

**SENIORS**

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Life now  
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**SPORTS**

Preseason  
underway for  
school sports  
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## Nate Mutti donates wooden flag

Department of Veterans Services recipient

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - Nate Mutti, a U.S. Air Force Veteran, is giving back through a custom wooden flag donation he recently presented to the Department of Veterans Services.

Presenting the donation to Director of Veteran Services Patrick Renna on Aug. 22, Mutti, who's also the owner/creator of Fallen Limb Designs, explained how he and his predecessor, Jered Sasen, helped him, his sister-in-law and his father get the support they needed.

Mutti served for 26 years and was in traffic management operations and a distribution flight superintendent



Turley photo by Kristin Rivers  
Patrick Renna, director of the Department of Veteran Services, and U.S. Air Force Veteran Nate Mutti with his custom wood flag donated to the Department of Veteran Services.

Please see **FLAG**, page 8

## Dinner Dance supports Alzheimer's Association

Also, special book announcement

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
krivers@turley.com

HAMPDEN - The community enjoyed a night of dinner and dancing at the senior center from 5:30 to 9 p.m. on Aug. 23 for the Alzheimer's Dinner Dance Fundraiser to support the Alzheimer's Association.

The dinner featured a meal comprised of Chicken BBQ Cornbread, a mixed greens with Italian dressing salad, baked stuffed chicken, mashed potatoes and green beans. For dessert, a chocolate cupcake with Dulce de Leche filling and Mocha Buttercream frosting.

The dinner sponsors were Brodeur-Campbell Fence, GreatHorse, JGS Lifecare and Monson Savings Bank.

As for the raffle sponsors, they were the Big Y East Longmeadow and Longmeadow locations, Attorney David Carlson, Carol K's Added Attractions, Wendy and Matt Cowles, Karen Fisk and Moe Proulx, Deb Fox, the Graves Sisters and Carla Michaelis.

Musical entertainment was provided by Off the Record—which was also sponsored by Monson Savings Bank—and there was also a 50/50 raffle.

The raffle prizes were part of the Walk to End Alzheimer's Tri-Town Team Raffle—consisting of the towns of Hampden, East Longmeadow

Please see **DANCE**, page 16

## Mark York performs Willie Nelson hits at WPL

By Angelina Acevedo  
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - On Aug. 18, the library welcomed Matt York to perform the songs of Willie Nelson and other famous country artists.

The concert took place on the back lawn of the library, and those attending were welcomed to bring a lawn chair to enjoy an hour of music.

Matt York has spent his time at the library singing classic Willie Nelson songs like "Good Hearted Woman", "Hello Walls", along with other country classics like "I Don't Hurt Anymore" by Johnny Cash. Along with sharing his talent, York also told the audience stories about his time performing.

York has been on the road singing across the country for the past three months, with his last show prior to Wilbraham being in Middle-



Turley photo by Angelina Acevedo  
Performer Matt York after his successful concert.

field. He plans to perform in Plymouth, Massachusetts, Newport, Rhode Island, and Nashville, Tennessee in the upcoming months.

This wasn't York's first time performing at the Wilbraham Library, and actually

Please see **YORK**, page 15

## Wilbraham Selectman 'baffled' by renovations

Marc Ducey said the board should have been part of the process.

By Dalton Zbierski  
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - A Wilbraham Select Board member feels left out of the loop after learning through friends and a television report that a major renovation occurred recently in town.

An Aug. 14 feature story

by Western Mass News announced the wrestling room located inside of Memorial School on Main Street recently underwent a significant renovation.

According to the tv station, the \$65,000 renovation project included the installation of new mats with logos, green and black wall padding, new scoreboards and timers, a projector and screen and a stereo system.

The newly refurbished

Please see **RENOVATIONS**, page 15



Turley photos by Kristin Rivers  
A couple struts their stuff on the dance floor.

## School Committee meets two new principals

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM - The School Committee met two new principals who will be working in the district starting this school year during their Aug. 21 meeting.

The new principals are

Erin Beaulac, who will be principal at Mile Tree Elementary School, and Jessie Donovan, who will be principal at Stony Hill Elementary School.

Superintendent Dr. John Provost said it was his pleasure to introduce Beaulac and Donovan to the committee, sharing that Beaulac is a new

member of the administrative team and Donovan, meanwhile, is a returning member.

"They both took their new roles on July 1 and have been working very closely with me through the summer to orient themselves to the new roles and to the new buildings. We have a very strong collaboration underway and they also

have been welcomed, as both said, with open arms by other elementary principals in the district," Provost said. "So, I think we're off to a good start."

Provost then had Beaulac and Donovan come up to the

Please see **PRINCIPALS**, page 8

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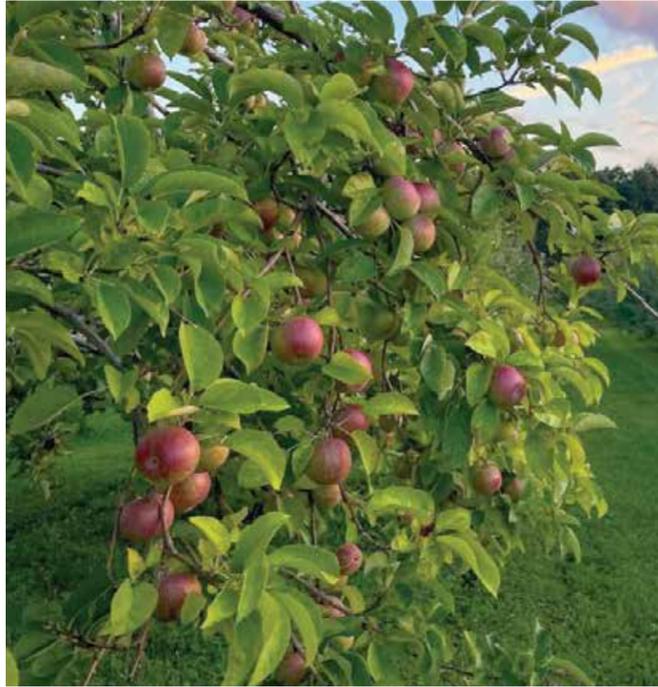
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Sturbridge Coffee Roasters

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and more!



# Selectboard shares update on TWB move

By Kristin Rivers  
Editor  
krivers@turley.com

HAMPDEN - The Selectboard shared an update on moving into the former Thornton W. Burgess Middle School during their Aug. 18 meeting.

Town Administrator Brian Domina explained he walked through the building the week before and an energy audit was done with NV5, the town's hired regional energy manager.

"I expect those results to come back probably this week or next week. They're looking at all aspects of the building, mechanical and energy conservation opportunities. So, hopefully we'll hear back from them," Domina said.

Domina next noted the classrooms.

"As you know, many of the classrooms in TWB have 9 x 9 vinyl tiles which have small percentage of asbestos in it, but they need to be remediated. So, we put out a bid to remediate five classrooms," Domina said. "I requested bids for those classrooms together and also a unit for any of the classrooms are standard size either \$800, \$900 or \$1,000. So, I have those. I received bids back at the end of last week and I want to talk those over with our facilities manager before moving forward on that."

Domina added a low bid "\$24,000 and some change for those five classrooms."

Chair John Flynn asked Domina this.

"But are you thinking that they're not the only classrooms with the problem or...?" Flynn said.

Domina clarified "they're certainly not the only classrooms with the problem" but "that's the area of the building where the floors are in the worst condition."

"So, I see this as something we'll have to phase over a period of time," Domina said.

"Like the school does," Flynn said.



Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

The Selectboard shared the latest on the move to the former Thornton W. Burgess Middle School on Aug. 18.

"Yep, exactly," Domina said.

Flynn added these thoughts.

"But I mean it gets into the ease of getting to them—after we moved in—on top of things," Flynn said. "So, you're taking care of the library ones and a couple of office ones?"

Domina replied yes.

"In my discussions with the vendors, they mentioned that when you do classrooms that are together, it's one containment unit. So, there's significant cost savings to do it that way," Domina said.

Flynn's next thought was this.

"So—and I'm thinking about that back hallway that Parks & Rec wants to use—but I'm not sure if they really have their programs together. They just wanted those three classrooms a bit for future right now," Flynn said.

"Yeah, I don't have those as a top priority," Domina said.

"Okay, but then the middle hallway thing, that's town clerk or...?" Flynn said.

"Yeah, those are in fairly good condition. Those four classrooms are probably the best condition," Domina said.

Flynn then addressed security next.

"The door locks, stuff like that, coming forward. You're

reaching out to...?" Flynn said.

"Valley Communications for electronic access and the security cameras. If we want to do the zoning as we talked about with three different zones based on building usage, we would need to install two interior doors in two different hallways," Domina said. "So, I would ask the facilities manager to look at that and get a price for that as well."

Other things, Domina added, would be painting, replacing ceiling tiles, minor electrical items and cabinet installations.

"If the different departments want some types of service counters. But, in talking with the facilities manager today, it's probably something that we can handle internally and just move existing cabinets around and maybe just buy countertops," Domina said.

Flynn wondered about reaching out to MassMutual, for example, "to see what they have out there" as they got rid of furniture in the past.

"We have a lot more floor space to fill than we're moving over," Flynn said.

Domina then shared how one of the movers reached out to him as they were going to receive a donation from an office move.

"They were going to have excess furniture that seemed to be in pretty good condition, but I haven't heard back on that yet,"

Domina said. "But, if someone has connections over there, I'd be happy to reach out."

On the timeframe and plan, Flynn noted everybody was on board.

"We're going to have I guess a conversation at our next meeting to make sure that everybody understands we're all working together," Flynn said.

Domina liked the idea.

"I think that would be good. We never set a specific date. We were always thinking the October, November timeframe," Domina said. "Again, the big step that was taken was the hiring of the facilities manager who can give us a realistic timetable for what we want to accomplish and then we can move forward from there. He's been hired, but he's going to start in early September. We'll have a better idea of nailing down a date."

On reaching out to CellCo to get a quote, Domina said the facilities manager would take care of this task too.

Someone would also come in to do checks, which Domina agreed.

## Fall Programs for kids at Wilbraham Public Library

WILBRAHAM - Check out these upcoming fall programs for kids at the Wilbraham Public Library.

### PRESCHOOL FUN WITH MRS. B

The Wilbraham Public Library is pleased to announce that registration will begin on Sept. 1 at 9 a.m. for the "Preschool Fun with Mrs. B" Fall program. This is a program

for children ages three to six to come into independently, while care providers wait in the library.

It is a fun-filled 45 minutes with stories, songs, movement and a craft. The program will run the following Thursday mornings from 10 to 10:45 a.m.: Sept. 11, Sept. 18, Sept. 25 (No program Oct. 2), Oct. 9, Oct. 16 and Oct. 23.

Themes such as "Teddy Bear's Picnic", "Budding

Artists", "Fall and Leaves, and the amazing stories by Ed Emberley will be included. Please register online at [www.wilbrahamlibrary.org](http://www.wilbrahamlibrary.org).

Registration includes all six dates.

### PRE-K and K DANCE PARTY!

Saturday, Sept. 20, 10 to 10:45 a.m. join in the dancing fun as we dance to some

familiar songs and learn some new ones! Complete with a disco ball and a "photo booth" for photo opportunities, wear your shiniest, movement-friendly clothes to dance! dance! dance!

This program is for Pre-K and K children with adult supervision (adults must remain in the program). Please register online beginning Sept. 1 at 9 a.m. at [www.wilbrahamlibrary.org](http://www.wilbrahamlibrary.org).

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**COMMUNITY**

# Charter Spectrum rep. presents to Wilbraham Select Board

Nancy Clark discussed a variety of topics Monday.

By Dalton Zbierski  
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM – A representative from Charter Spectrum gave the Wilbraham Select Board an in-depth presentation during Monday night’s meeting.

