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## **Doering students win awards for essay contest**

By Quinn Suomala

Staff Writer

AGAWAM – Three sixth grade students from Roberta G. Doering Middle School in Agawam won the district Patriotic Written Essay Competition.

This contest was sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars organization. The theme students had to write on was "how are you inspired by America?"

The contest is available to students in sixth through eighth grade throughout the country. The prizes and scholarships are awarded at the Post, District, State and National level.

Students are first entered into the post level. One student for every 15 entries advances to the district level.

The student who wins first

prize at the district level then moves onto the state. Then the first place at the state level advances to nationals.

All essays are scored off of knowledge of the theme, theme development and clarity of ideas.

Sixth grade students Luca Iannarelli, Kaylee Buynicki and Emma Buynicki won first, second and third place respectively at the district level.

Each student was awarded a monetary prize for their efforts and was presented with a certificate of appreciation to honor their achievement.

The district level for Agawam contains Westfield, East Hampton, Russel, Southwick and West Springfield, so it is no small feat for the students to win this contest.

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Doering School members, Superintendent Sheila Hoffman, Mayor Christopher Johnson and Representatives from Veterans of Foreign Wars of Massachusetts all celebrated the students' achievements. TURLEY PHOTO BY QUINN SUOMALA

## **Council asked to support Medicare**

By Quinn Suomala Staff Writer

AGAWAM – Two residents came forward during citizen speak time to share their support for the resolution to support Medicare for all in Massachusetts. This resolution was proposed by City Councilor Tom Hendrickson, who believes it could be highly beneficial for all of Agawam.

"Our healthcare system should be focused on improving

MEDICARE | page 11

Library hosts educational bingo

"Our healthcare system should be focused on improving public health, not generating profits for big health insurance corporations."

> – City Councilor Tom Hendrickson

## City Council outlines priorities for new term

By Quinn Suomala Staff Writer

AGAWAM – The city council gathered together in order to discuss what priorities they wanted to focus on for this term.

This served as an introduction to the council for new councilors, giving them a chance to ask questions and get their thoughts heard on what they wanted the council to prioritize in the next year or two

"Everybody has a voice at this round table discussion," Council President Rosemary Sandlin said. "It's always important for the camaraderie to build."

The council wants to ensure

on the ballot sometime in the spring, likely in May, so the town will have the decision in time for the MSBA meeting in June.

Johnson has promised to ensure that as many residents as possible are informed of the details of this project.

"My plan is to make the presentation multiple times in multiple locations around the community," he said. "My goal is for every resident and/or business in town to have the opportunity to know what this is all about and what the anticipated cost is going to be, the anticipated impact on the tax bill and the reasons why I think we need to move forward."

"He gave us every intention

By Quinn Suomala Staff Writer Throughout this round of bingo, they were also challenged to think of words that



Charlotte Matys won first place in library bingo and earned a hedgehog stuffed animal.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY QUINN SUOMALA

AGAWAM – The library hosted a series of bingo games for children in kindergarten through fourth grade.

Children played alphabet, math, library, weather and winter bingos. At the end of each round of bingo they were able to earn a prize.

"I like to do bingo like this because it's a wide range of difficulties," Children's Librarian Pamela Wiengart said. "We have images for non-readers, alphabet letters for non-readers, some math to make it a little harder and library terms to get them used to hearing the terms."

For the alphabet bingo, they had to create an "x" on the page to earn bingo. At the end, each child received a pencil as a prize.

started with the letter that was called out.

For math bingo, children had to get a plus sign on their bingo sheet in order to reach bingo. They had to match the equation with what Wiengart called out.

Wiengart also challenged the children to solve the equations as they went along.

At the end of this round, each child was welcome to select a rubber duck as their prize. Next, the children moved onto the library bingo. This was one of the harder bingos, as the words were more complicated for many of the children's reading levels.

"I like people to be familiar with the library terms," Weingart said. "There's so many li-

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they can work well together, and work well with Mayor Christopher Johnson, and this meeting helped greatly with creating that relationship.

During the meeting the council decided to review and update the council rules and regulations. There were a variety of simple things, such as updating the meeting location, that needed to be fixed.

Moving on from this the councilors discussed their main priorities for the upcoming years.

The most pressing priority is the high school project.

"We all accepted the fact that the biggest priority we're going to have...is the ballot question of should we build a new high school," Sandlin said.

They plan to put the question

that he would be at every event possible to discuss the high school," Sandlin said. "He would have meetings at the senior center, he would meet with small groups, he would have factual information available at those meetings."

Johnson hopes to have fully compiled information on the cost of the project as well as the estimated amount the town would receive from the MSBA for one of the February city council meetings.

He would also have the bonding cast, the impact for the average single family tax payer bill would be, the benefits of moving forward and the consequences of not moving forward.

The council also discussed the town's health insurance and

COUNCIL | page 11



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## Agawam makes multilingual videos

AGAWAM - In collaboration with the Town of West Springfield, Agawam has translated four recycling educational videos into Spanish, Russian, Turkish, and Ukrainian. After an unofficial poll from the surrounding communities of Agawam, Westfield, West Springfield, Chicopee, and Springfield, it was determined these languages were the most commonly spoken throughout the five communities. "In reality, there are over 25 languages spoken in the Agawam School System" stated Tracy DeMaio, Agawam's environmental project coordinator, "We narrowed the four languages down to the ones we found on multiple lists from each community."

