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The Wilbraham-Hampden

TIMES

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Wilbraham martial artists win big in **KARATE CHAMPIONSHIP**

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - Four martial artists from Wilbraham's Giroux Bros. Martial Arts Studio recently returned as champions after competing in the Chuck Norris System International Training Championships in Las Vegas. The Chuck Norris System International Training Championships is a tournament taking place during the annual United Fighting Arts Federation Conference, with the organiza-

tion having been founded by martial artist Chuck Norris. The champions are Mady Giroux (3rd Degree Black Belt), Kennedy Wright (1st Degree Black Belt), Sophie Sutter (Advanced Red Belt) and Brooke Beaudoin (Advanced Red Belt). The girls all won first place in their individual point sparring divisions, with Giroux also winning the coveted Norris

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MARTIAL ARTS,
page 8



Photos courtesy of Steve Giroux

The proud champions with their plaques at Giroux Bros Martial Arts Studio in Wilbraham.



Mady Giroux with her dad, Steve Giroux, a father-daughter legacy of excellence and achievement in martial arts officially born.

Parks Dept. holds pickleball program

By Harold Anderson
Correspondent

HAMPDEN - The senior pickleball program, organized by Tina Doran, Program and Volunteer Coordinator for the Hampden Senior Center, uses the gym at the former Thornton W. Burgess Middle School for three 90-minute sessions on Wednesday mornings with thanks to the Hampden Parks and Rec Department for court time. The program has grown immensely in popularity since it began with 33 players back in July 2025.

The senior pickleball program is expressly designed for the novice/beginner to advanced-beginner level in a low pressure, non-judgmental, fun and supportive community atmosphere that's perfect for the older player just starting to learn. Many current players who were interviewed stated how much they appreciate this social aspect.

Still, every beginner to the sport can find aspects of pickleball, such as serving, the rules of play and especially scoring, a challenge at first. Players here benefit from the helpful assistance, encouragement and instruction they receive from program volunteers Ann Maggio and Karen Kielb, both from Hampden.

"They take their time to explain things really well. You can tell they're really into it and they're really into wanting other people to learn the game," said Julie Minns-Piepho of Monson.

Maggio arrives at the gym

Please see **PICKLEBALL**,
page 13

WUC holds successful Vacation Bible Camp

By Noelle Hisgen
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham United Church celebrated another year of Vacation Bible Camp on Aug. 7, with this year's theme being Anchor's Aweigh!

The week-long camp consisted of a variety of activities for children: Including but not limited to arts and crafts, Bible stories, science projects, service projects, and musical activities. Along with a special water slide day, the kids were always up and moving throughout the church.

With the theme being Anchor's Aweigh, the camp



Turley photo by Noelle Hisgen

Children work on arts and crafts.

showed how God and Jesus serve as anchors in our lives.

Leading the Bible camp this year, especially behind the scenes, along with leading the Bible stories program in the camp, was WUC administrative assistant Deb Trimble.

"The kids have fun. They remember it. We have adult volunteers who came back this year who were here as campers. So it's just that sense of continuity of being here year after year for the kids and the community, and giving them a great place to come and learn and have fun and grow and cre-

Please see **BIBLE CAMP**,
page 9

Paul Revere rides to Wilbraham

By Patricia Sullivan
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - Michael Lepage rode to Wilbraham on Aug. 10 and in the persona of Paul Revere reflecting on his

life's highlights and disappointments, spoke to a rapt audience of 40 people at the Wilbraham Public Library.

Revere is known for his dramatic midnight ride, but there's much more to learn about this famous patriot, according to Lepage, a longtime historical interpreter and re-enactor.

Lepage first recalled Revere's later life and concluded with the thrilling story of the night of April 18-19, 1775, when Revere and two others rode on horseback from Charlestown

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Turley photo by Patricia Sullivan
Historical interpreter Michael Lepage portrays Paul Revere at the Wilbraham Public Library.

Catching up with Hampden authors

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com

HAMPDEN - Local authors Sandra Howell and Courtney Vail have been hard at work after some recent book releases.

Howell and Vail recently released "Mustang Magic" which is part of the Silver Horseshoes Adventure Series, with a sequel currently in the works for 2027.

Howell has also been promoting her recent book "Izzy The Reluctant Spy" and working on the anticipated sequel "Izzy: The Dogged P.I.," slated for release this fall.

The books are available wherever books are sold.

Vail explained "Mustang Magic" is about a girl bullied at school who struggles with anxiety and PTSD after getting beat up, going to a therapeutic riding farm for the summer to recuperate and get back to riding and join an equestrian team at a private



Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

Sandra Howell and Courtney Vail with their recent book releases.

school.

"In the early days of her being there, there's an emergency situation where they bring in a rescue on the fly and she doesn't bond with this horse, but she ends up connecting. They're both

coming from a same place of trauma," Vail said. "So, she feels a kinship with it."

She added there's a murder mystery tied in through an old travel journal found in a

Please see **AUTHORS**, page 5

Select Board reviews Eversource project

Reviewed noise
complaint

By Ben Hernandez
Staff Writer

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham Select Board reviewed details for the September Eversource Gas Line Project and to hear a complaint centered around the power company. The project will run a gas line into the town from Western View, which is expected to cause potential traffic disruptions due to road work required for the installation.

"The gas company is going to be doing a project in Hampden," Department of Public Works Superintendent of Operations William Sperrazza said. "This project is going to involve them bringing the gas line into Wilbraham by Western View. So they'll be working on the street build area from Western View all the way to the town line."

Sperrazza confirmed there will be a couple of projected road cuts across Western View and Oakland Street. Sperrazza identified one spot where Eversource would need to "come into the road" to cut around a culvert between Western View and Oakland St., which they expected would be similar to an installation they performed "a few years back" by Rice Fruit Farm.

"There'll be officers on duty there," Sperrazza said. "They'll be traffic but it's just a typical road pipeline project. They'll restore the pavement, whether the pavement they disturb or grass they disturb, they'll restore."

Sperrazza confirmed the project will be taking place in a "couple of weeks" and stated production was "supposed to be in September." On a similar vein, the Board

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■

COMMUNITY

Select Board selects new building commissioner

By Ben Hernandez
Staff Writer

WILBRAHAM – The Select Board has appointed a new town Building Commissioner and Zoning Enforcement Officer.

There were three candidates who applied for the vacant position, with the board conducting interviews on Aug. 3.

The candidates were Justin Larivee, Robbin Jones and Thomas Kennedy.

“I’ve been in construction since I was 16,” Larivee said. “I’ve been a commissioner now holding onto 20 years. January of next year will be my 20th year as a commissioner.”

Larivee explained he worked out of Weston “for a while with Ludlow” and continued his career in Ludlow for 15 years. Currently working out of Monson, he described his background as “pretty versed experience in zoning and everything.”

Starting as a builder, he changed careers into building inspection when the market tanked between 2006 and 2008. From there, he transitioned into his current role.

“As the market tanked in the ‘06 to ‘08 market, I had another close friend that was an inspector at the time. Back then, the state used to have the state inspectors actually have classes at night. So, I started going to those classes, started taking the exams and then started working part-time in Ludlow and in Weston to get my feet in the door,” Larivee said. “Then moved right into commissioner after that.”

When asked about how he navigated challenging circumstances in the past and how he was able to navigate them to a satisfying conclusion, Larivee called the building industry “hard to deal with” due to the constant changes occurring within state laws.

“We’re getting updates and the state’s always evolving, especially the energy code,” Larivee said. “As everybody knows, the houses are getting tighter.”

Larivee identified making homes compliant with current Home Energy Rating System regulations to be the most difficult part of his job. He stated his strategy in dealing with enforcing zoning laws was to tackle it head on with in-person discussion.

He added he didn’t like to send a letter “right off the bat,” as it “kind of rubs people the wrong way.”

“If you just send an enforcement order, sometimes they don’t even know what they’re violating,” Larivee said.

He also clarified how the town had non-criminal disposition policies—which the board responded in the affirmative—and added how the policy was a “finding mechanism” which could be used for enforcement.

During Larivee’s interview, his experience with Echo Hill Orchard in Monson was raised, as the business “got some press” during his involvement.

Larivee explained he got involved due to the property not receiving the required inspection needed after both a liquor license issuance and a change in premise.

“They created a bar, which created an A2 use,” Larivee said. “Then, as they expanded and did a decent amount of work without permits in place, they got kind of caught up in the end. So, when we did our annual inspection, we looked back at what was done.”

He further informed the Board the follow-up hearing orders issued were delayed due to COVID, which caused the outstanding case to fall “through the cracks.”

As a result, the case ballooned to what was reported

in the papers.

“A lot of the community got upset about it,” Larivee said.

He stated there were still outstanding issues, with the last hearing resulting with the state siding with the town’s judgment and mentioned he was still waiting to hear from the building’s architect for resolution.

“There’s nothing we can do as commissioners because if we go and know there’s a life safety issue and let it operate, that’s just lining us up for liability,” Larivee said. “We can be sued.”

Kennedy, meanwhile, is a Wilbraham resident who has lived in the town for “a little while.”

Certified as a building inspector working with the city of Springfield, Kennedy had over four years of experience within the industry. Having completed one of the three exams required to become a certified building commissioner, he cited dealing with homeowners as his biggest challenge as a building inspector.

“A lot of homeowners aren’t really sure exactly what the building code is,” Kennedy said. “A lot of times they’re doing things that they feel is appropriate when it doesn’t really meet code.”

Robbin Jones was interviewed last. A certified building inspector and a zoning enforcement officer with a “proven track record in municipal code enforcement.”

Jones stated he approached his role with three core principles: regulatory precision, fair impartial enforcement and excellent customer service for both residents and contractors.

