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# AGAWAM

## ADVERTISER NEWS

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## School project makes significant progress in 2023

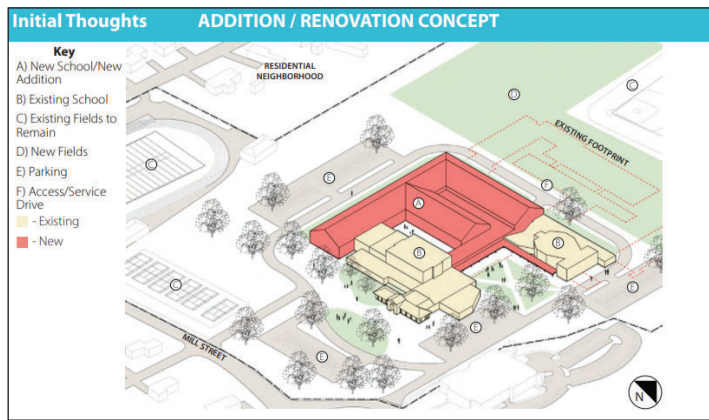
By Quinn Suomala  
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – The Agawam High School Building Project is moving forward into the new year, with hopes from many that the project will be fully approved to start by the town and the MSBA in June.

But major speed picked up on the project throughout 2023 making it the biggest ongoing Story of the Year.

The district received approval from the MSBA on Dec. 13 to continue into the schematic design phase of this project.

“The schematic design phase is the actual plans for the new building,” Mayor Elect Christopher Johnson said. “Up to this point it’s been the concepts and the rough design of how it’s going to be laid out on the site as they move into the schematic design it’s going to nail down to how the footprint breaks out to



Agawam High School is in line for major upgrade.

FILE PHOTO

the various areas.”

In the schematic design phase the district will work to produce the exact designs and floor plans for the project. They are currently in the process of hiring a contractor to assist with this phase.

“Once the contractor gets on board and the architect finalizes our design—because there are still a few pieces they need to fine

tune with our design—then we’ll really be in good shape,” Mayor William Sapelli said.

The design option approved to move forward was Option 1C, which will keep 10% of the original high school building.

It will also create two separate wings in the building, one

PROJECT | page 5

## From council to mayor, Johnson set to lead town

By Quinn Suomala  
Staff Writer



Christopher Johnson

AGAWAM – Former city council president, and sworn-in early this week as mayor again, Christopher Johnson is ready to take up the top seat once more.

Johnson made headlines all year as he declared his candidacy and then was elected to be the new mayor of Agawam in the November election. He looks forward to taking up the position again.

Since his election, he has been working to ensure that his transition into the mayor’s seat is a smooth one. Mainly, he has been speaking with Mayor William Sapelli and other key heads of the town that he will need to work with.

“The transition’s been going very well, I’ve had a couple of meetings with the school department...and had a few meetings

with the mayor, the solicitor, human resources,” he said.

In his first week in office he hopes to have further meetings with department heads, as he wants to ensure there is good communication between them and the mayor’s office.

He also hopes to get more familiar with the various projects occurring around Agawam.

“We have the police station project going on, the Tuckahoe Turf project and obviously the biggest one is the high school project,” Johnson said. “I’ve been spending time coming up to speed on those and I hope in the first week to be able to get out and get on the ground at those locations.”

He has been greatly supported by Sapelli and other staff in the

JOHNSON | page 10

## For second straight election, newcomer leads vote

By Quinn Suomala  
Staff Writer



Edward Borgatti

AGAWAM – Edward Borgatti was recently elected to be on the Agawam City Council, and he received the highest number of votes of any elected city councilor.

Borgatti received a total of 4,255 votes, with the next closest councilor being Anthony Russo with 3,770 making him one a Newcomer of Year in news headlines.

“I’m really humbled by the support and the voters,” he said. “I had thought that maybe I would do okay because I had the business...I was hoping I’d at least get a seat, and then when I heard I came in first I couldn’t believe it.”

Borgatti is a newcomer to the world of politics, though he is well known in the community thanks to his family’s restaurant, EB’s Restaurant.

The restaurant has been doing well and Borgatti felt that now was the right time to get involved in the city council

“I love Agawam, I’ve always kind of been behind the scenes,

my father was in politics, he was on the city council as well and my sister has been on the school committee for a number of years,” he said. “So I’ve always been interested in it and I’ve been asked over the years to run and I thought the timing

was right.”

With the restaurant in a good spot, so many seats open on the council and his own interest in serving the community, Borgatti knew this was his chance.

He looks forward to being able to serve the town in a new capacity as councilor.

“I’ve always been active on boards and committees...it’s always been in my blood, I got a Masters in Public Administration and I just kind of stayed in the background and I never decided to run until now,” Borgatti said. “I’ve always given back to the community and now I can do it in a different capacity.”

Borgatti was born and raised in Agawam, and has been working in EB’s Restaurant since he

BORGATTI | page 10

## BEST OF 2023

AGAWAM – The year of 2023 brought us further away from the restraints of the COVID-19 pandemic and into the challenges of inflation and so many other rising costs. The year also brought a lot of transition as the town elected a new mayor and new city councilors. It was also the precursor to big things happening in 2024 as big projects like Tuckahoe Turf Farm, the new police station and high school continued in their paths to fruition. Here’s a look back at some of the many things that happened in 2023.



Linda Connolly and Assistant Director Kristina Lynch volunteered their time to help with the gift basket assembly. Over 20 people gathered in the senior center in order to assist with the gift basket assembly for homebound seniors.



Dan Cosgrove and his son, Thomas and nephew, Jack hunt for eggs at the town’s Easter Egg Hunt at School Street Park.

FILE PHOTOS





## Celebrating the holidays



Those who attended the Dec. 24, Christmas Eve Day service at 10 a.m. on Sunday at Agawam Congregational Church, found the Sanctuary and Altar decorated and filled with the voices of the full choir.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

## Parks and Rec announce winter brochure available now

AGAWAM – Parks and Recreation Director Christopher Sparks announced last week the Town of Agawam's Winter Activity brochure is now available online for residents to view and register for activities. Registration for the Father Daughter Dance and Youth Lacrosse begins on Jan. 8.

## Feline Friends announce next fundraisers

AGAWAM – Feline Friends Inc. Cat Sanctuary of Feeding Hills will be holding food/supply drives at Smithland Pet & Garden Center on Saturday, Jan. 6 and Feb. 3 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Volunteers will be accepting food, litter & monetary donations for our kitties. Opened bags/boxes will also be accepted. Gift cards from various pet stores or Costco would be much appreciated.

We are selling tickets to our February Valentine Calendar Raffle in January for \$20 each at Paypal- info@felinefriendsinc.org; Venmo - @Feline-Friends and by check/cash - Feline Friends Inc., P.O. Box 174, Feeding Hills, MA 01030.

Smithland, a valued sponsor, is stocked with Friskies Pate or Shreds canned food (single flavored cases preferred), some Fancy Feast varieties and unscented, clumping cat litter. All donations are gratefully accepted. Our donation bin is located near

the cash registers.

Other Wish List items: Disinfecting wipes, paper towels, puppy pee pads, dry cat or dog food for strays & colonies.

Special thanks to our monthly donors and everyone who donated at our December event including Julie & Kevin, Jeanette L, Joanne L, Joan E, Crystal M, Kay A, Carl and Cheryl K, George P, Nicole M, Ken K. Congratulations to Ken K, who won the winter-themed gift basket.

We are thankful to all of our community members for their support throughout the year. December donations were received from the Community Foundation of Western Mass, Jonathan Hall and Toto, Denise R, Patricia C, Judith G, Nicole M, Carolyn C, Ida S, Diane H, Catherine M, Judy C, David P, Jennie U, Carol R, John & Marjorie, Carolyn O, Tami N, Jean R, Michael K, Jeremy B, Marianne S, Paypal Giving Fund Grant, Sharon and Bob L, Jude S, Daniel G, Caro-

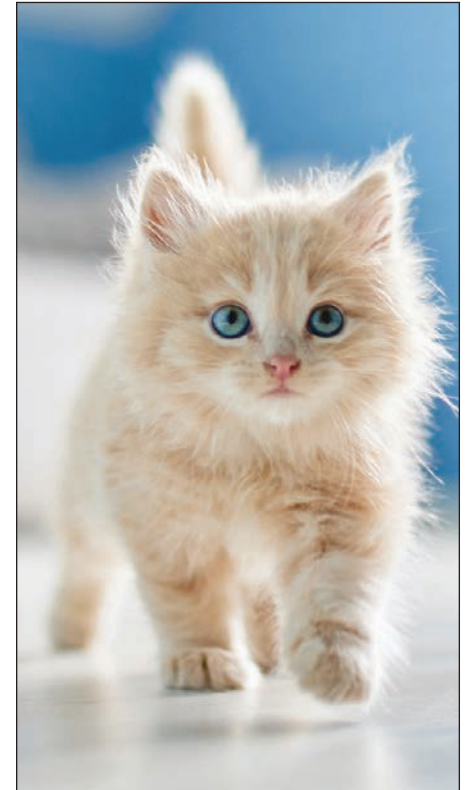
lyn T and Shirley M. We are so grateful.

