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The Wilbraham-Hampden

TIMES

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AUGUST 20, 2026

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A family group photo of the Meunier Family during their 44th Annual Family Reunion.

Meunier 44th family reunion celebration

By Harold Anderson
Correspondent

HAMPDEN – The 44th Annual Meunier Family Reunion this year was held at the Stone Meadow Farm on Ames Road in Hampden the weekend of Aug. 7 – 9 and it was quite a celebration.

What was started by Lillian Fedora's Uncle Roland on Crane Avenue in Dalton, MA back in the 50s as a one day gathering, expanded the

past 44 years to a three-day event. This year, about 80 people from eight different families were expected to attend, coming from as far away as Texas.

Held yearly on the first full weekend of August, this year's gathering was organized by Lillian Fedora and her husband Mike Fedora from Hampden along with Lillian's daughter, Jean O'Toole and her husband Steve O'Toole from New Jer-

sey, helped by Lillian's son Mike Fedora and his wife Cat Fedora from Westfield.

"(We) try to invite as many people as we can," Fe-

dora said.

Jean O'Toole added that they are working on putting

Please see **REUNION**, page 9



Turley photos by Harold Anderson

Beatrice Mills-Desroches from Virginia and Ernie Desroches, who came all the way from Texas to attend the reunion.

Teens celebrate end of summer reading at party

By Noelle Hisgen
Correspondent

HAMPDEN – The Hampden Free Public Library hosted their summer reading finale party for their teenage readers on Aug. 1.

At the finale party in the Sheila R. Flynn Teen Center, the Young Adult Librarian, Maxine Girard, raffled off the raffle baskets to the teenagers. Teens were able to get tickets for the raffle baskets from giving their finished reading slips to trade for raffle tickets.

After the raffle drawings, teens were able to play Plinko—the class game from

the game show "The Price is Right"—to win a variety of miscellaneous prizes.

There was also pizza and Capri Suns for the attendees to snack on.

Girard, who has been overseeing all of the teen programs this summer, reflected on the past summer reading season.

"We have a lot of rising fifth and sixth graders, so we have a new group that is super enthusiastic to read and participate this year. We had over 50 teens sign up. Over 30 of them read for more than 20 hours," Girard said.

Please see **PARTY**, page 3



Turley photo by Noelle Hisgen

Teens line up for Plinko, having a great time celebrating the conclusion of the summer reading program.

School Committee approves FY27 budget revisions

By Kristin Rivers
Editor

krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM – The School Committee approved revisions to the FY27 budget during its July 30 meeting.

The 6-1 vote on the revisions included adopting an operating budget of \$59,756,340, inclusive of the debt service payment for Minnechaug of \$1,910,550 for FY27 for HWRSD, assessing Wilbraham at \$33,162,455 and Hampden at \$9,910,905 and interim project costs for



Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

The School Committee approved FY27 budget revisions on July 30 to include an interim plan for Wilbraham Middle School.

Wilbraham Middle School as the district awaits a decision

by the Massachusetts School Building Authority to enter

the Core program.

The interim project costs are \$85,719.

The second vote—which passed unanimously—adopted a capital budget of \$170,000 for FY27, assessing Hampden at \$34,652 and Wilbraham at \$135,348 for the dump truck at the high school and network switches.

Assistant Superintendent for Finance, Operations and Human Resources Dr. Douglas Slaughter presented the memo he shared with the Wilbraham Select Board and Hampden Selectboard during

their joint July 23 meeting on an interim plan for the middle school. After providing an overview, he explained how this could be funded.

"That's the idea being most of them are modest in scope and we could accomplish them very quickly, and one of the ways we could do that would be to modify the budget and put it into our operating budget for fiscal year '27 and execute on those things over the course of this fiscal year to get them in place," Slaughter said.

The interim plan includes

one set of exterior doors, lock replacements to all exterior doors, condensation pumps to dehumidifiers for non-air-conditioned spaces, hoses for transmitting pumped water safely out of the building, portable air conditioning units with external venting and mini-split air conditioning units with accompanying electrical supplies and infrastructure upgrades.

Sean Kennedy noted the general consensus of the town

Please see **BUDGET REVISIONS**, page 8

Hot car safety: Making sure nothing is left behind

By Quinn Suomala
Correspondent

One of the largest heat-related safety threats of the summer is hot cars.

In 2025 there were 31 children who died nationwide due to being left in a car during the summer heat. So far in 2026, there have already been 12.

It is crucial to maintain awareness of how quickly a car's internal temperature can rise in the heat.

"It could reach up to 120 degrees and north of that within five to ten minutes of sitting in the sun," Agawam's

Please see **SAFETY**, page 10

HISTORICAL WILBRAHAM

Tales of historic Glendale

Church suppers
were the reward
for hard work

By Charles F. Bennett
Times Editor Emeritus

Wilbraham his-torian and a favorite son of the Glendale section of town, Henry Edson, was born in 1878, died on August 7, 1963 and was buried in Glendale Cemetery at the age of 85. He is one of my favorite sources of town history because he left behind a lot of personal memories in the form of his written memoirs that are available from the Wilbraham Library.

While browsing through

his history of "Glendale Methodist Church" I came across some interesting tales he wrote about the church which was really the center of the Wilbraham Mountain community in the 1800's and 1900's.

All this was prompted by my July 23 column that I wrote about the Soldiers Memorial Boulder that still stands next to Glendale Cemetery and across from the former Glendale Methodist Church. The boulder was Glendale's version of honoring soldiers who served in various wars like the Soldiers Monument that overlooks Crane Park, down in the valley. The Glendale Boulder was dedicated in 1911 and saluted in 1913.



Charlie Bennett



A photo of Glendale Methodist Church winter scene in the mid1900s. (Joe Roberts photo collection.)

When you read Edson's memoirs, you get a comforting feeling of "down home lifestyles" that are long gone these days.

Cast Iron Woodstoves

For example, Edson wrote about how the men of Glendale Methodist Church got together back before the turn of the century and volunteered to cut firewood together to

feed a new cast iron woodstove the ladies of the church raised money to buy.

Edson didn't say why it was the ladies who raised the money to buy the stove, but he did go into detail how the men labored to cut the firewood for it while the ladies cooked up church suppers to

Please see **HISTORICAL**, page 10

65 Years Ago

Bowling League Elects Officers

Here is a news clipping reported by my mom, Ethel M. Bennett, who was the Wilbraham correspondent for the Springfield daily newspaper The Morning Union from the 1940s through 1970s. From a August, 1961 edition: "At a meeting held Wednesday night at the Legion Home in North Wilbraham to plan the 1961-62 season for the Community Bowling League, Emeric Wyzik and Steve Lopata were re-elected president and vice-president respectively. Sessions will be Monday nights at the Orchard Lanes in Indian Orchard with the following teams: Powers Five, Daniele Door, Opalinski's Market, Village Store, Proctor's TV, American Legion, Pat's Atlantic, Auto Inn, Hastings Pontiac and Larro's Auctioneers."

Teens enjoy Mystery Movie Night at library

By Noelle Hisgen
Correspondent

HAMPDEN - The Hampden Free Public Library hosted a mystery movie night for teens on July 30.

The mystery movie of the afternoon was “K-Pop Demon Hunters.”

As a snack for the teen attendees, they were also given an assortment of popcorn during the movie.

Needless to say, the Sheila R. Flynn Teen Space was packed with energy from everyone all around, with lots of people getting out of their seats to dance to the hit songs during the movie.

Young Adult Librarian Maxine Girard took a moment to speak about the mystery movie program. The teen section of the library usually hosts movie nights, but this is their first movie night attendees did not know the movie beforehand.

“We thought it’d be fun and a little more engaging to keep it a mystery until we hit play,” Girard said. “Anytime we do something that our teens are truly interested in is



Teens at the Hampden Free Public Library enjoy the movie “K-Pop Demon Hunters.”

Turley photo by Noelle Hisgen

a win for us. So, to have such a full house and so much engagement and excitement and popcorn, you can’t really ask for more. We chose this mov-

ie because it’s popular, and we figured it would keep them engaged, and they would sing along, which is hysterical.”

It was a fun afternoon for

teens to come together with their friends and enjoy singing and dancing together to one of their favorite movies.

Hampden Historical Society presentation set for Aug. 26

HAMPDEN – The Hampden Historical Society presents Perrie Fedora Convery on the piano and her accordion with a special sing-along.

Aug. 26 at 6:30 p.m. at Academy Hall, Main Street.

All welcome. Refreshments will be served. Questions, call Linda Krawiec at 566-8447.

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.

NOTE
Construction at the inter-

section of Springfield St and Stony Hill Rd. will likely be going on during some or all of in-person early voting. Please check the Town’s website for detour details and plan accordingly.

Contact the Wilbraham Town Clerk’s Office with any questions. (413) 596-2800 x200 or Clerks@Wilbraham-ma.gov.

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.

In-person early voting in Hampden

HAMPDEN – In-Person Early Voting sessions for the Sept. 1 State Primary Election will be held in the Hampden Town Hall, 85 Wilbraham Road, during the hours listed below.

- ***Saturday August 22**
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- **Monday August 24**
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- **Tuesday August 25**
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- **Wednesday August 26**
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- **Thursday August 27**
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- **Saturday August 29**
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**Last day to change party or to register to vote in the Primary Election*

LiveLikeScott eighth annual event

HAMPDEN – Join us as we remember the life of W. Scott Godon-Decoteau at Hampden Memorial Park, 495 Main Street, on Saturday Sept. 19 and have a day full of activity, art and family fun.

All proceeds from the event will go to the W. Scott Godon-Decoteau Fund.

Registrations made by Aug. 24 will include a 2026 LLS t-shirt. After Aug. 24, t-shirts will be given out to registrants based on availability. Pre Registration \$30 and Event Day Registration \$40.

The Schedule of Events

Ride Like Scott 10 a.m. Easy group ride together for Scott on an approximately 2.5 mile loop

5K Run Like Scott 10:30 a.m. Fun Run/Walk

Have Fun Like Scott (All Day) Walk/Run/Bicycle/Tricycle/Strollers/Wagons (at your own pace)

Live Virtually Like Scott: Excited for the event but can’t make it in person? This is the registration for you! The virtual regis-

tration closes on Aug. 24 and t-shirts ordered will be mailed. Registration is \$30 (includes shipping)

Other Events

Readers are Leaders: Book reading by children’s author Amanda Fee

Option to hike to South Overlook on Goat Rock Trail to see new memorial bench for Scott.

The LLS Art & Craft Show 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Stop by the large pavilion by the spray park on the event day to view the artwork and crafts created by some of Scott’s coworkers and friends. Proceeds from the LLS Art and Craft Show will be donated to a local nonprofit charity through the W. Scott Godon-Decoteau Fund.

Spray park (don’t forget your towels), ice cream truck, kids zone activities including an obstacle course, silent auction and pizza provided or BYO picnic lunch.

Visit livelikescott.com to register and for more information.

An evening of myth and sound comes to HPL

A free public event celebrating the Sturgeon moon

HAMPDEN - Hampden Public Library will host an extraordinary evening of mythological storytelling and live sound meditation on Thursday, August 27, 2026 at 6 p.m. in the Rochford Reading Room, located at 85 Wilbraham Road, Hampden, MA. The event is free and open to the public. Led by Eugene Brown, Mythic Sound Guide, the evening is centered on the Sturgeon Moon - the final full moon of August - and an ancient Welsh myth

brought to life through voice, sound, and ceremony. Come open. Come curious. Brown’s sessions weave ceremonial storytelling and live sound simultaneously, guiding participants through an immersive journey of myth and resonance. No prior experience with meditation or mythology is required. All are welcome.

What: Sturgeon Moon - A Mythic Sound Journey

When: Thursday, August 27, 2026 at 6 p.m.

Where: Hampden Public Library, Rochford Reading Room, 85 Wilbraham Road, Hampden, MA

Cost: Free and open to the public

Evening Book Discussion at the Wilbraham Public Library

WILBRAHAM – The Evening Book Discussion will be discussing Wild Fire by Nelson DeMille on Wednesday, Sept. 16 at 7 p.m.

The group meets on the third Wednesday of every month and is facilitated by Assistant Director Mary Bell. Newcomers are always welcome, and no sign ups are necessary. Read the book prior to the meeting, and enjoy a fun hour discussing the story with other book lovers.