Nancy Clark, who represents Government Affairs for the telecommunications company, discussed the cable franchise renewal process, the status of internet service upgrades in town, an upcoming press event for the upgrades and the broader effort to increase the number of broadband internet users in Wilbraham.

“I want to offer myself up as the town’s resource... It is important that I am your resource for all of our customers and your constituents in Wilbraham who may have issues with their service from time to time,” Clark said, promising that the company is “well-suited to be able to respond.”

Clark gave an overview of the company, noting that it serves more than 30 million customers across 41 states in the U.S., with 900,000 miles of cable laid out to 57 million homes in the country.

Charter Spectrum specializes in providing communications technology such as entertainment products, cable and broadband internet. In Massachusetts, the company has over 320,000 customers and is expanding.

“We’ve made pushes into rural areas in particular in Western Mass recently,” Clark added. “In Wilbraham, we have 5,988 residential passings and 592 small business passing. We are fully built

out in Wilbraham with no unserved residential or business passing.”

Clark said that kind of service is of true value because it is not available in every community in the region.

According to Clark, Charter Spectrum “is dedicated to the town of Wilbraham.”

She said this was represented at numerous community events over the past year, including a Thanksgiving lunch at the Wilbraham Senior Center. There, Charter Spectrum made a \$5,000 donation to the Friends of Wilbraham Seniors, a group that supports activities at the facility for seniors.

The event was only open to Wilbraham seniors, and Clark said every seat was filled.

Clark was most impressed with the new building and considered it an honor that her company was able to participate.

“[The building] is something to be proud of and something that is a gem in the state of Massachusetts,” Clark said. “I certainly have not been part of a senior center that is of that magnitude and offers the services to its citizens that Wilbraham does, and, obviously, there are much larger communities in the state of Massachusetts.”

Charter Spectrum also sponsored a fall festival at Fern Valley Farms in 2024; Clark is optimistic that the company will play a role in the event this year as well.

Clark then delved into how the company offers its services at a “technology level and price point with investments in technology and infrastructure in a way that others cannot compete with both from an affordability standpoint and from a performance standpoint.”

This year, a new program has been rolled out by Charter Spectrum to provide credits

to customers who go without service.

“We are willing to put our money where our mouth is in terms of getting people back online,” Clark said.

Earlier this month, Charter Spectrum launched a major upgrade project in Wilbraham, as crews worked for nearly a week from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m., modernizing nodes and amplifiers across town, Clark said.

This will provide symmetrical upload and download multigigabit speeds for Wilbraham customers, according to Clark. An event will be planned in the coming weeks to celebrate the advancements.

One elected official did relay concerns, however, and that was Vice Chair Marc Ducey. He said he recently spoke with a family that was left without internet indefinitely during Charter Spectrum’s upgrade installations.

“I’m close with a family, who I was at their house on Russell Road, and while they were going through their upgrade, they lost internet for a week. That’s difficult in this day and age, particularly when there’s hybrid work or remote work availability. They live in a neighborhood where there’s limited cell service, so they couldn’t even create a hot spot on their phone. They were scrambling. It was difficult,” Ducey said.

Clark responded that she hopes town officials reach out to her immediately next time when they learn of such a development. She said the company has the resources to help.

“I don’t ever want to hear about those types of cases because I can understand that people work from home and need their internet for a variety of reasons, healthcare being one,” Clark said. “So, I urge you, whoever it is, to reach out and ask for help.”



Selectboard chair John Flynn, IG Shapiro, Selectboard member Don Davenport and Town Administrator Brian Domina.

# Inspector General Shapiro met with Hampden County Leaders

REGION - Inspector General Jeffrey S. Shapiro recently met with municipal leaders in Hampden, Holland, Monson, and Wales, as part of an ongoing listening tour around the Commonwealth.

“As the only statewide inspector general with municipal oversight, I have made it a priority to meet with leaders in their communities to encourage a candid dialogue,” IG Shapiro said. “I want to make government work better tomorrow than it did today. To best do that, I need to hear from the people who are doing the day-to-day business of governing to understand what works and what doesn’t work.”

On August 12, 2025, IG Shapiro met with Holland Town Administrator Stacy Stout; Hampden Select Board Chair John Flynn, Select Board Member Donald Davenport, and Town Administrator Brian Domina; Monson Town Administrator Jennifer Wolowicz; and Wales Town Clerk Sarah Ryan and Town Accountant Pamela Leduc.

“I am appreciative of the Inspector General’s time and interest in our community,” Holland Town Administrator Stacy Stout said. “We had a good conversation about the unique challenges that small towns confront when procuring goods and services as well as appreciative Holland is for the One Free Designee program, which made it possible for me to participate in the OIG Academy’s procurement training.”

Monson Town Administrator Jennifer Wolowicz expressed her appreciation for the Inspector General’s invitation to meet. “Reaching out directly to the local municipalities is a proactive approach and assists in



Wales Town Clerk Sarah Ryah, IG Shapiro, and Town Accountant Pamela Leduc.



IG Shapiro with Holland Town Administrator Stacy Stout.



Monson Town Administrator Jennifer Wolowicz with IG Shapiro.

building relationships. Over the 15 plus years that I have been a certified public purchasing official, the experienced staff at the OIG have always been a phone call away to assist me as I navigate public purchasing requirements,” she said.

“All too often the challenges voiced by smaller communities throughout the Commonwealth are overlooked so we appreciate the Inspector General visiting Hampden to hear our concerns and ideas on how to make the procurement system work for all communities,” Hampden Town Administrator Brian Domina

said. Since becoming the Inspector General in October 2023, IG Shapiro has proactively engaged with municipal leaders from communities all over the Commonwealth. Several policy initiatives have resulted from these meetings, including the One Free Designee program that offers tuition-free public procurement training to every city and town, passage of a law that streamlines the procurement process for electric buses and the Inspector General’s advocacy for common sense changes to the state’s procurement laws.

# Celebration Sunday at Federated Church of Hampden

HAMPDEN - The Federated Community Church of Hampden at 590 Main St., invites members of the church and community to our “Celebration Sunday” cookout on Sept. 7.

It will be held just after Sunday Service from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and will be outside on our grounds, or if it rains, in Libby Hall.

This event will introduce and welcome our new Pastor, Eunji Lee to all our church members, their extended families, and to our neighbors in

the community.

This event will also be our Annual Registration for Sunday School, and will be held inside the church before Sunday Service from 9:30 to 10 a.m., and from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the cookout.

We’ll have hamburgers, hot dogs, salads and beverages along with our featured dessert: Apple Crisp. You will be able to make your own Apple Crisp with ice cream or whipped cream.

Last year we had 13 different delicious Apple Crisp’s.

So, come to meet Pastor Eunji Lee, take a look at our Sunday School, and enjoy a picnic lunch with a Super Dessert.

For questions or information, our church office is open Mon., Weds, and Friday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Please call, or leave a message after hours, 413-566-3711. Please follow us on FB & check out our website FB: <http://www.facebook.com/HampdenFederatedChurch> website: <https://www.hampdenfederatedchurch.org/>



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## Teen Advisory Board announces meeting

WILBRAHAM - The Wilbraham Public Library's Teen Advisory Board (TAB) announces it's first monthly meeting of the school year on Monday, Sept. 15 from 4 to 5 p.m. in the Brooks Room.

If you know someone in grades six through 12, please let them know about TAB. The WPL Teen Advisory Board consists of students who help our Teen Librarian design the best programs for teens and recommend YA books and more for the Teen Loft.

Online registration is required or call us at 413-596-6141. Sign up, join us and let your teen voice be heard!

Snacks will be available, and the group is always looking for new members.

## Card & Game Party Luncheon Sept. 25

WILBRAHAM - Fall into Fun at the Luncheon Card & Game Party sponsored by the Wilbraham Women's Club on Thursday, Sept. 25, at the Saint Cecilia Parish Center, 42 Main St., Wilbraham.

Check-in begins at 11:30 a.m. with a delicious luncheon served at Noon. Bring friends and come to play any game of your choice (dominoes, mah-jong, bridge, canasta, scrabble, etc.).

Donation is \$10 and there will be a raffle for cash prizes. Proceeds help to fund our scholarships and donations to charitable organizations in the area.

For reservations, please call Sue Agnew, 596-9480. Hope you will join us for a fun afternoon.

# Hampden Treasure Hunt

By Patricia Sullivan  
Correspondent

HAMPDEN - A man walked out of the Hampden Senior Center Tag Sale on Aug. 27 bearing a microwave stuffed with several shirts.

He wasn't the only shopper finding bargains at the Friends of Hampden Senior Citizens Huge Indoor Tag Sale. Shoppers lined up to be the first to enter on the sale's Aug. 26 opening day and organizers anticipate that it will continue to be busy throughout the nearly three-week event, which concludes with a bargain day on Sept. 13.

"We will be adding new stuff every day," Claudia Kapinos, president of Friends of Hampden Senior Citizens, said.

Shopping hours are Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Senior Center's sales tables and racks are neatly filled with everything from household items to books, games, holiday decor and clothing, purses and shoes—everything except furniture.

On Aug. 27 you could pick up a new spiral vegetable slicer, a child's Spiderman sun hat, an automatic pill dispenser, or a set of sushi plates, among many other unique finds.

Proceeds from the sale will fund programs and activities at the senior center.

"People were incredibly generous with their donations," Kapinos said. "We have tons of stuff on the floor and a horse trailer in the parking lot that we'll unload as the sale continues."

Use of the horse trailer for storage was donated by Lilian Fedora of Hampden.

Shoppers from the sale's first day returned on day two to see what was new.

Diane Toski of Wilbraham, a tag sale regular, walked away with three small silver decorative Christmas trees for \$3 each.

"I love to treasure hunt," Toski said. "It's set up very nice here. I'll absolutely be back."

Men's and women's clothing was meticulously organized by volunteer Cathy Albert, who sorts, sizes and prices clothes for a boutique at the senior center year-round.

"It warms my heart that people take the time to wash and iron clothes before donating them to us," Albert said. "We get many name-brand items, including Vera Bradley and Coach purses, Chico's, J. Jill and Alfred Dunner clothes."

Clothing, with most items priced at \$5, sold briskly at the tag sale, as did jewelry and kitchen items. Lamps in particular went quickly.

"We had a great opening day," Kapinos said. "If it continues to go well, we'll do it again next year."

Wendy Cowles, outreach coordinator for the senior center, purchased a decorative shelf as she walked through the sale on her way to work.

"I should step away now," Cowles said. "It's not like a tag sale at someone's home. As soon as things are sold,



Turley photos by Patricia Sullivan  
**Volunteers Elaine Kingsbury, Cathy Albert, Claudia Kapinos and Gina Moauro at the Friends of Hampden Senior Citizens Huge Indoor Tag Sale.**

the stock is replenished. This could be dangerous!"

Cowles noted that a bonus of the tag sale is that it brings newcomers in to the Senior Center.

"One woman came in for the sale and then filled out the paperwork to be a volunteer,"

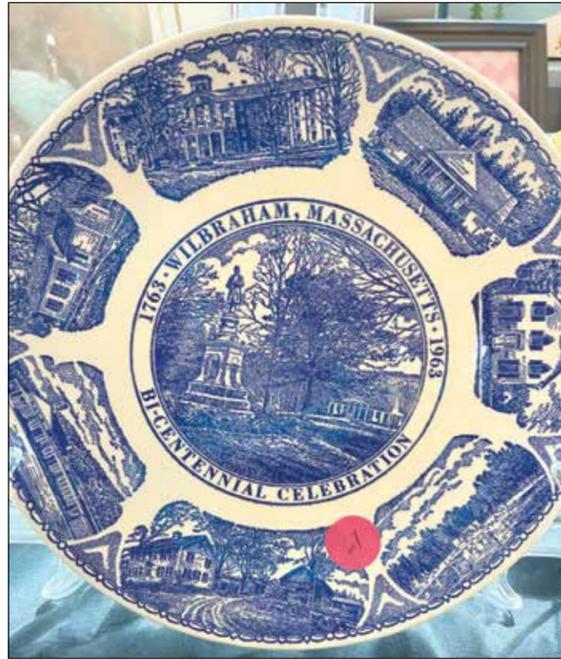
Cowles noted.

