. "That's what my job is. Making my constituents' lives easier, providing the information and connecting my constituents with the resources that the Commonwealth provides."

His message was this.

"I hope they had a great time. I hope they learned, had a great lunch, but more importantly, left here with the resources that they need, left here feeling more comfortable that their home is safe and secure, that their deed is going to be safe and secure and what we are providing here is a resource and if something happens, we're here to answer any questions and help as much as we possibly can," Puppulo said.

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Midway between south and southeast

4. Fathers

9. Wine grape

14. Al Bundy's wife

15. Derived from ammonia

16. Venezuelan state

17. Interest rate

18. Experts

20. Vascular tissues

22. Smooth and glossy

23. Administrative region in S. Korea

24. One from Damascus

28. Special interest group

29. It cools your home

30. Oh, God!

31. Intestinal pouches

33. Men

37. Twelfth star in a constellation

38. Former CIA

39. Arrange in grades of size

41. A baglike structure in a plant or animal

42. "The Great Lakes State"

43. Having earlike appendages

44. Momentarily stop

46. Ancient kingdom

49. Of I

50. White clerical vestment

51. Songs to one's beloved

55. Charges

58. Computer application originator

59. A place to dock a boat

60. One guided by reason

64. Slang for cigarette

65. Sailboats

66. "Jerry Maguire" actor Zellweger

67. Screen type

68. Country legend Haggard

69. Puts together in time

70. When you anticipate arriving

CLUES DOWN

1. Involuntary muscular contraction

2. Eastern US transit agency

3. Leaves a place

4. Cease to participate

5. Current units

6. Cease to exist

7. General's assistant (abbr.)

8. Earth vibration

9. Very strong winds

10. For each one

11. A bog

12. The creation of beautiful or significant things

13. Affirmative

19. Pie __ mode

21. Nonclerical

24. Indonesian island

25. Educational environment

26. Namibian peoples

27. Bring out or develop

31. Moves into a place of thought

32. Out of the way

34. Loads a ship

35. Beloved Hollywood alien

36. Distinguishes

40. The ancient Egyptian sun god

41. Secondary or explanatory title

45. Relating to a wing

47. One who gives a speech

48. In the middle

52. Loop with a running knot

53. Airborne (abbr.)

54. Sweet persons

56. Put into play

57. Small cattle breed

59. Millisecond

60. Revolutions per minute

61. They __

62. Moon crater

63. A place to stay the night

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.

SPORTS

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Falcons finish up summer season



Alex Perez sends a free throw away.



Jayden Lopez tries to lift a shot.



Colin Conboy shoots in traffic.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Alex Perez goes for a layup.

WILBRAHAM – The Spec Pond Summer Basketball League held playoff last week, utilizing a few sites in addition to the courts at Spec Pond. The Falcons, a 7-8 team, were involved in a matchup held in Belchertown at Chestnut Hill School.

West Side Sports Shop claims ladies title

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW—Since joining the prestigious Pioneer Valley Summer Soccer League in 2021, West Side Sports Shop has claimed the women’s championship title five times.

West Side Sports Shop entered this year’s playoffs as the fourth seed. They posted a 2-0 shutout victory over second-seeded W. Mass Xtremes in the women’s finals held at historic Lusitano Stadium in Ludlow last Friday night.

“We might be the fourth seed, but we played very well in the playoffs,” said West Side Sports Shop head coach Chris Andre. “We lost to the Xtremes twice during the regular season.”

The only year that West Side Sports Shop didn’t take home the championship trophy was in 2024. They beat top seeded Here for Beer in the finals a year ago.

“We’ve set a high standard here,” Andre added. “A number of these players have been playing for me since our first year in this league. We also add a couple of new players each year. The players get along with each other very well and we always have a lot of fun.”

West Side Sports Shop, who finished the 2026 regular season with a 7-4-0 record, defeated the fifth-seeded Lusitano Women, 5-1, in the quarterfinals. Just like they did a year ago, they beat top seeded Here for Beer, 3-2, in the semifinals. West Side Sports also won the regular season match-up Here for Beer.

