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AGAWAM

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Sandlin chosen as new council president

Second-term Councilor Anthony Russo selected as vice president

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer



Rosemary Sandlin

AGAWAM – City Councilors Rosemary Sandlin and Anthony Russo were chosen to be City Council President and Vice President respectively.

Sandlin and Former Vice President Dino Mercadante were both nominated for the position.



Anthony Russo

Sandlin won the initial vote 6-5.

Following the vote Mercadante made a motion to move the vote to general consensus, making the official vote then 11-0 for Sandlin.

“I just want to say thank you for my fellow councilor’s confidence in me,” Sandlin said. “I will try to earn that over the course of the next year.”

Sandlin has been the chair of many committees throughout her time as a city councilor, and she feels this

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Elected officials sworn into office for new term

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – Mayor Christopher Johnson was sworn into office along with members of the city council and the school committee in a ceremony on Jan. 2.

Johnson took the time after his swearing-in to thank everyone who had helped him to get to where he is today. He focused especially on his wife and all that she has done for him.

“I wanted to extend special thanks to my wife,” Johnson said. “Without her, I’m not here.”

Johnson also gave his hopes for what the next few years of government will look like. He wants to ensure the cooperation

and collaborative environment cultivated by Former Mayor William Sapelli stays.

“I hope that we can all work together, the same way that we worked together with my predecessor,” Johnson said. “I know I have incredibly large shoes to fill, Bill did a fantastic job as mayor, I hope to do half as good a job as he did.”

He also reminded all present that his door is always open for people to come and see him, whether they have questions or just want to say hello.

“I want to work together to make Agawam the best place in the Pioneer valley to live, work

CEREMONY | page 8



Mayor Christopher Johnson thanked everyone who helped him to get to where he is today in his speech following his swearing-in.

TURLEY PHOTO BY QUINN SUOMALA

DPW tackles first major snowstorm of the winter season

There is plenty of room for more snow plow contractors

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – Agawam and surrounding areas were hit by a winter storm on Jan. 7, giving Agawam nearly a foot of snow.

During this storm, plowing crews were at work for more than 24 hours to treat and clean the roads, according to Department of Public Works Superintendent Mario Mazza.

“I think it was a full 24 hours if not more fighting that storm,” Mazza said.

Mazza felt that overall crews did well in staying on top of the storm.

“I think we did great,” he said. While he acknowledges that some areas did still have some snow on the roads as of the morning of Jan. 8, the majority of the roads were completely clean.

“It’s not that different from

other cities and towns that I’ve been through,” Mazza said. “So I think we’re as good or better than them.”

This was the first large snow storm of the year, and one of the largest in recent years.

“I usually like to start the season off with a three or four inch storm,” Mazza said. “There’s always bugs to work out in a storm, no matter the size, but obviously the bigger the storm the more complicated it gets.”

Following the storm, Mazza and the workers will meet in order to discuss the successes and challenges of the storm.

They will go over any complaints or issues brought up by residents as well as any difficulties workers encountered while plowing.

Oftentimes the “bugs” include piling snow in places that are inconvenient for residents, roads not being cleared off to people’s liking or issues with on street parking.

Mazza took the time to thank the police department for their

support during this storm in helping with any issues with on street parking or the parking ban.

“[The police] are great, anytime that we found an issue we called them and they assisted with it,” Mazza said.

Overall, the goal of this meeting is to figure out how to fix any issues encountered during the storm and to prepare for the next one.

“It’s about being proactive for the next storm and reaching out to the root supervisors and those plow operators...and making them aware of things that need to be changed for the next storm,” Mazza said.

Mazza is still looking out for more plow contractors. While he felt the crew he has currently did well with the storm, they could always use more support.

“The more you have, the lighter the load,” he said. “It would have been better to have a few more, it would ease some of the time that we ended up having to work. In-

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A large snowblower is operated by a member of the Agawam DPW works on the sidewalks of Springfield St. following the first major snowstorm of the season.

TURLEY PHOTO BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



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Materials delay keeps culvert area closed

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – The North Street Culvert Project is delayed by six weeks due to difficulties with material delivery.

A key material for the project, foamed glass, has been undeliverable due to the recent weather as well as manufacturing difficulties.

Foamed glass is a lightweight aggregate material that acts as an insulation and protection in construction.

“The best way I can describe it is when you get packages and there are foam peanuts inside of it,” Department of Public Works Superintendent Mario Mazza said. “They filled up all that space around the package to protect it. It’s the construction version of that.”

This material is necessary to move forward with the project, and it is only manufactured in a few places on the east coast

including Vermont, Pennsylvania and Canada.

Northern Construction, the company hired for this project, contracted with the plant in Vermont as it was the closest and cheapest option.

Unfortunately, this plant ran into manufacturing issues, which pushed back the material delivery.

The recent snow storm also created additional difficulties with clearing around the project and with delivery.

“They wound up being delayed by about four weeks with that material, and then the holidays hit and now a snow storm,” Mazza said. “So all of these things pushed the project into a six week delay range.”

Due to this delay, Mazza said they explored potentially getting the material out of the other plants in Pennsylvania and Canada, but neither option would improve the delay.

“We explored getting it out of Pennsylva-

nia and Canada but neither of them could get it to us any quicker and it would cost us more money in transportation,” Mazza said.

The original timeline for this project was for it to be completed by the week before the week of Christmas.

Now Mazza anticipates that they will receive deliveries of the foamed glass starting this week and, if weather is agreeable, the project will be completed in the middle of February.

Should everything remain on schedule Mazza expects the construction team will start placing material on the culvert again on Jan. 11 or 12, thus allowing construction work to move forward.

However, this stage of completion does not include paving the road. While North Street will reopen, Mazza believes that the road will be gravel until the spring, when paving plants open once more.

Once spring comes, the road will have to close once more for paving.

“It may open but have to close again for a week or day by day as we’re doing the paving,” Mazza said.

The North Street Culvert project was focused on replacing the culvert, constructing an additional culvert, installing storm-water structures and improving the road and surface conditions of the area.

This project was initially started as the culvert was in danger of collapsing and the DPW wanted to address the issue before it worsened.

“If it were to collapse the overhead road would no longer be usable, and North Street is a pretty heavily traveled road,” Mazza had said in a previous interview. “The second part is that the water that passes through it would become damned, so it would back up and probably back up into other people’s properties.”

Thankfully, the DPW was able to address the project in time and all work should be complete in the spring.

Inaugural social for new mayor on Feb. 2

AGAWAM – Newly sworn-in Mayor Christopher Johnson will hold an inaugural social on Friday, Feb. 2 beginning at 5:30 p.m. at Oak Ridge Golf Course. The cost to attend is \$40 per person or \$75 per couple. There will be a DJ and dress is business casual. Social hour will begin at 5:30 p.m. followed by a buffet dinner at 6:30 p.m. For tickets, please contact chrisjlaw@comcast.net or call (413) 732-8356.



Christopher Johnson

Please Recycle This Newspaper

Smith House paranormal findings to be revealed

AGAWAM – It was an evening last October when members of Agawam Paranormal began arriving at a Feeding Hills farmhouse, soon to be joined by news anchor Chris Pisano and a film crew from Western Mass News.

Case after case of equipment was unloaded, and cameras and sensors set up in every room of the Agawam Historical Association’s 267-year-old Thomas Smith House. Working in total darkness, team members took readings and recorded their surroundings for the next several hours. It wasn’t until after 1 a.m. that Agawam Paranormal founder and lead investigator Rob Goff Sr. was satisfied all necessary information had been collected and the ok was given for everything to be packed up and the Smith House locked up for the night.

A brief segment of the investigation appeared on Western Mass News on Oct. 30, 2023, but a full assessment of data collected that night has not yet been made public.

That will change on Thursday, Jan. 18 at 6:30 p.m. at the Captain Charles Leonard House, 663 Main St., when the Agawam Historical Association invites the public to

attend its first meeting of the new year. Agawam Paranormal will present for the first time the full results of their investigation. Equipment used in the investigation will be displayed and their processes detailed. Findings will be explained and followed by a Q&A session. A raffle will also be held for a chance for two to accompany Agawam Paranormal on a future investigation at the Smith House.

The Thomas Smith House, built c. 1757, remains in largely original condition, without central heat or plumbing. No one has spent the night at the house in decades; the house has not been lived in since the 1960s. The property was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2005 and is a rare, unrestored example of 18th century architecture. The garage was built specifically for automobiles and connects the property’s agricultural origins to the Agawam’s suburban present.

An interactive virtual tour of the Thomas Smith House, created by photographer Fred Gore, can be found at <https://mls.kuu.la/share/collection/7Jq2q?fs=1&vr=1&initload=0&thumbs=1>, and offers basement to attic access.