Sincere condolences go out to all who have lost furry family members this year. We were saddened by the loss of our dear friend, Toto the Tornado Kitten in late November at the age of 12. May their memories remain in our hearts.

Just a reminder that we have collection bins at the Agawam Public Library as well as at Smithland in Agawam. Please add your contact information if you would like an acknowledgement.

Feline Friends Inc. is a community-based, nonprofit sanctuary that does not discriminate against any cat based on age, gender or disability.

More information about our sanctuary may be found on our website at felinefriendsinc.org or our Facebook page at Feline Friends Cat Sanctuary. Contact us with questions at info@felinefriendsinc.org or by phone at 413-786-5019.



## Schools & Youth

### Lehigh Dean's List for Fall 2023

BETHLEHEM, PA – Local students at Lehigh University attained Dean's List in Fall 2023.

This status is granted to students who

earned a scholastic average of 3.6 or better while carrying at least 12 hours of regularly graded courses. Demitra Benard and Ben Spahiu both achieved Dean's List.

## Polish heritage scholarship applications being accepted

AGAWAM – The Polish Junior League of Massachusetts welcomes area college students of Polish heritage to apply for one of the annual academic scholarships.

Students must have a permanent address in one of the four Western Massa-

chusetts counties: Hampshire, Hampden, Franklin or Berkshire.

Application forms with related information are available at www.polishjuniorleagueuma.org/applications.

The deadline for all applications and related materials is May 1, 2024.

## Christmas tree curbside collection beginning Jan. 8

AGAWAM – The Department of Public Works is pleased to announce that Republic Services will be providing a collection of Christmas Trees during the week of Jan. 8 through the 12.

Christmas trees will be collected on the same day as scheduled trash collection. Please be aware that the regular trash truck will not be collecting trees, a separate truck will be running for the collection of trees.

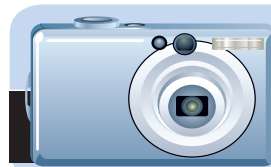
Christmas trees 7' or larger must be cut in half and placed on the tree belt no earlier than 7 a.m. of the collection day listed above.

Trees in plastic bags will not be collected.

It is not the responsibility of the hauler to dig out trees buried in the snow due to plowing or excessive snowfall prior to the scheduled collection days.

In the event of a snow delay during the scheduled collection week, residents should make alternative arrangements to recycle their trees at the Bondi's Island Landfill. Collection routes for trees will not be re-scheduled.

Residents may dispose of trees prior to or after the scheduled collection days at the Bondi's Island Landfill.



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# Happy New Year events to be held at the library

AGAWAM – Happy New Year from the Agawam Library Staff. The library invites everyone to visit us in the new year. We all know that the library has something for everyone to read, but did you know that we also offer digital content and streaming services for books, audiobooks, movies and music? We also host informative programs and talented authors to share presentations on subjects from Bigfoot to Black History Month. Adults can also enjoy monthly craft nights and game nights; book discussion groups; library tech classes and trivia challenges. Look for new and exciting programs coming in 2024.

Try something new and join us for a game night just for adults. Tea & Trivia returns this winter with two opportunities to test your wits! Evening trivia will take place on Tuesday, Jan. 16 at 6:30 p.m. and

afternoon trivia will take place on Wednesday, Jan. 17 at 2:30 p.m. Join us for fun trivia games, a cup of warm tea and prizes for the winning teams. Please register online or call the Information Desk (413) 789-1550 X4.

Beginning Jan. 8 and running through Feb. 29, adults will have the opportunity to participate in a Winter Reading Challenge. By challenging yourself to log your reading minutes, write book reviews and complete easy and fun activities, you will be eligible for a prize drawing. Stay tuned for more details coming soon!

If one of your new year's resolutions is to use the library more, our January tech class is the perfect way to learn more about what we offer! Come learn about every digital experience you can have just with a free library card! We will take a quick look

at all the resources that the Agawam Public Library and the state of Massachusetts have to offer our patrons. It will be helpful for attendees to know their library login information in advance. We will offer two January tech classes: Wednesday, Jan. 17 at 6:30 p.m. and Tuesday, Jan. 23 at 10 a.m. Both classes will take place in the Cline Community Room. Please register ahead of time online or by calling the Information Desk.

The library is pleased to welcome back Certified Life Coach, Chris Rich as she presents Goal Setting in the New Year on Thursday, Jan. 18 at 7 p.m. in the Cline Community Room. Do you ever set a goal and find yourself giving up? You are not alone. There is a good reason we lose motivation with our goals. Come discover from Rich why we give up and learn some

small tweaks to help you achieve your goals. Please register for this event online or by calling the Information Desk. Please note that the snow date for this event will be Monday, Jan. 22 at 7 p.m.

Our Adult Craft Night will be back on Monday, Jan. 29 at 6:30 p.m. Crafters will get another opportunity to make a large snowflake from coat hangers. Register online as space will be limited. Registration for adult events opened on Jan. 2. Please visit [www.agawamlibrary.org](http://www.agawamlibrary.org) for more information and to register for programs. The Agawam Library will be closed on Monday, Jan. 15. During the winter months, any closings or late openings will be reported to local TV stations 22 and 40, as well as their websites. Inclement weather closings or delays will also be posted on our social media platforms.

## Friends of Agawam Public Library looking for new members to join

AGAWAM – The Friends of the Agawam Public Library has been in existence for over 20 years. They are a dedicated group of local citizens who support the library with both time and money. The Friends hold monthly meetings to discuss ways they can best help with the library's mission.

Over the years the Friends have supplied the library with numerous items that were not included in the town's budget, such as; a slide projector, a people counter, a Laser HP color printer, a wireless Lavalier microphone system, a portable Public Address system, an ongoing lease for a color photocopier, furniture for the children's room, protective sleeves for library cards, a DVD player and computers and software for the Children's Room.

The Friends help the library in various other ways too. Some ways are by funding library events throughout the year, such as the Elementary Summer School Reading Challenge (where cash prizes are awarded to Agawam's 4 grade schools), English as a Second Language classes and a number of museum passes. They raise the money for funding by holding an annual Holiday Basket Raffle, presenting an annual Juried Photogra-

phy show, selling used books, offering canvas tote bags and mugs with the Friends logo created by Agawam's own David Cecchi, and volunteering in various library-supported activities.

The Friends welcome all who want to bring attention to the library's vital role in our town by becoming a member, volunteering at activities, or simply offering support through book and monetary contributions. The Friends are always grateful for any volunteer help with library projects. If community members are interested in becoming a Friends member, you can find the application on our website <https://www.agawamlibrary.org/about-2/friends/>, print it out and mail it in or look for the Friends form in the Friends kiosk in the library and pay in person.

And, to make things even more exciting, if you are interested in becoming a Friend and pay your Friends membership by Jan. 1, 2024, you will be entered in a drawing on Jan. 4 (at the Friends January meeting), to win a \$50 Amazon gift card.

The time is now for the community to join The Friends of Agawam Public Library, it is loads of fun and extremely satisfying.

## Fair Share Amendment to bring infrastructure funds

AGAWAM – Governor Maura Healey and Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll, under the new administration, have allocated a total of \$1.00 million from the Fair Share Amendment for Fiscal Year 2024, dedicated to bolstering local infrastructure across the Commonwealth's 351 cities and towns.

Enacted by voters in 2022, the Fair Share Amendment mandates that revenue generated by a 4% surtax on taxable income over \$1 million must be invested in public education and transportation. This allocation showcases the Administration's commitment to fortifying municipal collaborations and providing crucial financial support for local transportation enhancements.

In confirmation of this allocation, Agawam's Fair Share apportionment for fiscal 2024 is certified at \$418,889.00.

The distribution of Fair Share Amendment funds to communities will follow two distinct formulas. The initial \$50 million will adhere to the traditional Chapter 90 formula, factoring in local road mileage (58.33%), population (20.83%), and

employment (20.83%). Subsequently, the remaining \$50 million will be distributed based on each municipality's road mileage share.

This apportionment will seamlessly integrate into your existing Chapter 90 contract with MassDOT, requiring no additional action from the municipality. Detailed apportionments for all communities can be accessed online at [www.mass.gov/chapter-90-program](http://www.mass.gov/chapter-90-program). It's important to note that the bill authorizing these funds has been signed, making the funds available for immediate municipal utilization.

