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Spectrum announces nearly $50M investment for WMass

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
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WILBRAHAM - The towns of Wilbraham and Hampden are among many communities that will be part of Spectrum's nearly $50 million investment in fiber broadband network evolution.

The other communities are Belchertown, Brimfield, Chicopee, Easthampton, East Longmeadow, Hadley, Ludlow, Southampton and Wales.

The initiative is slated to further enhance Spectrum's broadband internet services including faster speed and improved reliability for Spectrum customers, with the plan having gone underway in the state throughout 2025 and the upgrades to be substantially completed by the end of the year.

The announcement was made on Oct. 7 at the Scantic Valley YMCA with remarks from Nancy Clark, director of State Government Affairs for Charter Communications, State Rep. Brian Ashe (D-Longmeadow), State Rep. Angelo Puppolo, Jr. (D-Springfield), Commissioner Karen Charles, Department of Telecommunications and Cable, Rick Sullivan, executive director of the Western Massachusetts Economic Development Council, Jennifer Young, state director of Government Affairs for Charter Communications, Grace Barone, executive director of the East of the River Chamber of Commerce, Amy Scott, owner of Wild Apple Design Group in Hampden, Steve Baker, director of Broadband and Digital Equity at the Executive Office of Economic Development, and Michael Liccione, New England Area Vice President, Field Operations, Charter Communications.

Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

A group photo comprising the team at Charter Communications, state elected officials and members of state departments and Western Massachusetts councils after the nearly $50 million Spectrum announcement at the Scantic Valley YMCA in Wilbraham on Oct. 7.

Sullivan, who will be retiring from his role after 11 years, said, "I think our best days are ahead of us" with this investment.

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Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

The Selectboard has chosen their new police chief.

Hampden chooses next police chief

Daniel Bruno will take the position of outgoing Chief Scott Trombly

By Dalton Zbierski
Correspondent

HAMPDEN – The town of Hampden will soon have a new police chief.

Following the news of Police Chief Scott Trombly's retirement in July, the town hired a search committee to help with the process of finding his replacement.

Trombly also served as interim Police Chief as the search went on.

On Monday, Selectboard Chair John Flynn thanked Trombly for his years of service to the town and explained where the search process stands.

"We, in conjunction with the town administrator and the chief, put out for a search committee that has quite a bit of experience helping towns and cities find a new police chief," Flynn said. "With the help of the town administrator, they started with 12 and came down to four candidates they brought to the board. We set up interviews with the four last Thursday. One candidate pulled away before the interview started, so the board had roughly half-hour interviews with the three candidates last Thursday."

The three finalists included Thomas Ivon, Carl Mazifer and Daniel Bruno.

After last Thursday's interviews, the Selectboard spent the weekend taking into account what they learned, as they worked toward making a

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YWCA, Miles for Change announce $100K raised from walk

By Kristin Rivers
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WILBRAHAM - The YWCA of Western Massachusetts and Sophie Pariseau, organizer of the 3.3 Miles for Change Walk, jointly announced on Oct. 1 that over $100,000 was raised to support the YWCA's domestic violence programs.

The joint announcement was made at the YWCA of Western Massachusetts headquarters in Springfield.

The 3.3 Miles for Change Walk, held in June at Fountain Park, was organized by Pariseau along with her family and friends of her mother and brother, Sima and Dylan Pariseau, two community pillars taken too soon in June 2024.

The beloved mother and son, longtime residents of Wilbraham, also continue to be remembered through the community rallying together to create the Dylan Pariseau "Follow Your Passion" Science Scholarship, a Memorial Vigil and Toast held by Sima's longtime friends and the Doyle Family awarding Dylan Pariseau the Ryan J. Doyle Award posthumously at the Western Mass Baseball Hall of Fame induction.

Reflecting on the announcement, Pariseau shared, "Without a doubt, it was beyond any of my wildest dreams" to have raised so much for the YWCA, and having it go towards the organization's domestic violence programs is what, also, "made this so incredible."

She added the walk's turnout "really is just a testament to our community, and even more so, the impact that my mom and my brother have on the community."

Photos courtesy of Tiera Wright

Mark Pariseau, Elizabeth Dineen, YWCA of Western Massachusetts CEO, and Sophie Pariseau, organizer of the 3.3. Miles for Change Walk, in a group photo at their joint announcement on Oct. 1 of over $100,000 raised to support the YWCA's domestic violence programs.