“A building inspector is not just a code enforcement officer,” Jones said. “They are a proactive partner who works seamlessly with all the boards to protect the town’s infrastructure, provide public

safety as well as provide excellent service to the customers of the town itself.”

The board later shared their thoughts.

“I am impressed with all three candidates,” Vice Chair Sue Bunnell said. “And I believe I was part of the process when we hired John Walsh. We were very lucky to get him, but we sure didn’t have a deep pool.”

Bunnell called the decision a “lovely challenge” but decided to cast her vote with Larivee for his “depth of experience and knowledge” around the position, believing him to be the candidate who would be able to “hit the ground running.”

Clerk Michael Squindo stated he was “topsy-turvy” about Bunnell’s opinion and sided with Jones for the position. He cited Jones’ experience as the deciding factor and also felt his personality would be a good fit for the role.

“I felt that his personality came off in a way that I felt he would be able to engage constituents a little differently,” Squindo said.

Chair Marc Ducey deliberated his decision. He thought Larivee had a “scope of knowledge” greater than the other two candidates, but also described Kennedy as “genuine.”

Though he put both Kennedy and Larivee very close in the race, he went with Larivee for his “knowledge perspective.”

“It’s not his fault necessarily,” Ducey said. “But I am concerned about how that went down in Monson. He had a great explanation for (it) and I’m not aware of what happened firsthand, but maybe there were better ways to handle it.”

After further deliberation, the Select Board chose Justin Larivee as the new Building Commissioner and Zoning Enforcement Officer.

Upcoming Fundraisers in Wilbraham: Jewelry Buying Event and Hilarious Irish Comedy Show

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 Villamaino 413-896-2206.

Hampden Garden Club Sept. 17

HAMPDEN - On Thursday, Sept. 17 at 7 p.m., the Hampden Garden Club will be hosting John Galvan, who will be presenting his program “All About Berries.”

John is a small fruit specialist with the UMass Extension Fruit Program. He works closely with growers across Massachusetts and New England to support blueberry, strawberries, grapes and bramble production.

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.

EVERSOURCE

from page 1

also heard noise complaints regarding Eversource’s power plant, which was described by locals as a “humming-type noise.”

“Earlier this year, the police department received complaints of a humming-type noise coming from the Cottage Ave area of Boston Road,” Chief of Police Edward Lennon said. “The police department investigated and we determined that the sound was originating from the Eversource gas plant in Ludlow.”

Lennon stated the sound came from a processing procedure the plant uses “intermittently,” which repeats for several weeks a “few times per year.” Lennon stated the State Department of Environment Protection was the enforcing authority behind “these types of issues” and mentioned the DEP was investigating the matter.

“I know that was on the news with Sen. Oliveira and Rep. Puppolo,” Lennon said, who identified the senator and the state representative as being involved in problem resolution. The desk of Sen. Jake Oliveira responded to comment with a forwarded press release on the ongoing investigation.

“For months, families have been living with a constant noise that has disrupted their sleep, affected their health and diminished their quality of life,” Senator Oliveira said. “While I appreciate that Eversource has begun taking steps to address this issue, my constituents deserve more than an ongoing investigation. They deserve results.”

The senator called on Eversource to “dedicate every available resource necessary” to determine the noise’s source and to resolve the issue “as quickly as possible.” Senator Oliveira applauded Wilbraham town residents for being “incredibly patient” throughout the investigation and emphasized their patience should be rewarded with transparency, urgent response and a clear commitment towards resolving the issue.

“I will continue working with residents, Rep. Puppolo, MassDEP and Eversource until a permanent resolution is reached,” Oliveira said.

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 29 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

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

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Art at the Wilbraham library

WILBRAHAM - Artwork by Summit View Handmade is on display at the Wilbraham Public Library through the month of August.

The pieces will be available for purchase in September, with prices ranging from \$10 to \$35. All are invited to stop by the library during

regular hours to view the collection. Anyone interested in buying a displayed piece, or who has suggestions for future

painting subjects can email summitviewhandmade@outlook.com or send a message on Facebook at [facebook.com/summitviewhandmade](https://www.facebook.com/summitviewhandmade).

LiveLikeScott Eighth Annual Event set for Sept. 19

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 registration 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.

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 best-

seller 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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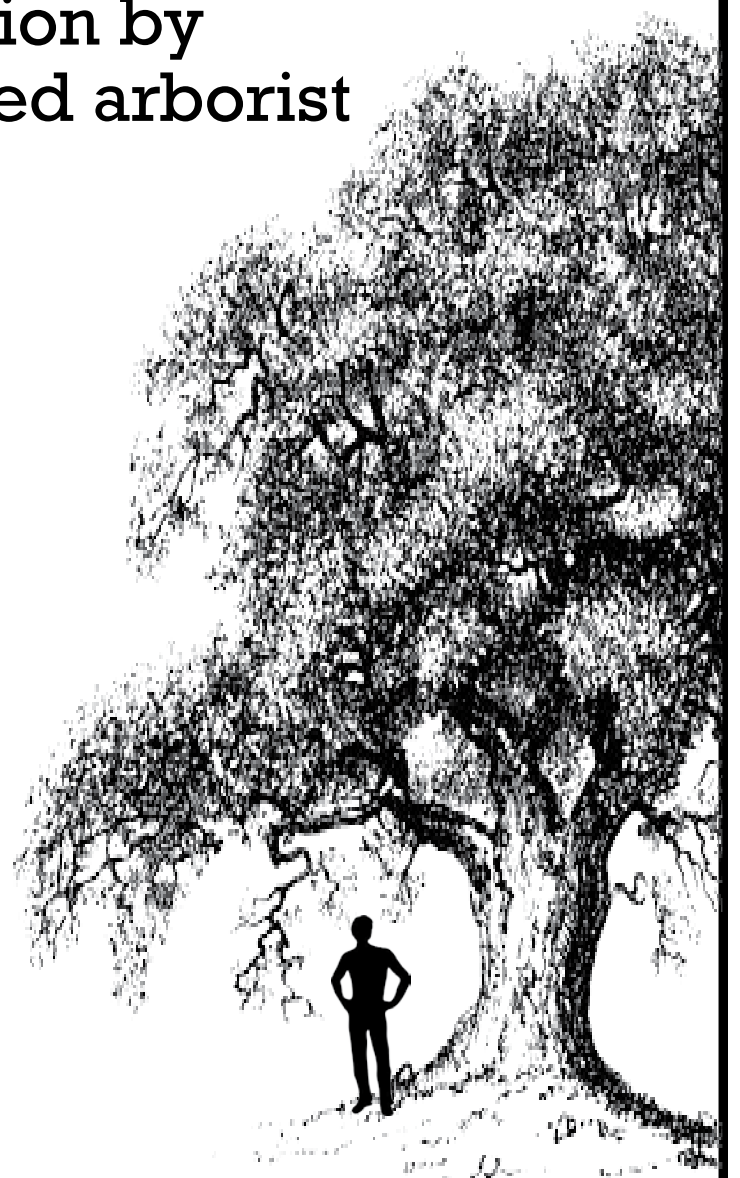


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Help find a missing friend

WILBRAHAM – The police department is asking for the public’s help to find a child’s missing friend. Please review the attached photo for more information.

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 experi-

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

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

HSC Memory Café to celebrate 10 years

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

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

Enjoy a Drumming Class with Jason followed by a light lunch.

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

Please let Wendy know you’re coming at 413.566.5588.

AUTHORS from page 1

trunk that leads to a scavenger hunt with friends to find out what happened.

Howell shared that the previous series she and Vail have done together—such as the Angels Club series – focused on younger bullying. Here, “Mustang Magic” focuses on a high school girl.

“That’s an important piece of this because this is a young girl who goes into high school for the first time—a freshman—and a boy is giving her a lot of attention and another girl likes this boy,” Howell said. “She looks at him as a friend but, unfortunately, there’s a group of girls and one’s a queen bee that has a real crush on this boy.”

“And so she wants her to stay away from him,” Vail said. “So, she doesn’t even know who’s bullying her.”

“She threatens her in many little ways, but one day it becomes a physical altercation,” Howell said. “Just like many of these bullying-type situations, it’s not meant to be a direct harm to her but a push occurs and she falls over and is admitted to the hospital for a head injury.”

Howell added that after that, the main character also struggles with trust issues and pushes away friends and horses.

“She’s fearful of many things and it’s all about a story of not only fear and of PTSD and bullying,” Howell said.

“It’s a story of finding your

inner strength,” Vail said.

“And resilience that each of us has, actually. A way of coming back from a trauma, how do you come back from a trauma, how do you learn to trust people and how animals can heal you,” Howell said.

Vail and Howell shared what they enjoy about collaborating together.

“We fill each other’s gaps, actually. She’s very detailed, descriptive writer and I’m the action, voicy kind of thing. I didn’t think we could work well together, but we do. It’s almost magical itself, our process. We’ll just write a few notes, she sends me chapters or this and that and I weave it all together and voicify it,” Vail said. “We come from the same mentality of the theme that we want to project, so we kind of ground all of our writing in that.”

“She does the younger children, she knows the voice and I am the older (one) and the horse person,” Howell said. “That’s how we balance each other because we each bring into our writing—which is very interesting—different voices, different characters.”

Howell added that writing as co-authors has become very popular.

“All of them are writing with someone else right now,” Howell said. “I feel like we started the fad because we’ve been writing together so long. But what’s nice is we each move in different directions at different times.”

Reflecting on her Izzy book, Howell was inspired

by someone she knew who was scammed, writing it to help others while also “make it interesting and funny” for readers.

The sequel came about through reader demand, including a recent book club visit to the Ludlow Senior Center where people asked what her main character, Izzy, was doing next.