Moreover, these allocated Fair Share Amendment funds will be instrumental in expanding our ongoing efforts to enhance local infrastructure. The funds will be strategically utilized to supplement and expand upon the existing roster of road projects within our community. This additional support will enable us to address crucial transportation needs and further improve our roads, benefiting residents and commuters alike.

## Foster care information meeting

LUDLOW – Children who are removed from their birth family due to neglect or abuse can be in multiple foster situations for a long time before being reunited or adopted by another family. Due to a severe shortage of foster homes and volunteer advocates, many of these youth are placed in any home with the space, whether or not it is the best match.

While the experiences of foster children vary widely, some common themes emerge during this critical, formative stage of their lives: trauma, instability and uncertainty, emotional and psychological challenges, and educational disruptions.

We can't protect foster children, or any child, from challenges in life, but we can equip them with resilience and prepare them for those hardships. Children need structure, responsibility, and opportunities to see that they can do and learn new things. There is something every one of us can do to help. Details and Resources: [zontaqv.org/foster](http://zontaqv.org/foster)

The Zonta Club of Quaboag Valley will hold a panel discussion and dinner on Monday, Feb. 12 at the Ludlow Country Club for anyone interested in learning more about the realities and opportunities in the Foster Care system in Western MA.

The program will be facilitated by Andrea Bordenca, founder of Lead Yourself Youth and will include representatives from Family Justice Advocates, Department of Children and Family Volunteer Case Review Program and Family Resources, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) and other organizations that provide services to foster children and families.

Ludlow Country Club on Monday, Feb. 12. At 5:30 p.m. Socialize, 6 p.m. Buffet Dinner, followed by the Program. Dinner \$28 is payable by cash, check, or credit card the night of the event, but RSVP to [info@zontaqv.org](mailto:info@zontaqv.org) by 2/7 for the caterers. Contact [info@zontaqv.org](mailto:info@zontaqv.org) for information on sliding scale fee.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

## Agawam Day in Florida March 6

ST.PETERSBURG, FL – Agawam Day will be held on Wednesday, March 6, 2024., from 10 a.m. to noon, at Fort De Soto National Park, shelter #14, in St. Petersburg.

Agawam Day in Florida has been held on the first Wednesday of March since 1981. Each year 40 to 60 former Agawam

residents join together for a reunion of friends and family for a picnic, raffles, beautiful scenery, hugs and to share old memories. For more information contact Hank Drewnowski by cell phone call or text at 860-462-7273 or by email at [hdrew2452@gmail.com](mailto:hdrew2452@gmail.com).



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# Opinion

## Guest Column



*Native plants often need to be coaxed into germinating*

Are you interested in starting your own perennials from seed this year? This column, straight from the archives, will be of use to you! Sadly, not all seeds sprout as quickly and easily indoors as tomatoes do.

Some seeds can be a bit tricky to germinate, and we must go through extraordinary measures to get them to sprout. In the grand scheme of things, you will learn that this is actually a good thing.

Take the Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*) for example, and imagine what would happen if this late bloomer dropped its seed on the ground in October and the seed came up immediately? Likely, the seedlings would be so small and tender that they would not survive the winter.

On the other hand, if germination occurred in early spring (and it does!), success could almost be guaranteed.

The Cardinal Flower, along with many other native plants, has a built-in dormancy that is broken only by a period of moist-cold. Until "winter" has passed – either for real or simulated by us, these plants will simply not sprout.

In addition to Cardinal Flower, Columbine, Delphinium, Gas Plant, Great Lobelia, Lupine, Iris, Monkshood, Border Phlox, Primrose, Purple Coneflower and probably more than I am unaware of, all benefit from what is called "stratification." The term, which admittedly sounds a bit intimidating, refers to the practice of "stratifying," or storing seeds in layers alternating with moisture-holding material and exposing them to cold temperatures.

This can be accomplished both indoors and out, and I will go through the pros and cons of each.

GARDEN | page 5

## Guest Column

*If my wife claims now, will it hurt my Social Security Amount?*



Dear Rusty

*I am 69 years old, and my wife turned 70 early this year. I am still working full time. My wife is not working, but she got a letter from Social Security saying she should take her Social Security as soon as possible.*

*My question is: since my wife has reached her full retirement age, can she take her SS without it affecting mine when I claim? I plan to work at least another year, depending on how the economy goes I may have to work longer if it doesn't get better. I have IRAs and a 401k to pull from when I retire.*

Signed Anxious Husband

Dear Anxious

The reason your wife received a letter from Social Security suggesting she claims now is because her benefit reached maximum some time ago at age 70. Thus, there is no reason for her to wait beyond age 70 to claim. By delaying past age 70 your wife is losing money so she should apply as soon as possible.

I suggest your wife call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 or your local office right away to



## Letter to the Editor

*Junior Women's Club grateful to donors*

Dear Editor:

As we close out 2023, the GFWC Agawam Junior Women's Club continues to be grateful to the community for their support. We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to those who helped us this year.

Those who made monetary donations include: Ayre Real Estate, Berkshire Power, Clinical Research Management Group (CRMG)/ Steve Cincotta, Liberty Package Store, McLane/McLane Attorneys at Law, OMG, Inc., Sarat Ford, Westfield Bank (for our Spelling Bee prizes), and Patty Lloyd.

We also thank Bethany Assembly of God (donation of the use of their parking lot for our Touch a Truck event), The Still (donation of the use of their back room for our Friendsgiving Membership/Vendor event), and Chris Sparks (help with the use of the School Street Park for our Spring Fest II Vendor/Food truck event) for their assistance with our fundraisers.

Shout outs go to the following businesses that donated gift certificates for our use: EB's Restaurant, First Choice Tours/Maria Manouvelos-Baker, Murphy's Pub, and Partner's Restau-

rant.

For 66 years, AJWC has been committed to the betterment of our community through special projects supporting the GFWC Special and Community Service Programs: domestic and sexual violence and awareness, advocates for children, education and libraries, arts and culture, environment, health and wellness, and civic involvement and outreach.

The GFWC Agawam Junior Women's Club is especially proud of its continued donations even in times of financial cut-backs. In 2023 The AJWC donated \$3,450 including \$2,000 in scholarship monies to graduating seniors. In 2023 the AJWC made in-kind donations worth \$6437.00 including the purchase of grocery gift cards and Old Navy gift cards worth \$2,850 through their Holiday Baskets program.

We could not have done it without you.

This group of thoughtful caring women are always looking for new members.

Check us out on social media ~ <https://www.facebook.com/AgawamJuniorWomensClub>.

Kathy Mouneimneh and Donna Shibley  
AJWC Co-Presidents



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### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

must include a name, address, and daytime telephone number for author verification purposes. We do not publish anonymous letters. All letters are subject to editing for content and length. The deadline is Monday at noon. Please send letters to Agawam Advertiser News, care of Turley Publications Inc., 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, or e-mail [aan@turley.com](mailto:aan@turley.com).

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**PROJECT** ■ from page 1

for academic classrooms and one more community focused. The community side will contain the cafeteria, auditorium and the gymnasium and the academic side the pods of classrooms.

The project in total is estimated to be complete, should everything go as planned, in 2028.

The total project is estimated to cost \$231.5 million. The MSBA, should it approve the project, is expected to reimburse 43% of the project costs. Due to this, the town's share is anticipated to amount to about \$132 million.

"It is going to be the most expensive capital improvement project in the history of the town," Johnson said. "But it's something that I think we need."