“Here For Beer is a very talented soccer team,” Andre said. “We played very well against them the other night.”

The West Side Sports Shop captain is Rhiann

Please see **WEST SIDE**, page 12



Turley photo by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Sydney Mercier sends a free kick away.



Mount Carmel captured the PVSSL Men’s title this year.

Mount Carmel takes Men’s PVSSL title

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW—Anthony Bourget was an assistant boys’ soccer coach under longtime varsity coach John O’Keefe at Minnechaug Regional High School before stepping down at the end of last season.

Bourget was also the head coach of Villa FC, which captured the last two Pioneer Valley Summer Soccer League men’s championship titles. Villa FC changed sponsors before the start of the 2026 summer league season and are now known as Mount Carmel FC.

Mason Perham is one of the former Minnechaug soccer players listed on the Mount Carmel roster.

Perham scored a second half goal, which helped top-seeded Mount Carmel FC win the championship title once again with a crisp 2-0 win over second-seeded Rumbleseat before a large crowd at Lusitano Stadium in Ludlow on Friday, July 31.

“We’ve won the last two men’s championship titles with Villa, and this is our first one with Mount Carmel,” Bourget said. “Winning the championship game is something that we expect to do every year. It was a hard fought battle tonight. Rumbleseat played very well against us.”

Mount Carmel FC, who finished the PVSSL regular season with a 10-1-0 record,

defeated fourth-seeded CF Ardor, 2-0, in the semifinals.

Rumbleseat, who also lost to Mount Carmel during the regular season, entered the playoffs with a 9-1-1 record. They advanced into the men’s finals for the first time in more than ten years after knocking off the third-seeded KO Elites FC, 2-1, in the semifinals.

“This is the first time that we’ve made the finals in many years, and it was a fun game tonight,” said Kyle Giroud, who was an outstanding three-sport athlete at Chicopee Comp. “It’s always a great time playing in this league and I’m looking forward to playing again next year.”

Giroud is also a member of the Skidmore College men’s soccer team.

The men’s finals was scoreless at halftime.

Mount Carmel broke the ice four minutes into the second half.

The scoring play began with a crossing pass from Joao Miranda to Deandrae Brown, who fired a shot from the top of the box past Rumbleseat goalie Luke Theroux.

Miranda was selected as the M.V.P. following the match.

About ten minutes later, Perham scored a goal, which was assisted by Brown.

“It just felt awesome to score a goal in the championship game,” Perham said. “We took control of the game at the start of the second half. We had another great season.”



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Deandrae Brown dribbles away from a defender.

Perham has been a member of Villa/Mount Carmel for the past four years.

“I’m very happy for Mason,” Bourget said. “He began playing with us the year after he graduated from Minnechaug. We also have a couple of other Minnechaug players on our team. We have a bunch of talented players on this team.”

The other former Minnechaug soccer players listed on the Mount Carmel roster are Kyle Atkin, Nick Cianflone, Chase Henderson, and Cam Rigney.

The members of the Mount Carmel FC are hoping to make it a four-peat in the summer of 2027.

SPORTS

Blue Sox season comes to end

HOLYOKE — The Valley Blue Sox’s bats finally awoke at home during Game 2 of the 2026 NECBL Playoffs Opening Round on Aug. 2. While the Blue Sox ultimately lost 14-5 to the Sanford Mainers, head coach John Raiola says his team has a lot to be pleased with.

“[As a coach] you try to provide the motivation and the energy and the right words, which are tough to find sometimes, especially when things aren’t going well,” said Raiola. “There are brighter days ahead, and we have an outstanding coaching staff who brings that same message, and that is something we are proud of.”

The journey to get to the playoffs was grueling for the Blue Sox, winning both games of a home-and-away series on the final day of the regular season to secure their spot in the postseason. The team gave it everything they had in the two weeks leading up to the playoffs, but unfortunately ran out of steam in the end.