The town used material specific videos created by the Springfield Materials Recycling Facility Advisory Board and translated them for use in all communities.

Funding was made available through the MassDEP's Recycling Dividends Program, which provides grant funds to municipalities that have implemented specific programs and policies proven to maximize reuse, recycling, and waste reduction. Agawam and West Springfield have each earned funding through this program for their communities.

"Agawam has earned funding through a number of programs available to our community, including textile collections, household hazardous waste day events, annual Christmas tree light collections, and yard waste collections" said Agawam's Mayor Christopher Johnson. "We are very fortunate to have these waste reduction and recycling programs available to our residents".

All videos can be viewed and shared by visiting https://springfieldmrf.org/ videos.

Special thanks goes out to Reelife Productions, UMass Amherst Translation Center, and the Agawam School Department for their assistance and guidance in completing this multilingual recycling outreach project.

## Inaugural social for new mayor

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.

## Feline Friends Cat Sanctuary announce next fundraisers

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

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

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

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

Special thanks to our monthly donors and everyone who donated at our December event including Julie & Kevin, Jeanette L, Joanne L, Joan E, Crystal M, Kay A, Carl and Cheryl K, George P, Nicole M, Ken K. Congratulations to Ken K, who won the winter-themed gift basket. We are thankful to all of our community members for their support throughout the year. December donations were received from the Community Foundation of Western Mass, Jonathan Hall and Toto, Denise R, Patricia C, Judith G, Nicole M, Carolyn C, Ida S, Diane H, Catherine M, Judy C, David P, Jennie U, Carol R, John & Marjorie, Carolyn O, Tami N, Jean R, Michael K, Jeremy B, Marianne S, Paypal Giving Fund Grant, Sharon and Bob L, Jude S, Daniel G, 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.

### Winter reading challenge at APL

AGAWAM – Did you know kids and teens can enter to win prizes just by logging reading online? The Agawam Public Library's annual Winter Reading Challenge goes through Feb. 29.

During this time kids and teens can log days that they read on the library's Beanstack website found at, agawamlibrary. beanstack.org.

On March 4, the prize winners will be announced, so be sure to log all the reading and earn raffle tickets before that day. For more information about this program or other programs at the Agawam Library go to our website agawamlibrary.org or call 413-789-1550 ext. 3.

## Art festival coming to Agawam

AGAWAM – The Agawam Community Artists and Artisans will present Beat the Winter Blues Art Festival on Saturday March 2, with snow date of March 9. The Art Festival will become an annual event.

The art festival will take place at the Sacred Heart Parish Hall, 1061 Springfield St., from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

There will be food served from the Sa-

cred Heart Parish kitchen. Breakfast and lunch may be purchased.

Artists and artisans will be selling framed original art, prints, pottery, fused glass, jewelry, stained glass, photography, wire art, wood craft, gourds, and more.

For further information please contact Ceil Rossi email at tocarefree2@hotmail. com or call (413) 207-1247

### ACC to hold souper bowl Sunday

AGAWAM – As of Sunday, Jan. 14, SOUPer Bowl Sunday is underway at Agawam Congregational Church.

"Cans of various soups will be collected from members and friends through Super Bowl Sunday, Feb. 11, the day of the big football game," said church Missionary Committee chair Lesley Young. The "Football Stadium" is set up in the Narthex where folks can place their donated cans of soup to be brought to the Parish Cupboard the week of Feb. 12.

For more information, contact the church office at 413-786-7111 of office@ agawamcong.com.

## Parks and Rec announce new activities available

AGAWAM – Parks and Recreation Director Christopher Sparks announced last week the Town of Agawam's Winter

## **Pioneer Valley Conference for Women May 9**

SPRINGFIELD – The third annual Pioneer Valley Conference for Women will be held May 9 at the Marriott Springfield Downtown from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. The conference will be held in person and virtually. This year's theme is Unleashed. Sponsors include M&T Bank and USI.

Dr. Christina Royal will serve as emcee for the conference. The former president of Holyoke Community College, Royal is now president and CEO of Infinite Unlearning, LLC, a woman, BIPOC, and queer-owned executive coaching and consultancy service supporting mid to senior leaders and their organizations. Her goal is to educate leaders on a new paradigm of the future of work and help them shed their limiting beliefs and lead from a place of potential.

Keynote speakers are Meghan Rothschild, president, and owner of the marketing and public relations firm Chikmedia, and Jessika Rozki, founder of Rozki Rides, a transportation service focusing on children and seniors.

Rothschild is an award-winning business owner, public speaker, and social influencer. As a speaker, she is known for engaging audiences on topics such as social media, marketing strategy, public relations, women in business, melanoma survivorship, and living with endometriosis. Rozki's career in transportation began 15 years ago as a school bus driver in Chicopee. In 2019, with the resolve to balance her professional aspirations and family life, Rozki launched Rozki Rides. Based in Greater Springfield, the company started as a professional transportation service catering primarily to families.

In addition, there will be 10 different panels that women can choose to attend in the morning and afternoon. Panelists, all local women, will be announced in the coming months. For more information, visit https:// sheslocal.org/pioneer-valley-conference-for-women/.

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.

## **ACC hosting Valentine's dinner**

AGAWAM – A unique dessert will be featured in the Saturday, Feb. 17, Valentine's Italian night dinner at Agawam Congregational Church, 745 Main St.