Wild Fire is a 2006 thriller featuring Detective John Corey and his wife, FBI agent Kate Mayfield, who begin investigating a death and uncover a post-9/11 plot by the powerful men in the Custer Hill Club. The book debuted on the New York Times bestseller list.

Copies of the book are available at the library’s front desk. For more information contact Mary Bell at 413-596-6141 or email mbell@wilbrahamlibrary.org.

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- ✓ **Delivered \$100,000** for the **Scantic Valley YMCA**
- ✓ **Delivered \$825,000** for the **Wilbraham Nature and Cultural Center and Fountain Park**
- ✓ Delivered more than **\$10 million** in Chapter 90 funding in Wilbraham for **roads, sidewalks, bridges and bikeways and related infrastructure**
- ✓ **Full-time district office right here in Wilbraham** to serve constituents



Angelo and his wife Isabel with their daughters, Julia and Olivia



Delivering for Our Youth and Families

- ✓ **Delivered \$775,000 in State funding for Rick's Place**, a Wilbraham nonprofit that provides grief support for youth who have lost a loved one and their families
- ✓ Co-sponsored **anti-bullying laws** to protect our children
- ✓ Delivered **\$320,000 for the new Turf Field at Minnechaug**
- ✓ Delivered funding **for the new Minnechaug Regional High School**
- ✓ Delivered funding **for new safety equipment for our fire fighters**
- ✓ Sponsor of youth sports and proudly **recognizes Dean's List and Honor Roll students**
- ✓ Regularly offers **internships to students** in his district office

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Angelo has delivered a total of **over \$275 million** in local aid for Wilbraham and for our regional school district throughout his tenure as our State Representative

Please Vote for Angelo in the Democratic Primary • Tuesday, September 1st
(Independents/Unenrolled Voters Can Also Vote in the Democratic Primary)

Early Voting: August 22-28



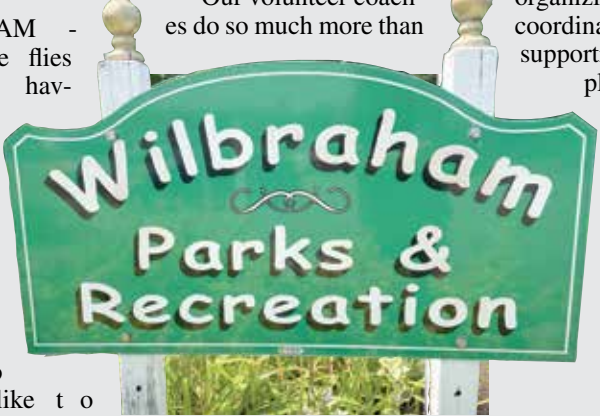
This week in recreation

Erin Carroll,
Assistant Director

WILBRAHAM - They say time flies when you're having fun, and W P R D knows this to be true! Summer 2026 went by in the blink of an eye, and before we fully turn the page to fall, we would like to take a moment to recognize and thank all of our seasonal summer staff and program staff who helped make this summer fun, successful, and memorable for the youth of Wilbraham. Thank you for all that you did to help us provide a summer filled with something for everyone!

As we immerse ourselves in the fall season, we would also like to give a big shout-out to all of the volunteer coaches who are stepping up to coach this fall. We are incredibly grateful for all of our volunteer coaches who dedicate their time each season to give back to our community. We understand how busy everyone's lives can be, which

makes their commitment even more meaningful. Our volunteer coaches do so much more than



teach the fundamentals of a sport. They help children develop important skills, learn sportsmanship, build confidence, work as part of a team, and create positive memories and experiences that can last a lifetime. We are fortunate to have hundreds of dedicated volunteers who continue to make these opportunities possible for our youth.

We would also like to extend a sincere thank-you to our committee and association members who work behind the scenes throughout the year. From football, wrestling, baseball, softball, and lacrosse to all of the other organizations that support

youth sports, these volunteers spend countless hours organizing programs, coordinating schedules, supporting coaches and players, and making sure everything runs smoothly. Their hard work and dedication are an important part of providing quality recreational opportunities for our community.

And, of course, we cannot forget our Friends of Recreation and Recreation Commission members, whose contributions and support are invaluable to WPRD and the community we serve.

At the Wilbraham Parks & Recreation Department, we are fortunate to be surrounded by so many dedicated staff members and volunteers who generously give their time, energy, and talents to make Wilbraham a better place. To everyone who contributes in big ways and small, **thank you!** We truly appreciate everything you do for our community.

For more information and to register for programs, please visit: wilbrahamma.myrec.com

WPD conducts traffic stop

WILBRAHAM - On August 14, 2026, at approximately 4 a.m., the Wilbraham Police Department attempted to conduct a motor vehicle stop of a vehicle traveling on Springfield Street in Wilbraham. The vehicle was later confirmed to have been reported stolen out of Springfield.

The vehicle failed to stop for police and was subsequently abandoned on Main Street near Boston Road. The occupants then fled from the vehicle on foot.

Following a search of the area, police located five juveniles and adults in various locations near the scene.

The investigation remains ongoing, and criminal charges against the involved individuals are under investigation.

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.

Please let Wendy know you're coming at 413.566.5588.

PARTY from page 1

"They read over 1,400 hours combined. It's just really wonderful to see."

Girard said the finale part is always a fun time for the teens to get together and celebrate their accomplishments during summer reading season.

"Our summer wrap-up is always fun. The enthusiasm and the anticipation to see who's going to win is always exciting. And everybody loves Plinko, and they get to win miscellaneous prizes, so everybody gets to walk away with something," Girard said. "We always hope they keep their enthusiasm, want to continue coming to the library, reading and doing our programs. They're a very enthusiastic group, and they all seem to be friends with each other, which definitely helps making everything more fun."

It was a fun day for the teens to celebrate the end of summer reading and how much they read this summer.



Teens enjoy pizza with their friends as Maxine Girard raffles off the raffle baskets.



Turley photos by Noelle Hisgen

Pizza is served at the finale party.

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Children celebrate summer reading's end at HPL

By Noelle Hisgen
Correspondent

HAMPDEN - The Hampden Free Public Library had their Children's Summer Reading Finale Party on July 30.

This year's theme for the summer reading program was "Plant a Seed, Read."

Children participated in a wide variety of programs from the library over the summer: Including but not limited to learning about animals, creating paintings and singing and dancing to music. This year, the library had over 90 kids sign up for the program and over 500 hours of books read total. There were also two children who read over 38 hours: Clare O'Connor and Bella Zarlengo. Along with O'Connor and Zarlengo, there were multiple children who read over the initial 12 hour reading goal.



Library Director Ellen Moriarty took a moment to talk about the end of year party.

"This is a big hit. We have the Friends of the Library serving us dinner, which is donated by The Village Store every year, and they always give us a big sheet cake for the end. Then our children's librarian will give out prizes for the kids who finished their summer reading and all kinds of freebie giveaways. It's a really fun time," Moriarty said.

Youth Services Librarian Kate Rumplik reflected on the

past year and the party as well.

"We have our summer reading finale, the Friends of the Library coordinated all of the food for us, and it's donated by the Village Food Mart. The kids get to come and celebrate their success with their reading and get all their prizes," Rumplik said.

The library had lots of sponsors over the summer, and recognized a few of them at the party.

The Friends of the Library put on the end of year party in addition to their constant support of the library, and members of the friends were at the

Members of the Friends of the Hampden Free Public Library serve food.

party serving food to children and their families. One of those friends was Co-President Catherine Mahoney.

"We really enjoy supporting all of our summer readers. But it's so wonderful to see that there are kids out there who continue to read all summer long. It's so important," Mahoney said.

The Village Food Mart donated the food for the party that afternoon, which consisted of pasta salad, and bread. The Hampden Library also recognized the Hampden Cultural Council, who supported many of the summer reading programs.

The library also would like to especially recognize Live Like Scott, who sponsored a special butterfly program this summer.

The library has also had lots of local businesses donate to the summer reading

program: Big Y, Bilton's Orchard, Ed's Tree Service, Find Your Way Home Real Estate, Ground Breakers Service, Gio's Pizzeria, Graduate Pest Solutions, GreatHorse, Hampden Engineering, Hampden Performing Arts Center, the Howarth Family, Jeffrey Russo DMD, Krynicki Insurance Agency, La Cucina de Hampden House, Monsoon Savings Bank, Mountain View, Park Cleaners, Richard Green Insurance, Spartan Auto Care Center, and VFW Pat Ledoux Post 9397.

It was a very special evening to celebrate all the kid's reading accomplishments over the summer, and help them get ready for the school year ready to read even more.

Live Like Scott is, also, looking forward to their upcoming program on Sept. 19 at the Hampden Memorial Park.

Rick's Place Golf Classic to honor the 25th anniversary of 9/11

WILBRAHAM - Twenty-five years after September 11, 2001, the impact of death loss continues to be felt by families and communities across the country, including right here in Western Massachusetts.

This year's Rick's Place Golf Classic, taking place Saturday, September 19, at the Country Club of Wilbraham, will honor the 25th anniversary of 9/11 while raising critical funds to support children, teens, and families who are grieving the death of someone significant in their lives.

Rick's Place was founded in memory of Wilbraham-born Rick Thorpe, who lost his life in the attacks on September 11, 2001. His legacy lives on through the organization's dedication to making sure youth and families have a caring place to talk about loss, express their grief, and connect with others who understand.

The need for that grief support is widespread. National research estimates that 1 in 12 children in the United States will experience the death of a parent or sibling before the age of 18.

"Death is something every community experiences, and grief can be incredibly isolating, especially for young people," said Therese Ross, Executive Director of Rick's Place. "The 25th anniversary of 9/11 gives us an opportunity to remember Rick Thorpe and all those who died in that tragic event, while also recognizing the many families in our own community who are navigating loss today. We want youth and families

to know they don't have to navigate their grief alone."

The Rick's Place Golf Classic is more than a day on the golf course. It is an opportunity for the community to come together in remembrance while helping ensure that free grief support remains available to local families.

The tournament is open to golfers of all skill levels and features an 18-hole shotgun scramble beginning at 12:30 p.m. Registration begins at 10:30 a.m. The \$175 individual entry fee or \$700 foursome fee includes green fees, cart, lunch, and dinner. Community members who do not golf are invited to join the dinner for \$40 per person. The event will also include a raffle and silent auction.

"Rick's story began with a devastating loss, but his legacy has become one of connection, compassion, and community," Ross said. "Twenty-five years later, we have the opportunity to remember him by helping more children and families who have experienced the death of someone special."

Community members and local businesses are invited to participate as golfers, dinner guests, sponsors, donors, or volunteers. Every contribution helps Rick's Place continue to provide peer grief support at no cost to youth and families throughout Western Massachusetts and Northern Connecticut.

Questions about sponsorships or attendance: 413-279-2010. Registration is now open at ricksplacema.org.

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 business-

es 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 mma-gee@hwrdsd.org.

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VIEWPOINTS

SOCIAL SECURITY

Matters

By Russell Gloor

Is the Medicare Part B premium a percentage of our Social Security amount?

Dear Rusty:
I have a simple question: Is the amount we pay for Medicare Part B premium a percent of our Social Security amount we receive?

Signed: Curious

Dear Curious:
Your Medicare Part B premium is not based on a percentage of your monthly Social Security benefit amount.

Medicare Part B premiums are set in October of each year by Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and are based upon anticipated total costs of the Medicare program in the forthcoming year.

Generally speaking, Medicare Part B enrollee premiums are expected to offset about 25% of CMS' anticipated total Medicare Part B costs; the rest is borne by the Federal Government.

So, when CMS estimates Medicare program costs for the upcoming year, they also look at the number of anticipated Part B enrollees. They then divide 25% of total anticipated Part B program costs by the number of expected Part B enrollees, resulting in the "standard" Medicare Part B premium for next year.

For 2026, the standard Part B premium amount is \$202.90. The standard premium for 2027 will be announced in October 2026 and will likely be different.

It's important to understand also that not everyone pays the "standard" Part B premium. Some lower income seniors may pay less because of the so-called "hold harmless provision," and some higher income folks may pay more than the "standard" monthly Part B premium because of a provision called Income Related Monthly Adjustment Amount.