Kapinos has blocked off three weeks on her calendar to run the tag sale, aided by a large crew of volunteers.

"We are blessed in Hampden to have the senior center and the Hampden Senior Center is blessed to have so many wonderful volunteers."

Kapinos said.

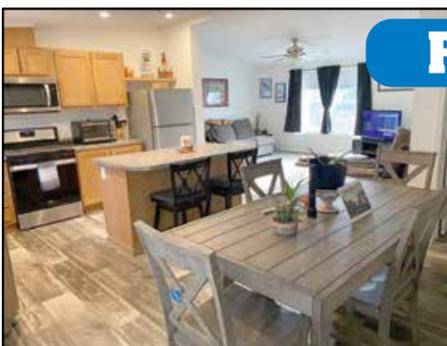
The Friends of Hampden Senior Citizens Huge Indoor Tag Sale will run through Sept. 13, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekdays, at the Senior Center at 104 Allen Street in Hampden.



**A commemorative Wilbraham bicentennial plate from 1963 priced at only \$1.**



**Holiday items at the tag sale included this fuzzy lamb dressed in a knit winter hat.**



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**VIEWPOINTS**

**SOCIAL SECURITY**

*Matters*

By Russell Gloor

**I'm in poor health and need to know my Social Security options**

**Dear Rusty:**

*I plan to stop working very soon.*

*My health is not good. I am 66 years old, born in June 1959, so my full retirement age is 66 years and 10 months. My wife passed away in March 2024 and she was collecting SS benefits when she died. I have no dependent children. In general, what benefits am I entitled to?*

**Signed: Unhealthy and Struggling**

**Dear Unhealthy and Struggling:**

Sorry to hear that your health is failing and that you will need to stop working soon. But do not fear, Social Security will be there for you. Here is some info to help you decide your next possible steps:

Since you will not reach your full retirement age until next year in April 2026, your earnings limit from working for this year is \$23,400 or \$1,950/month. The earnings limit will apply only if you decide to claim Social Security early (this year).

If you decide to take Social Security this year, your earnings from before you take SS won't count, but your monthly earnings for the remaining months of this year will be subject to the 2025 monthly limit (\$1,950). If your monthly earnings exceed that amount, you won't be entitled to SS benefits for that month, unless your total earnings for 2025 are less than \$23,400. If you don't exceed the annual limit, your 2025 Social Security benefits won't be affected by your work earnings.

Next year, the year you attain your Full Retirement Age, your earnings limit will be much higher about 2.5 times more or something more than about \$63,000. If your 2026 earnings up through March do not exceed that limit, then you can claim your SS benefits a bit earlier in 2026 before your FRA and your benefits won't be affected, except that your monthly benefit amount will be permanently reduced by .56% for each month you claim before your FRA.

For example, if you were to claim for your SS to start in January 2026, you would get 98.3% of your FRA amount. So, provided your work earnings won't exceed about \$63,000 between January and March 2026, you could claim effective January 2026 without worrying about Social Security's earnings test.

So, depending upon your health, you could claim SS to start in January 2026, likely without worry about the earnings test and would get about 98.3% of your FRA benefit. Or, health permitting, you could wait to claim SS starting in April 2026 to get 100% of the benefit you've earned from a life-

time of working. Point is, you just need to be careful not to exceed Social Security's earnings tests prior to reaching your Full Retirement Age or SS will take away some of your benefits.

They "take away" by withholding future monthly payments as long as needed to recover what you owe. Worse case penalty for exceeding the 2026 monthly limit would be no benefits for any month you exceed about \$5,300 or a penalty of \$1 for every \$3 over the limit if you exceed the 2026 annual limit before your FRA.

You do, however, have another option as your wife's surviving spouse: You can claim your benefit as a surviving spouse prior to claiming your own SS retirement amount. But the earnings test described above (if you claim before your FRA) would also apply to your survivor benefits. So, again, your plans for working enter this decision. If you decide to stop working this year, you could, for example, decide to claim your survivor benefit this year and collect that until you reach your FRA in April 2026 when you would get 100% of your personal SS retirement amount. In fact, you might even decide to collect your survivor benefit longer, allowing your own SS benefit to grow until you are 70, at which time you would get about 25% more than your FRA amount. Indeed, if your survivor benefit is higher than your personal age 70 amount, you can just continue to claim the higher amount.

I suggest that when you decide that you must stop working full time, you contact Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 to discuss whether it is best to claim your survivor benefit from your wife first and delay claiming your own until a later time to get a higher amount. You can make an appointment to discuss your options with SS over the phone, before deciding when (and what) to claim. And, of course, if you have any further questions, we are always here to assist you with your decision.

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

**Letters to the Editor**

**Message to Town Council on Wilbraham Hill Climb**

**To the Editor:**  
*Dear Members of the Town Council:*

I could not resist writing to you briefly concerning the Hill Climb and its continuation hopefully in the future. I recall when I was first asked to support the program.

The request for support was most convincing. When I actually witnessed the subsequent competition, I felt proud that our town would bring such a fun event to our community. (One does not have to be a vehicle fan to enjoy this fun morning!)

I was so pleased to see the variety of attendees. I noticed

that many students of Western New England University were present. (As President of the University, I am always glad to see our students visiting our community.)

So many of the attendees to the event are visitors for the first time to our town. They like our community and appreciate its attractiveness and all it has to offer.

I have heard on occasion that some of our residents do not want to see the Hill Climb continue. I do not recall hearing any convincing arguments to discontinue the event.

I assume you have a written list of the objections. Whatever they may be, I

would think there are ways of ameliorating/resolving the issues that have been raised.

Inconvenience of residents along the Hill, noise, traffic congestion, or whatever else-- instead of just collecting the complaints, utilize what we have learned to guide us to create solutions.

I am sure you have gathered the pros and the cons. I do hope the pros by far surpass the cons. I am a fan and hope this special event will remain on our town calendar.

**Anthony Caprio,**  
*Wilbraham*

**Response to Mary-Kate Holman statement on Wilbraham Hill Climb**

**To The Editor:**  
*Dear Select Board Chair Michael Squindo:*

I enjoyed our conversation after the last meeting and would like to provide some comments regarding Mary's letter. While these reflect her opinions, they do not always align with the facts.

1) The Hill Climb was never intended to occur only every couple of years. Initially, we were unsure if it would continue at all.

When we launched this event, we worked closely with Senator Gale Canderas, Joan Paris, the Selectmen, Lyman (my husband) and others to address the key requirements for making the Hill Climb happen. We didn't start holding it annually due to limited funds and time.

However, as the town embraced the event, donations increased, with support from the local bank and generous contributions from residents.

Wayne Carini filmed and broadcasted the event on his TV show, which helped build momentum. These combined efforts made it possible - and necessary - to hold the Hill

Climb every year. Reducing the frequency would actually jeopardize its future.

2) Regarding the claim that an accident could bankrupt the town: Jeff maintains two insurance policies exceeding \$1 million each that cover liability and protect the town. He has gone above and beyond to ensure safety and liability coverage, which is commendable.

Over more than 10 years, since 2013, there have been no major issues, and each year the team proactively reviews and implements additional safety measures to re-assure the town. The event is a source of pride, as symbolized by the plaque displayed prominently in the town hall, celebrating Wilbraham's history.

3) On the topic of donations, I'm unsure why this was raised since it does not involve the town. The Hill Climb funds itself and has the authority to decide how to allocate any surplus. Personally, I believe the funds should be reinvested into the event due to the significant expenses involved, such as safety measures and police

overtime. That said, the committee has the right to make these decisions independently, and I fully support their autonomy.

Mary is no longer involved, so this is an internal matter unrelated to the Selectmen.

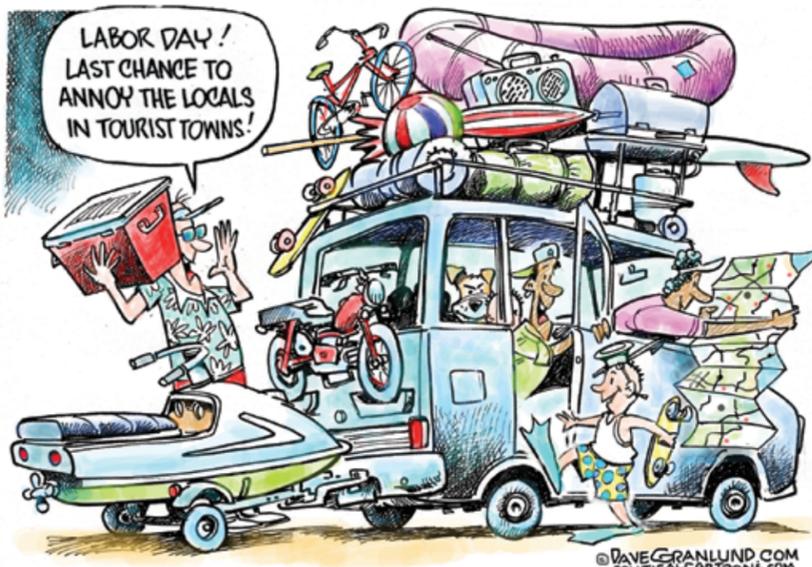
4) Jeff has addressed the VSCCA, which covers all of Mary's safety concerns thoroughly, and I believe they answered the Board's questions.

5) The Hill Climb has been held since 2013, spanning over 10 years. I find it puzzling that someone who supported the event for so long but is no longer involved is only now raising issues that were never brought up during that entire period.

Had Ms. Holman voiced her concerns earlier, I believe Senator Gale Canderas could have assured her that, thanks to her involvement and her oversight, the event has always complied with all legal requirements.

This allowed the reenactment to begin in 2013 and continue to this day.

**Leslie Wood,**  
*Wilbraham*



**Building Hope in Holyoke:**

Habitat, UMass, and housing authority partner to create affordable home for local couple

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



**Students from the University of Massachusetts DesignBuild program help construct the modular home that will be delivered to the Holyoke build site.**

It is working closely with Holyoke Housing Authority (HHA) and the University of Massachusetts DesignBuild

program to make this opportunity possible for Pedro Please see **HOPE**, page 8

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**Correction Policy**

The TIMES will gladly correct factual errors that appear in this paper and can be substantiated. Corrections or clarifications will always appear on the editorial pages. To request a correction, send information in an e-mail or mailed communication to the editor at the above address listed above. The Wilbraham-Hampden TIMES is published every Thursday by Turley Publications, Inc. One year out of town subscriptions are available at \$45, out of state \$50 by calling 800-824-8458 Ext. 201. The deadline for submission of news material, letters to the editor and photos is Monday at 12 p.m. The TIMES is not responsible for submitted photos.

**Election letters to the editor welcome**

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

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

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

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

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# A COMMUNITY GALLERY

*Life in*

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

# WILBRAHAM HAMPDEN

## HFD supports Longmeadow Fire Department



Photo and caption courtesy of Hampden Fire Department

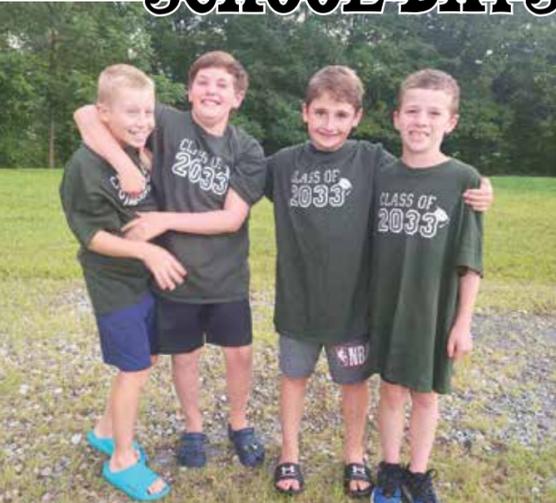
Hampden Fire providing station coverage for East Longmeadow while they're operating at a structure fire.

## COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

Send us in your announcements!  
Happy Birthdays, Anniversaries, etc.

We will pick one each week to run here free of charge, please keep it to less than 50 words.  
Please send to [krivers@turley.com](mailto:krivers@turley.com)

## SCHOOL DAYS



In this photo, we have Samuel Davis, Oliver Michel, Mike Verteramo and Jack Ryan.



Here, we have Logan McDonald, Nell Ryan, Kinsley Davis and Isabel Michel.



Here, we have a pic of Ryleigh McDonald, Ella Verteramo, Addie Davis and Rosie Michel.



Those were the days as they say...

Submitted photos Kimberly Ryan

A throwback when the littles were babies.

Kimberly Ryan shared these photos with the Times as the community gets ready to head back to school.

"A group of our friends have been taking back to school photos with ice cream at Rices since 2020 when our boys entered Kindergarten and we had preschoolers and babies in tow," Ryan said. "Now our boys are entering 5th grade, the preschoolers are going into 3rd grade and we have a 1st grader and the babies are going into Kindergarten."



The kids really do grow up so fast

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## Travel expert to discuss Mt. Vesuvius, Pompeii at the WPL

WILBRAHAM— Author and retired Professor Matt Davis will present “Pompeii’s Final Day: The Eruption of Italy’s Mt. Vesuvius” at the Wilbraham Public Library on Monday, Sept. 8 at 6 p.m. Considered one of the greatest disasters in history, Davis will share what the well-preserved ruins have taught us about life in Ancient Rome and discuss the volcanic risks still facing metropolitan Naples today.

This event is free and open to the public. Registration is appreciated but not required.

Sign up at [wilbrahamlibrary.org](http://wilbrahamlibrary.org), or call the library at 413-596-6141.

## Plant Swap to be held at Wilbraham Library

WILBRAHAM— Live up your home by swapping or adopting an indoor plant!

The Wilbraham Public Library will host Blackstone Valley Veggie Gardens for their presentation, Houseplants 101, on Monday, September 15 at 6 p.m. Then, on Saturday,

Sept. 20 from Noon to 1:30 pm, the public is encouraged to bring their extra houseplants, clippings, and propagations to the library to swap with others. These events are free and open to the public.

For more information and guidelines, visit [wilbrahamlibrary.org](http://wilbrahamlibrary.org).

## St. Cecilia Women’s Club meeting

WILBRAHAM - Our Annual Membership Tea will be held on Tuesday, Sept. 9 with Mass at 5:30 p.m. followed by tea, coffee and delicious treats!

We take this time every year to honor our past president and to acknowledge members with signif-

icant years of membership.

It’s a wonderful chance to greet old friends and perhaps make new ones as well! Please come and join us!

The meeting takes place at St. Cecilia Church at 42 Main St. in Wilbraham.

## PRINCIPALS from page 1

microphone to say hello to the School Committee members and share more about themselves.

Donovan thanked the district for welcoming them in their new roles.

“As John said, we’ve been really busy this summer getting acclimated to our new roles. Lots of things happening at Stony Hill this summer. New flooring, curriculum deliveries, hiring,” Donovan said. “So, I’m really excited to welcome students back next week.”

Beaulac said she was thrilled to be in the district.

“I grew up over in Longmeadow, worked in Springfield,” Beaulac said. “I was over in the Berkshires for the past two years and de-

ecided that my family and I needed to come home, to be around our people and that is exactly how I have felt entering Mile Tree. I have been met with open arms by both the staff, the families and the students that I’ve already met, which has been great. Our team of principals—both elementary, middle and high—have been super collaborative, and everybody in the district team as well. So, we are looking forward to a very collaborative, positive year in both of our schools and thank you for having us.”

She also had this message for the School Committee members: connect with the schools and consider stopping by for a visit.

“Please be present and visible in our schools as

well. I think that’s a big part of our push is to have more visibility than ever before,” Beaulac said. “So, you’re welcome to come on down.”

Vice Chair Sean Kennedy then welcomed Beaulac and Donovan with these words.

“I want to thank you both. Wish you the best and please let us know if you need anything, what support you need. If you need us to be somewhere at a certain time, please reach out,” Kennedy said. “I know everyone on the committee here, I’m sure, will be more than happy to help out.”

Chair Michal Boudreau thanked the new principals for introducing themselves, wishing them luck.

“Have a great year,” Boudreau said.

## FLAG from page 1

by the time he retired. He did stints in several states and countries including Romania and the Middle East.

Military service runs in his family as his father, sister-in-law, grandfather, cousins and brothers have also served. They all served in the Air Force too.

“All of the flags that I make are made from recycled pallet wood, so I’ll go out and someone’s got a stack of pallets and ask, ‘Hey, can I take these?’ and ‘Yep.’ So, I cut them up, throw them in the car, bring them home, knock out all the nails, rip down them to length and width and glue them together and stain them and just assemble it,” Mutti said. “It’s all 100% made from upcycled pallet material that I find.”

Mutti said his company started during the pandemic and when everyone was home, there was a maple tree branch that was in a school yard across the street from his house. After getting the branch down, he wondered what he could do with it.

His wife, Yvonne, later asked if he could make a cutting board, which he did.

“She loved it and she was like, ‘Oh, I bet my mom would like one.’ I was like, ‘Oh, I’ll make one for your mom,’” Mutti said. “So, I ended up making a bunch of them for friends and family around Christmas time.”

After doing cutting boards and some craft shows, Mutti then made a website and later saw some flags at a craft show, inspired to make his

own.

“I mulled around some ideas,” Mutti said. “So I was like, ‘Well, let me try pallets,’ so I went and tore up a bunch of pallets, started the pro-

He also loves giving back to the community, especially the veterans and first responders, adding the greatest gifts one can give are time, talent and treasure.

“In fact, once a month, we give away a free flag. You just go to the website, you just put in somebody who you want to submit for a free flag. Tell us out of all the different options that we have for flags which style you want and once a month, we randomly select a name and we

send that person a free flag,” Mutti said. “Once the name’s submitted, it doesn’t get removed until that person gets a flag, so your odds are eventually you will get one. We just shipped one out two weeks ago and we got another one going out Wednesday of next week.”

Renna pointed to where it said “Serving Those Who Served” when asked what it meant to the department to receive this special gift.

“We’re here to provide services to people who’ve served in the Armed Forces. It is our job but it’s really just such a fulfilling thing to get the opportunity to serve a whole family and be able to help them out so much and just for their appreciation and the impact that it’s had working with them is just outstanding,” Renna said.

Mutti’s message was this. “For the veterans in town, you could not be in better hands. Pat is just genuinely a great guy, but he’s got a noble heart. He’s here for the right reasons,” Mutti said. “To the town, thank you for the opportunity to do this and to donate this and have it on the wall—like Pat said—for everyone to see. That’s the greatest honor for me is just knowing that it’s up here.”

Renna expressed his thanks to Mutti.

“It kind of just spells out exactly what we’re here for. To serve our local veterans,” Renna said.



Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

Another shot of the custom wood flag designed by U.S. Air Force Veteran Nate Mutti.

cess and tried some different things and this is kind of what I ended up with.”

Mutti was honored to present one of his custom wooden flags to the Department of Veterans Services.

“Absolutely love it. These are one of my favorite things to make,” Mutti said. “They just resonate, especially using the upcycle and recycled materials is the cherry on top that makes it a little more special.”

Renna said when Mutti talked about wanting to donate the flag to the department to share his gratitude for the support he and the Mutti Family received, he was humbled.

“I was like, ‘That’s awesome’ and then once he said that, we started bouncing all of the design ideas off of each other,” Renna said. “We went through—I don’t know—at least a half dozen iterations, what do we want it to look like, what do we want it to say. Because like you (Mutti) said, it’s going to end up being like the centerpiece of the office, which is awesome. It means a lot to me personally, but to the department too to have somebody—and a whole family, really—so appreciative of the service that they got here.”

Mutti looks back on his military service with pride.

“Enjoyed every single minute of it. People always say to me, ‘Thank you for your service.’ I’m like, ‘thank you for the opportunity to serve,’” Mutti said.

## HOPE from page 6

and Damaris. HHA donated the plot of land on Chestnut Street. UMass DesignBuild professors and students designed the modular home, are constructing it, and will oversee its delivery to the Holyoke site. Upon its arrival, GSHFH, which prepared the site and built the foundation, will complete utility connections, landscaping, and install appliances.

“This is a great collaboration to give the students practical, hands-on experience, and for Habitat to provide a home to a family that might not have qualified for one of our traditionally built homes,” said Aimee Giroux, GSHFH executive director. “Family size is one of many factors taken into consideration when building our homes and partnering with the future buyer. There is a need for affordable housing to benefit a variety of family sizes; not everyone needs three or four bedrooms. This project helps us to be able to make that happen.”

The design of the 575-square-foot modular home emphasizes energy efficiency via highly-insulated and air-sealed exterior assemblies, triple-glazed windows, all-electric appliances/utilities, and low-embodied carbon building materials, such as wood fiber, hemp, and straw, said Ben Leinfelder, construction manager of this year’s DesignBuild project and an alumnus of the program.

“We are chugging along right now and have our second group of students (the other half of the class) on the build site. It’s been great to introduce these eight students to our construction site, the tools of the trade, and to show off what their class-

mates completed in the first six-week session,” Ben said.

The decks and porch roof are framed and students are working on installing exterior trim and siding. Next up is drywall and siding.

“The challenge is keeping an eye on everything when I have pairs of students tackling different parts of the house and/or different kinds of tasks,” Ben said. “As this is an educational experience, I try to give the students some space to problem solve on their own – even make mistakes (that we then fix) – but ultimately, we want this to be a high-quality house for Pedro and Damaris.”

The house will feature design aspects specific to Pedro and Damaris, including a U-kitchen and interior stairs to the basement. The couple expressed a desire to one day finish the basement and turn it into a spare bedroom. By having an internal staircase, they have the ability to add more living space to the ground floor. The UMass DesignBuild team also allocated one of the donated windows to the lower level for that specific purpose.

“Every design is a matter of thinking about what would be most valuable within the given constraints,” said Naomi Darling, a design studio professor at Mount Holyoke College and the UMass Architecture Department. “We went back and forth between a bar kitchen and a U-kitchen. We ultimately decided on the U-kitchen because we understand both Pedro and Damaris really like to cook.”