Large red velvet cake cupcakes, filled and topped with white chocolate, buttercream icing with a fancy chocolate, two-heart decoration on top will be included. Church member Sharon Christian is making the delectable cupcakes from a family recipe that always delights everyone.

The spaghetti with meatballs and sauce dinner will, also, in-

clude a salad and dressing. Coffee, tea, and water will be included.

Tickets are \$14 with a deadline of Wednesday, Feb. 14 at noon to purchase tickets. The sit-down dinner will be served in the church hall. Take out orders are available, as well.

The church office is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to noon. Call the office at 413-786-7111 or office@agawamcong.com. The church is handicapped accessible with a large, well-lit, parking lot.

## **Photography submissions needed**

AGAWAM – The Friends of the Agawam Public Library is looking for entries to their 4th Open Judged Virtual Photography Show, to be on display after March 15, 2024. The show provides a platform to recognize and encourage photographers and benefits the Agawam Public Library. Twenty-one awards totaling \$1,540 will be determined by judging done on March 1, 2024. Dave Roback and Tim Donelan, both well recognized photographers, will be the judges.

The show is divided into four categories of photography: creative, nature, photojournalism and pictorial. The entry fee is \$25 per entry. Deadline for submissions is Feb. 15, 2024. If we have not received sufficient entries, the show will be cancelled and all fees returned.

All images must be original, made by the photographer, captured by film or digitally, and cannot be previous entries in our show.

The Prospectus and Entry Form can be accessed by going to www.agawamlibrary. org, and scrolling down to the Friends of the Library widget. From there you will be able to click on a link to the show's information.

For further information please contact Bob Kadis at r.kadis@comcast.net or at 413-789-4814.

## Girl Scouts announces new CEO

HOLYOKE - Following an extensive and thorough search process, Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts is excited to announce the appointment of Theresa Lynn as its new chief executive officer.

Lynn brings with her a wealth of experience in non-profit leadership, having most recently served as Senior Vice President of the United Way of Central Massachusetts where she focused on fundraising, communications and some large grant making opportunities. Her dedication to community engagement is evident through her roles as the executive director for Back on My Feet, addressing homelessness and job insecurity in Boston, and as the executive director for ReadBoston for an impressive 14 years. She currently serves as a board member for the Worcester Education Collaborative and BioBuilder Education Foundation.

"I've long been a fan of Girl Scouts' legacy experiences, from outdoor adventure to the iconic cookie program and an admirer of the cutting-edge STEM initiatives that create one-of-a-kind experiences," said Lynn. "I'm thrilled for the opportunity to join Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts and work alongside the staff, adult volunteers and community supporters who are deeply committed to serving today's members in exciting, future-focused ways because the need for female leadership has never been greater."

Lynn holds a Master in Public Administration from the Harvard Kennedy School, a Master in Business Administration from Boston University, and a Bachelor of Arts in Economics from the College of Holy Cross. Her contributions in the community have been recognized by the Boston Celtics, who presented her with a Heroes Among Us award, and by the Boston Busi-

**Rotatry club hosts Valentine's dinner** 

door.

The cost for adults 13

and over is \$21 pp, chil-

dren 6 to 12 \$11 pp, and

under 6 free. Tickets are

available by calling the

club secretary, Lynne

Merceri at (508) 951-3027,

or patrons may pay at the

Dinner will be followed by a

ness Journal, which acknowledged her as a Top 40 Under 40 leader in Boston.

Nicole Messier, Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts Board Chair said "We are so proud to welcome Theresa to the Girl Scouts family. Her proven leadership, innovative vision, and unwavering commitment to empowering young people align seamlessly with the values that define our organization. We are confident that under her guidance, GSCWM will continue to thrive and inspire the next generation of leaders. We're thankful to the search committee for their diligence in selecting a leader who shares our commitment to fostering a supportive and empowering environment for the members we serve. We look forward to the positive impact Theresa will undoubtedly make as she leads us in fulfilling our mission of developing girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place."

free concert from 6:30 to 8 p.m. featuring

Decades, New England's premier oldies

national's campaign to eliminate Polio

around the world as well as supporting

local projects including student scholar-

ships, the food pantry, a new pollinator

garden at Agawam High School, and other

projects to benefit the community.

The event will help fund Rotary Inter-

dance band.

## New artist at **Wistariahurst** in February

HOLYOKE – Erika Slocumb's newest exhibit, Abstract Revelry will be on display at Wistariahurst on Mondays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Tuesdays from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m from Feb. 6 to Feb. 27. Admission to Abstract Revelry is free and open to the public so that all can view this amazing exhibit experience.

This art exhibit is the first of its kind to be presented in the gallery, with each artwork being accompanied by pieces of music that inspired each piece. Borne from a discussion about the need for interactive exhibits that can engage multiple senses, while also making sure to program this exhibit in a way that people with disabilities can also enjoy the full experience. Slocumb's artwork is intricate and multidimensional, making it a unique perspective on how art comes in many forms. Vistors will hear artists such as Rihanna and Public Enemy, with QR Codes available to link you to a playlist that you can listen to while viewing the exhibit. Abstract Revelry: A Visual and Audio Experience hopes to inspire visitors to think differently about art and how it can be experienced.

"When I see the paintings, they usually invoke a playlist in my mind based on what I was listening to when I created them. Some of my paintings were influenced by music and I created them based on the sounds I was hearing," Slocumb said. "I love this experience and I want to share it with everyone."