The "hold harmless provision" says that monthly Social Security benefits cannot decrease as a result of a Medicare premium increase, so if the annual SS Cost Of Living Adjustment is insufficient to offset any increase to the standard Part B premium, then the SS beneficiary may pay a smaller Part B premium amount so that their SS benefit doesn't decrease (note there are exceptions to this rule).

Conversely, those with a higher "provisional income" (an IRS definition),

may pay more than the standard Medicare Part B premium. That's because of a provision known as IRMAA, which adds a supplemental amount on top of the standard Medicare Part B premium.

IRMAA supplement amounts are determined using a sliding scale to define the required higher Part B premium for each income level category and IRMAA will cause the Part B premium to be more than the standard premium amount.

For those with exceptionally high incomes, the Part B premium can be as much as \$690 per month.

For your information, income reported to the IRS two years ago is used to determine if an individual is subject to IRMAA for the forthcoming year.

The reason for this is timing: when next year's Part B premium is determined in October of each current year, the IRS has processed all tax returns for the preceding year but doesn't yet have individual income for the current year.

Thus, they must use a person's income from October of the preceding year to determine who will pay the standard Part B premium next year, and who will pay a higher IRMAA amount.

And just to complete this picture, you should be aware that IRMAA also applies to Medicare Part D premiums. And that means that those with higher incomes who are affected by IRMAA for Part B will also pay a higher Medicare Part D premium.

Medicare Part D is private insurance coverage for prescription drugs). But none of this is related to your Social Security benefit amount.

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.

Midsummer questions for the Garden Lady

Karen, who has a vegetable garden in Hardwick, is concerned over her tomatoes cracking and is asking the Garden Lady for some advice.

"With all the rainstorms we've had, one measuring over 5 inches last week, my cherry tomatoes, and even some of my paste types are starting to crack. Is this a normal occurrence and if so, is there anything I can do to prevent this from happening in the future?"

This is a timely question, Karen, and one that I am sure a lot of readers can relate to. I know I can.

It's always exciting when the tomatoes start ripening and then this happens.

Fruit cracking around the stem, either in rings or radiating downward is caused by overwatering; we or Mother Nature can be at fault. This year I will blame her for some of it.

A week ago many gardeners in the area received an inch or more of rain in two separate deluges. Keep in mind that most veggies require about an inch per week.

Adjust your irrigation to accommodate for the excess.

Mulches do well to moderate soil moisture; if you mulch, you can water less often. If cracking ends up being a big problem for you, consider scouring the seed catalogs for varieties that are resistant to it.

As long as the cracks are fresh, and haven't begun to show mold, I use the fruit anyway. Watering issues

can also affect other plants. Sometimes gardeners complain that their cucumbers look funny, bent in the shape of an apostrophe.

Some people comment that the berries with this disorder are a little tough or flavorless. It doesn't really bother me.

Moldy berries would look furry and the area would be raised.

Bill is growing basil for the first time and he had this question for the Garden Lady: "My basil was slow to take off. I came back from vacation and it is in flower. While the bees seem

to enjoy the flowers, I was hoping to harvest some of the leaves. Do you have any advice as to how to get it out of flower mode and into leaf production?"

Yes, I do. It involves giving the basil a hair cut. Sure enough, your plant needs to be rid of those flowers.

Once you do that, provide some nitrogen to get them greened up and growing. This could be by the addition of a little blood meal at the base of the plant or a foliar feed of fish emulsion or compost tea.

In no time your plant will rebound. Just be sure to keep those flowers trimmed off.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 32 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.

Letters to the Editor

Why is Puppolo not debating his legislative record on healthcare affordability in front of his constituents?

To The Editor:

Responding to Ms. Carpenter's August 6 letter to the editor, I would like to refer to Mr. Puppolo's legislative record and examine the credit he truly deserves for the legislation mentioned. Mr. Puppolo only began focusing his legislative actions on healthcare and affordability after Mr. Michael Lachenmeyer announced his candidacy for the seat. The best way for him to present his legislative record is to debate these issues in front of his constituents, as Mr. Lachenmeyer has requested.

What the letter missed is

that Mr. Puppolo only chose to co-sponsor bills H.5590 and H.5618 in July 2026, just two months before the primary election. None of the bills mentioned in the letter became actual legislation that will change people's experiences with health care. Bill H.5590, which aimed to form a commission to study a single-payer healthcare system, became Amendment 1 to the Primary Care bill (S.3141). By the end of the legislative session, lawmakers removed the amendment because of a lack of strong advocacy. The second bill, H.5618, passed the House and the Senate has received it. Whether it will

become law, when it might, and how well it will lower the cost of prescriptions and other essential healthcare items is still unknown. His co-sponsorship is a positive step, but he still needs to deliver tangible results in healthcare and affordability to earn credit.

We can imagine better representation for our district. Those of us who expect our State Representative to work more and harder to make health care affordable will vote for Mr. Lachenmeyer on September 1.

Maria Idali Torres
Wilbraham

Reader supports Fenton for Governor Council

To the Editor:

I am proud to offer my strong support for Michael A. Fenton for the District 8 Governor's Council seat. His experience, judgment and deep commitment to the communi-

ties of western Massachusetts make him exceptionally qualified to serve in this important role.

Practicing law in western Massachusetts for more than 30 years, I have seen firsthand the challenges facing our courts. Backlogs are growing, infrastructure is deteriorating and judicial vacancies remain unfilled for far too long. Our region needs a proactive leader who will fight for the resources, accountability and judicial capacity we deserve.

Mike Fenton brings the exact blend of legal and government expertise required for this position. As an experienced Springfield attorney, law professor and veteran local official, he brings a deep understanding of the com-

plexities of our justice system. His experience uniquely equips him to rigorously vet judicial nominees and ensure our benches are staffed with qualified judges who understand our communities.

Fenton's campaign is focused on filling Superior Court vacancies, ending the constant rotation of traveling judges and securing the modern courthouse infrastructure our region deserves.

Western Massachusetts needs a vocal, highly competent champion on the Governor's Council to protect our legal rights. I urge people to vote for Michael A. Fenton on Tuesday, September 1.

Daniel J. Finnegan
Wilbraham, MA



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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.

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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 HAMPDEN

A COMMUNITY GALLERY



Submitted photo and caption Abigail Ferrone

Representative Puppolo makes a house call to celebrate the 50th Wedding Anniversary of Wilbraham couple

State Representative Angelo J. Puppolo, Jr. proudly recognized the 50th wedding anniversary of Paula and Nicholas Creanza, honoring their lifetime of love and devotion with an official citation from the Massachusetts House of Representatives on July 7.



WFD summer program fun

Photos and caption courtesy of Hampden Parks and Rec

Always a highlight of the Summer Program! A huge thank you to LT Brendan Kennedy and the Hampden Fire Department for showing the kids a wonderful time.



Submitted photo Bonnie Roncone
Happy 60th wedding anniversary to Ronald and Bonnie Roncone.

Local couple celebrates 60th wedding anniversary



Photos and caption courtesy of Wilbraham Police Department

WPD welcomes two new officers

The Wilbraham Police Department welcomes two new officers to our ranks. Officers Cervizzi and Cruzado graduated from the Massachusetts Municipal Police Training Committees Regional Academy in Holyoke last week. Officers will begin a 12-week field training program to familiarize themselves with the Town, our policies & procedures, tools & tactics and fine tune their basic academy training.

Officer Cervizzi originates from Tewksbury before relocating to Western Mass to attend Westfield State University where he earned a Bachelor's of Science in Criminal Justice. Prior to accepting this job Officer Cervizzi worked for the

Connecticut Department of Corrections spending 7 years between 2 different institutions.

Officer Cruzado hails from the City of Springfield but spent a significant portion of his youth in Caguas, Puerto Rico. Officer Cruzado also spent the last seven years at the CT DOC and has prior experience as an armed Federal officer working with Immigration courts.

Fun Fact: In addition to attending the MPTC Academy together, Officers Cervizzi and Cruzado, also completed the CT DOC Academy together.

Please say hi if you see these officers out and about.

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Please send to krivers@turley.com

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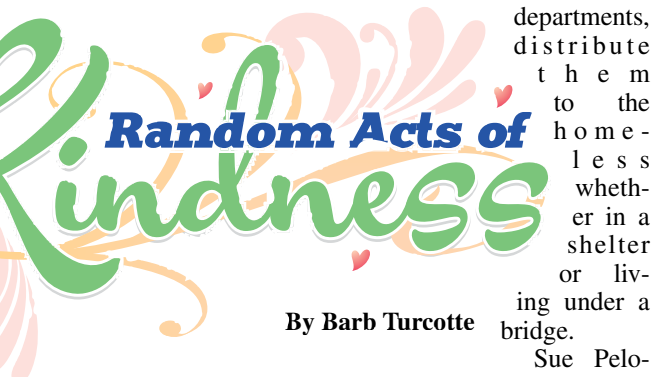
Last week I panicked because both interviews had to be postponed, then I thought, why not just share some previous stories.

When I started writing these monthly articles over five years ago, I did separate stories for each paper about a resident from their own town. Then I realized that we all cross communities so I began writing one story a month and having it published in all the papers. I've met so many incredible people it was very difficult to choose which I should include so I may have to do another article like this in the future.

Agawam:

Nancy Vellozo decided to have a tag sale. A newlywed couple came to buy a dresser in a beat-up old truck but instead of taking their money, Nancy offered the bureau as a wedding gift. Then a dad and his young daughter came to look at a bedroom set. The little girl was so excited that this was going to be her new 'big girl' bed that Nancy, thinking of her own granddaughters, just couldn't charge dad for it.

Janice Truelove shared



By Barb Turcotte

when her family went through some tough times, they'd been the recipients of some amazing kindnesses. One Thanksgiving they received a full dinner, then on Christmas her children were given two new bikes! She never forgot, so when her family was doing better, she enjoyed giving back. She organizes Easter egg-hunts for the neighborhood children, for Halloween she always creates a creepy new theme and Christmas is for giving.

Chicopee:

Ally Montemagni tragically lost her cousin Jenna Burleigh at the age of twenty-two and rather than focus on the loss, chose to concentrate on Jenna's goodness. Ally and her family created a Foundation called, "Jenna's Blessing Bags" that Ally and her father are Board members of. They get donations, then working with various police

departments, distribute them to the homeless whether in a shelter or living under a bridge.

Sue Pelouquin spear-headed the idea of a thrift store in the basement of the Trinity Lutheran Church in Springfield where items are beautifully displayed. She and all the staff are volunteers using the proceeds to help support the church in various ways. Sue even offers to pick up some donations to help you out.

Ludlow:

Jamie Gagnon overheard her teacher tell her mother, "God didn't give Jamie a good brain" and another told her, "Jamie will never make a good student, only a good person to go shopping with." Those overheard words impacted Jamie's life, creating intense insecurities, but in the end, she proved them wrong by publishing a children's book, 'Imagine My Love'. It's a story about a mother's love and she's donated many of her books.

Natalina Tulik & Michelle Annechiarico have

created "Second Time's A Charm" formal-wear shop. Natalina had sticker shock shopping for her daughter's prom gown but felt awful when her daughter's friend had to refuse her invitation because she couldn't afford a gown. Natalina noticed after the dance, everyone was trying to sell their gowns, hence her idea became a reality. People donate their dresses, which Natalina & Michelle clean before displaying. They ask for a donation of what the 'buyer' can afford and even get new gowns donated from a local bridal shop.

Wilbraham:

Peter & Kelly Elias paid the check when a co-worker and I brought eight residents to lunch, normally each is responsible to pay for their own. When asked why they'd done that, very humbly he said, "They don't generally tell people when they do things, they just do them anonymously but the waitress squealed on them". He shared that his mom was a young widow leaving her to raise three children yet she always found a way to give to others. He said it warmed his heart to see a group of women her age laughing and enjoying each other's company.

Phil (Philomena) Hanrahan has volunteered by donating to the American Red

Cross regularly. She's a volunteer on the Springfield St. Patrick's Day parade committee, where in 2018 was honored as the 'Irish Person of Year'. She also volunteers at the Hampden Senior Center, is a Eucharistic Minister at St. Mary's Church, all while also being her neighbor's caregiver for the last five years. Her daughter teaches in a low-income school and when Phil had clothes to donate, her daughter took them to distribute. Phil solicited her friends who were looking to do something other than exchanging gifts amongst themselves. Instead of the \$200 Phil thought they'd collect, they actually collected \$600 and therefore able to help two families from the school.