“They had to go out there and show up every single day, tired, and same lineup, grinding their way through it,” said Raiola. “Credit to the players, credit to [team owner] Matt [Drury], and the coaching staff for keeping the train on the tracks.”

Despite finally breaking their duck and hitting the ball out of Mackenzie Stadium for the first time all summer, Sunday’s loss eliminated Valley from the playoffs.

Mackenzie Stadium is one of the larger fields in the league, with dimensions of 400 ft. to center, 330 ft. to

right, and 315 ft. to left, making it one of the hardest parks in the NECBL to hit a home run in. Valley did not hit a home run at the Mack until Sunday’s loss.

Entering the postseason, it seemed unlikely that statistic would change, but Valley’s Josh Toole (George Mason) went yard with two outs and two men on base in the bottom of the second. Toole swung at the first pitch he saw from Drew Smith (UConn) and sent the ball out of left field, scoring the first Blue Sox home run at Mackenzie Stadium this summer, putting his team up 3-0.

Fans were still riding the high from Toole’s homer when Nick Spaventa (UPenn) added the second Blue Sox home run at the Mack an inning later. Spaventa hit the ball out into Valley’s bullpen with Esteban Garcia (Boston College) on third, extending the lead to 5-0.

Though the Blue Sox did not walk away with the win, it was only fitting for the team that clinched their playoff spot on the last day of the regular season to also score their first home runs at the Mack during their last game of the summer.

“We talk so much about the wins and the losses throughout the year, but we don’t do it for the wins; the wins happen as a result of them continuing to show up and do the right things,” said Raiola. “They will look back on it, and they will realize that through failure comes a lot of success down the road, and that part in itself is rewarding.”



Jake Durham plays the ball off his toe.



Anthony Basile turns play around.

Mount Carmel takes Men’s PVSSL title

Turley photos by David Henry
www.sweetdogphotos.com
Shane Sewell
sends a pass away.



Chapin Jeannotte takes the ball up the sideline.



Kaela Mochak heads up the field.



Emily Howard makes a stop. / Julianna Beaulieu sends a pass away.

WEST SIDE from page 11
Ryan, who graduated from Minnechaug a couple of years ago.

“I love being a member of this soccer team,” Ryan said. “It feels nice to finally beat Xtremes, especially after losing to them twice during the regular season.”

Six other players listed on the Westside Sports Shop roster played soccer for legendary head coach Nundi Goncalves at Minnechaug. They are Emily Howard, Gabby Rita, Lylah Jeannotte, Chapin Jeannotte, Gaby Williams, and Claire Poindexter.

One of the West Side Sports Shop starters in the championship match was Mallory Pereira, who graduated from Ludlow High School.

Julianna Beaulieu, who graduated from Chicopee Comp, was selected as the M.V.P. of the women’s championship game.

“I never expected to be the M.V.P. of this game, but

I knew we could win another championship title,” Beaulieu said. “I’ve now won three championships with this team, which is very special. It’s been a lot of fun playing soccer for this team.”

Beaulieu, who played both basketball and soccer at Utica University, scored a pair of goals in the finals.

She got things rolling during the 16th minute of the opening half by putting a shot into the back of the net past goalie Madison Harmon.

“Once the ball left my foot, I knew it was going into the net,” Beaulieu said. “It set the tone for the rest of the game.”

The Xtremes, who went 10-1-0 during the regular season, had an opportunity to tie the score during the 27th minute. Gianna Sakowski, who also graduated from Minnechaug, fired a shot on goal, which sailed high over the crossbar.

Beaulieu scored her second goal early in the second



West Side Sports Shop, featuring adult female players from throughout the region, took the PVSSL Women’s Championship.

half.
Sara Avery, who was the West Side Sports Shop starting goalie, didn’t have

to make very many saves in recording the shutout. Avery lives in Belchertown and she graduated from the MacDuf-

fie School. She’ll be a senior on the AIC women’s soccer team this fall.
The members of the

West Side Sports Shop will be looking to win another PVSSL championship title next summer.

