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Page 9

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Page 15

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A group shot of cub masters, members and more saying "Cub Scouts!" for the camera during the Cub Scout Pack 177 Scout year kickoff event at Wilbraham United Church on Sept. 13.

Cub Scout Pack 177 kicks off scouting year with annual recruitment event

The event took place at Wilbraham United Church

By Kristin Rivers
Staff Writer
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WILBRAHAM -- Families visited Wilbraham United Church from 6 - 7:30 p.m. on Sept. 13 for Cub Scout Pack 177's annual recruitment and kickoff event.

During the event, attendees signed up for Cub Scouts, met with

pack leaders and members and enjoyed activities including Jenga Blocks, archery and more.

The balloon launch was not held due to the weather.

Jeffrey Choinski, pack leader for Cub Scouts Pack 177, has been with the organization for six years, explaining Cub Scouts is open to boys and girls from kindergarten through grade five.

Recruitment events like this, Choinski said, help attendees see the different things the organization does, publicize it and bring in new members.

"I think it's good exposure for

the scouts and gets the kids exposed to seeing some new stuff and being able to meet new friends and have some good activities and get outdoors," Choinski said. "We try to get outdoors as much as we can, and just learning some life skills is part of it too."

Choinski is happy to do Cub Scouts again after the pandemic, explaining "we had very few kids" during that time and another pack at Saint Cecelia's Parish closed down and hasn't resumed.

"Once we were able to open and

Please see **CUB SCOUTS**, page 4

Atheneum Society celebrates 60 years

By Dalton Zbierski
Editor
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WILBRAHAM -- The Wilbraham Atheneum Society commemorated its 60th anniversary during a Sept. 10 event at the Old Meeting House Museum on Main Street.

The celebration was highlighted by a presentation given by guest speaker Dennis Picard in the nearby Wilbraham & Monson Academy Chapel. Picard shared a history of Joshua L. Brooks, a Wilbraham resident who founded the Eastern States Exposition.

The society was established in 1963 as a nonprofit organization by a group of concerned townspeople who sought to preserve Wilbraham history. The group works to collect and protect artifacts and memorabilia relative

Please see **ATHENEUM**, page 8



Old Meeting House Museum guest speaker Dennis Picard adds his best wishes to a poster celebrating the Wilbraham Atheneum Society's 60th Birthday Sept. 10 at the Museum. (Lucy Peltier photo)

Hampden Senior Center meals fundraiser features live Irish music



A group of performers played Irish music at the senior center's "Halfway to St. Patrick's Day" drive-through meals fundraiser.

By Dalton Zbierski
Editor
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HAMPDEN -- The senior center celebrated "Halfway to St. Patrick's Day" on Sept. 17 with a drive-through grab-and-go dinner fundraiser featuring live Irish music and step dancing.

On the menu was corned beef and cabbage complete with rye bread and dessert, and 200 meals were served.

The cost of each meal was \$10; the proceeds benefited the senior center building fund, as the Council on Aging aspires to expand its building on Allen Street.

A group of staff and volunteers spent the week peeling vegetables, cooking and packaging the meals. Hampden COA Executive Director Becky Moriarty weighed in on the teamwork that made the fundraiser possible.

"Most of the week, we were really focused on getting everything prepared for this so we kind of divided up responsibilities, but everything at the center kept running smoothly with staff and volunteers,

and we were able to really pull it together," Moriarty said.

As drivers made their way through the senior center parking lot, they were entertained by an accordion player and singers performing Irish music while others step danced to the songs. Moriarty noted the performers were volunteers as well and voiced her appreciation for their contributions.

"The music is awesome. It makes everything 10,000 times better. It's wonderful. We love to have the music," she said.

COA Volunteer Coordinator Tina Doran felt fortunate that the weather was so beautiful on Sunday. Doran noted that the seniors were highly appreciative, and expressed her gratitude that so many staff members and volunteers came to the senior center on the weekend.

"We love it. We all love it," she said. "Everybody's here today; all of the staff. Everybody showed up, and it's Sunday; this is our day off. That should tell you something... I hope we do it again next year and bigger."

Please see **IRISH**, page 4

Turley photo by Dalton Zbierski

Rice Fruit Farm, MiraVista recognize Suicide Prevention Month

Partnership promotes 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

By Dalton Zbierski
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WILBRAHAM -- September is Suicide Prevention Month, and Wilbraham's Rice Fruit Farm is partnering with the Holyoke-based MiraVista Behavioral Center to spread word of 988, the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

Currently, beverages sold at Rice Fruit Farm on Main Street carry the sticker: 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. The lifeline is a national network of local crisis centers, providing free, confidential emotional support around the clock to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress.

All you must do to access the hotline is dial or text 988.

Anthony Maloni, an owner of Rice Fruit Farm, considered the partnership with MiraVista to be a "no brainer," explaining that mental illness is not as widely understood as other illnesses.

"Treatment for it is half the battle. If we can help with that in any way -- even just with one person -- that would be an incredible outcome of this effort," Maloni said. "Simply raising awareness of the 988 number and the services of MiraVista is an undertaking we are more than eager to be a part of. We have many young people from area colleges frequenting our location, a pop-

ulation we will target with this messaging."

Maloni said the fruit farm sells about 12,000 beverages each month. Cider from native apples is particularly popular this time of year.

The sticker campaign began on Sept. 10.

Kimberley Lee, chief of strategy and development at MiraVista, a community-based behavioral health center and substance use treatment center, said 1250 stickers had been distributed as of Sept. 17. The initiative was only meant to last a week, but its success has prolonged it.

Lee, a Wilbraham resident, said she approached Maloni after partnering with him in the past on other projects related to mental health. She praised the fruit farm for partnering on the campaign.

"Their willingness to partner with us demonstrates their care and concern for the communities in which they do business and the customers who support their business," Lee said. "So, taking advantage of Suicide Prevention Month to elevate awareness of 988 clearly illustrates Rice's commitment to the greater Wilbraham community."

Lee said MiraVista provides psychiatric treatment for adolescents as well as adults and an extensive array of outpatient substance use treatment programs. She said people find their way to MiraVista and the inpatient mental health care because they're in crisis.

"Their mental health has de-



Photo courtesy of Rice Fruit Farm

Rice Fruit Farm has partnered with MiraVista Behavioral Health Center to raise suicide prevention awareness, promoting the crisis hotline number 988.

teriorated to the point where they need inpatient treatment, and suicide prevention and education are extremely important in terms of helping people be aware of the fact that there is a free telephone lifeline that's available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, which allows them to talk to somebody when they find themselves in crisis," Lee said.

Lee said suicide prevention is prevalent all year, but Suicide Prevention Month offers an opportunity for heightened awareness. She said mental health is a topic that should be freely discussed; it should not be considered taboo.

Lee noted that trained clini-

cians are on the other side of the 24/7 988 lifeline.

She said it can be helpful daily to ask someone how they are feeling emotionally and how their mental health is.

"We don't have any difficulty telling those in our lives that our back hurts or our belly is upset," she said. "But when it comes to communicating that we may not be feeling well emotionally that same comfort in having a conversation about our physical health should be just as comfortable for us talking about or mental health. And the more we talk about it, the more it becomes part of our social landscape, the less stigmatized it will be. You

just have to start talking."

Maloni said he knows that "life can be tough and unfair," which is why he always greets customers with a warm expression.

"People may be having a bad day and decide to come here for a break from that day. We may not understand what a stop means in a customer's life, but we are always welcoming of whoever passes through our doors. A smile, a good morning, a friendly encounter can have a tremendous impact on someone," he said.



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CAMPUS

NOTES

Holyoke Community College Dean's List

HOLYOKE - Each semester Holyoke Community College recognizes superior scholarship through the Dean's List. A student is placed on the Dean's List if their G.P.A. is 3.2 or higher.

Kathryn Chevalier, of Wilbraham, made the Dean's List this summer.

Simmons University Dean's List

BOSTON — **Marina Long**, of Wilbraham, was named to the 2023 spring semester dean's list at Simmons University in Boston. To qualify for dean's list status, undergraduate students must obtain a grade point average of 3.5 or higher, based on 12 or more credit hours of work in classes using the letter grade system.

SNHU President's List

MANCHESTER, NH -- **Dariana Aponte-Edwards**, of Wilbraham, has been named to Southern New Hampshire University's Summer 2023 President's List. The summer terms run from May to August.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

SNHU Dean's List

MANCHESTER, NH -- **Hunter Hembdt**, of Hampden, has been named to Southern New Hampshire University's Summer 2023 Dean's List. The summer terms run from May to August.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.500 to 3.699 for the reporting term are named to the Dean's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

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Select Board receives updates on Red Bridge Hydro Plant collapse

By Kristin Rivers
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WILBRAHAM — The Select Board received updates on Sept. 11 from Patriot Hydro regarding the Red Bridge Hydro Plant collapse that took place Aug. 22.

After explaining what happened, John Robichaud, asset manager and general manager at Patriot Hydro and their parent company, LS Power, explained they're working on securing the building to figure out the cause.

"Ultimately, our goal is to provide a coffer dam in the tailrace area, which will allow us to drain water from the substructure of it so we can get a better evaluation," Robichaud said.

Robichaud said some debris from the tailrace will be removed in addition to removing and securing the superstructure. From there, they will assess and decide how to move forward.

"It's going to be a long road," Robichaud said. "We've had excellent help from the city and both the state and federal regulators to help us with that process and it's gone very well."

When Board Chair Theresa Goodrich asked about the oil found on the surface, Robichaud explained they "have no idea what went into the tailraces," and it will be inspected upon closer examination.

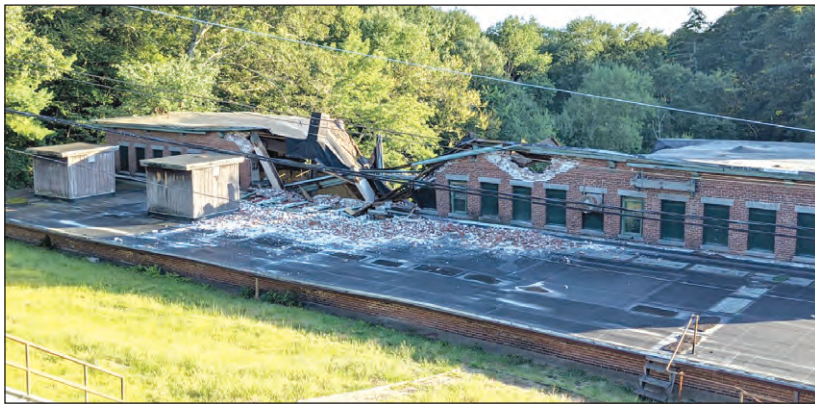
"What we do understand or what we are kind of estimating is that one of our breakers — our service breakers — which holds about 10 gallons of mineral oil had gone into the tailrace area," Robichaud said. "Mass Department of Environmental Protection deployed the boons within hours of the incident, so we contained almost if not all of the oil in our tailrace area and that boon still remains in place."

Robichaud clarified no oil drum ever went into the tailrace and no hazardous substances were found, which were confirmed by Mass DEP.

"It was confirmed mineral oil and there's no PCBs," Robichaud said.

Skip Medford, manager of Stakeholder Relations at Patriot Hydro, explained they're working with the DEP due to "some construction that might have contained asbestos material" as the plant was built in 1901.

Medford added a representative was onsite that day "to remedy that" concern.



A close-up of the damage after the collapse and fire at the Red Bridge Hydro Plant on Red Bridge Road on Aug. 22. The collapse and fire were discussed during the Sept. 11 Wilbraham Board of Selectmen meeting. Turley photo by Marcelo Gusmao

"We have to stabilize the situation first, but as part of the disposal of materials from the powerhouse, we're going to be treating that under an asbestos management plan of attack," Medford said.

Luke Wright, owner and operator of Ware River Power, which has operated at the plant since 2017, added the units were shut off before the collapse occurred and no water flowed through the system.

"We were able to isolate any water coming through that powerhouse any further so pretty much what's happening now is that the river's backing up into the tailrace, not the tailrace backing out to the river," Wright said.