“So, I said I’ll write one more Izzy book, so Izzy is now an official private investigator. A career change she never expected. I think I’m more writing for women that are retired or think everything is ended when a job ends or retirement comes,” Howell

said.

“And you can still have hobbies,” Vail said.

“You can have another career. The door is wide open to other possibilities always throughout your whole life,” Howell said.

For the sequel, Howell said it focuses on a stolen-dog ring and the theft of a French Bulldog named Penelope La Fleur, who went missing from someone’s yard.

An experience from a friend also inspired the story.

“There’s all kinds of bad things going on and when I researched it, at first I thought, ‘Really? Dogs stolen all the time like that?’ and she said

yes,” Howell said. “I found there’s 10 million dogs a year stolen or something like that. People just think they disappear, but really, someone has taken them for whatever reason.”

The case also only lasts a week.

“Because she knows she only has a short period of time to try and find this missing dog. All bets are off after that,” Howell said. “So, the whole book takes place in one week with her searching for this missing dog but it ends up much bigger than she possibly dreamed.”

Vail and Howell thanked the community for reading

their books and encouraged everyone to continue supporting their local authors.

“People don’t realize that local authors are just as talented and have a story to tell and if they support local artists like through the Scantic River Artists, if they support local authors, if they support anything innovative whether it’s in the community for outreach, it’s time that people are supporting those who live around them,” Howell said. “Let’s support our local economy.”

“Let’s support each other,” Vail said.

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VIEWPOINTS

SOCIAL SECURITY Matters

By Russell Gloor

I worked for my ex-husband but wasn't paid and now have little Social Security
What are my options?

Author note: This is article number 500 in the AMAC Foundation's "Ask Rusty" series of Social Security articles, which have been published nationwide every week since February 2017. "Ask Rusty" is provided free of charge as an integral part of the AMAC Foundation's mission to "support and educate America's seniors." If you would like to help the AMAC Foundation fulfill its mission, charitable donations are graciously accepted at <https://amacfoundation.org/donate/>.

Dear Rusty:
Sadly, I was in business with my ex-husband. I'm a nurse and he was a chiropractor. He refused to pay me "on the books" and now, at age 73, after divorcing him due to his financial irresponsibility. (I don't want to burden you with the thefts that he perpetrated), I am stuck with a small \$773 Social Security payment each month. At age 73 I am now faced with having to go back into the workforce. Is there anything I can do to prove that I worked 40 years for my husband, but wasn't paid?

Signed: Distressed Divorcee

Dear Distressed:
We are so sorry to hear of your unfortunate circumstances. Assuming your ex-husband is now collecting Social Security retirement benefits or is at least eligible to if you are divorced at least two years, you should be able to collect an ex-spouse benefit as his former wife. In that case, you would be entitled to receive 50% of the Social Security benefit he was entitled to at his own Full Retirement Age because he and you were married for over 10 years. The way that will work is that you would continue to receive your personally-earned \$773 monthly Social Security retirement amount earned from other employment, but you would also be entitled to a supplemental "spousal boost" to bring your payment up to half of the SS payment amount your ex-husband is entitled to at his SS Full Retirement Age. In other words, because you were married to your ex for more than 10 years, you are entitled to the same Social Security benefits as though you were still married. That is true, even if

he has remarried and his new wife is also getting a spouse benefit from his record. You will still be entitled to an ex-spouse benefit from your ex-husband as his former wife. And if he dies before you, as a surviving ex-spouse you will get the same Social Security benefit he was receiving at his death, instead of the smaller amount your will get while you are both living. Regarding rejoining the workforce, while you can certainly go back to work at age 73 without it negatively affecting your Social Security benefits, if you are struggling financially, I suggest you visit this website sponsored by the National Council on Aging: www.benefitscheckup.org. At this website, you can enter your zip code and find much information about other supplemental assistance you may be entitled to where you live, including healthcare and medication assistance, housing, nutritional assistance, etc. Regarding your question: "Is there anything I can do to prove that I worked 40 years and wasn't paid?" Social Security determines benefits based solely on your personal earnings as reported to the Internal Revenue Service, which is, in turn, dependent on how your joint income taxes were filed over the years you worked in your husband's business. Social Security is unable to assist you with IRS matters. I'm afraid yours is more of a legal matter you would need to pursue by discussing your situation directly with the IRS or engaging an attorney for assistance.

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 ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

Preservation questions are popular this time of year

Dawn, who gardens in Tolland, asked a few questions of the Garden Lady this past week. You see, this is the first year in three years that Dawn has a had a productive garden. Her former garden was too far from the house to be tended. It was tricky to irrigate and animals often found their way through or under the fence. Dawn's hard work ended up being a hearty meal for woodchucks and more. Now, with raised beds close to her house, she is grateful for a bountiful harvest. First, she wanted to be reminded how to roast tomatoes. I enjoy roasting my cherry tomatoes; it's a great way to use them up when they produce like gangbusters. Depending on the size, I either cut them in half or quarters and put them no more than two rows deep in a roasting pan. I sprinkle a teaspoon or two of extra virgin olive oil over the tomatoes and then I add half an onion and two-three cloves of garlic. After mixing all the ingredients together, I bake at 400 degrees for about an hour, stirring midway. You know when it is done when the skins pucker and there is very little liquid left. Now you can either eat it this way, say over pasta or rice, or you can zip it up with a few basil leaves and you have made your own sauce. No need to de-seed or remove the skins. Just think, all that added fiber and goodness, with less work to boot! You can tailor your roasting to suite your own taste buds as well. Some folks add chopped peppers or eggplant. Certainly you can use any type of tomato, too and add additional herbs or spices. Speaking of peppers,

Dawn also wanted to know how to roast peppers. It's a little different from tomatoes. Peppers roast best when they are fully ripe – i.e., when they have changed color. I have mentioned it before, but my favorite roasting pepper is "Carmen," a long bell pepper with thick walls. Simply wash the fruits and position them whole in a single layer under the broiler, turning frequently until they bubble up and char slightly. This can also be accomplished on a gas grill or as my husband will attest, over the flame of your kitchen gas stove. Once charred, place them in a paper bag or covered container. The steam will soften the skin to the point it can be rubbed off, revealing yummy, thick flesh. Pull off the stem and remove the seeds and voila! Roasted red peppers are yours to freeze. I just blot mine dry and put them in single servings in plastic freezer bags. The fruit is easily thawed by placing the bag into a shallow basin of water; likewise, you can pop the pepper popsicle on to a plate and let it thaw in the fridge. Roasted peppers are fantastic on homemade pizza or blended into hummus. I shared with Dawn that I was making pickles. She went on to say that hers never turn out well, so I texted her a copy of a recipe given to me by a dear coworker over 20 years ago. I am still making them. I'm not sure who original-

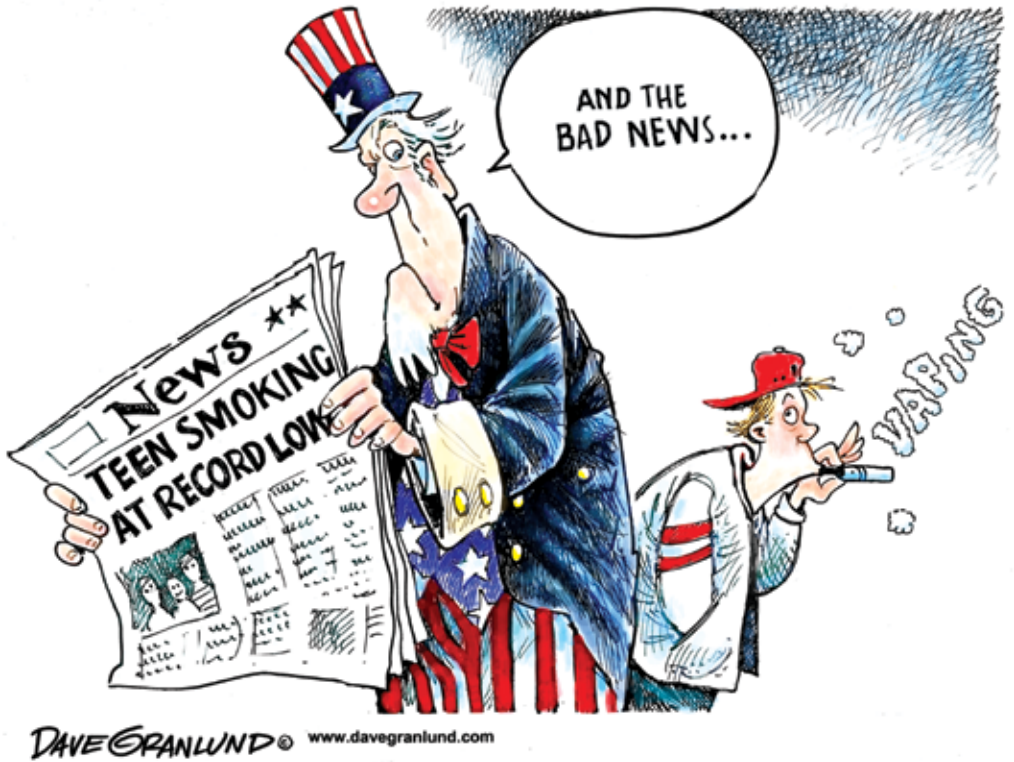
ly gave Ron the recipe, but here it is for anyone wanting to use up an abundance of cucumbers. I've made it with full size cukes as well as picklers. I would recommend that you fill your canning jars, be it quart or half gallon, with the cucumbers first. They can be packed tightly. Then, add plain water to the jar all the way to the rim. Dump the water out into a large measuring cup to see just how much liquid you need. Then you can adjust the other ingredients to the ratio in the recipe. I learned this trick the hard way after wasting ingredients because I didn't need quite a double recipe.