The house is expected to be finished in autumn. To learn more about Greater Springfield Habitat’s homeownership program, visit [habitatspringfield.org/how-to-apply](http://habitatspringfield.org/how-to-apply)

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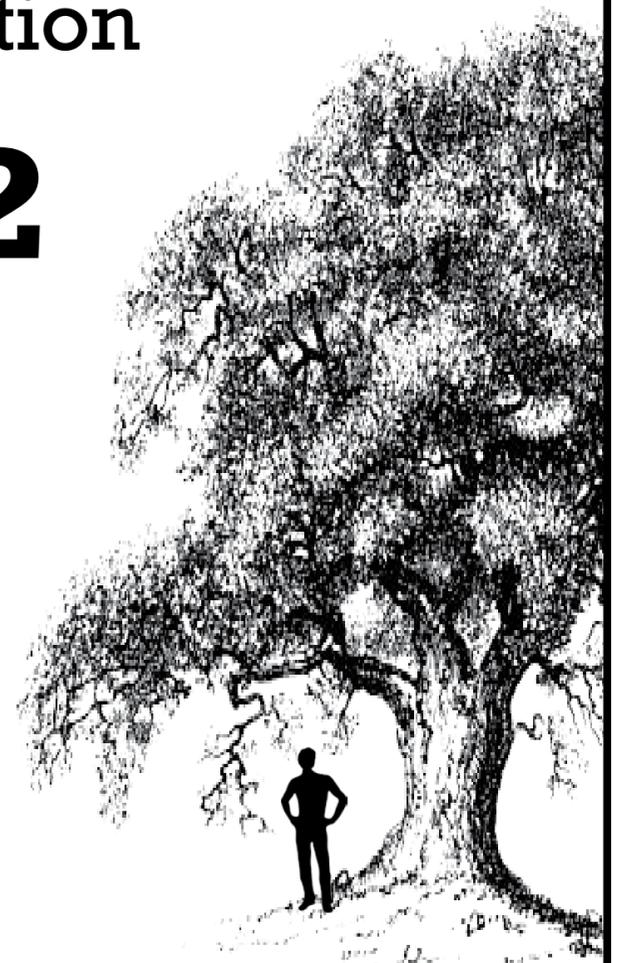
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# 'Treasures from the Attic' unveiled this Sunday

WILBRAHAM – When the Wilbraham Atheneum Society unveils their "Treasures from the Attic" exhibit for 2025, at their Sunday, Sept. 7 Open House from 2 to 4 p.m., it will also prompt even more questions about Wilbraham history.

Lucy Peltier, the Old Meeting House Museum's chief curator, past president and treasurer came up with the idea last season for an interesting exhibit to show off at the museum's September Open House. It will be repeated again this year on Sunday, Sept. 7 from 2 to 4 p.m.

The Open House at the museum at 450 Main Street will feature artifacts from the Wilbraham Atheneum Society's collections that have rarely, if ever, been displayed. (The Atheneum Society oversees the town-owned museum.) The Open House is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served and the Gift Shop will be open.

"We are going to do it again this year, but with all newly discovered objects, and we have added a new series of mystery questions called the 'Historical Wilbraham Trivia Contest,'" said Peltier.

The questions were put together by historian David

Bourcier, president of the Board of Trustees of the Atheneum Society. And the organization's Vice President Karen Geaghan will emcee the trivia contest. Here are several samples of trivia questions that attendees will be asked:

*Which famous General transported artillery to support General Washington during the Revolutionary War, following a route that roughly traced the Old Boston Post Road through North Wilbraham around January 15 or 16, 1776?*

*What year did the first*

*Massachusetts Turnpike pass through the town of Wilbraham?*

NOTE: This could be a stump question because most people would say 1957, when the last Massachusetts Turnpike opened, which also passes through Wilbraham.

You will have to come to the Sept. 7 Open House to find out the answers.

### Can You Guess?

Echoing old Yankee Magazine articles that test if people can identify what a historical item is used for, the open house will also feature a "Can you guess what this is?"



(Charles F. Bennett photo)

Do you know what this antique was used for?...

display of unusual items. Visitors are invited to guess the purpose and function of these items that used to be common, but are now unfamiliar to many, according to Peltier.

For more information about the Open Houses or the Museum, search "Old Meeting House Museum" on Facebook or Instagram.

# PET PAGE



## PET OF THE MONTH

### Meet Willbee!



Meet Willbee! A very handsome Australian Shepherd and all around "cool dude". He lives with his mom Lee Fernandes.

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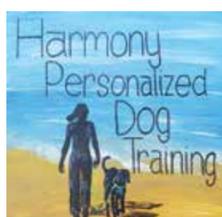
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- Sept. 8 - Behavior Modification
- Sept. 9 - Basics of Obedience, Socialization & Foundations of Scent Work.

All class descriptions & sign-ups on the Belchertown Rec Dept website.

- "Saturday In the Park!"  
Every Saturday at Post Office Park, Wilbraham  
12 noon - Pack Walk  
1:30 p.m. - Basic Obedience & Socialization  
All ages & breeds - \$20 each - Attend 1 class or both!

- Wednesday Nights in Belchertown  
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- Behavior modification

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## ATTENTION READERS!

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Email your photos to: jwalker@turley.com. Please include your name and your pet's name.

# Easing the Back to School Transition for Your Pet

Cats and dogs are creatures of habit. They like their feeding and sleeping kept on a regular routine. Changes to our routines can have a negative effect on our pets too.

When the children go back to school it disrupts the summer routine your pet has become accustomed to. While you are preparing your kids for the transition to a new routine keep your pet in mind as well.

### Tips for Transitioning:

- **Coming and going:** Don't make a big deal about leaving the house or, for that matter, returning. Make departures and arrivals a low-key affair. Don't get your pets worked up, and don't make them emotional moments.
- **Exercise early:** Consider getting your pets up earlier for a walk, a run, a game of fetch or a string-chasing session. They need

the exercise and the earlier exertion might mitigate their unwanted behaviors later.

- **Encourage alone time:** Provide "puzzle toys" that dispense treats when they're manipulated the right way (available online or at most pet stores).

- **Leave some comfort behind:** Create special bedding for your dog or cat. Leave behind an article of clothing or a special blanket that has your scent on it. Your pet may find it comforting.

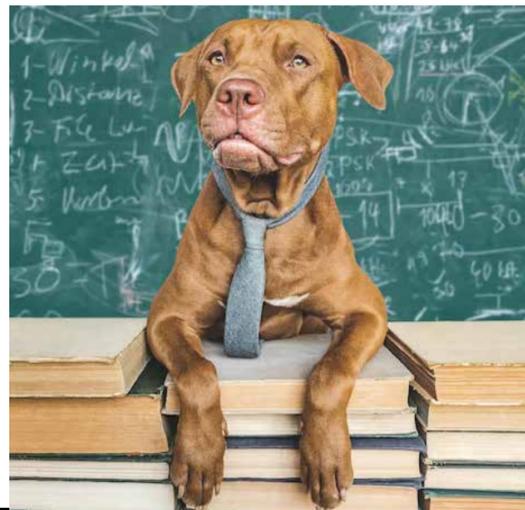
- **Field trips:** Your kids love it when they get a chance to leave the classroom for a field trip. How about an outing for your pet to a four-legged friend's house? Visit a dog park or doggy daycare center. Or hire a dog-walker to come by on a regular schedule.

- **Multimedia:** Some experts say it's not a bad idea to leave on the television or

some soothing music when you leave the house. Your dog CAN actually see what's happening on modern televisions and the sounds may keep Fido or Fluffy calm.

- **Create new routines:** Start early by creating new routines. Maybe you started the early morning exercise routine. How about an after-school routine that keeps your children involved and maintains the relationship they developed during the long summer months? Make sure they're back to feed and water your pet at the same time. Encourage them to have after-school playtime, or some time before bed, with your dog or cat.

- **Guidance not Punishment:** Don't punish your pets for their failure to adjust when their routine changes. Provide guidance, support and training.



sports@turley.com

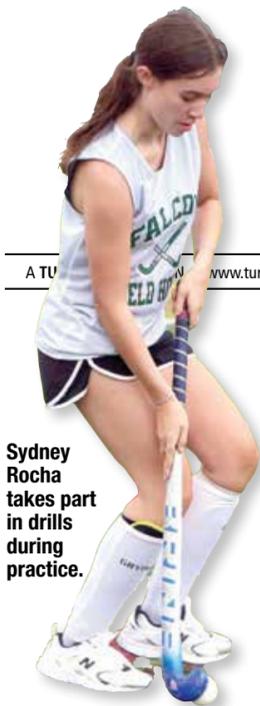
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# SPORTS

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Sydney Rocha takes part in drills during practice.



Minnechaug field hockey practices last week, getting ready for the fall season.



Kendall Placzek drags a pass away.

## Field hockey team readies for regular season



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotots.com  
Tess Morrow follows through on a hit.

WILBRAHAM – The regular season got underway earlier this week, with Minnechaug playing on the road at East Longmeadow. In their preparation for the season, the Falcons field hockey team took on out of state competition as they faced Somers and Suffield, both Connecticut teams. Minnechaug will be challenged early, with their home opener coming up against perennial power Longmeadow on Friday, Sept. 5 at 6:30 p.m.



Trinity Burgemyer eyes an open teammate.

## Minnechaug girls soccer hits the field this week

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

WILBRAHAM — During Ava Kearney's first two years as a member of the Minnechaug girls' varsity soccer team, the Lady Falcons won a total of 31 matches.

After missing the entire 2024 season while recovering from an ACL injury to her right knee, Kearney is very excited about getting back on the soccer pitch again as a senior.

The Lady Falcons are scheduled to open the 2025 regular season with a road match against Coombs Division rival Longmeadow on Thursday night.

"I've missed playing soccer so much and I'm very happy to be back out on the field again," said Kearney following her team's pre-season scrimmage at Ludlow High School on Aug. 26. "I really didn't want to miss my senior year."

Kearney, who's wearing a brace on her right knee, suffered the injury while playing a match for her club soccer team during the spring of 2023.

"I've known Ava since she was in the fifth grade," said longtime Minnechaug head coach Nundi Goncalves. "She's a very good soccer player and athlete. I'm very glad that she's able to play soccer this year."

As a freshman, Kearney was selected as a member of the Lady Falcons varsity squad by Goncalves without even playing a game for the junior varsity team.

"I was nervous when I joined the varsity soccer team a freshman, but the seniors really helped me a lot," Kearney said. "Nundi is a demanding soccer coach, but he only wants the best for each of his players."

The other two current seniors who were also freshmen on the Lady Falcons 2022 varsity soccer roster are Kelly Cronin and Zoriah Wray.

Cronin is also recovering from an ACL injury to her right knee, which occurred during a varsity basketball game last winter. The timetable for her return to action is unknown.

The Lady Falcons, who finished the 2022 season with an 18-3-2 overall record, captured the Western Mass. Class A title, and advanced to the final four of the Division 2 state tournament.

"I look back on that season almost everyday day because it was so much fun," Kearney said. "Seeing Nundi win a Western Mass title was very exciting."

Please see **SOCCER**, page12

## Falcons girls volleyball opens up season



Maliha Daubon goes lower for hit.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotots.com  
Minnechaug girls volleyball players do drills during practice last week.

WILBRAHAM – Earlier this week, Minnechaug was able to get its regular season going, hosting Agawam High School in the season opener at home. Following a road match at Bay State Charter, Minnechaug returns home on Monday, Sept. 8 to face Westfield at 6 p.m.



Sreen Awkal gets ready to practice her serve.



Aezline Rost practices a set.



Jordan Miller makes a bump.



Addison Baldyga goes for a hit over the net.

## Quabbin Fall League expands to six teams

SOUTH HADLEY – After successful recruiting, the Quabbin Valley Baseball League has reached a decision to expand this year's fall league to six teams.

With the expansion, there are still some open roster spots for players who are age 28 and older. The league is set to get underway with its Sunday schedule beginning on Sunday, Sept. 7.

All players in the league will get to experience an

eight-game slate with the cost in the range of \$45 to \$60 depending on the number of players on the team. The cost reflects paying for insurance, umpires, baseballs, and fields.

Primary fields being used this fall include Mittineague in West Springfield and Beachgrounds Park in South Hadley, with a third field being finalized this week.

Players potentially interested in participating in the league this year, don't wait to

sign-up.

Go to [www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org](http://www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org) and click on the registration page. If you have more questions, you can contact the league's co-ordinators at [gscibelli22@yahoo.com](mailto:gscibelli22@yahoo.com) or [ikhandfield@gmail.com](mailto:ikhandfield@gmail.com)

The Quabbin Valley Baseball League is an over-28 baseball league playing games during the spring and summer in Western Massachusetts. The league recently expanded

to offer an over-28 fall league to allow players in the age range to face like competition during the fall months. There were four teams last year, and the league is expanding due to higher interest in its second year.