I hope you've enjoyed reading these Random Acts of Kindness as much as I enjoyed hearing them. I'd love to hear about how you spread positivity.

If you'd like to share a Random Act of Kindness story or if this one has touched you, please contact me at bdt514@aol.com or 413-575-9385. Who knows, you might see your story, 'Just 'Cause' you witnessed, you did or were the recipient of a kind gesture. See you soon with another Random Act of Kindness! ~ Barb

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.



BUDGET REVISIONS

boards about the amount and how a lot of the work was done in-house to keep pricing down.

"I think this is just great use of funds and resources," Kennedy said.

Vice Chair Dr. Michael Tirabassi was also pleased.

"I think this is great and I applaud both boards for making public progress on this. I think it's very, quite frankly, very generous on the part of Hampden to be considering stepping up to help with some of these expenses, understanding they don't own the building, but their children are there," Tirabassi said. "I'm just overwhelmed with how great this is."

Superintendent Dr. John Provost explained there was one thing the district needed direction on: "a great deal of urgency expressed by both boards at that meeting for us getting as much of the work on this interim plan done as quickly as possible," with the suggestion to start immediately.

"I think there was feelings that these projects would be able to garner support of the voters at Fall Town Meetings. But, I said I was not comfortable going into a deficit spending mode without consulting with the School Committee," Provost said. "I want to, I guess, take your direction on whether you want us to start right now or wait until the funds come in."

When Tirabassi said there was excess and deficiency funds from the prior year that could be used—which was \$230,000—after the decision

was made to budget \$150 per student, Slaughter replied this was correct.

"So we wouldn't necessarily have to deficit spend..." Tirabassi said.

Slaughter added there were "several mechanisms" to consider.

"If you wanted to formally leverage the E & D funding, you would make an adjustment to the budget where you would adjust the sources, but it wouldn't have an impact on the assessments to the towns because you'd be funding it from an existing source," Slaughter said. "On the other hand, if you adjust the budget to include the \$85,719 and then you simultaneously adjust the assessments accordingly and make that request to the towns, they then can take that and take action at Town Meeting for that. If they reject it, then you can go back and leverage E & D to supplant that nonfunding of that if you chose to as a committee."

Slaughter said it's "sort of which direction you want to give."

"If you formally appropriate the E & D now, you're not going to be asking them to take action on a change in their assessment, so you should probably want to ask if the assessment is the better way to give it," Slaughter said.

Tirabassi replied the negative of using E & D would be "that money will then be contributed towards the next budget side."

"So, if we spent that money on this, then that would be \$84,000 less dollars to go towards offsetting town assessments for the following year," Tirabassi said.

"Correct," Slaughter said. "All right. So, if the committee decides it's better that we, yes, increase the assessments—which is the plan—what is the mechanism by which you could do that, start the work before the Town Meetings?" Tirabassi said.

Slaughter replied how there's "a number of things that are already funded" and being worked on such as asbestos projects and door replacements.

"If the committee is willing to commit to that \$85,000 regardless of funding mechanism, then we would be more confident in starting the work without having the true source of it identified at the moment. But, the option is sort of up to the committee as far as whether that's the case," Slaughter said.

He reiterated the several things already being worked on and funded and how "it's really a question of how strong the committee wants to offer more than one option to fund it."

"If you're committed to one or the other regardless, then that gives (us) the ability to go to staff and say, 'You can start right now' and then we figure out whether it's a change to the assessment to the towns or whether it's a leveraging of E & D," Slaughter said.

Kennedy asked if this was presented to the Finance Committee, the Capital Planning Committee and Hampden's Advisory Committee, with the answer being no. He then noted an earlier public comment against the proposal.

"I just think we should have all the parties involved

before we put this forth unless we decide as Dr. Tirabassi just said that you use that money that we saved in case we can get the \$160 and put that money in out of E & D," Kennedy said. "But then still, I would recommend before we do that, if we make that decision, at least let them know what's out there, talk to the different parties involved..."

After Tirabassi noted how those committees don't meet during the summer, aren't all constituted and the School Committee has to approve something before it goes to Town Meeting and shared additional thoughts, Hampden Selectboard John Flynn joined the conversation.

Flynn said he anticipated the assessment for Hampden being revised and a letter sent to them.

"If you're talking about also increasing to potentially talk about the capital items at WMS, that's not a lump sum. We're not allowed to say, 'Okay, we agreed to the truck, the switches, but not that.' We get a lump sum from you. It's up or down. Same thing we talked about in the spring," Flynn said. "So, the only question I have and if you hear there's some doubt about that, don't throw out the baby with the bath water. If you're really passionate about the truck and those switches and you're sensing that perhaps one or both towns—as Sean said—stakeholders have not weighed in yet on this, you might put everything together because you have to give that omnibus change assessment number."

Hampden Selectboard Member Don Davenport not-

ed these numbers: \$50,000 for asbestos, \$40,000 for the doors and \$105,000 in the general maintenance account that was already approved and how everything, to him, is a package put together of all the separate items.

"And if we do \$86,000 here, you're talking about \$281,000 of substantial repairs that will go a long way to cleaning up some of the problems you had there," Davenport said. "I want to present it as a package and this is the last part of the package and because those needed repairs are long overdue and we put together a really good program to do it."

Tim Collins brought up health and safety, asking if sufficient work would be done by the start of the new school year for better air quality and lack of asbestos. In response, Slaughter shared the air quality has been "decent" and would be maintained.

Asbestos work is just about complete, with the planned work to come.

"These types of system improvements will make it easier to maintain that and require less hands-on work. But, I think we'll be in a good, steady place. Is it the optimal for that building or what we might do if we knew we were going to stay in the building for 20 years, could we take a different approach? Yeah, we probably would, but for the time horizon we're talking about of about six to 10 years, this is a modest way to maintain a decent environment for the kids and for the staff..." Slaughter said.

After additional thoughts, Collins next said this.

"I know it's an interim

step; it's not a final solution, but we have an obligation to make that building as safe and healthy as possible before the kids get back in there this year. So I would be in of favor of saying, 'Hey, let's just go ahead,'" Collins said.

Flynn added the projects for the middle school "can be accommodated by the extra money, leaving more money over" thanks to Chapter 70 state aid and reiterated his earlier points on the other items.

"The potential is that both will go down because people might be upset about the extra 'Oh my gosh we're paying 20% of something we don't own.' It's a real thing and it's a danger and you're rolling the dice with that. That's my only caveat to you all," Flynn said.

He added to come back for Fall Town Meeting as Hampden would be able to pay for the switches and dump truck thanks to free cash.

Chair Michal Boudreau asked Slaughter what was the best way to separate the capital items "so we don't jeopardize losing everything."

He replied how the towns "are in control of how they place" an appropriation or award "so it can be a single item or it can be separated into pieces."

However, he cautioned if the separate items are not all approved, that could put the committee out of balance and the budget would need to be readjusted again, which is what happened in May during Town Meeting.

After final thoughts, the motions were presented and voted on.

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Turley photos by Harold Anderson
From left, Jeanine Roy, Bea Mills-Desroches, Ernie Desroches, Lillian Fedora and Wayne Desroches.

The memorial vigil ceremony to remember loved ones who are no longer with us, but always there in spirit.

REUNION from page 1
together a comprehensive family tree project for future reunions.

The festivities began for those who arrived on Friday with a family BBQ that kicked off the weekend theme of “The Wild West”. The western décor was evident throughout the farm with themed backdrops that O’Toole found online to add to the fun.

She even thought of a creative welcome for the guests with a series of lawn signs posted along the long driveway leading up to the house. From “You made it!” on the first sign to “So glad you’re here!” and “Woo Hoo!”, attendees could tell that they were in for something special.

Well-fed at the BBQ, the line dancers in the family moved under the tent to a sturdy plywood dance floor built by Lil’s husband Mike, a carpenter by trade, for some boot-scooting line dancing led by Mikki Langone.

Although heavy rain and thunderstorms were expected sometime that evening, the start of the inclement weather was delayed as the gathering continued although frequent dry lightning was seen in the distance as the storm approached.

Following the dancing was a family tradition “as almost a kick-off of the whole weekend.” O’Toole said.

“We’re doing a special remembrance to honor ancestors...It is because of them that we are here,” O’Toole said.

Family members gathered in a circle on the plywood



From left, Jeanine Roy from Florida with Jan and Eric Girard from South Hadley.

floor with a collection of battery-operated candles at the center.

“We wanted to be able to honor all our members,” Fedora said. “It’s like, the light they bring to us brings the family together.”

Led by O’Toole at the microphone, one by one, someone would say the name of a particular loved one and tell a favorite story of this person.

The memorial wasn’t all somber, however, as there was much laughter heard as stories were told including accounts from past reunions, shared adventures, good times and typical tales of their loved one. Some brought a picture of the person they were honoring and set it down with the candles.

As the memorial service was nearing its end, a strong driving wind suddenly rose up as if on cue to let everyone know it was time to wrap things up for the night. After one last story from O’Toole,

the bonfire that night was cancelled and everyone dispersed, some to the barn and others to their homes to anticipate the next day’s events.

Saturday was full of family fun and games including an Egg Toss, a Sack Race—with all contestants wearing horse head masks—a Wild West Obstacle Course Competition, Red Cup and Family Basket Raffles, a Pot Luck Family Supper and live music from Jim Blanch and Boot Hill.

Fedora said the obstacle course was designed by her son Mike. It was a highly creative series of challenges for the various teams of three adults and one child each, with the participants ranging in age from five to 83 years old.

The course began with the child from each of two of the teams breaking out of the “jail”, picking up their hobby horse and “riding” to the “saloon” where they “stole” a

bag of “loot” that was on the bar counter.

Running out to toss the sack to one of their adult “accomplices”, the race continued with the adult climbing up and jumping down the other side of both ends of a tall rectangular metal pipe fence. There, another adult took the loot sack and ran over hay bales and a large plastic conduit pipe to the child who had jumped into the “getaway vehicle”, a large wheelbarrow pushed by another adult “accomplice”.

But the “townspeople”, a line of family members armed with water squirt guns, weren’t going to let them get away that easily and “opened fire” on the escaping “robbers” as they ran to the finish line. In the end, the winning team was “The Zoe Stars” comprised of Zoe, Paige, Jay and 9-year-old Aharon. From there it was back under the tent for the call of the winning raffle tickets.



Time to partake in the buffet.

The Pot Luck Supper, however, was delayed as the weather again intervened with strong winds and rain making their appearance. Fortunately, the first wave of the storm passed quickly enough for the hungry crowd to dig in to the vast buffet table with all sorts of food and desserts.

Jim Blanch and Boot Hill then took their places on the plywood stage and began what they called “Classic Country with a Twist”. Although only a few brave souls got up to dance at first, the music was clearly a treat for all.

The day ended with the

family gathering around a fire for another family tradition.

“We’re Canadian descent...(so) on Saturday night, we always sing a song...’Alouette’, that’s a traditional song that’s sung by the bonfire”, Fedora said.

Sunday closed out the reunion with many attending a Catholic Mass at St. Mary’s in Hampden, followed by a family meeting back at the farm to remember the fun and plan for the future. When leaving down the driveway, the lawn signs this time read “Have a safe trip home!”, “So glad you were here!” and “See you next year!”.



The escape portion of the obstacle course gets underway.

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Jewelry Buying Event and hilarious Irish comedy show are upcoming fundraisers

WILBRAHAM - The Friends of Wilbraham Seniors will be hosting a two-day Jewelry Buying Event at the Wilbraham Senior Center on Sept. 24 and 25 for people interested in selling vintage jewelry (including broken pieces, watches, rings, etc.), coins, gold, silver, platinum, sterling silver flatware, dishes, antiques and more.

Family Jewels, a staple in Northampton since 1970, will evaluate your items and make you an offer. No fees. No obligations.

Payment made on the spot, but you must make an appointment at Wilbraham Senior Center. Call 413-596-8379. No walk ins allowed.

Also, the Friends will be hosting a popular comedy show “JOKES MY IRISH FATHER TOLD ME” on Oct. 2. Doors open 6:30 p.m.

Comedian Dave Kane, who portrayed Fr. Patrick Aloysius in the comedy show “Misgivings” last year will have you laughing at his one lines and jokes. Come relax and enjoy an evening from a much-needed break from everyday routines.