Silk takes open modified race

WINCHESTER, NH - Ron Silk thought it was Independence Day all over again Aug. 1 at Monadnock Speedway. The July 4 winner of \$7,600 for topping that night's Open Modified main event, took home another \$10,000 Saturday by winning the night's 100-lap Dash For Cash headline race.

The Nutmeg State star, a two-time NASCAR Whelen Modified series champion, is no stranger to victory lane at the high-banked oval. A summer ago, he won a Whelen 200-lapper at Monadnock, while this summer he was victorious in two of the three Open Modified 100s at the fast quarter-mile.

But Silk's two Open Modified victories weren't enough to place him at the top for the overall series championship. That honor went to Bennington, NH second-generation star Matt Kimball, who cut his racing teeth here on the high banks in the oval's youth division Young Guns.

Kimball's spot atop the three-race points parade netted him \$5,000, which, when added to his Saturday fourth-place purse money and event bonuses, sent him home with close to \$10,000, not quite as much as Silk, but a still hefty pay day.

In other action Saturday on the high banks, Daniel Petrowicz scored his first career victory in the Limited Late Models, Jon Fultz made it two on the year in the Mini Stocks, and Jimmy Zellman won a thriller in the Pure Stocks.

Young Gun Dylan Stati won his track-high eleventh 2026 feature race Saturday, while New England Dwarf Car ace Ryan Carman had to twice take the lead en route to his second win in six days, his Saturday win following a Sabbath Day score at Hudson.

A top-12 redraw put Silk on the pole for the night's Country 93.5 FM Open Modified Dash For Cash 100-lap main event. Blasting off at the green, Silk led the first two go-rounds before twice trading the early lead with Kyle Bosignore en route to holding the top spot for 83 laps as he dashed off to win with ease. The big defining moment in this one happened on a lap 56 restart.

Repeating his July 4 strategy, Silk led nine other cars to the pits for fresh rubber, handing the top spot to Brad Zahensky. Back under green, a wild mess unfolded as the tight pack charged out of turn two.

Kimball and Brian Robie entered Saturday's 100-lapper tied for the top spot atop the three-race series. When the dust had settled along the backstretch on lap 55, Bosignore and Robie were amongst the casualties. Kimball, then at mid-pack, started counting, all the way up to \$5,000.

With Silk sailing off into the night to win with ease, steady Joey Cipriano came home second. Anthony Nocella, with Kimball at

his bumper, took home the bronze metal hardware. Zahensky's choice to stay on the track under caution netted him seventh, while Robie's promising start fizzled to a 14th place finish.

Daniel Petrowicz started up front in the nightcap Twin State Truck Services Limited Late Model main event and never looked back as he sped off to his first career win in front of the night's huge Dash For Cash speedway crowd.

Robert Hagar had the fastest car in the field, closing a third-lap deficit to finish four lengths behind Petrowicz for his second runner-up showing of the weekend. Top points man JD Stockwell, a seven-time 2026 winner, had a rare quiet night, getting up for third, just ahead of Hillary Renaud.

Popular Pat Houle led the first dozen laps of the Keene Towing and Recovery Mini Stock feature, then giving way to rocketman Jon Fultz. Once in front, the Bay State ace was unstoppable, winning with ease ahead of number two point man Craig Chaffee.

Houle held strong to finish a season best third, with former track champ Louie Mahar fourth, and Tim Paquette fifth. Paquette's top-five run kept him atop the 2026 points parade.

Maya Bell was the early leader in the Brattleboro Towing and Recovery Pure Stock 25-lapper, then giving way to

Please see **RACE**, page 15

This week in recreation



Alex Soares
Administrative Clerk

seeing everyone back on the fields and courts this fall. We are also preparing for our winter programming season. Registration for our Suburban Basketball program (Grades 5-8) opens on August 25, Suburban tryouts will begin in late September, and we are excited to welcome another season of players.