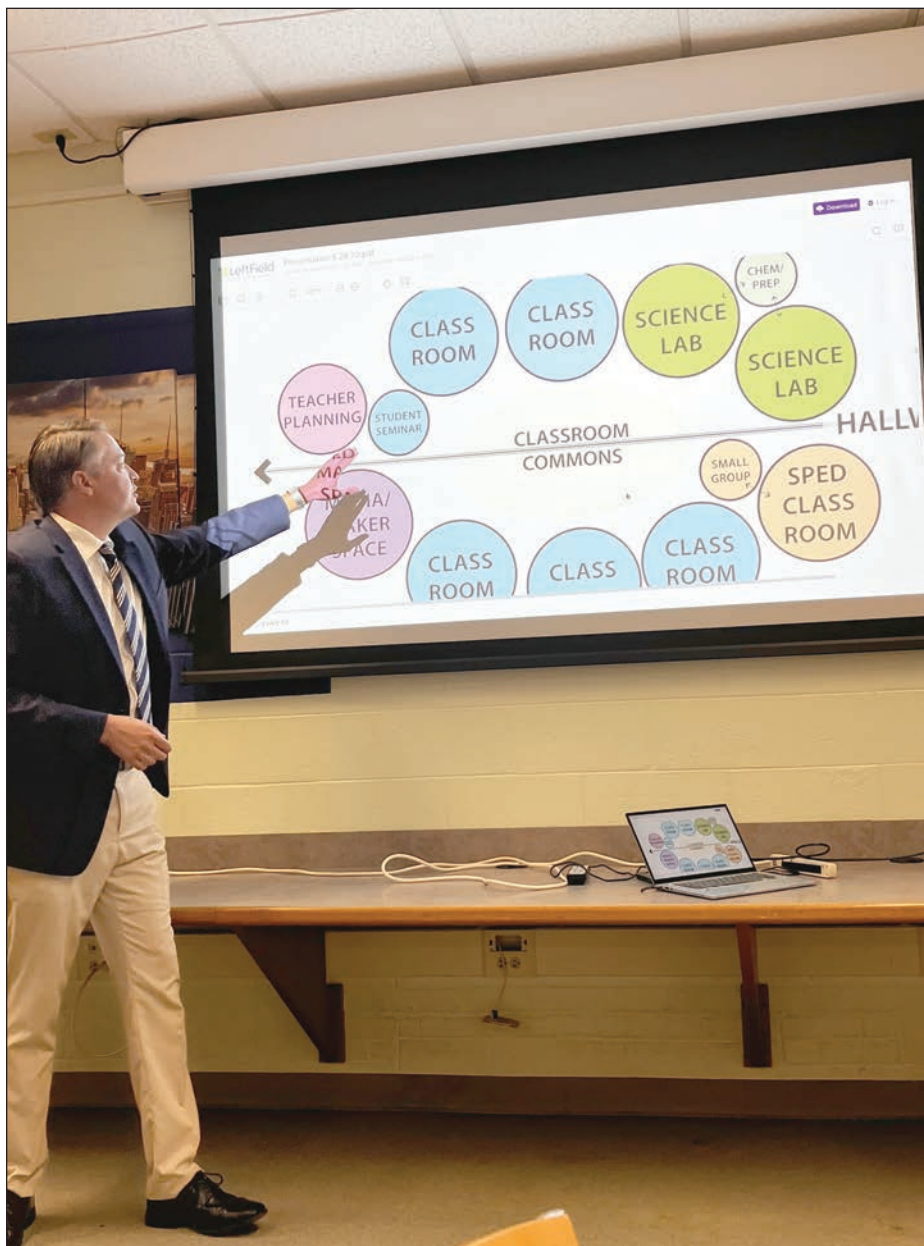
Johnson hopes to push for this project throughout his term as mayor. The town is long overdue for a new high school, with the current building over 70 years old. Johnson believes a new building would be key for the town.

To work toward gaining approval of the town and the MSBA, Johnson hopes to first figure out the financial aspects.

"As the schematic design moves forward we'll get a better estimate of the cost," he said. "Then we have to figure out the finances, whether it's going to be a single bond or multiple bonds because it's going to be a four-year project at the point that construction begins."

Once he has the financial details in place he wants to ensure the information is clearly communicated to the public. He plans to hold a series of public meetings at various locations so more people can attend.

"Whether it be at various schools, the senior center, get a hold of the Chamber of Commerce, see if they're willing to host a meeting so business owners can get information," Johnson said. "Basically to get all the information out to as many residents



A lot of progress was made throughout 2023 on the project, including MSBA approval to enter schematic design in late December.

FILE PHOTO

and businesses as we can to hopefully get the approval we need to move forward."

Johnson is hopeful that this project will gain the approval of the town. Many city councilors agree with Johnson over the necessity of the project.

New councilor Edward Borgatti commented on the necessity of education for improving the town. He agreed that this was the opportunity for the town to get a new school.

"The new high school needs to get underway as soon as we can get that going," Borgatti said. "We haven't had a new school since 1973, no town is in that predicament...we have to do it."

This project first started in May of 2020, when Agawam submitted their statement of interest to the MSBA. Then, in April of 2021, the MSBA invited Agawam to the Eligibility Period for the project.

During this period, the district met with the MSBA to determine the district's readiness, both financial and community, to enter into a project with the MSBA.

They were then invited into the Feasibility Study, where Agawam came up with the different ideas for constructions that they could pursue.

This then led to the Schematic Design Phase that they are currently in and will be in until the town and MSBA either approve or disapprove the project.

If everything goes as scheduled, the goal is to request the MSBA for funding at their meeting on June 26, 2024.

All involved with the project encourage the community of Agawam to come out and learn more about it and to have their voices heard. There will be more community meetings held as the new year begins.

Additionally, the school building committee meets twice a month, and the public is welcome to attend any meeting. The meeting dates and times are posted on the AHS project website, which you can access at <https://agawamhsproject.com/>.

**GARDEN** ■ from page 4

No doubt the easiest way to expose seeds to a period of moist-cold is to sow them outdoors in the fall in a nursery bed or cold frame. They will go through the winter and when conditions are right (cross your fingers!) germinate neatly in their rows.

But because you are outside, seeds can sometimes disappear thanks to ants, rodents and birds. Weeds can also pop up in the seed bed, making it hard to tell which plant is which!

The elements can likewise take their toll and unless the beds are protected, soil can either dry out or get completely waterlogged.

Another way to stratify seeds outdoors is by using the milk-jug method. Taking a gallon size clear milk container and starting just below the handle, cut it almost all the way across.

If you begin just after the handle on one side and end up just before the handle on the other, you will make a hinge. Punch a few drainage holes in the bottom and a couple more on the sides, up and down from the cut so that you can "twist-tie" the jug shut after you are done.

Fill the bottom half with well-moistened seed starting mix and plant the seeds according to the directions on the packet - if they are tiny don't cover; simply press them into the soil. Connect the two halves of the jug with twist ties (or just use duct tape) and label with pencil.

Keep the cap off to provide ventilation, then place in a spot protected from hard winds. As seedlings emerge in the spring you can flip back the top on nice days, but

remember to replace each night and water as needed.

If you prefer to start your seedlings indoors you can mimic winter by placing your seeds in the refrigerator to "chill." Don't put them in there in their seed packets, though, since they must also be kept moist.

If you have enough room in the refrigerator, you can simply sow them in their flats, cover the flat with a loose plastic bag and place it inside for the recommended length of time, usually anywhere from one to three months. Afterwards, set them out to germinate as you normally would, with supplemental light and bottom heat (in other words, fake spring this time around!).

Most folks don't have a spare refrigerator to fill up with seedling flats. In this case put a small amount of moist seed-starting medium in a tiny plastic bag and sprinkle in the seeds.

After "winter" has elapsed, sprinkle the contents on to the top of moistened soil in your container and firm down. Large seeds can be covered with an additional sprinkling of growing medium. Proceed as above to promote germination.

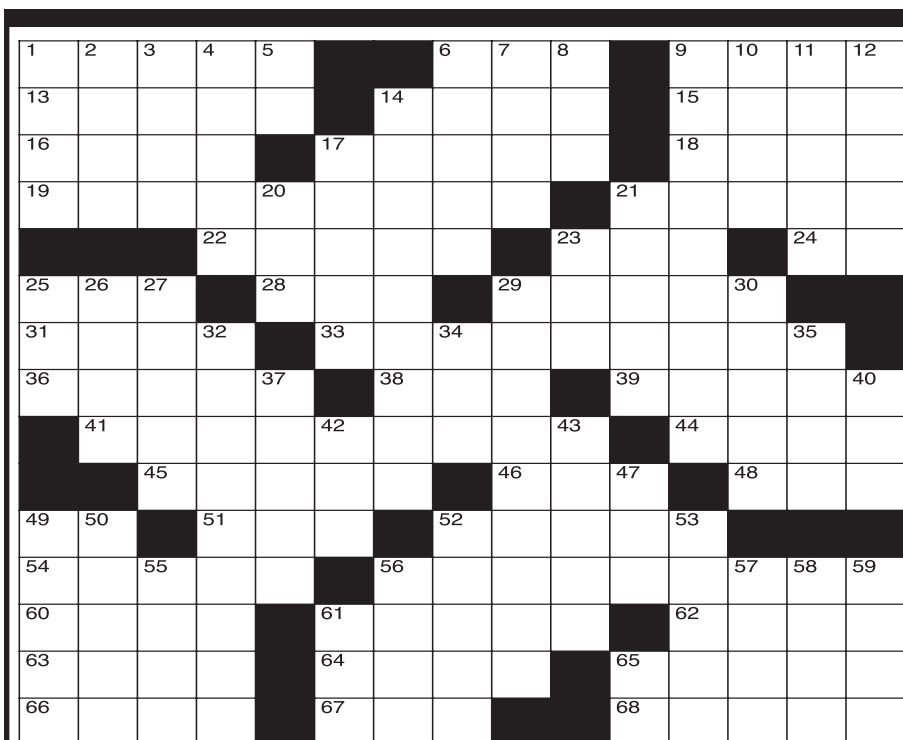
If you plan to order perennial seeds by mail, do so soon, so that you can stratify and have them sprout at the normal time. This may sound tricky, but it's really pretty simple, and the pay-off is lots of new plants for your perennial border!