Ron's Pickle Recipe

Ingredients:
14-16 cucumbers
8 teaspoons pickling spice
6 dill tops
2 cloves garlic
2 teaspoons sugar
4 tablespoons Kosher salt
1 cup vinegar
5 cups water

Instructions:
Combine all ingredients into canning jars. Shake and leave on counter for 36 hours. Refrigerate for two days before eating. Will keep in the fridge for a few months although the flavor will intensify with storage. Enjoy the harvest as much as Dawn is!

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



I received an email from a Hampden resident, who sent two photos of Eastern bluebirds – one adult male and a fledgling. She states, "I live in Hampden, for the past several years we have been blessed to have a pair of bluebird's nest in our yard. They have had three broods of babies each year including this year."

This adult male Eastern bluebird is seen at the entrance of a bluebird house checking on his brood.

The fledgling in the above photo is a male. The photo was taken shortly after fledging. Wing feathers, wing coverts and tail feathers are es-

sential in determining the sex of young bluebirds. By day ten to eleven days after hatching, feather colors are noticeable. The blue tail



The fledgling male Eastern bluebird blends in with the ground cover. Blue feathers are visible.

in males and gray in females become apparent. In the male, the short tail at fledging is bright blue. Times may vary but by day 13 the tail color is apparent.

Both sexes have a gray spotted back and chest. They also have a white eye ring. By the time a bluebird is 19 to 24 days old, the male has blue wing coverts and the female gray ones. At five weeks old the young male has blue wing feathers and a bright blue tail. The female's primary wing feathers are blue, but concealed. The base of her tail is blue and the rest bluish gray. Spots are still present on back and breast. Young bluebirds continue to depend on their parents for food until six weeks old. Siblings tend to forage nearby until they join flocks of young birds. Some first brood birds Please see **BACKYARD**, page 10

The Wilbraham-Hampden

TIMES

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Correction Policy

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

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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

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The Wilbraham Police Department would like to extend our thanks and gratitude to the K9 programs of the Longmeadow Police Department, West Springfield Police Department and Amherst Police Department (Official) for supporting our community outreach efforts with the summer camp at #specpond hosted by the Wilbraham Parks & Recreation Department. Campers watched demonstrations by these highly trained K9 teams exhibiting their obedience, training, teamwork, and patrol & search qualifications.



Photos and caption courtesy of Wilbraham Police Department



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MARTIAL ARTS
from page 1

Cup and the Warrior Legends Award.

Wright, Sutter and Beaudoin are students at the studio, while Giroux is a head instructor running the studio alongside her dad, Steve Giroux, who also won his own respective titles and the Norris Cup in 1999, 2010 and 2011 at the championships.

Giroux Bros. Martial Arts Studio is located on Boston Road in Wilbraham.

Wright said the event was fun and was thankful for her parents' support, having done karate for seven years.

"My dad was talking to Mady's mom and they were talking at preschool because she has a brother that went to my preschool and they were talking about it. Then my dad was like, 'Oh, if you guys ever open up a studio in Wilbraham, then maybe we'll come and do it' and that's how it kind of all started for me," Wright said.

She's enjoyed the people she's gotten to meet in karate along with the sport itself, with the biggest lesson she's learned being this.

"Be nice to everybody that you meet. Even if they aren't nice to you because you never know what they're thinking and what they might want to do," Wright said.

Wright was also excited about the group representing Wilbraham at the championships. She plans to take part in more local tournaments and fly out for others too.

"It feels really amazing and I'm proud of everybody here, from what everybody did and it's just so amazing that we got to do that," Wright said.

Sutter loved the immediate friendships she made once arriving in Vegas. She started karate when she was eight years old and got involved when the studio came to her school.

"Just made lifelong friendships there. It was so fun. We went to dinners, galas all together. They kind of felt like my family because we were hanging for like a week. It was just an amazing experience," Sutter said.

She also praised the Giroux's, saying she was proud to be part of their studio and wants to continue competing in tournaments.

"They worked very hard to



Photos courtesy of Steve Giroux
Mady Giroux securing her place in history after winning the Chuck Norris Cup and the Warrior Legends Award.

have this studio. His daughter's very committed, obviously. I just feel so proud to be a part of their organization because I know how hard they work and I want to be like them one day," Sutter said.

One thing Sutter also appreciates and has learned about karate is the value of respect.

"It's a big part of karate. You say 'Yes ma'am,' bow to them and to other people too. I can see their perspective on things because when you're fighting, you know the other person doesn't want to hurt you. We all just want to try and win and we're all good friends," Sutter said.

Beaudoin shared the championships were her second competition ever and, once she stepped into the ring, she was at ease. She's done karate for several years and hopes to compete in more local competitions, ones in Rhode Island and do Las Vegas again.

"My brother started doing it and then I just really wanted to learn about self-defense and learn how to protect myself," Beaudoin said.

Besides self-defense, gaining confidence and learning to protect herself, Beaudoin noted the importance of mindset.

"Mady has said many times, 'If you say that you're gonna lose, you have already beaten yourself before you have gotten in the ring.' Because you have that mindset now that you're gonna lose,"



Being presented with the plaque is, indeed, an emotional moment of triumph and accomplishment.

Beaudoin said. "It teaches you a lot of discipline and respecting each other and control and, also, another thing that I have been told, if someone says, 'You wanna fight?' Just walk away from it. Just don't."

She added karate can help women in self-defense as well, which she's applied to her life.

"At my school, people have been really rude to me and I learned how to defend myself with words and I also wanted to know how to defend myself physically in case I ever got attacked," Beaudoin said.

teaching at 11 years old and started working side by side with her dad as a teen.

"I worked really hard this year for it because nobody has ever won the cup coming in the first year in the adult division. My dad won the cup his first year at 22 years old and then he won it again at 34 and 35," Giroux said. "We worked really hard this year. We went to a lot of national tournaments and local tournaments and my mindset the entire year was this was just getting me ready for the cup. So it was great. We got some recognition and I got a sponsorship offer. They'll be paying my way for the national tournaments, which should start in 2027. I remember sitting there in 2010, I was two years old, hands over my face, watching my dad win it, so it's always been this big deal to me."

Giroux said she was proud of the girls, adding that competitors come from all parts of the world to compete.

"We have two schools, but the fact that this school got the rep for being a female-fighting school—can't even put it into words how proud we are," Giroux said.

She also hopes the community checks out karate, offering this advice.

"It's never too late to start. We offer an adult class and we have a lot of different programs that if you don't want to do the traditional martial arts and wear the belts and the forms, we offer kickboxing classes. We also offer women's self-defense class and we're willing to work with you. So, we do private lessons," Giroux said. "Give us a call and I can guarantee you we can figure out a way where you can still get the knowledge you want in a different way."

Steve Giroux, Mady's father and the owner, was filled with pride and joy for the girls' accomplishments.

"I never pushed sparring on my students and I think Mady has had a very big influence on the students here at our studio because she's driven to be a good fighter and the girls that are all part of our studio look up to her. She's a great role model for them and I believe they're all aspiring to be as good as Mady is and they proved that this year out in Las Vegas," Giroux said.

"So, it was very cool for me to see, especially for girls—that they're young women—that

were able to do this."

Giroux started his first studio right out of college in Newton, having it there for 26 years. 12 years ago, his family moved to Wilbraham and several years later, the second studio opened in town. He emphasized values and character development are what have the biggest impact.

"Last year, I transitioned out of that studio and sold it to one of my longtime instructors. The instructor's now 30 and he started when he was four, so now he runs that studio and I'm in the process of coming here full-time," Giroux said. "We're all in on the Wilbraham studio now."

He added he's in the process of moving the studio to a 3,500-square-foot facility.

"We're very excited about that. Basically, what we're trying to do is we're trying to do exactly what we did in Newton. I grew up doing martial arts and I can give countless stories about how it's helped me in my life. Not just with karate, but the values and the lessons I've learned through the classes, but also through competition and through just being a martial artist. Earning my black belt, earning a higher-rank black belt. It's helped me in so many ways and now for me to see how it's helped countless students do the same thing. Going back to Newton, I probably worked with over 2,000 families in 27 years, so we're very excited to do the same thing here now."

The studio, Giroux said, has also worked with many special needs kids.

"A lot of kids with ADHD, a lot of kids with Asperger's or autism. We got Down syndrome students and to see how martial arts affects their life in a positive way is really one of the greatest things that we've gotten," Giroux said.

Giroux thanked the community for supporting the students and stressed how hard work, persistence and not giving up can make anything possible.

"The main thing is don't give up. I think that's the biggest message. We all go through things and giving up isn't the option," Giroux said.

For anyone interested in checking out Giroux Bros Martial Arts Studio, visit girouxbros.com or call 413-335-0753.