Annual flu vaccinations available

AGAWAM – The Agawam Health Department held their annual flu clinic at the Senior Center on Thursday, Oct. 19. The Public Health Nurse is pleased to announce we have some remaining High Dose Flu Vaccine still available for senior residents over 65 years of age. Interested residents may call the Agawam Health Department to schedule an appointment. A very small supply of flu vaccine for those less than 65 years of age is also available. To schedule an appointment please call 413-726-9722 and department hours are Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

FREE FLY TYING CLASSES

Sponsored by the Western Mass Fly Fishermen, the Ludlow Elks Lodge 2448 and Turley Publications are starting January 11th, 2024.

Held at the Ludlow Elks Lodge located at 69 Chapin St. Ludlow Mass.

Thursday nights for eight weeks from 7PM to 9PM.

The classes are open to the public with children 8 years and up accompanied by an adult.

Classes are geared to the beginner or novice.

Course materials and tools will be supplied.

Should you have your own tools, feel free to bring them.

No Registration is Necessary!

Should there be Bad weather please contact the Ludlow Elks after 4:00 PM for any cancelations at (413) 583-2448 or check our website <http://www.wmffclub.org>

Feline Friends announce upcoming 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, Carolyn 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.

Town of Agawam shares winter reminders

AGAWAM – The Town of Agawam would like to share some important winter maintenance information, including the placement of trash carts, keeping sidewalks clear, avoiding frozen pipes and keeping fire hydrants clear during the winter months.

In the event of a snow storm, residents are asked to wait until 7 a.m. of their scheduled collection day to roll carts to the tree belt. Residents are asked to remove carts from the tree belts as soon as possible. Please do not leave carts on the tree belt overnight during a snow storm.

The town is not responsible for any damage to carts left out during a snow event where services have been cancelled.

Any change in service due to a snow event will be announced on the town's news page of the web site, as well as through the town's "Code Red" community notification call. To join Code Red, visit the main page of the town website at www.agawam.ma.us

During heavy snowfall events, residents

are asked to park off the street to allow plows to clear as much of the roadway as possible.

Parking bans will be posted on the town's news page of the website, as well as on the local news stations via WWLP, Western Mass News, and the following radio stations; 94.7, 102.1 and 560AM.

Any vehicle parked in violation of a winter parking ban may be removed by the town, with all charges and expenses incurred at the expense of the vehicle owner.

Under the Town of Agawam ordinance 155-10, it is the responsibility of the adjacent property owner to keep sidewalks clear of snow and ice within 24 hours after snowfall ends or where ice has encumbered.

Cleared snow and ice shall not be pushed into streets or other public rights of way.

Report snow and ice obstructed sidewalks to Agawam Police Department 413-786-4767 or Department of Inspection Ser-

vices 413-821-0632.

Citizens are asked to be observant of fire hydrant locations to ensure that emergency access to those hydrants are maintained. The Water and Fire departments ask that a 2 to 3 foot circle around the hydrants be left clear of significant snow accumulations to provide clear emergency access.

To heat your home safely check smoke and carbon monoxide detectors regularly and never leave these devices without batteries. Have your heating system, water heater, and any other gas, oil, wood or coal-burning appliance serviced by a qualified technician every year. Do not use a generator, charcoal grill, camp stove, or other gasoline or charcoal burning devices inside your home, basement, or garage, or near a window. Generators should be located at least 20 feet from an occupied structure. Kerosene heaters are prohibited in Massachusetts. Keep fireplaces clean and well vented. Inspect home after heavy

snow fall and make sure snow is removed from around exhaust stacks, vents and fresh-air intakes. Use space heaters in accordance with manufacturer instructions and do not use extension cord not suitable for space heaters. Keep portable space heaters at least 3 feet from combustible material and turn them off when leaving or going to sleep.

To avoid frozen pipes drain water from all swimming pool and water sprinkler supply lines. Remove, drain and store hoses used outdoors. Add insulation to attics, basements and crawl spaces. Insulation will maintain higher temperatures in these areas. Weather strip doors and windows. Leave cabinet doors under sinks open, especially if they are located on exterior walls. Set thermostats no lower than 55 degrees, even if the house is unoccupied; If you are afraid a pipe will freeze, allow the faucet to drip slightly; Protect your water meter from freezing to avoid any maintenance or replacement charges.

New Year events at the Agawam 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 Clini 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 Clini 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 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.



Parks and Rec winter brochure now available

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.

SNOWSTORM | from page 1

stead of about 24 hours it maybe could have been 18.”

Having to work on the roads for about 24 hours straight is hard on the plowers, so Mazza would appreciate further support in the future.

If someone is interested in signing up to plow, they can reach out to the procurement office at town hall in order to receive the needed paperwork.

“We are still open to more contractors if there are folks out there that are late to sign up or interested in doing it,” he said.

As far as residents in the town, Mazza appreciates their patience and understanding while the crew is working on the roads. He asks that they do the same in future storms.

“I ask folks to be patient with us in future storms,” he said. “Give the plows the space they need to do their work and if they can follow the parking ban that’s greatly appreciated and helps out.”

NOTICE

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Opinion

Guest Column



Will my friend's fiancée be entitled to a survivor benefit?

Dear Rusty

I have a very good friend who has cancer and will begin chemotherapy this week. He is 71 years old and is currently receiving Social Security benefits. He has been living with his fiancée for a little more than 2 years, but they have been a couple for about 15 years and will be married in the next few weeks. She is 60 years old.

I am naturally concerned about his and her future so my questions are:

What, if anything, should he and his wife do to ensure that she gets his Social Security benefits?

What benefits will she be entitled to and how soon will she be able to begin receiving them after his death?

Signed: A Friend with Questions

Dear Friend

You are kind to be concerned about your friend and his fiancée. Here's what you need to know:

Social Security goes by state rules when it comes to what is often referred to as "common law marriage." That means that whether your friend's fiancée will receive any benefits as a surviving spouse in a "common law" relationship depends on whether they live in a state, which recognizes common law marriage.

Most states do not, but state laws have changed over the years and many states which once recognized such unions as "marriage" no longer do. Although they may have "been a couple" for 15 years, if your friend and his fiancée have been living together for only two it is likely only the last two years will count for Social Security benefit purposes. So, whether your friend's fiancée will get anything when your friend dies depends on where they live, unless they get married, in which case the rules are different.

In order for a married widow(er) to receive surviving spouse benefits, the couple must have been married for at least nine months. If they marry and your friend lives longer than nine months thereafter, then his wife will be entitled to a surviving spouse benefit from her husband. The amount of his wife's benefit will be based upon the amount your friend is receiving at his death, adjusted for her age when she claims her surviving spouse benefit.

A surviving spouse can claim benefits from the deceased as early as age 60, but those benefits will be reduced for claiming before full retirement age (FRA). Taken at age 60, the wife's benefit would be 71.5% of your friend's SS benefit at his death. The wife need not claim the survivor benefit immediately; she could opt to delay claiming in order to get a higher percentage of the husband's amount. Survivor benefits reach maximum, 100% of the deceased's benefit amount, at the recipient's FRA.

So, if your friend and his fiancée now live in a state which currently recognizes common law marriage (Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Montana, New Hampshire, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Rhode Island or in the District of Columbia), then your friend's partner will be considered his "wife" and entitled to survivor benefits as normal (the fiancée would need to prove they cohabitate in a marriage-like relationship to claim benefits).



Guest Column

New questions for the New Year!



Jim, who gardens in Bridgewater, sent this question in to the Garden Lady.

"I liked your article on experimenting with holly seeds. I do some of my own propagating with trees and perennials, so the holly seeds thing was good. My question concerns being dioecious and at what point can one determine male or female? Is there some way to determine sex at an early stage or must I grow a dozen plants for years before I can wean out the males and keep the females? I have read that a single male will successfully pollinate all the females within a half mile radius so finding the females is my goal at the earliest possible stage of growth."

Sadly, the only way to figure out whether you have a male or female holly is by examining the flowers, so yes, that will require growing them on for some time; my research indicates about four to seven years.

The male flowers will have four petals and four stamens where you will see the pollen at the end. Female flowers look very similar except there is a green "bump" in the center of the petals - the ovary, where the berries will form from.

Garden centers usually propagate vegetatively from either male or female plants, so they are not playing the waiting game. Starting hollies from seed is still a fun experiment, time consuming nonetheless.

Dawn was worried that her amaryllis plant was dead. "My amaryllis was originally a Christ-

mas gift. I've enjoyed it for a few years now, but its leaves yellowed, then they withered and died. I'm worried that I killed it!"

As soon as I heard from Dawn, my thoughts went to my own amaryllis, still in my bedroom window despite the fact that its leaves are brown and have fallen around the outside of its pot. I haven't watered it since it started to "decline."

It has sat there in this sorry state for a few weeks now. Never fear, it's likely our bulbs have gone dormant.

This timing is a little off if you think about all of those boxed sets of amaryllis bulbs sitting on store shelves just in time for Christmas giving and planting. Bulb companies can "time" growth stages a little more reliably than we can.

After a month or two of dormancy watering can resume and with good fortune, blooms should reappear in 6-8 weeks. Some experts recommend putting the dormant bulbs in a cool, dark room to rest.