Last year his show was a sellout, and we expect this one will be mobbed.

Tickets are only \$20 and are on sale at the Wilbraham Senior Center, 250 Springfield St, Wilbraham, MA. Limited seating.

All tickets must be purchased in advance.

Stop in today. No reservations. No holds.

All proceeds from each fundraiser to support multiple programs and services for Wilbraham Seniors. For more information on either event, contact Matt Villaino 413-896-2206.

Revolutionary War Journal and more digitized by the Wilbraham Public Library

WILBRAHAM – The Wilbraham Public Library has digitized three collections from microfilm: Samuel Warner’s diary, the Revolutionary War Diary of Samuel F. Merrick, and the Clerk’s Record Book from 1740 – 1773.

“The impetus for the project was a local history reference question,” said Assistant Director Mary Bell. “A patron wanted to know if we had the original Revolutionary War diary of Samuel F. Merrick or knew where it might be kept.”

The library doesn’t have the original, but they do have a microfilmed copy from the 1960s. “Unfortunately, we don’t have a microfilm reader and haven’t in years,” said Bell. Instead, the library worked with Advantage Archives to digitize the microfilm and make it

accessible to all.

To access the original diaries and record book, go to www.wilbrahamlibrary.org, select the Local History menu and click on “Digitized Collections.” This page will bring up links to these and other collections.

In addition to the Revolutionary War Diary, the Samuel Warner diary includes his record of service in the French and Indian War in 1759, and the Clerk’s Record Book has descriptions of town meetings from the Fourth Precinct of Springfield through the incorporation of Wilbraham in 1763, and vital records for the town beginning with that date.

For more information, please contact Mary Bell at 413-596-6141 or mbell@wilbrahamlibrary.org.

please recycle this newspaper

HISTORICAL from page 1

feed the hungry woodcutters.

The heating of the church was due to two big stoves with cast iron bases with doors on top and elliptical sheet-iron bodies. “These stoves stood in each corner at the back of the church connected with the chimneys by long pipes, suspended from the ceiling,” wrote Edson. “The pipe was attached to the back of the stove, and the whole top was hinged to open for putting in the wood,” he said.

In those days of wood stove heating, the heat came from radiating out from the hot stoves and pipes.

Served them Well

Edson bragged, “These stoves were great heaters and no one thought of closing the church on account of the cold.”

About 1897 the base of the stove in the south corner started to crack and it was thought it was time to buy a new stove. A Glendale resident by the name of Dwight W. Eddy was an agent of a woodstove company and sold a new stove to the church at a wholesale price.

The new stove was quite fancy. “It was cast iron, said Edson, with isinglass, porcelain rosette, a bronzed top, and nickel foot rail. “It had draft openings, a heat control damper; it was slower to

give off heat but held it longer. It served us well for more than 40 years,” wrote Edson. It did a good job but after long use it developed a crack.

The matter of a new stove came before the church trustees and in 1942 Henry Clark and Roland Bennett were appointed a committee on heating.

Roland Bennett was no relation to me but he was related to the late Cindy Bennett who graduated from Minnechaug in 1962 and lived in the historic “Maplehurst House” on Monson Road with her husband Denny Smith. Oldtimers used to say that the house, that previously was a stagecoach stop on a trail over the mountain, use to be owned by the prominent townswoman Miss Evannore O. Beebe and was haunted. But that’s another story for another day.

The north corner stove stood for several years longer than the south corner one, but finally becoming unsafe, was replaced by a horizontal sheet-iron heater that was very efficient. Edson remembered that for the chicken-pie suppers the north corner heater always yielded to a cook stove.

Over the years the stoves were replaced by members’ used stoves but were still serviceable. The last woodstove used was a very high quality “Pearl” brand stove made in Otter River, Mass in 1868 and was used for 75 years of continual service. An electric stove was eventually given to the church by a Central Massachusetts electric company in 1941.

The Horse Sheds

It wasn’t until Dec. 12, 1875 until the trustees of Glendale Methodist Church voted to build some sheds for the horses that carried churchgoers to the church services. They were erected north of the church in a spot that was exposed to the weather. They were rebuilt by George Edson. “Then, a wind pushed them off their foundation, again,” said Edson.

But the next time, said Edson, Mother Nature said her warning wasn’t heeded and blew them inside out!” he wrote.

So the trustees tried again and hired Alanson Calkins to rebuild the horse sheds under the shelter of the hill to the south. The sheds accommodated 12 teams of hors-



Henry Edson (1878-1963) chronicled the happenings that went on in Glendale.

(Times file photo)

es. Each user would pay for his own shed and the church would pay for its own shed. Edson remembered some of the horse owners were slow in paying so Mr. Calkins became impatient and implored the trustees to board up their spaces. But eventually it was settled.

By 1905, during the pastorate of Rev. A. L. Howe, the sheds needed repair again. The sheds were once more repaired and re-shingled at a cost of \$45.75 for 15,000 shingles and nails. The money to pay for the job was raised by a chicken pie supper put on by the women and an oyster supper put on by the men. The work was completed in four days by all volunteers. Edson wrote some of the men gave four whole days to the work; and the ladies furnished fine dinners for the hungry men in the chapel. “These were pleasant days, my brethren,” he wrote.

Well, it was apparent that Mother Nature had a grudge against the poor horse sheds all through the years. Twice the winds destroyed them and the frost heaved-in the walls in the winters. Water puddled the ground in the spring.

During the winter of 1919-1920 the snow piled deeper and deeper on the roof; the wind piled drift on drift and cold rain added its weight on the crust and strain became too great. With great drama Edson described their demise: “Exultantly Nature heard the plates splinter as the beams snapped from their mortises, and braces groaned and tore from their places. With shrill remonstrance the rafters were pulled from their footings and the sheds crashed in a confused heap of broken lumber.

With the coming of the automobile carrying worship-

ers to church, the horse sheds were never completely rebuilt again.

Revolutionary Moment

We continue to honor our country’s birthday, at our 250th anniversary each month. Dr. Samuel Fiske Merrick, the son of Rev. Noah Merrick, the first minister of a Protestant church in Wilbraham, received his Medical Degree studying with Dr. Brainard of Haddam, Conn. Dr. Merrick’s house was on Main Street near where the Minnechaug driveway is now.

In 1776 Merrick was a surgeon’s mate in Col. Elisha Porter’s regiment that went to reinforce the Northern Army, then besieging Quebec.

Dr. Merrick was in the disastrous retreat from Canada and helped care for the many soldiers ill with smallpox and dysentery.

Dr. Merrick left Wilbraham on April 22, 1776 and began writing his journal on May 1; it ends on Sept. 16. The first three pages of his Journal, said historian Bruce Tingle, were almost completely destroyed, so the first readable entry begins with May 11, 1776, when his section of the Army was moving on Lake Champlain to reinforce troops of the Northern Army, then in the region of Quebec.

“11 May. Rested comfortably last night on a straw bed. Early in the morning we proceeded with much wind felt. Toward morning there came up a gale of wind which obliged us to land on the Western shore in a bay about four miles to the northward. We encamped in thin woods, spread a table in the wilderness, ate heartily and laid down to sleep.”

Sources: “History of Wilbraham Bicentennial Edition 1763-1963” edited by Charles Merrick; “The History of Wilbraham, 1731, 1763-1913 by Chauncey E. Peck. “Glendale Methodist Church” by Henry Edson. “Military Rolls of Outward Commons, Soldiers of Wilbraham, Mass. 1730-1840”.

Editor Emeritus Charlie Bennett is a member of the Historic Commission and a trustee of the Wilbraham Atheneum Society. Readers can contact him with comments or ideas for the column at cben-nett4765@charter.net.

SAFETY from page 1

Deputy Fire Chief Frank Matuszczak said.

Due to these dangerous temperatures, if a person sees a child or an animal within a car in the heat and they are unsure if the car is running or not, they need to call 911 immediately.

“It is a true emergency at that point,” Matuszczak said.

Children’s internal body temperatures rise faster than adults, making it even more dangerous for them to be left in a hot car.

Heatstroke begins when a person’s internal body temperature reaches 104 degrees. Death occurs at a body temperature of 107 or higher.

With car temperatures reaching over 120 degrees,

these dangerous internal temperatures can happen quickly.

Matuszczak advises people to never leave children or pets in the car in the heat, even if they think it will be a quick trip. Sometimes even a five minute trip can result in heat related injury or even death.

When getting out of the car, always do a sweep to ensure no one is left in the back seat. Over 50% of pediatric vehicular heatstroke deaths are the result of a parent or caregiver forgetting the child in the car.

The National Highway Safety Administration recommends leaving an important item in the backseat with a child to serve as a reminder to look in the back.

It is also important to

teach children that cars and vehicles are not play areas and to leave car keys out of their reach.

This will help prevent children from accidentally locking themselves in a vehicle when their caregiver is not paying attention.

Many modern cars are made to be more air tight to help retain air conditioning or heating in all weathers. While this has a benefit, it also means they hold heat in the summer for longer than many older models.

“If you are going somewhere, you should leave [your kid] at home, if you can, or take the child with you,” Matuszczak said.

With the hot temperatures cars can reach, it is also important to be conscientious as a person gets into a hot car.

Many modern cars have ways of lowering the windows using a key fob, which Matuszczak recommends using to help lower internal temperatures before getting inside the car.

This is especially important as metal surfaces, such as seatbelts, can reach temperatures over 180 degrees, which can result in burns.

If a person’s car does not have the ability to lower the windows using the key fob, it will be best for them to open the car doors for a few minutes before getting inside.

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Microgram

4. Fixed charge

7. Each

8. Feeling of humiliation

10. Coat with sticky substance

12. Powerful “Severance” family

13. Japanese city

14. “Pulp Fiction” actress Thurman

16. Hat

17. Place where rockers work

19. Psyche

20. Snakelike fishes

21. Where people live

25. Body part

26. Old towel

27. One’s essential being

29. Japanese alcoholic beverage

30. Boxing’s GOAT

31. Wet muddy ground

32. Christian Laettner is one

39. A place to store lawn tools

41. Large tub for liquid

42. Old World lizard

43. One-time European member group

44. Healing student

45. Nuclear weapon

46. “Kiss of the Spider Woman” actress Sonia

48. Silk garment

49. About some Norse poems

50. Woman religious community member

51. Congressman (abbr.)

CLUES DOWN

1. An insane person

2. “Homeland” actress Danes

3. Buttock muscles

4. US federal agency

5. Birds of prey

6. Electronic communication

8. Ocean

9. Terminates

11. Low-pitched sound from a bell

14. Exclamation: yuck!

15. A place to attach a boat

18. Exclamation of surprise

19. Make a mistake

20. Border line

22. Have religious faith

23. Klutz

24. Large tree

27. House of ___ rulers

28. Red deer

29. Small coin (French)

31. Popular sandwich

32. 10-year period

33. Not good

34. Government lawyer

35. Egypt’s intelligence agency

36. Without an occupant or incumbent

37. Stain with one’s hands

38. Crippling

39. One point east of southeast

40. Large, united groups

44. ___ and cheese

47. Alcoholic beverage

SPORTS

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Ryan McLane does a running drill.

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

WILBRAHAM— One of the last sports camps of the summer of 2026 was held at Spec Pond in Wilbraham from August 10-13.

A total of 57 baseball and softball players between the ages of 6-16 from Wilbraham

and the surrounding communities attended the four day clinic.

“This is our fourth year conducting the baseball clinics, and this is probably the best one yet,” said camp director Dustin Brisson “We have almost 60 kids, including a couple of softball players for the first time, this week. It’s the most campers we’ve ever had at this clinic and I’m very pleased.”

Brisson, who is the owner of Forge Athletics, was born in Florida and played college baseball at the University of Central Florida from 1997-2000. The first baseman was drafted by the Boston Red Sox in the 15th round of the 2000 MLB draft.

Brisson, who played 345 minor league games, advanced to Double A Portland. His baseball career came to an end due to an injury.

“I was blessed to have the opportunity to play professional baseball,” Brisson said. “I’m doing what I can to give back to these kids.”

Some of the camp instructors were Lindsay Beer, David Wendt, Ace Adams Chade Shade, who’s the head coach



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Campers receive some instructions from one of the coaches in the Forge Baseball Clinic.