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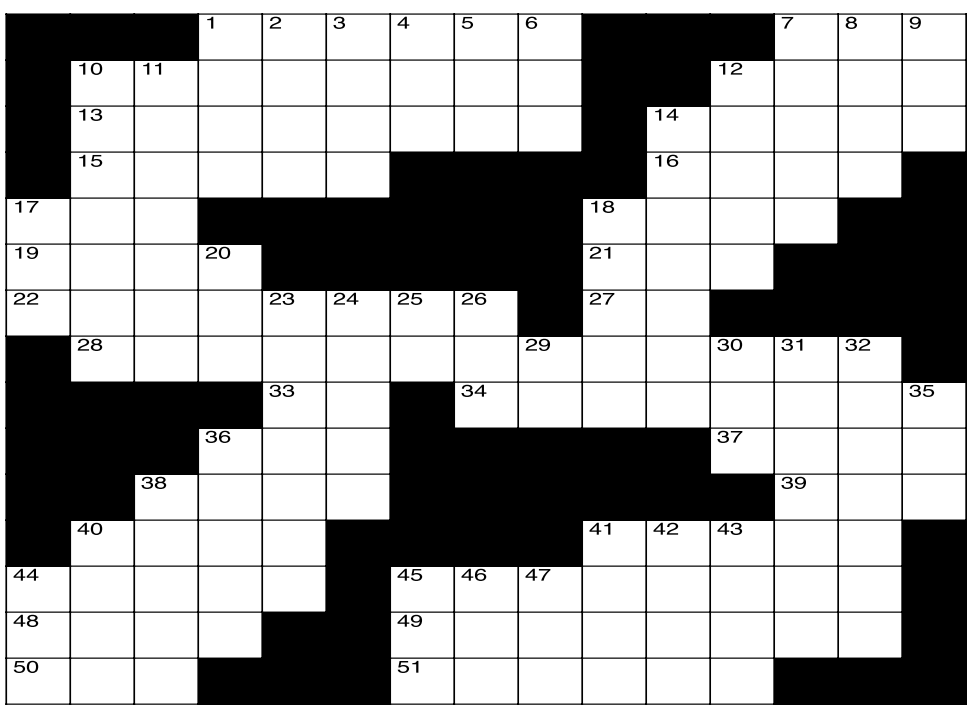
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CLUES ACROSS

1. A vast desert in Africa
7. Reciprocal of a sine
10. Type of phone
12. Biblical figure
13. One who renounces a religious belief
14. Warren and Monroe are two
15. Wild ox
16. Dismounted a horse
17. Cave dweller
18. Where infants sleep
19. Popular type of shoe
21. Clumsy large person
22. Evil-like
27. Integrated circuit
28. Austin-based athlete
33. Postscript
34. Follows 18
36. People of Gambia
37. Popular actor
38. Platform for a lectern
39. Taxi
40. American songwriter Sammy
41. Iranian city
44. Heavy clubs
45. One who is expelled
48. In bed
49. Lifelessness
50. Former CIA
51. Most slick
- 3.hovels
4. Pie ___ mode
5. Subway rodent
6. They ___
7. Indigenous S. American people
8. Fine sand
9. Central nervous system
10. Nightclub entertainment
11. The perfect example of something
12. Supreme Islamic leader
14. Pain
17. Binary-coded decimal
18. Projecting corner of an angle
20. "Succession" actor Brian
23. Dinner table decor
24. Ancient settlement in modern Turkey
25. You can call Paul Simon this
26. Opposite of a pro
29. Atomic #28
30. Type of drug (abbr.)
31. Arrives at
32. Nullifies
35. Bird's beak
36. Partner to "oohed"
38. Ray-finned fishes
40. Taxis
41. Sat on and controlled
42. Sea eagles
43. Remain as-is
44. Chinese revolutionary
45. Tooth caregiver
46. Snake-like fish
47. Compensate



All the VBC volunteers come together for a group picture. Turley photos by Noelle Hisgen

BIBLE CAMP from page 1

ate memories,” said Trimble. Since 1990, the music portion of the Bible Camp has been led by Patti Colkos.

“I love this program,” said Colkos. “I just love sharing the good news of God, and hearing all these beautiful voices sing and praise and worship God.”

Anchor’s Aweigh! Had a large amount of teen activity volunteers and counselors for the week: Speaking on behalf of the program are Wilbraham Middle School 7th grade student Aubrey Stephen who was helping with arts and crafts, and Minnechaug juniors and 2nd-5th grade counselors Audri Stasio and Jillian True.

“I feel like it’s so important to help kids know the most that they can about God and to help them just be creative and get outside more while having so much fun.” Said Stephen.

“We started as campers. We started as little kids, and we felt like we should come back and help the next generation,” said True.

“We just love helping them, the kids are super nice.” said True.

As part of the Bible Camp, Anchor’s Away! Worked with Church World Services for a service project. Leading the service project portion of the program was discipleship commission chair Shelly Capen.

“In service projects, we talk about sharing God’s love, showing kindness, and how the kids can show small acts of kindness. Because if you’re kind to somebody else, they’re more likely to be kind to somebody else, and it just goes forward over and over again. And the hope is that we have a kinder world. So this year because our theme is Anchor’s Away, we made an anchor and asked the kids to think about things that they can do or say that’s kind toward others throughout the week. And every morning they get to share that by adding a link to the chain to an anchor, which represents God’s steadfast, unwavering love. It’s like our rock. And the chain, you need to change to get linked to those anchors, otherwise, you know, you need that connection, so this is our connection to God by showing God’s love to others,” said Capen.

With the collaboration with Church World Services,



Volunteers give gifts to the Wilbraham Fire and Police Departments.

community engagement specialist Adam Smedberg visited the church to help with the service projects.

“It’s important for youth to understand the impact they can have at the local level, but also all over the world,” said Smedberg. “We did a demonstration with water, and how we can help communities who don’t have access to clean water gain access to it and understand what it means for them. We had a great conversation with the students. Some of them, especially older ones, were really adamant to make sure that the girls in those communities get a chance to go to school. And really getting a chance to understand what the realities are for children all over the globe.”

Pastor Julie Olmsted would welcome everyone to the camp every morning and close out the camp at noon talking about the good news of God.

“I think that VBC is one of the greatest things a church can offer a community. We draw in children who have no church home and the creativity and the love that goes into this is quite extraordinary,” said Olmsted.

For the final day, campers put on a special concert for their families. There was also a few special surprises. The children sang songs, and reviewed the stories such as Jonah and the whale, Moses parting the Red Sea, Jesus walking on water, and Jesus stopping the storm. They also collected food and canned goods over the week as well.

For their service projects, they gifted snacks to the fire and police departments in



Campers play with Orbeez as part of their science activity.

Wilbraham, as well as a large card thanking them for being our anchors. Volunteers also revealed the final result of the kindness chain from the

week.

The VBC recognized two campers: Emma Driscoll and Joey Stebbins, on their VBC graduation.

Wilbraham Parks & Recreation announces Adaptive Soccer Program

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

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

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

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

Program Information
Dates: Saturdays – Sept. 13, 20, 27, Oct. 4, 11, and 18
Time: 11 a.m. - Noon
Location: Front Field at Wilbraham Middle School
Ages: 4-10
Fee: \$140 for Wilbraham residents | \$150 for non-residents
Registration: through Sept. 7
Participants should bring a water bottle, athletic clothing, shin guards, soccer cleats, and a soccer ball.
For additional information, please contact Alfred at info@futsalstreet.soccer.

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.

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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.

HCC Honors & Awards for 2025-2026:

Hampden: Korey Colglazier (two awards), Heather Wrona.

Wilbraham: Anna Heim-sath, Collin Trombley.

please recycle this newspaper

BACKYARD from page 6

even help raise their parents next brood if their parents have a double brood season.

Between July and October young birds begin to replace their juvenile plumage. Blue and brick red feathers begin to appear. By mid to late October all juveniles finish molting into their first adult plumage.

Leucistic crow

I met a New Braintree resident at the Oakham Post Office this week. He said he saw a crow with one white wing. Leucistic birds are birds that have abnormal

plumage coloration due to a genetic mutation that causes a partial loss of pigmentation.

They may have washed out feathers or blotches of white feathers. While rare, they are found in many bird species around the world.

Whippoorwills

A Brimfield resident emailed, "I thought you'd be interested to learn that I still have several whippoorwills calling at dusk in the lower Haynes Hill/Paige Hill area of Brimfield."

She stated, "I've only lived here four years, but they are here every year!. They start calling about 8:30

p.m."

She stated, "My grandparents owned a house that bordered Reedy Meadow in Lynnfield. We heard Whippoorwills there. So cool to have them calling from my front and back yards at the same time."

While on vacation as a child on Lake Winnisquam, my dad, brother and I would hear them calling while fishing for horn pout at night. I used to hear them in Oakham, but I not heard one in years.

Owls hooting

I do hear barred owls hooting back and forth at

night. Sometimes they are quite loud and can be heard even with the windows closed.

Juvenile red-tailed hawk

I received an email from a reader who saw a juvenile red-tailed hawk in her front yard. She stated, "It was quite beautiful. It had a small rodent for its dinner. It was really close to my front door, I've never seen a hawk so close to me."

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



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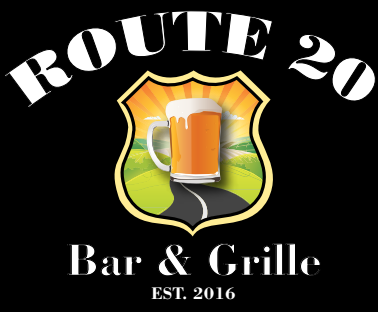
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For More Information
Contact Lori Atkinson at 413-566-8324
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BAY STATE GAMES



Turley photo by Gregory A. Scibelli
Andrew Dziadroz makes a play on the ball.

Boys take silver in 2026 Bay State Games

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

FITCHBURG—A year ago, Chicopee’s Griffen Wrisley and Minnechaug’s Tyler Supczak were starters for the West soccer team which captured the Gold medal at the annual Bay State Summer Games.

The duo were the only returning starters on this year’s West squad.

The West team took home the Silver medal at the Bay State Summer Games following a 2-1 loss to Central in this year’s Gold medal match, which took place at the Game On Sports and Performance Center in Fitchburg on July 11.

“I was lucky enough to be a member of the Gold medal team last year,” Wrisley said. “We have a bunch of new players on this year’s team

and were hoping to win the Gold Medal again. It’s a lot of fun being a leader of this team.”

The other members of the West team, who live in the Turley Publications coverage area, are John Carra (Agawam), Zacharia Yarovoy (Chicopee), Antonio Maurico (Chicopee), Aidan Monaghan (Agawam), Kayson Gauthier (South Hadley), Spencer Parsons (South Hadley), and Braeden Fitzgerald (Agawam).