Adults can stay active this fall as well! We are offering a variety of pickleball opportunities, including lessons for both beginner and advanced players, along with open play hours. Registration for the first session of lessons opens on August 11, with programs beginning on September 13. If you

enjoy the outdoors, be sure to check out the Wilbraham Hiking Club. Weekly hikes are offered both in town and throughout the surrounding area, with registration available through TeamReach.

We hope everyone enjoys the remainder of their summer, and we look forward to seeing you this fall!

NOTE: Please remember to visit WilbrahamRec.com often to find out more information on all of our programs and to register. You can also like our Facebook page, Wilbraham Parks and Recreation Department, as we update regularly with pictures and important announcements.

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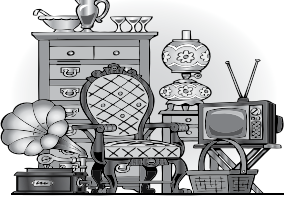
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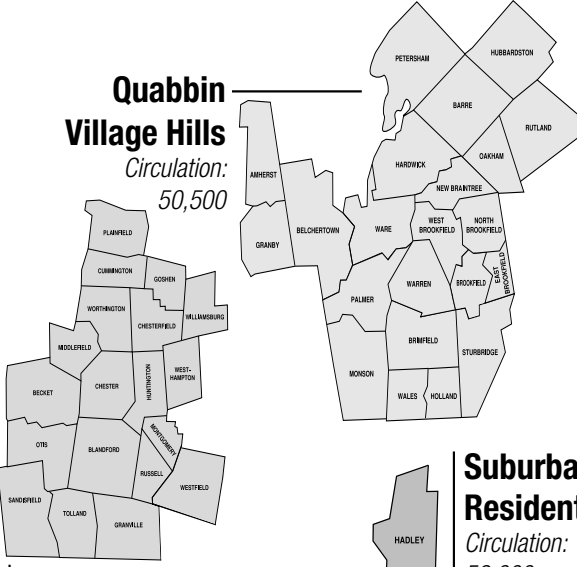
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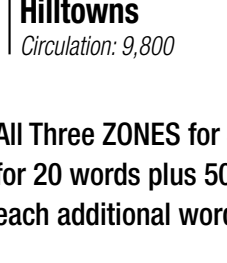
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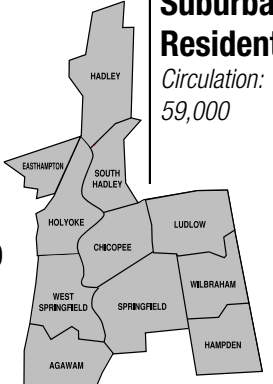
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PUBLIC NOTICES

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Division
Docket No.
HD26P1636EA
Estate of:
Suzanne Elmasian
Date of Death: June 11, 2026
INFORMAL PROBATE
PUBLICATION NOTICE**
To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Chelsea Pappalardo of Ludlow, MA** a Will has been admitted to informal probate.
Chelsea Pappalardo of Ludlow, MA has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve **without surety** on the bond.
The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.
08/13/2026

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No.
HD26P1673EA
Estate of:
Paul H Kittridge, Jr.
Date of Death: 12/01/2013
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION**
To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Late and Limited Formal Testacy and/or Appointment** has been filed by **Gordon D. Kittridge of EAST CORINTH, VT** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

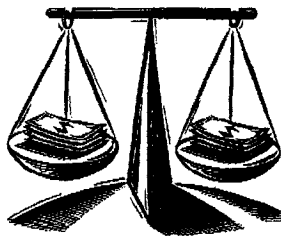
lief as requested in the Petition.
The Petitioner requests that **Gordon D. Kittridge of EAST CORINTH, VT** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.
IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 08/31/2026. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.
UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)
A **Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.**
WITNESS, Hon. Claudine T. Stoudemire, First Justice of this Court.
Date: August03,2026
Rosemary A Saccomani,
Register of Probate
8/13/2026