*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](mailto:pouimette@turley.com) with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.*

**NEWS & FEATURES**

As a paper of record, we attempt to cover all general news, personality profiles, and community features that we know about. This includes all selectmen and school committee meetings as well as spot planning board, board of health, finance, and other town meetings determined by the issue's relevance to our readers. There are the annual major community event features that we should always cover, but we are more than open to suggestions of other features to celebrate the fabric of our communities and their many interesting occupants. Our loyal advertisers provide funding for this paid staff coverage.

For more information on news or community features for the Agawam Advertiser News, please email [aan@turley.com](mailto:aan@turley.com).



**CLUES ACROSS**

- 1. Bleated
- 6. Snake-like fish
- 9. Database management system
- 13. Russian-American violinist
- 14. Wendy's founder Thomas
- 15. Ancient Italian-Greek colony
- 16. Negatives
- 17. Rescued
- 18. Self-immolation by fire ritual
- 19. Assigns tasks to
- 21. Island nation native
- 22. Trade
- 23. Detergent brand
- 24. Famed NY Giant
- 25. Before
- 28. Split pulses
- 29. Extremely angry; highly incensed
- 31. Body part
- 33. American state
- 36. David \_\_, US playwright
- 38. Move one's head slightly
- 39. Secret rendezvous
- 41. Improved
- 44. A place to exercise
- 45. 18-year astronomical period
- 46. Automobile
- 48. You can take it
- 49. A radio band
- 51. Jaws of an animal
- 52. Short-billed rails
- 54. Chinese province
- 56. Shameless and undisguised
- 60. Horizontal passage into a mine
- 61. Adult males
- 62. Fail to entertain
- 63. Dried-up
- 64. City in north-central Utah
- 65. Southern U.S.
- 66. German river
- 67. Oxygen
- 68. Make law
- 1. Curved segment
- 2. Wings
- 3. From pentane (Chemistry)
- 4. Gradually gets into
- 5. Commercial document (abbr.)
- 6. Overhang
- 7. Christmas and New Year's have them
- 8. Type of bulb
- 9. Lacking a plan
- 10. Tattle
- 11. Rockers like it "heavy"
- 12. One who's been canonized
- 14. Indicate time and place
- 17. Nobel Prize winner in physics
- 20. The voice of Olaf
- 21. Fragmented rock
- 23. They \_\_
- 25. Master of Philosophy
- 26. Backside
- 27. Landmark house
- 29. An act of undue intimacy
- 30. From which a later word is derived
- 32. Equal to 10 meters
- 34. Neither
- 35. Computer language
- 37. Sacred book of Judaism
- 40. A woolen cap of Scottish origin
- 42. A way to dedicate
- 43. Challenges
- 47. British Air Aces
- 49. Large, influential bank
- 50. Portended
- 52. Cavalry-sword
- 53. Vaccine developer
- 55. Napoleonic Wars general
- 56. Italian Seaport
- 57. Hip joint
- 58. \_\_ Clapton, musician
- 59. Insect repellent
- 61. Decorative scarf
- 65. Delaware





Matt Largess leads a "Big Tree" walk at Robinson State Park Day in June.



Everyone gets up and moving, creating music in the air with scarves provided by Bob Bloom at an August performance.

FILE PHOTOS



Laurie Dimock, Development and Marketing Director for Hartsprings Foundation presented the Town of Agawam with a check in early February. The Town of Agawam and The Town of West Springfield participated in a friendly textile collection competition. The Town of Agawam is proud to announce that we were the winner of The Community Textile collection challenge. Agawam collected 12,172 pounds of cloth, thus keeping them out of landfills and repurposing these items.



Crowds of Agawam community members gathered to celebrate the renaming of Robinson Park School to William P. Sapelli School.



City Councilor Anthony Russo presents the Robotics team with a donation in late January.



Everyone participating in the run was throwing colors in the air as they prepared for the Color Run held at Agawam High School Sept. 16.



Fire Chief Alan Sirois and Mayor William Sapelli make a plaque presentation after the family of Dickie Fearn generously donated funds to the Agawam Fire Department for the purchase of equipment. In return, the town has placed a new plaque remembering the longtime fire mechanic. The ceremony was held in April.



The Roberta Doering School finalists for the "Patriot's Pen Writing Competition" held in January.



John (Greg) Kudlic of Kudlic Brothers Inc. and Craig Damon of Witch Enterprises are given citations by Mayor William Sapelli. The businesses assisted a family in need of assistance.



Representatives of the Veterans Council head to the war memorials to lay wreaths at this year's Veterans Day Ceremony held on Nov. 11.



The Class of 2023 takes their place at the commencement ceremony held on June 3.





Members of Clifford M. Granger Elementary School's fourth grade class sell lemonade to kick off the new school year.



Agawam High School teachers wore black on Thursdays to show support for a new contract. Teachers went many months without a contract into 2023. They did eventually settle on a new deal later in the year.

# BEST OF 2023



The Agawam High School band performs at the 2023 St. Patrick's Day Parade in Holyoke.

FILE PHOTOS



Pynchon Point is unfortunately the target of lots of trash left behind. Cleanups are held at least twice a year by the Westfield River Watershed Association. Volunteers in late May work down by the river to pick up trash left behind there.



The Agawam Rotary Club held their annual Harvest Festival at School Street Park on Saturday, Oct. 14 with lots of food, vendors, and activities for families.



AHS football plays against West Springfield at its annual Thanksgiving Day game on Nov. 23.



State Sen. John Velis and Mayor William P. Sapelli recognize the Colleen and court at a corned beef and cabbage dinner event on March 1 at Oak Ridge Golf Course. The 2023 Colleen is Hope Clark, and her court includes Abigail Perry, Margaret Johnston, Kayla Herlihy, and Rylee Moreau.



# SPORTS

## Agawam beats Chicopee, but falls in finals

HOLYOKE – Last week, the Agawam High School hockey team participated in the Chicopee Holiday Classic. The games in the mini-tournament were held at Fitzpatrick Rink in Holyoke and Agawam defeated host Chicopee in the semifinals last Wednesday night, then lost to Gardner in the finals the fol-

lowing night. Agawam defeated Chicopee 5-0 with five different players scoring goals and Frankie DiSanti picking up the shutout in net with 16 saves. Following a busy vacation week, the 4-4 Brownies have a full week off before traveling to Pittsfield to face Taconic at 7:30 p.m. at the Pittsfield Boys & Girls Club.



Peyton Buffum sails the puck up the ice.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM



Angelo Robbins makes his way up the ice.



Drew Scherban dekes with the puck.



Thomas Connery heads up the right side.



Brett Eggleston breaks away from an opponent.

## Brownies take home tournament

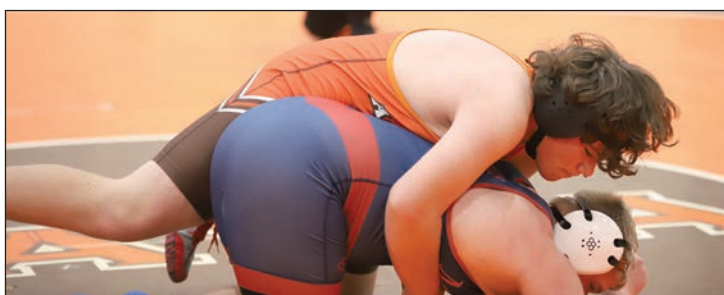
AGAWAM – The Agawam High School wrestling team had its fingerprints all over its Phil Tomkiel Holiday Tournament. As a team, Agawam took the crown with an impressive 274.5 points. Natick placed second with 234 points. Agawam also had a B squad that placed eighth. Also competing was Chicopee, which placed

ninth with 68 points, South Hadley (12th) with 56 points, Holyoke (13th) with 53 points, and Quabbin Regional (14th) with 46 points. Agawam also placed a “B” squad in the meet, and their squad came in eighth with 79.5 points. Agawam would crown three individual champions and five runner-ups. Holyoke had an individual cham-

pion as well. Holyoke’s Steven Santiago was a champion at 113 pounds, while Agawam was led by Jordin Agosto (120), Nicholas Ugolini (132), and Ilya Shlemanov (150) led Agawam. There was also a girls tournament that several teams sent competitors to. Agawam placed seventh in that tournament with 39 points.



Chase Rising starts his match during the opening round.



Jack Levesque gets the tackle in his match.



Dominic Tourigny tries to grab his opponent in a heavyweight match.



