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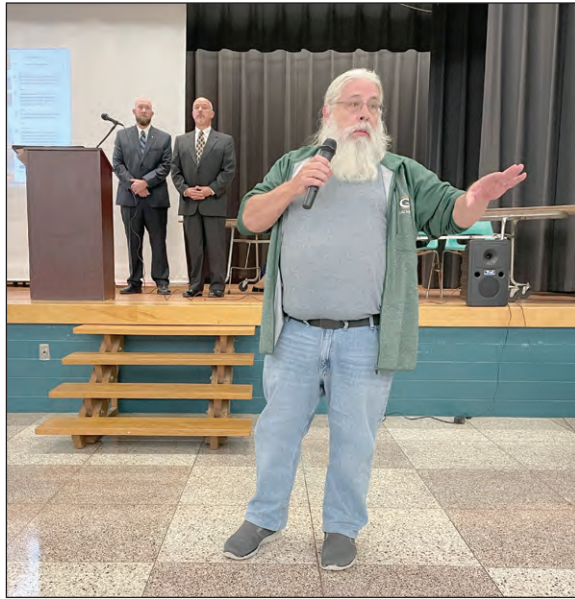
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Hampden Fiber optic article falls short at the goal line



Turley photos by Dalton Zbierski

Thad Clavette speaks against fiber optic internet during the Oct. 30 Special Town Meeting.

Vote needed 66.7% of votes, receives 64.8%

By Dalton Zbierski
Editor
dzbierski@turley.com

HAMPDEN -- Only standing room was available in the Thornton Burgess School auditorium for the Oct. 30 Special Town Meeting, as several hundred attendees determined the future of high-speed fiber optic internet in Hampden.

Article 2 requested approval for Hampden to borrow \$8.57 million for the installation of 71 miles of fiber optic cable. Ultimately, the item failed by mere percentage points.

To pass, the article required a two-thirds majority vote; however, only 64.8% of residents on-hand voted in favor, failing just shy of the 66.7% needed. A total of 133 residents gave their approval while 72 opposed the article.

Please see **HAMPDEN**, page 8



Turley photos by Kristin Rivers

(L to R) Gracie Smith, Maddie Dart, Emmie Dart and Natalie Bruno as the Founding Fathers during the Halloween Party at Hampden Free Public Library. The group also won Best Group Costume during the Costume Contest.

Halloween Party conjures scary good fun

Event was held at the Hampden library

By Kristin Rivers
Staff Writer
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HAMPDEN -- Tricks and treats abounded at the library from 6 - 8 p.m. on Oct. 28 during its annual Halloween Party.

The party took place in the Sheila R. Flynn Teen Center.

Throughout the evening, cos-

tumed party guests partook in numerous activities including musical chairs to Halloween-themed music, a limbo game, a mummy-wrap race, temporary glow-in-the-dark tattoos, a photo booth, loads of candy and treats and more.

The party's main course, pizza, was donated by Casa Bella Italian Kitchen & Bar.

Additionally, a costume contest was held for the best original costume, scariest costume, funniest costume, best group costume and best homemade costume, with two of

them being decided by majority vote after a tie.

Grace Gabin came to the party dressed as a dark fairy, sharing she had a great time and enjoyed the limbo, musical chairs and mummy wrap.

Gabin heard about the party through a friend of hers.

"The Halloween Party was a lot of fun. It has a bunch of games, a bunch of candy and some really good pizza from Casa Bella," Gabin said.

Please see **HALLOWEEN**, page 11

Jack-o-Lantern contest supports Wilbraham Friends of the Library

By Kristin Rivers
Staff Writer
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WILBRAHAM -- Families stopped by the library on Oct. 29 for the Friends of the Wilbraham Public Library's Jack-o-Lantern Contest and StoryWalk Display.

The event, now in its second year, was sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

Due to the weather, the event was moved indoors.

Throughout the event, numerous carved jack-o-lanterns, lit up with LED tea lights, were on display, including a jack-o-lantern with cat whiskers and ears, a monster-like jack-o-lantern with a small white pumpkin in its mouth, one-eyed jack-o-lanterns with horns and more.

Additionally, families enjoyed Halloween-themed coloring pages, word find games and treat bags, with ribbons given out for the most outstanding pumpkin, most creative, most unusual, spookiest and more.

Karen Ball, the library's director, explained the event came together when the library opened the StoryWalk last summer, a quarter-mile loop trail displaying a different page of a picture book.

"It's a nice intergenerational thing, families can do it together. A lot of libraries do temporary StoryWalks where they have signs that are more like lawn signs, but by doing the permanent one, we can make really good use of the wilderness that we have outside," Ball said.



Turley photos by Kristin Rivers

Liam Anderson shows off his Boston Bruins-themed pumpkin during the Friends of the Wilbraham Public Library Jack-O-Lantern Display event at Wilbraham Public Library. Anderson's pumpkin was awarded Best Creative at the event.

Ball loved the creativity of the jack-o-lanterns participants brought in.

"We didn't give them any rules at all, so it was whatever their imagination led them to make," Ball said.

Lily Harrigan took part in the contest with a "Three Little Pigs" inspired jack-o-lantern display, one large pumpkin displaying the big bad wolf, three smaller pumpkins representing the three little pigs and another small pumpkin carved as a straw house with a tea set inside.

Harrigan said she heard about the event through her mom, who is heavily involved in town and community events, and the family wanted to try the event this year.

"I love how it's, like, themed, because you get to enjoy different themes and different things," Harrigan said. "So, that's really fun, and there's so many different possibilities for just one theme, so like for the pumpkin carving, you can do any pumpkin carving."

Harrigan, a big fan of books, also appreciates how the event helps fundraise for the library.

"I really think that libraries should thrive and lots of kids should be able to enjoy that," Harrigan said. "I would really love if the library could get more books from fundraising because I love reading them. They're all so amazing."

Liam Anderson, who presented a Boston Bruins-themed jack-o-lantern for the display, enjoyed the

Please see **JACK-O-LANTERN**, page 19

Design funding approved for Hampden Senior Center expansion

By Dalton Zbierski
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HAMPDEN -- A sum of \$60,000 was approved during Monday's Special Town meeting to fund the architectural design for an addition to the senior center on Allen Street.

The senior center is the only service agency located within the town of Hampden, and people of all ages visit the facility for fuel assistance, food stamps, emergency fuel, MassHealth and other insurance. They can also access the food pantry, congregate meals, transportation, housing, application search assistance and more.

However, space in the building is limited. When special events occur, all programs in the senior center's Great Room are cancelled. Cancelled classes include weight training, yoga and functional fitness.

Space is so limited that a custodial closet has been transformed into an auxiliary room where foot care, massages, manicures, pedicures, facials and hearing tests take place throughout the month.

"That's quite an inappropriate space for a healthcare procedure," Senior Center Building Committee member Don Collins said.

Collins noted that the Selectmen were approached by the Council on Aging's board several years ago to entertain having a study done to look at the senior center's current needs and needs that may develop in the next 25 years.

Collins said the senior center has served the community well for more than 23 years, and it even served as an emergency shelter during the October snowstorm in 2011. However, changes must be made, and an expansion could be the answer.

"Over the past several years, the programs at the senior center have grown and shortcomings have emerged in the building with the availability of space. Renovations are needed, and there are sever space



Turley photos by Dalton Zbierski

Residents approve an item relating to an architectural design for the senior center expansion project during the Oct. 30 Special Town Meeting.

limitations that have become evident," Collins said.

He presented a PowerPoint presentation that said chair racks, staging equipment, tables and other furniture items are stored in the Great Room, library or hallway due to lack of space. In addition, the library is used for classes and programs instead of being available for reading, relaxing or visiting with friends.

Collins said there are three areas the committee has evaluated.

"One is looking for space for private, confidential conversations when people come to the senior center to discuss things like food stamp assistance, fuel assistance, health insurance analysis and recommendations, consulting with a nurse or consulting with the Veteran's Agent," he said.

Secondly, the senior center runs 19 regular programs during the year, and there are eight to 10 programs during the

day. One of the key areas the building is short on is storage space.

"These 19 programs have equipment and supplies, and there's a dire lack of space. The senior center has to store all this equipment and supplies, and the senior center has a dire lack of storage," Collins said.

A third area is evaluating room for growth and what an expansion could mean for programs.

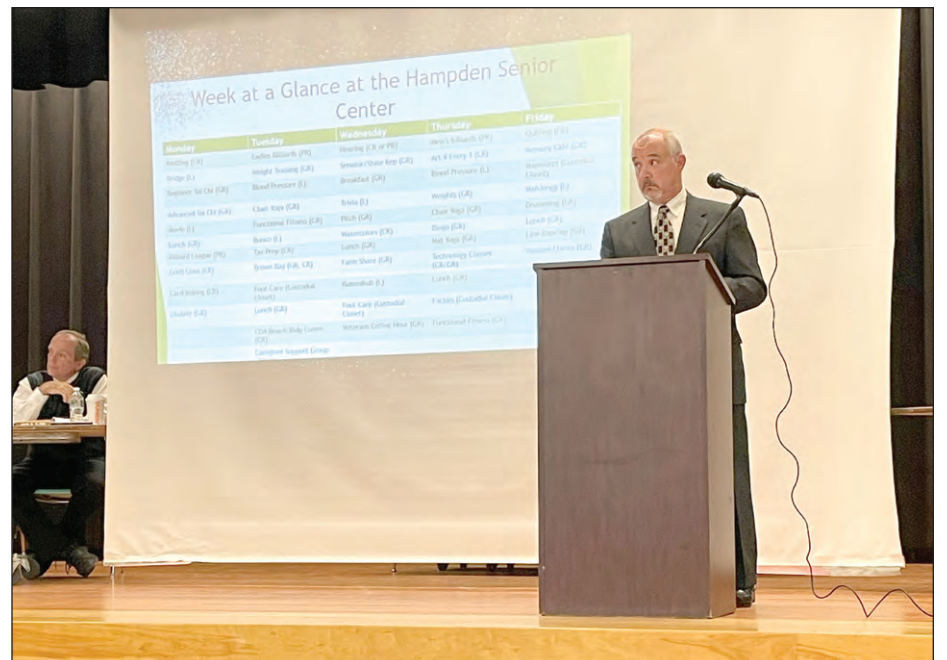
An addition would allow for more programs and events during the day without having to cancel regularly scheduled programs. It would strengthen the transportation program, create programs to help with mental health issues, create confidential office space for Veteran's Services, health screenings and support groups and provide an updated computer lab, assisting with desktop computers, tablets and iPhones.

An expansion would also allow for the possibility of a year-round gift shop for the Friends of the Hampden Seniors to fundraise and would enable the senior center to explore options for designated exercise class space.

It would provide increased intergenerational programs for the community, allow the facility to continue to host programs for recreation, socialization and educational purposes, explore options for different nutrition programs and enable restrooms to be updated.

Collins said the committee has met twice a month for the past year.

"We've identified the needs, we've refined this list, we've looked at alternatives and options, and we've come up with a final list of needs," he said. "We're requesting these funds so the next step is to meet with an architectural firm to come up with a design that will meet these needs."



Town Moderator Rick Green introduces an item related to the senior center during the Oct. 20 Special Town Meeting.

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Saint Cecilia Women's Club November meeting

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Town administrator items pass at Hampden Special Town Meeting

By Dalton Zbierski
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HAMPDEN — With current Town Administrator Bob Markel set to retire at the end of the year, Hampden is preparing to land his successor.

On Oct. 30 at the Special Town Meeting, voters approved two articles that will contribute to hiring the town's next town administrator.

First, \$15,000 will be made available to increase the salary of the next town administrator. Selectman Donald Davenport explained.