"I think it's pretty impossible to deny in this scenario how much 100 grand is going to help the YWCA, and most importantly, is going to help the people who rely on the YWCA for support and the people who, indirectly, even receive support from the YWCA and they don't even realize it. Or, the children in schools who are receiving the curriculum about healthy relationships and they don't even know what they might be saved from in years to come, and I think that is really amazing," Pariseau said.

A coworker in San Diego,

Please see **MILES FOR CHANGE**, page 5

Teens paint harvest moon

By Angelina Acevedo
Correspondent

WILBRAHAM - With fall just beginning during the end of September, the crisp air and changing leaves can make anyone excited for the season.

One special event that happens near the autumn equinox is the annual Harvest Moon, a day where the full moon shines brightly in the sky and signifies a change in seasons.

Teens at the library on Oct. 6 were welcomed to paint along with Ellie Antonacci, a local art ed-

Please see **HARVEST MOON**, page 8

Community orgs gather for Crane Park cleanup

By Kristin Rivers
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WILBRAHAM - The Department of Veterans Services, the Rotary Club of Wilbraham-Hampden and the Minnechaug Regional High School Military Community Club gathered at Crane Park Veteran Memorial on Oct. 4 to clean up the veterans' memorials and statues.

The project provided an opportunity for these three organizations to come together to clean and restore the memorial wartime pillars and Civil War statues.

The Rotary Club of Wilbraham-Hampden also thanks the Hampden Police Officers Association for their donations to help purchase cleaning supplies for the cleanup project.

Patrick Renna, director of Veterans Services, explained since taking over in January, multiple veterans reached out about mold and lichen building up over the years on the monuments.

"That definitely was a priority of mine was to figure out a way to get down here and clean it. There's no set funding set aside to do this or anything, so it could have been a longer project to get that squared away, but the Rotary Club had come to me," Renna said. "They invited me to a dinner earlier this year, so we developed a relationship and we've had a good relationship since then and they come to me asking just what they can do in town and for an event and I brought this up and they jumped right on it."

(Charles F. Bennett photo)

Collaborating to spruce up town memorials in Crane Park, Oct. 4, are members of the Wilbraham-Hampden Rotary Club, the Minnechaug Military Community Club and Veterans Agent Patrick Renna.

From there, Renna invited the Military Community Club, who also expressed interest in helping out.

"We have a beautiful day, we have a couple of differ-

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MILES FOR CHANGE

from page 1

Pariseau said, also organized a walk to happen simultaneously with Wilbraham's, with other coworkers, friends and her Book Club lending their support.

"It was just really a nice way for all of my different communities in San Diego to come together and support me," Pariseau said. "They arranged it all and I shipped some t-shirts, so they were able to walk simultaneously with us in Western Mass, which is just so incredible. It was really cool to feel that bi-coastal support."

Pariseau also expressed deep gratitude to her San Diego community's support throughout, especially when away from home and family.

"I got so lucky in the community that I found there, so to have people there that have been able to make me feel supported and who even I'm lucky who have met my family members and stuff and have just been able to make San Diego a home for me has been so important," Pariseau said. "And then, for me to come home and have all of my home friends and people who I have met in college, just so many other facets of my life and to bring them all together; I had friends from all over the country coming over to support me during the walk. To see them all together is just the most amazing thing."

Pariseau also shared big news: the walk will now become an annual event, a foundation is in the works with a focus on domestic violence, gun violence and mental health awareness and more events to come, noting how during and after the walk, many people expressed praise and wanted to learn more about what they could do next year. Others who hadn't heard about the walk—including corporations and businesses—also reached out to ask how they could get involved.

She hopes this goes beyond the community, beyond Wilbraham, beyond Western Massachusetts and even beyond the state.

"So, I think that when we got all of that feedback, it just felt crazy to me to not do something more when people want to help," Pariseau said.

Photo courtesy of Tiera Wright

The amount raised at the 3.3 Miles for Change Walk held in June at Fountain Park in Wilbraham in unveiled. The 3.3 represents the number "33," which was Dylan Pariseau's baseball jersey number.

Elizabeth Dineen, YWCA of Western Massachusetts CEO, expressed gratitude to Pariseau and the community for their support.

"We are very honored and grateful for Sophie and her team's hard work. The money raised will go towards supporting two programs that focus on youth violence prevention: the Healthy and Empowering Relationship Education (H.E.R.E) Project and Children Who Witness Violence (CWWV). The money raised will enable the YWCA to expand each of these programs. Thus, we can stop the next generation from perpetuating the cycle of violence or falling victim to it," Dineen said.

For Tiera Wright, vice president of Communications & Development at the YWCA of Western Massachusetts, providing these resources and programs to those going through domestic violence—including youth, women and their families—is important.