The West team finished pool play with a perfect 4-0 record.

They posted a pair of one sided matches against Northeast 6-2, and Southeast, 8-0. They also pulled out two matches by 2-1 results against Central and Metro.

“Central was the best

Please see **BOYS**, page 12

Girls represented by two squads at Bay State Games

By Tim Peterson

Sports Correspondent
FITCHBURG— While the other sections of the state only had one girls’ soccer team competing in this year’s Bay State Summer Games, Western Mass. was represented by two teams for the first time.

The West Red team was coached by Matt Mosher, while Eric Woods guided the West Yellow team.

The two squads faced each other in the final pool game on July 11 at the Game On Sports and Performance Center in Fitchburg.



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Taylor Bartosz, of Wilbraham, looks to clear the ball on defense.

After building a 3-0 lead, the Red team withstood a

late comeback by the Yellow team for a 3-2 victory.

“We had more than 40 girls’ try out for the two soccer teams, which shows how popular the sport is in Western Mass.,” said Mosher. “Eric and I have a very good relationship. We try our best to make the teams equal. It’s has been a lot of fun coaching this team.”

It was the sixth consecutive year that Mosher coached a Western Mass. girls’ soccer team at the Bay State Summers Games. His previous teams won two Silver Medals and three Bronze Medals.

Mosher was assisted by Laura Wray-Ramos, who’s the longtime girls’ varsity soccer coach at Agawam High School.

The members of the Red team, who live in the region, are Filomena Stellato (Agawam), Hannah Haesaert (South Hadley), Kyra Lipmann (Holyoke), Gabriella Ramos (Agawam), Riley Platt (South Hadley), Audrey Afonso (Ludlow), Ol-

ivia Izzo (Agawam), Bridget Benoit (Belchertown), and Bri-Anne Kraus (Granby).

“All of the players on my soccer team have been playing with and against each other for years,” Mosher said. “They know each other very well.”

After finishing pool play at 2-1-1, the Red team surged to a 3-0 win over Northeast in the Gold medal game. It marked the first time that a West girls soccer team won the Gold medal at the Bay State Games since 2016.

“It’s very exciting being a member of this soccer team,” Haesaert said. “There are a lot talented soccer players in the west.”

The Red team began pool play with a 2-1 loss to Northeast. The following day, they tied Central, 1-1, before celebrating a 3-0 shutout win against Southeast/Coastal.

During the past couple of years, Woods, who coaches the girls’ soccer team at the MacDuffie School in Gran-

Please see **GIRLS**, page 12



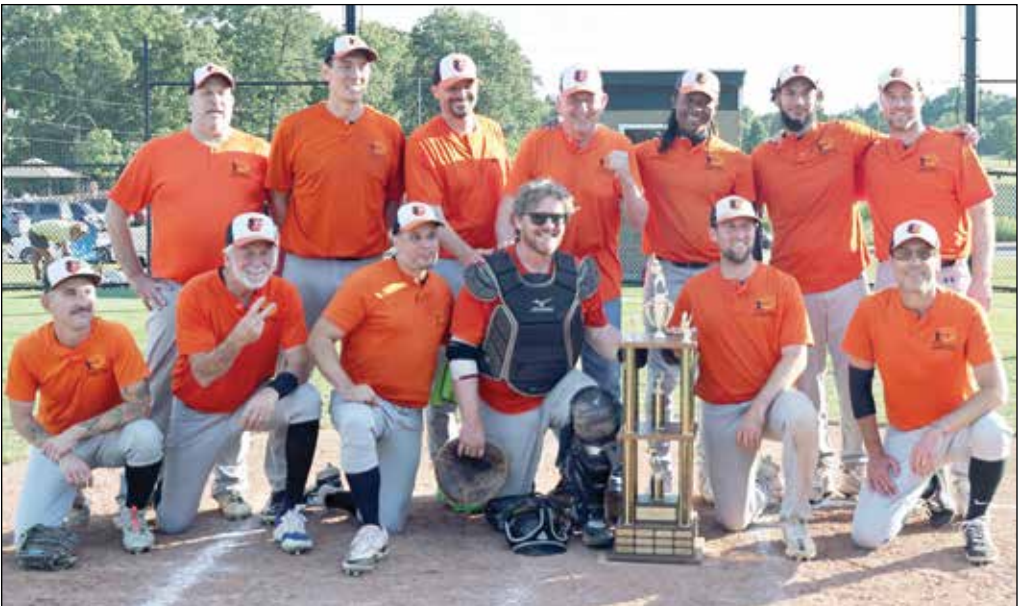
Kalli White, of Granby, is pressured as she heads through the middle of the field.

Orioles repeat as Valley Wheel champions

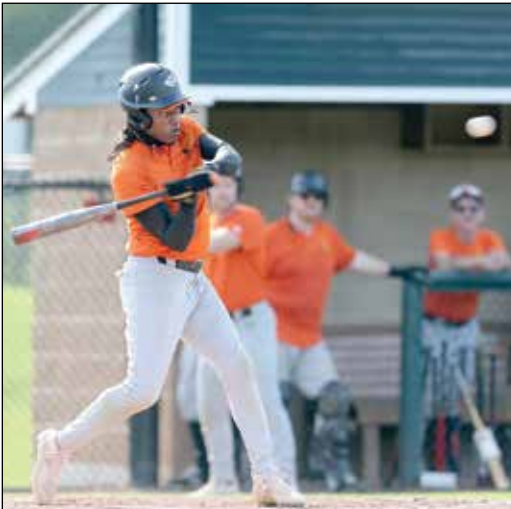


Pete Paroli makes a swing.

WILBRAHAM — On Saturday, Aug. 15 at Spec Pond in Wilbraham, the Orioles defeated the Angels 15-8 in the championship game. The Orioles were propelled by nine runs in the first two innings. While the Angels would manage some offense later in the game, it was not enough to come all the way back in the matchup. The Angels were this year’s pennant winners, taking first place with an 11-4 record. The Orioles won the championship for the second year in the row. They defeated the Twins in last year’s championship game.



The Orioles are the 2026 Valley Wheel Over-28 Baseball League champions.



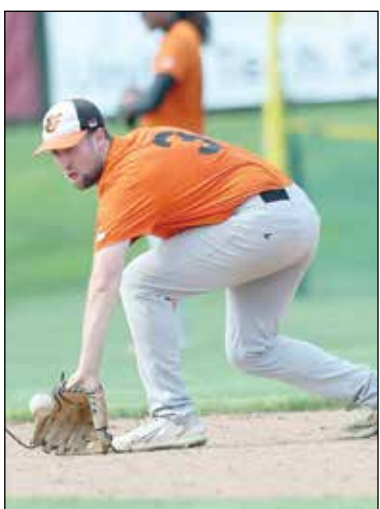
Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Henry Henriquez is focused as he swings.



Mike Burgos delivers a pitch for the Orioles.



Andy Roland fires a pitch for the Angels.



Sam Maxwell makes a backhand play.

West baseball defeats Northeast for gold medal

MALDEN – Between July 29 and Aug. 1, the baseball Bay State Games took place in Malden. The West came out as this year’s gold medal recipients. Here is a recap of the championship game between the West and Northeast:

West got on the board in the first inning after Jaeden Azevedo hit into a double play, but one run scored.

Jared Burke hit a sacrifice fly, which helped Northeast tie the game at one in the top of the second.

West took the lead in the bottom of the fifth. An error scored one run, to give West the lead, 2-1.

Tyler Neville led things off on the mound for West. The starting pitcher gave up five hits

Please see **GOLD MEDAL**, page 12

Teddy Bear Pools takes playoff title in Tri-County

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

THORNDIKE—For the first time since 2012, the Tri-County League championship title belongs to a baseball team other than PeoplesBank.

The third-seeded Teddy Bear Pools & Spas ended the second-seeded PeoplesBank twelve year dynasty after sweeping the best of three semifinal series. Teddy Bear then captured the championship trophy for the first time since the 1980’s with an 8-4 victory over the top-seeded St. Joseph’s Saints in last Sunday’s night decisive game three held at St. Joe’s Park in Thorndike.

“Before the start of the regular season, I thought we had the most talented team in this league,” said Teddy Bear player/manager Ryan Magni. “We have a couple of outstanding college baseball players on our roster, which made the biggest difference. It does feel great to win the championship title, but I do have a lot of respect for St. Joe’s.”

Ryan Magni played for St. Joe’s for eight years before switching sides a couple of years ago. His younger brother,

Brandon, was the St. Joe’s starting first baseman in game three.

Ryan Magni started the game in centerfield before replacing righthander Brendan Fournier on the mound in the bottom of the seventh inning. St. Joe’s scored two runs against the righthander in their final at-bats. The game came to an end when Brandon Magni hit a ground ball to the second baseman against his older brother.

“I’ve faced my brother many times over the years,” Ryan Magni said. “I didn’t have my best stuff tonight, but I didn’t make it very easy for him.”

St. Joe’s, who lost to PeoplesBank in last year’s championship series, was looking to win the TCL title for the first time since 2006.