Tyler Grevais locks up in an early round match.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

### Brownies take care of East Longmeadow

AGAWAM – Last Friday night, Agawam High School boys basketball defeated visiting East Longmeadow 71-55. The Brownies would score 25 points in the second quarter to take a commanding lead at halftime. Up 38-16, Agawam had no trouble holding on for the win. Colin Smith had 30 points for the Brownies, including four 3-pointers. Coach Tim Sheehan also recognized Elijah Maldonado for his eight points, eight assists, five rebounds, and four steals in the game. Agawam is now 3-2 on the season heading into 2024. The Brownies resume action on Jan. 5 against Wahconah Regional at home at 7 p.m. They face West Springfield on the road Monday, Jan. 8 at 7 p.m.



# Sports

## New modifieds event announced for early February

AUBURNDALE – After discussion with race teams, competitors and fans, Showdown Series officials have decided to update the schedule for the upcoming events at Auburndale Speedway in February during Speedweeks. With the new adjustments, the 602 Modifieds and Tour-Type Modifieds will compete in racing action at Auburndale on Thursday, Feb. 8 and Friday, Feb. 9 only.

The Tour-Type Modifieds will run two feature races - one Thursday and one Friday. Tour Modified events pay \$2,000 to win, \$1,000 for second and \$750 for third. The 602 Modified division will pay \$500 for the winner of each race, \$350 for second and \$300 for third. The 602 division will run double-feature events on Thursday and one on Friday. The 602 Modified features will be 30 laps and the Tour-Type Modifieds 50 laps.

“We’re getting more and more phone calls and momentum is building surrounding these Modified races and we wanted to do everything possible to avoid conflicts with the New Smyrna Speedway Modified events,” Brad Hockaday, owner of Professional Motorsports Solutions, said. “Seeing Modifieds on Auburndale Speedway is going to be something special that fans and competitors are not going to want to miss. Extending Speedweeks a few days earlier is a great opportunity for everyone to enjoy some more time in the sunshine state.”

For the 602 Modified division, unlike some other events, there is no age limit on the races. Teams are asked to be responsible with their drivers age and experience level to compete in this event. No NASCAR licenses are required for either division.

New Smyrna Speedway has also adjust-

ed the times for their parking times for Modified teams. No Modified teams (excluding the Whelen Modified Tour) will be able to park until early on Sunday morning. This means that teams can compete in the Auburndale Speedway events and have plenty of time to make it across the state, which is just over a two-hour ride. The Tour-Type Modifieds have been adjusted to go out early in the schedule for Friday and will be able to exit the track by approximately 9 p.m. The 602 Modifieds will race earlier in the night.

The tire rule for the event is posted online. The rule will be six race tires for the 602 Modifieds with the F45 by Hoosier, and eight race tires for the Tour-Type Modifieds running the M20 & M30. Practice tires allotment is unlimited for the event, but teams need to let the management know in order for Hoosier to have a

proper amount on site for the event.

Race teams with questions about the event are encouraged to email [wntshowdown@gmail.com](mailto:wntshowdown@gmail.com). There are practice nights available on Tuesday and Wednesday. Each night has a session from 4-7 p.m. and another from 7-10 p.m. Each session is \$50 per car running.

Teams are also encouraged to register as soon as possible so the promoters can prepare for the race. For more information on the Showdown Series events at Auburndale Speedway, everyone is encouraged to visit <https://linktr.ee/series-showdown>. There, you can find the event tickets, registration forms, event schedule, event flyers, technical rules, general information and more. Auburndale Speedway will see the rumble and roar of Modifieds in February for the first time in the history of the Florida oval.

## Worcester Railers edged in one-goal loss to Reading Royals

READING, PA – The Worcester Railers HC (12-11-3-2, 29pts) lost in a close one against the Reading Royals (11-13-1-1, 23pts), on Saturday night, Dec. 30 by the final score of 4-3 in front of 3,233 fans at the Santander Arena.

The game started right where they left off last night: physical. The Royals would do most of the heavy lifting in this department as they committed their 8th and 9th penalty of the weekend with a tripping minor penalty by Royals Forward Kenny Johnson (0-0-0) and a bench minor by Forward Tag Bertuzzi (1-0-1) committed while he was on the bench. The Railers offense would make them pay on the Bertuzzi minor penalty. Joey Cipollone entered the offensive zone with the puck in the middle of the ice where he found Zach White open on the right wing of their offensive zone. White quickly sent a cross-ice pass to an open Daylan Kuefler on the left side dot and sniped it past Royals goaltender Parker Gahagen's blocker side. Bertuzzi came back the other way three minutes later for Reading and tied the game 1-1 going into the second period. The Railers led the period in shots on goal 13-11.

The Railers struggled to find many scoring chances in the second but relied

on their defense and goaltending to get them through the period and deny the Royals from scoring. The Railers were disciplined and managed spacing well throughout the period until they would get a power play opportunity late in the second period. Towards the end of the power play, Copeland drove the puck past Gahagen in front for the Royals to put Worcester back ahead, 2-1. The Royals answered back not much later with a power play goal by Forward Shane Sellar to beat Fulcher and tie it 2-2. The Royals led shots on goal in the period, 12-5.

Reading grabbed their first lead of the night when Matt Brown shot one blocker side to beat Fulcher and make it a 3-2 game. Late in the third, the Railers got another power play and did a great job keeping the puck in the zone and battling down low. Jenkins quickly fired the puck past Gahagen's low blocker side to tie the game up once again. Both sides would get chances on the net but nothing came out of it in the box score where this game would head into overtime. The Railers led the period in shots on goal, 14-13.

In overtime, the Royals worked their way down ice in a 2-on-1 3:18 into the frame with Brown and Bertuzzi to score and give the Royals the 4-3 win at home.

## T-Birds fall hard against Bruins

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds (16-10-3-1) had few answers for a confident opposing attack, falling 8-2 to the Providence Bruins (17-12-2-2) on Saturday night in front of a sold-out MassMutual Center crowd of 6,793.

The Bruins were opportunistic off a self-inflicted T-Birds mistake to jump to a 1-0 lead at 3:44 of the opening period. Will Bitten directed a pass back toward the Springfield bench, where a pair of defenders were in the process of a line change. Out of the confusion, Anthony Richard jumped on the loose puck and quickly snapped a wrister through Vadim Zherenko to give Providence the game's opening goal.

Rookie Bruins blueliner Ethan Ritchie would add his first career AHL goal just 60 seconds later, jumping up into a 3-on-2 rush and ripping a shot through Zherenko at 4:44 off a drop pass from Jesper Boqvist. Providence also made life difficult on the T-Birds' offense, as the Springfield attack mustered only five shots in the opening 20 minutes.

After going unsuccessful on a power play early in the second, the T-Birds saw a familiar bout of adversity when Justin Brazeau whipped a turnaround wrister through Zherenko at 6:21 to make it 3-0 for Providence.

The T-Birds gave the sellout crowd a glimpse of another comeback bid when

Jakub Vrana extended his point streak to four games with a beautiful wrist shot under the crossbar behind Brandon Bussi, cutting the lead to 3-1 just 18 seconds after the Brazeau goal.

The two-goal deficit proved only temporary, though, as Jesper Boqvist scored on the front end of a four-minute power play, one of his three points on the night, at 8:40 to make it 4-1.

Zach Bolduc had the opportunity to give the T-Birds another jolt when he was awarded a penalty shot with Springfield down a man at the 10:46 mark. However, Bussi had the answer with the leg pad, shutting the rookie's bid down and keeping Providence ahead by three.

The Bruins rewarded their goalie in kind with back-to-back power-play goals from John Farinacci at 11:31 and Trevor Kuntar at 15:11, upping the margin to 6-1 before Bitten finally got Springfield on the board again with a power-play tip-in at 19:27 of period two.

Patrick Brown would add to the Providence lead with a rush up the left side at 7:17 of the third, and Jayson Megna capped off the scoring by netting the first shorthanded goal against Springfield all season at 18:00.

The T-Birds finish up the homestand as they begin a 3-in-3 weekend against the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins on Friday at 7:05 p.m. at the MassMutual Center.

## Penguin Plunge to be held at Hampton Ponds State Park Jan. 27

WESTFIELD – Amelia Park Children's Museum is announcing the 20th annual Penguin Plunge to be held at Hampton Ponds State Park, on Saturday, Jan. 27, 2024. Check-in begins at 11:30 a.m. and the plunging starts at 1 p.m. All proceeds from the Penguin Plunge will benefit Amelia Park Children's Museum.

Amelia Park Children's Museum and the Penguin Plunge have been a longstanding institution and tradition respectively in Westfield. Through the years participants and sponsors of the Plunge have helped to raise over \$350,000 to support Amelia Park Children's Museum.