"Domestic violence is more than physical or sexual abuse. It can be emotional, verbal and financial. Those experiencing domestic violence often feel isolated and are ashamed to ask for help, or they shoulder the blame. These programs help them realize they are not alone and that there are resources available to help them get out of a terrible situation," Wright said. "Furthermore, our youth violence prevention programs teach children and teens what healthy relationships should look like by giving them space to talk and work through their feelings through the H.E.R.E. Project and CWWV, respectively."

Mark Pariseau, Sophie's father, continues to be amazed by the community support, grateful they are "still getting Sima and Dylan's name out there and their faces out there" so they are never forgotten.

Regarding the walk, he was "deeply, deeply touched by everyone" from the volunteers to the donors, including those he and his family didn't know, the community and the local businesses.

"It really means the world to me and Sophie and I'm sure if Sima and Dylan could be here with us today, they would say the same exact thing," he said.

He also stressed education to help address domestic violence.

"There's a lot of resources out there and people are willing to help, but they just need to be directed in the right paths. Again, like I said last June, if you see something, say something. Don't keep yourself or put yourself in a situation that can utterly turn out horrific," he said. "I said it at the press conference: money, houses, cars, doesn't really mean anything. All of that material stuff can be figured out at a different time, different place, but the safety of yourself, your children, that comes before everything."

Another thing he emphasized was addressing mental health.

"I think that people just need to take a step back. Think about what's going on in their heads and talking to somebody," he said. "I know for myself, I've been seeing a therapist since this tragic event took place and it's helped me immensely, but you need to get your stuff out there. Whether it's to a family member, a therapist, it doesn't matter. You got to put yourself out there. If you don't put yourself out there and you internalize everything, it's only going to pile up on you and it's going to make matters worse and worse and that's when really bad things can happen."

He also expressed excitement about the foundation, explaining it's in the beginning stages including putting together a board, a mission and more.

"We definitely want to help out however we can to whoever we can. It doesn't always have to be about domestic violence, it can be whatever. But, if we can somehow, some way help somebody, help a family, that's what our goal is," he said. "And also, again, I always say this: is I want Sima and Dylan's faces and their names out there so that people never forget who they were."

The Messages to All

Dineen and Wright also shared these messages.

"The success of the walk is a testament to what great people Sima and Dylan were, the impact they had on their community and the community's commitment to supporting one another. It is also a testament of the deep love Sophie has for her mother and brother. It was her way of honoring them," Dineen said.

"It has been such a pleasure working with and getting to know Sophie and her dad, Mark. Thank you for the time, effort and support. I'd also like to thank Sophie for sharing a piece of Sima and Dylan with all of us," Wright said.

Sophie Pariseau will never forget the community stepping up.

"It just was really incredible, not only about the support from family and friends, but it was really amazing—even more so—to feel the support from strangers who hadn't even met me or my family or been involved with us at all and people who just want to help," Pariseau said. "When you see people stepping up who you would have never expected to because you don't know who they are and they don't seem to have a stake in the situation, that is just really special. I would just have to say thank you to the community, thank you to everyone who sponsored, people who just think of us every day. Just want to say thank you."

Mark Pariseau's message was this: never forget Sima and Dylan and "you can still do a lot of good."

"I truly, truly appreciate the community, the folks along the walk that were so supportive of our mission and what we were trying to accomplish. I would really, really like to thank the group of Sima's dear friends that were a huge help to Sophie and coordinating everything with the walk. The Sheriff's Department, the big sponsors of the event—and not only the big sponsors—but whatever you did to help," he said. "It is truly, truly appreciated and it's something that I will never, ever forget as I'm sure Sophie can say the same."

As for a message to the YWCA, Sophie Pairseau thanked Dineen and Wright for their friendship and support, stressing how organizations like the YWCA can provide those vital resources and connections. Also, accessibility, something else she wants to work on with the foundation.

"I think that's why places like the YWCA are so important because they are going to be crucial in a step in getting there and getting to that how do we do this. So, I just want to thank them for being there and providing that support and being able to work alongside me with this," Pariseau said.

Mark Pariseau said his daughter also got to tour the YWCA and he has gained a deeper understanding of the work that they do, praising Dineen and her team for what they're doing for the area.

"They're giving people a voice and they're giving people—moms and wives and whoever—a fresh start and an opportunity to say, 'You know what? I'm taking charge of my life and this is how it's going to happen.' But, just extremely, extremely proud of who they are and what they do and Sophie and I will always be there for whatever they need," he said.

His overall message to all was this.

"Thank you for thinking of Sima and Dylan," he said.

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