London Shepard focuses on solid contact off the batting tee.

of the Springfield College baseball team, Pat Strange, who’s the pitching coach at Westfield State University, Dan Gomez, who’s the head

baseball coach at Western New England University, and Terry Doyle, who’s the the baseball coach at New England College.

“It’s an honor to have these coaches working at our clinic this year,” Brisson said. “They

Please see **CAMP**, page 12

Blue Sox look back on ‘resilient’ campaign

HOLYOKE – When the Valley Blue Sox walked off the field following a 14-5 loss to the Sanford Mainers in Game 2 of the NECBL South Division Semifinals on Aug.2, the scoreboard marked the end of a 2026 season to remember.

Valley returned to the postseason for the first time since 2024 after navigating the ups and downs that come with collegiate summer baseball. A scorching start gave way to a difficult stretch of roster turnover and injuries before the Blue Sox caught fire at exactly the right time, winning 10 of their final 13 regular-season games to clinch a playoff berth.

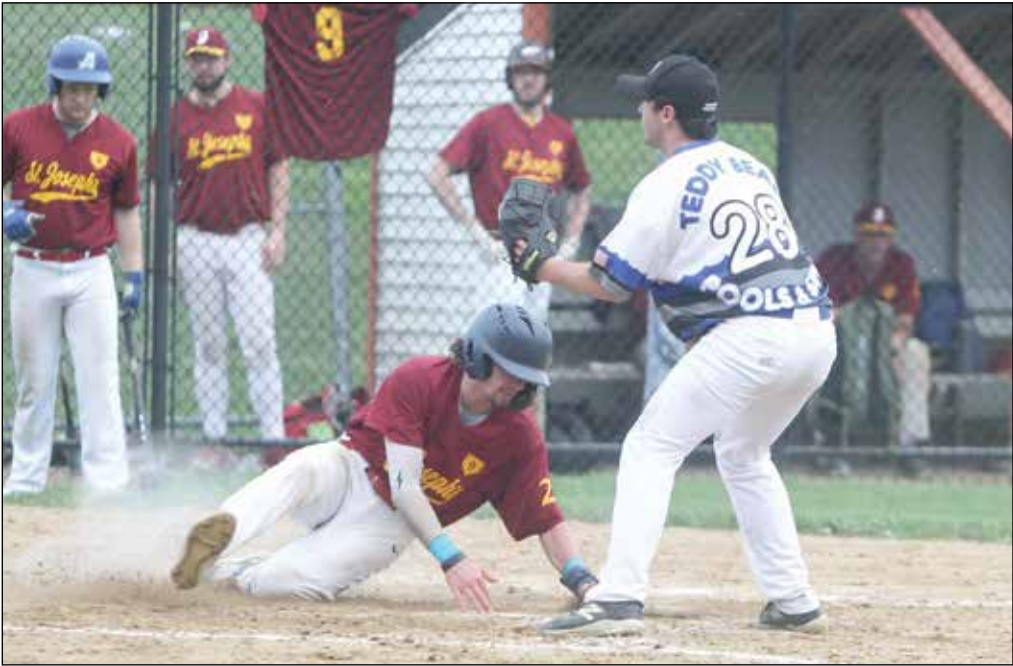
“We don’t do it for the wins,” head coach John Raiola said. “The wins happen as a result of continuing to show up, [doing] the right thing every day and [continuing] to grind and work.”

After opening the season with an 11-inning tie against the Newport Gulls, Valley won seven of its next eight games to jump near the top of the NECBL South Division standings. Strong pitching, reliable defense and timely hitting fueled victories over Ocean State, Upper Valley, Danbury, North Shore and Mystic, giving the Blue Sox an early identity as one of the league’s toughest teams.

But the middle of the summer presented new challenges.

As is common throughout the NECBL season, the roster shifted constantly as players departed and newcomers

Please see **BLUE SOX**, page 12



Nate Carrill slides safely home.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Tri-County finals forced to a deciding game three

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

SOUTH HADLEY— Third-seeded Teddy Bear Pools & Spas had a golden opportunity to sweep the top-seeded St. Joseph’s Saints in the Tri-County League championship series.

Teddy Bear held a 1-0 lead entering the top of the third inning in game two.

St. Joe’s rallied for three runs in the third and fourth innings and they evened the best-of-three series at 1-1 following a 6-3 victory at South Hadley High School Friday, Aug. 7.

The game came to an end after five innings due to darkness, which didn’t please the Teddy Bear players and their supporters.

“It’s a very frustrating situation,” said Teddy Bear player/manager Ryan Magni. “I think we should’ve been able to finish the final two innings of tonight’s game at St. Joe’s Park before playing the deciding game tomorrow night.”

The baseball field at South Hadley High School doesn’t



Matt Drobiak tries to evade a run-down.

have any lights and the first pitch of game two was thrown by Teddy Bear righthander Sean Rosemond at 5:55p.m. The three umpires made the decision to end the game at 7:45 p.m.

“The pace of tonight’s game was very slow,” said St.

Joe’s manager Paul Marcinek. “We were very lucky to finish five innings which made it an official game.”

Had the game ended before the bottom of the fifth

Please see **TRI-COUNTY**, page 12

Lusitano keeps the soccer going

Hosts exhibition
collegiate match

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW— In what could become an annual tradition, the UConn and UMass women’s soccer teams met in an exhibition match in front of a large crowd at Lusitano Stadium on Aug. 5.

Neither team was able to find the back of the net during the contest, played in three 30-minute intervals, but it was still a memorable evening at the 108-year-old stadium located on Winsor Street in Ludlow.

“It’s very exciting to be hosting a college soccer match here at Lusitano Stadium,” said Joe Ferrara Jr., who’s the Managing Director of the New England Mutiny and the General Manager of the Western Mass. Pioneers. “Both UConn and UMass have been very supportive of the Mutiny over the years. I also have a personal relationship with both coaching staffs.”

The last time a college soccer match was held at Lusitano Stadium was on October 17, 2018.

On that fall evening, the Worcester State University Lancers squared off against the Western New England University Golden Bears in a non-conference men’s match-up.

Cyrus Raines, a Belcher-town High School graduate, delivered his first collegiate goal during the second half, which lifted the Lancers to a 1-0 shutout victory. Raines, who’s a defender, finished his college soccer career with three goals.

The Worcester State head coach at that time was Jason Willis, who’s currently an assistant coach for the Western Mass Pioneers. He also coaches a Western United Pioneers team.

Willis graduated from Ludlow High School, and he helped the Lions boys’ soccer team win two state titles and three Western Mass. titles back in the 1990’s.

Ferrara, who also graduated from Ludlow High School in the 1980’s, played many soccer games on the grass stadium field.

“I recall scoring a lot of big goals on this field while I was in high school,” Ferrara said. “I also played for the Lusitano Whites, which won the first ever summer league championship on this field. I hope the college players appreciate the history of this place.”

This past spring, Ferrara approached UMass head coach Jason Dowiak about playing the exhibition match against UConn at Lusitano Stadium.

“Because it was UMass turn to host the exhibition, I asked coach Dowiak if he would be interested in playing the game here this year,” Ferrara said. “He thought it was a very good idea.”

It was something that Dowiak, who was hired as the UMass women’s soccer coach in 2017, had always wanted to do.

“I’m beginning my ninth season as the UMass women’s soccer coach and this is something that I’ve always wanted to do,” said Dowiak following the scoreless draw. “I’ve watched several Mutiny games here in the past and this was really a very special night for us. I’m very glad that the soccer community came out and supported us. This was an electric atmosphere for an exhibition game.”

A year ago, UMass posted a 5-8-4 overall record and went 3-6-2 against their Mid-American Conference foes.

“I thought my team played very well against a fantastic UConn team, and

Please see **SOCCER**, page 12

Matt Hirschman nabs in win Thompson 150 modifieds

THOMPSON, CT – Defending NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour champion Austin Beers earned the pole position last Wednesday night with the 19.154-second fast lap and quickly ran with the lead at the start of the Thompson 150. Matt Hirschman followed on the tail of Beers throughout the opening circuits while mechanical trouble took fan-favorite Jon McKennedy out of action early on.

Matt Hirschman made his way into the lead around a loose Austin Beers in turn two, slowly but surely extending that lead through the first third of the event. Andrew Krause met an early end on lap 60 as he slammed the turn one wall to call out the first caution. All but three lapped cars took the chance to jump to pit road with Hirschman winning the race to the backstretch while Eric Goodale and Matt Swanson nearly collided for the runner-up spot.

After hanging around sixth, Patrick Emerling entered the top-five picture to chase down Mike Christopher Jr., Beers and Hirschman. It was all for not as Matt Hirschman ran away in the 80+ green flag run to the checkered flags to take his first career Thompson Speedway NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour win over Austin Beers and Patrick Emerling.

Chase Dowling kept it clean all race long to finish fourth with Matt Swanson climbing back from a pit-road gamble to finish fifth.

The Crown Vics kicked off Wednesday’s racing action with their feature event. Ethan Williams looked strong enough to take his first win of the season but it was July’s winner Jack Emerson who took over at the halfway point. Emerson ran away with it to take win number two with Williams relegated to second over John Dulac.

The SK Light Modifieds got things started with a bang as Dennis Sneade and Milania Shilosky made contact coming off turn four, plowing up the infield grass and pit wall before coming to a halt on lap 4. Back under green, Austin Goff got the jump on Corey Caddick and began to run from RJ Marcotte. Marcotte made contact with Goff, spinning the 07 into the turn one wall to call up the lap 17 caution. With Marcotte sent to the rear, Caddick and point leader Kevin Davis went to war at the front for the final three circuits with Davis getting the win over Caddick with John O’Sullivan taking third.

It was a battle for the ages between top Late Model ace Jake Johnson and Matt Lowinski-Loh throughout their 25 lap feature. The two top

guns ran side-by-side, slamming doors on one another, beating and banging around the Thompson highbanks for twenty-three laps until Jared Roy’s spin in turn four. The green-white-checkers sealed the fate for Johnson, who slid sideways on the final lap to give Matt Lowinski-Loh the Wednesday night victory.

Following NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour time trial qualifying, Derek Ramstrom took the lead early in the Thompson Sunoco Modified feature with Bryan Narducci and Todd Owen in hot pursuit. Point leader Keith Rocco made his way into third and then second as Ramstrom fell back behind Narducci. Bryan Narducci never faltered in the caution-free feature to take his first win of the season over Rocco and Owen at the line.

Rookie Charles Beal lost the pole position on the initial green, falling back through the top five leaving Ryan Lineham and Al Stone III out front. Jarrod Soucy motored his way underneath Stone by the halfway point as former track champion Ryan Waterman and former Thunder Road Speedbowl champ Jason Woodard battled for fourth. In the end, no-one had any steam for Lineham who took the night-ending win over Soucy and Stone.

CAMP from page 11

want to help these kids. This is a high level skills clinic. I just want the older kids to have the opportunity to work with the college coaches.”

A couple of the guest speakers at the clinic were Brandon Seymour, who’s the general manager of the Valley Blue Sox, Nancy Street, who’s a board member of the Miracle League of Western Massachusetts, and Duke Castiglione Jr who’s a sportscaster at a television station in Boston.

Ray Fagnant, who grew up in Chicopee and is the Boston Red Sox Northeast Regional Scouting Supervisor, also spent a day at the clinic.

A few of the different stations were hitting, fielding, and throwing.

“My main goal is to teach the players the basic fundamentals of the game,” Brisson said. “I also want to keep the kids active at this clinic. I really don’t want them standing around



Turley photos by David Henry
www.sweetdogphotos.com
Adam Smola swings off a tee.

doing nothing.”

Brisson was aided at the clinic by his wife, Kasey.

“My wife is the backbone of the organization,” Brisson said. “She keeps everything in order. I appreciate all the support from many different people that I’ve received running this camp.”

Brisson and his staff is already looking forward to holding the baseball clinic at Spec Pond again next summer.

Brodie Craven makes a throw.

SOCCER from page 11

this is a positive step for us,” Dowiak added. “I feel like we can go into tough environments and still be successful.”

One of the three graduated students listed on the UMass women’s roster is Bianca Cardano, who’s from Monson. She attended Minnechaug Regional where she played soccer for Nundi Goncalves, who’s another Ludlow High graduate.

“I’ve played a lot of games at this stadium,” Cardano said. “My family and friends were here tonight. It was a very special night.”