“We are striving to attract more plungers to this event,” says Diane Chambers, executive director. “It’s a fun outing for the whole family or a group of friends whether they are plunging or watching. We’re adding new activities and entertainment, plus incentives to entice more plunge participants in 2024.”

New this year is the Petite Plunge for children ages 2 - 6. Little ones will have the opportunity to dip their toe or boot into a kiddie pool. Fun games like cornhole and a “snowball” toss will be added to the activities. S'mores and other refreshments will be available. Lively musical entertainment will be provided by Jay Pagluica of JP Lighting and Sounds.

Join as an individual or as a team. Each participant pledges to raise a minimum of \$75 from friends and family and is encouraged to collect as many sponsors as possible. Full time students will receive a registration discount of \$25 with valid school ID and pledge to raise at least \$50. The registration fee for the Petite Plunge participants is \$25.

The following prizes will awarded dependent on amount of money raised per individual:

Penguin Plunge 2024 T-shirt to those

adults that raise \$75 - \$149 (\* \$25 for those 2 -6, \$50 for those 7 - 18); Penguin Plunge 2024 hat and T-shirt for those that raise \$150 - \$299; Penguin Plunge 2024 drinkware, hat and T-shirt for those that raise \$300 - \$499; Penguin Plunge 2024 jacket, drinkware, hat and T-shirt for those that raise \$500 or more; Monetary prizes of cash for the top 3 individuals or teams that raise the most money; 1st Place - \$300, 2nd Place - \$200, 3rd Place - \$100.

A costume contest is part of the fun, and there are prizes for Best Individual Costume and Best Team Costume.

Register in advance online or the day of the event from 11:30 am to noon. All participants will receive a free 2024 Penguin Plunge T-shirt.

Sponsorship opportunities, registration and pledge forms are available via the museum website <https://www.ameliaparkmuseum.org/penguin-plunge> or can be picked up at the museum. Penguins may also use the Fundly page to collect sponsors; <https://fundly.com/penguin-plunge-2024>.

The money raised by the Plunge goes to providing playful learning for area children and their families. This event is crucial in supporting the work of Amelia Park Children's Museum

Amelia Park Children's Museum is located at 29 South Broad St. and is open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday-Tuesday. The museum offers hands-on learning for children ages 1-7 in a safe and welcoming environment. Cost of admission is \$8 per person; grandparents have a reduced rate of \$4. Admission is \$2 per person on Thursday afternoons from noon 4 p.m. Call us with questions at (413) 572-4014 or email questions to: [fun@ameliaparkmuseum.org](mailto:fun@ameliaparkmuseum.org). Learn more about the museum at [www.ameliaparkmuseum.org](http://www.ameliaparkmuseum.org).



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**JOHNSON** ■ from page 1

town throughout his process of preparing to take the mayoral position.

“Superintendent Hoffman has been great in providing information and Mayor Sapelli has been outstanding,” Johnson said. “I spent a lot of time with him getting up to speed on the personnel and human resource issues that are going on.”

Once Johnson has settled into the office and has gotten fully up to speed on the different projects and issues within the town, he plans to focus on the budget for FY24 and the Agawam High School Project.

“The thing that’s going to take the main focus for 2024 is the high school project,” he said.

Johnson really hopes to push this project through during his term as mayor. He is aware of how expensive it will be for the town, but he feels it will be key for Agawam, especially for children in the school system.

“We need to make that investment,” he said. “It’s been 50 years since we built our last school. The high school was built over 70 years ago, so we need to make the investment.”

Additionally, they have already secured MSBA approval and, preliminary, the state claims it will put in \$100 million to the project.

“It would be foolish, in my opinion, to abandon it and lose the state funding,” he said.

Johnson also hopes to focus on continuing the collaborative environment that Sapelli has created throughout his term as mayor.

“Mayor Sapelli has brought a real collaborative spirit to working with the council and he’s the chair of the school committee,” Johnson said. “I want to continue that

collaborative effort.”

He knows there will be issues that people disagree on, but he hopes that they can still find common ground and continue forward, as they have been working to do over the last six years with Sapelli as mayor.

“I’ve learned a lot working with Bill as council president, so collaboration is key to me,” Johnson said.

He hopes to foster this environment through small group meetings.

According to Johnson, over the past several years if the council had a productive agenda review process and when a difficulty did arise, he and Sapelli would meet with smaller groups or talk to individuals to try to find a compromise.

“I want to keep that same mindset of trying to get everybody on board with every issue,” Johnson said. “When you do that, people will say, ‘hey I think that’s good, but I think this is better’ and so trying to get all those ideas in that melting pot to come up with the best solution.”

Johnson looks forward to being able to implement these ideas throughout his term as mayor.

He is grateful to all in Agawam who voted for him to be elected as mayor once again.

“I am honored to be Agawam’s next mayor,” he said.

He left the mayor’s office 24 years ago, and since then has worked on the city council, the STCC Board of Trustees, the Mass Housing Finance Agency Board and been involved in many community groups.

According to Johnson, all of these experiences have only enhanced his leadership skills, so he hopes the people of Agawam see the growth as well.

“I’m honored that many years later they put their faith and trust in me again,” Johnson said.

**BORGATTI** ■ from page 1

and his father opened it in 1986 and running it since his father handed it over to him in 1994.

The restaurant has a give back program called Give Back Wednesdays, through which they have given back over \$120,000 to the community since 2011.

Through the restaurant Borgatti claims he has gotten to know many people in Agawam, which is part of what inspired him to want to serve on the council.

“You get attached to the town and the people,” he explained. “It makes for a really great opportunity to do more. So, I’m excited, I really am.”

Borgatti truly loves the community and hopes to be able to serve them through his position on the council.

He plans to be a “watchdog” on the council when it comes to taxes and business thanks to his own experience.

He also hopes his experience running EB’s Restaurant will assist him in planning items out on the council. At his business he has to watch his finances and plan properly and he hopes to apply that mindset to the town.

“When you run a business you have to plan and manage properly,” he said. “At my business I’m already looking into the next promotions, the next thing, when you relate that to the town you have to plan and manage properly, you can’t have crisis to crisis management.”

Additionally, he hopes to be able to continue the collaborative working environment that the council has fostered over recent years. He feels that Mayor William Sapelli built a good relationship within the council, and wants to improve upon it.

“Everyone needs to get along,” he said. “We need to really work together as a council, which I think Mayor Sapelli has created

that culture because we didn’t always have that in Agawam. He’s been amazing...we’re really in a good place right now and I think I can help maintain that.”

Additionally, he hopes to encourage transparency between the town and the council. He is aware it can be difficult to foster communication and he hopes to be able to improve upon it during his term.

“I want to try to figure out a way to encourage people to get involved,” he said. “If you have an issue you care about, go to the council and speak.”

On top of working on these aspects of the council environment, Borgatti also has plans for what he hopes to focus on in his voting and proposals.

Borgatti wants to support the high school project and the other ongoing construction projects in Agawam, such as the police station and the Tuckahoe Turf Park.

Additionally, he hopes to look into sidewalks and improving public safety.

“Education and safety is what brings people to a town,” Borgatti said. “People will come to town and want to live here and raise a family here and that’s what you need.”

Businesses will also be a large portion of his focus, thanks to his own experience running a business in town.

To try and prepare for taking up his seat on the council, Borgatti has been listening and attending recent council meetings. He also attended the new councilor orientation, along with his fellow newly elected councilors.

Throughout his preparations he has felt very welcomed by the council and the town.

“The town was really very supportive,” he said. “I’m looking forward to holding up to that expectation.”

Borgatti’s term will officially start on Jan. 2, when he is sworn into the council along with his fellow newly elected councilors.