I often move dormant pots of bulbs to my mudroom where temperatures are in the 50s this time of year and when I see green tips on the bulb I bring it back into the living area of my house. Usually regrowth comes, but a flower sometimes doesn't.

In this case, the bulb is likely depleted of nutrients and without enough reserves left for rebloom. I would recommend watering with an all-purpose plant fertilizer during active growth.

Seed production also diminishes the plant's reserves, so be sure to deadhead the individual flowers as they go by, leaving the stem intact until it yellows. Hopefully these tips will give your amaryllis a few more good years of flowering.

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



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Opinion

Habitat breaks the mold: Offers affordable homeownership

By Brandice J. O'Brien

SPRINGFIELD – Yes, Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity builds houses. But, there's so much more to the nonprofit organization. Simply put, Greater Springfield Habitat offers the limited-income population of Hampden County an opportunity to create better lives and generational wealth for their families. GSHFH operates using a three-pronged approach as a construction company, social service agency, and mortgage provider. In fact, Greater Springfield Habitat's construction projects are built despite the rise of inflation, financial challenges, and changes in the local housing market.

GSHFH primarily constructs three- and four-bedroom single-family homes that measure approximately 1,500 square feet. GSHFH helps families purchase homes that they construct in partnership with the organization, by requiring sweat equity contribution in lieu of down payment from partner families and providing low-to-zero-interest mortgages and subsidies to purchase homes at below market rate. Greater Springfield Habitat mortgages are based on the family's income and set to not exceed 43% of their total household debt when combined with all financial obligations.

"GSHFH works with families that earn 45% to 60% of the area median income level. For a family of four, that's a household income of \$35,000 to \$59,000 per year," said Aimee Giroux, GSHFH executive director. "Traditional first-time home buyer programs require a minimum income of 80% or \$80,000 AMI and the family must have 3% to 10% down payment to qualify."

By comparison, Aimee said, imagine a family of four earning \$50,000 (50% AMI) is trying to secure a \$150,000 mortgage. They have a current debt of \$700 per month for a student loan, credit card and car loan. By partnering with GSHFH, they can afford up to a 2.5% interest loan. Their maximum payment with escrow would be \$993 per month with an overall debt to income of 40%. At the current 6.5% interest rate, their payment would be \$1,348 per month, and their debt to income would be 53%, which would make them ineligible for traditional funding.

Juan Gonzalez said just before he and his wife showed up to the January 2023 closing of his new home in Holyoke, he ran the numbers one last time to make sure the home was within their financial means. Looking over the math, he was worried. Unnecessarily so. Juan forgot the loan was interest-free. When he heard that he exhaled a big breath and said, "Disregard my math. Thank you, Lord. This home is more affordable."

"Habitat made the process easy and with a no-interest loan in this economy, we couldn't have asked for anything better," said Karina Dise, Habitat homeowner in Monson, who with her husband, purchased their home in November 2007. "We are blessed to own a house and have land that goes with it. We can enjoy the outside when the weather is nice and we don't have to hear our noisy neighbors who used to live right next door to us. My husband likes to grill outside too, so that's definitely a plus."

Greater Springfield Habitat realizes everyone deserves simple, decent, affordable



Juan Gonzalez and Ireydiza Perez's finished house



Juan, Ireydiza, two children.

PHOTOS SUBMITTED BY BRANDICE J. O'BRIEN

housing. Period. Habitat aims to close the racial wealth disparities by providing subsidies and affordable mortgages to help families break the cycle.

"We had debt, we cleaned it up and went to the bank to see if we qualified for a mortgage. We were told we didn't have enough money," said Lori Holt, who with her husband purchased a Springfield Habitat home in May 2014. "Our daughter told us about Habitat and encouraged us to apply. I didn't think we had a chance."

Eventually, Lori and her husband applied and were accepted. "It was such a blessing for us," Lori said. The couple has five children, four of whom are now adults. "We pay for mortgage what a lot of people pay for rent. Habitat helped our family a lot."

Kim Rivera, who experienced homelessness, on and off since her 18th birthday before owning a Habitat home, said she appreciates what Habitat has done for her. Kim purchased her home in December 2009.

"Habitat gave people like me the ability to get the American dream. I have stability. My children and grandchildren have a safe haven," Kim said. "I'm never selling this house. I'm going to keep it in the family. I want other generations to know they won't be homeless. I have three kids, and they've all seen the benefits of having a home."

Studies have shown children of limited-income homeowners are 11% more likely to graduate from high school and are 4.5% more likely to complete post-secondary education than children of low-income renters, Aimee said.

Since its inception in 1987, GSHFH has constructed 74 homes throughout Hampden County.

Habitat chooses partner families based on need, their willingness to partner with us, and their ability to repay a mortgage for the purchase of their home. In many instances, a family's current living situation is less than ideal with issues of rodents, limited electricity, no heat, and/or the apartment is in a dangerous location. For many families, gunfire, drugs and vandalism are frequent. Families who face these realities often have challenges breaking

the cycle for their children.

To ensure selected families understand the "hand up" versus a "hand out" ideology, prospective and have tools to manage the responsibility of homeownership, Habitat partner families must also attend first-time homebuyer education, financial literacy classes, good neighbor and home maintenance classes.

To keep the mission moving forward, GSHFH relies on donations. Most funding comes from individual donations, local businesses, and grants.

To learn more about Greater Springfield Habitat and its mission, visit habitat.springfield.org.



New homeowner Ireydiza accepts the keys to her new home.

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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Defensive nuclear weapon
- 4. Moved back and forth
- 9. One-time coach of the Cowboys
- 14. Last letter
- 15. Cause to become less intense
- 16. Genus of tree bugs
- 17. Body art
- 18. Romance novelist
- 20. Be filled with love for
- 22. City
- 23. Make vivid
- 24. Horses
- 28. Mauna __, Hawaiian volcano
- 29. Atomic #18
- 30. Shortly
- 31. A type of prejudice
- 33. Whirls
- 37. Six
- 38. Old world, new
- 39. __ Hess, oil company
- 41. Talk
- 42. Not off
- 43. Begets
- 44. Cars need them
- 46. Computing architecture (abbr.)
- 49. Of I
- 50. Journalist, activist
- 51. Takes apart
- 55. Lists
- 58. Positively charged electrode
- 59. Hard, colorless compound
- 60. Inflammation of the peritoneum
- 64. Trent Reznor's band
- 65. Simply dry fruit
- 66. "Ivanhoe" author
- 67. Google certification
- 68. French commune
- 69. Medieval circuit courts
- 70. Soviet Socialist Republic

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Indigenous people of Mexico
- 2. Dietary supplement
- 3. Having a particular sheen or luster
- 4. Views
- 5. Academic Bill of Rights
- 6. Automobile
- 7. When you anticipate arriving
- 8. Beef or chicken intestine
- 9. Conspiracy
- 10. Blood disorder
- 11. Long-time NBAer Shawn
- 12. Time zone
- 13. US, Latin America, Canada belong to
- 19. Upton Sinclair novel
- 21. What a cow does
- 24. Cavalry-sword
- 25. Ancient Greek war galley
- 26. Stars
- 27. Rebukes
- 31. Billion year periods
- 32. Some are in a bottle
- 34. Tears down
- 35. Lethal dose
- 36. Humorists
- 40. Midwestern US state (abbr.)
- 41. Frameworks
- 45. Rocker Billy
- 47. More thin
- 48. Dog
- 52. Habitual repetitions
- 53. State of fuss
- 54. Uneasy
- 56. Chemical compounds
- 57. More cognizant of reality
- 59. A place to build
- 60. Exclamation that denotes disgust
- 61. Supplement with difficulty
- 62. Very slick
- 63. Hill or rocky peak

SECURITY ■ from page 4

If they do not live in one of those states, but they get married and the marriage lasts for at least 9 months, then the wife will be entitled to normal benefits as a surviving spouse as described above.

But if the couple do not live in one of the above states which recognize "common law" relationships or if their soon-to-occur marriage doesn't last at least 9 months or if they do not get married, I'm afraid your friend's partner will not be entitled to any survivor benefits from your friend.

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

Baystate's Mobile Blood Donation Team is coming to Palmer

PALMER – The Baystate Health Blood Donation team will host a blood drives at Baystate Wing Hospital in 2024, beginning on Feb. 7, from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Additionally, Blood Drives will be held every other month on Wednesday throughout the year at Baystate Wing on April 10, June 5, Aug. 7, Oct. 9 and Dec. 11.

“There continues to be an urgent need for blood, when you donate blood to Baystate Health, your precious gift remains in our local communities,” said Nicole VanZandt, MLT III, supervisor, BRL Blood Donor Services. “Please help us to ensure a safe and adequate blood supply is available by donating blood with the Baystate Health Blood Donor Program.