To learn more and plan your visit, please follow this link:https://new.wistariahurst.org/events/month/2024-02/.



### Valentine's dinner tickets now available

AGAWAM - The Agawam

Rotary club will host Dinner

for Hope, a fundraiser at the

Agawam Senior Center on

Valentines day, Feb. 14 from 4

to 6 p.m. The menu will include

ziti with marinara sauce, Italian

meatballs, garlic breadsticks, side

be catered by Storrowton Tavern.

salad, and dessert. The dinner will

AGAWAM - Save the date of Saturday, Feb. 17, for a Valentine's Italian night dinner at Agawam Congregational Church.

The spaghetti and meatballs dinner with a salad and cupcake dessert will be held beginning at 5 p.m.

Tickets are \$14 with a deadline of Wednesday, Feb. 14 at noon to purchase tickets. Take-out orders will be available, as well. Contact the church at 413-786-7111 or office@agawamcong.com.The church office is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to noon.

Agawam Congregational Church, located in the town's Historic District, is handicapped accessible with a large, well-lit parking lot.

### **Agawam Public Library to feature** two new art exhibits in February

AGAWAM – Throughout the month of February, the Agawam Public Library is excited to be hosting works by Stephanie Diaz on the main floor gallery walls. Diaz is a local artist who will be exhibiting acrylic and watercolor paintings, alongside woodburning art. Works and commissions by Diaz can be found online, at whimsicalcorner.bigcartel.com and in local craft fairs

Works will also be exhibited in the glass cases leading into the children's section provided by Rick's Place. These pieces are part of a travelling exhibit made in November to honor Children's Grief Awareness Month titled "Reflections: A Grief Awareness Exhibit." Rick's Place is a Wilbraham-based support organization for children, teens, and families navigating

VALENTINE'S

grief. Their exhibit features poignant artwork created by both youth and adult participants, encapsulating intimate, heartfelt narratives of personal journeys through grief. This collection serves to raise awareness about the impact of grief and loss on youth and families, as well as to provide a platform for individuals to tell their story through art. Anyone with questions about Rick's Place can contact them at their Wilbraham office at 413-279-2010.

All art can be viewing during the Agawam Public Library's open hours. The library will be closed Monday, Feb. 19 for Presidents' Day. If you are interested in exhibiting your own art or have any questions about this month's exhibits, please contact Library Associate Erica at elefebvre@agawamlibrary.org or 413-789-1550 x4.









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## Opinion

### Guest Column

### Will withdrawing from 401(k) affect my Social Security?



#### **Dear Rusty**

My full retirement age (FRA) is 66 and 8 months, which I'll reach in September 2024. I'm still working three days a week. I want to cash in my 401K and want to know if I have to wait until my FRA for IRS purposes or can cash it in anytime in 2024. I don't want to affect my Social Security or end up paying taxes on my benefits.

Signed: Seeking to Avoid Taxes

#### **Dear Seeking**

We're not experts on IRS matters here at the AMAC Foundation so I can't address 401(k) questions, but we can provide information on your Social Security circumstances and how 401(k) withdrawals may affect your SS. I assume from your question that you are now receiving early Social Security and wish to avoid any tax consequences thereto by cashing in your 401(k), as well as from working. Here's what you need to know:

Since you will reach your Full Retirement Age in 2024, your 2024 work earnings limit will be \$59,520 up to the month you reach FRA. If you were born in January 1958, you'll attain FRA in September 2024. After you have reached your FRA there is no longer a Social Security limit to how much you can earn from working, so your work earnings thereafter will not affect your monthly Social Security benefit regardless of how much you earn. If your part time work between January and August 2024 won't put you over the \$59,520 limit, your work earnings will not negatively affect your gross monthly Social Security benefit.

Assuming you are on Medicare, the premium for which is deducted from your Social Security payment, withdrawals from your 401(k) might affect your net monthly Social Security payment in two years hence. Medicare premiums are based upon your combined income from all sources, including 50% of the SS benefits you received during the tax year. If your 401(k) withdrawal(s) put you over an income threshold for your tax filing status, you may be required to pay an Income Related Monthly Adjustment Amount on top of the standard Medicare premium. That IRMAA supplement would be deducted from your Social Security, which would affect the net amount of your Social Security payment. Your Medicare premium for each coming year is determined by your combined income from two years prior, so if you "cash in" your 401(K) in 2024, it would affect your net Social Security payments in 2026.

Whether you will pay income tax on your Social Security benefits is determined by your combined income from everywhere, which the IRS calls your "Modified Adjusted Gross Income." MAGI is your income from all sources except ROTH IRA withdrawals and includes half of the SS benefits you received during the tax year.

If you file your taxes as a single, and your MAGI is over \$25,000 or if you file your taxes as "married-jointly" and your MAGI is over \$32,000 then 50% of the Social Security benefits received during the tax year becomes part of your overall income taxed by the IRS (at your normal IRS tax rate). But if your MAGI as a single filer is more than \$34,000 - or as a married/jointly filer over \$44,000 - then up to 85% of the SS benefits received during the tax year becomes part of your overall income taxed by the IRS.

So, to recap:

Your part time work earnings in 2024 won't affect your monthly Social Security benefit, unless your 2024 work earnings prior to September 2024 exceed \$59,520.