The tradition of fall league is to play with wood bats only. The league has nine-inning games and participants are guaranteed time in the field for at least four innings.

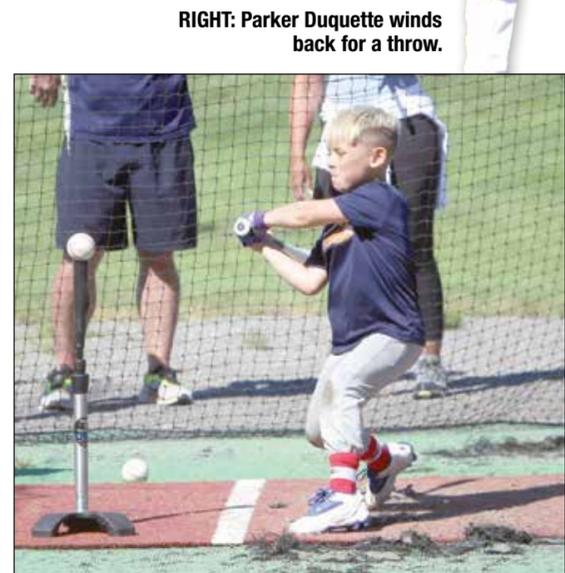
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# Former minor league brings regional camp back



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotots.com  
Sam Lacasse works on his pitching.



RIGHT: Parker Duquette winds back for a throw.

Luke LaChappelle eyes the ball as he swings.

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

WILBRAHAM—There were many different sports camps held throughout Western Massachusetts this summer.

The last one was called the Summer Sendoff Baseball Camp, which took place on the baseball fields at Spec Pond in Wilbraham during the third week of August and featured players from all over the region.

The camp director is Dustin Brisson, who played Minor League Baseball for the Boston Red Sox.

“This is our second year holding the baseball camp and it has been absolutely incredible,” Brisson said. “All of the kids have been great. They understand that this isn’t just a normal day camp, it’s a skills camp. They’re learning different things about baseball every day.”

Brisson, who was born

in Florida, played college baseball at the University of Central Florida from 1997-2000. He was drafted by the New York Mets and the Miami Marlins before signing with the Red Sox.

He advanced to Double A before his professional baseball career came to an end due to an injury.

“I was blessed to have the opportunity to play professional baseball,” said Brisson, who also owns Forge Athletics. “I’m doing what I can to give back.”

During one of his college baseball games in Orlando, Brisson hit a long flyball down the right field line.

The base umpire was Don LaValley, who’s from Chicopee. LaValley ruled that the ball was foul, but it was a home run. LaValley told the campers that story at this year’s camp.

“I’ve known Don since I was playing college baseball,” Brisson said. “We’re good friends now.”

About 45 youth baseball players between the ages of 7-15 from Wilbraham and the surrounding communities attended the baseball camp. The campers were split up into groups depending on their age.

“Once we know how many kids will be coming to the camp, we like to put them in

groups depending on their age,” Brisson said. “We just want to make sure that the kids are in the appropriate skill level. It’s hard to put eighth or ninth graders with third or fourth graders. I want them to have fun and learn some new things at the same time. They’re learning for some of the best coaches in the area.”

A couple of the camp instructors were Chade Shade, who was the first-year head coach of the Springfield College baseball team, Dan Gomez, who’s the head baseball coach at Western New England University, and Terry Doyle, who coaches baseball at New England College which is in Henniker, NH.

Minnechaug Regional varsity baseball coach Mike Netkovick also worked at this year’s camp.

“This is an outstanding baseball camp for the kids,” Netkovick said. “Dustin is a great guy, and he has an outstanding baseball resume. I’m glad that I was able to help at this year’s camp. I never attended a camp like this one when I was a kid.”

Ray Fagnant, who grew up in Chicopee and is the Boston Red Sox Northeast Regional Scouting Supervisor, also helped at the camp.

A few of the different stations were hitting, fielding,



Rick Colon practices his technique behind the plate.

and throwing.

One of the older campers was Nolan Witek, who’s from Wilbraham.

“This baseball camp is a lot of fun,” said Witek, who’s a sixth grader. “This camp will prepare me for my baseball tryouts for the Wilbraham Falcons in a couple of weeks. Baseball is my favorite sport.”

Brisson was also aided at the camp by his wife, Kasey.

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

Brisson and his staff are already looking forward to holding the baseball camp again next summer.



Alex Nunlist takes a swing.



Eli Olbrych frames up a pitch.

**SOCCER** from page 11

In the 2022 season opener, Cronin scored a pair of goals leading the Lady Falcons to a 3-0 road win against the Westfield Bombers in a

Coombs Division match-up.

Kearney netted her first career varsity goal two weeks later in a 2-0 win against rival Ludlow at historic Lusitano Stadium. Kylie Ray, who’s currently a sophomore mem-

ber of the women’s soccer team at Seton Hall University, was credited with the assist on Kearney’s goal.

“Kylie sent a cross into the box which was tipped by the goalie. I scored on a re-

bound shot,” Kearney said. “It was a great feeling, especially doing it against one of our biggest rivals.”

Ludlow was also a member of the Coombs Division, but they’re a first-year members of the Kurty/Fielding Division this fall.

After defeating Chicopee Comp, 6-0, in the Class A quarterfinals, and West Springfield, 1-0, in the semifinals, the Lady Falcons pulled out a thrilling 2-1 win in a penalty shootout over East Longmeadow in the championship game.

“We beat East Longmeadow in PK’s in the Western Mass. finals,” said Kearney. “I was in the lineup, but thankfully I didn’t have to take a shot during the shootout.”

The Lady Falcons lost to Silver Lake, 1-0, in the Division 2 state semifinals, which was held at Doyle Field in Leominster. It marked the first time Minnechaug Regional played in the state semifinals since 2015 when they lost to Algonquin Re-

gional, 1-0, in the Division 1 state semifinal match at Westfield State University.

After graduating seven seniors, Kearney and her teammates posted a 13-5-2 overall record the following season.

The Lady Falcons lost in a penalty shootout to West Springfield in the Western Mass. semifinals and to Hingham in a round of 16 contest in the Division 2 state tournament.

“I do like the playoff format,” Kearney said. “Even if you don’t win a Western Mass. title, you still have a chance to win a state title. We’re hoping to win both a Western Mass. title and a state title this year.”

The Lady Falcons tri-captains of the 2023 squad were Lylah Jennotte, Zoey Cardano, and Ray.

With Kearney lending her support from the sidelines, Minnechaug posted an 8-7-5 overall record a year ago.

“It was very frustrating missing my whole junior year,” Kearney said. “I

worked very hard during my recovery. I knew that I would be coming back this year.”

Kearney, who didn’t play in any of her team’s Pioneer Valley Summer Soccer League matches this past summer, was cleared to return to action on the first day of the high school practice, which was on August 18.

The other four Lady Falcons seniors listed on this year’s varsity roster are Cailin O’Brien, Elizabeth Woytowicz, Alexis Carreira, and Zoe Pinnoch.

The Lady Falcons starting goalie will most likely be junior Abigail Lee. As a sophomore, Lee was the backup goalie to Makenzi Pastreck, who’s beginning her freshman year as a member of the Southern Connecticut University women’s soccer team.

“I think we’re going to be a very good soccer team once again this year,” Goncalves said. “We do have a bunch of quality soccer players.”

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**CLUES ACROSS**

- Fairly large
- Barrels per day (abbr.)
- Cover the entirety of
- Leafy appetizer
- Showy ornament
- Norse personification of old age
- Athletes
- Closes tightly
- Attack via hurling items
- Where the reserves stand
- Sword
- Begat
- Damage another's reputation
- Northeast
- Turf
- For each
- Hours (Spanish)
- Western state
- One who offers help
- Flanks
- A woolen cap of Scottish origin
- Free from drink or drugs
- Tunnels
- Mature
- More dried-up
- News organization
- Steal something
- Forms one's public persona (abbr.)
- Female fish eggs
- Small petrel of southern seas
- Edible starches
- Historical
- In a place to sleep
- Horse grooms
- Off-Broadway theater award
- Chinese dynasty
- Resembling a wing
- Small projection on a bird's wing
- Of the Isle of Man
- Derived unit of force (abbr.)

**CLUES DOWN**

- Vipers
- Ancient city in Syria
- Slog
- Emits coherent radiation
- "Pollock" actor Harris
- Bleated
- Monetary units of Afghanistan
- Tooth doctor
- One who takes apart
- Commoner
- Beat poet Ginsberg
- Cave deposit material
- Home energy backup
- Begets
- Face part
- Frocks
- Hill or rocky peak
- Giving the impression of dishonesty
- About ear
- Male parents
- Popular grilled food
- Vaccine developer
- Not conforming
- Polite address for women
- 1970 U.S. environmental law
- Astronomical period of 18 years
- One who fights the government
- Center for Excellence in Education
- Watches discreetly
- An electrically charged atom
- Hymn
- Arabic given name
- Popular pie nut
- City in Zambia
- Species of cherry
- John \_\_, British writer
- Be next to
- Make angry
- Give birth to a lamb or kid
- Unhappy

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# Monthly Highlights for September at the Hampden Senior Center:

## Friends of Hampden Senior Citizens HUGE Indoor Tag Sale through Sept. 12

Shopping Hours Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

\*\*\*Final Sale Day: Saturday, Sept. 13 from 8 a.m. to Noon (no early birds!)

Thank you for supporting this fundraiser. Proceeds from the Tag Sale will benefit senior center programs and activities. Please call 566-5588 with any questions.

Friends of Hampden Senior Citizens Annual Rice's Farm Pie Sale Fundraiser. Order a delicious Apple or Pumpkin Pie between Sept. 2 and Oct. 17.

Pies are \$19 each, and all proceeds from the sale will benefit programs and activities at the Senior Center. Pies will be available for pickup on Saturday, Nov. 1, from Noon to 1:30 p.m. in the senior center parking lot. Order forms are available at the Senior Center front desk. We appreciate your support!

## Crafts with Kim Versatile Harvest/Halloween Wreath

Tuesday, Sept. 9, from 1 to 3 p.m.

Slight changes will allow you to decorate as you wish.

Cost is \$25 for each wreath. All materials are provided. Projects are on display in the lobby.

Please call 566-5588 to reserve your spot. Space is limited.

## Scrapbooking Class

Every Tuesday, from 10 a.m. to Noon

Please bring 7-8 photographs, scissors, a tape runner, and any stickers you may wish to use.

Kim will provide scrapbooking paper and all the tools necessary to make your book gift-worthy.

Cost is \$10 per class.

## Do you need to get your affairs in order?

Wednesday, Sept. 10 at 10 a.m.

Patrick Sherman from Edward Jones will be here to help guide you through the necessary financial decisions

you should make for yourself, rather than having someone make those choices for you.

Join Pat for coffee and bring a family member or close friend to have a casual but important conversation.

Pat will be here on the 2nd Wednesday of each month and will be available to answer any questions until noon. He will schedule appointments to meet with you privately for your individual needs.

Please call 566-5588 to sign up.

## Life with Bill:

### A New Model of Aging

Friday, Sept. 12 at 12:30 p.m.

Join us for a tasty lunch of Chicken Piccata provided by Greater Springfield Senior Services at Noon (suggested donation for lunch is \$3) and stay for a FREE program with Nick Kachulis, local author, storyteller, and professional musician starting at 12:30 pm. Nick will be here to perform his program of stories and music, Life with Bill: A New Model of Aging. A heartfelt tale of taking care of a parent in their later years, Life with Bill is both an exceptionally educational and entertaining experience. Nick Kachulis is a published author with work appearing in several periodicals, including Chicken Soup for the Soul: Grieving Loss and Healing. Nick's music has been featured on broadcast television in Asia, Africa, Europe, North and South America, including ABC, PBS, HBO, and ESPN. Sign up today by calling 566-5588.