"The days of Hampden having a town administrator who is recognized statewide as an experienced, accomplished and knowledgeable professional administrator for a discounted price is coming to an end," Davenport said. "I think it's important to note that Mr. Markel was paid on an hourly basis, he received no benefits from the town, he received no paid days off. His net pay consequently was not commensurate to what the market is nowadays for town administrators."

Davenport said the money requested in the article will be used to elevate the salary to a competitive range to attract a highly qualified candidate who will work full-time. Davenport also took time to thank Markel for his contributions over the past several years.

"I'd like to thank him for his advice and guidance and leadership on a number of important issues, including keeping the town running during the pandemic, (working to bring in) the ambulance service, securing millions in various grants, establishing fair and equitable complete pay scale and benefits packages for town employees and upgrading technology," Davenport said.

While the article passed, the Advisory Committee recommended unfavorable action. Chair Doug Boyd explained that the unfavorable vote had nothing to do with Markel's performance and was not a poor reflection of the position itself.

"It's more of a reflection of the fact that position has not even been advertised yet," Boyd said. "(Markel)



Turley photo by Dalton Zbierski

With Selectman Donald Davenport to the left, Town Administrator Bob Markel addresses the Special Town Meeting on Oct. 30.

is planning on leaving at the end of December so we anticipate that position will be unfilled for some period of time after Jan. 1, which means the funds that are in that account now will be available to apply to the new person who's brought into that position. It's simply a matter of believing that this money is not going to be necessary to hire the type of person that we're going to need, and we believe that those funds will be available in the existing budget."

The second article that was approved was an appropriation of \$15,000 for the town to hire search firm Community Paradigm Associates of Plymouth to assist in the search for a full-time town administrator. The Advisory Committee recommended favorable action.

Former Selectboard member Mary Ellen Glover came to the podium to offer an amendment to the article.

"I would move to amend the motion to empower Town Administrator Markel to conduct a search and recruit a full-time town administrator," Glover said.

Kathy Pessolano then asked Markel if he wants to be in charge of the search, noting that "it seems to me if you don't then the amendment is moved."

Markel expressed his concerns about the possibility.

"Legally, it is something that the outgoing town administrator can do; conduct a search. I have some concerns. Certainly, making judgements about my successor will be controversial. Some will say I made the wrong judgement for whatever reason. I'd be concerned about that," he said.

Town Moderator Rick Green spoke to town counsel and expressed that Glover's amendment could not have gone through regardless.

"The town meeting cannot dictate who does the search. That is the responsibility that falls within the purview of the Board of Selectmen. In actuality, the amendment to the motion is mute. What we can simply vote up or down is the funding for the search as per the motion," he said.

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Select Board holds hearing on FY24 property tax rate

By Kristin Rivers
Staff Writer
krivers@turley.com

WILBRAHAM -- The Select Board held a public hearing on Oct. 30 for establishing the property tax rate for fiscal year 2024.

Michael Squindo was absent this week, while Sue Bunnell was remote via GoTo Meeting.

Principal Assessor Christopher Keefe was joined by Board of Assessors members Roger Roberge II and John Wesolowski to review the tax classifications, explaining the change in values for taxable property went from \$2.284 billion to \$2.459 billion, increasing approximately 7.5%.

Keefe said residential properties experienced the biggest increase.

"We've had several new condominiums and several family homes come online and there's been a lot of renovation work in town," Keefe said.

Keefe acknowledged the levy number is unofficial but expected to increase as well.

"(The) town looks to be spending about three million dollars more than they did last year," Keefe said.

That increase, Keefe said, will show up in the tax bills, with an expected increase from \$7200 to about



Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

(L to R) Board of Assessors members Roger Roberge II, John Wesolowski and Principal Assessor Christopher Keefe speak with Select Board Chairman Theresa Goodrich about establishing the property tax rate for fiscal year 2024 during the Oct. 30 Select Board meeting in Wilbraham.

\$7725, an increase of \$525.

"All of which will impact on the third and fourth quarter tax bills coming out," Keefe said.

Keefe presented several options for shifting the tax

burden, including a shift to individual or commercial/industrial/personal property classes by as much as 150%, an open space discount offering up to 25% on whatever open space is, a small commercial discount to lower the assess value of qualifying commercial properties by 10%, residential tax exemption for up to 35% of owner-occupied residential structures total valuation and a farm excise exemption.

The personal property exemption is already in effect, exempting accounts under \$10,000 in value from taxation.

"Historically, we have not adopted any of these and kept a residential factor of one which has a uniform tax rate for everyone," Keefe said.

John Jurkowski asked Keefe a couple of questions, explaining how "any increase in taxes is a big burden on me," as he's retired and on a pension.

"Is it possible to reduce the residential rate and increase the business rate?" Jurkowski said.

Keefe said yes, but it's a vote by the board, not the assessors.

"It won't change the amount of money collected by the town. It would just change from whom the money is collected," Keefe said.

After Jurkowski's questions, Bunnell weighed in.

"We have, historically, evaluated the possibility of shifting some of the burden to businesses," Bunnell said. "But most of the businesses in our community are relatively small businesses and the impact of that shifted burden because there's so much more residential property and therefore, residential tax, is large."

When Chairman Theresa Goodrich asked what the residential versus commercial ratio is, Keefe said it's 95% percent residential and five-percent commercial.

The following motions were made: taking no action relative to the adoption of an open space discount figure for FY24 passed 2-0, taking no action relative to the adoption of a residential exemption for FY24 passed 2-0, taking no action relative to the adoption of a small commercial exemption for FY24 passed 2-0 and moving to adopt a residential sector of one passed 2-0.

Select Boards approve Veteran Services agreement in joint meeting

By Kristin Rivers
Staff Writer
krivers@turley.com



Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

(L to R) Monson Town Administrator Jennifer Wolowicz, Wilbraham Select Board Chairman Theresa Goodrich, Monson Select Board member Peter Warren, Monson Select Board Chair Patricia Oney, Wilbraham Town Administrator Nick Breault and Jered Sasen, director of Veterans Services for the Town of Wilbraham, discuss how to support veteran's services in both towns during their joint meeting on Oct. 30.

WILBRAHAM -- The Wilbraham and Monson Select Boards approved on Oct. 30 to create a Veteran Services agreement between the two towns.

Town Administrator Nick Breault explained he's spoken with Monson Town Administrator Jennifer Wolowicz and Wilbraham's Director of Veterans Services Jered Sasen on two possible options: establishing a Veteran's Services District with staffing and governance or a host community client arrangement with shared services similar to the Shared Public Health District.

"There may be others, I'm not saying that those are the only two ways, but in speaking with Jennifer we thought that it would be appropriate to bring that up for this discussion," Breault said.

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— Beth from Belchertown

"Everyone loved it. Absolutely perfect. I was planning on stopping by between now and Christmas to thank you. You beat me to it. We'll definitely see you next year."
— Greg from West Springfield

"It was absolutely AMAZING! This was the first time ever bringing a turkey and then I followed your cooking directions on your website. It was perfect cooking it low and slow."
— Kelly from Ludlow

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VIEWPOINTS

in the Garden

by Roberta McQuaid



The questions keep coming

I continue to receive a number of questions each week.

It's encouraging that there is so much interest in gardening even as this season is coming to an end. Here are the quandaries we have for this week:

Myrtle still has an abundance of green tomatoes left on the plants in her small gardening plot. "Are my tomatoes still OK to be outside? When I've picked them green in the past I remember putting them in a paper bag to ripen. Is that better than just leaving them on the counter? Mine are mostly cherries and I have quite a few! I looked online and it says to put them in a bag with an apple, but I don't recall using an apple the last time I did this. I sometimes find that advice from the internet gets confusing - too many options! Also, I was wondering what you thought of trying to root the tomato branches that have flowers. Maybe I could grow them inside for the winter."

Lucky you to still have tomato branches with flowers, let alone those with tomatoes on them! I am impressed.

With frost imminent, I typically allow green tomatoes to ripen single layer in trays or cardboard boxes - something that can "breathe," unlike plastic bags or containers. A paper bag sounds like a fine option too.

The reason for the apple is so that it will emit ethylene gas and hasten the ripening process. Bananas can be used in place of the apple.

There is some controversy about what temperature tomatoes should be kept at to ripen, but it would make sense that ripening would occur at warmer temperatures versus cooler - tomatoes are tropical plants. Typical household temps around 70 degrees are just right.

As far as rooting flowering branches, it would be a fun experiment and tomato stems do root readily. Usually when we take cuttings, we prefer them not to be in flower, though, as it hinders rooting to some degree.

Try it; I'd love to hear how it works out.

If they root, keep in mind that winter light is not as bright as summer light. It might be hard to keep the plants growing well inside.

Sylvia, who gardens in Ware, wrote in with this question:

"My beautiful lush morning glory vine doesn't have any buds, let alone blossoms! I fear we will have frost soon. Do you have any idea why this failed? I started four little plants in June, lots of rain, no fertilizer, soil so-so with some compost added during growth and that's it for care."

My first thought is that your soil is too rich. You said no fertilizer, but maybe the compost was enough to increase fertility, and nitrogen especially, in such a way that you ended up with all that lush foliage but no flowers.

Morning glories are related to bind weed - that pesky weed that tangles around my garden fence and just about anything else it can get its tendrils on. Try to pull it up and the thick white roots break and new plants pop up.

How does this relate? Well, it sort of proves that morning glories prefer soil that isn't so rich.

Another thought is that you have a late flowering variety! Honest!

Some varieties take a long time to flower. One variety that I know grows well and flowers on the early side is an heirloom by the name of Grandpa Ott's.

Give it a try and you'll be pleasantly surprised by the dark purple flowers with reddish centers.

One thing you didn't mention in your note was exposure; morning glories do need to be planted in full sun in order to flower. I do hope this helps!

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.

Letters to the Editor

Boston Road is 'a changin'

But then again, Boston Road in Wilbraham is always changing. We've seen the Parkway Drive-In replaced by Home Depot and Big Y, Friendly's growth and decline, Alberici's turn into Balice Ford, the evolution of Manny's and the various mutations of the Chima - Horizons - Top Of The Hill location.

Today is a time of mixed feelings. We have the new The Local Table and Tap restaurant opening to long waits and good reviews. Wilbraham is about to get its very own Starbucks. Lia Toyota made a lot of noise with their parking lot expansion. And finally, we have a massive indoor storage facility getting ready to open.

Some have a hard time with change. But change is inevitable no matter what people post on the internet. Businesses come and go, properties change hands, and the American enterprise system does its thing whether we like it or not. We at Woodcrest Condominiums weren't thrilled to learn about the new storage building. Still, compared to getting a McDonald's or a 7-11 doing their noisy and bright thing 24 hours a day, seven days a week, a not-ugly, mute building with lovely landscaping is a better alternative.

After we get adjusted to this wave of change, we'll all be excited watching the development at Eastfield Mall and waiting to see if we get the establishments we desire, or don't.

John Boudreau,
Wilbraham



Remembering Bob Page

As you know, our good friend and past president of Friends of Wilbraham Seniors passed away recently. He was so looking forward to our new Senior Center Grand Opening. We are heartbroken that he will not be here to see the fruits of his labor and receive the public recognition he rightly deserved. Bob Page was my mentor, and I can't thank him enough for his guidance and leadership.

It was because of Bob's tireless and unwavering efforts that helped Wilbraham to have new senior center. Back in 2010, the Council on Aging realized the current senior center location at the YMCA was too small to adequately accommodate the growing needs of our seniors. They approached Bob to help find a new, larger location. Bob took this to heart, and it became a personal challenge because he emphatically believed in it and the enormous benefits it would provide for our seniors.