Depending on the amount of your 401(k) withdrawals, your 2026 net Social Security payments may be impacted by Medicare's IRMAA provision. But your 401(k) withdrawals will not affect your gross Social Security payments.

Depending on the amount of your 401(k) withdrawals, some of the Social Security benefits received during the 2024 tax year will likely be subject to income tax. That is, if your annual total income, including your 401(k) withdrawals, exceeds the MAGI thresholds described above.

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PHONE

413.283.8393 Fax: 413.283.7107 Subscriptions: 413.283.8393

EMAIL

Advertising Sales Wendy Delcamp wdelcamp@turley.com

> Editor Gregory Scibellli aan@turley.com

Subscriptions cgriswold@turley.com

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purchased some paper white bulbs early in December, figuring I'd need some flower power come January.

Four bulbs were planted in potting soil in an old tureen bowl that I found at the local recycling center swap shed. I covered the soil in moss I saved from my yard and honest to goodness when those bulbs burst into bloom about a month after planting, I felt pretty proud of myself for creating such a chic display.

Now what to do with it? Usually, when paper whites are forced in pebbles, or just plain water, they are a once and done kind of experiment.

## 

#### Re-blooming paper whites

But because I planted them in decent potting soil, there may be hope for re-bloom.

Read on to see how it's done.

First, it's important to think about how bulbs work. They are a self-contained unit that has everything in that unit to bloom the first time no matter what, as long as basic environmental needs are met.

Pretty impressive.

For bulbs to bloom again, we have to make sure that unit gets re-charged. I read once to think of the bulb as a solar battery - that's not far off!

For typical daffodil bulbs that are planted in the ground that means removing spent flowers, keeping the foliage intact until it yellows, and giving the plant a little fertilizer or a compost top dressing if the soil isn't fertile. Now that we understand, we can use this information to re charge our hyacinth bulbs.

The flowers are still on my chic display, but they are definitely gone by. I will snip off the spent blooms.

Next, I will put the tureen in a sunny window.

To be honest, I had placed it in my pantry when it was in bloom.

My husband found the fragrance a little too overpowering and not to his liking. Over the years I have found that people either love it or hate it and sadly he leans toward the latter of the two.

But, because it was placed in the window of a cool room, it grew upright without falling over, and the flowers lasted close to three weeks! Now that I have the pot of foliage in a sunny window, I will sprinkle a little bulb fertilizer on the soil surface and water it in.

Choose one that has both nitrogen for the leaves and phosphorus for the bulb. The numbers on the fertilizer indicate NPK: Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Potassium.

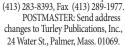
We want to encourage those leaves to photosynthesize and make energy to build up the reserves in the bulb. Fertilization will happen monthly as long as the leaves are green.

The leaves will grow for longer than you might think, maybe even into late spring and summer. I'll put the pot outside in the sunshine once the weather warms up enough.

Eventually, though, the leaves will yellow and brown. Once they do it's time to cut them back and let the soil dry out completely, after which the bulbs can be removed. Give them a couple of days in the sun to dry out further. The outer skin of the bulbs will get papery. Now it is time to store them in a brown paper bag until planting. Old panty hose or onion bags would also work. I will replant my paper white bulbs during Advent, and with any luck, all of my work will pay off with blooms when I need it the most this time next year! And maybe every year thereafter! 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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## Schools & Youth

### **AIC fall 2023 Dean's List**

SPRINGFIELD - American International College announces the dean's list for fall 2023 semester. The following students are from Agawam and Feeding Hills.

Keely Guindon, majoring in Nursing; Orin Howell, majoring in Nursing; Joe Liquori, majoring in General Business; Jordan Stack, majoring in Digital Marketing Communications; Brooke Szafran, majoring in Marketing; Kendra Williams majoring in Educational Studies; and Mia Wood, majoring in Exercise Science.

### **Elms College** announces fall 2023 Dean's List

CHICOPEE - The College of Our Lady of the Elms has named the following students to the dean's list for the fall 2023 semester. The following students are from Agawam and Feeding Hills.

Carson Asselin, Katelynn Gordner, Amy McKinley, Leniah Ruiz, Nick Uschmann, Jessica Vinci, Sabrina McBride, Aidan Noftall, Raymond Randall, Liam Sole and Brady Spaulding.

### University of Rhode Island Dean's List

KINGSTON, RI - The University of Rhode Island announces the fall 2023 dean's list. The following students are from Agawam and Feeding Hills.

FEBRUARY 2024

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SUPPLEMENT TO

Emily Gamelli, Marissa Hermans, Madison Hill. Samantha O'Meara, Eme Oberheim, Faith Olbrych, Jack Patterson, Cassie Reed and Andrew Snow.

### Scholarship, fellowships available

WESTFIELD – The Horace Smith Fund has scholarship and fellowship money available for graduates of Hampden County public and private high schools. Graduating high school seniors and students already in college may apply for Scholarships of \$12,000. Those in their final year of college and previous college graduates pursuing advanced degrees may apply for Fellowships of \$15,000. Applicants must maintain at least a B average in college and be enrolled as full-time students. Awards are made based on both academic achievement and financial need. Of great importance is a personal written account of why the student feels deserving of financial assistance and their goals in pursuing higher education.