# Public Notices

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Hampden Probate and Family Court  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
(413)748-7758  
Docket No. HD23P2271EA  
Estate of:  
Rita G Moore  
Date of Death: 12/19/2020  
CITATION ON  
PETITION FOR  
FORMAL  
ADJUDICATION**  
To all interested persons:  
A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Leslie J Moore, III of North Stonington, CT and Judith A Moore of Springfield, MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.  
The Petitioner requests that: **Leslie J Moore, III of North Stonington, CT and Judith A Moore of Springfield, MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said

estate to serve **Without Surety** 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 01/23/2024**.  
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: December 22, 2023  
**Rosemary A. Saccomani**  
Register of Probate  
01/04/2024  
**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampden Division  
Docket No. HD23P0465EA  
Estate of:  
Donald Jacobs  
Date of Death:  
August 15, 2022  
INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE**  
To all persons interested in the above captioned estate,

by Petition of Petitioner **Erin Rand of Suffield, CT**.  
**Erin Rand of Suffield, CT** has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve **without** surety on the bond.  
The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.  
01/04/2024

01/04/2024  
**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampden Probate and Family Court  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
(413)748-7758  
Docket No. HD23A0154AD  
In the matter of:  
David Alejandro Garavito  
CITATION  
G.L. c. 210, §6**  
TO:  
any unnamed or unknown parent and persons interested in a petition for the adoption of said child and to the Department of Children and Families of said Commonwealth.  
A petition has been presented to said court by:  
**Darwin Gomez of Agawam, MA  
Clara Gomez of Agawam, MA**  
requesting for leave to adopt said child and that the name of the child be changed to  
**David Alejandro Gomez**  
**If you object to this**

**adoption you are entitled to the appointment of an attorney if you are an indigent person.**  
An indigent person is defined by SJC Rule 3.10. The definition includes but is not limited to persons receiving TAFDC, EACDC, poverty related veteran’s benefits, Medicaid, and SSI. The Court will determine if you are indigent. Contact an Assistant Judicial Case Manager or Adoption Clerk of the Court on or before the date listed below to obtain the necessary forms.  
**IF YOU DESIRE TO OBJECT THERETO, YOU OR YOUR ATTORNEY MUST FILE A WRITTEN APPEARANCE IN SAID COURT AT Springfield ON OR BEFORE TEN O’CLOCK IN THE MORNING (10:00 AM) ON: 01/16/2024.**  
WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.  
Date: December 22, 2023  
**Rosemary A. Saccomani**  
Register of Probate  
01/04/2024

*Agawam Advertiser News*  
**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](mailto:obits@turley.com).

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

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**visit [www.publicnotices.turley.com](http://www.publicnotices.turley.com)**





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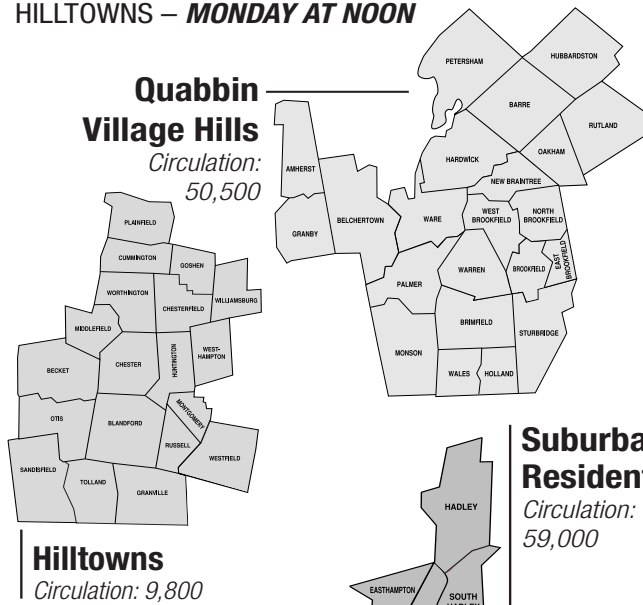
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# Food Bank of Western Mass debuts new facility

By Dalton Zbierski  
dzbierski@turley.com

CHICOPEE – Dec. 14, 2023 was a banner day for the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, as its newly constructed, state-of-the-art food distribution facility on Carew Street officially opened.

Food Bank employees showcased the 62,000 square-foot building during an evening ceremony attended by elected officials, donors, partners and invested residents from Chicopee and neighboring communities.

Since 1982, the Food Bank has been feeding neighbors in need in Berkshire, Hampden, Hampshire and Franklin Counties, and the strategically located warehouse and office space will allow the operation to further pursue its mission of ending hunger.

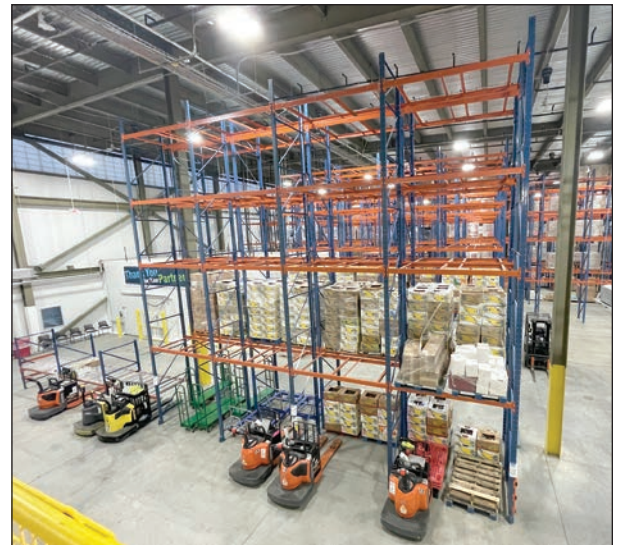
"It's at the crossroads of the major interstates of Western Massachusetts, so we selected this location because it

will really enable us to provide healthy food to anyone and everyone who needs it, when they need it, across all four counties in Western Massachusetts," Food Bank Executive Director Andrew Morehouse said.

The new structure is far larger than the food bank's previous home in Hatfield, enabling it to serve more people than ever. Last year, the Food Bank distributed the equivalent of 11 million meals to about 107,000 people monthly, and Morehouse expects the number to rise, as residents battle inflation and the end of federal pandemic benefits.

"So, they turn to the Food Bank and our 175 partners, the local, frontline food pantries, meal sites and shelters, to seek food assistance so they can carry on with their lives and get ahead in life," Morehouse said.

The Food Bank employs 64 people, but that number could rise as management capitalizes on the facility's "incredible" capacity. Morehouse said the staff is currently in a "learning mode," getting accustomed to the space and



The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts' new 62,000 square foot facility includes this state-of-the-art warehouse.

TURLEY PHOTO BY DALTON ZBIERSKI

repeatedly rearranging inventory to maximize efficiencies and food flow.

Statistics are already proving the larger warehouse to be more effective than the previous site.

"In the last three months, we've provided 25% more healthy food than the same period last year, and we're confident we'll be able to sustain that growth moving forward," Morehouse said.

Being able to serve the community better than before is fantastic, said Director of Programs Christine Maxwell. She described the building's teaching kitchen.

"We'll be using that for community programming, for food demonstrations and for cooking classes and nutrition workshops. We weren't able to do that in our old building, so we're excited about that," Maxwell said.

Director of Development Jillian Morgan said moving into a facility that allows the Food Bank to serve its communities at a higher clip is significant. She said the staff is dedicated to making sure food is delivered to as many people as possible who are facing food insecurity, and the larger warehouse pays dividends.

"This was a really important move for the food bank to be able to increase our capacity and efficiency," she said. "We already have distributed more food in this building, so we know that it's going to serve us for decades to come until we end hunger."

Farm Manager Lee Gadway estimated that the new warehouse can store twice as much food as the old one. He said even the parking lot is twice the size.

"This is amazing," Gadway said. "Just being able to warehouse this much food and being able to think of it as a hub and spoke system on a bicycle. Everything's brought in on the spokes to the hub, and then we deliver it back out."

Gadway said the larger space makes the operation more efficient, as the Food Bank delivers food to places that smaller farms are unable to reach.

Morehouse said people are blown away when they enter the building and see its size and magnitude. He said the Food Bank looks to leverage the power of community to create a hunger free Western Massachusetts.

"The way we're going to do that is by talking to one another and cooking up new ideas, so this new facility and food distribution center has a lot of space for us to invite community groups in, whether they want to volunteer or just collaborate and plan how we can work better together to get more done," Morehouse said.

Morehouse pointed out that the dream could not have become a reality without the assistance of state and federal legislators. The Food Bank raised \$30 million to build its new home, and about half of the money came from state and federal government.

He also expressed gratitude for private donors, as 246 businesses and individuals invested in the food distribution center.

"We couldn't have done it without them, large and small," he said.

Morgan said she is humbled by the amount that was raised, noting that it displays the community's investment in addressing the underlying causes of hunger and making sure that the operation can help alleviate hunger in the community or get rid of it entirely.

"(The \$30 million raised) is a real testament to how much people in this area care about addressing the needs of people who are facing hunger," she said.

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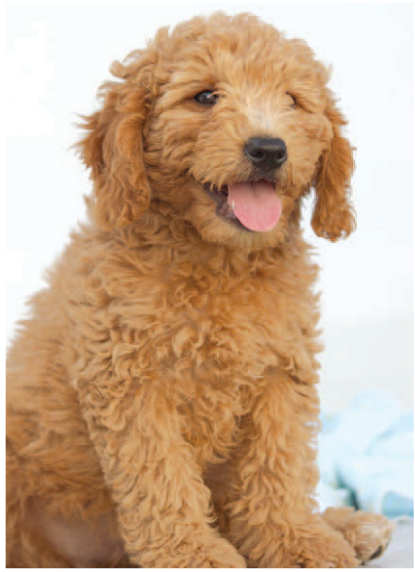
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