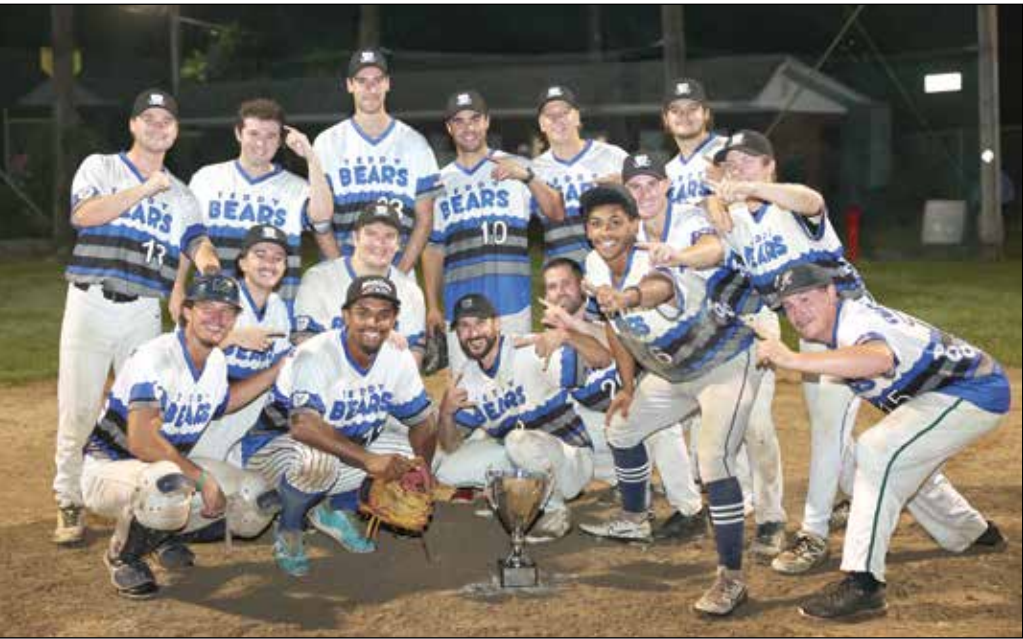
“They just capitalized on our mistakes in the last night’s game,” said St. Joe’s manager Paul Marcinek. “It would’ve been nice if we could’ve scored a few more runs. We did

win the regular season championship with a 16-4 record, and we have nothing to be disappointed about.”

Marcinek was assisted by Brian Hayes this season.

With one-out in the top of the first inning, Teddy Bear had runners on first and third when right fielder Willie Landman hit a ground ball up the middle. St. Joe’s shortstop Jacob Hayes made an outstanding diving stop before tagging second base and throwing a strike to Magni completing the inning ending double play.

Jacob Hayes, who’s a member of the UMass Dartmouth baseball team along with his brother Jackson, belted a double to right center



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Teddy Bear Pools becomes the first new playoff champions in more than a decade.

leading off the bottom half of the opening frame. Brandon Magni followed with a groundball single into left field putting runners at the corners. St. Joe’s took a 1-0 lead when centerfielder Pat Fitzgibbons hit a bloop just out of the second baseman’s reach which scored Hayes. Magni also crossed the plate following a throwing error by the catcher.

Fournier, who graduated from Chicopee High School in 2017, retired 17 of the final 18 St. Joe’s batters that he faced. St. Joe’s only base runner during that stretch was Fitzgibbons, who hit a triple to right field with one-out in the sixth inning.

“I struggled in the first inning, but I started throwing more off speed pitches that kept them off balance. My teammates also made the plays behind me,” said Fournier, who was the winning pitcher. “I’ve been playing in this

league for almost ten years, and it feels great to finally win a championship.”

Teddy Bear cut the deficit in half against righty Jack Feltovic in the third inning.

With one-out, catcher Mike Toth, who graduated from Granby High School, was hit-by-a-pitch. Second baseman Ramon Jimenez singled to right field putting runners at first and third. Then Landman hit a sacrifice fly to right.

Jimenez graduated from Chicopee High School before playing Division 1 college baseball at Boston College and Central Connecticut. He was intentionally walked in his other three plate appearances.

The visiting team took the lead for the first time two innings later.

Ryan Magni and Jimenez reached base via walks, which was sandwiched between a Mike Toth flyball single, which loaded the bases with one out. Left fielder Josh Frometa (2-for-3) blasted a triple to center giving his team a 4-2 lead.

“The bases were loaded and I was looking for a pitch to drive,” said Frometa, who played baseball at Chicopee High and A.I.C. “It was a huge hit at that point of the

game, and it feels great to win the championship title.”

After scoring an unearned run in the sixth, Teddy Bear scored three more runs in the top of the seventh against lefthander relief pitcher Jackson Hayes. The key hit during that frame was a bases loaded double by first baseman Will Kennedy, who played for St. Joe’s several years ago.

Teddy Bear entered the bottom of the seventh inning holding an 8-2 advantage.

St. Joe’s DH Adam Zebian drew a walk against Ryan Magni leading off the final frame. Zebian was replaced at first base by pinch runner Adam Przybycien. Left fielder Ryan O’Leary followed with a triple to center scoring Przybycien. O’Leary scored on an infield hit by catcher Nate Carillon, who graduated from South Hadley High School.

Ryan Magni settled down and got out of the jam by retiring the next three batters, including his younger brother.

Teddy Bear Pools & Spas will be looking to defend their championship title in the summer of 2027, but challengers like St. Joe’s and PeoplesBank will be looking to knock them off the top of the mountain.



Matt Drobiak slides safely back to first.



RIGHT: Jacob Hayes fires over to first.



LEFT: Joey DeMichele makes a play for St. Joe’s.

BOYS from page 11

team we played in pool play,” Wrisley said. “I scored a goal and had an assist in that game.”

The West team was coached by Josh Wietecha, who’s the boys’ varsity soccer coach at Hampshire Regional. He graduated from Chicopee Comp in 2021 and helped the West team win the Gold medal at the 2019 Bay State Games.

Wietecha enjoyed coaching Wrisley at this year’s Bay State Games.

“Griffen is one of the best soccer players that I’ve coached,” Wietecha said. “He’s an outstanding forward and takes control of every game.”

This fall, Wrisley will be

one of the few returning players on the Chicopee Pacers varsity team.

“We graduated twelve players from last year’s varsity team,” Wrisley said. “We only have a couple of varsity players returning.”

Wrisley never thought about transferring to a different high school.

“Chicopee High School is a very special place for me and my family,” Wrisley added. “We won the Western Mass. title for the first time in 43 years last year. It was very special.”

Wrisley is the All-Time leading goal scorer for the Pacers boys’ soccer team. He needs only three more goals to reach the 100 goal milestone. He currently has 116 career points.

Hugo Destapado, who coached the West team at the Bay State Summer games last year, is returning as the Pacers varsity boys’ soccer coach.

“I wouldn’t be a successful soccer player without the help of my coaches,” Wrisley said. “I’m looking to playing soccer for one final season at Chicopee High School.”

The Pacers are scheduled to host Northampton in the season opener on Labor Day. They’re also scheduled to play another match against Frontier Regional at historic Szot Park two nights later.



LEFT: Aidan Monaghan, of Agawam, tries to play the ball off his chest.



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Lucas Cruz hustles past mid-field.



Linus Dandurand attempts to make a stop.



Turley photo by Gregory A. Scibelli
Kelsey Morrisette, of Chicopee, starts her way up the field.

GIRLS from page 11

by, coached the Central/West team at the Bay State Games. His team won the Gold medal in 2024.

“The Central team had a mixture of players from Central and Western Mass. during the past couple of years,” Woods said. “It’s nice to coach a team with only players from the West. Soccer is a very popular sport in Western Mass.”

The Yellow team lost to Central, 5-0, in the Bronze medal game.

The members of the Yellow team, who attend a high school in the region, are Taylor Bartosz (Minnechaug Reg.), Kelsey Morrisette (Chicopee Comp), Grace Sherman (South Hadley), Sofia Marsh (Granby), Cecelia Litz (Agawam), Kalli White (Granby), Margaret Healey (Granby), Grace Curto (Agawam),

Mackenzie Lynch (Agawam), Sydney Germain (Chicopee), Cayla Ribeiro (Chicopee), Eleanor Szlosek (Granby), and Jordyn Szado (Monson).

The Yellow team (0-3-1) began pool play with a pair of 4-1 losses to both Central and Northeast. They managed to tie Southeast/ Coastal, 1-1 the following afternoon.

In the West vs. West match-up, Healey scored a penalty kick goal and added a corner kick goal.

“It was really a lot fun playing in the Bay State games for the first time,” said Healey, who’s a rising sophomore. “I enjoyed competing against the other players from the West.”

It was an enjoyable three days in Northern Worcester County for the two girls’ soccer teams from Western Massachusetts.

GOLD MEDAL from page 11

and one run over six innings, striking out seven and walking two. Chase Richmond stepped on the hill first for Northeast. The

starting pitcher gave up six hits and four runs (two earned) over five and two-thirds innings, striking out four and walking four. Logan Millet tossed one inning of zero-run ball for West in relief. The reliever surren-

dered zero hits, striking out none and walking none. Camden Witczak went 1-for-2 at the plate and led the team with one run batted in. Leadoff hitter Hunter Donahue led West with three hits in three at bats. West turned

one double play in the game. Richmond and Ronny Leonor each collected two hits for Northeast. Burke led the team with one run batted in. Northeast turned two double plays in the game.

PICKLEBALL from page 1

early to set things up for the 8 a.m. session and assisted throughout the morning. Her help has certainly not gone unnoticed by the players.

“Ann is great to work with...she went over the rules with us, she refereed all the first few months we were here...what we were doing wrong and how to keep score and all the rules...she was just terrific,” said John Leone from East Longmeadow.

Although she sees her role now as more of a facilitator, Kielb helps the new players feel at home with the sport.

“When there’s a brand-new player, I actually sit with them and talk about the basics”, she said.

Some players, however, still had their doubts about playing and Mary Mehlich from Hampden said she was one of them.

“When I first started the program, I was a little unsure of myself...Actually, I was going to not return, but one of the volunteers, Karen, insisted that I give it another try and I’m very happy that she did.”