Last year, \$316,000 was awarded to 30 individuals. Scholarships were given to 22 graduating seniors from nine Hampden County high schools. Three scholarships were also awarded to current college students to assist them in completing their undergraduate degrees. Five fellowships were given to college graduates pursuing advanced degrees, who had graduated from Hampden County high schools. The Horace Smith Fund was established in 1899 by the successful and generous philanthropist named Horace Smith, co-founder of Smith & Wesson, established in Springfield. The scholarships and fellowships are named for Walter S. Barr, a West Springfield businessman, whose widow left the bulk of the family estate to The Horace Smith Fund in 1950. Completed applications must be received either electronically or by mail to The Horace Smith Fund at 16 Union Avenue, Suite 2K, Westfield, MA 01085 no later than March 15. Applications are available at local high school guidance offices, college financial aid offices, online at www. HoraceSmithFund.org or by phoning (413) 739-4222.

16

40

36. It may be for

shopping

37. Midway between

39. A stock of foods

42. The bindings of

books

44. Megabyte

46. Sammy \_\_\_,

songwriter

47. Dutch colonist

48. Clare Booth \_\_\_,

American writer

50. Popular type of bread

51. Transfers of money

(abbr.)

49. Sun or solar disk

south and southeast

43

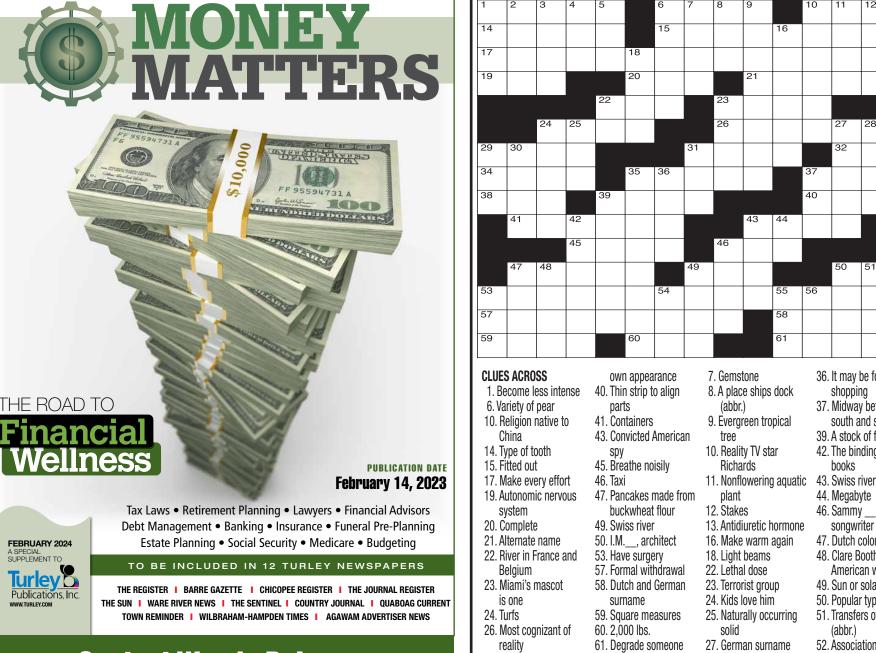
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34. Traitorous Greek	2. Blessing	29. Partner to cheese	association
mythological prince 35. Collide	<ol> <li>Substitutes (abbr.)</li> <li>Principle underlying</li> </ol>	30. Type of horse 31. <u> </u>	54. City 55. Niger-Congo branch
37. Immune response 38. Feline	the universe 5. Work unit	33. Defensive nuclear weapon	of languages 56. Pointed end of a pen
39. High opinion of one's		35. Most shrewd	

#### **CROSSWORD SOLUTION ON PAGE 9**

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Representatives from Veterans of Foreign Wars of Massachusetts and Doering Middle School Principal Dominic Costanzi present awards to the winning students



Aldo Mancini from Agawam Veterans Council presented the contest winners with certificates of appreciation to honor their achievements. TURLEY PHOTOS BY QUINN SUOMALA



Sixth grader Kaylee Buynicki won second place at the district level of the Patriotic Written Essay Competition.

#### **ESSAY** from page 1

"Everyone did a wonderful job...so I want to thank you all for your participation," State Junior Vice Commander of the VFW Massachusetts Troy Henke said.

"It's a big deal for these students," The Students' Teacher Kathy Goyette-Jediny said.

Goyette-Jediny was thrilled to see three of her students advance so far in the contest.

"I could not be more proud of them," Goyette-Jediny said.

According to Goyette-Jediny, this is her second time doing this competition with her students. Last year, two of her students won first and third place.

She is proud that her students have done so well yet again, and hopes to see the trend continue in future years.

The students have to submit their essay by Oct. 31 in order to be eligible for the contest. This means this challenge comes early in the school year.

In Goyette-Jediny's opinion, that makes

her students' achievements all the more impressive, as they managed to

write the essays this well while also starting a new school year.

"It's a lot for them to get that done," Goyette-Jediny said. "And they're brand new students to me...That's why, to me, it's huge that we had first, second and third."

Each student had an inspirational essay topic. Goyette-Jediny described that Iannarelli focused on how important the National Anthem is to him, and what pride he feels in standing for the flag and being an American.

Kaylee Buynicki wrote about freedom and its symbolism for America and the opportunity America provides for its citizens.

Emma Buynicki wrote about her great grandfather's sacrifices serving in war.

Another stand out student was Ava Skowron. Skowron unfortunately was unaware of the essay's wordcount maximum and so her essay was disqualified from the competition.