Cardano, who’s a management major, fell in love with the UMass campus when she made her official visit.

“UMass was always my top choice,” she said. “The girls on the soccer team are like members of my own family. We’re hoping to finish first in the Mid-American Conference.”

Cardano, who’s a starting defender, played in 16 games as a freshman before missing

her entire sophomore season recovering from a right knee injury. She was limited to just three matches (two starts) in 2024.

A year ago, Cardano was a starter in ten of the 14 matches that she played in.

“We’re really hoping that Bianca is able to play the whole season for us this year,” Dowiak said. “She’s a fantastic leader on and off the field.”

Cardano isn’t the only Minnechaug girls’ soccer player to play soccer at UMass.

Jess Howe, who was a member of the Lady Falcons 2005 Western Mass championship team and the 2008 state title team, was a defender at UMass from 2009-2012.

UConn head coach Margaret Rodriguez played soccer at Lusitano Stadium for a couple of seasons as a member of the Western Mass. Lady Pioneers. She also played for the Mutiny for one year when they played their home matches at Agawam High School.

“We’ve led the Big East in fan support during the past several years,” Rodriguez said. “This was a good way for my players to get used to playing in this type of a setting under the lights.”

The Huskies, who finished the 2025 campaign with an 11-4-3 overall record and a 7-1-2 conference record, were picked to finish second behind Georgetown in the BIG EAST Preseason Women’s Soccer Coaches’ Poll.

Redshirt sophomore Se-Hanna Mars, who plays for the Mutiny, was selected to the preseason All-Big East team, along with senior Anaya Johnson.

There is a very good chance that the UConn and UMass women’s soccer teams will be meeting at Lusitano Stadium again next August.

Western Mass. soccer fans will get another chance to take in collegiate action at Lusitano Stadium, as the Western New England University men’s team hosts Wesleyan University on September 22 at 7 p.m.

BLUE SOX from page 11

arrived. Valley dropped 10 out of 13 games between late June and mid-July, forcing the coaching staff and returning players to quickly adjust, all while keeping their postseason hopes alive.

Rather than allowing the season to slip away, the Blue Sox responded.

Beginning with a July 16 win over Ocean State, Valley continued the winning ways to close the regular season 10-3, including victories over Sanford, Vermont, Martha’s Vineyard and Ocean State. Valley capped off their hot finish by sweeping a must-win doubleheader on the final day of the regular season to secure the seventh seed in the NECBL playoffs.

Along the way, Valley reached the 20-win mark, a milestone Raiola said should not be overlooked.

“Twenty wins is an accomplishment,” Raiola said. “It is tough to win 20 games in this league.”

The late-season push reflected the resilience the Blue Sox built over the course of the summer.

“Look at what happened [and] where we were in the middle of the year, and then [look at] how we ended it,” Raiola said. “Do you quit when times get tough, or do you stick it out and keep working?”

The postseason, however, presented another challenge.

With four games in three days just to reach the playoffs, Valley entered its opening-round series against Sanford with a taxed pitching staff and an everyday lineup that had shouldered a heavy workload during the season’s final stretch. The



Mainers capitalized, winning Games 1 and 2 to end the Blue Sox’s season.

“We just ran out of gas before we got to the finish line,” Raiola said.

Still, the finish did little to diminish what the group accomplished.

“We don’t always want to have to win 10 out of the last 13 to get in. We’d like to take care of business a little bit before that, but that’s the way it went this year,” Raiola said. “Credit to [the players] who had to go out there and show up every single day, tired, same lineup and grinding their way through it ... Overall, [We want them to] be better at the end than when they started.”

TRI-COUNTY from page 11

inning, it would’ve resumed at South Hadley High School the following day. If the score would’ve been tied, game two would’ve been replayed from the beginning, which has been a TCL rule for many years.

Teddy Bear won game one of the championship series,

which was an old fashion pitcher’s duel, 3-1, at St. Joe’s Park, last Thursday night.

Righthander Matt Drobiak, who graduated from South Hadley High School in 2024, went the distance for Teddy Bear. He allowed a run on six hits and three strikeouts without issuing a walk.

Drobiak outdueled St. Joe’s righty Trey Yesu, who

graduated from Monson High School in 2022.

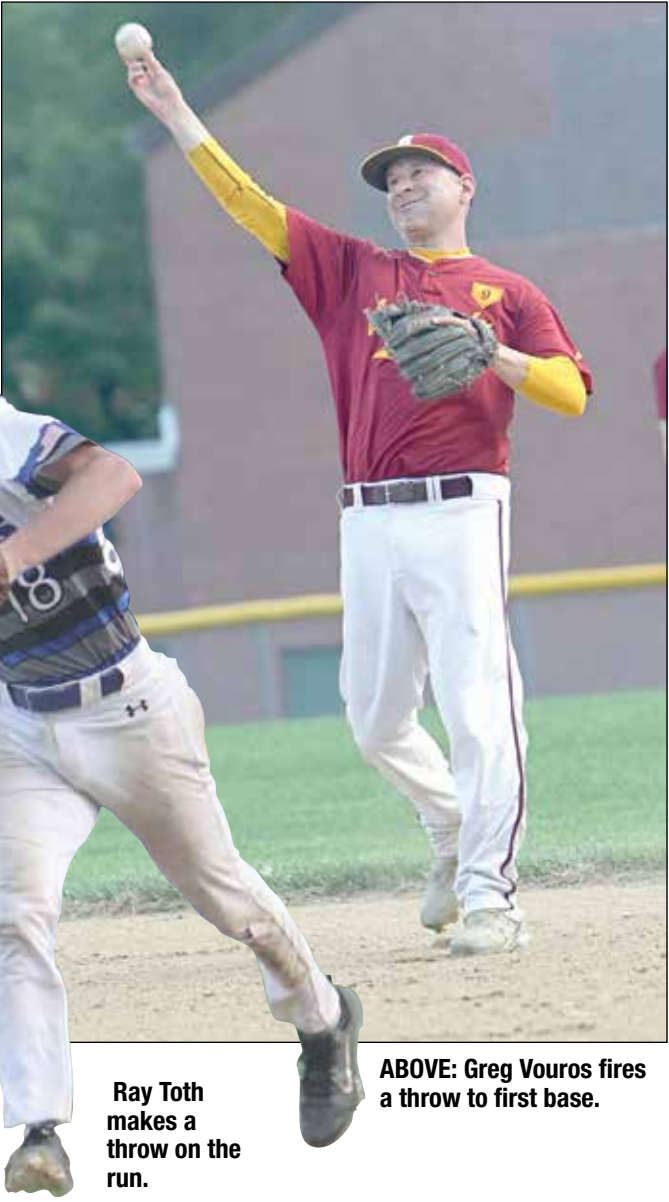
Yesu also went seven innings allowing three runs (two earned) on six hits with six strikeouts and two walks.

Teddy Bear took a 1-0 lead in game against lefthander Jackson Hayes with two outs in the bottom of the first inning following a run scoring double by second baseman Ramon Jimenez.

St. Joe’s took the lead against Rosemond in the top of the third inning.

Catcher Nate Carillon and second baseman Greg Vourous began the St. Joe’s rally with back-to-back singles. After Drobiak retired the next batter on a pop-up, before Carillon scored the tying run following a wild pitch. Then right fielder Brian Hayes drew a walk before center-fielder Pat Fitzgibbons hit a two run single into right field giving St. Joe’s a 3-1 lead.

With one-out in the bottom of the third inning, Drobiak, who started at first base, launched a solo home run over the left field fence.



ABOVE: Greg Vourous fires a throw to first base.

Ray Toth makes a throw on the run.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Ramon Jimenez takes a swing.

COLLEGE NEWS

STCC announces dean's list for spring 2026

SPRINGFIELD – Springfield Technical Community College and celebrates the 1,455 students who were named to the spring 2026 dean's list.

The dean's list is published each semester to recognize excellence in academic performance. To be considered, degree-seeking students must earn 12 or more college level credits in the current semester, or a total of 12 or more combined college-level credits earned during the fall and spring semesters, and achieve a 3.3 or above grade point average.

Student names are listed under the towns or cities in which they reside.

Hampden
Brent E. Botas, Abigail C. Dean, Alexander J. Demos, Nathan M. Dias, Julia M. Downey, Aiden J. Duff, Jonas B. Kefalas, Francesca D. Moretti, Abigail Pronovost, Landon J. Smith-Devenitch, Bret S. Soja

Wilbraham
Shawna K. Anderson, Nicholas L. Aubrey, John Barlow, Coleman A. Bradlee, Jade Burns-Pennant, Olivia M. DePace, Madison G. Drumm, Rose E. Eldridge, Ryan F. Eldridge, Ryan M. Eplite, John T. Fitzgerald, Emma M. Forest, Maya Galvan, Dashiell Garvey, Sadat Golestaneh, Maiki Gomez,

Alexander Gormley, Brandon Gormley, Ian J. Horne, Hayley L. Kane, Regan M. Kelly, Ava G. Korzec, Rory A. Lavelle, Julia R. Lewis, Chris Li, Jake C. Liquori, Haylie E. MacBrian, Diella M. Martell, Noah B. Mayock, Elizabeth C. Mendoza, Jaselynn Morales, Christopher L. Moreno, Matthew B. Normoyle, Edward E. Owens, Isabella G. Pietras, Anthony N. Rachele, Sean P. Rooney, Patricia Roy, Daniel G. Ryzewicz, Natalie Sanschagrin, Cecilia M. Sheehan, Christian Stevenson, Cassandra L. Strom, Stephen R. Surprenant, Kallie G. Thomas, Loura L. Velazquez, Zahnya Brown Windsor, Felix C. Zayas

HCC honors students for 2025-2026 achievements

HOLYOKE - Holyoke Community College is proud to celebrate the students who earned honors and awards for their outstanding achievements during the 2025-2026 academic year.

Awardees were honored Wednesday, May 20, during a ceremony in the Bartley Center for Athletics and Recreation.

Below is a list of HCC honorees and award recipients for the 2025-2026 academic year. Some students received multiple awards.

A full list of students along with their specific honors and awards can be found at [hcc.edu/awards-2026](#)

HCC Honors & Awards for 2025-2026:
Hampden: Korey Colglazier (two awards), Heather Wrona.
Wilbraham: Anna Heimsath, Collin Trombley.

Residents named to Dean's List for the Spring 2026 semester at Quinnipiac University

HAMDEN, Connecticut - The following area students were named to the dean's list for the Spring 2026 semester at Quinnipiac University:

To qualify for the dean's list, students must earn a grade point average of at least 3.5 with no grade lower than C. Full-time students must complete at least 14 credits in a semester, with at least 12 credits that have been graded on a letter grade basis to be eligible. Part-time students must complete at least six credits during a semester. Names followed by an asterisk denotes with honors.

Wilbraham
Sydney Beebe
Samantha Moore*
Kevin Tessicini*

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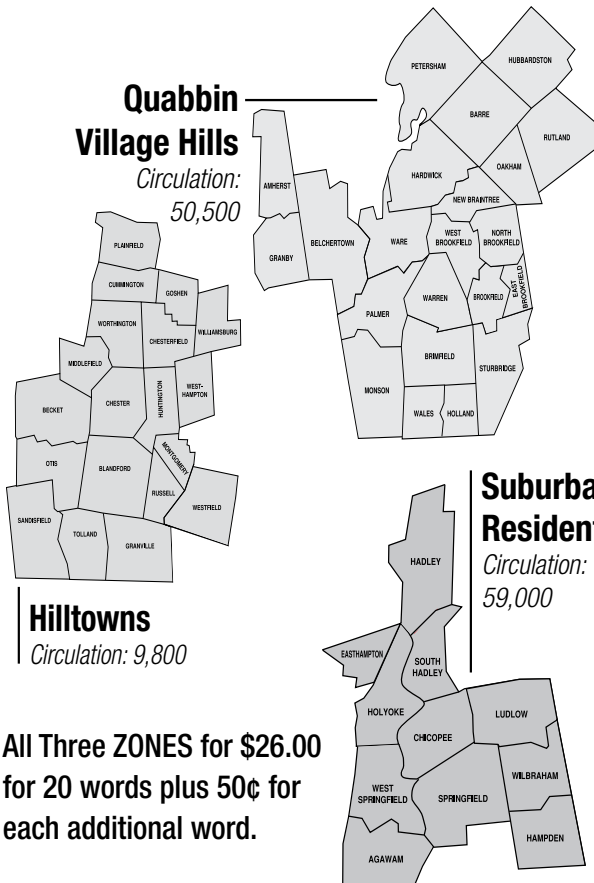
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COLLEGE NEWS

Area residents named to Dean’s List at University of New England

BIDDEFORD AND PORTLAND, ME | TANGIER, MOROCCO - The following students have been named to the University of New England’s Dean’s List for the spring semester 2026. Dean’s List students have attained a grade point average of 3.3 or better out of a possible 4.0 at the end of the semester.