After Robichaud confirmed they intend to rebuild and operate the plant, Goodrich shared concerns she received from residents, along with her own.

"No one had any idea that it was still functional, operational. It looked in pretty rough shape," Goodrich said. "I guess my concern is that it needs to be maintained and have attention on a regular basis so things like this can be certainly avoided in the future."

Robichaud responded it was "a valid concern" and that the facility "had and is

being managed" per their federal and state oversights.

Goodrich thanked the representatives for their updates and information, stressing the importance of staying up to date as residents are concerned.

"People are watching and looking for information and updates so thank you guys for that," Goodrich said.

Before the discussion concluded, Robichaud also clarified the coffer dam after Sue Bunnell asked when it would remain in place.

"It will stay in place for presumably a year until we get the building secured," Robichaud said. "It will be a very permanent structure until we remove it."

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(L to R) Mark Langone, Thad Michael, Cari Stebenne, Holly Ashley, Maggie Ladue, Jeff Choinski and Mike Pelletier smile for a group photo during the Cub Scout Pack 177 Scout year kickoff event at Wilbraham United Church.



Matt Ashley and Daniel play with Jenga blocks as Jeyvien, John and another child have fun with another Jenga block set during the Cub Scout Pack 177 Scout year kickoff event at Wilbraham United Church. Jenga blocks were an array of activities offered to attendees and their families during the kickoff.



A cub master shows Daniel how to shoot an arrow as Caleb watches during the Cub Scouts Pack 177 Scout year kickoff event at Wilbraham United Church.



A S.A.F.E. Archery inflatable target set provided archery fun to attendees at the Cub Scouts Pack 177 Scout year kickoff event at Wilbraham United Church. Cub masters taught attendees how to use a bow and arrow and properly shoot arrows at targets.

CUB SCOUTS from page 1

get back up, we almost tripled in size with our kids last year, so it's been great. It's just been good to get the kids out. Get them back out of the house, get them in front of each other, face to face. The whole remote thing's been tough on a lot of kids at home," Choinski said.

Choinski shared Cub Scouts offers many benefits, including teaching life skills, giving back to the community, volunteering and getting active through being out in nature.

He hopes attendees see "the value that's added in scouts," including kids having fun.

"Prepared for life. That's the scout motto," Choinski said.

Carl Borden is the membership specialist for the Western Massachusetts Council for the Boys Scouts of America and has been involved with the organization for 40 years, nine of them as a professional boy scout.

Borden's job is to help strengthen current units, revive closed ones and see which towns need bigger programs.

"My hope is that in the next 24 months, we are once again serving about 4,000 - 5,000 kids in the area. Right now, we're a little over 2,000 kids in the Western Mass area," Borden said.

Borden stressed the importance of parents becoming leaders not just for the Boy Scouts but also the Cub Scouts and, additionally, volunteering as den leaders, committee chairs and committee members.

"We want to make sure the community knows we're here, we're vibrant, we're growing," Borden said. "We're a year-round program. It's summer scouting, winter scouting, fall scouting, spring scouting. We're always doing something, and we don't penalize kids for missing (meetings)."

Borden wants the community to know Cub Scouts "is a great program" and encourages people to

check them out.

"It's a family program. It's designed for mom, dad, son, daughter, youth to be involved and do fun things," Borden said. "We make sure they're age-appropriate for the program. So, the stuff they do in kindergarten is much more simple than the stuff they're going to do in fifth grade."

Choinski hopes the members of Cub Scouts Pack 177 learn how to help each other this year.

"That's one of the big things that we try to teach in scouts is helping your fellow scout, helping your fellow community and just being there and looking out for everybody else too," Choinski said.

He also had this message for the community.

"Thanks for supporting us," Choinski said.

To learn more, visit BeaScout.org.



Jim Dupuis, a volunteer, helped direct traffic in the parking lot during the senior center's "Halfway to St. Patrick's Day" meals grab-and-go.



Turley photos by Dalton Zbierski
Senior center staff direct traffic during the "Halfway to St. Patrick's Day" grab-and-go on Sept. 17.

IRISH from page 1

Wendy Cowles, the COA's outreach coordinator, said that as much fun as it is for the seniors to participate, it's equally enjoyable for the staff members and volunteers. Cowles was most impressed by the entertainment, which many did not expect.

"It's actually funny because people have been coming through surprised so the fact that we can still surprise people after all these years I think is pretty cool," Cowles said. "They didn't expect there to be live music. They thought it was a recording. They said, 'Oh my gosh, someone's playing the accordion.' And we have Irish step dancers too. It brings people out. It's a fun day; something different."

Jim Dupuis, a volunteer, helped direct traffic in the parking lot, wearing a St. Patrick's Day-themed orange, green and white top hat.

"I'm having a ball. This is great. This is the second year I've done this, and I really have a good time here," he said.

Dupuis is originally from Holyoke, where he's always enjoyed attending the city's St. Patrick's Day Parade. He noted that "Halfway to St. Patrick's Day" is celebrated everywhere and was happy to see Hampden join in on the fun.

Most importantly, he enjoyed the opportunity to volunteer and encourages others to do so.

"I retired about three years ago; first stop was here. I asked if they ever need any volunteer work. I help with whatever they need me to do. I help set up the stage and move tables for different events. Whatever they do, I'm here to help them," Dupuis said.

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Select Board approves Technology & Efficiency Fund Request

The project will help publish town by-laws more efficiently

By Kristin Rivers
Staff Writer
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WILBRAHAM -- The Select Board approved a Technology & Efficiency Fund Request on Sept. 18 of \$9,980 for the By-Law Study Committee.

Chairman Theresa Goodrich was absent this week.

During the discussion, Chief Ed Lennon, a member of the By-Law Study Committee, explained the committee has been looking at new ways to publish the town bylaws in more efficient formats.

"Currently, the town publishes its town bylaws in regulatory documents and PDFs. If anyone who has ever worked with PDFs knows, they can be difficult to manage, they're tedious, time-consuming," Lennon said. "One of the biggest challenges with them is when you want to make an update. It can be difficult to upload the document and get it back into a format that is easy to understand and manage."

Lennon said nearby towns, including East Longmeadow, Longmeadow, Palmer, Belchertown and Ludlow have turned to private vendors, including General Code or eCode360, for technical management and online publishing of documents.

General Code recently gave a presentation to the By-Law Study Committee on its work and behind-the-scenes features.

"They essentially described that their documents are managed online. You know, very intuitive, easy-to-understand format. Easily searchable. Their index essentially is a drop-down menu with links. It's very easy to understand it and find what you're looking for," Lennon said.

Lennon said the By-Law Study Committee has been working with the Planning Department, Building Department, IT, the clerk's office and treasurer's office on the project, with all agreeing it would be a significant help to the current staff.

"The quote from General Code that digitizes and manages the general bylaws, zoning bylaws, subdivision rules and regulations and the subdivision rule regulation fee schedule is \$9,980 to get it up and running. The yearly management fee to host it is \$1,195," Lennon said.

Sue Bunnell asked if building codes were considered "as another category."

"Or is that covered under the subdivision rules?" Bunnell said.

Lennon said it was not.

"What our thought process was to do was to get the project right off the ground, get these major documents developed, and then in the future we could bring in all these more minor documents and we can get those online later," Lennon said.

Town Administrator Nick Breault also confirmed if successful, this item would be built into the budget.

"Depending on the success of the item of this addition, we would look to add that to the budget, with the maintenance fee," Breault said.

Select Board member Michael Squindo asked a two-part question on the timeline for onboarding and turnaround times for the project.

"What would be the initial onboarding time frame for this project, if it's approved, and then in addition, approximately how long is the turnaround for any updates of the average size that we've seen over the years?" Squindo said.

Lennon responded the onboarding process would include reviewing the documents to make sure there are no conflicts or no violations of any Massachusetts laws.

"What I'm told, that could take up to four to six months for them to be able to actually get that all managed and together. They said the original start of any types of projects can be significantly time-consuming to get them built," Lennon said.

For the turnaround time, that is unclear.

"I know the towns around us that have a relationship with this company, they had nothing but great things to say about it, so at least we believe that they haven't had any issues. I believe minor updates don't take very long," Lennon said.

The fund request was approved 2-0.

Lastly, there will be no meeting next week, Sept. 25. The Select Board will meet again on Oct. 2.

'Dancing with the Stars II' Sept. 30

Event returns to Hampden, this time at TWB

By Dalton Zbierski
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HAMPDEN -- "Dancing with the Stars II" will bring the popular dance competition back to Hampden for the first time in over five years.

The benefit for the Theatre Guild of Hampden is set to occur on Saturday, Sept. 30 at 7 p.m. at Thornton Burgess Middle School at 85 Wilbraham Road. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

Attendees can enjoy desserts and soft beverages, a raffle, gift baskets and a fun night for all ages. The requested donation is \$25 for adults and \$10 for children aged 12 and under.

The Theatre Guild of Hampden is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing quality theatre experiences to audiences of all ages. Co-Founder and Director Mark Giza is hosting the event; he offered a glimpse of what is in store for the last Saturday of the month.

"We're going to have six couples, 12 dancers. Then, there's three judges. The judges will give their calculation on each couple, and at the end there will be a runner up and there will be a winner of the 'Dancing with the Stars,'" Giza said.

Couples include Hampden Police Chief Scott Trombly, dancing with Stacy Goldberg, Western Regional Childcare coordinator. Rick Green from Richard R. Green Insurance Agency, Inc. is dancing with Dina DelBuono, the theatre guild's choreographer.

Hampden Selectman Craig Rivest is dancing with Diane Flynn, wife of Hampden Board of Selectmen Chair John Flynn. Lou from Lou's Bagel Nook on Somers

Road in Hampden is dancing with Jayden Leighty, a ballroom dancer/instructor from Westfield.

Adriano dos Santos, branch manager of the Monson Savings Bank branch on Somers Road in Hampden, is dancing with Kim Rittmaier, director/dance instructor at STAR Dance and Fitness Studio in West Springfield. Lastly, actor Jason Desjardin is dancing with actress Jordan Pelletier.

Giza said that the couples have been preparing for much of the summer.

"It's a lot of work on their part. They have to find time between their jobs and work and different hobbies to get together and practice. It's coming up fast, and they've been doing a lot of preparation of their own, which is great. They're very devoted to the project," he said.

Giza said it has been six or seven years since the theatre guild last hosted a "Dancing with the Stars" event. The previous edition occurred at the Hampden Senior Center, but Giza moved the upcoming event to TWB in order to support a larger audience.

"We had to turn people away last time because it was such a big event so this time we decided to go with the bigger event and sort of go with the bigger place and go through the whole thing that way," Giza said.

To purchase tickets, one can visit Lou's Bagel Nook in Hampden, 413-566-1515 or Mark Henry Florist on Main Street in Indian Orchard, 413-543-4203.

Giza encourages residents to come. Again, he thanked the participants for dedicating their time to all that participating requires.

"I appreciate their time and effort. It's been an amazing thing for people to put their time and effort and to just pitch in and make sure everybody has a good time. And they are. They're working very, very hard, but they're having a good time. That's the main thing," he said.



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VIEWPOINTS

Why Is my age 70 benefit not higher than my January amount?

Dear Rusty

I plan to retire in 2025, the year I turn 70. Given that I'm still working, I'm delaying my Social Security until that year. I noticed on my Social Security statement that my payment in January of 2025 will not be much different than my age 70 amount in October of 2025.

If that is truly the case, would it not be better for me to start taking Social Security payments starting in January of 2025. Am I missing anything here?

Signed: Uncertain Senior

Dear Uncertain Senior

Your benefit in October 2025 at age 70 will be about 6% more than it will be in January 2025. If that isn't shown on your Statement of Estimated Benefits, it may be due to a particular nuance in Social Security's rules relating to Delayed Retirement Credits.