However, Doering school and Agawam Veterans Council took the time to honor her powerful essay discussing her father's military service.

"Ava Skowron's essay was really powerful," Doering Principal Dominic Costanzi said.

Skowron had read her essay at the school's Bring a Vet to School Day Ceremony, and it had moved many in the audience.

All four students were honored at a brief ceremony at Doering School, complete with a brief pizza party after they were presented with their awards.





Sixth grader Emily Buynicki won third place at the district level of the Patriotic Written Essay Competition.





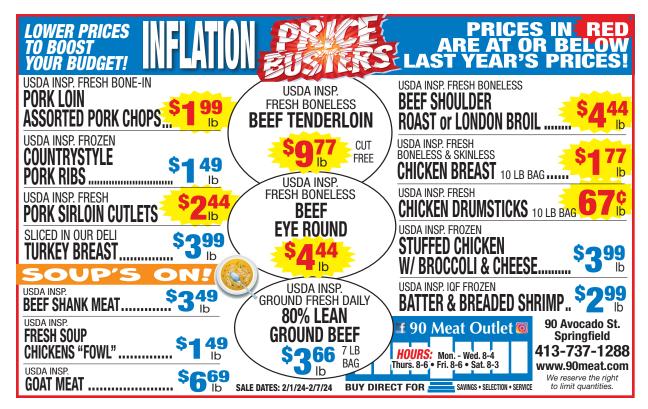


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## Buffum leads Agawam hockey past Chicopee

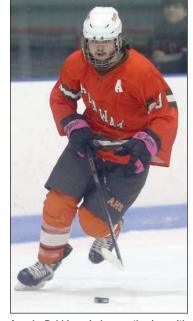
**By Tim Peterson** Sports Correspondent

HOLYOKE – Agawam senior Peyton Buffum netted five goals during a 7-3 win against Southwick on January 13. Junior A.J. Robbins nearly scored that many goals eleven days later.

Robbins, who's a defenseman, netted a career-high four goals leading the Brownies to a 10-1 victory over Fay Division rival Chicopee at the Fitzpatrick Skating Rink in Holyoke, last Wednesday afternoon.

"Peyton scored five goals against Southwick, and I think A.J. was trying to match him," said Agawam head coach Todd Rowley. "Not only is A.J. a great defenseman, but he's also an all-around outstanding hockey player. He can do

HOCKEY | page 8



Angelo Robbins circles up the ice with the puck.



Peyton Buffum emerges with the puck.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY



Above, Addison Podworski gets the advantage in a match at 113 pounds. For Podworski, it was her first varsity match and she picked up the win. Above right, Joe Breault locks up at 165 pounds. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY

## Brownies shut out Chicopee wrestling

CHICOPEE – Last Wednesday night, Agawam showed up and really took it to Chicopee's co-op wrestling team. The Brownies left with a 72-0 win, taking every contested match as well as a number of forfeits.

Agawam had one more meet scheduled and then will look towards the sectional and state tournaments with several competitors contending for individual titles.





Max Halloway tries to turn over his opponent at 215 pounds.



Nick Ugolini goes after a takedown in the 138-pound match.





## Boys basketball falls to West Springfield

AGAWAM – The Agawam High School boys basketball fell to West Springfield last Thursday evening 63-46. Agawam got 19 points from Elijah Maldonado



and 15 points from Colin Smith. The Brownies beat Wahconah on the road last Saturday and are now 10-3 and have qualified for the state tournament.



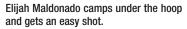
Colin Smith sizes up a three-point attempt.



Ethan Danek goes for the bank shot. TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

Dominic Rodriguez heads into the paint.

CANAN BANAN BANAN



Melih Tomak hustles down the court.

## Sports

## **Thunderbirds offense scores big over Charlotte Checkers**

SPRINGFIELD - The Springfield Thunderbirds (20-17-3-2) dominated for much of the night in a 6-1 win over the Charlotte Checkers (20-17-4-0) on Saturday night before a sellout crowd of 6,793 at the MassMutual Center.

The T-Birds jumped to a first-period lead for a second straight evening, this time just 3:37 into game action. Mathias Laferriere spun away from a defender to gain entry on the right-wing side. Mikhail Abramov raced up the middle of the ice, catching a perfect pass from Laferriere and lifting a shot into the top shelf behind Charlotte netminder Ludovic Waeber, making it 1-0 on his eighth goal of the season.

After not facing much action in the opening half of the period, Springfield goaltender Malcolm Subban got infinitely busier in the closing minutes, as the T-Birds killed off two Charlotte power plays, including 28 seconds' worth of 5-on-3 time. Subban shined, with point-blank saves off Gerry Mayhew and Rasmus Asplund sticking out in a 10-save opening frame.

After the goal by Abramov, Waeber also settled in, and the Checkers' third-ranked penalty kill also denied Springfield on two power plays as the two clubs' man-advantage units continued to scuffle.

For a second consecutive evening, Charlotte got an equalizer in the early stages of period two. Patrick Khodorenko approached the net and bashed home a rebound through Subban's legs after Patrick Giles had his initial try denied by the goaltender. The goal came just 44 seconds into the period to tie the score, 1-1.