When asked about their experience with the program, the responses from program participants who have been with the program from 1 month to over a year were unanimous in praising the numerous advantages of the senior Pickleball program as well as the many health and social benefits of the sport for seniors.

“What a great group of encouraging, supportive people and no matter how much of a beginner, everybody gets included into the fold,” said Jocelyn Smith from Mon-



Action from the recent senior pickleball program.



Kelley Boucier gets ready to serve.



Ann Maggio observes the action at the senior pickleball program.

son who added that she and her husband “knew nothing

(about pickleball)” when they came to their first session.

David and Kelley Bourcier from Wilbraham, who



Chic and Joyce Dunklee team up for a doubles match.

joined the program with Kelley’s sister Kathy Leone and her husband John from East Longmeadow, were also new to the sport, but quickly saw its advantages.

“It’s phenomenal....Not only are we keeping healthy by doing this sport, but meeting new friends, that’s just as important,” said Bourcier.

As players gain experience in the sport, they are encouraged to remain with the program, something which helps newer players to improve their game. “You only grow if you play against somebody better than you,” noted Kielb.

These more established players are eager to help those less experienced with tips to learn how it’s done. Evelyn Daniel from Wilbraham found this out from her own experience. “I got to meet a lot of people...they don’t consider themselves beginners, but I think they’re really, really good...I get a lot of pointers from them. It’s a lot of fun.”

Once in the program, new friendships are easily formed as players often change partners throughout their session and get to know each other on and off the court. Mike Murdza from Hampden said that

he hadn’t seen a lot of people since he retired a few years ago. So, when asked why he plays pickleball, he responded, “It’s interesting to come meet new people...they’re all great people, we have a great time”.

Many current players mentioned how they also play at other times during the week with people they met through the program. Using an app called “Team Reach”, players can sign up for court time at the Pickleball courts in Hampden or other courts, such as the ones at Greenleaf Park near the Sixteen Acres Library in Springfield, and see who else has signed up to play.

Anyone 60 years old or over is welcome to contact Tina at (413) 566-5588 to ask about joining the senior Pickleball program at either their 8 a.m., 9:30 a.m. or 11 a.m. session.

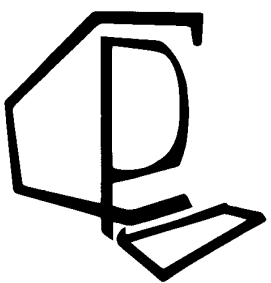
“We still do have a waiting list for the program, that’s how popular it’s been,” Maggio added.

When asked what they would say to someone who was thinking of playing pickleball, everyone enthusiastically encouraged seniors to try it.

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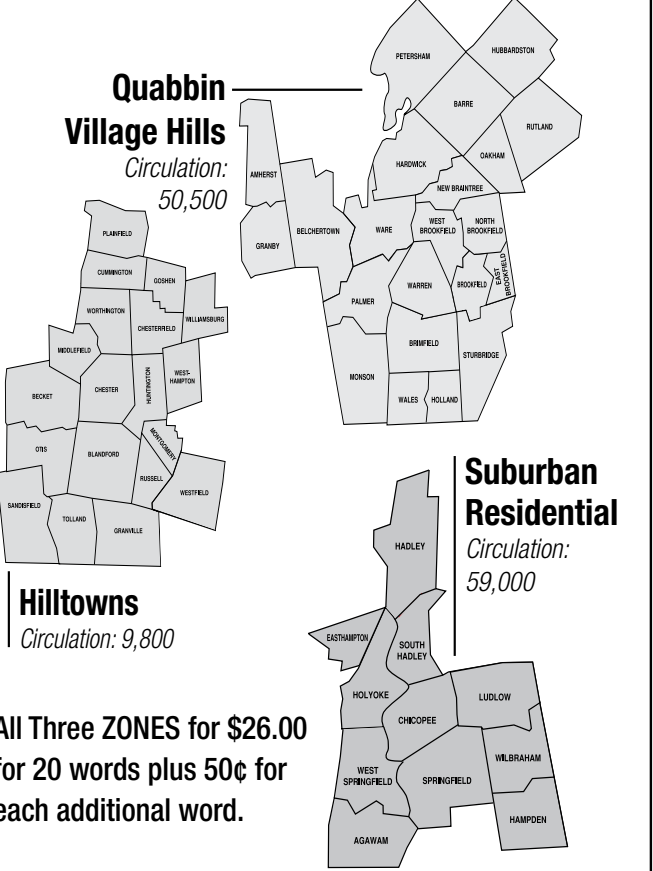
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Hampden Cultural Council accepting grant applications

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

Since 1998, the Hampden Cultural Council has helped fund cultural-centered experiences that include performances, workshops and lectures, in-school and out of school programming, historical preservation, public murals, music and drama production materials, and seasonal,

arts and cultural festivals. Cultural groups have given performances on Native American culture, Irish American culture and music, and Tai Chi. The Hampden Cultural Council has also provided support in sending our Hampden students to the Springfield Symphony Orchestra, Old Sturbridge Village, Museum of Fine Arts Boston, and the Berklee Performing Arts Center in Boston.

To give you a broader idea of individuals and groups who have been awarded grants, some of our previous awardees have been mural painters, storytellers, musicians and multicultural performers, puppeteers, and enrichment program leaders. Other awardees have given lectures covering local history, WWII history, women in history, and the underground railroad. Additional recipients have lead workshops focusing on topics such as music, creative writing, painting, pastels, photography, wood-working, STEM, deafness and deaf culture, mindful practic-

es, nutrition and health, and environmental conservation with aid of cultural council funding.

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

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

The Hampden Cultural Council will start accepting online grant applications for FY27 on September 1st. The deadline for grant applications is October 15th, 2026. A full list of application guidelines can be found at <https://massculturalcouncil.org/communities/local-cultural-council-program/application-process/> Still have more questions or ideas for future programming for the town of Hampden? Are you interested in joining Hampden’s Cultural Council? Contact our Hampden Cultural Council Chair, Virginia Blake at ginbee@charter.net.

PUBLIC NOTICES

**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

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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

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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:
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REVERE from page 1

to Lexington to warn Samuel Adams and John Hancock and local militias that British soldiers would be advancing their way—by sea.

At the start of his ride, Revere outrode two mounted officers.

“I had a better horse!” said Lepage as Revere.

“Did you really say ‘The British are coming! The British are coming!’?” asked an audience member.

“I did not,” said Lepage/Revere. “I said ‘The Regulars are coming out.’ The poet who came later got things wrong.”

Lepage cleared up other historical inaccuracies in Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s 1860 poem, “Paul Revere’s Ride,” but went on to say that his mother read it to him as a child and it remains his favorite poem.

After alerting Adams and Hancock of the oncoming troops, the three riders were stopped by a British patrol. The other two riders escaped and continued on toward Concord, but Revere was questioned with a pistol to his head and his horse was confiscated. He returned on foot to Lexington, where he heard the first shots ring out on the town green around dawn.

“I heard a pistol fire,” said Lepage/Revere. “It has always been my contention

that the Regulars fired first. That was a long day and night for me.”

Lepage spoke about Revere’s other revolutionary activities. Although there is no evidence that he participated in the Boston Tea Party, he was politically active and may very well have tossed some tea into the harbor.

“There were spies everywhere,” said Lepage/Revere. “I was among them.”

He made four and five-day rides to New York and Philadelphia as a courier for the revolutionaries, bearing critical messages.

Lepage observed, “I admire Revere’s willingness to sacrifice for a cause. Those rides definitely hurt him. He had to leave his family and business on some dangerous journeys.”

Despite his revolutionary work, Revere was not named an officer in the Continental Army—much to his disappointment. As a tradesman and as the son of a religious refugee from France (Appolis Rivoire), he wasn’t of the proper social class.

“They were looking for gentlemen,” Lepage/Revere remarked.

Instead, Revere served in the militia. Later in the war he was involved in a failed expedition to capture a British fort on the Penobscot River in Maine and was censured for cowardice. He

fought for years to have his name cleared and was eventually found not guilty.

Having portrayed Revere for many years, Lepage said he has grown to appreciate his many accomplishments in later life.

He evolved from learning gold and silversmithing from his father to running a successful ironwork foundry where he cast bells and cannonballs. After the war he took on great financial risk to start a copper mill where he rolled copper into sheets to build the USS Constitution and other ships. He also worked as an engraver and dentist and had 16 children with two wives.

Lepage describes Revere as a pioneering industrialist.

“The war years were not glorious for me, but the post-war years were good to me and my family,” said Lepage/Revere.

At the end of the presentation and after questions from the audience, Lepage remarked that after decades of portraying both Paul Revere and John Adams he enjoys re-enacting them as older statesmen.

“My greatest joy is to show that these historical figures were human too,” Lepage said.

Emilie Lang, adult services librarian at the Wilbraham Public Library, thanked the Friends of the Library for sponsoring the event.

“Historical interpreters are always popular and we wanted to commemorate America’s 250th anniversary this summer,” Lang said. “I was happy to see some of our regular attendees and some new ones here tonight.”

Lepage will be appearing periodically at the Adams National Historical Park and at the Paul Revere House in Boston. He urges anyone interested in learning more about Paul Revere to visit the Paul Revere Heritage Site in Canton, Mass.

Upcoming events at the WPL include a textile drive and watercolor classes.

Go to www.wilbraham-library.org for a full list of happenings.

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- 1 Email all notices to notices@turley.com
- 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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VETERANS DAY SALUTE

The Wilbraham-Hampden Times
~ November 5, 2026 ~

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

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

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

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



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EARLY DEADLINES

In observance of Labor Day, there will be an **EARLY AD, PUBLIC NOTICES & CLASSIFIEDS DEADLINE**
To advertise,
place your ad no later than **NOON Thursday, Sept. 3**
– Thank you!

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