Over the years, Bob worked endlessly on this initiative. He worked closely with many people to help find a location and start fundraising. Some people that I'm aware of *back in the early days* included Kathy Phipps, Elaine King, Mark and Jane Soukup, Adele Paulin, Elaine Lavoie, Evelyn Morris, Ann Marie and Charlie Gaudette, Deb Gormley, Terry Dumais, Maria Cacula, Theresa Munn, Zig Pabich, Trant Campbell, Joan Bloomberg, Paula Dubord, and Dennis Lapota to name a few off the top of my head. I'm sure there were more. Please excuse me if I failed to mention other early volunteers/helpers.

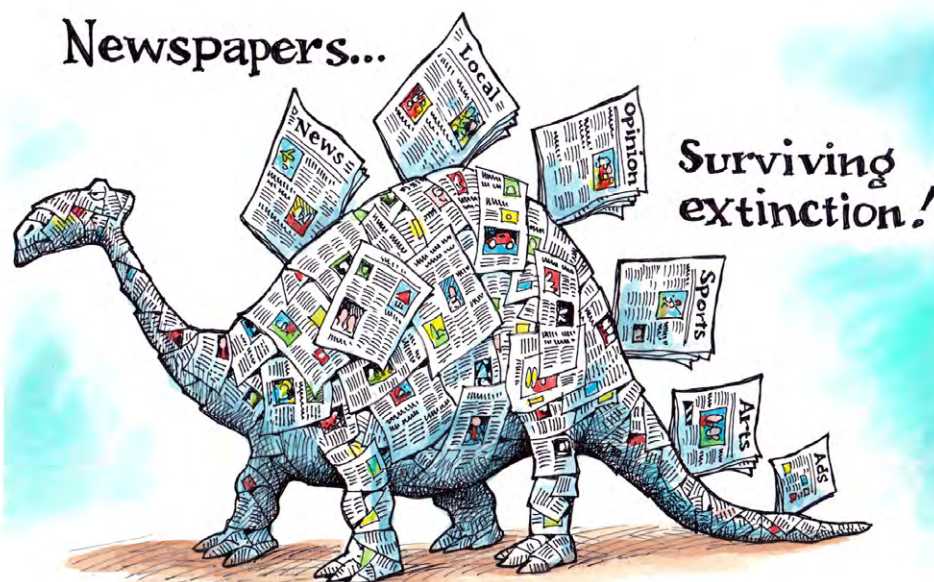
There were many obstacles and challenges in the early days. But it was Bob's tenacity that helped overcome so many disappointments and setbacks. Bob could be tough and sometimes "difficult" to work with, but he was always a gentleman, respectful and honest. He always fought what was best for our seniors. There was never a hidden agenda with Bob Page. You always knew where he was coming from.

Bob attended and actively participated in numerous meetings to raise awareness for a new Senior Center. As president of Friends of Wilbraham Seniors Board of Directors, he visited many area senior centers and spoke with their directors of elder affairs to better understand what was best for seniors. He met numerous times with the COA, Boards of Selectmen, the Needs Committee, the Feasibility Committee, Building Committee, Town Informational Meetings, civic organizations and clubs, and many more. He was a fierce proponent to support seniors. He would never give up!!! He was like a "Dog with a Bone"! I used to call him Rambo.

We the residents of Wilbraham owe a debt of gratitude to this gentleman for his dedication, leadership, and unwavering commitment that will help make our dream come true to build a new senior center. Thank you, Robert Page, Jr. - May you RIP.

Sincerely,

Matt Villamaino, Wilbraham



DAVE GRANLUND © www.davegranlund.com

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Correction Policy

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

The Wilbraham-Hampden TIMES is published every Thursday by Turley Publications, Inc. One year out of town subscriptions are available at \$45, out of state \$50 by calling 800-824-6458 Ext. 201. The deadline for submission of news material, letters to the editor and photos is Monday at 12 p.m. The TIMES is not responsible for submitted photos.

OSRPC Scout Project 2023 installs benches and sign at Mt. Marcy



Photos submitted by Christopher McCarthy

WILBRAHAM -- Thanks to Jack Tassinari, now a full-fledged Eagle Scout as a result of this project, the beautiful and challenging Mt. Marcy trail has two benches and a sign with local geography, as well as information on the Post Office plane beacon that once sat on the summit. The benches have a pea stone base underneath, while the sign is secured with concrete.

As a local resident, and an avid hiker at 17 years of age, Jack felt the trail was strenuous and believed the area would be ideal for a resting spot. Jack took it a step further by including signage and historic information. To qualify as an Eagle Scout project, Jack's vision had to benefit the community, as well as receive approval of a beneficiary, The Open Space & Recreation Plan Committee. Approval was secured in June 2023, and with the help of 25 people, the project was completed on Sept. 24. A bulk of the help came in the form of manual labor, but from start to finish, those who contributed included members of the OSRPC and local volunteers.

Once the OSRPC signed off on the completed project, it was then presented to a Scout Review Board. Upon final approval, Jack was awarded the well-deserved status of Eagle Scout. Thanks to Jack and his efforts, Mt. Marcy has the resting spots he envisioned. The OSRPC



members are grateful for Jack's perseverance and diligence, and future hikers have already commented on the OSRPC Facebook page about their eagerness to tackle the mountain now that the benches are along the way.

Minnechaug Land Trust Goat Rock Volunteer Maintenance Day

Help maintain the popular Goat Rock Trails

HAMPDEN -- Come join the Minnechaug Land Trust on Saturday Nov. 11, 9 a.m. to noon to help maintain our popular Goat Rock Trails.

You may have heard that Goat Rock was originally called "Goat Rocks," and received its name in the late 1700's after one of William King's goats became caught in the rocks and died. Many hikers in Hampden and the surrounding towns know Goat Rock and its trails well.

Due to the popularity of Goat Rock and its trail system, we will need volunteers to help with various tasks including trash pickup, placing new trail markers as needed to make the trails more user-friendly, painting over graffiti on Goat Rock, re-painting kiosks at the trail entrances, creating water diversions on trails coming up from Memorial Park and clearing weeds and brush from vistas.

Our group will meet at the trailhead in the Memorial Park parking lot at 9am. Memorial Park is located at 495 Main Street, Hampden. Volunteers are welcome to meet up with us on the trails anytime between 9a-12p. A digital copy of the trail map can be found at www.minnechauglandtrust.org/goat-rock-trail/ or by searching Goat Rock Trail on the AllTrails app.

Sturdy shoes, clothes that can get dirty, gloves, water, bug spray and a backpack are recommended, other tools will be provided. Please email Jenn at Jenn.bagge@gmail.com with any questions.

Thank you for your support. Without you, our lovely trail systems, serene woodlands, and iconic views would not exist. Volunteer trail days are a great way to get outside and give back within the community. Fingers crossed for good weather; we hope to see you there!

Minnechaug Land Trust seeking new Hampden board members

HAMPDEN -- Residents of Hampden may have seen our President Steve Lawson and Jenn Bagge at a recent Hampden Board of Selectmen meeting promoting Minnechaug Land Trusts' conservation efforts and increasing public awareness of our group. During that meeting we addressed our need of volunteers from Hampden who are interested in holding

a seat on our Board. We generally like to maintain a balance of Hampden and Wilbraham Board members; currently Wilbraham Board members outnumber Hampden members almost 2:1.

Our long-time Board member and Treasurer Kathy Barz has been faithfully serving as our financial officer and is hoping to train a successor before she

steps down from her role as treasurer. We would love to have another Hampden Board member with a financial background join us.

We are a volunteer-run organization and understand how busy life can get. Board members typically spend one to two hours a month on Land Trust-related projects. Board members are appointed

for three-year terms and Board of Directors' meetings are held in person and take place 4 times a year. If you or someone you know is interested in learning more information about our Board or joining us, please reach out to Steve Lawson at contact@minnechauglandtrust.org or Jenn Bagge at jenn.bagge@gmail.com.

VETERAN SERVICES from page 4

Monson Select Board Chair Patricia Oney said with the shared district that "if you go the other route, then you've got a lot more latitude."

"It seems the district, at least if you look at the statute, it's pretty clear and pretty direct on what has to be done and how it has to be done. Again, you just have more latitude with the other choice," Oney said.

Wolowicz agreed with Oney, citing the success of the Shared Public Health District.

"I think it would be similar on the budget side where we would have the benefits through the state reimbursable part of that budget line, we would still have administrative supplies through that budget line and then whatever we would be paying into Wilbraham for being your client would be under the operating expenses of the budget line," Wolowicz said.

Wolowicz said, "It makes sense not to rock the boat" for Sasen, who already works for the town; she praised his support to Monson and its veterans.

"Even though he's helping us on a very ad hoc basis right now, he's really, you know, again, just risen

to the occasion," Wolowicz said.

Monson Select Board member Peter Warren also agreed on both towns creating a municipal agreement.

"Especially if we have versatility and flexibility, I think that's a no-brainer," Warren said. "Would we ever consider going outside and getting other towns involved with this as well?"

Breault said, "If we're successful, it's possible."

Sue Bunnell also approved of the municipal agreement.

"I'm in agreement that the municipal agreement is a better way to go," Bunnell said.

Breault said after the motion is approved, there will still be work to be done.

"We'll work as quickly as possible, but it will probably be about a month be-

fore we get the agreements back and forth so that there's review between the councils and the like just to make sure we have the proper agreement," Breault said.

The Wilbraham and Monson Select Boards both approved to form an inter-municipal agreement for Veteran's Services 2-0.

Chairman Theresa Goodrich praised

the two communities working together.

"I think this is the way communities like ours need to do things moving forward. Good people are hard to find more and more, so if we have someone that we can all work with, I think we need to do it and maybe share and work together," Goodrich said.

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Death Notices

Jane Dowling,
of Wilbraham
died on Oct. 14, 2023
Wilbraham Funeral
Home is assisting the
family

Robert Page
former longtime Wil-
braham resident
died on Oct. 13, 2023
Services will be held on
Friday, Nov. 3
at Wilbraham Funeral
Home

Thomas R. McLean,
of Wilbraham
died on Oct. 22, 2023
Services will be held on
Thursday, Nov. 2
at Wilbraham Funeral
Home

WPL to host Teen Movie & Pizza event Nov. 7

WILBRAHAM — The Wilbraham Public Library's Teen Department is excited to announce a Teen Movie & Pizza event on Tuesday, Nov. 7 from 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. HWRSD has no school for students on this day. Teens in grades 6-12 can sign up with a friend and join in for free pizza and a movie. Check out our website for movie title and details. Online registration is required at wilbrahamlibrary.org, Events, Teens or call 413-596-6141 to register. Teen Movie & Pizza is sponsored by the Wilbraham Friends of the Library.

Wilbraham-Hampden Times

OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$225, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.

Veterans Agent to speak at Museum Open House

WILBRAHAM - The Old Meeting House Museum in the center of Wilbraham will host Wilbraham Veterans Agent Jared Sasen, a Navy veteran, who will speak at the 2 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 5 Open House in the Wilbraham & Monson Academy Chapel.

The event is in honor of the upcoming Veterans Day ceremonies at Crane Park in the center of town. After Sasen's talk, visitors are invited

across the street to the Museum to enjoy refreshments and view historical military uniforms that will be on display. The event is free and open to the public and the Gift Shop will be open.

Sasen, joined the Navy at age 19 and achieved the title "Shipboard Firefighter" as a "damage control man". From 2006 to 2011 he served on the powerful aircraft carrier the USS Harry S. Truman, a Nim-

itz-class aircraft carrier.