**FY27 MULTI-TOWN INVITATION TO BID
ROCK SALT
FOR SNOW & ICE CONTROL**
Sealed bids for Sodium Chloride (Rock Salt), for the purpose of snow and ice control, will be received by the Director of Facilities & Operations Department of the Hampden-Wilbraham Regional School District at the office of the Superintendent of Schools, 621 Main Street, Wilbraham, MA 01095, **until Thursday, September 10, 2026 at 10:00 AM**, at which time they

will be opened and read aloud. Bids received after the above stated time and date will be rejected. Towns included in this Multi-Town Bid are as follows: Agawam, Brimfield, East Longmeadow, Hampden, Holland, Ludlow, Monson, Palmer, Wales, Ware, Warren, Wilbraham, and the Hampden-Wilbraham Regional School District.
Bid specifications and other bid related information is available Monday through Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M., excluding holidays, at the office of the Superintendent of Schools, 621 Main Street, Wilbraham, MA 01095, located at Minnechaug Regional High School, and on the HWRSD website, www.hwrso.org, beginning Thursday, August 13, 2026. No Specs will be Faxed. Envelope to be marked: **“MULTI-TOWN BID: ROCK SALT FOR SNOW & ICE CONTROL – FY27”**
The Director may reject any and all bids or waive defects in same in the best interest of the towns.
This procurement shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Uniform Procurement Act, M.G.L. Chapter 30B, Section 5, and those provisions are hereby Incorporated by reference into this Invitation for Bid.
David Rogers
Director of Facilities & Operations
Hampden-Wilbraham Regional School District
08/13/2026

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No.
HD26P1681EA
Estate of:
MaryAnne Stout
Date of Death: 02/07/2026
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION**
To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Sean B. Stout of Wilbraham, MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.
The Petitioner requests that **Sean B. Stout of Wilbraham, MA** be appointed as Personal

Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.
IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 09/02/2026. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.
UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)
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WITNESS, Hon. Claudine T. Stoudemire, First Justice of this Court.
Date: August 05, 2026
Rosemary A Saccomani,
Register of Probate
08/13/2026



Hampden Garden Club event in August

HAMPDEN - On Thursday, Aug. 20 at 7 p.m., the Hampden Garden Club will be hosting Chris Ferrero, a writer and consultant, who will be presenting her program “All About Hydrangeas”.
Chris trained as a Cornell Master Gardener in New York. For ten years, she led demonstration garden teams, plant propagation workshops, alternative-to-invasives work groups, and children’s programs. The program will be at our NEW meeting location at the Town Hall (formerly Thornton W. Burgess Middle School), 85 Wilbraham Rd, Hampden, Room A7.
Guests are asked to use the Library Entrance. There is a \$5 fee for non-members of the garden club. New members are welcome! Membership fee for the year is \$15 and includes admission to all programs.

MSB from page 10
success through our scholarship program. At Monson Savings Bank, we believe investing in local students is one of the most meaningful ways we can strengthen our communities, and we look forward to seeing the positive impact these young leaders will make in the years ahead.”
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RACE from page 13
Dylan Zullo, who, in turn, surrendered the top spot to four-time winner Michael Yeaton, zooming off in quest of win number five. But this one wasn’t over yet.
A lap- 24 restart sat Yeaton and Jimmy Zellman side-by-side as the event’s defining moment unfolded. The top two banged and clanged out of turn four at the drop of the green, sending Yeaton to the pits and Zellman to the lead. The Bay State blaster held strong to edge top points man rookie Josh Brigham for the win. Kyle Begos, from way back in row nine,

charged up for third, with Markus O’Neil and Zullo completing the top five.
Ryan Carman led twice in the New England Dwarf Car feature, taking the top spot the second time with a lap-21 pass of Tom Harwood as they blasted out of turn two. Harwood held strong for second, and Cody Hodgdon was solid in third.
Dylan Stati continued his dominance of the Doug’s Auto Body Young Guns Saturday, romping to his eleventh win of the summer. Maeve Barry was second, and Mason Bezio earned the third-place trophy.