Sponsored by the Friends of Hampden Senior Citizens and BC/BS of MA. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Hampden Cultural Council, a local agency that is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

## FREE Tech Support

Monday, Sept. 15, from 10 to 11 a.m.

Everyday Tech Support will be available by appointment only for 30-minute sessions on the 3rd Monday of each month from 10 to

11 a.m. to meet with you to address your technical questions.

Come prepared with your charged portable device: mobile phone, laptop, or tablet. Know your passwords, and have your questions written down. Time is of the essence; use it wisely. It's a good idea to bring a notebook to take notes. Appointments are limited, and pre-registration is mandatory.

Please call 566-5588 to schedule your appointment.

## Hershey Chocolate Tour

Tuesday, Sept. 16, 2025 1 p.m.

Join us for a virtual tour presented by the Hershey Story Museum in Hershey, Pennsylvania.

Sweet Success: The Story of Milton Hershey & International Chocolate Tasting.

Discover how Milton Hershey turned a simple cocoa bean into one of the most iconic chocolate brands in the world! You will embark on a guided chocolate tasting and explore the delicious flavor profiles of single-source chocolates from across the globe. Limited spots available.

You must pre-register for this program by calling 566-5588. You don't want to miss this delicious experience. Sponsored in part by: Katie Krupka, Assisted Living Locators

## Veteran Discounts

Discussion with Jason Burgener, VSO

Wednesday, Sept. 17, from 9:30 to 10 a.m.

Come, enjoy a cup of coffee, and learn what discounts are available to Veterans and how to access these money-saving opportunities. Please call 566.5588 to let us know you're coming.

Grandparents Day/Thunderbirds BINGO

Thursday, Sept. 18, at Noon

Grandparents Luncheon Lunch: Hot Dog, Broccoli Slaw & Baked Beans Provided by GSSSI. \$3 Suggested Donation

Followed by: BINGO with

BOOMER and the Springfield Thunderbirds.

We will have Thunderbirds prizes, including tickets to games, koozies, t-shirts, and more!

This is a FREE event. Come and have your picture taken with Boomer and win great prizes.

Please call 566-5588 to reserve your seat. Space is limited.

Greeting Cards with Ellie

Monday, Sept. 22, 1 to 3 p.m.

Come and discover endless possibilities for creating your own personal greeting cards. Learn new techniques each month.

Cost is \$3.00 per person. All materials are provided.

Please call 566-5588 to reserve your spot. Space is limited.

## Lobby Learning

Thursdays in September

Don't have time to come in and sit for a long presentation? We understand.

Lobby Learning is aimed at welcoming businesses and organizations to provide helpful information to you.

You are welcome to stop in to pick up information and speak one-on-one with representatives in the senior center lobby and stay for as long as you need to get your questions answered.

Perhaps there is an organization you would like us to welcome? Please let us know.

Sept. 4: Assisted Living Locators, Katie Krupka

Sept 11: Retired Senior Volunteer Program (S.S.V.P.)

Sept. 18: Alzheimer's Association

Sept. 25: Kind Hands Home Care

Do you have Parkinson's Disease, or know someone who does?

PWR! Moves Group Exercise Classes with Lisa Kern, OT, Reiki

Master/Holistic Therapist

Mondays from 9 to 10 a.m.

A Parkinson-specific exercise class that "makes function, exercise" to keep you moving and doing more of

what you want to do! As you practice, you will be challenged physically and cognitively while working on fitness goals: strength, balance, agility, aerobics, and flexibility.

Exercises are designed to improve your fitness, counteract your PD symptoms, and increase your daily activity. This whole-body, function-focused exercise class will push you to do more than you think you can in a fun, empowering, and enriched environment!

Pre-paid rate for 8 classes: \$65, Drop-in rate: \$10 per class. Please call 566-5588 to sign up.

Common Threads Led by Joan Tompkins, PhD

Mondays, from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. - No meeting on 9/8 and 9/15.

Come join this friendly group... Share memories and learn new coping skills on how to deal with loss, loneliness, and adapting to life changes. There is no charge to join this group. All are welcome.

Please call 566-5588 to let us know you're coming.

Ukulele Classes with Amy Scott

Current session runs through October 20th. Drop-ins are welcome!

No classes on 9/1 & 10/13

New Times: Mondays

Beginner Ukulele - 11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.

Cost is \$50 for the session if paid in full or \$7 per class for drop-ins.

Advanced Ukulele - 1 to 2:30 p.m.

Cost is \$80 for the session. Please call 566-5588 to sign up.

Pickleball for Seniors 60 and older at Thornton Burgess, 85 Wilbraham Rd, Hampden

Wednesday morning timeslots: 8, 9:30, or 11 a.m.

You must call the senior center to sign up.

This program is for new players and beginners looking to hone their skills and learn the rules of the game.

Please call 566-5588 to

register and schedule your court time.

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

Tuesdays from 2:15 to 3 p.m.

Classes in September will be on the 9th, 16th, 23rd, and 30th.

Join Lamar to learn about balance and how it impacts your overall health and wellness. Get tips on strength training and cardiovascular endurance to increase mobility and flexibility.

"It's never too late to start making progress on your health span. Muscles and balance are the two things you can train and improve even as you age."

The new 11-week session begins September 30th through December 16th.

Cost is \$55 for the session if paid in full or \$6 per class. Please call 566-5588 to reserve your spot.

Ballroom Dance for Balance and Longevity

Thursdays, from 2:15 to 3:15 p.m.

Current session through Sept. 18. No classes on 9/4 and 9/11.

Social dance classes led by Amy Villalobos-Schold, a skilled occupational therapist. Focused on strengthening, stability, and modifications... so you can dance! Beginners and singles welcome!

The new 8-week session begins September 25th through November 13th

Cost is \$60 per person for the 8-week session if paid in full, or \$10 for drop-ins.

Please call 566-5588 to reserve your spot.

"African Drumming" with Jason

NEW TIME\*\* Fridays from 2 to 3 p.m.

The new 14-week session begins Sept. 5 through Dec. 12. No class on 11/28.

All are welcome! No previous experience necessary.

Cost is \$80 for the 14-week session if paid in full, or \$7 per class for drop-ins.

Please call 566-5588 to reserve your spot. Space is limited.

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YORK from page 1

had a concert there two years ago. Emile Lang, the adult service librarian, said she was excited to have York return.

"We've known Matt for a while, and we were glad to welcome him back to the library. The library is always interested in showing independent artists, they really help us appeal to a wide range of audiences that live in town," Lang said.

Lang enjoys concerts being performed at the library.

"There aren't a ton of concerts outside, since the weather is always a factor, but we still do host many solo acts and groups who are happy to perform here, and we're happy to welcome them. Our next concert is scheduled for Dec. 8, which is a winter holiday concert with Melodious Zach," Lang said.

During his performance, York shared the story of when he attended a music festival, and was backstage waiting to get on stage with two other groups.

"I remember looking

around and seeing a Spanish band and a Korean group, and there was an obvious language barrier, but at some point we all just started making noise, making music, together. It wasn't anything grand by any means, but still, we all connected through the music," York said.

York has been performing for 40 years, learning how to play the guitar around the age of 10 while living in Austin, Texas.

"For me, Willie Nelson was the biggest thing in the world when I was a kid. He's a huge inspiration for me just because he's this chameleon who wants to play with everyone. I've played shows in the poorest parts of Tennessee to the yacht clubs in the Cape, and I just hope that everyone feels the spirit and fun that Willie was able to bring," York said.

Before his final song, York shared one of his favorite quotes by Nelson, "We are the same. There is no difference anywhere in the world. People are people. They laugh, cry, feel, and love, and music seems to be the



Turley photo by Angelina Acevedo

Matt York performing outside the WPL on a cool summer evening.

commons denomination that brings us all together. Music cuts through all boundaries and goes right to the soul."

He ended the night playing "Turn Out The Lights, The Party's Over", wishing the audience a good night and

hoping that, just for that hour, his audience came together to feel the joy that music brings him.

Wilbraham sponsors a Dementia Caregiver Support Group

WILBRAHAM – Join our Caregiver Support Group.

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Are you caregiver for someone and feeling overwhelmed and would like a safe place to talk and gather information and resources?

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RSVP to Barbara at 413-596-8379 or bharrington@wilbraham-ma.gov.

The group is open to everyone.



RENOVATIONS from page 1

room was named after Kyle Humphries, a wrestler and coach from East Longmeadow who passed away in 2022 at the age of 25.

Ducey addressed the development during the Selectmen's report.

He began by noting that several months ago, there was a discussion with the Friends groups for the senior center and Parks and Rec. Department about naming rights and "a host of other things."

Ducey complimented both groups for raising millions of dollars over the past several years, essentially applauding them for going about it the right way.

He continued to note that on Aug. 12, he received an invitation for the ribbon-cut-

ting ceremony at Memorial School for Aug. 16, which he couldn't attend.

"I didn't really put much thought into it... because I hadn't heard anything about it," Ducey said.

However, he was out to eat with friends over the weekend, who began asking him about it. He said he didn't know anything, and they were surprised because they saw it on the news.

The next day, the Western Mass News video popped up on his Facebook, and Ducey watched the video.

He wasn't quite sure how to react.

"I was kind of baffled by this," Ducey said. "Reportedly, there were \$65,000 of improvements in the wrestling rec room in a building whose fate is yet to be determined."

Ducey said he was sur-

prised that improvements of that extent occurred.

"What was equally surprising to me is the room is named after an individual who unfortunately passed away tragically in his mid-20s, who had been a member of that program for years," Ducey said, shortly before questioning why the Select Board wasn't part of this naming process.

After watching the news report, Ducey contacted the Friends of Recreation, and a member told him that they donated under \$10,000 to contribute to the renovation.

"I'm still trying to balance the [other] \$55,000 that was raised by them somehow," Ducey said.

Ducey added that the situation illustrates the need to have a unified, comprehensive vision or policy regard-

ing gifts and naming rights.

"I don't like to be the one who rains on the parade, but it's not in the best interests of the town or the residents to not have clear direction on these types of gifts," Ducey said.

Ducey explained that he would really like to understand several things.

"First, who or what entity accepted this gift? And allowed these improvements to occur without the Select Board knowing? That's a substantial amount of money," Ducey said. "The second thing, I'd really like to know about who or what entity named it? It doesn't seem right that we would not be involved in that discussion on some level. And, I really think as a board, we need to reprioritize that."

Ducey again emphasized

that he hates to be the one who rains on the parade and said he doesn't seek to make this a "negative thing."

"But it's really one of those questions we need the answers, and we need to understand better," Ducey said. "Who's accepting gifts? We need to think about this in a more comprehensive way."

Longtime Select Board member Sue Bunnell then noted that she had recollection of the item being discussed before the Select Board a long time ago.

"I will just mention that I do remember us being informed of donations that were heading in that direction for the wrestling room donations and improvements. There was notification that I have memory of," Bunnell said.

Ducey responded that maybe it occurred before he

joined the board, which Bunnell said was a good question.

Ducey was still adamant. He said maybe initial approval was given, but he doesn't believe the entire \$65,000 project was approved.

"Maybe because that started, they felt as though they had the ability to just continue to add on?" Ducey said.

Select Board Chair Michael Squindo acknowledged Ducey's concerns and said that it will be important to communicate to avoid a similar occurrence from unfolding again.

"I think your point is well taken that just making sure whatever the practice is and what the policy is clearly outlined for all parties, so we don't find ourselves with what happened in this situation," Squindo said.