The carrier took him to deployments in the Persian Gulf providing critical support to two operations, Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Supporting Sasen's love of history he later found himself assigned to the epitome of living Naval history, The USS Constitution. During his service his contributions to "Old Ironsides" earned him the prestigious title of "USS Consti-

tion's Sailor of the Year" for 2012, leading to his promotion to Chief Petty Officer. Sasen's goal since his appointment in 2018 is to help cultivate a sense of community and appreciation for Wilbraham veterans.

For more information about the Old Meeting House Open House, email president@wilbrahamatheneum.org.

HAMPDEN from page 1

Background

The Fiber Optic Committee reported that the goal of building out high speed fiber optic internet infrastructure is to offer Hampden residents and businesses a reliable and competitive alternative to their current internet provider.

It was said that fiber optic internet is the pathway to rapid, dependable connectivity. Its installation over a three-to-five-year window would give residents the ability to choose television programming of their choice without having to bundle unwanted services.

The estimated annual bond payment would be \$651,521. If the 50% targeted take rate was achieved and 998 households used the fiber optic service, the town would receive a \$31,111 annual revenue.

The town began its exploration of fiber optic internet two-and-a-half years ago, and town meeting voters previously supported establishing a municipal light plant, a step that is required before the installation process can begin.

Selectman Craig Rivest has promoted fiber optic internet since he entered office in the spring of 2021. He led a presentation during Monday evening's meeting.

"Part of a Selectman's responsibilities is to look at all the possible ails in town and speak to alternative solutions to a variety of townwide issues. When we have these options or solutions, we present them to the public at town meeting like we're all doing tonight to see if you the residents find it a viable option as well or not," Rivest said.

Rivest said the goal of bringing fiber optic internet to Hampden was created with residents in mind. He noted that fiber optic internet would add local accountability to servers and is a way for the community to invest back in the town, keeping money revolving in the community instead of with corporate lobbyists.

"Our job was to find a competitive alternative to a state regulated monopoly of cable providers. First and foremost, it's a much-needed choice offering a reliable and fast service locally," he said.

By attaining grants, the town spent \$180,000 to explore the prospects of installing fiber optic lines in Hampden. Rivest noted that the \$8.57 million is daunting at first but explained that Hampden is in line to profit.

"The concept of this is to run municipal fiber much like the transfer station; paid for by the subscribers with an enterprise account where revenue is collected and will be used to pay off the bond, for the maintenance and upgrades to the system," Rivest said.

Rivest said the town isn't looking to borrow all of the money today, tomorrow or even next year. Instead, a vote "yes" would have allowed Hampden to move forward in stages over three to five years, allowing construction to begin and revenue to be collected before the bonding process begins.

"Voting 'yes' also allows the town to be a serious contender when seeking grant funding from the state

and federal government's infrastructure improvement," Rivest said.

The construction process would have involved running fiber optic lines on all the telephone poles in town. A total of 64 miles of fiber optic lines would be installed above ground, and seven miles would be installed underground, where conduits already exist.

Maintenance would have been completed by Whip City Fiber, which would have been responsible for network operations and would serve as the internet service provider.

Those in favor

Most of the residents who spoke on the item were in favor of installing the fiber optic cable. Dave Hayward, a member of the Fiber Optic Committee, noted that with grant funding, the town could have most of the project paid off.

"There's a possibility with this grant program that we may not have any cost at all or very little. We don't know that for certain, but we can't apply for the grants until we're in construction. There's plenty of federal and state money out there, and I'd hate to see that pot go away," Hayward said.

Hayward emphasized that the desired take rate was 50%, meaning not every Hampden resident would be required to switch to fiber optic internet.

Joe Sibilia pointed out that a share of Charter Communications in 2021 was \$749. On Monday, it was \$372.

"You have a dying dog of a business. Cable is like the VCR. It's dying," he said. "They're fighting for their survival so cities and towns like this will not put in fiber optic, so they don't lose their business... and continue their monopoly."

Town Treasurer Dick Patullo was skeptical of the idea when first approached by Rivest in 2021. However, he was sold on the article entering Monday's meeting.

Patullo said that if the 50% take rate was not achieved, at a 40% take rate, it would cost \$109,000, which would bill residents \$49 per month.

He noted that Charter costs him nearly \$200 a month and, if all residents pay what he pays, Charter extracts \$4.5 million a year from the 1,995 subscribers in town, which makes spending \$8.5 million over several years less discouraging.

"It seems like a low-risk venture to me," Patullo said. "I think there's enough margin for error here, even if you're a pessimist like me and the grant money doesn't come in and the take rate is a little bit low, I think this is the only way we're going to keep the government monopoly from charging whatever they can, so I'm going to vote in favor of it."

Patullo said at a 60% take rate, the town's annual revenue would be \$161,071 and residents' tax bills would decrease \$72.

Jane Thorpe, a customer service representative with Whip City Fiber, located in Westfield, noted that there is a small, close-knit group of 12 customer service representatives. She said they work around the clock and during severe weather can work from home.



A resident asks a question to Selectman Craig Rivest during Monday's Special Town Meeting.



Turley photos by Dalton Zbierski
Treasurer Dick Patullo speaks on Oct. 30 at Thornton Burgess School.

"Technicians are always there and available. You'll never get a machine unless it's after hours, and we will get back to you within 24," she said. "It's a really great option for Hampden, and to see the way it has grown so well in smaller communities like Hampden, I think it would really be beneficial for the town."

Opposition

Several residents came to the podium to express disinterest in the article. The first was Thad Clavette.

"I'm the guy who writes all the comments on the internet that says, 'Vote no.' For me, it's a personal reason, primarily because I have a TiVo unit in my house, and the fiber optic will not work," he said.

Jacqueline Fournier said she has a cable system with her landline phone, internet and television. She also said she has "really good luck" with Charter.

"I do my little old lady act; 'don't put me on the computer'. I want to tell you if I have trouble with my cable TV, I call and speak to a person. They come, and they're quick, and who is going to service (my landline, tv and computer if I switch to fiber optic). It just gets more and more complicated," Fournier said, adding, "holy hallelujah, if we have something that works, what are we doing?"

It was to this comment that Thorpe replied, detailing Whip City Fiber's customer service team.

James Smith also opposed the article. He said he doesn't have a problem with the concept and appreciates the members of the Fiber Optic Committee for their hard work.

Nonetheless, Smith asked if there were alternatives because, "I'm conceptually opposed to the town taking taxpayer money to bond to take that money to build infrastructure and then contract out to a private business to make money off that construction."

Smith said he believes there is a lot of false information out there as well.

"The current internet provider, even at 200 megabits per second, you can do a lot of streaming and a lot of work. I have an office at home and have no problems monitoring machine equipment across the country. It's not an issue where people are without an internet option," Smith said.

Zoom controversy

When the final vote was cast, and the approval was missed by less than four votes, a contingent of angry residents watching the meeting on Zoom complained that they couldn't vote virtually in favor of the item.

Town Moderator Rick Green addressed them, providing the hard truth: they weren't there so they couldn't vote.

"For lack of a better way to say it, you have to be here to play," Green said. "We have steadfastly said since the beginning of Zoom and this type of forum that you need to be here in order for a vote to count. We have no way to know if you're watching from home, who's going to be voting, how they're going to be voting."

Seniors get lost in art during weekly Acrylic Painting classes



Dianna Pepper works on her nature scene with flowers acrylic painting during the Acrylic Painting Class with Nan Hurlburt at Hampden Senior Center.



A photo of Demi Busky's acrylic painting of a cardinal she's currently working on during the Acrylic Painting Class with Nan Hurlburt at Hampden Senior Center on Oct. 26.



Teresa Warka's ongoing acrylic painting project of a morgan horse with fine details during the Acrylic Painting Class with Nan Hurlburt at Hampden Senior Center.



Dulce Nowak works on her colors as Nan Hurlburt, president of the Scantic River Artisans, observes during the Acrylic Painting Class at Hampden Senior Center.



A shot of the beginning stages of Joanne Markham's acrylic painting project of sunflowers during the Acrylic Painting Class with Nan Hurlburt at Hampden Senior Center.



Janet Smith uses a ruler and pencil to create a line as she starts work on her foggy nature scene acrylic painting during the Acrylic Painting Class with Nan Hurlburt at Hampden Senior Center.

The classes happen every Thursday, twice a day at Hampden Senior Center

By Kristin Rivers
Staff Writer
krivers@turley.com

HAMPDEN -- Seniors stopped by the senior center on Oct. 26 for their weekly Acrylic Painting class in the multipurpose room.

The classes happen twice a day on Thursdays from 10 a.m. - noon and from 12:30 - 2:30 p.m.

The morning classes are drop-in classes where students work on ongoing individual projects. The afternoon classes are more structured, teaching one lesson with students incorporating what they learned into their own paintings.

Registration for the classes is required.

During this class, students worked on ongoing works-in-progress including a morgan horse, sunflowers, a cardinal, a nature scene with flowers, a foggy mountain scene in Somers, CT and more.

Nan Hurlburt, president of the Scantic River Artisans, has taught the classes for 12 years, explaining

the students are a mix of beginners and more advanced painters.

Hurlburt highlighted two techniques she teaches throughout her classes, such as brush control, which involves selecting the right brush for the application of paint.

"A lot of times, even people who have painted for a while, they really have no idea that the brush is an engineered tool, so there are actually areas in the brush that are good to use for a specific technique and/or not to get the best results," Hurlburt said.

The other is how to "see" like an artist, as acrylic painting is done in layers.

"Teaching them to see like an artist and to see depth of field, just like in photography, and to

understand how to paint that to bring the image forward or back depending on what direction they're going in," Hurlburt said.

Hurlburt shared what she most enjoys about teaching these classes.

Please see **PAINTING**, page 14

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Life in & **WILBRAHAM**

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WILBRAHAM



Youth Group fall outing

The St. Cecilia's Youth Group met at Westview Farms in Monson on Columbus Day to take part in the corn maze and enjoy the autumn weather. A total of 26 young people came out to partake in the fun.

Photos courtesy of Diane Testa.



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Please send to dzberski@turley.com**



Former Wilbraham resident Luke Kertenis is the Longfellow New Hampshire Singles Tournament Champion.
Submitted photo.



Sue Nelson submitted this photo of 22 Cedar Oak Lane in Hampden, decorated for Halloween.

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Siblings Kayla and Jake Vanderleeden, dressed as a cow and a whoopee cushion, pose for a fun photo at the photo booth during the Halloween Party at Hampden Free Public Library. Jake Vanderleeden also won Funniest Costume during the Costume Contest.



Eli Webster, as Waldo, poses for the camera during the Halloween Party at Hampden Free Public Library.



Lauren Beaulieu and Olivia Martowska are ready to celebrate Halloween during the Halloween Party at Hampden Free Public Library.



Costumed partygoers race each other to wrap a mummy first during the Halloween Party at Hampden Free Public Library.



Library employee Gracen Moriarty refills a Hocus Pocus Punch concoction as Calvin Webster and Leah Croteau watch in excitement during the Halloween Party at Hampden Free Public Library.



Turley photos by Kristin Rivers
Costumed partygoers play musical chairs to Halloween-themed music during the Halloween Party at Hampden Free Public Library.

HALLOWEEN from page 1

Gabin appreciated the library putting together the party so community members could get together and have some fun.

"It means that they show care about us and that they show some sort of interest in wanting to make us have fun," Gabin said.

Library Director Ellen Moriarty, who dressed as Weird Barbie from the Barbie movie, explained this is the second year the library has held this event.

Moriarty said, "The kids just love it."

"We love to have this party for the kids who might be a little bit too old to trick or treat, and there's not too many places in town, so we have this big party for them," Moriarty said. "We open up this space and we have a great time."

Moriarty credited library employees Maxine Girard and Gracen Moriarty for organizing the party, sharing they "have been planning this for months."

"It was a good turnout. We're happy to have it for them," Moriarty said.