When benefits are claimed mid-year after full retirement age, the DRCs earned in that year aren't applied until the following January. Thus, someone who claims benefits to start mid-year will initially get the DRCs they've earned through the end of the previous year, but not immediately get credit for the additional DRCs earned during the claim-year. Those extra DRCs earned between January and the



month benefits started will be applied the following January.

By way of example, if someone beyond FRA claims benefits to start in October 2024, their initial SS retirement benefit will be what they were entitled to at the end of 2023 and would not include DRCs earned between January 2024 and September 2024. They will collect that initial January 2024 benefit until January 2025 when the DRCs earned in 2024 are applied, at which point their benefit would increase by 6%.

There is, however, one exception to this rule, which is that all DRCs are immediately credited when benefits are claimed to start in the month age 70 is reached, so despite what your Statement of Estimated Benefits might reflect, if you claim for benefits to start in the month you turn 70 (October 2025) you will get your maximum age 70 benefit immediately and won't need to wait until January 2026 for those extra DRCs to be applied.

Unfortunately, Social Security's benefit estimator doesn't explain how this nuance works and may show someone claiming mid-year receiving the same benefit as for the preceding January, without further explanation.

That is, in my opinion, a flaw in the estimator which may result in people making a wrong decision on when to claim their Social Security benefit. Nevertheless, rest assured that your benefit in October 2025, the month you turn 70, will be your maximum amount - 6% more than it would be if you claimed benefits to start in January 2025 and you won't need to wait until the following January to get the DRCs earned earlier in 2025.

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

Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

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Correction Policy

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

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Fall plants extend the season

Over the last few days, I have heard the same sorry statement again and again: "I can't believe summer is over."

I am not sure if this is because school has started, or if honestly, folks feel cheated out of summer because of all the rain and overcast skies we had. Probably it's a little of both!

There have been a few coldish mornings, enough to make me get excited about all that is fall. Pumpkins, crisp apples, beautiful foliage and you guessed it, autumn plants!

Read on for a column from the archives, one that will inspire you to add some late season color to your landscape.

It is always fun to freshen up the garden with new plants. I think of adding a splash of color at this point in the season as a last hurrah before old man winter sets in.

There are all types of mums, and flowering cabbage and kale available for sale right now. Unfortunately, they command higher prices than summer annuals do.

This article will teach you how to get the most out of your investment.

Choose mums carefully.

Daisy and other decorative flower types will generally not last as long in the garden as "cushions" will. These have petals straight through to the center of the flower- no yellow center is visible.

Because the flower head is dense it tends to hold up after a heavy rain and as well as after the first few frosty nights. Although mums are pretty in their pots, they will do better if planted in the ground or at least repotted into a larger container.

The poor things have been growing in the pots you bought them in for quite a while and are usually root-bound. Because of this it is important to slice the roots in a few places just as you would annuals or perennials at planting time.

This way they will have a chance to expand into the new soil you have provided. Mums tend to dry out quickly and require water often.

If you notice that your plant has wilted before you have had a chance to plant it, submerge the pot in a bucket of water- the shrunken soil ball will soak up water like a sponge!

Although mums can stand temperatures a few degrees below freezing, it is still a good



idea to cover them if an early hard frost is in the forecast. Try using bushel baskets, old sheets or blankets, etc.

It is a nuisance, but so many times I have been grateful that I went through a bit of work to be able to enjoy my mums for weeks longer than if I hadn't.

If you are hoping that your mums will return for another season, cut them back to "fist height" in November, and provide them with a loose mulch after the ground freezes. The term "hardy mum" doesn't always prove true, but planting them properly, providing ample water and mulching for the winter will increase your odds of a repeat performance.

Remove the winter mulch around the time forsythias bloom.

Prevent gangly growth by pinching them back to a manageable height two or three times prior to mid-July. Expect blooms this time next year.

Flowering kale and cabbage can add nice

texture to the fall garden. The same planting instructions apply here, but I have found that they can be finicky about water.

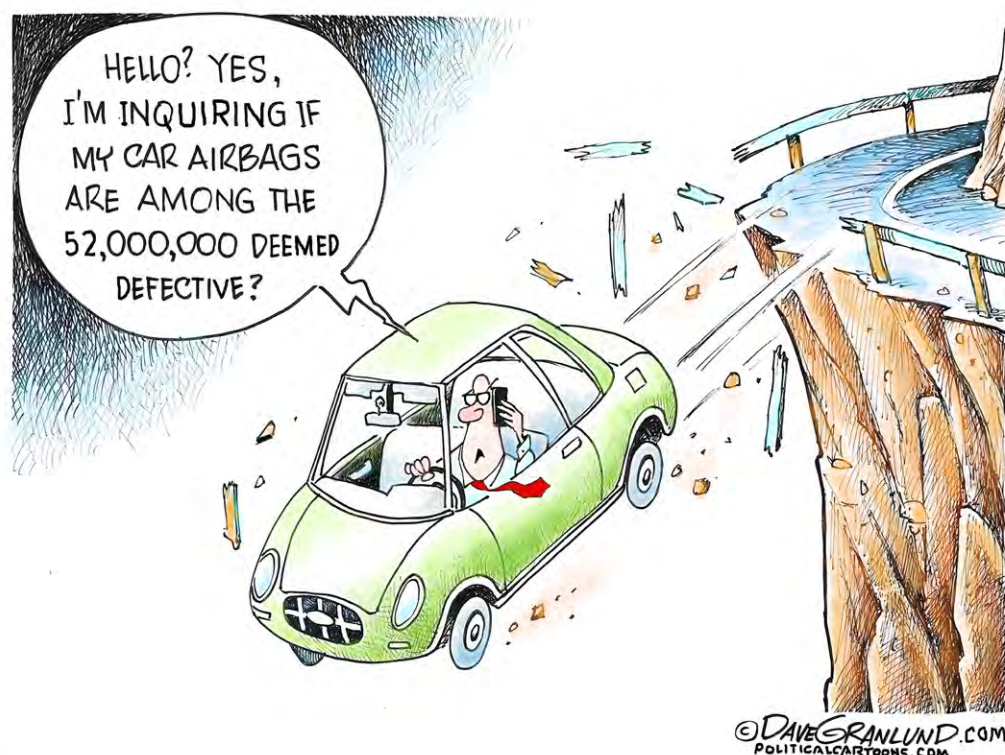
Consistent overwatering and they rot; giving them too little and they wilt. The best advice: test them before you get out the hose by inserting your finger into the top couple inches of soil.

Kale and cabbage need little in the way of grooming other than an occasional bottom leaf removed. Slugs do tend to enjoy the foliage, however, so set up some traps or barriers nearby.

The color on cabbage and kale will intensify as the weather gets colder, and the plants will continue to look good well into December, provided we don't get an early long standing snow- it will eventually make the leaves mushy. While it's tempting to leave them in your containers and add greenery and such for the holidays, it's not recommended unless the planters are in a protected spot.

Plant now for your garden's last hurrah of the season- you'll be glad you did!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 31 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.



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Wilbraham-Hampden Times

Hampden names Dan Blanchard Parks & Recreation Director

Fall Festival to occur Oct. 21

By Dalton Zbierski
Editor
dzbierski@turley.com

HAMPDEN -- Newly appointed Parks & Recreation Director Dan Blanchard was introduced to the Board of Selectmen Monday evening.

Blanchard, a Hampden resident, begins Sept. 25. He was accompanied by Parks & Rec. Commission Chair Carrie Joseph on Sept. 18 as he shared his vision with the board.

"I'll be busy, and I'm looking forward to this. I'm excited about working for Parks & Rec. and getting some new programs installed," Blanchard said.

Blanchard said he will work to get the town "updated," and he will communicate with residents through outreach.

Selectman Donald Davenport inquired about Blanchard's qualifi-

cations, asking, "So, Dan, did you just show up at the park or do you have some experience or what?"

Blanchard said he has lived in Hampden for about 12 years and that he loves the town. He explained how he first became involved with Parks & Rec.

"It's an interesting story really," he said. "I left my job in finance about five years ago. At the time, I actually filled in and worked for the Rec. Department. When somebody had moved away over to the Conservation Commission, I stepped in and worked with the parks."

Blanchard has also been involved in youth sports locally.

"I've been a youth basketball coach in town for the last 10 years or so coaching my boys, who have gone through the program, so I sort of have a unique perspective of working here, having kids who went through the program and coaching in town as well," Blanchard said.

After the Selectmen wished Blanchard well, Joseph updated residents about the Fall Festival, an up-

coming event at Thornton Burgess Middle School on Oct. 21.

"It's coming along very well," Joseph said. "It's a craft fair. The (Minnechaug Regional High School) band will be performing, a local dance studio will be performing. We're in combination with Public Safety Night now. So, we have fireworks and are trying to get some other things going to. It should be a good time."

Selectmen Craig Rivest asked how people can contribute, and Joseph said, "If you want to do a truck, contact me, and I'll add you to the list."

During the meeting, Lauren McCormick was introduced as administrative assistant to the Selectmen & Town Administrator. It was her first day on the job.

Selectboard Chair John Flynn offered kind words for McCormick's predecessor, Pam Courtney.

"We certainly wish Pam Courtney the best in her retirement," he said.

Wilbraham Friends of the Library to hold Pollinator Plant Sale Oct. 7

WILBRAHAM -- The Wilbraham Friends of the Library is holding a pollinator plant sale on Saturday, Oct. 7 from 9 a.m. to noon at the Wilbraham Public Library, 25 Crane Park Drive, Wilbraham. Cash or checks only. There will be a variety of pollinator friendly biennials, perennials, shrubs and vines available for sale at the library.

Early October is an excellent time to plant, the ground is warm enough to support root growth and there is plenty of time for plants to get established before winter sets in. According to the USDA, "Three-fourths of the world's flowering plants and about 35 percent of the world's food crops depend on animal pollinators to reproduce. That's one out of every three bites of food you eat. More than 3,500 species of native bees help increase crop yields.

Some scientists estimate that one out of every three bites of food we eat exists because of animal pollinators like bees, butterflies and moths, birds and bats, and beetles and other insects."

Help keep these important pollinators fed by planting their favorite food sources in your garden. Proceeds from the sale will benefit both the Wilbraham Public Library and Wistariahurst Museum in Holyoke.

The sale is sponsored by the Wilbraham Friends of the Library, which was established in 1973. The Friends of the Library fund programs for children, teens and adults, as well as the library's popular Museum Pass program, furnishings and other library equipment.

For more information, contact the Friends at friends@wilbrahamlibrary.org.

HOMETOWN SPOTLIGHT

WILBRAHAM-HAMPDEN TIMES

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WILBRAHAM -- Some of you reading this probably haven't even turned the ripe old age of 70 yet, but Donald and Barbara Kuhn's of Wilbraham both celebrated their 92nd birthdays in July! (Donald with a jovial chuckle made sure I knew Barbara was two weeks older!) So, the significance of 70, they will be celebrating 70 years of marriage this October, and I just want to tell you, neither of them misses a beat!

I know in their 92 years they've enjoyed giving, receiving and witnessing Random Acts of Kindness, but let me continue to tell you a little more about them.

Barbara had been a resident of Wilbraham all her life while Donald migrated there from the Forest Park section of Springfield. They built their home in Wilbraham in 1960 and even cleared the land themselves which is where they raised their three children. Their oldest daughter Mary Alyce, their son Joe and their youngest Betty Ann have enriched their lives by not only being their kids, but by giving them four grandchildren and one great-grandchild. In November of 2022, they became residents of Ludlow residing at Keystone Commons, where the

lifestyle for their age was more suitable.

Donald was an only child, whereas Barbara was one of eight. When I asked her if he was spoiled as an only child, her response was a whimsical smile, twinkling eyes and a tilt of the head, no words needed, she'd answered the question, he was!

They both agreed having a good humor was a major asset to their successful marriage and shared another couple secrets of their longevity. He said the first was learning early on to say, "Yes dear," and then went onto the next with more seriousness. Most important was doing everything as a partnership; there were no his or her jobs, it was whatever needed to be done, they just did and together raising their children, they did it as a united effort both equally sharing the tasks.