“There is no substitute for human blood,” VanZandt said. “Blood donations take approximately one hour to complete, including the interview, donation, and refreshments. To donate blood, you must be at least 17 years old; weigh at least 110 pounds have a photo ID; be in good health (no colds, or sore throat); and have not donated blood within the past eight weeks.”

Blood drives will be held at Baystate Wing Hospital, 40 Wright St., Palmer, in Snow Conference Room C. In appreciation, all eligible donors will receive a \$10 Gift card.

For more information or to book an appointment to donate blood, please call the Blood Donor Center at 413-794-4600. Please be sure to note the Baystate Health hospital location you would like to make your donation at when you make your appointment.

Zonta Service Grants available for 2024

In keeping with Zonta's more-than-100-year tradition of improving the lives of women and girls, the Zonta Club of Quabog Valley is currently soliciting proposals from local non-profit organizations for projects that benefit women and/or youth. Since its inception in 1991, the Zonta Club of Quabog Valley has contributed over \$150 thousand in cash and in-kind donations to local non-profits.

The Zonta Service Grant Form application can be downloaded at www.zontaqv.org/service-grant/ or requested by contacting info@zontaqv.org. 2024 Grants ranging from \$100 to \$2000 will be awarded biannually, in May with a April 1 deadline and November with a Oct. 1 deadline. Proposals must include specific details of the project including the need that will be addressed with the funds. In reviewing completed applications the committee will give preference for a hands-on component that can

involve Zontians and supporters, if appropriate.

The club's efforts to raise funds for these grants included a Calendar Raffle, Golf Tournament and Poinsettia sales. Two-thirds of all profits are used to fund local initiatives; one-third goes to the Zonta Foundation for Women to fund global projects with partners including UNFPA, UNICEF USA, Girls Not Brides, Coalition to End Violence Against Women and Girls Globally and Women's Empowerment Principles.

2022-23 grant recipients included: Girl's Inc of the Valley received a grant to help build new programs at their new Holyoke location.

YWCA of Western MA received a grant to purchase gift cards for individuals in their network to purchase essentials.

Safe Passage of Northampton to off-set printing of a program booklet for Say Something - 8-hour skills-focused training

program grounded in effective strategies of bystander intervention and empowerment self-defense.

Food Share in Palmer in support of stocking personal hygiene products and other items in short supply for women and girls.

Second Time's a Charm in Palmer received a grant toward the purchase of different-sized gowns in short supply for teens in need.

Alianza DV Services, Inc. (formerly Womanshelter/Companeros) in support of a fall showing of the Clothesline Project, a visual display of violence statistics that often go ignored. Each shirt is made by a survivor of violence or by someone who has lost a loved one to violence.

Inquiries can be directed to the Zonta Club of Quabog Valley, Mary Knight the Communications Chair at info@zontaqv.org or 413-219-8260.

Friends of APL looking for new members

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 Photography 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.



Be aware of phony bank text messages

One of scammers' favorite tactics is impersonating a person or organization you know and trust. That's the premise of this new text message scam, which has been popping up in recent BBB Scam Tracker reports. This time, con artists are impersonating your bank.

You receive a text message that looks like a fraud alert from your bank. It claims there is some unusual activity in your account. It may read: "Bank Fraud Alert - Did you approve a transaction for \$1,000? Reply YES or NO." If you reply to the text, the scammer now knows they have an active number - and a person to scam.

The scam doesn't end there. The scammer will call you to follow up, and the number will appear in the caller ID as coming from your bank. When you answer, the caller claims to be a bank representative who can help stop the fraudulent charges. To do so, you need to send money to yourself using Zelle or another digital wallet app. The caller walks you through the process of connecting the app to your bank account. Then, they ask you to verify the connection by sharing the code your bank sent.

Don't do it! If you give the scammer your verification code, the scammer can set up an account with your phone number and email - but their bank account information. If that happens, when you send money to "yourself," you're actually sending money to the scammer. Disputing the charges will be difficult because the scammer has tricked you into approving the transaction. Sending money through a digital wallet app is like using cash, making it very hard to get your money back.

One consumer reported this experience to BBB Scam Tracker: "I received two texts stating it was the Wells Fargo Fraud Department wanting to know if I had made a Zelle transfer... I responded no and immediately got another text stating, 'Thank you, no further action is needed, a representative will call you from 800-869-3556.' Within a few minutes, I got a call from an individual stating they were with the Wells Fargo fraud department. The caller ID on my phone said Wells Fargo, and the person said they could reverse the transaction if I sign into my online account and open the Zelle app. I did

this and the caller asked if I saw my name. I told him I saw my name in two places. It looked like I would be sending money to myself. The caller said everything was fine and the money would come back to my account. After the call ended, I got two texts stating funds for \$2,500 and \$1,000 would be deposited in my Wells Fargo account. I went back into my account and there was no evidence of any deposits. What I did see was \$3,500 taken out of my account and a zero account balance."

How to avoid bank fraud scams

- Understand your bank's policies. Know that your bank will never ask you to send money to yourself. If someone tries to convince you otherwise, it's a scam.
 - Watch out for fake caller IDs. Scammers can spoof caller ID names and numbers to make you think you are receiving a call from a reputable source. If you weren't expecting to be contacted by your bank, it's best to avoid answering. Instead, call the number on the back of your ATM card to confirm that there is an issue.
 - Never share one-time passcodes. Scammers can use one-time passcodes from your bank or any other company to access your accounts and change information. Don't share them with anyone, no exceptions.
 - Contact your bank if you suspect a scam. If you receive an unsolicited call, text, or email that you suspect is a scam, contact your bank immediately and let them know.
 - Don't reply to suspicious texts. Ignore any instructions to reply yes or no if you receive an unsolicited, suspicious text message. If you reply to a scammer, they could save your number as "active" and target you with future scams.
- See the related BBB Scam Alert about phony banking texts and calls and review the BBB Tip on avoiding impostor scams.
- If you spot a scam, report it to BBB Scam Tracker. Your report can help others avoid falling victim to similar scams.
- Do you want more information about how to avoid getting scammed? Check out the Spot a Scam page and sign up to receive weekly scam alerts.

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Public Notices

AGAWAM HOUSING SEALED BIDS
 The AGAWAM HOUSING AUTHORITY, the Awarding Authority, invites sealed bids from Contractors for the Entry Improvements - Phase 1 Project at State Aided Development: Colonial Haven (667-2) in Agawam, Massachusetts, in accordance with the documents prepared by TIGHE & BOND.

The Project consists of but not limited to: Replacement of existing wood trim at building entries.

The work is estimated to cost \$65,000.00.

All bidding Requests for Information (RFIs) shall be submitted online by 01/22/2024 at 2:00PM EST for general bids.

Bids are subject to M.G.L. c.149 §44A-J & to minimum wage rates as required by M.G.L. c.149 §26 to 27H inclusive.

THIS PROJECT IS BEING ELECTRONICALLY BID AND HARD COPY BIDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Please review the instructions in the bid documents on how to register as an electronic bidder. All Bids shall be submitted online at biddocs.com and received no later than the date and time specified.

General Bids will be received until 25 January 2024 at 2:00PM EST and publicly opened online, forthwith.

General bids shall be accompanied by a bid deposit that is not less than five (5%) of the greatest possible bid amount (including all alternates) and made payable to the AGAWAM HOUSING AUTHORITY.

Bid Forms and Contract Documents will be available for review at biddocs.com (may be viewed and downloaded electronically at no

cost).
P R E - B I D CONFERENCE / SITE VISIT: Date and Time: 01/18/2024 at 2:00PM EST. Address: Colonial Haven Drive, Agawam, MA 01001
 The hard copy Contract Documents may be seen at: Nashoba Blue Inc., 433 Main Street, Hudson, MA, 01749. 978-568-1167
 01/11/2024

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 Docket No. HD15P2422PM
In the matter of: Peter Demas of Agawam, MA Protected Person/ Disabled Person/ Respondent
CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF CONSERVATOR'S ACCOUNT

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, you are hereby notified pursuant to Rule 72 of the Supplemental Rules of the Probate & Family Court, that the **First and Final** account(s) of Alison Bartlett-O'Donald of Holyoke, MA as Conservator of the property of said Respondent has or have been presented to the Court for allowance.

You have the right to object to the account(s). If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of **02/07/2024**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to object to the account(s). If you fail to file the written appearance and objection by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice

to you, including the allowance of the account(s).

Additionally, within thirty days after said return day (or within such other time as the Court upon motion may order), you must file a written affidavit of objections stating the specific facts and grounds upon which each objection is based and a copy shall be served upon the Conservator pursuant to Rule 3 of the Supplemental Rules of the Probate & Family Court.

You have the right to send to the Conservator, by registered or certified mail, a written request to receive a copy of the Petition and account(s) at no cost to you.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense.

Witness, Hon. **Barbara M. Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.

Date: December 26, 2023
Rosemary A. Saccomoni
 Register of Probate
 01/11/2024

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Division Docket No. HD23P2441EA
Estate of: Joseph John Mihalski
Date of Death: April 20, 2023
INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE
 To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Linda J Yelinek of Monson,**

MA a Will has been admitted to informal probate.