The University of New England is Maine’s largest independent university, with two beautiful coastal campuses in Maine, a one-of-a-kind study-abroad campus in Tangier, Morocco, and an array of flexible online offerings. In

an uncommonly welcoming and supportive community, we offer hands-on learning, empowering students to make a positive impact in a world full of challenges. We are the state’s top provider of health professionals and home to Maine’s only medical and dental colleges, physician assistant program, and pharmacy school, in addition to a variety of other interprofessionally aligned health care programs and nationally recognized programs in the marine sciences, the natural and social sciences, business, the humanities, and the arts.

SNHU announces residents named to Spring 2026 President’s List

MANCHESTER, NH - It is with great pleasure that Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates the following students on being named to the Spring 2026 President’s List. The spring terms run from January to May.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point av-

erage of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President’s List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

Kathryn Dooley of Wilbraham and Christopher Goossens of Hampden.

Jolicoeur named to Assumption Univ. Spring 2026 Dean’s List

WORCESTER - Assumption University has announced that James Jolicoeur, of Hampden, has been named to the University’s Dean’s List for the spring 2026 semester. Students named to the Dean’s List must achieve a grade point average of 3.5 for a five-class, 15-credit semester to be included on the prestigious list, which is announced at the completion of the fall and spring semesters.

“Earning the right to be

named to the Assumption University’s Dean’s List is an extraordinary accomplishment and we congratulate those students who demonstrated exemplary academic excellence this semester,” said Assumption University President Greg Weiner, Ph.D. “These students have demonstrated a deep commitment to the pursuit of truth in the company of friends that lies at the heart of the Catholic liberal education Assumption provides.”

Diehl named to Spring 2026 McDaniel College Dean’s List

WESTMINSTER, MD - Paul Diehl of Wilbraham (01095) has been recognized for outstanding achievement by being named to the McDaniel College spring 2026 dean’s list with Highest Honors.

Highest honors are earned for a semester grade point average of 3.90 or higher, high honors for a grade point average of 3.70-3.89, and honors for a 3.50-3.69 grade point average.

WNEU recognizes 805 students on Spring 2026 Dean’s List

- SPRINGFIELD - Western New England University (WNEU) is proud to recognize 805 students who have earned a place on the Spring 2026 Dean’s List, reflecting their dedication to academic excellence, perseverance, and commitment to achieving their educational goals.
- WNE congratulates these outstanding students for their accomplishments and applauds their continued pursuit of academic success.
- Patrick Sherman of Wilbraham
 - Jacob Keller of Wilbraham
 - Hayden Vreeland of Wilbraham
 - Noah Love-Walsh of Wilbraham
 - James Kumpulanian of Wilbraham
 - Demetrios Patrakis of Wilbraham
 - Bella Loddo of Wilbraham
 - Christopher MacPhail of Wilbraham
 - Justis Barbeau of Hampden
 - John Dafonseca of Wilbraham
 - Kyler Ittner of Wilbraham
 - Alex Rickis of Wilbraham
 - Jessica Leary of Hampden
 - Davis Nelson of Wilbraham
 - Morgan Conchinha of Wilbraham
 - Jolene Lewis of Wilbraham
 - Madison Duperre of Wilbraham
 - Daniel Greene of Wilbraham
 - Colin Leydon of Wilbraham
 - Alexander Melluzzo of Wilbraham
 - Jordan Dietz of Wilbraham
 - Abdullah Khan of Wilbraham
 - Taylor Labadorf of Wilbraham
 - Brodie Martin of Wilbraham
 - Jason Degray of Hampden
 - Gavin Lee of Wilbraham

WNEU recognizes students on Spring 2026 President’s List

- SPRINGFIELD - Western New England University (WNEU) is proud to recognize 597 students who have earned a place on the Spring 2026 President’s List, one of the University’s highest academic honors.
- The President’s List celebrates students who have achieved exceptional academic success through their dedication, discipline, and pursuit of excellence by earning a GPA of 3.80 or higher, while the Dean’s List honors students who earned a semester GPA of 3.30 or higher. Their accomplishments reflect a strong commitment to learning and exemplify the high standards of achievement that define the Western New England University community.
- WNE congratulates these outstanding students on their remarkable academic performance and applauds their continued pursuit of excellence.
- Ella Henry of Wilbraham
 - Emily-Jane Sullivan of Wilbraham
 - Steven Pollard of Wilbraham
 - Noah Love-Walsh of Wilbraham
 - David Noel of Hampden
 - Jessica Leary of Hampden
 - Jolene Lewis of Wilbraham
 - Elsa Cable of Hampden
 - Mary Cable of Hampden
 - Madison Duperre of Wilbraham
 - Sophie Laird of Hampden
 - Ryan Lee of Wilbraham
 - Theodore Klostri of Wilbraham
 - Zachary Vigneault of Wilbraham
 - Colin Leydon of Wilbraham
 - Caydence Pellerin of Wilbraham
 - Johanyliz Torres of Wilbraham
 - Jeremiah Martin of Wilbraham
 - Abdullah Khan of Wilbraham
 - Brodie Martin of Wilbraham

Springfield College recognizes Dean’s List students for the 2026 Spring Semester

- SPRINGFIELD - Springfield College recognized its Dean’s List students for the 2026 Spring Semester. The following local students were recognized for academic excellence:
- Amir Ardolino from Wilbraham, MA. Ardolino has a primary major of Sport Management.
 - Catharine Brennan from Wilbraham, MA. Brennan has a primary major of Sports Biology.
 - Kaelin Cerasuolo from Hampden, MA. Cerasuolo has a primary major of Health Science / Pre-PT.
 - Olivia Dragon from Wilbraham, MA. Dragon has a primary major of Health Science.
 - Nicholas Dufresne from Wilbraham, MA. Dufresne has a primary major of Psychology.
 - Logan Gould from Wilbraham, MA. Gould has a primary major of Business Management.
 - Abigail Hotaling from Wilbraham, MA. Hotaling has a primary major of Athletic Leadership.
 - Mary-Elizabeth Hrycay from Hampden, MA. Hrycay has a primary major of Biology.
 - Connor Joyce from Hampden, MA. Joyce has a primary major of Exercise Science / Applied ES.
 - Ryan McConnell from Wilbraham, MA. McConnell has a primary major of Health Science.
 - Taylor Meunier from Wilbraham, MA. Meunier has a primary major of Health Science / Pre-PT.
 - Gianna Siciliano from Wilbraham, MA. Siciliano has a primary major of Health Science / Pre-OT.
 - Emily Stark from Hampden, MA. Stark has a primary major of Health Science / Pre-OT.
 - Sophia Varelakis from Hampden, MA. Varelakis has a primary major of Business Management.
 - Xavier Villanueva from Wilbraham, MA. Villanueva has a primary major of Computer & Information Science.

Students named to University of Hartford Dean’s, President’s List

WEST HARTFORD, CT - The University of Hartford is pleased to announce that 2,332 students have been named to the Dean’s List and President’s List for the spring 2026 semester.

The Dean’s List recognizes students achieving superior academic standing. The requirement, with some exceptions, is a grade point average of at least 3.0 and no grade below C.

The President’s List recognizes a select group of students reaching the highest level of academic standing. To be placed on the President’s List, students must maintain a GPA of at least a 3.75 and receive

grades of C or better.

Please join us in congratulating:

- Margaret Capuano - Hampden, MA - Dean’s List
- Jacob Evans - Wilbraham, MA - Dean’s List and President’s List
- Peter Kuselias - Wilbraham, MA - Dean’s List and President’s List
- Thomas O’Toole - Wilbraham, MA - Dean’s List
- Thomas Tetrault - Wilbraham, MA - Dean’s List and President’s List

Congratulations to all our students on their hard work and academic achievements.

PUBLIC NOTICES

**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.
HD26P1715EA
Estate of:
Robert Hamilton Bishop, Sr
Date of Death: 07/27/2025
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION**

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Deborah A. McDonald of Ludlow 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 **Deborah A. McDonald of Ludlow 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 09/18/2026**. 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: August 11, 2026
Rosemary A Saccomani, Register of Probate
08/20/2026

**Town of Hampden
Notice of Public Hearing**
In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 40A, Section 5, the Hampden Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Wednesday, September 9, 2026 at 6:30 PM** in the Town Hall, 85 Wilbraham Road, Hampden,

Massachusetts, to give interested parties the opportunity to comment on the following proposed amendment to the Hampden Zoning By-Law. To delete Section 4, Continuation of Existing Uses, Paragraph 4.3, Sub-Paragraph 4.3.2 which states, “Setbacks shall conform to Table 7.2 annotated except for the side yard, which may be reduced to 25 feet.” The complete text of the proposed article is available for review in the Town Clerk’s Office and the Planning Office during normal business hours. All persons interested or wishing to be heard on this matter are urged to attend the public hearing.

For the Board,
Patrick Coyne, Chair,
Hampden Planning Board
08/20, 08/27/2026

Sale of Motor Vehicle
This ad is pursuant to MA Gen. Law Ch.255, Sec. 39A as of September 3, 2026 the following motor vehicles will be for sale to satisfy a garage keepers lien:
2009 Kait MD150

VIN#: LYDTCKPF091100152
LKO: Unknown
2024 TaizHou Zhongneng
Flying
VIN#: HZ2TBCND6R1012554
LKO: Unknown
R & S Assoc. Inc
PO Box 543
Wilbraham MA 01095
413-596-4374
08/20, 08/27, 09/03/2026

**Town of Hampden
Notice of Public Hearing**
In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 40A, Section 5, the Hampden Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Wednesday, September 9, 2026 at 7 PM** in the Town Hall, 85 Wilbraham Road, Hampden, Massachusetts, to give interested parties the opportunity to comment on the proposed amendments to the Hampden Zoning By-Law. The proposed amendments pertain to Section 7.16 – Solar Energy System(s). The complete text of the proposed article is available for review in the Town Clerk’s Office

and the Planning Office during normal business hours. All persons interested or wishing to be heard on this matter are urged to attend the public hearing.

For the Board,
Patrick Coyne, Chair
Hampden Planning Board.
08/20, 08/27/2026

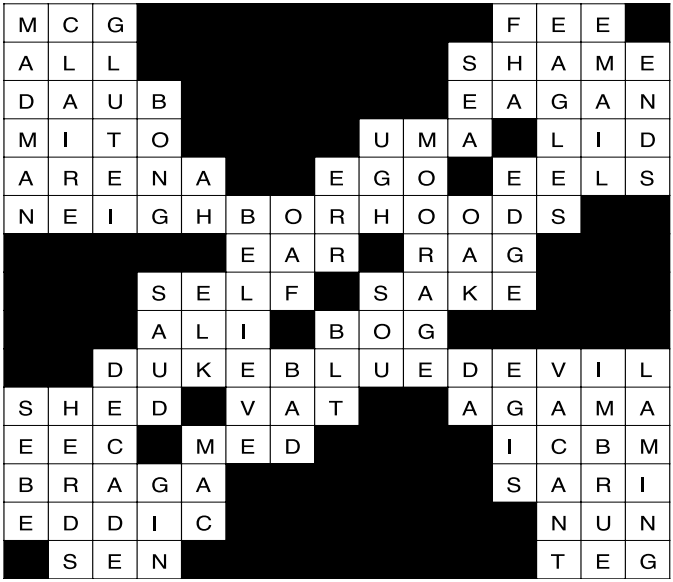
Please check the accuracy of your legal notice prior to submission (i.e., date, time, spelling). Also, be sure the requested publication date coincides with the purpose of the notice, or as the law demands. Thank you.

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.



PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

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- 2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.
- 3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts' public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

Public notice deadlines are Friday at 3 p.m.

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com



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