When asked how they'd met, they both laughed out loud, and they humorously told the story of that infamous blind date. His mother and a girl's mother plot-

Random Acts of Kindness

By Barb Turcotte

ted that Donald should take her daughter to the prom, but the girl chickened out, his conclusion, "She probably didn't want to go to the prom with that nerd." Barbara was supposed to go to the prom with the guy she'd been dating, but he'd gotten into trouble which they explained wasn't out of the ordinary, so one of Barbara's friends, who'd 'pre-approved' Donald, fixed them up. I asked if the rest was history, and he laughed when replying, "Eventually." He said she played very hard to get, but he was persistent. (Guess that comes from that spoiled only child syndrome) They wound up dating four years off and on and marrying after six years. Six months after they were married, he was drafted and served two years in the Army.

Donald retired from Chap-

man Valve located in Indian Orchard after 30 years on a Friday and went to work the following Monday morning at Conval Company in Connecticut, where he fully retired after 10 years. Barbara was a stay-at-home mom then went back to school and became the first female pharmacist at Baystate Medical Center and retired after 17 years.

The Kuhn's loved to travel, visiting numerous destinations from Costa Rica, the Canadian Rockies, Panama Canal, Switzerland including the Alpine Alps, Germany and many places encompassing Hawaii, Alaska, Salt Lake City, Puerto Rico and marveling at the Grand Canyon.

I enjoyed so much visiting with the Kuhn's I almost forgot to ask them about Random Acts of Kindness they'd been the recipient of, done or witnessed. Again, with humor, Donald told me they hadn't done anything because they weren't nice people. Well, I can attest to you that is totally false by just a couple of

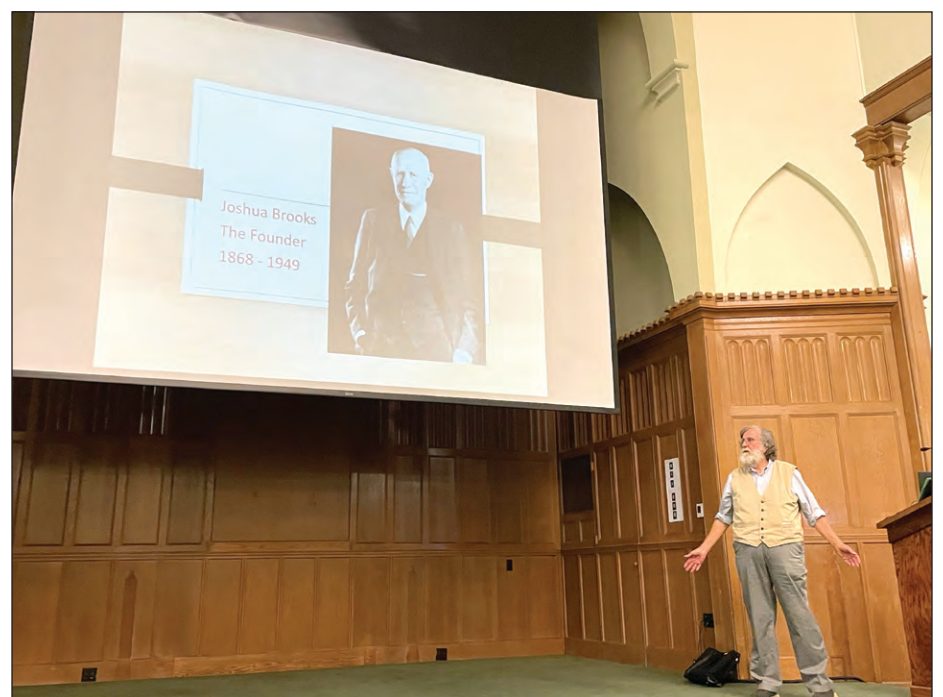
things they shared with me 'off the record.' But they were very quick to tell me how their grandson and his girlfriend had been the recipient of a kind gesture by a stranger. They were enjoying a dinner at a high-end restaurant and at the end of their meal they were informed another patron had in fact paid for their dinner! And that's the cherry on top to this story.

Thank you so much Donald and Barbara for not only sharing your humor but the secret to the longevity of your marriage. You are both such an inspiration to not only your children, but so many others. Congratulations on your upcoming anniversary!

If you'd like to tell me a story about a Random Act of Kindness please contact me at bdt514@aol.com or 413-788-7514. You don't need one, but if you'd like to have a predesigned flyer to include with your next gesture, let me know. It's a way to keep the memory alive long after the gesture is done. Who knows, you might see your story in this column, 'Just 'Cause' you witnessed, did or received something nice being done. See you next month with another Random Act of Kindness!



Turley photos by Dalton Zbierski
As Dennis Picard watches, Charlie Bennett speaks on Sept. 10 in Wilbraham.



Dennis Picard presented a history of Joshua Brooks, founder of the Big E, on Sept. 10.

ATHENEUM from page 1

to the town's heritage.

David Bourcier, president of the society, credits the original members for their passion and commitment to their mission, noting that it has always been a volunteer organization.

"So, we really have to pass on all that credit to all the people before us. They really started this whole society. They were very serious about preserving Wilbraham artifacts, and as you can see, we have quite a few artifacts here in the museum," Bourcier said.

Bourcier said every month the society holds an open house at the Old Meeting House Museum; the building was built in 1794 as a Methodist meeting house and is the oldest Meeting House in New England.

Each open house includes a guest speaker. Picard spoke on Sept. 10, making his third appearance for the museum since it reopened following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Picard has been a museum professional in the living history field for more than 40 years,

working for long stretches at locations such as Old Sturbridge Village, where he was lead interpreter, and Storrowton Village, where he served as director.

As a youth, no one would have expected Picard to enter that line of work.

"I was in grammar school, and my parents were called in by one of my teachers and the principal to say that I was too shy, that I was never going to socialize, and I've made my living for 45 years talking to the public, working in museums like this," he said.

Honored to be part of the celebration, Picard reflected on what he believes has allowed the society to survive for six decades. He credited the commitment of the volunteers.

"To be the caretakers of everything they have is really important and to try to maintain the pieces of local history that you have is really, really important," he said.

Peter Ablondi is a longtime member of the society, which he said town historian Charles Merri- rick founded alongside several

contemporaries.

"The reason they founded it, he told me, was many of the elderly people in Wilbraham retired, moved other places, took all their Wilbraham stuff with them, and when they died, it was all dispersed on other markets. They felt that was eventually not going to be a good thing, so they started this organization," Ablondi said.

After serving its original purpose for several decades, the Old Meeting House became a family residence in the 1830s. When it went on the market more than half-a-century ago, a local realtor wanted to turn it into his office, which was much opposed by residents.

"So, a group petitioned the town to buy it. It was very contentious," Ablondi said. "There was a guy on the board who was a minister, Mel Williams. He was an eloquent speaker and he got up and spoke. I told him later, 'That was the best sermon you ever gave in your life,' and the town voted to buy it."

Then, Ablondi said, the hard work began, as a group of peo-



Chocolate and vanilla birthday cakes were served to visitors of the Open House Sept. 10 at the Old Meeting House Museum to celebrate its 60th birthday. (Lucy Peltier photo)

ple came together to fix up the building.

"Eventually people learned about the building and what we wanted to do with it, and the donations started to come in," he said. "Now, there's other people there who have great interest in it and will keep it going."

Ablondi is proud to see the

society continue to live on and the Old Meeting House Museum open its doors monthly. He said a lot of old towns have a museum and it is important for Wilbraham to have one too.

When ultimately asked to summarize the society's mission, he said, "The goal is to keep Wilbraham items in Wilbraham."



Submitted photo

Orchard Valley at Wilbraham to launch Dementia-Friendly Wilbraham Initiative

Individuals encouraged to attend launch event on Sept. 27

WILBRAHAM -- Orchard Valley at Wilbraham, a Benchmark assisted living and Mind & Memory Care community, has announced they are joining forces with several local organizations and individuals who serve seniors to make Wilbraham an easier place for those with Alzheimer's and dementia to live. Through a series of events, the first on Sept. 27, the goal of the project is to help the local community better understand and relate to those with dementia.

"Living in a true community means supporting one another regardless of who each person is or what their diagnosis may be," said Emily Perkins, executive director of Orchard Valley. "With dementia impacting more and more people and at younger ages, there are many people living among us who are affected. We want to make Wilbraham a better place for everyone to live and are excited to embark on this initiative."

Overseen by The Alzheimer's Association Massachusetts and New Hampshire chapter, Orchard Valley, The Wilbraham Council on Aging, the East of the River Chamber of Commerce, Country Bank, Life Care Centers, JGS Lifecare and Katie Krupka, Certified Case Manager and Gerontologist, have put together a year of events designed to educate the public.

"Country Bank is proud to support the initiative to make Wilbraham a Dementia-Friendly Community. Being able to provide the very best service to all of our customers is imperative and this is one more way we can do just that. Making a difference for those who need it is always at the forefront for us at Country Bank," said Tracey Perry, assistant vice president & retail banking officer.

The free Sept. 27 kick-off event will run from 4-6 p.m. at the Country Club of Wilbraham (859 Stony Hill Road). In addition to discussing the goals and plans for the project, attendees will have the opportunity to participate in Dementia Live, understanding first-hand what it's like to live with dementia, chat with Alzheimer's and dementia experts and learn what they can do to support the initiative.

Speakers will include Patty Sullivan, program director, for Dementia Friendly Massachusetts, Becky Basch, senior planner for The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, and Meghan Lemay, regional manager for the Alzheimer's Association.

To register for the kick-off event, contact Orchard Valley at (413) 596-0006.

Reading star wins Bruins' autographed photo of Brad Marchand

WILBRAHAM — Bennett Cutler is one of a select group of young people to receive Boston Bruins prizes for their outstanding participation in the Children's and Teens' Dept. summer reading program at the Wilbraham Public Library! Bennett's mom said they were very happy because they are big hockey fans!

The Bruins first teamed up with the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and the Massachusetts Library System in 2009.

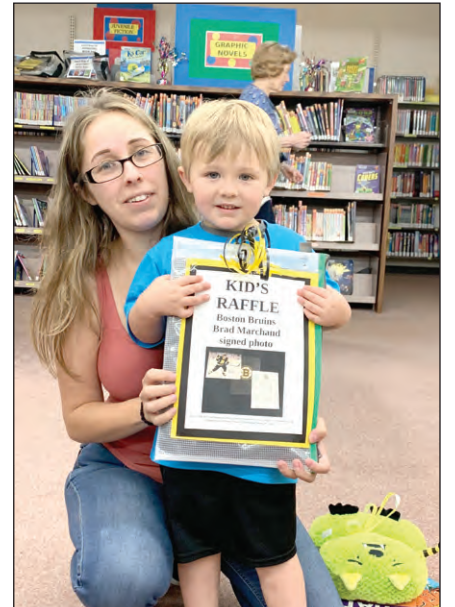
Since then, over 4 million people have participated in summer library programs. Together, the Bruins, the MBLC and MLS work with libraries across the Commonwealth to make reading a part of summer fun for all ages.

Patrice Bergeron, Brad Marchand, Jeremy Swayman and other Bruins players helped libraries develop Favorite Books of the Boston Bruins available at libraries.state.ma.us/pages/summer-reading.

"Summer reading is fun, but it's also an important part of students' academic success because it helps them avoid the summer slide," said James Lonergan, MBLC director.

Kids who read just four books over the summer do better on reading-comprehension tests in the fall than their peers who read one or no books over the summer.

The statewide summer library program is made free to all public libraries and residents in the Commonwealth thanks to support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, the Massachusetts Library System, and the Boston Bruins.



Bennett Cutler received Boston Bruins prizes for his outstanding participation in the Children's and Teens' Dept. summer reading program at the Wilbraham Public Library. Photo submitted by Heidi Kane, children's librarian.

Minnechaug Flag Football Game is back

WILBRAHAM -- It's back! The Annual Minnechaug Flag Football game will be played on Thursday, Sept. 28 between the Classes of 2024 and 2025. Join us on the turf at 6:30 p.m. to watch an epic battle between the Junior and Senior girls.