Linda J Yelinek of Monson, MA 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.
 01/11/2024

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Division Docket No. HD23P2515EA
Estate of: Stephanie W. Mossman Also Known As: Stephanie Wittnebel Mossman
Date of Death: October 15, 2023
INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE
 To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Thomas E. Bator of Boston, MA** a Will has been admitted to informal probate.
Thomas E. Bator of

Boston, MA 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.
 01/11/2024

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-7758 Docket No. HD23P2314EA
Estate of: John M O'Neil
Date of Death: 09/22/2020
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 **Donna M. Walen of South Chatham, 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: **Donna M. Walen of South Chatham, 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 01/22/2024.

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 19, 2023
Rosemary A. Saccomoni
 Register of Probate
 01/11/2024

COUNCIL ■ from page 1

experience has well prepared her to take up the position.

"I thought I'd do a good job with the new city councilors that were coming in," Sandlin said. "I thought I could bring a lot to the board. I can step into the large shoes that Chris Johnson left and try to create my own path."

As council president she wants to focus on collaboration within the council. Her first plan is to speak with all of the council members in order to get their input on what they would like to see the council do this year.

She wants to ensure that every member has a voice and their opinions are heard.

"It's a collaborative effort of all 11 of us, the president is a presiding officer but I really want the input of all of the committee," Sandlin said.

Sandlin also plans to work closely with Mayor Christopher Johnson throughout her term as president. Agawam has several big projects ahead, particularly the high school project, and Sandlin wants the process to run as smoothly as possible.

Particularly important to Sandlin is communication, between council members, the council and the mayor, and the council and the citizens of Agawam.

"We have to make sure the people in Agawam and the voters know exactly what they're voting for and how

it's going to affect them," Sandlin said.

Sandlin's fellow councilors were very supportive of her election to the position.

"Rosemary Sandlin is going to do a very, very good job as the council president," Russo said. "She's been involved in government for an extremely long time, she definitely has the experience, she has the knowledge, Agawam will be very lucky to have her up there and I look forward to learning from her."

Russo was the only person nominated for the vice president position, and so was elected unanimously. He was honored by the council's faith in his abilities.

"To know that my colleagues had the faith in me to feel that I could hit the ground running with that position and do a good job at it and give it justice, it felt very good," he said.

Russo made the decision to try for this position as he knew that Mercadante, the former vice president, would be running for president, thus leaving an opening.

He felt that with his experience and work ethic, he would be the right person for the job.

"I'm the kind of person that when I commit to something I try to give it my all and do all that I can to help move that forward," Russo said. "So I felt that in my position and my energy I would be able to give this a really good, strong attack at the job."

Russo also hopes to focus on con-

tinuing the cooperative environment the council has had over the past few years. He feels that this cooperation is key to getting work done in the town and ensuring that the government moves as efficiently as possible.

"We all worked very well together with the mayor, the council, the school committee," Russo said. "I want to do all I can to keep that working relationship going forward."

He hopes to help the new councilors get acclimated to their positions, and also looks forward to learning from them and their experiences.

"We all interact differently and we all bring something different to the table," he said.

Over the next year Russo, like Sandlin, hopes to make progress on the high school project. He also hopes to have a Charter review done for the town.

"Our Charter hasn't been visited in a very long time," he said. "We're pretty much operating on the same Charter as we were when we were a town manager government, so I'd like to see that get worked on."

He wants to ensure that he and his fellow councilors can do what is best for Agawam over the next two years. With many infrastructure projects and improvements on public safety in the works, Russo is ready to expand upon all the good Agawam has.

"Agawam is my home," Russo said. "And you're supposed to protect your home and do all that you can to make your home better."w

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.

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

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City Clerk Vince Gioscia administers the oath the new city council.



The new city council takes their oath of office at the swearing-in ceremony. TURLEY PHOTOS BY QUINN SUOMALA

CEREMONY ■ from page 1

and raise a family," he said.

New City Councilors Edward Borgatti, Maria Velego and Peter Smus officially joined the council during the ceremony. They joined the eight incumbents: George Bitzas, Thomas Hendrickson, Dino Mercadante, Robert Rossi, Anthony Russo, Rosemary Sandlin, Gerald Smith and Anthony Suffriti.

Catherine McDougal was also officially sworn-in as a member of the school committee. She joined incumbents Shelley Borgatti-Reed, Dawn Dematteo, Michael Perry, AJ Christopher and Wendy Rua.

All of the elected officials were sworn in by City Clerk Vince Gioscia. They were also led in prayer by Pastor Stephen Thee from Bethany Assembly of God Church.

This ceremony kicked-off the new year in Agawam, and all the officials look forward to seeing where this year will take them.



Pastor Stephen Thee from Bethany Assembly of God Church led the invocation at the swearing-in ceremony.

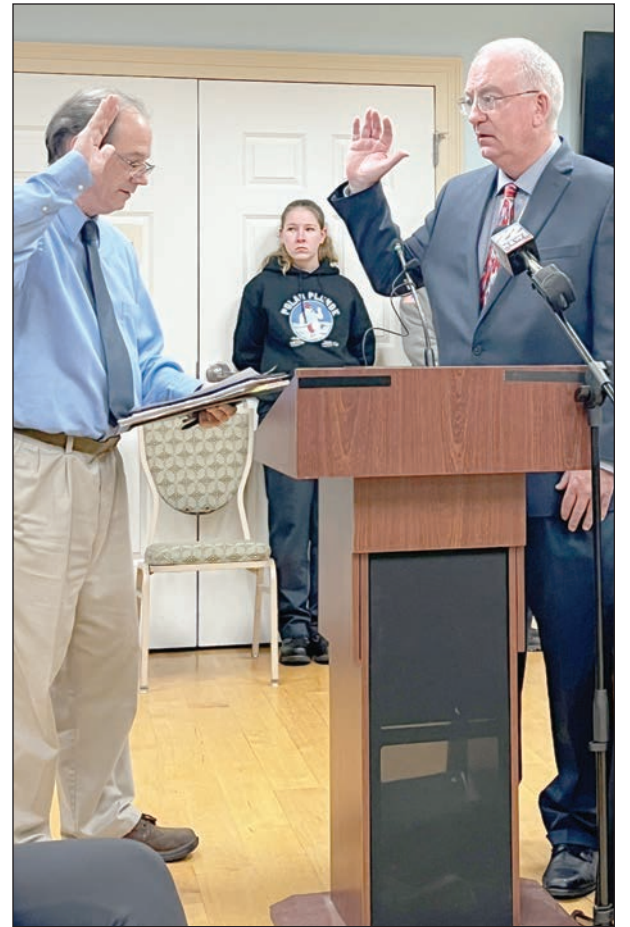


City Clerk Vince Gioscia led the swearing-in ceremony for Mayor Christopher Johnson, the school committee and the city council.



The school committee takes their oath of office.

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USDA INSP. FROZEN BONE-IN PORK LOIN CENTER CUT CHOPS	\$2.49 lb	USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF EYE ROUND	\$4.44 lb	USDA INSP. FRESH CHICKEN THIGH	99¢ lb
SLICED IN OUR DELI ROAST BEEF	\$7.99 lb	USDA INSP. GROUND FRESH DAILY 80% LEAN GROUND BEEF	\$3.66 7 LB BAG	USDA INSP. IQF FROZEN RAW SHRIMP 31/40 CT	\$8.88 ea
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USDA INSP. STORE MADE BBQ MARINATED BEEF BLADE STEAKS	\$6.99 lb	SAVINGS • SELECTION • SERVICE		We reserve the right to limit quantities.	
USDA INSP. FROZEN AMERICAN LAMB RIB CHOPS	\$9.99 lb	SALE DATES: 1/11/24-1/17/24		BUY DIRECT FOR	



Mayor Christopher Johnson is sworn in by City Clerk Vince Gioscia.

WILBRAHAM & MONSON ACADEMY

TITAN TALKS

Join us for coffee and conversation to learn more about WMA's programs and community.



MIDDLE SCHOOL (families interested in grades 6-8) Tue., Jan. 23, 9 - 10 a.m.	UPPER SCHOOL (families interested in grades 9-12, PG) Thu., Jan. 25, 8 - 9 a.m.
RSVP: www.wma.us/TitanTalks	



The Agawam Veterans Council post the colors at the swearing-in ceremony.

SPORTS



Colin Smith holds the ball up as he prepares to shoot.



Melih Tomak turns and looks for an open teammate as he keeps the ball away from the opposition.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Elijah Maldonado stops short of the hoop and looks to pass.



Gavin Cruz looks to get around a Commerce player and go to the hoop.

Brownies offense takes down Commerce

AGAWAM – Last Wednesday night, Agawam hosted a makeup game against Commerce High School. The Brownies offense was consistent and worked all evening in an 80-57 win.

Agawam was up by 20 points before halftime and coasted in the second half, maintaining its lead.