Girard was also thrilled with the turnout.

"Our Halloween Party is one of our favorite events to put on for our teens, so it's just awesome to have them all show up in costume, see them participate in all of the games that we put together, have fun with their friends, enjoy a bunch of candy," Girard said. "So, it's really just a nice time for us to have a fun after-hours event that is specifically for our teens, and they seem to enjoy it."

Girard explained that the Halloween Party took place every year pre-pandemic and has returned post-pandemic.

"We were so happy to be able to bring it back last year and then kind of start our annual tradition again from that," Girard said.

Gabin shared what she wants the community to know about the library.

"I just want them to know to come and join it because it's a really fun (place to be)," Gabin said.

Girard encouraged the community to visit, explaining there are numerous teen events scheduled to occur during the next two months, including the Teen Volunteer Council on Nov. 4 at noon, the BookTok Teen Book Club on Nov. 18 at noon and a Spideverse Watch Party on Dec. 28 at 6 p.m.

"We keep all of our events up to date so if you're ever looking for something fun to do in the community, we usually have something going on," Girard said.

Moriarty also had this message.

"Happy Halloween everyone!" she said.

To learn more about future library events, visit hampden-library.org/events.

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JOB OPENING

STAFF WRITER

Turley Publications, based in Palmer, is seeking a storyteller who is curious about everything, and who understands how town government works to join our team of weekly reporters.

Experience in covering town government is a huge plus, and any experience in community journalism is as well. Staff writers cover all aspects of communities from features to municipal meetings to crimes and fires. Successful candidates must have people skills, plenty of curiosity and able to tell a story.

If you're a self-starter who enjoys community journalism and who can envision themselves connecting with our communities, we encourage you to apply for this position. Not a remote position.

Qualifications should include:

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience
- A determination to get the story, whatever it might be
- Equally comfortable writing hard news, features and event coverage
- Ability to write clean copy in a fast-paced, deadline-driven environment
- Proficiency in Associated Press style

Please tell us in a cover letter why you would be a good fit for this position and send it along with a resume and three writing samples to

Eileen Kennedy, Executive Editor

24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069

or email directly to ekennedy@turley.com



www.turley.com

The Western New England Fall

Bridal Show

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MassMutual Center • Springfield, MA

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Is stopping to “smell the roses” different for you lately? Do you find that certain foods are not as “tasty”?

Your sense of smell is important! It not only can evoke favorite memories, like your morning coffee or someone’s cologne, but also be a warning sign of impending danger like spoiled food or smoke from a fire.

Some decreases in sense of smell can be temporary. Upper respiratory infections or allergies can cause smell to be altered, or impossible! As these minor health issues resolve, smell and taste can be expected to return to normal. Nasal polyps, if they are the cause, can be removed and senses restored. Medications, (some antibiotics, blood pressure and chemotherapy agents) cause temporary disruptions.

Research is still being done as to the loss of smell secondary to COVID. Eighty percent of people who lose their sense of smell related to the virus regain it within one to three months. For the other 20%, the path to recovery is not as clear. The CDC website remains the most up to date source of quality information surrounding symptoms of COVID and their implications.

Other, more serious causes can be chronic diseases such as Parkinson’s or Alzheimer Disease. This would require comprehensive evaluation by a medical professional.

Sadly, as we age, our sense of smell gradually declines, as does our sense of taste because the two are so intricately related.

The flavor of food depends on stimulation of taste buds in your mouth as well as the aroma. When food tastes bland, often we lose our desire to eat, leading to nutrition problems or we tend to increase the flavor of foods by adding saltiness or sweetness which is not good for our health. Again, medications can be the cause of some foods tasting “off”. Some medications may make our mouths dry, which in turn can make food taste funny or be difficult to swallow. A discussion with the prescribing provider can alleviate the effects medicines have on your sense of smell or taste. Also, poor dental health can disrupt the functioning of taste buds and make chewing difficult.

The idea as we age is to maximize our senses of taste and smell. In general, stay well hydrated. Try adding color or textures to your favorite healthy foods to enhance the flavors. The old adage “You eat first with your eyes” reminds us that food that looks appealing tends to taste better!

If you have concerns about your ability to taste and smell, seek an evaluation from your primary care provider, who may refer you to an Ear Nose and Throat specialist. Questions you need to be prepared to answer are:

Can you smell anything at all?

Can you taste any food?

When did you first notice the problem?

Do you have allergies or chronic sinus problems?

What medicines do you take?

If the issue cannot be solved, there are likely strategies that you can be taught to cope with changes in smell and taste.

As always, feel free to send questions/ comments to seniorinfo2021@gmail.com or leave a voicemail at 596-2800 ext 315.

Wishing you time to stop and smell the roses and Bon Appetit!

Linda Tatko Cooper RN for Wilbraham Senior Center Building Committee

Monthly highlights for November at the Hampden Senior Center

HAMPDEN – The following programs will occur in the coming weeks at the Hampden Center, located on Allen Street.

African drumming with Jason!

New six-week session
Fridays at 2:15 p.m., starting Nov. 3 through Dec. 22.

No classes on Nov. 10 and Nov. 24.

\$25 for the session if paid in full and get one class free, or \$5 per class.

Create your own Greeting Card with Ellie!

Monday, Nov. 6, 1-3 p.m.

The cost is \$3 per person; all materials are provided. Please call 566-5588 to reserve your seat.

“Shop till you drop” Annual Holiday Fundraiser is back in our lobby!

The sale starts Monday, Nov. 6, and will remain available through Friday, Dec. 30.

Cash or check only. All proceeds benefit activities at the Hampden Senior Center.

Veterans Breakfast

Thursday, Nov. 9 at 9 a.m.

Come and join us in thanking our Veterans for their service.

Jason Burgener, VSO for Hampden, will be there as well.

Enjoy a delicious breakfast of Scrambled Eggs, Sausage, Home Fries, Coffee and Juice

made by Becky and Wendy.

All are welcome to attend.

The cost is \$3 per person. FREE for Veterans.

Please call 566-5588 to sign up.

Get in the Holiday spirit and decorate a Diamond Dotz project with Sheree!

Come see what the “Diamond Dotz Craze” is all about, while enjoying a fun gathering with great conversation, and lots of laughs, complete with treats and a beverage!

The cost is \$8 per person (all materials are included)

Thanksgiving Grab and Go Dinner

Wednesday, Nov. 22 - pick up is 2-2:30 p.m.

Enjoy a delicious Thanksgiving dinner with all the fixings and dessert.

Compliments of the Hampden Senior Center, and our generous sponsors:

Bethlehem Church, Bluebird Estates, Brodeur Campbell Fence Co., GreatHorse,

Hampden Senior Center Quilt Group, Monson Savings Bank, Polish National Credit Union,

Saint Mary’s Parish and The Reserve.

Delivery in Hampden is available. Please let us know when ordering your meal if you need your meal delivered. Please call 566-5588 starting Nov. 1 to order your dinner.

D & R Farm Share

Winter Farm Share will be back in January.

D & R Farm will again offer fresh produce twice per month starting in January and run through June.

FREE with SNAP/HIP if you qualify.

If you do not qualify for SNAP/Hip, you may purchase a share for \$40 per month.

New applications are required.

If interested, please contact Wendy to get your application in.

FREE Technology Help Sessions are back!

The Wilbraham & Monson Academy Service Team will be at the Hampden Senior Center

Thursday, Nov. 9 from 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Students will meet with you, one-on-one and assist you with all your technology questions.

Bring your phone, laptop computer, iPad, or tablet and your questions! Please call 566-5588 to sign up.

Hampden Resident Emergency Fuel Fund

The Fuel Fund is available to any Hampden resident who is in a heating crisis. A resident must have received a shut-off notice from the electric company, have less than a quarter of a tank of oil or be in another emergency heating situation.

Please call Wendy at 566-5588 for more information or to schedule an appointment.

All information provided is confidential.

The Hampden Emergency Fuel Fund is made available through private donations throughout the year. We are so grateful for the support of this valuable program.

HELP US STOCK OUR SHELVES with Disinfecting Wipes!

Thank you to those who donated liquid dish soap last month. Every month we will target a different item to fill our shelves to provide non-food items to SNAP recipients.

Friends of Hampden Senior Citizens 2024 Fundraiser

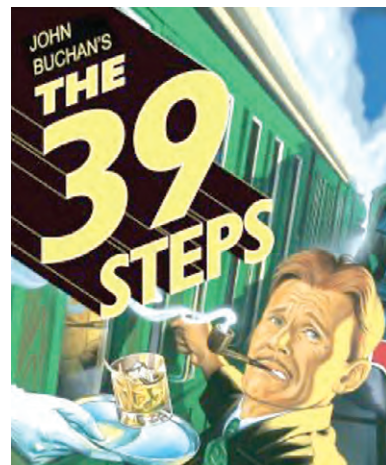
Back by popular demand, the Friends of Hampden Senior Citizens, are selling one-month lottery calendars for \$10 each to support the Hampden Senior Center Building Expansion Fund.

Calendar Sales will begin on Nov. 6 and end on Dec. 30.

You have a chance to win a cash prize or gift card to a local business and you can win more than once! You have a chance to win EVERY day for the month of January. One name will be drawn daily during the month of January. Winners will be notified and can pick up their prize or we will mail it to them.

This is a great gift idea for all those people you want to give a thank you to for their services throughout the year. The calendars also make great stocking stuffers!

Wilbraham United Players to present ‘The 39 Steps’



The Wilbraham United Players will be presenting the comedy ‘The 39 Steps’ on Nov. 3, 4 and 5 and 10, 11 and 12 at Fellowship Hall, 500

Main St. in downtown Wilbraham. Based on Alfred Hitchcock’s classic movie that thrilled audiences in 1935, the stage version is now a “comic thrill ride” performed by a cast of only six actors. Adapted by Patrick Barlow, this 2005 comedy hit played in London’s West End for nine years and was nominated for six Tony Awards on Broadway in 2008.

“The 39 Steps” tells the story of an ordinary man flung into extraordinary circumstances. When a spy is murdered in his London flat, Richard Hannay is chased by a team of killers across England and Scotland, defying death in one seemingly inescapable scrape after another – including a romance! Based on a 1915 spy novel by John

Buchan, Patrick Barlow’s adaptation not only spoofs old movies and Hitchcock tropes (“Psycho”, “Vertigo”, etc.), but also adds a dash of Monty Python comedy as six actors instantly transform into over dozens of characters with lightning precision.

Performance dates and times for “The 39 Steps”: Friday, Nov. 3 at 7:30 p.m. – Saturday, Nov. 4 at 7:30 p.m. – Sunday, Nov. 5 at 2:30 p.m. Friday, Nov. 10 at 7:30 p.m. – Saturday, Nov. 11 at 7:30 p.m. – Sunday, Nov. 12 at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are now available online at www.wilbrahamunitedplayers.org. Premium seating \$27, Regular Seating \$22, Regular Seating with Student / Senior discount is \$17.

Friends’ Holiday Bazaar is Nov. 18

WILBRAHAM -- Kick off the holidays by joining The Friends of Wilbraham Seniors for a fun filled day! Come to their 14th annual Holiday Bazaar to be held on Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023, at St. Cecilia Church, 42 Main St, Wilbraham, MA from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

This bazaar is a full day of shopping with over 25 exhibitors, offering handmade soaps, greeting

cards, Christmas ornaments, doggie goodies, and more! Their famous huge Raffle offers many chances to bring home a lovely gift basket or other gifts. Stay for lunch as the folks at Loomis Lakeside at Reeds Landing-Springfield cook up Meatball Grinders or pick a sweet treat from our Bake Sale of muffins, cookies and more – and hot coffee will be available too! But, best of

all SANTA CLAUS will be riding into town at 11 a.m. and will stay ‘til 2 p.m. for visits with children of all ages who can get their picture taken, and all children receive a FREE GIFT! This year’s event proceeds will support Recognition Programs of Friends Volunteers.