The halftime show is sure to be entertaining, featuring junior and senior boys as cheerleaders and the fan favorite Falcon mascot! Tickets should be purchased online for \$7 per person using the following QR code. All proceeds will go towards senior activities for both of these classes.

The halftime show is sure to be entertaining, featuring junior and senior boys as cheerleaders and the fan favorite Falcon mascot! Tickets should be purchased online for \$7 per person using the following QR code. All proceeds will go towards senior activities for both of these classes.

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USDA INSP. FROZEN BONE-IN CENTER CUT PORK LOIN CHOPS \$2.49 lb	CUT FREE WHOLE OR HALF	USDA INSP. FROZEN VARIETY PACK CUT UP CHICKEN 15 LB BOX \$13.99 ea
USDA INSP. SLICED IN OUR DELI TURKEY PASTRAMI \$3.99 lb	USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF STEAKHOUSE TIPS \$9.89 lb	USDA INSP. FRESH 10 LB BAG CHICKEN DRUMSTICKS 69¢ lb
SLICED IN OUR DELI LAND O' LAKES SHARP CHEDDAR AMERICAN CHEESE \$3.99 lb	GREAT ON THE GRILL	USDA INSP. HÄAGEN-DAZS CHOCOLATE DARK CHOCOLATE MINI ICE CREAM BARS 11.1 OZ... \$3.99 ea
USDA INSP. STORE MADE ITALIAN MARINATED 1/2 CHICKENS \$2.49 lb	USDA INSP. GROUND FRESH DAILY 90% DIET LEAN GROUND BEEF \$4.99 5 LB BAG	USDA INSP. IQF FROZEN 16/20 COUNT COOKED SHRIMP 2 LB BAG \$18.99 ea
USDA INSP. STORE MADE TERIYAKI MARINATED BEEF SKIRT STEAKS \$6.99 lb	90 Meat Outlet	90 Avocado St. Springfield 413-737-1288 www.90meat.com
USDA INSP. STORE MADE BBQ MARINATED BONELESS PORK BUTT STRIPS \$3.35 lb	HOURS: Mon. - Wed. 8-4 Thurs. 8-6 • Fri. 8-6 • Sat. 8-3	We reserve the right to limit quantities.

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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 dzbierski@turley.com or mail to TIMES, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069. Please note that if you send us a photo of the Times in different parts of the world, please include a recognizable landmark in the background. Examples: Eiffel Tower; castle in Spain.

WIL HAM

The St. Cecilia's Youth Group met on Labor Day to make lunches for the Community Survival Center and play games together. The Youth Group is for students looking to build their faith and friendships. It meets on Sundays from noon to 2 p.m. at the Faith Formation House. For more information or to sign up, please call or e-mail Youth Group Coordinator Carolee McGrath (599-0370) or caroleesings@yahoo.com. Photos courtesy of Diane Testa.



THIS PAGE IS BROUGHT TO YOU

BD MART

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WILBRAHAM HAMPDEN

Community Bulletin Board

Send us in
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Happy Birthdays, Anniversaries, etc.

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Please send to dzbierski@turley.com



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This paper publishes birth, engagement, wedding and significant anniversary announcements free of charge. Simply log on to our web site, choose the paper you want the announcement to appear in, then use our SUBMISSION link to email your information.



www.turley.com

Events & announcements schedule

Note: We apologize for running events twice in last week's edition of the paper.

The Scantic River Artisans to hold "Fall into Art" Art Show

HAMPDEN—The Scantic River Artisans will be holding the "Fall into Art" Art Show on Saturday, Sept. 23, from 3 – 8 p.m. and Sunday, Sept. 24 from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

On Saturday, there will be a reception with wine, cheese and music and peer awards given out on Sunday.

The art show will take place in the Community Room at the Hampden Senior Center at 104 Allen Street in Hampden, MA.

Additionally, featured at the art show will be "THE NEW ENGLAND MOSAIC - 24 FOOT WALL OF ART"

The New England Mosaic is a 24-foot fine art wall made up of 264 individual 6"x 6" canvas tiles painted by over 200 area artists. The wall captures the beauty and diversity of New England life. The tiles will be for sale and the proceeds will fund scholarships for area art students.

Visit: www.scanticriverartisans.com to fill out a "Call for Artists" form if you wish to participate in the art show. Or pick up forms at the Hampden Senior Center.

Rick's Place Golf Classic

WILBRAHAM — Registration is currently open for the Rick's Place Golf Classic. The Golf Classic will be held on Saturday, Sept. 23, at the Country Club of Wilbraham. The tournament is open to all golfers and is an 18-hole shotgun scramble starting at 12:30 pm.

The entry fee is \$175 per person or \$700 per foursome and includes green fees, cart rental, lunch and dinner. We also encourage those who do not golf to attend the dinner for \$40 per person. There will be a raffle and silent auction at the event. Consider becoming a sponsor or purchasing a tee&green sign.

The Rick's Place Golf Classic serves as one of our primary fundraisers and proceeds will benefit Rick's Place grief support programs for youth and families who have had a death loss. We hope to see you there!

To register for the tournament, please visit ricksplacema.org. For more information, contact info@ricksplacema.org

Established in memory of Rick Thorpe, who died in Tower Two of the World Trade Center on 9/11, Rick's Place opened in March 2007. We are honored to offer young people and their families, from all over Western MA and Northern CT, our free grief support services.

Springfield Technical High School – Every Class Reunion Sept. 23

SPRINGFIELD -- The spirit and camaraderie of Springfield's Tech High School is alive and well, as they gear up for another exciting reunion on Saturday, Sept. 23 at the Elks Lodge #61 at 440 Tiffany St. from 3-8 p.m. The reunion is open to ALL TECH CLASSES.

An outside barbecue will be held rain or shine under the lodge's pavilion and will include hot dogs, hamburgers, pulled pork, salads, vegan options, dessert and more. Cash bar. Free parking and handicap accessible.

A fun-filled afternoon will include DJ and dancing, cornhole and bocce games, raffles and time to reminisce with friends over the years and make new friends as well.

According to committee chair Mike Borecki, "Tech High was a great school,

and many lifelong friendships were forged back then. It's our dream for everyone to have fun and to keep the Tech Spirit tradition alive for many years to come.

Seating is limited and tickets are \$25 each. All are on a first come, first served basis. Open seating. For tickets call Mike Borecki '72 at 413-351-6572, Margaret McCormick '74 at 413-531-4763, Dawn Duncan '71 413-896-3930, or Matt Villamaino '67 at 413-896-2206

Located on Elliot Street in Springfield, MA Technical High School was founded in 1906 and closed in 1986.

'Fall into Fun' Card & Game Party & Luncheon to occur Sept. 28

WILBRAHAM — The Wilbraham Women's Club is holding its annual "Fall Into Fun" Card & Game Party & Luncheon on Thursday, Sept. 28, at the St. Cecilia Parish Center, 42 Main St., Wilbraham.

Check-in begins at 11:30 a.m. with lunch served at noon. There will also be a raffle for cash prizes.

The donation is \$8, and proceeds are used for the club's scholarships and other charitable endeavors. Please bring friends and join us for a delicious luncheon and play any game of your choice. For reservations, please call Sue Agnew, 596-9480.

50th Reunion for Minnechaug Class of 1973

WILBRAHAM -- The Minnechaug Regional High School Class of 1973 will commemorate their 50th reunion with a four-day, event-filled celebration from Thursday, Oct. 12, through Sunday, Oct. 15, 2023.

The October 2023 reunion will offer a wide array of options to celebrate and reconnect with classmates and the community, including a tour of the "new" Minnechaug, a trivia contest, gatherings at craft breweries, hikes, golf, a Falcon football game and tailgate and a dinner-dance at the Country Club of Wilbraham.

To give back to our communities and schools and to inspire the next generation of scientists, our class has established a fund to honor our classmate Dr. Janice E. Voss, a NASA astronaut who flew five shuttle missions in space before she passed away in 2012. Through this fund, the class of 1973 will donate STEM-related books for the libraries in the Wilbraham and Hampden schools, send one nine-to-eleven-year-old student to Space Camp in Huntsville, AL, and create a \$2,500 annual scholarship to be awarded to a graduating Minnechaug senior from Wilbraham or Hampden with plans to study for a career in STEM.

Organizers hope that all members of the class family will know that they are invited to attend this reunion. We experienced years together in the Hampden-Wilbraham school system, so we welcome others who may have been part of our educational journey, including teachers and friends whose time at Minnechaug overlapped with ours. If you know someone from the Minnechaug Class of 1973 (they would have been born in 1954 or 1955) or would like to know more about the Janice Voss Memorial projects, please contact Ricardo Perez at perezr9@gmail.com or 919-757-7679.

Armenian Food Festival Sept. 30

St. Gregory Armenian Apostolic Church will hold its annual Armenian

Food Festival on Saturday, Sept. 30, from noon to 5 p.m. at 135 Goodwin Street, Indian Orchard. Visitors are invited to enjoy Armenian dinners including shish kebab and losh kebab along with rice pilaf. Baked goods will be featured such as pakhlava and spinach-cheese pie.

To place a take-out order or for more information, please call the church at (413) 543-4763.

Non-registered Wilbraham voters must register for town meeting by Oct. 13

WILBRAHAM -- According to Wilbraham Town Clerk, Carole J. Tardif, residents who are not registered voters, who wish to vote in the upcoming Special Town Meeting on Oct. 23, 2023, must register to vote by 5 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 13, 2023.

Registration hours are daily 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 13, 2023.

Voter registration will be held in the Town Clerk's Office, 240 Springfield St. or online at registertovotema.com. Please contact the Town Clerk's Office if you have any questions at 596-2800, ext. 200.

Harvest Fundraiser Dinner on Oct. 7

WILBRAHAM -- Join the Wilbraham Welcome Project for a night of dinner and dancing at the Wilbraham Country Club on Saturday, Oct. 7 from 6-10 p.m.

Tickets are \$50 per person and available online at www.thewilbrahamwelcomeproject.com.

Includes appetizers and dinner by 3 Guys at the Grille, desserts from Pan'e Dolcetti and live music provided by Project 267. The Wilbraham Welcome Project is a registered 501(c)3 dedicated to celebrating our town, cultivating community and championing local business.

Saint Cecilia Knights of Columbus to hold Italian Night Dinner Oct. 14

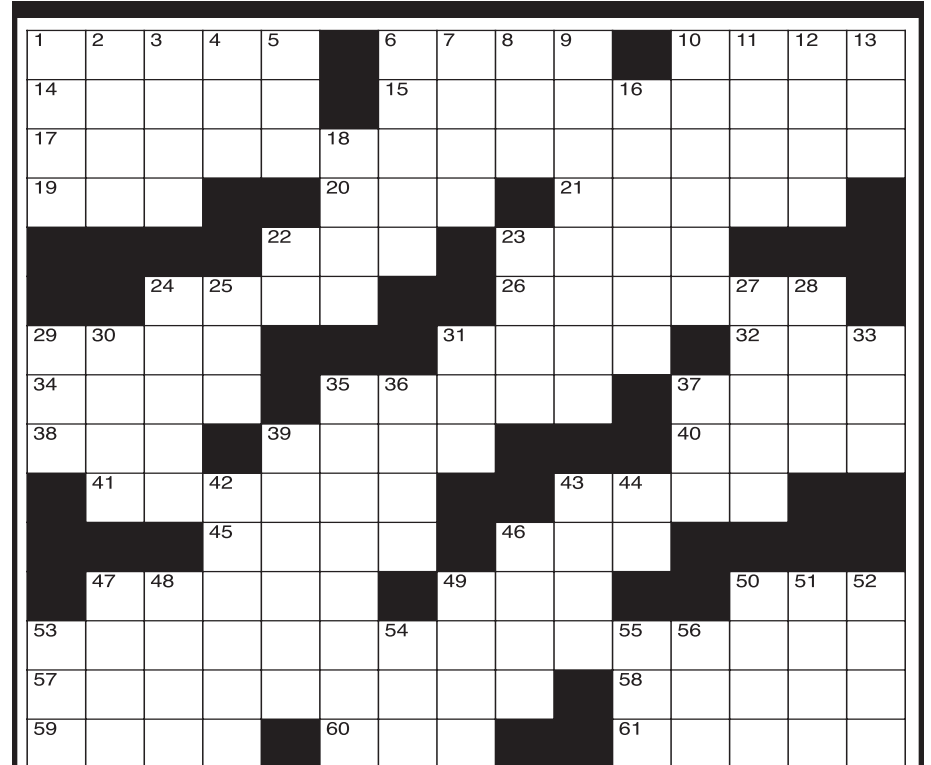
WILBRAHAM -- The Knights of Columbus of the Saint Cecilia Council will be holding an Italian Night Dinner as a fundraiser for the Community Survival Center on Oct. 14 at 5 p.m. at Saint Cecilia Parish Center, 42 Main St., Wilbraham, MA.