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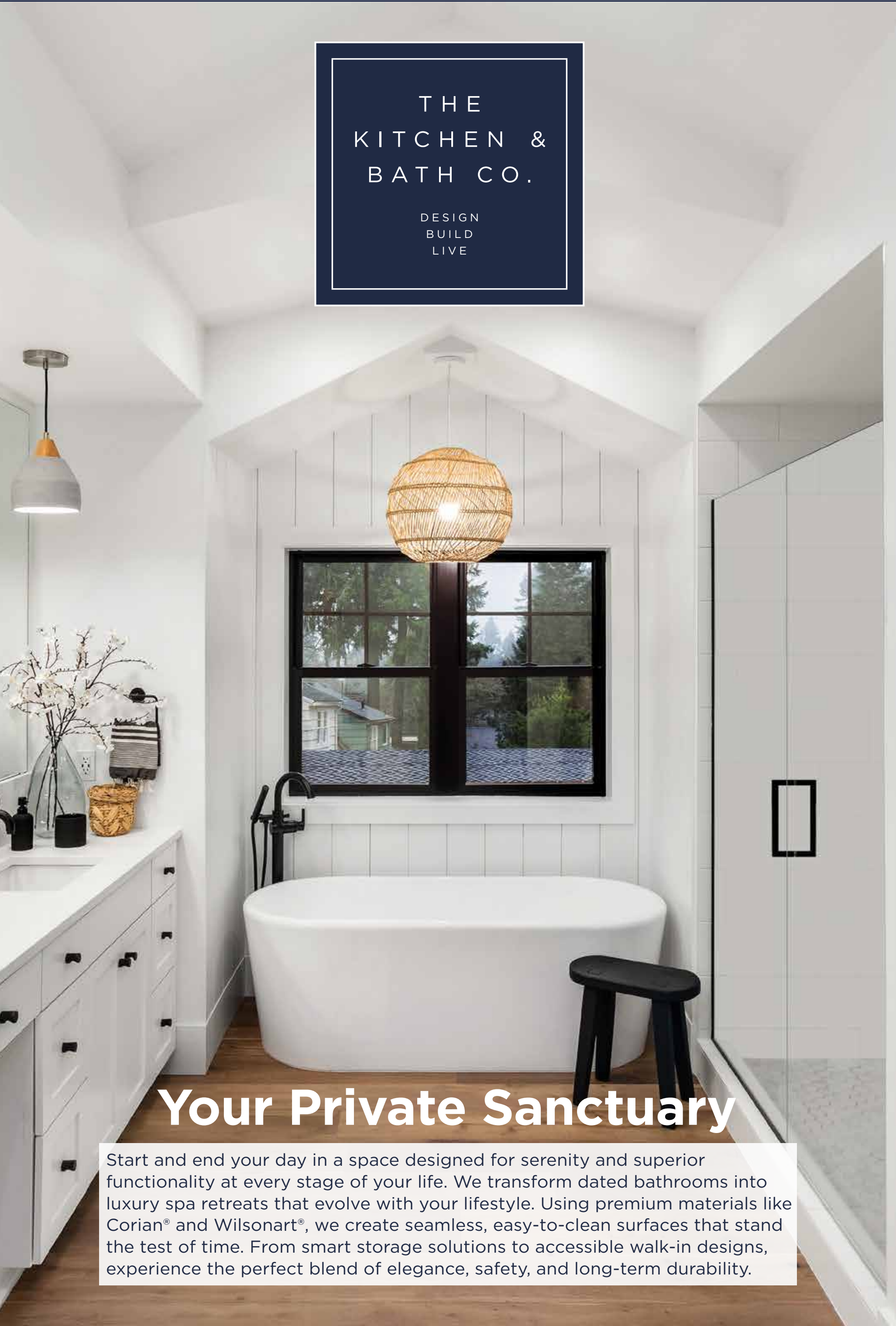


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