Elijah Maldonado had a huge night with 31 points. Colin Smith scored 20 points, and Melih Tomak added 12 points. Agawam is now 5-2 this season.

Find us online:
sports.turley.com



Peyton Buffum makes his way up the ice.



David Newsome looks to pass away from the boards.

Agawam hockey enters new year with even record

WEST SPRINGFIELD – In its final action before the calendar turned to 2024, Agawam High School hockey would fall in the finals of the Chicopee Holiday Tournament followed by a tough 5-2 loss against Amherst Regional, the second time Aga-

wam would lose to Amherst this season. Agawam has a 4-4 record and had 11 days off before resuming action on Jan. 10 at Taconic. The Brownies next face Southwick on Saturday, Jan. 13 at 3:20 p.m. at Amelia Park Arena in Westfield.



Drew Scherban tries to get around the opposing defense.



Angelo Robbins gets set to take a shot on goal.



Ryan Sexton gets ready to wrestle.



Rhein Ingham looks to lock up.

Brownies fall short in match with Falcons

WILBRAHAM – Last Thursday night, league rivals Agawam and Minnechaug wrestling gathered for a key meet.

Both teams, which boast large programs, were vying for the advantage with the tournaments just a month away.

The Falcons were able to get the win 43-27 thanks to some big wins in the meet.

Zeke Vargas scored a win at 106 over Agawam's James Cascio. Agawam's Nick Ugolini had a pinfall win for the Brownies in the meet.



Tyler Gervais tries to turn over his opponent for a pin.



Keymani Rivera goes low for a takedown attempt.



Lincoln Despard holds his ground looking to avoid a takedown.



Frankie DiSanti observes play after making a deflection.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGHOTOS.COM

TURLEY PHOTOS BY SOFIA DIGRANDE

Sports

HoopHall Classic to be broadcast nationwide

The Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame announced today the broadcast schedule for the 2024 Spalding HoopHall Classic, an annual basketball showcase now in its 22nd year. Games will be played at Blake Arena from January 11-15 at Springfield College, the Birthplace of Basketball.

ESPN is returning as a broadcast partner, with 10 matchups broadcast nationally across Sunday and Monday's schedules. Coverage starts on Sunday with LaLumiere School, KY, vs. Prolific Prep, CA, at 1:30 p.m. Two matchups will be broadcast on ESPN2, five on ESPNU, and three on ESPN+.

Saturday's slate of eight games, which will tip off with Bishop Hendricken High School (RI) vs. Gulliver Prep (FL) at 9 a.m. and conclude with Grayson High School (GA) vs. Perry High School (AZ) at 9 p.m. will stream on the NBA App, with the first four games and last four games simulcast to NBA TV and NBA YouTube, respectively. Additionally, content and highlights from Saturday's games will be featured on NBA Future Starts Now. This marks the first time that HoopHall Classic games and content will be featured on NBA platforms.

BallerTV continues as a broadcast partner for the event and will stream 14 games

throughout the weekend.

18 of ESPN's Top 25 High School basketball programs will be participating in the event: Montverde Academy (#1), Long Island Lutheran High School (#2), Paul VI High School (#3), Link Academy (#4), Christopher Columbus High School (#5), Prolific Prep (#7), Arizona Compass Prep (#8), Don Bosco Prep (#9), La Lumiere School (#11), Harvard-Westlake High School (#12), Brewster Academy (#13), IMG Academy (#14), Bishop O'Connell High School (#15), Gonzaga College High School (#16), Oak Hill Academy (#17), Archbishop Stepinac High School (#19),

Grayson High School (#24), and McEachern High School (#25).

Ten of the last 12 No. 1 overall picks in the NBA Draft have played at the HoopHall Classic. This year, HoopHall Classic will feature 43 players in ESPN's Top 100 from the Class of 2024, 18 from the Class of 2025 Top 60, and five from the Class of 2026 Top 25.

The tournament will feature four women's games this year. Eight of the Class of 2024's HoopGurlz WESPEN Top 100 recruits will be featured, five from the Class of 2025's Super 60, and two from the Class of 2026's Terrific 25.

Worcester Railers fall to Maine Mariners on the road

PORTLAND, ME – The skate was on the other foot here Sunday afternoon, much to the Railers' dismay.

After spending a lot of the first part of this season crafting miraculous comebacks, Worcester had it happen in reverse, losing to the Maine Mariners, 4-2.

The Railers squandered a 2-1 lead as they allowed two goals by Alex Kile in the game's closing minutes, then an empty-netter by Curtis Hall at 19:59.

Kile's goals were his 19th and 20th of the season. The tying goal came with Maine on a power play at 17:09 of the third period. The winner was a 5 on 5 shot through a screen from about 55 feet at 19:33. It came after a Railers' mistake, an errant pass that led to an icing call and a faceoff in their own end.

Joey Cipollone and Anthony Callin scored the Worcester goals. Owen Pederson had the first Maine goal.

John Muse stopped 25 of 28 Maine shots. Brad Arvanitis was excellent for the Mariners with 34 saves.

Worcester had a chance to put things out of reach earlier in the third period but could not capitalize on more than three straight minutes of power play time, much of it skating 5 on 3.

The first period was a real trip for the Railers, but in the worst way.

Referee Michael Zyla did not call a penalty and missed a blatant trip that took down a Worcester player and it cost the

Railers a goal. It happened at 11:12, or just before that, as Riley Piercey controlled the puck along the right wing boards in the Worcester zone.

As Piercey began to move out he was tripped. The puck wound up on Pederson's stick. He carried it into the slot and popped a high backhand past Muse.

Otherwise, Muse and Arvanitis were equal to the task to make 18 combined saves.

It took Worcester a while to tie the game but Cipollone finally did at 5:02 of the second period. He entered the Maine zone with Piercey on his right and one Maine defender between them. Cipollone took the puck in deep and his wrist shot broke through Arvanitis to make it 1-1.

Worcester made it 2-1 about seven minutes later on Callin's power play goal. He was set up by Blade Jenkins and zipped a 40-foot wrist shot just under the crossbar for the go ahead goal. The goal snapped an 11-game drought without one for Callin, although he had seven assists in that time.

Jenkins continued a very productive run of games with the assist. He is 2-9-11 in the last eight.

The Railers' next game is Friday night at the DCU Center, the first in a three-in-three versus the Norfolk Admirals. Worcester and Norfolk are likely to jockey for playoff position for the rest of the season and the Admirals have been leading the series to date, winning four of the five meetings.

Thunderbirds suffer loss against rival Bruins

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – The Springfield Thunderbirds (16-12-3-2) could not overcome an early blitz by the Providence Bruins (19-12-3-0) in a 6-3 loss on Sunday afternoon at Amica Mutual Pavilion.

It did not take the Bruins long to flex their offensive muscles, as John Farnacci slipped into an open area in front of the net, received a pass from Brett Harrison, and one-touched it past Vadim Zherenko to make it a 1-0 Bruins lead just 2:40 into the game.

Just 1:04 later, Justin Brazeau added to the advantage, taking a Georgii Merkulov pass and deking to the backhand past Zherenko on a point-blank opportunity. Anthony Richard added a third at 6:05, and before the T-Birds knew it, the home side had a 3-0 lead.

After a pair of matching minors put the game at 4-on-4 for the first time, the Bruins found another seam in the defense, as Frederic Brunet made a perfect diagonal pass to the right post, where Ian Mitchell guided it into the twine, ending a potent first period for the Bruins with the 4-0 goal at 17:05.

Malcolm Subban entered in relief of Zherenko to start the second period, but the Bruins were not done on the attack,

as Jayson Megna beat Subban on an odd-man rush from the slot, and the lead ballooned to 5-0 at 6:27 of the frame.

Despite the mountain of a deficit, the T-Birds showed tremendous character as Zach Bolduc and Adam Gaudette each

found the back of the net behind Michael DiPietro in just a 2:12 span to bring the margin down to 5-2 at the 13:52 mark of the period. Bolduc's fifth of the season broke a personal 11-game drought, and Gaudette scored for a third straight game, becoming the first AHL player to reach 20 goals this season.

The third period went 11 minutes with relatively minimal offensive chances for each team. Springfield would get another one as MacKenzie MacEachern roofed a shot from the right of the crease at 11:54 to cut the margin down to 5-3 off a slick set-up from Wyatt Kalynuk, but the comeback effort would not get any closer. Richard's second goal of the afternoon, a power play marker into an empty net, ended the scoring at the 17:54 mark of the third.

The T-Birds continued their four-game road swing on Wednesday night when they visited the Bridgeport Islanders.



Schools & Youth

AIC to hold registration rush

SPRINGFIELD – American International College is set to host a Registration Rush event for the spring 2024 semester, scheduled from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 8. The Registration Rush at AIC offers a convenient opportunity for on-the-spot application review, registration, and financial aid support.