The dinner will include a traditional Italian meal with musical entertainment and raffle prizes.

Tickets are \$20 and are available before and after masses Sept. 23 through Oct. 8.

For more information, or to get tickets, email TicketsKoC10195@gmail.com.

More on page 14



CLUES ACROSS

1. Type of cat
6. Weaponry
10. Western Christian Church service
14. Significant eruption of pustules
15. Baltic nation
17. Start of American holiday season
19. Unhappy
20. Maintains possession of
21. Metrical foot of one long and three short syllables
22. Mountain pass
23. Vestments
24. Type of dish
26. Escaped quickly
29. Zoroastrian concept of holy fire
31. Wings
32. Political action committee
34. Touches lightly
35. Stood back from
37. Philippine Island
38. Popular winter activity
39. Type of amine
40. Small freshwater duck
41. Filled with love
43. Without (French)
45. Vetch
46. Swiss river
47. Describes a sound
49. Sign language
50. Hair product
53. Have surgery
57. Quality of being imaginary
58. Far-right German party
59. Drove
60. Former French coin of low value
61. Hard, durable timbers

CLUES DOWN

1. Body art
2. Middle East military title
3. Actor Pitt
4. Container
5. Speak incessantly
6. Relating to algae
7. Jacob ____, journalist
8. Rock TV channel
9. Boat's cargo
10. Most wise
11. Within
12. Chinese industrial city
13. Scotland's longest river
16. Not capable
18. Footwear
22. Savings account
23. Capable
24. Vaccine developer
25. Tax collector
27. Fencing swords
28. Native religion in China
29. Promotional materials
30. A shot in a film production
31. Afflict in mind or body
33. A passage with access only at one end
35. Breathing devices
36. Employ for wages
37. Kids' TV channel (abbr.)
39. Popular Boston song
42. Made amends
43. Selling at specially reduced prices
44. Atomic #18
46. With fireplace residue
47. Unleavened cornbread
48. Draw out
49. Southwestern Alaska island
50. Where the Pyramids are
51. People of Nigeria
52. Smaller quantity
53. Destroy the inside of
54. City
55. Chivalrous figure (abbr.)
56. No (Scottish)

Wilbraham Friends of the Library to hold Pollinator Plant Sale Oct. 7

WILBRAHAM -- The Wilbraham Friends of the Library is holding a pollinator plant sale on Saturday, Oct. 7 from 9 a.m. to noon at the Wilbraham Public Library, 25 Crane Park Drive, Wilbraham. Cash or checks only.

There will be a variety of pollinator friendly biennials, perennials, shrubs and vines available for sale at the library. Early October is an excellent time to plant, the ground is warm enough to support root growth and there is plenty of time for plants to get established before winter sets in.

According to the USDA, "Three-fourths of the world's flowering plants and about 35 percent of the world's food crops depend on animal pollinators to reproduce. That's one out of every three bites of food you eat. More than 3,500 species

of native bees help increase crop yields. Some scientists estimate that one out of every three bites of food we eat exists because of animal pollinators like bees, butterflies and moths, birds and bats, and beetles and other insects."

Help keep these important pollinators fed by planting their favorite food sources in your garden. Proceeds from the sale will benefit both the Wilbraham Public Library and Wistariahurst Museum in Holyoke.

The sale is sponsored by the Wilbraham Friends of the Library, which was established in 1973. The Friends of the Library fund programs for children, teens and adults, as well as the library's popular Museum Pass program, furnishings and other library equipment.

For more information, contact the Friends at friends@wilbrahamlibrary.org.

Pink Scarves for Rays of Hope at the Wilbraham Public Library

WILBRAHAM -- Knitters and crocheters, get out your needles and patterns and make pink scarves for Rays of Hope!

"Rays of Hope is an annual walk in October for breast cancer survivors and their families, headed by Baystate Hospital. The pink scarf project provides scarves for the breast cancer survivors who are walking," said Assistant Director Mary Bell. "We had over 85 scarves donated last year, and we'd love to have

even more this year."

Any pattern can be used, but the scarves must be primarily pink. A box will be in the library to accept donations through Oct. 14.

The 2023 Rays of Hope walk will be Sunday, Oct. 22. More information can be found at baystatehealth.org/raysof-hope.

For more information on donating scarves, please call the Wilbraham Public Library at 413-596-6141.

Polanie Club to hold 'Spotlight on Beautiful Fashions' fashion show Oct. 1

LUDLOW -- The Polanie Club will hold a Fashion Show "Spotlight on Beautiful Fashions" to honor the memory of the late Loretta T. Goyette, Club President for 32 years, Fashions presented by Zanna of Amherst on Sunday, Oct. 1, 2023 at Ludlow Country Club, 1 Tony Lema Drive, Ludlow.

Doors open at 11 a.m. followed by lunch at noon with Entree choices of Chicken Francaise, Roast Pork Loin or

Grilled Salmon.

Entertainment provided by Richie Mittenick and Peter Annone. Reserved Seating at \$48 available by sending check payable to POLANIE CLUB and mailing to:

Ms. Denise Meyers--14 Glen Albyn Street Springfield, MA, 01104 specify Meal Choice Information please call: Denise-413-563-7464, Stacy- 413-593-1172, Diane-413-214-3822, Jeanne-413-589-0366 or Sophie-413-540-9877.

This Week in Rec

Erin Carroll
Assistant Director

All too often we take for granted the amazing and dedicated people that are in our lives. There are our family members and here at WPRD our "extended" family which includes all the volunteers that step up to make things better and give back to our community. We would like to acknowledge and thank our hundreds of volunteer coaches, committee members (softball, baseball, football, etc.), Friends of Recreation members, Recreation Commission members as well as all the volunteers at tryouts, special events and everything in-between.

In today's society, when we are all so busy and limited in time, it is humbling to think of all the people that make time to aid in the betterment of our children and community. Anyone who has ever sat on a committee, board or coached truly knows how much time, planning, coordinating and energy is dedicated to make things run efficiently. These coaches and committee members take away time from their family to attend numerous meetings, read rules/communication from

WPRD and if coaching send numerous emails and texts to keep everyone updated on the season.

Unfortunately, we can't offer our volunteers a discounted registration fee, but we can say THANK YOU. Thank you for being a positive influence in our children's lives. Thank you for teaching kids to be good sports, to be good people, that communication is important and to treat others with respect. Thank you for your patience, kindness, understanding and giving your all for our kids and our community. Thank you for making a difference and being a part of the WPRD team! The entire staff of the Wilbraham Parks & Recreation Department truly appreciates all that you do.

So next time you see your child's coach, a committee or commission member, or any type of volunteer that helps in our community please say thank you as I am sure they don't hear that enough.

NOTES: Rec. Basketball (Gr. K-8) and ART-ventures (Gr K-5) registration starts September 26. Visit WilbrahamRec.com for all program details and to register.



Pawzaar Craft Fair will be held Sept. 30

SPRINGFIELD -- The annual Pawzaar Craft Fair is a signature event for the Foundation for TJO Animals. It is a local craft fair that attracts some of the Pioneer Valley's finest crafters, along with hundreds of animal loving patrons, all to benefit homeless animals in the community.

The event will be held in the parking lot of the Thomas J. O'Connor Animal Control & Adoption Center on Saturday, Sept. 30 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

There will be 30 vendors, great raffles, Jeannies Weenies and Fat City Kid food

trucks, music provided by Visual Sound Productions, pet merchandise for sale, bake sale and more. Special guests Jonathan Hall and Toto the Tornado Kitten will be stopping by for the afternoon.

Proceeds go directly to the medical care and treatment for Thomas J. O'Connor Animal Control & Adoption Center animals in need.

More information is available on www.tjofoundation.org, by emailing info@tjofoundation.org or by calling 413.306.5161

Events & announcements schedule

More on page 13

The Wilbraham Friends of the Library Annual Art Exhibit Call to Artists

WILBRAHAM -- The Wilbraham Friends of the Library will present their Annual Art Exhibit, taking place at the Brooks Room of the Wilbraham Public Library from Oct. 2 to Oct. 29 with a reception for artists, Friends and the public, Saturday, Oct. 14 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Artists will be able to sell additional unframed pieces at the reception. The library is located at 25 Crane Park Drive, Wilbraham.

The show is open for various art media, and Chairman Mary Bandouveres is now welcoming artist's applications.

Respond early at wplartshow@gmail.com to insure your spot. Entry deadline is September 22.

The event is free and open to the public. This show is always popular and many of the artists will have pieces for sale. The show is sponsored by the Wilbraham Friends of the Library which was established in 1973.

The Friends of the Library fund programs for children, teens, and adults, as well as the library's popular Museum

Pass program, furnishings, and other library equipment.

For more information, contact the Friends at friends@wilbrahamlibrary.org.

Get ready to shake, rattle & roll!

WILBRAHAM -- Let's dance to the 50's! The Friends of Wilbraham Seniors are excited to be bringing their "Fabulous 50's Dance" to the surrounding communities on Saturday, Oct. 14 at the Ludlow Polish American Citizens Club on 355 East Street from 7-11 p.m.

This evening dance party will feature music from the 50's with RADBU DJ Productions, who will have you singing along and rockin' the night away! In case you need to limber up and practice your moves, there will be dance lessons starting at 7:30.

A photo op area will be set up to capture your "cool" look! Prizes will be awarded for the best outfits and dance moves. 50's attire is not required & if dancing is not your thing, just visiting with friends and singing along to the oldies is fun enough! Snacks and a cash bar will be available, and the night will end with a fabulous raffle.

This event is sponsored by Vantage Care of Wilbraham and proceeds will benefit the Friends of Wilbraham Seniors. Wonderful raffle prizes are sure to please everyone including a swag basket from The Springfield Thunderbirds! The price is \$15 per person to attend. All attendees must be 18 years or older. Tickets may be purchased by calling Ann Marie Gaudette at 413-599-4803 or by stopping by the Wilbraham Senior Center at 45B Post Office Park, off Boston Rd, in Wilbraham.

Wilbraham Public Library announces teen programming

WILBRAHAM -- Teens Who Code will have their first meeting of the school year on Wednesday, Oct. 25 from 3:30-5 p.m. in the Brooks Room of the library. Facilitated by Mrs. Christine Goonan, this club is looking for new members. Grades 6-12 can explore project-based coding in a fun and friendly environment. Meetings are typically once a month in the Brooks Room, and all attendees need a laptop to join in. Online registration is required at www.wilbrahamlibrary.org or call 413-596-6141. Af-

ter registering, teens will receive more info by email. This is a free program hosted by the Wilbraham Public Library.

Hampden Senior Trips

HAMPDEN -- The following Hampden Senior Trips will occur in the coming weeks and months.

Newport Playhouse Thurs, Sept. 28: All-You-Can-Eat Buffet, Hilarious Show "Ghost of a Chance", & Cabaret; NEW LOWER PRICE \$132/pp. Full Payment Deadline Sept. 14.