For more information, call AnnMarie at 413-599-4803.

OPPORTUNITY

newspaper correspondent

Turley Publications seeks **Experienced Writers/Journalists** to produce news and/or feature stories of local interest for various towns and cities.

- **Must be dependable, professional and able to meet strict deadlines**
- **Salary based on a flat rate by story and photo**

Send writing samples with resume to



Eileen Kennedy, Executive Editor
24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069
or email directly to
ekennedy@turley.com

www.turley.com

HOPE Ministry Project packs birthday boxes



Photos submitted by Katy Reed

WILBRAHAM – Late last month, the St. Cecilia HOPE Ministry Project packed 70 Birthday Wishes Boxes that will be delivered to children living in shelters. Many boxes will be delivered to Springfield and Holyoke shelters and CHD programs. This project brings a birthday party to a child up to 17 years old who otherwise might not be able to have one.



PAINTING from page 9

“I actually like it when I see a student get that lightbulb moment like ‘Yeah, okay, that worked. I got it!’” Hurlburt said. “So that, for me, is the joy of teaching when you get to see somebody excel at something and they really enjoy it.”

Also, painting provides artists with a sense of creativity.

“I love the freedom of it. Because there really is no such thing as a mistake in acrylic painting because you can quickly wait a few minutes and quickly make any kind of adjustments that you need to make on it,” Hurlburt said.

Hurlburt added how acrylic painting is non-toxic and “the only medium that you can get to look like oil, look like watercolor, look like wash.”

“It has such flexibility as a medium and that’s the part that I enjoy the most,” Hurlburt said.

Hurlburt expressed excitement about the upcoming “The Season of Art” Juried Exhibit Show, taking place on Nov. 18 from 2 - 7 p.m. and Nov. 19 from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. in the senior center’s community room.

The call to artists went out this past week.

“Anyone can enter into the juried show. The drop-off date for the artwork is Nov. 9 from 9 a.m. - 7 p.m. and there’s a fee associated with that depending on if you’re a member or an outside person exhibiting,” Hurlburt said.

Hurlburt encourages the community to check out the classes, expressing appreciation to the senior center for supporting the arts.

“We feel, every day, very privileged to be able to be here, to have our art exhibited and feel like that’s really how we’re reaching out to the community and all of the visitors that come here get to see this beautiful art on a day-to-day basis,” Hurlburt said. “So that’s a privilege that we have that very few art groups have.”

To learn more, contact Hurlburt at nanhurlburt50@gmail.com, visit www.scanticriverartists.com/programs or contact the senior center at 413-566-5588.

PUBLIC NOTICES

WILBRAHAM BOARD OF APPEALS PUBLIC HEARING

The Wilbraham Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing on **Thursday, November 16, 2023 starting at 5:30 PM** on the application of Colene Melikian for a variance from the provisions of Sections 4.4.5, 4.4.6 and 4.4.10 of the Wilbraham Zoning By-Law to construct a 1,008 square foot accessory building (garage) within the front and side yard setbacks at 5 Vista Road as further specified in the application and plan that are on file in the Planning Office and posted for public viewing on the Zoning Board of Appeals page of the Town of Wilbraham website at www.wilbraham-ma.gov/135/Zoning-Board-of-Appeals.

Both in person and virtual participation are available. To participate virtually go to <https://meet.goto.com/333605845> or call 877-309-2073 (Access Code: 333-605-845).

Edward Kivari Jr.,
Chairman

11/02, 11/09/2023

LEGAL NOTICE Town of Wilbraham

The Wilbraham Conservation Commission will hold a public meeting on **Monday, November 13, 2023 at 6:00 PM** on the Request for Determination of Applicability filed by Bedrock Financial, LLC under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and the Wilbraham Wetlands Bylaw. The request is to determine whether the activity/area depicted on plans submitted is subject to the Wilbraham Wetland Bylaw and the Wetlands Protection

Act. The proposed activity is the construction of a single family home, utilities, driveway and associated grading. The property is located at 5V Ely Road. Information relating to this application is on file with the Conservation Commission.

Christopher Brown,
Chairman

11/02/2023

LEGAL NOTICE Town of Wilbraham

The Wilbraham Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on **Monday November 13, 2023 at 6:15 PM** in Conference Room 1 at the Wilbraham Town Hall, 240 Springfield Street, on the Notice of Intent filed by D.A.K.S. Trust under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and the Wilbraham Wetlands Bylaw. The proposed project includes the development of 4 single family homes, associated driveways and grading. Portions of the work fall within the 100-foot Bordering Vegetated Wetland buffer zone. The property is located at 26V Stirling Drive. Information relating to this application is on file with the Conservation Commission.

Christopher Brown,
Chairman

11/02/2023

WILBRAHAM CONSERVATION COMMISSION LEGAL NOTICE

The Wilbraham Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on **Monday, November 13, 2023 at 6:30 PM** on the Notice of Intent filed by Christopher Magill under the Massachusetts

Wetlands Protection Act and the Wilbraham Wetlands Bylaw. The proposed activity is for the construction of a single family home, utilities, driveway, stream crossing, and associated grading. Portions of the project fall within the 100 foot buffer zone of Bordering Vegetated Wetlands and an intermittent stream. The property is located at 454V Ridge Road. Information relating to this application is on file with the Conservation Commission.

Christopher Brown,
Chairman

11/02/2023

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS The Trial Court Probate and Family Court HAMPDEN, Division Docket No. HD23P2041EA

To all persons interested in the estate of CAMILLE C. BIENVENUE, of Daytona Beach, in the State of Florida.

A petition has been presented to said Court by Brenda Farnsworth and Connie R. Burke, Co Personal Representatives of said decedent, appointed by the State of Florida in the Circuit Court for Volusia County, Florida, for license to sell at private sale certain real estate of said Decedent, situated in Hampden, MA.

If you desire to object thereto, you or your attorney should file a written appearance in said Court at **Springfield** before ten o'clock in the forenoon on the **twenty-first day of November 2023**, the return date of this citation.

Witness, **BARBARA M. HYLAND**, Esquire. First Justice of said court, this

fourth day of October 2023.
Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register
10/26, 11/02, 11/09/2023

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-7758 Docket No. HD23P1915EA

Estate of:
Claire Lois Caney
Also known as:
Claire L Caney, Clare Caney
Date of Death: 06/04/2012

CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Late and Limited Formal Testacy and/or Appointment** has been filed by **Crystal Rae Chapman of Woodstock, CT** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: **Crystal Rae Chapman of Woodstock, CT** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 11/22/2023.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by

which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A **Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.**

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: October 25, 2023

Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
11/02/2023

PUBLIC NOTICE

This ad is pursuant to MA Gen. Law Ch.255, Sec. 39A as of **November 3, 2023** the following motor vehicle will be for sale to satisfy a garage keepers lien:

Vehicle: 2007 Honda Accord
VIN: 1HGCM66597A063675
COLOR: White
LKO: Jason Barrios
3041 HELLERMAN ST
PHILADELPHIA PA

R & S Assoc. Inc.
Wilbraham MA
413-596-4374
10/19, 10/26, 11/02/2023

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate & Family Court HAMPDEN Division Docket No. HD17P1240GD Antonio F. Sierra CITATION

To all interested persons:
A petition has been filed by: **Primitiva S. Wiencek of Paha, HI** requesting: That the Court transfer the Guardianship of Antonio F. Sierra from Massachusetts to Hawaii and such other relief as stated in said Petition.

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before 10:00 a.m. on December 7, 2023

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an Affidavit of Objections within thirty (30) days of the return date, action may be taken without further notice to you.

WITNESS, **Barbara M. Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: October 26, 2023

Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
11/02/2023

SPORTS

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Falcons punch easy ticket to finals



Alivia Grono guides the ball up the field.



Alayna Lucas makes a stop on defense.



Turley photos by Sofia DiGrande

Audrey Izzo follows through on a hit.

WILBRAHAM – When it comes to the Western Mass. tournament, just four teams are selected to compete in the Class A Tournament. Minnechaug, which obtained the top seed after an outstanding season, punched its ticket to the finals with a 5-0 shutout of No. 4 Northampton last Saturday afternoon. The Falcons got two goals from Audrey Izzo while Mary Woytowicz, Norah Dumala, and Alayna Lucas also scored. The Falcons were set to face Longmeadow on Monday night. Highlights from that matchup will be in next week's edition.



Ainsley Sheehan inbounds the ball.



Norah Dumala drops the ball as she prepares for a free hit.



Kate O'Connor sends a pass through an opponent.

Falcons win big, ready for state tournament

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

WILBRAHAM—There are 21 seniors listed on the Minnechaug football roster.

A couple of sophomores made sure that they celebrated a senior night victory.

Starting quarterback Jack Lucarelle completed three touchdown passes, while running back Max Baroni scored a pair of first half rushing touchdowns, as the Falcons closed out the regular season with a 42-6 home victory over the Longmeadow Lancers before a large crowd, last Friday night.

The previous four meetings on the gridiron between the AA-League rivals were decided by a touchdown or less. The Lancers squeaked out a 19-14 home win a year ago.

The Falcons (5-2,3-2) also needed a victory to keep their playoff dreams alive. They entered the game as the



CJ Socha looks to make a reception near the end zone.



Turley photos by Sofia DiGrande

Nick Patrakis kicks a point-after.

Please see **CHAUG**, page 17

Girls soccer edged out in semifinals



Giana Sakowski looks to pass ahead of pressure.



Bianca Fachetti sets to clear the ball.



Ava Kearney tries to catch up to the ball.



Kylie Ray collides with an opponent.



Kelly Cronin tries to get around the loose ball.



Turley photos by Sofia DiGrande
Mackenzie Murray makes her way up the field.

WILBRAHAM – After an outstanding 1-0 win for Minnechaug girls soccer in the quarterfinals of the Western Mass. Class A Tournament, the Falcons were defeated in penalty kicks after battling to a scoreless tie against West Springfield in the semifinals held on Saturday afternoon. West Springfield would win 3-2 in the penalty

kick phase. Coming up, the Falcons have the state tournament, and with a 12-5-1 overall record, the Falcons are currently ranked No. 6 in the state, meaning they could host at least two games in the state tournament, which begins late this week.

Football seeds released

Belchertown, Chaug, Ware, South Hadley head for tournament

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

It has not been easygoing for teams from the West and Central region of the state to make the 16-team state tournament since its inception in 2021.

For the third straight year, only a small handful of Western Mass. teams will make the eight 16-teams fields.

Among those heading for the tournament will be Minnechaug, Belchertown, Ware, and South Hadley.

For the third time, Minnechaug qualified for the Division 3 tournament. The Falcons went 5-2 on the regular season. Minnechaug qualified as the No. 14 team, but could have done better had it not lost a game on its schedule early in the season. The Falcons were scheduled to play West Springfield in Week 1, but severe thunderstorms on Sept. 8 forced the cancellation of the game. Attempts were made to

make up the game as late as Monday, Sept. 11, but more severe weather nipped that plan, and the Falcons only played seven games in the regular season. Minnechaug will be traveling to No. 3 Milton for the first round.

Belchertown is a first-time qualifier to the state tournament. Belchertown received the No. 14 seed in Division 5 with a 7-1 record. The Orioles travel to No. 3 Shawsheen Valley Tech on Nov. 3 at 7 p.m.

In Division 7, South Hadley qualified at No. 14 with a 7-1 record. The Tigers made the state tournament for the second time and head for West Bridgewater, the third-seeded team.