PUBLIC NOTICES

WILBRAHAM PLANNING BOARD

The Wilbraham Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on Wednesday, September 24, 2025, at 6:00 PM in the Town Office Building, 240 Springfield Street, on the application of Daniel Strum (contractor) for 1) Site Plan Approval (SPA25-02) under Sections 3.4.2.8 and 4.10 of the Wilbraham Zoning Bylaw to allow construction of an 897 square foot detached Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) with attached garage and 2) a Special Permit (SP25-04) under Section 3.9.2.2 of the Wilbraham Zoning Bylaw to allow the proposed attached garage with a building footprint of 480 square feet resulting in combined garage area in the proposed and existing garage in excess of 1,100 square feet on property owned by Christopher and Melissa Knowles located at 27 Stonegate Circle as shown on plans on file in the Planning Office and posted for public viewing on the Planning Board page of the Town of Wilbraham website at www.wilbraham-ma.gov/123/Planning-Board. Both in person and virtual participation are available. To participate

virtually go to https://meet.goto.com/637841781 or call 866-899-4679 (Access Code: 637-841-781).

James Rooney, Chair 09/04, 09/11/2025

WILBRAHAM PLANNING BOARD

The Wilbraham Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on Wednesday, September 24, 2025, at 6:15 PM in the Town Office Building, 240 Springfield Street, on the application of Sabbie Siniscalchi (contractor) for Site Plan Approval (SPA25-03) under Sections 3.4.2.8 and 4.10 of the Wilbraham Zoning Bylaw to allow construction of a 543 square foot attached Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) on property owned by Anthony Tyler and Rebecca Impionbato located at 664 Stony Hill Road as shown on plans on file in the Planning Office and posted for public viewing on the Planning Board page of the Town of Wilbraham website at www.wilbraham-ma.gov/123/Planning-Board. Both in person and virtual participation are available. To participate

virtually go to https://meet.goto.com/637841781 or call 866-899-4679 (Access Code: 637-841-781).

James Rooney, Chair 09/04, 09/11/2025

WILBRAHAM BOARD OF APPEALS PUBLIC HEARING

The Wilbraham Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing on Thursday, September 18, 2025 at 5:45 PM on the application of Mark Nowak for 1) a Special Permit (ZBA25-09) under the provisions of Sections 3.4.5.20(B) and 6.5.11 of the Wilbraham Zoning By-Law to allow retail sales of used automobiles and trucks ancillary to the existing limousine transportation business and 2) a variance under the provisions of Section 15.5.2.2 of the Wilbraham Zoning By-Law to allow the automobiles to be parked within the front and rear yard setbacks on property owned by Nowak Family Trust at 8 Stony Hill Road as further specified in the application on file in the Planning Office and posted for public viewing on the Zoning Board of Appeals page of the Town of Wilbraham website

at www.wilbraham-ma.gov/135/Zoning-Board-of-Appeals.

Both in person and virtual participation are available. To participate virtually go to https://meet.goto.com/389877245 or call 877-309-2073 (Access Code: 389-877-245).

Edward Kivari Jr., Chairman 09/04, 09/11/2025

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-7758 Docket No. HD25C0213CA In the matter of: Azariy Eskandarinejad CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME A Petition to Change Name of Minor has been filed by Azariy Eskandarinejad of Wilbraham, MA requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to: Azariy Banari IMPORTANT NOTICE Any person may appear for

purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Hampden Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 09/25/2025.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara M Hyland, First Justice of this Court. Date: August 27, 2025

Rosemary A Saccomani Register of Probate 09/04/2025

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-7758 Docket No. HD25C0215CA In the matter of: Kian Eskandarinejad CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME A Petition to Change Name of Minor has been filed

by Kian Eskandarinejad of Wilbraham, MA requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to:

Kian Banari IMPORTANT NOTICE Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Hampden Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 09/25/2025.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara M Hyland, First Justice of this Court. Date: August 27, 2025

Rosemary A Saccomani Register of Probate 09/04/2025



A grid of letters used for a word search puzzle.

Wilbraham-Hampden Times OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

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**DANCE** from page 1

and Longmeadow--with tickets costing \$1 per ticket or \$5 for six tickets. A benefit raffle also took place ahead of the event from Aug. 11 through 22.

The Walk to End Alzheimer's takes place on Sunday, Oct. 26, at 10 a.m. at Holyoke Community College.

Ruth Arnold, one of the event coordinators, was back at it with Deb Fox selling raffle tickets to attendees as they arrived.

"This is one of our biggest fundraisers. The Tri-Town Team is Longmeadow, East Longmeadow and Hampden. We've done the raffles, they've done the Dinner Dance, we also had the tag sale at East Longmeadow," Arnold said.

"We're going to be selling ornaments at the Little E, the East Longmeadow Farmers Market and the Loomis House Craft Sale," Fox added.

"That'll all go directly to the Tri-Town Team Walk to End Alzheimer's," Arnold said.

Arnold is passionate about hosting the Dinner Dance in Hampden, bringing people together for an important cause.

"It's a fundraiser. It's to raise money, it's to have company and talk to people and to enjoy the night for a good cause. That's what it's all about," Arnold said. "You don't have to dance. Listen to the music, have a good time and it's a great fundraiser."

HSC Executive Director Rebecca Moriarty expressed gratitude to attendees for their support of the event and the Alzheimer's Association.

"So, we know that in one way or another, we have all been touched by this disease. It's an honor for us—the staff and the volunteers—to host this event every year to give back to the Alzheimer's Association in hopes of finding a cure someday," Moriarty said. "We know that there have been breakthroughs recently. There's been some really



A group of supporters for the Alzheimer's Association pose for a photo.

Turley photos by Kristin Rivers



Tom Farrow and Caryn Greco pose for a photo.

great things coming out and so we are very, very hopeful that even our little bit of money that goes to the association will help to further develop the new findings and the new medications and the new research so that we can beat this terrible disease."

Moriarty credited Wendy Cowles, the senior center's outreach coordinator, who makes sure there's an event every year to support the Alzheimer's Association. Also, the facilitator behind the Memory Café held every Friday at the senior center.



Ruth Arnold and Deb Fox smile at the raffle table.

"So, thank you, Wendy, for making sure we do that," Moriarty said.

On the Tri-Town Team, Moriarty explained the three communities team up, credit-

ing Arnold and Fox.

"They're very good friends to us, they're very good friends to the Alzheimer's Association. They made sure the raffle out here in the hallway was

taken care of, they recruit people to walk," Moriarty said. "So, thank you Ruth and Deb for always being there and for always being so supportive."

Arnold said one thing she

wished people knew about Alzheimer's or dementia is there's progress on early detection and to reach out if you know someone who needs help.

Also, you're not alone.

"Reach out to somebody. There's a 24/7 hotline they can call any time and get help with anything," Arnold said. "Don't be afraid. Pick up a card and call if you need some help. Just don't be afraid to do that."

The hotline is 800-272-3900.

During the event, Moriarty shared a special announcement that connected to the Alzheimer's community.

"The exciting news is that a participant in the Memory Cafe, Melva, has written a book. She wrote a book about her experience with the Hampden Senior Center Memory Cafe that she used to attend with her husband, Jerry, who has Alzheimer's disease. So, she wrote a book and that book has been published," Moriarty said.

The book is called "Thanks For The Memories" and is available on Amazon. The author, Melva Michaelian, will hold a book signing at 12:30 p.m. on Sept. 19 at the senior center.

Moriarty's message to the attendees at the fundraiser was this.

"Thank you so much for being here tonight, thank you for your support of the Alzheimer's Association. Every single penny from this dinner goes directly to the Alzheimer's Association. So, we're very proud of that," Moriarty said.

Arnold expressed her gratitude to the senior center.

"The Hampden Senior Center is the greatest place in the world to give to the community and to others and I wish that more people would come," Arnold said. "I hope they understand that. These people are working their tail ends off tonight and it's so important and they know that and that's why they do it."

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**SINGLE FAMILY LISTINGS**

| STATUS | ADDRESS                                    | DESCRIPTION                                       | LIST PRICE | SOLD PRICE |
|--------|--|---|------------|------------|
| NEW    | 131 Endicott St., Springfield              | 5 room, 3 bed, 1f 0h bath Ranch                   | \$309,900  |            |
| ACT    | 92 Juniper Ridge Dr., Agawam               | 8 room, 3 bed, 2f 1h bath Ranch                   | \$849,900  |            |
| ACT    | 30 Beauchamp, Springfield                  | 8 room, 4 bed, 1f 0h bath Colonial                | \$295,000  |            |
| PCG    | 1 Ina St., Springfield                     | 8 room, 2 bed, 1f 0h bath Bungalow                | \$239,900  | ↓          |
| CTG    | 58 Bennett Rd., Hampden                    | 6 room, 4 bed, 2f 0h bath Cape                    | \$329,900  |            |
| CTG    | 61 West St., Ludlow                        | 7 room, 3 bed, 1f 0h bath Cape                    | \$299,900  |            |
| CTG    | 27 Goodwin St., Springfield                | 4 room, 2 bed, 1f 0h bath Bungalow                | \$258,700  |            |
| CTG    | 53 Wood End Rd., Springfield               | 5 room, 3 bed, 1f 0h bath Ranch                   | \$275,000  |            |
| SLD    | 12 Federal St. Ext., Agawam                | 8 room, 3 bed, 1f 1h bath Dutch Colonial          | \$465,000  | \$478,000  |
| SLD    | 47 Mayfair St., East Longmeadow            | 7 room, 4 bed, 1f 1h bath Ranch                   | \$309,900  | \$315,000  |
| SLD    | 2 Anna Marie Lane, East Longmeadow         | 8 room, 4 bed, 2f 1h bath Colonial                | \$849,900  | \$825,000  |
| SLD    | 65 River Park Dr., Hampden                 | 7 room, 3 bed, 1f 1h bath Colonial                | \$449,000  | \$450,000  |
| SLD    | 313 Bennett Rd., Hampden                   | 7 room, 3 bed, 2f 1h bath Cape                    | \$510,000  | \$500,000  |
| SLD    | 98 Town Farm Rd., Monson                   | 11 room, 5 bed, 3f 0h bath Contemporary           | \$619,900  | \$647,500  |
| SLD    | 75 Puritan Rd., Springfield, Sixteen Acres | 9 room, 3 bed, 2f 0h bath Ranch                   | \$299,900  | \$312,000  |
| SLD    | 302 West Allen Ridge Rd., Springfield      | East Forest Park, 6 room, 4 bed, 2f 0h bath Ranch | \$309,000  | \$325,000  |
| SLD    | 4 Mark Twain Dr., Wilbraham                | 9 room, 4 bed, 2f 2h bath Colonial                | \$599,900  | \$622,000  |

**CONDOMINIUM LISTINGS**

|     |                                   |                                     |           |  |
|-----|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|--|
| ACT | 2205 Boston Rd., U:i 82 Wilbraham | 7 room, 2 bed, 2f 1h bath Townhouse | \$289,900 |  |
|-----|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|--|

**MULTI FAMILY LISTINGS**

|     |                              |   |           |           |
|-----|------------------------------|---|-----------|-----------|
| SLD | 26 S. Main St., Belchertown, | 3 unit, 22 total rooms, 9 total bedrooms 3 Family | \$739,999 | \$695,000 |
|-----|------------------------------|---|-----------|-----------|

**LAND LISTINGS**

|     |                             |                                       |           |          |
|-----|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------|----------|
| ACT | 7 Old Reed Rd lot:6, Monson | 8.50 Residential acres (370,260 SqFt) | \$99,000  |          |
| ACT | 454 Ridge Road, Wilbraham   | 1.78 Residential acres (77,555 SqFt)  | \$218,000 |          |
| SLD | 160 Silver Street, Monson   | 4.93 Residential acres (214,751 SqFt) | \$99,000  | \$90,000 |

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