Atlantic City Tues - Thurs, Oct. 10 - 12: Caesars Resort Hotel, two shows, \$50 food & slot bonuses; \$295/pp double, \$285/pp triple, \$395/pp single; \$50 deposit due at sign-up. Full Payment Deadline Oct. 1. Cancellation Insurance Available.

The Aqua Turf Club - ELVIS IS IN THE BUILDING! on Wed, Nov 8.; coffee/donuts, free drink, family-style lunch, great show and door prizes, \$119/pp. Full Payment Deadline Oct. 20.

All Prices incl Driver's Tip. Call Bobbi @ 413-566-8271 or email bobbijg2@charter.net.

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Chaug gets shutout over Ludlow



Zoey Cardano tries to intercept the ball.



Ava Kearney fights an opponent for the ball.



Turley photos by Sofia DiGrande
Kenzie Defonseca tries to get a leg on the ball.



Kelly Cronin makes a quick pass.



Kylie Ray tries to make a pass as pressure comes.

Tough start for Chaug girls volleyball



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli

Ava Murray sends a bump away. More photos on page 16.

Cora Pace sends a set straight up.

WILBRAHAM – Last Friday evening, Minnechaug girls volleyball was swept by visiting Longmeadow 3-0, with scores of 25-17, 25-10, and 25-21. Minnechaug is now 0-5 this season.

Falcons golf hits 4-1



Miles Fergus attempts a putt. More photos on page 17.



Turley photos by Sofia DiGrande
John Fitzgerald winds up for a tee-off.

WSU girls get big win

WESTFIELD - Westfield State junior forward Delaney Parker (Orange, Mass./Mahar HS) notched her 52nd career goal to set the Owls' career goals record in a 5-0 win over Massachusetts Maritime Academy in a Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference women's soccer match at Alumni Field on Saturday afternoon.

Westfield, the defending conference champs and picked first in the league's pre-season poll, looked the part as they outshot Buccaneers 28-0 in the first half, and 37-1 in the match. The Owls improve to 3-3, 1-0 MASCAC. Mass Maritime is now 0-4, and 0-1 in the league.

Parker's record-setter was the Owls fifth goal of the first half, as she scored on PK after the Owls Ryan Moran was taken down from behind while attacking the goal in the 42nd minute.

Parker's shot was just off the left side of Buccaneers starting goalkeeper Brady Deschamps (Brewster, Mass./Nauset).

"It feels great," said Parker. "I could tell the shots I was taking earlier were just me in my head. I was thinking 'I need to get it' but I was just off."

The crowd surged with excitement for each Owls scoring chance for Parker, but she delivered a couple of shots high over the cross bar in the early going.

"Even the PK wasn't great," she said, throwing up her hands. "But it went in, and now it's over with."

Westfield made sure the game was over by the half.

Tia Tollis (East Longmeadow, Mass.) put the Owls on the board in the eighth minute with a nice header

off of a corner kick from Jaida Cochran (Middleboro, Mass.). Kiana Maratsuka (Mililani, Hawaii) delivered a pair of goals, both on feeds from Parker, and Kiana Patel (Nairobi, Kenya) tallied her first collegiate goal with an assist from Maratsuka as the Owls got out to the big early lead.

The Owls peppered Deschamps with 28 total shots as she made 11 saves in the first half. Reagan Kerecz (Tolland, Conn./Ethel Walker School) played between the pipes for the Bucs in the second half and came up with six saves to keep the Owls off the board in the second frame.

Westfield used 26 players including two goalkeepers. Kayla Santucci (Agawam, Mass.) didn't face a single shot in the first half in getting the win, and Michaella Monchecchi (Winsdor, Mass./Wahconah) came out of the net to play a wide shot from Deschamps, who played in the field in the second half, late in the game on the only serious incursion into Owls territory for the Buccaneers.

Parker now has 52 goals, one more than Owls hall of famer Sandy (Pinto) Graham '97. Parker shares the team lead with Maratsuka with five goals each this season. Parker led NCAA D3 in goals with 31 as a freshman and added 16 in her sophomore season.

Westfield State was playing its first home game of the season after starting with four straight on the road. The Owls travels took them from Gorham, Maine to Cortland, N.Y. while playing schools from Maine, Massachusetts, New York and Pennsylvania. Westfield traversed 1,114 miles in facing those four foes.

Bonsignore adds 11th Riverhead Raceway win at crucial time

RIVERHEAD, N.Y. - Saturday night's NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour race at Riverhead Raceway came down to the final five laps, with the two championship contenders battling it out to the finish.

At the checkered flag, Justin Bonsignore scored his 11th career Riverhead Raceway victory, tying Mike Ewanitkso for the most all-time at the New York bullring. The win was also his 40th career in NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour competition and fifth of the 2023 season.

Bonsignore is one of just four drivers in the history of the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour to win 40 events. He is currently just two wins behind tying Ted Christopher for third on the all-time list.

With the win, Bonsignore took over the points lead over Ron Silk with just three races remaining in the season. Silk finished third on Saturday after the two battled down the stretch.

"Tying Mike Ewanitkso has been a goal of mine since I was fortunate enough to start winning races here on the Whelen Modified Tour," Bonsignore said. "I wish he was here tonight, but I'm sure I will get something funny in texts later tonight. It was a heavyweight fight for sure tonight. This is an awesome event that everyone here puts together to keep racing going on Long Island and honor Ed Partridge. The momentum has been on our side lately - onto North Wilkesboro in two weeks."

The next event on the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour schedule is set for Saturday, Sept. 30, as the series heads to North Wilkesboro Speedway, one of the most historic tracks in NASCAR history. For more information on three-time NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour champion Justin Bonsignore, visit JustinBonsignore.com and follow his Athlete page on Facebook for the latest news and updates from the track.

T-Birds start season Oct. 14

SPRINGFIELD - The Springfield Thunderbirds, the proud AHL affiliate of the St. Louis Blues, today announced their slate of promotions and theme nights for the 2023-24 season, presented by MGM Springfield. The T-Birds will host 36 home games from October to April inside the MassMutual Center.

The Calder Cup quest begins on Saturday, Oct. 14 for Opening Night presented by MGM Springfield. In the team's annual tradition, fans will be treated to a pre-game Block Party on the property of MGM Springfield from 4:00 - 6:00 PM presented by Community Bank N.A. with the support of the Springfield Business Improve-

ment District (BID). The outdoor bash will feature live music, food, and drink. Thunderbirds fans will have the opportunity to get their hands on a plethora of giveaway souvenir items this season, beginning on Opening Night with jersey-shaped rally towels on each and every seat at the MassMutual Center.

"On the heels of a record 15 sellouts last season, we are continuing to aim higher to ensure the Thunderdome remains a definitive home-ice advantage for our team," said Thunderbirds President Nathan Costa. "Our fans will always remain our number one priority, and this year's promotions and

Please see **T-BIRDS**, page 17



Saniyah Dawkins goes for the spike.



Sammie Long serves for the Falcons.



Siena Dansereau sends the ball away.



Cora Pace and Anna O'Toole attempt to block.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli

Falcons golf hits 4-1



Matt Beaudin watches his drive.



Turley photos by Sofia DiGrande

Graysen Placzek watches his last shot.

WILBRAHAM – The Minnechaug Regional High School golf team is now 4-1 to start the season after wins against Ludlow and East Longmeadow last week. In the win over Ludlow 148-170, the Falcons got some great cards with Ali Awkal scoring a 35, Owen Goldberg a 36, John Fitzgerald with a 38, and Miles Fergus with a 39. The Falcons had the top four scores in the match.

T-BIRDS from page 16

theme nights reflect that, as there truly is something in it for everybody. We cannot wait to get another unforgettable season underway.”

Fans interested in attending Opening Night can take advantage of a value offer with the purchase of a Dunkin’ Opening Night Pack, which starts at \$100 in the Defense Zone, \$115 in the Attack Zone sections and \$130 in the Center Value Zone sections. Fans who purchase a pack will receive: two (2) tickets to Opening Night on Oct. 14; four (4) vouchers redeemable at any regular season game in 2023-24 (subject to availability); one (1) T-Birds hat; a Dunkin’ gift card; and one (1) Single Day Big E admission*.

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Baystate Health receives Get With The Guidelines-Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Awards

American Heart Association Award recognizes Baystate’s commitment to quality stroke care at its four hospitals

SPRINGFIELD--Baystate Health’s four hospitals have received the American Heart Association’s Get With The Guidelines - Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award for their commitment to ensuring stroke patients receive the most appropriate treatment according to nationally recognized, research-based guidelines leading to more lives saved and reduced disability.

Baystate Medical Center in Springfield, Baystate Franklin Medical Center in Greenfield, Baystate Wing Hospital in Palmer, and Baystate Noble Hospital in Westfield earned the awards by meeting specific quality achievement measures for the diagnosis and treatment of stroke patients who have access to the best practices and lifesaving care throughout Baystate Health.

Stroke is the No. 5 cause of death and a leading cause of disability in the United States. A stroke occurs when a blood vessel that carries oxygen and nutrients to the brain is either blocked by a clot or bursts. When that happens, part of the brain cannot get the blood and oxygen it needs, so brain cells die. Early stroke detection and treatment are key to improving survival, minimizing disability and accelerating recovery times.

Get With The Guidelines puts the expertise of the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association to work for hospitals nationwide, helping ensure patient care is aligned with the latest research and evidence-based guidelines. Get With The Guidelines - Stroke is an in-hospital program

for improving stroke care by promoting consistent adherence to these guidelines, which can minimize the long-term effects of a stroke and even prevent death.

All four hospitals also received the American Heart Association’s Target: Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll Award. Target: Type 2 Diabetes aims to ensure patients with Type 2 diabetes, who might be at high risk for complications, receive the most up-to-date, evidence-based care when hospitalized due to stroke.

Each year, program participants qualify for the award by demonstrating how their organization has committed to providing quality care for stroke patients. In addition to following treatment guidelines, Get With The Guidelines participants also educate patients to help them manage their health and recovery at home.

“We are incredibly pleased to recognize Baystate Health’s four hospitals for their commitment to caring for patients with stroke,” said Steven Messe, M.D., chairperson of the Stroke System of Care Advisory Group. “Participation in Get With The Guidelines is associated with improved patient outcomes, fewer readmissions and lower mortality rates - a win for health care systems, families and communities.”

Baystate Medical Center additionally received the association’s TARGET: Stroke Elite Plus Honor Roll Award. To qualify for this recognition, hospitals must meet quality measures developed to reduce the time between the patient’s arrival at the hospital and clot-buster treatment in keeping with the latest scientific evidence to treat ischemic stroke.



Dr. Edward Feldman



Dr. Rajiv Padmanabhan

“When it comes to stroke, minutes matter. Fast evaluation and treatment saves lives and makes rehabilitation more effective. Our dual stroke awards place Baystate Health among an elite group of stroke care providers nationwide recognized for their clinical excellence in treating any stroke from ischemic to hemorrhagic,” said Dr. Rajiv Padmanabhan, medical director, stroke program, Baystate Health.

“These dual awards are a further recognition of our stroke care team who stand ready 24/7 to immediately provide patients with the best possible care so that they have the best possible outcome after their stroke,” added Dr. Edward Feldmann, vice president and medical director, neurosciences and rehabilitation, Baystate Health.

Until recently, clot busting treatment was the only proven therapy to treat ischemic stroke. Now doctors nationwide are using an advanced procedure called thrombectomy, which has transformed care for those with an acute ischemic stroke. In western Massachusetts, this procedure is performed exclusively at Baystate Medical Center’s state-of-the-art neurointerventional laboratory.

Thrombectomy involves anesthetizing the patient, then inserting a thin metallic stent-like device into an artery in the leg. The neurovascular specialist then threads the device up to the blockage in the brain, where it opens to immediately restore blood circulation, eventually grabbing onto the clot and pulling it out.

For more information on stroke, visit baystatehealth.org/stroke.

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Mall Barbers arrives in Wilbraham after Eastfield Mall closure

The barbershop is located on Boston Road

By **Kristin Rivers**
Staff Writer
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM -- Mall Barbers officially opened its doors on Sept. 11 at its new location on Boston Road.