Ware makes the state tournament in Division 8 for the third time. Ware was a perfect 8-0 and they will hold the No. 5 seed and host No. 12 Randolph on Friday, Nov. 3 at 7 p.m.

Not making tournament despite positive records are Agawam and Pathfinder. Chicopee, Palmer, Ludlow, Chicopee Comprehensive, and Holyoke join them and will be in nonplayoff games for Week 9 and 10.

T-Birds even record with wins over Bruins

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds (4-4-0-0) came back from two separate third-period deficits to knock off the Providence Bruins (1-3-1-2) on Sunday at the Amica Mutual Pavilion in a 3-2 overtime victory.

Vadim Zherenko got the starting nod and was up to par in the first, blocking aside all 14 Bruins shot attempts, including a calm breakaway stick save against Justin Brazeau in the opening minutes. Brandon Bussi was not tested much at all in period one, as the second-year Providence goalie only needed to make four saves in the opening 20 minutes.

After a chaotic first period that featured no goals but a combined eight penalty infractions, the Bruins finally broke the 0-0 tie with their fourth power-play goal in three games against Springfield. Reigning AHL All-Rookie Team member Georgii Merkulov netted the tally with a wrist shot from the right circle at the 7:41 mark of the middle period, his second of the year.

The complexion of the game may have changed just past the midpoint of regulation when Sam

Bitten dropped the gloves before a puck drop with Trevor Kuntar, drawing a huge ovation from his teammates on the bench. While Bitten and Kuntar would be given game misconducts for the fight, the shots and chances heavily leaned in Springfield's favor from that point forward.

2:43 into the final period, Bitten's scrap had its first tangible effect when Drew Callin took a feed from Mathias Laferriere in the trapezoid and wrapped it home through Bussi to tie the score, 1-1.

More adversity loomed just nine seconds later, though, as Justin Brazeau scorched a slap shot into the top shelf from the right circle, and Providence had restored its lead, 2-1.

Despite the quick counter by the Bruins, the T-Birds continued to play with confidence, and in a period where they outshot Providence 18-7, Mikhail Abramov found a soft spot in the slot area to deflect a Calle Rosen wrist shot over Bussi to make it a tie game again, 2-2, with 9:34 remaining in regulation.

The T-Birds' penalty kill then had the pressure on its shoulders

after Austin Osmanski inadvertently cleared a puck out of play, forcing Springfield into a delay-of-game minor with just over five minutes to play. The PK picked up their teammate, and after nothing was settled in the closing minutes, the two rivals went to overtime, Springfield's first extra-time game of the season.

In the 3-on-3 session, Abramov helped complete the comeback when he peeled off at the right-wing boards, drawing the attention of two defenders. Meanwhile, Dylan Coghlan sneaked down the left side to receive a rink-wide pass and snap a wrist perfectly off the post and in to win it at the 1:38 mark of overtime, 3-2. It was Coghlan's second straight game with a goal.

Zherenko earned his third win in four starts by virtue of his 25 stops, while Bussi turned away 33 in the losing effort for Providence.

The T-Birds embark on yet another 3-in-3 on Friday night as they welcome the Belleville Senators to the MassMutual Center for a 7:05 p.m. puck drop.

Candlepin League News

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

Tuesday Night

Commercial Elks League

As of Oct. 17, Compression is the #1 seed in the Tuesday Night Commercial Elks league at Diamond Junction.

The first round of the season will end on Nov. 14 and several teams are trying to catch up to Compression, who are standing with 20 wins. In second place, Acres has 18 wins with The Champs R Here and the Blue B's tied for third place with 16 wins.

In one match, Champs R Here went up against Life is Good. In game one, Life is Good defeated the Champs by a score of 400-393. In game two, the Champs rallied and won by a score of 405-366.

Taylor Colkos and Steve Manolakis of the Champs carried the team by scoring 115 and 118.

In game three, Life is Good won by a score of 410-384. Jeff Knight of Life is Good scored a 107 game.

For total pinfall, The Champs won by a final score of 1182-1176. Both teams won two points.

Blue B's bowled against Last in Line. In game one, Blue B's won a close game by a score of 345-340. In game two, Last in Line won by a

score of 383-350.

Jeremy Laduke of Last in Line scored 111, and Vinny Navarro of Last in Line scored 107. In game three, Last in Line and Blue B's tied at 346.

For total pinfall, Last in Line won by a final score of 1069-1041.

The #2 seed Acres went up against the #5 seed Team BK. In game one, BK won by a score of 377-357. In game two, Acres bounced back by taking the second game by a score of 382-373.

Kenny Trudel of Acres and Mark Fitzpatrick of BK were the high scorers on their teams, and both scored 110. In game three, Acres won a close game by a score of 369-360.

The total pinfall was close as BK managed to take total by just two pins in a final score of 1110-1108.

Compression bowled solo against their average and managed to sweep all four points and maintained their #1 spot.

The Commercial Elks league will be taking Oct. 31 off and will return on Tuesday, Nov. 7.

Thursday Night Mixed League

The Thursday Night Mixed League bowled their final league night in October.

In one match, Team One bowled against Team Four. In game one,

Team Four won by a score of 409-384. In game two, Team Four won by a score of 416-404. In game three, Team One was victorious by a score of 413-401.

Team Four won total pinfall by a final score of 1226-1201.

Another match featured Team Six bowling against Team Two. In game one, Team Six won by a score of 409-378. In game two, Team Six won by a score of 432-418.

Donna Danek of Team Two broke the century mark by scoring a 109 game.

In game three, Team Six won to sweep the night by a score of 426-414. Donna Danek scored 102 the third game and Danny Fennyery of Team Two scored a 108 game in the third. Team Six took total pinfall by a final score of 1267-1210.

Team Five bowled against Team Three. In game one, Team Five won a close game against Team Three by a score of 403-397. In game two, Team Five continued keeping the match close by winning 439-429.

Jesse Danek of Team Three lead the team by scoring a 115.

In game three, Team Three won the third and final game by a score of 401-397. The match was close the entire night, but Team Five won total pinfall by a final score of 1239-1227.

Cambridge half-marathon registration open

CAMBRIDGE – Registration is open for the Cambridge Half Marathon and 5K at CambridgeSide. The races are scheduled for Sunday, Nov. 5 (race begins 7 a.m. EST) on a gorgeous new course with views of the Charles River along Memorial Drive.

The Cambridge Half Marathon is a 13.1 mile fast and flat course featuring views of the MIT, John W. Weeks Footbridge, Harvard University Stadium, Charles River and more. The new 5K race also offers scenic views alongside the Charles River. Both courses are USATF certified and start and finish at CambridgeSide.

Race registration includes quarter zip pull over (half marathon participants) or long sleeve shirt (5K participants), five complimentary CambridgeSide parking passes, training plan, race bib with timing chip, and finishing medal. Register for both races at CambridgeSide.com.

Cambridge Half Marathon and 5K at CambridgeSide race proceeds benefit Cambridge Camping (CambridgeCamping.org), City of Cambridge Scholarship Fund (Cambridgema.gov/Services/CityScholarship) as well as other local charities. Cambridge Half Marathon and 5K is sponsored by Canam Group Inc. and training sponsor MYSTRYDE.



Quarterback Jack Lucarelle drops back to pass.



The Chaug line gets ready to start a play.

CHAUG from page 15

17th ranked team in the MIAA Division 3 state power rankings. Only the top 16 teams in each Division qualify for the playoffs.

"We were just worried about playing a rival in a big game after losing to them last year," said Minnechaug head coach Will Nickerson. "We tried to take care of business early. We forced turnovers early, which really killed some of their momentum."

When the Division 3 playoff bracket was released on Sunday afternoon, the Falcons did qualify for the playoffs as the 14th seed.

Minnechaug is looking for their first win in the new playoff format.

Two years ago, the Falcons were the 10th-seed and they lost to seventh-seeded Hanover.

They were the 16th-seed a year ago and lost to top-seeded Milton in another road game.



Max Baroni busts through the Longmeadow defense.

The Falcons will be making another trip to Milton High School on Friday night to battle the third-seeded Wildcats.

"We know if we get in, we are making a run," Baroni said. "It won't be like last year, whoever we play."

Eight of the Falcons starters on defense are seniors. They are Dajzuan Johnson, CJ Wilson, Sam Dean, Sean Murphy, Aiden Simpkins, Jackson Derosia, Alex Mauer, and Alex Barthette.

Derosia and Murphy also start on offense. The Falcons other four senior offensive starters are Parker LeTendre, CJ Socha, Davis Nelson, and Will Lara.

The Lancers (3-5) received the opening kickoff, but failed to get a first down and were forced to punt from their own 15 yard line.

Following a 15 yard punt, the Falcons offense began their first series of the game at the Lancers 30.

Baroni rushed for 5, 11, and 10 yards on the first three plays before scoring on a four yard run up the middle three minutes into the opening quarter.

Senior Nic Patrakis made all six of his extra point attempts. All of his kickoffs sailed into the endzone.

Dean recovered a fumble on the first play of the Lancers next series giving the Falcons offense the ball back at the Longmeadow 37.

The home team took a 14-0 lead with 6:49 left in the first quarter when Lucarelle rolled out to his left and threw a 21-yard touchdown pass to Nelson.

On the first play of the second quarter, Baroni in-



Turley photos by Sofia DiGrande
Sean Murphy follows his blockers on a rush.

creased the Falcons lead to 21-0 with a six yard touchdown run.

"Max had the best game he's had this year," Nickerson said. "He's shown that in the offseason and practice. It came together well for him and the offensive line."

That series began with another fumble recovery by Simpkins.

With 7:49 left in the second quarter, Lucarelle completed an 18-yard TD pass to Johnson, who made an over the shoulder catch in the endzone extending the Falcons lead to 28-0. Johnson has verbally committed to playing football at the University of Maine next year.

Then the Lancers put-together a 12 play drive, which was capped off with a 10-yard touchdown run by senior Jurjen Bouvier with 3:22 left in the first half.

A pass attempt on the two-point conversion play was intercepted by Barthette.

On the opening series of the second half, the Falcons took a 35-6 lead when Lucarelle threw a 14-yard TD pass to Socha.

Minnechaug's final touchdown of the senior night game was scored by Nelson on a 10-yard run with 2:13 left in the third quarter.

With the Falcons leading by more than 32 points at that point, the entire fourth quarter was running time.

The Falcons are hoping to continue playing well on both sides of the ball in the playoffs.

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Jack-o-Lantern contest supports Wilbraham Friends of the Library



Ivy Harrigan stands with her pumpkin carving of a cat wearing a witch's hat while smiling next to a jack-o-lantern during the Friends of the Wilbraham Public Library Jack-O-Lantern Display event at Wilbraham Public Library. Harrigan's pumpkin was awarded Best Artistic during the event.



Turley photos by Kristin Rivers
Vera Carpenter, dressed as a witch, stands with her pumpkin at the Friends of the Wilbraham Public Library Jack-O-Lantern Display event at Wilbraham Public Library on Oct. 29. This pumpkin, done by the Carpenter Family, was awarded Spookiest Pumpkin.



A jack-o-lantern with a monstrous mouth and a small white pumpkin inside was one of numerous entries displayed during the Friends of the Wilbraham Public Library Jack-O-Lantern Display event at Wilbraham Public Library on Oct. 29.



A jack-o-lantern inspired by Wilson from the classic Tom Hanks film "Cast Away" at the Friends of the Wilbraham Public Library Jack-O-Lantern Display event at Wilbraham Public Library.



Two one-eyed jack-o-lanterns with horns greet attendees at the Friends of the Wilbraham Public Library Jack-O-Lantern Display event at Wilbraham Public Library.