Prospective and returning students are encouraged to attend the event being held at AIC's Shea Memorial Library on the campus at 1000 State St. AIC's

dedicated admissions and financial aid teams will be on hand to assist with the application process, FAFSA submission, and class registration all in one visit.

Those who complete the process during this one-stop-shop experience will be eligible to join classes when AIC's spring 2024 semester begins on Wednesday, Jan. 17.

For additional information, please reach out to AIC Admissions at (413) 205-2101 or admissions@aic.edu. Apply online at aic.edu.

Agawam resident makes Dean's List

ANNVILLE, PA – Cameron Croteau of Feeding Hills is one of nearly 900 Lebanon Valley College students named to the dean's list for the fall 2023 semester.

Dean's list students must maintain a GPA of at least 3.4 out of 4.0.

Croteau is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in exercise science at The Valley and is a graduate of Agawam High School.

SNHU announces fall 2023 President's List

MANCHESTER, NH – The following students have been named to the fall 2023 president's list. The fall terms run from September to December.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer. Cole Klafeta of Agawam, Adam Gelinis of Agawam, Jackson Zampiceni of Agawam, Reese Stevens of Agawam, Serena Croteau of Agawam, Timothy Lorenz of Feeding Hills, and Madison Elias of Feeding Hills.

How to contact the Sports Editor

Have the scoop on a local sports story? Want to submit a team photo, pass along a potential story idea, or just find out how to get a copy of that great photo of your young athlete? Please send all sports-related press releases and information to Sports Editor Greg Scibelli at: sports@turley.com or call, 1-413-283-8393.



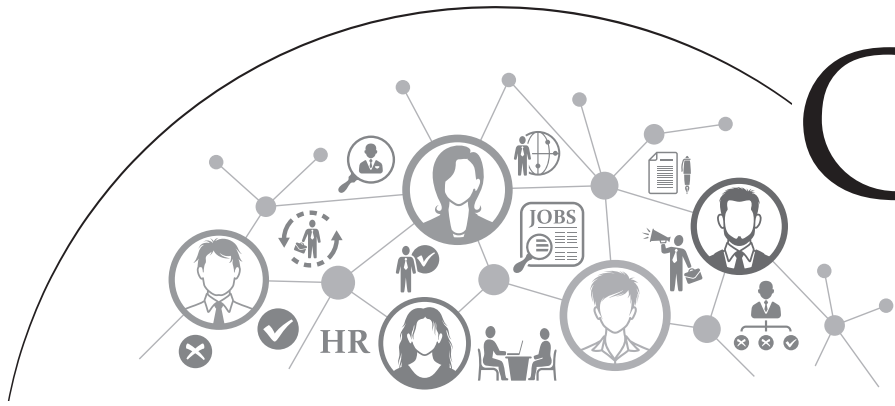
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CAREER Education

HCC announces healthy cooking series for new year

If you've made a New Year's resolution to eat healthier in 2024, Holyoke Community College might have just what you need.

The college is running a series of noncredit cooking classes this spring focused on diabetes but geared toward anyone interested in learning how to prepare healthier, more nutritious meals.

Classes in the "Nutrition for Diabetes" series run either on Tuesday or Wednesday nights beginning Feb. 7. All classes are held at the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute, 164 Race St., and taught by Marissa Chiapperino, a registered dietician and instructor in HCC's Culinary Arts program.

"Certain foods can lower your risk of heart disease and diabetes or help to manage it," Chiapperino said. "Making healthy adjustments to your daily meal plan does not have to be hard or boring. Oftentimes, adding in sources of healthy fats, whole grains, and high fiber fruits and vegetables can boost flavor and decrease the risk of chronic disease."

Each three-hour, stand-alone class will focus on a different theme. The first

hour will be an education session with Chiapperino, followed by a two-hour hands-on cooking activity after which participants can take home leftovers and recipes that align with the nutritional topic of the evening.

Wed., Feb. 7, 6-9 p.m.: "What is a carbohydrate?" (white bean egg shakshuka, breakfast casserole, overnight oats, vanilla bean pancakes, salmon toast)

Tues., March 5, 6-9 p.m.: "What is a protein?" (grilled skirt steak with chickpea salad, fideo, raspberry chicken, tahini-baked cod)

Wed., March 20, 6-9 p.m.: "What is a fat?" (smoothie bar, zucchini fritters, roasted chickpeas, cheesy egg souffles, Vietnamese spring rolls with peanut sauce)

Wed., April 17, 6-9 pm.: "How to read a food label" (grilled swordfish and pepper salad; chicken, lemon and olive bake; sweet potato berry muffins; easy breakfast salad; cheddar and herb savory overnight oats)

Tues., April 30, 6-9 p.m.: "What is a carbohydrate?" (desserts for diabetes:

chocolate date spread, oatmeal cookies, orange chamomile blondies, homemade popcorn four ways, caramelized spiced pears)

In addition, on Tues., April 2, from 6-9 p.m., Chiapperino will lead a similarly structured class on meal planning, "Building a balanced meal," featuring chilled avocado and cucumber mint soup, eggplant and lentil meatballs, chili-stuffed spaghetti squash, kale and fava bean salad, and grain-free granola.

"Making dietary changes can feel overwhelming," she said. "In this class, we will talk about how meal planning can make or break your ability to lead a more nourishing life with food. The concepts discussed will be suitable for those with many different health concerns and also those who just want to get more comfortable in the kitchen."

Chiapperino holds a bachelor of science degree in dietetics from the State University of New York at Oneonta and a masters of public health from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. She specialized in medical nutrition therapy for critical care and oncology at West-



chester Medical Center in New York and was the first bariatric dietician at Holyoke Medical Center, where she helped build their nutrition program.

She is a past president of the Western Massachusetts Dietetic Association and currently serves as executive secretary.

Each session is \$84. For more information, or to register for classes, please go to hcc.edu/healthy-cooking

Learn from the best.

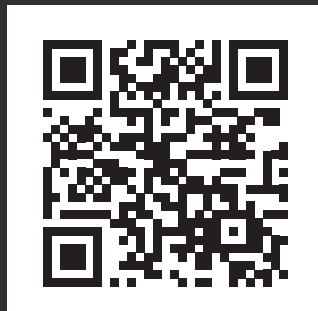
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CAREER Education

Hampden Charter School of Science marks 14 years of educational excellence

Hampden Charter School of Science (HCSS) is a top-ranking free college-preparatory public school founded in 2009 and serving families with students in grades 6th-12th at two campuses in Western Massachusetts: HCSS-East (Chicopee Campus) and HCSS-West (West Springfield Campus).

HCSS proudly provides seven years of unparalleled college preparatory education for grades 6-12 students, paving the way for college admissions and a wealth of scholarship opportunities. College and Career Readiness at HCSS is a tailored process forging the best possible alignment between each distinctively talented student and the most suitable college or university for them. Students collaborate closely with their counselors to delve into their manifold talents and interests, set aspirations based on these insights, and identify colleges that align with their ambitions.

- **College Board AP Capstone Diploma Program:** A prestigious program that enhances research, analysis, and presentation skills.

- **Focused Attention in Small Classes:** With an average class size of fewer than 20 students, each individual receives the attention they deserve.

- **University Partnerships and Dual Enrollment:** Engage in university outreach programs that offer dual enrollment opportunities, bridging the gap between high school and college.



- **Enhanced College-Prep Curriculum:** HCSS's amplified curriculum prepares students comprehensively for higher education.

- **Early SAT and PSAT Preparation:** To build a strong foundation, Rigorous SAT and PSAT training starting in 8th grade.

- **Comprehensive College and Career Guidance:** A thorough guidance program that starts as early as 6th grade, equipping students for future academic and career choices.

- **Experiential College Campus Visits:** Hands-on learning through college campus tours and informative sessions, providing real-world college experience.

- **Community-Driven Guest Speakers and Career Workshops:** Gain insights from guest speakers and partake in career workshops led by community professionals.

- **Consistently High College Acceptance Rates:** An impressive average college acceptance rate of 95% since 2014.

- **Substantial Scholarship Achievements:** More than \$51M in scholarships raised since 2014.

HCSS Curriculum Highlights:

- Project-Based Instruction and Con-

textual Learning: Engage in real-world problems and hands-on projects that bring learning to life.

- **Developmentally Appropriate and Data-Driven Instruction:** Personalized teaching strategies delivered by dedicated and highly qualified educators.

- **High-Level Academic Discussions:** Opportunities to improve critical listening, thinking, and analysis skills across all subjects.

- **Advanced Placement (AP) Opportunities:** Access 14 AP courses starting in 9th grade to challenge and elevate academic capabilities.

- **Early Honors Courses:** Availability of honors courses beginning in 7th grade for an academically accelerated path.

- **Inquiry-Driven Curriculum:** A focus on fostering inquiry, discovery, innovation, and collaboration in learning.

- **Comprehensive Support Services:** SPED and ELL services ensure that 100% of at-risk students meet high school MCAS graduation requirements.

- **Extensive Tutoring Programs:** Free in-school, after-school, and Saturday Academy tutoring, in addition to 24/7 online support in all subjects.