The barbershop, owned by Maria Gomes and her husband Hector, had been at the Eastfield Mall until the mall closed its doors on July 15.

Their hours are Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. and closed on Sundays.

Gomes, who's been at the barbershop for 44 years, explained she originally wanted to be a nurse, but within a month of working at a nursing home, changed her mind and went to barber school in Hartford, CT.

The school later directed her to Ciro Bracci, the founding owner of Mall Barbers.

"It was a very busy shop. He had just remodeled it because back in the day, every 10 years, you had to remodel your place; didn't matter if it was retail or service or whatever," Gomes said. "He opened in '68, so in '78, he remodeled the barbershop, and he hired me in the beginning of '79. I came out of barber school, I worked for him and have been here ever since."

Gomes was excited about opening Mall Barbers in Wilbraham, explaining the new location would serve longtime customers while welcoming new ones.

"Everybody comes in and says that this is more convenient for them, so this was the perfect location," Gomes said.

Gomes is also grateful for the support of the town and community.

"It's been great. The support up here's been wonderful. The town of Wilbraham's been wonderful. I didn't have any trouble with getting

the occupancy permit or the business certificate or anything. They were very accommodating. We have no complaints," Gomes said.

Reflecting on the Eastfield Mall, Gomes misses the walkers she saw every morning, her old crew, the interactions and how everybody knew each other, adding she knew a move was coming.

"We'll miss the mall, but business itself since we've been here for three months, we're adapted. We knew it was just time to go in the last few years. We had to find a new home for us to stay in business," Gomes said.

Gomes said she and her husband had considered other locations before the mall's closure.

"We've been casually looking on Boston Road for a long time, just casually, no plans no nothing, and then this location became available Feb. 1," Gomes said.

Gomes stressed the importance of supporting local barbers as the industry "is kind of dying" and more stylists are pursuing careers at salons.

"A lot of the small barbers, they went out of business after the pandemic. In our industry, people tend to stay long. They don't retire at 62 or 65. You just stay, but then during the pandemic a lot of those people closed," Gomes said.

Gomes said Mall Barbers also offers walk-in appointments, sharing how they took care of a client after they couldn't see a barber because they were appointment-only.

"Our business is welcoming. Anybody that comes through the door, we'll do our best to take care of," Gomes said.

Gomes wants the community to know Mall Barbers is open and ready to serve them.

"Our doors are open. We'd love to see them. Our mission is to welcome people, to make them look good," Gomes said.

Gomes also shared this message: thank you.

"I really want to thank the community, business-wise, on the move," Gomes said. "They've been nothing



Maria Gomes, owner of Mall Barbers, and Alicia Paquette, barber at Mall Barbers, smile for a photo inside Mall Barbers during a break from serving clients on Sept. 15. Mall Barbers officially opened its doors in Wilbraham on Sept. 11.



An interior shot of the barber stations where customers get their hair done at Mall Barbers on Boston Road.



An interior shot of Mall Barbers of their stations for washing and shampooing hair for customers. Mall Barbers has been around for 40 years, originally at the Eastfield Mall before its closure on July 15.



A sign Maria Gomes, owner of Mall Barbers, was given during the grand opening of Mall Barbers on Boston Road on Sept. 11. The sign is one of many barbershop-themed pieces on display throughout the interior.

but helpful here in the town; very welcoming, we're very happy to be up here. I definitely want to let them know that I'm very happy to be here and we're here to serve."

To learn more, call 413-543-1738.



An exterior shot of Mall Barbers on Boston Road. They welcome walk-ins and appointments for their services.

North Brookfield Savings Bank announces new President and Chief Executive Officer

NORTH BROOKFIELD— North Brookfield Savings Bank announced that Kaz Borawski has been appointed President & Chief Executive Officer of North Brookfield Savings Bank effective Aug. 1.

"The Board and I have been impressed by Kaz's extensive and varied banking experience and we look forward to continuing to work with Kaz to grow North Brookfield Savings Bank" said Chairwoman of the Board of Trustees Donna L. Boulanger. "The Board of Directors has been impressed by his commitment to the Bank, our employees, and the community."

Borawski, a resident of Wilbraham, holds more than 26 years of experience in industries including retail banking, investment banking, wealth management, and technology and operations at organizations such as JPMorgan Chase and Mass Mutual Financial. He has spent the last 13 years in community banking with United Bank, Merchants Bank, and Holyoke Credit Union before joining North Brookfield Savings Bank in February 2022 as Chief Financial Officer. Kaz's depth of financial industry expertise and his community involvement will serve the

Bank well.

Kaz shares NBSB's value of continued learning and goes the extra mile to stay in front of industry trends and concepts. Kaz holds a certificate from The New England School for the Financial Studies at Babson College, a Master of Business Administration, with a major in Finance, from Manhattan College in New York City and a Bachelor of Business Administration, with a major in Accounting, from Baruch College also in New York City.

"I would like to thank the Board of Directors for this opportunity to lead North Brookfield Savings Bank," said Borawski. "Our bank has a valued team of employees who are dedicated to helping our customers with their financial needs and I am proud to be the leader of this team. I look forward to building lasting relationships with our customers. North Brookfield Savings Bank is important to the communities we serve, and it has a long-standing tradition of excellence in customer service. The Bank has enjoyed strong growth over the years and has a very strong capital position. I'm committed to continuing that legacy."

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If you are like me, you have been getting reminders since last month about signing up for a flu vaccine and for the new COVID vaccine, which is due to be available in the next month or so. Is this important?

What are vaccines anyway? They are usually injections (can be nasal sprays or pills) that you take to help your immune system to recognize harmful diseases and teach it to defend against them. You can think of it as practice, kind of like how a football team plays against itself or runs drills so when it is up against a larger or stronger opponent, some of the defenses come about naturally. There are different types of vaccines. Live vaccines use a weak form of the germ; inactive vaccines use a dead version of the germ. Recombinant or conjugate vaccines use a certain piece of the germ such as a protein. mRNA vaccines use messenger RNA, which is a special substance that tells your cells how to make a protein of the germ so it can fight it.

The different types work in different ways, but they all produce an immune response in your body. The immune response is the way your body defends itself against things that it sees as foreign or harmful. Three things happen in an immune response. There is a germ: one, your body figures out it doesn't belong; two, your immune system fights the germ and three, it REMEMBERS the germ. This last step is how it protects you from getting the disease- it fights it off before it can develop into an

illness because it recognizes it right away as an enemy. This is called immunity. Herd immunity, or community immunity, is helped by vaccines. What this means is the fewer people who get a disease, the harder it is for it to travel from person to person. Many diseases can be very mild, or show no symptoms, and people can give it to others who may become very sick. Community immunity is also important for folks who cannot be vaccinated such as babies, folks who are allergic to vaccine ingredients or have weakened immune systems.

Why do we need an annual flu vaccine and potentially an annual COVID vaccine? These are both caused by viruses, rather than bacteria. Viruses are sneaky. They can change in response to the defenses mounted by our immune systems. Scientists look at the flu season in the southern hemisphere (their winter is our summer) and make the vaccine according to the viruses they see. That is still a best guess, which is why some people get the flu even with the vaccine. It is usually a much milder case than they would get otherwise, or it doesn't reproduce enough for them to pass it on without knowing. The idea behind the COVID vaccine is the same. You may still get it, but you will not be as sick, and it is less likely you can give it to someone else. COVID keeps changing, which is why boosters, and now a new vaccine, are recommended.

Why do some people say the flu vaccine gave them the flu? That

is not possible, the flu vaccine is a dead germ. What likely happens is they are feeling their body's immune response to the vaccine. That is a good thing, it means your immune response is working properly! Also, most folks get their vaccine in fall/early winter when the cold season begins and folks spend more time indoors. If your body is working on an immune response to the vaccine and you run into someone carrying a cold, you might get that cold because your body is busy already so defenses can't do both well. You might have already had that cold or virus starting to grow when you got the vaccine. That is why it is recommended that you get vaccines when you are feeling well. Most folks (like myself) only get a sore arm after the flu vaccine which goes away in a day or two. It takes several weeks for your body to produce the special cells to fight the virus, which is why it is recommended that you get a flu shot in the fall.

Keeping up to date on vaccines is the best way to protect yourself and others from getting sick. You can get them at your doctor's office, a flu clinic or a pharmacy. My flu shot is already scheduled!

As always, I can be reached by email at seniorinfo2021@gmail.com or leave a voicemail at 596-2800 Ext 315 and someone will get back to you.

Diane Weston, RN BSN
Senior Center Building Committee

Wilbraham Senior Center programming

WILBRAHAM – The following programs will occur in the coming weeks at the Wilbraham Senior Center, located in Post Office Park.

Pumpkin Contest

Submit your pumpkin by Oct. 23.

Let's get creative and decorate pumpkins any way you want! You can carve, paint, shave or bedazzle. It's up to you! The last day to vote for pumpkins is on Halloween! The winner will receive a gift prize provided by Serenity Care PACE. Please register at 596-8379.

Elder Financial Abuse Workshop by Polish National

Thursday, Oct 5 from noon to 2 p.m.

Financial Elder Abuse affect between 3 to 5 million seniors each year. During this workshop, you'll learn how to spot potential threats and what to do to avoid financial fraud. Lunch will be provided compliments of PNCU. Sign up at 596-8379.

TOUR: Armbrook Village Westfield

Friday, Oct. 13. Bus leave at 11 a.m.

Independent & assisted living-compass memory support. Armbrook Village offers a woodland setting, with many outdoor amenities, including an outdoor dining terrace, raised garden beds, a gazebo and more. The exceptional building, with its wide array of dedicated community spaces, has been designed to support a vibrant community of individuals doing the things they love.

Serenity Care PACE

Oct. 16 at 10:30 a.m. Sign up at 596-8379.

Join us for an informational presentation by serenity care Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly is a Medicare and Medicaid program that helps people meet their health care needs in the community instead of going to a nursing home or other care facility. If you join PACE, a team of health care professionals will work with you to help coordinate your care.

Money Management

Oct. 23 at 10:30 a.m. Call 596-8379 to sign up.

Money Management is an in-home service which helps low income, frail older people who have difficulty with budgeting, paying routine bills, and keeping track of financial matters. The program's overall objective is to help seniors stay independent and to make sure their bills are paid.

Individuals whose eyesight makes it difficult to read clearly, with a physical disability who are unable to write checks for the bills they receive, Persons who cannot maintain everyday banking activities because of frailty or disability or who are simply overwhelmed by the bill paying process.

October Special Lunch

Oct. 24 at noon. Doors open at 11:30 a.m. Free!

Happy Halloween! Members from all communities can sign up for our October Special Lunch by calling 596-8379. Country Bank is providing the meal. Musical entertainment by Laura Hicks. 596-8379 to sign up. Costumes are encouraged.

Songbirds Choir

Starting Wednesdays at 3 p.m.

Rehearsals will begin Wednesdays 3 p.m. Join this group of passionate youth singers and let's make some music. This choir has been established since 2018, and now it needs is you. Please contact Kimberly Perteet at songbirdschilrenschoir@gmail.com with any questions. Come give it a try and see if this fun choir is right for you. Sign up at 596-8379,

Grief Support Counseling – FREE three times a month

Second, third and fourth Tuesday at 11 a.m.

Drop-ins welcome. Free!

Owner and Founder, Liane Smola will be joining us monthly to discuss topics such as the nature of grief, managing difficult emotions, self-care, remembering the person who has passed, coping with the stress of change, handling special occasions, reaching out for support and finally sharing some ideas on how to support others in your life, who also may be faced with grief. This course will also allow you a space to share the story of your lost loved one and will offer soft guidance and support for your continued grief journey.


Wilbraham & Monson Academy

OPEN HOUSE

Sunday, October 1, 10 a.m.

COEDUCATIONAL • BOARDING & DAY
COLLEGE PREPARATORY • GRADES 6 - 12, PG

Tour the campus and learn more about our programs and community. Meet faculty, coaches, parents and students.



RSVP: www.wma.us/openhouse

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