Military Care Package Campaign returns for the ninth year

MONSON -- The Monson Military Care Package Campaign will be held again this year. The program, now in its ninth year, was founded by Karen King, a local realtor. This volunteer program continues to grow each year, providing 32 service members from Monson representing the Navy, Coast Guard, Army, National Guard (deployed), Marines and Air Force, with holiday gift boxes. The organization's goal is to raise \$5,000 this year which will allow the organization to send Visa Gift Cards to each member. The Committee would also like to request snacks and personal items for the boxes, including small homemade crafts and cards, from members of the community who would like to contribute.

Current donors include Monson Savings Bank, which has paid for postage each year, Treehouse Brewing and Echo Hill Orchard and Winery, who are donating T-shirts, and Sunshine Village/Three Rivers who are providing Christmas Tree ornaments. Many other local businesses vitally help out in multiple ways. Girl Scout Troop #64811 helps by decorating box flaps, and local Boy Scouts and school children make cards for the service members.

Main Street Tavern in Monson will have a fundraising night on Thursday, Nov. 9, from 4-9 p.m. and all are invited to attend. There will be a raffle and fun for all.

The Packing event will be Sunday, Nov. 19 at 1 p.m. at the Monson Polish Club on Bliss Street and all donations must be received by Nov. 9.

For more info, please visit the Facebook page: Monson Military Care Package Drive. Donated items may be dropped off at the Monson Free Library or call Karen King at 413-348-3948 to make arrangements. There is also an Amazon wish list posted on the organization's Facebook page of needed items.

Healing Voices Project achieves 501c3 non-profit status to combat addiction in communities

AGAWAM -- The Healing Voices Project, an initiative dedicated to raising awareness and supporting community programs to combat addiction, announced its official designation as a non-profit 501c3 organization.

Led by Mike Tourville, author of "Voices from the Fallen", this groundbreaking project has been making a significant impact by fostering open conversations surrounding addiction and recovery.

The Healing Voices Project broadcasts weekly episodes across various media platforms, including popular podcast apps and its official website, www.healingvoicesproject.org.

The inspiration behind the Healing Voices Project stems from the success of Tourville's book, Voices from the Fallen, which powerfully explores the multifaceted nature of addiction through the personal stories of eight diverse individuals. The book has been used by several recovery centers as a useful teaching tool, and for groups, as it highlights the causes and effects of addiction, and sheds light on its enduring impact on families and communities.

Building on this foundation, the Healing Voices Project takes it a step further, by involving individuals from all walks of life who have experienced addiction, including those in recovery, bereaved loved ones, substance use professionals and community leaders.

Tourville emphasized the project's purpose as more than just a podcast.

"Our conversations delve deep into the personal struggles related to addiction, from broken families, incarceration and homelessness to inspiring stories of recovery, renewed lives and healed families. While we may never fully grasp our impact, shared experiences can motivate and encourage people while reducing the stigma that often prevents individuals from seeking help," Tourville said.

The Healing Voices Project frequently features experts, care providers, and community leaders who provide essential updates on prevention, intervention, and treatment options.

In addition to podcast formats, each program is available on YouTube, offering viewers a more personal experience. The Healing Voices Project is proud to announce its official non-profit status under 501c3 (#93-2357377) and encourages community support and sharing the program to enhance its effectiveness to combat addiction.

JACK O LANTERN from page 1

event and said the contest is not a competition. "This event isn't about being competitive or anything. It's just about having fun and carving pumpkins, and you should try to carve a pumpkin," Anderson said. Anderson said people should carve whatever they want on their pumpkins. "People won't make fun of your pumpkin, and it's really good to participate because you can enter to have fun and get prizes and stuff," Anderson said. Harrigan encourages the community to continue supporting the library through their events and programs. "It's really good to know that all the books that are in here are here because people donated money to get these books. It's really nice that people actually care for the books and for the library and a lot of events help the library and fundraise for it, and I think that's really nice," Harrigan said. Harrigan hoped everyone had fun at the event, echoing Anderson's message of carving whatever you want on your pumpkin. "Carve what you want to carve and just do what you want to do and be yourself and have fun," Harrigan said. "And read lots of books!"

HEALTH & WELLNESS

It's time to get your flu shot, if you haven't already

CDC recommends getting your flu shot by end of October, but there is still time to protect yourself and others around you

SPRINGFIELD -- It's flu shot time.

No one knows exactly what to expect about the severity of this flu season, but flu is already in the community.

While the Centers for Disease and Control recommend getting your flu shot by the end of October, it's never too late, and if you haven't gotten the vaccine yet, don't wait any longer to protect yourself and those around you.

"Whether we have a severe or mild flu season predicted should not matter when it comes to getting your flu shot. Everyone with some exceptions needs to get one," said Dr. Armando Paez, chief, Infectious Disease Division, Baystate Health.

The CDC recommends that everyone six months and older who does not have any conditions that may prevent them from getting flu vaccine, such as a prior reaction after receiving the flu vaccine, should be vaccinated now, preferably before the end of October. The flu vaccine

composition for 2023-2024 has been updated to best match the flu viruses that are anticipated to be commonly circulating this season.

One-dose flu shots are appropriate for most people, with rare exceptions for children younger than six months of age and those with severe, life-threatening allergies to any ingredient in the flu vaccine or who have had a previous severe allergic reaction to a dose of flu vaccine. Some children ages six months through eight years may require two doses. Flu vaccinations are particularly important for those individuals at risk of severe illness and complications from flu. These include older adults, residents of long-term care facilities, women who are pregnant, adults and children with a weakened immune system and those with chronic medical conditions and obesity. Persons who live with or care for individuals at risk of severe infection such as health-care personnel and others living in the home are also essential to be vaccinated.

For people 65 years and older, there are three preferentially recommended higher-dose or adjuvant flu vaccines: Fluzone High-Dose Quadrivalent vaccine, Flublok Quadrivalent recombinant flu vaccine and Flud Quadrivalent adjuvant flu vac-

cine. More information is available at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/highrisk/65over.htm>.

Yet another concern, according to Paez, "In addition to flu, COVID-19 and RSV infections can complicate and pose additional threats to vulnerable individuals with weakened immune systems."

And a flu outbreak can be devastating for children.

"Influenza and RSV have always been a significant illness in young children. Children with underlying medical conditions, especially prematurity, asthma and immunodeficiencies, kids under age five, as well as those with asthma or serious underlying pulmonary, cardiac, neurologic, or immune system illnesses are at particular risk for a serious influenza infection," said Dr. Cecilia Di Pentima, chief, Pediatric Infectious Diseases, Baystate Children's Hospital.

During the 2022-23 Influenza season, 174 children of all age groups died of influenza.

She noted the best way to protect children from more severe influenza infection is with annually available vaccines. While protection from immunization might not prevent getting sick with influenza, it does offer protection against more severe illness. Children between six

months and eight years of age who have never received at least two doses of flu vaccine at any point in time during their lives (not necessarily during the same flu season) need two doses of flu vaccine given at least four weeks apart in order to be better protected from flu.

But it's not just about the flu for kids this fall and beyond.

"As the RSV season arrives, newborns, and infants under eight months of age can be protected for severe RSV infection with a single intramuscular injection of a newly-approved monoclonal antibody (Nirsevimab). Older infants between eight months and 19 months of age with underlying risk factors are also eligible to receive Nirsevimab," said Di Pentima.

Monoclonal antibodies are man-made proteins that mimic the antibodies our bodies naturally produce when exposed to harmful germs. Because these antibodies are not produced by our own immune system, they are called "passive-immunization."

Although COVID-19 infections in children tend to have a milder impact than in adults, severe lung and heart disease can lead to complications in children as well. Since the onset of the pandemic, over 2000 children and teenagers 17 years

of age and younger have died of COVID-19 infection. Infants as young as 6 months of age and older can be protected with the updated COVID-19 vaccines.

"The best way to learn more about influenza, RSV and COVID-19 prevention is by talking to your pediatrician now, before the colder weather increases the risk of transmission of all respiratory viruses," said Di Pentima said.

Given the potential triple-demic of respiratory infections by respiratory syncytial virus, flu and COVID, Paez noted Americans at risk of severe disease from these infections are urged to get vaccinated.

Flu shots can be given at the same time as other vaccines, including the updated COVID-19 vaccine. However, there are mixed messages on adding the RSV vaccine at the same time. The CDC has stated that it may be given at the same time as other vaccines. However, some health experts cite the fact there is little research about administering an RSV shot with another vaccine. Consult your doctor if you are unsure as to what to do.

For more information on Baystate Health, visit baystatehealth.org or for more information about Baystate Children's Hospital, visit baystatehealth.org/bch.

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ACT	2 Oakland St., Wilbraham	9 room, 5 bed, 2f 1h bath Colonial, Gambrel /Dutch	\$479,372	
PCG	9 Melody Ln., East Longmeadow	7 room, 3 bed, 1f 0h bath Ranch	\$349,900	
PCG	66 Chapin Rd., Hampden	7 room, 3 bed, 1f 0h bath Cape	\$274,900	
CTG	19 Hillview Dr., West Springfield	4 room, 2 bed, 2f 0h bath Other	\$243,900	
UAG	73 Genevieve, Hampden	7 room, 3 bed, 1f 2h bath Colonial	\$465,000	
UAG	114 Piney, Ludlow	6 room, 2 bed, 1f bath Cottage, Bungalow	\$300,000	
UAG	383 Rondeau St., Palmer	4 room, 2 bed, 1f 0h bath Ranch	\$265,000	
UAG	54 Fernald St, Springfield	5 room, 3 bed, 1f 1h bath Ranch	\$204,900	
UAG	28 Dayton St., Springfield	5 room, 2 bed, 1f 0h bath Ranch	\$264,900	
UAG	36 Elwood Dr., Springfield	9 room, 4 bed, 1f 2h bath Colonial	\$349,900	
UAG	3 Western View Dr., Wilbraham	8 room, 4 bed, 1f 1h bath Colonial	\$489,900	
SLD	41 Fernwood Dr., Hampden	8 room, 4 bed, 2f bath Cape	\$459,900	\$425,000
SLD	455 Miller St., Ludlow	4 room, 2 bed, 1f 0h bath Ranch	\$265,000	\$290,000
SLD	290 Prospect St., Ludlow	7 room, 3 bed, 1f 1h bath Bungalow	\$299,900	\$310,000
SLD	11 Pease Ave., Monson	6 room, 3 bed, 2f bath Colonial	\$260,000	\$270,000
SLD	39 Shaw St., Palmer	5 room, 3 bed, 2f bath	\$270,000	\$311,000
SLD	64 Old Farm Rd., Springfield	7 room, 4 bed, 1f 1h bath Ranch	\$259,900	\$265,000
SLD	39 Rita St, Springfield	6 room, 2 bed, 2f 0h bath Ranch	\$274,900	\$305,000
SLD	50 Slumber Ln., Springfield	5 room, 3 bed, 1f bath Ranch	\$279,900	\$290,000
SLD	21 Woodlawn St., Springfield	7 room, 4 bed, 2f 1h bath Colonial	\$599,900	\$605,000

MULTI FAMILY LISTINGS

CTG	98 Fuller St., U:32, Ludlow	2 unit, 12 total rooms, 6 total bedrooms 2 Family	\$219,900	
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LAND LISTINGS

ACT	0 Springhouse Rd., Hampden	0.72 Residential acres (31,531 SqFt)	\$87,000	
ACT	0 Old Reed Rd lot:6, Monson	8.50 Residential acres (370,260 SqFt)	\$89,000	
ACT	4 Hilltop Park Wilbraham	20.20 Residential acres (879,912 SqFt)	\$259,900	
CTG	61 Devonshire Terr (lot 6A) E. Longmeadow	1.05 Residential acres (45,663 SqFt)	\$179,900	

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