- **Project Lead The Way (PLTW):** A new addition fostering STEM skills through hands-on projects and real-world challenges, preparing students for future innovation and leadership.

Apply by March 3, 2024, for grades 6th-10th at www.hampdencharter.org.



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MARCH 3, 2024



SCAN

CAREER Education

St. Michael's Academy to hold Open House

Are you looking for a school that educates each of its students as an individual? Are you looking for dedicated teachers who want their students to succeed? Are you looking for a school that combines faith with education in order to teach strong moral values, respect and kindness? Are you looking for a school with a structured environment that promotes learning?

Then we have a school for you!

St. Michael's Academy, located at 153 Eddywood Street in the East Forest Park section of Springfield, invites you to an Open House and Curriculum Fair on Sunday, Jan. 28, 2024. There will be a special presentation for prospective students and their families that will begin at noon. The event will include an information session, followed by a panel of students, teachers

and parents for questions and finish with a full school tour. The full school will be open to visitors with teachers in each of the classrooms to accommodate questions.

Attend the Open House and learn what St. Michael's Academy can offer your child. St. Michael's Academy is not just books and papers. The educational process strives to form the entire child academically, spiritually, physically and emotionally. The dedicated teaching faculty truly care about their students and want them to learn, grow and succeed. The final result is a graduate who is well prepared for high school, college and beyond. Each student takes with them a solid foundation for continued growth and achievement, having learned the value of respect, kindness and community service.

Unable to attend the Open House on January 28th? Simply call the Admissions Office at (413) 782-5246, ext. 1208 and schedule an informational session and tour.

St. Michael's Academy is located off of Plumtree Road in Springfield, directly behind Holy Cross Church. The Academy educates students from preschool 3 years old, through grade 8. It is the largest Catholic elementary school in Western Mass and the only Catholic elementary school in Springfield.



Apex Homecare of Western MA expands programs and staffing to meet growing needs in the elder care arena

Direct Support Professionals at Apex Homecare of Springfield provides home care aides to increase independence for the people with disabilities and seniors, every day.

Caregivers and students pursuing a degree in the healthcare field are encouraged to contact the agency to take advantage of Apex's Direct Support Professional (DSP's) training program. To attract top quality Aides, the agency provides attractive benefits and a career path.

The direct care worker shortage is a global issue, stretching well beyond Massachusetts. In the U.S., 3 out of every 4 agency providers has a wait list for caregiving services. According to the Global Coalition on Aging Report, 70% of Americans who reach age 65 will need long-term services and support. If nothing changes, the report predicts there will be a national shortage of 151,000 care workers by 2030, and a 355,000-caregiver shortfall by 2040.

Pew Research states that one in four Americans live with a disability that interferes with activities of daily living and a recent national survey reports 90% of Americans age 50 and over want to 'age in place'.

To compound the situation, demand in the family caregiving market is increasing as well. Currently, 53 million Americans serve as family caregivers and the number is growing.

An Executive Order from the White House signed in April 2023 offers new



Direct care workers and students pursuing a degree in healthcare are encouraged to contact Apex.

resources to remedy the caregiver shortage crisis to meet increased need. It is the most sweeping set of executive actions to improve care in the nation's history and takes immediate action to enhance job quality for the direct care workforce. Like many of Apex's services, the Executive Order also provides resources for family caregivers that foster emotional well-being and stems the financial and health strain that caregiving has on a family.

About Apex Homecare

Apex provides a safe, compassionate and friendly atmosphere to enable the client to enjoy and maximize the excellence of life in the comfort of his or her home. If you or a loved one needs services, contact Cheryl Rumley RN at Apexhealth01@verizon.net. If you are seeking a career in the caregiving, disability or healthcare field, visit the Apex career page.



St. Michael's Academy

Attention Elementary School Teachers!

Looking for a rewarding teaching experience?

St. Michael's Academy will be hiring teachers for the 2024-2025 academic year.

Interested? Send your resume to a.dougal@smaspringfield.org.



Looking for a new school for your child?

Join us on Sunday, January 28th

at noon for an

Open House

Learn what St. Michael's Academy can offer YOUR child!

St. Michael's Academy, 153 Eddywood St., Springfield, MA
Check us out at smaspringfield.org



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CAREER Education

Come and see what great things are happening at St. Stanislaus

St. Stanislaus School in Chicopee is under the new leadership of Principal Katherine Rorrio, who fully appreciates the Franciscan values and long-standing traditions of the school. Mrs. Rorrio is a graduate of the school, was a teacher at the school for 20 years, and is now Principal.

This year the school's theme is "For it is in giving that we receive", an inspirational quote from St. Francis about the value of giving back. Students are focusing on a different Corporal Work of Mercy each month. Some of the Corporal Works of

Mercy that have been covered are – Feeding the Hungry and Working for Peace. The most recent Work of Mercy was Shelter the Homeless. Students and families collected 100 blankets, 50 hats, coats, and many undergarments that were donated to a local homeless shelter to help those in the community. Service projects are done throughout the year to help teach students the value of giving back.

The school will be holding an Open House on Sunday, Jan. 21 from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. (no appointment needed).

If you would like to schedule a private tour for another time, please call the school to schedule an appointment at (413) 592-5135.

St. Stanislaus School is a Roman Catholic, Franciscan, co-educational Pre-K through 8th grade school. Students are assisted in developing their potential spiritually, physically, and socially within a safe and diverse community. A foundation of academic excellence is created to prepare students to become contributing members of a global society. The school

has a welcoming Franciscan environment, modern air-conditioned facility, strong core curriculum, enrichment classes, certified faculty, full-day preschool (PreK3 and 4) and Kindergarten, free breakfast and hot lunch, before & after school program, and one to one use and integration of iPads and Chromebooks into curriculum. Financial Aid is available. Interested students are invited to "spend a day with us". To learn more please visit www.saintstansschool.org.

We can't wait to meet you!

ST. STANISLAUS SCHOOL

SERVANT LEADERS FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

OPEN HOUSE
SUNDAY, JAN. 21, 2024
11AM-1PM

- Welcoming Franciscan environment
- Strong core curriculum
- Enrichment classes
- Certified faculty
- Full day Preschool & Kindergarten
- Free breakfast and hot lunch
- Before & After school program
- One to one use and integration of iPads & Chromebooks into curriculum

PREK - 8TH GRADE SCHOOL
PHYSICAL, SPIRITUAL, AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

To learn more →

Call us for more information and to schedule a tour. We welcome the opportunity for you to experience St. Stanislaus School! Interested students are invited to "spend a day with us."

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www.saintstansschool.org
534 Front Street, Chicopee, MA 01013
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THE MACDUFFIE SCHOOL

OPEN HOUSES

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Saturday, April 6, 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

The MacDuffie School is a special place, and it all begins with our mission:
To foster in all students the intellectual habits of mind, high ethical standards, and respect for diversity required for becoming effective individuals in their personal and work lives, and moral and responsible participants in the world beyond.

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↓ ↓ ↓

LUIS COLON -
[LCOLON@GANDARACENTER.ORG](mailto:lcolon@gandaracenter.org)



CAREER Education

Explore the difference at St. Joan of Arc School

Explore the difference at St. Joan of Arc School in Chicopee! Lively Letters and OSMO Tangible Play programs have been added to our PreK and Kindergarten programs. Lexia, a phonics instruction that gives students independent practice in basic reading skills, is now offered to Kindergarten through Grade 8 students. And a Robotics Curriculum is coming soon for our 8th graders.

The school will be holding an Open House on Saturday, Jan. 27 from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. (no appointment needed). Appointment only tours for families will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 30 and Thursday, Feb. 1 from 3 p.m. - 7 p.m. Please call Chris or Janine in the Business Office at 536-6038 for registration information or to make

an appointment. St. Joan of Arc is a welcoming, safe and secure school community providing social, physical, spiritual & intellectual wellness for students in Pre-K 3 to Grade 8. SJA has innovative offerings that include affordable tuition and extended care, free breakfast and lunch, extracurricular programs to include Chess, Book and Lego Clubs, as well as a Performing Arts Club. Computer fundamentals with intro to computer science, music, library, and Duolingo language classes are also offered. Located at 587 Grattan St., Chicopee offers easy access to I-391 & I-90. Financial aid and tuition assistance is available. To learn more visit www.sjachicopee.org.

We look forward to meeting you!

St. Joan of Arc School ~ Pre-K to Grade 8
 587 Grattan Street, Chicopee ~ 533-1475 ~ sjachicopee.org
Learning Rooted in Christian Values

OPEN HOUSE
Saturday, January 27th 9am-12 noon
No Appointment Needed

January 30th & February 1st 3pm-7pm
By Appointment Only



Affordable Tuition & Extended Care
Free Breakfast & Lunch
Extracurricular Programs
Technology ~ Phys. Ed
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Welcoming, Safe & Secure School Community
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Easy Access to I-391 & I-90
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