However, like Friday night, the tie score would be short-lived. A Matt Kiersted penalty sent Springfield's power play back to work, and just 32 seconds after the Khodorenko tally, Hugh McGing got his first goal since Nov. 24, ramming home a wide shot from Laferriere that skipped off the end boards right in front of the goal on the left side.

With the lead back in their possession, the T-Birds would not relinquish it. Subban made a crucial 2-on-1 save on Checkers captain Zac Dalpe, and moments after another Springfield penalty kill, at 10:22 of the period, Hunter Skinner stepped into a one-time drop pass from Zach Bolduc and saw it ricochet off a Charlotte stick and behind Waeber to make it 3-1. It was Skinner's first goal as a Thunderbird.

Laferriere's night was far from over, as he stepped over the left-wing side and roofed a heavy snap shot through Waeber at 14:00, and in less than four minutes, the lead grew to 4-1.

Things would not get any better for the Checkers in the third. Ryan Suzuki pounced on a loose puck in the slot after a Jakub Vrana pass to Bolduc caromed off Waeber's pad right into the slot area. Suzuki also found the top corner, advancing the lead to 5-1 on his third goal of the season.

Will Bitten would round out the scoring with his second point of the night, cashing in on a 2-on-1 after an initial shot from Bolduc bounced off Waeber's left pad and right onto Bitten's tape. Subban got himself back into the win column, making 29 saves in securing his ninth win of the year.

Including the postseason, Springfield is now 10-1-0-0 in its last 11 games against Charlotte inside the Thunderdome, and with the two-game sweep, the T-Birds leaped ahead of Charlotte in the Atlantic Division standings.

## Loss puts Railers in fifth place

WORCESTER – The Railers fell 4-2 to the Trois-Rivieres Lions to wrap up a home three-in-three weekend.

The Railers found themselves in an early hole. They were behind, 1-0, less than four minutes after the opening faceoff and never led.

Lions goaltender Zachary Emond, facing Worcester for the first time in his career, was excellent in net with 34 stops. Several were very timely, too. But, the Railers just did not finish well.

"It was a combination of both," is how coach Jordan Smotherman described his team's lack of goals. "He made some good saves but often times we don't find those pucks laying around the net. There were a lot of rebounds and the drive has not been there this year to put those in the back of the net."

The two pucks that did find the back of the net were shot by Jack Quinlivan and Blade Jenkins. The Lions got goals from Nolan Yaremko, Nicolas Guay, Jakov Novak — his 19th of the season - and Cedric Montminy into an empty net.

Ken Appleby stopped 31 of 34 shots

#### on the night for Worcester.

Yaremko scored at 3:43 of the first period. Quinlivan tied it at 7:12 of the second on a rebound of a play he set up with hard work down the left wing. It was his first goal of the season, third as a pro and first at the DCU Center.

Guay converted a 4 on 3 power play at 1:33 of the third then Jenkins tied it again with a wraparound at 4:53. Novak scored a scrambly goal for what proved to be the winner at 11:10.

The opposition seems to be getting more scrambly goals than Worcester these days.

"Those are earned over time," Smotherman said, "when you dissect them you realize they're self-inflicted."

The game was a lively one that featured 51 minutes worth of penalties including a fighting major to Artyom Kulakov and a game misconduct for abuse of officials to Zach White.

The loss dropped Worcester into fifth place in the North Division, at least in terms of points. The Railers are fourth in winning percentage but can't see to find the traction to get themselves a little breathing room.



#### HOCKEY from page 7

it all. Everything that we shot, went into the net.

It was the second time this season that the Brownies (9-5) have scored at least ten

"Getting my first hat-trick of the season just feels wonderful. It's the first time that I've scored four goals in a varsity game," Robbins said. "We just played very well as a team in today's game."

The Brownies took a quick 1-0 lead a little more than a minute into the opening p riod when Robbins fired a shot into the net past Chicopee junior goalie Damian Loinaz (10 saves).

## Western Mass. Baseball Hall of Fame announces new class

HOLYOKE - The Western Massachusetts Baseball Hall of Fame has announced the 11th annual class to be inducted on March 7, 2024 at Twin Hills Country Club:

Jeff Reardon: Reardon is a 16-year MLB relief pitcher, four-time All-Star, and 1987 World Series champion (Twins). He notched 367 saves over the course of his career, ranking 12th on the MLB all-time saves list. He pitched for five different teams during his big league career (Mets, Expos, Twins, Red Sox, and Yankees). Reardon grew up in Western Massachusetts, graduating from Wahconah High School in Dalton.

Mark Simeone: Entering his 28th season as Head Coach of Springfield College's baseball team, Simeone has compiled 484 victories during his tenure. He grew up in Northampton, graduating from Northampton High School in 1982. In addition to coaching at Springfield College, Simeone played outfield from 1982-87 under Charles Roys (Class of 2022 Western Massachusetts Baseball Hall of Fame inductee).

Bob Taylor: A current and longtime resident of Springfield, Taylor played 16 professional baseball seasons. He reached the major leagues in 1970, where he appeared in 63 games for the San Francisco Giants alongside Willie Mays and Willie McCovey. Taylor played for San Francisco's Double-A affiliate, the Springfield Giants, in 1965.

Don Strange: Strange, a Springfield native, played college baseball at UMass

playing time in goal for the Pacers (0-14-1).

Down at the other end of the ice, freshman Dmitri Huey (12 saves) made his third start in goal for the Brownies. Sophomore Frankie DiSanti, who's normally the Brownies starting goalie, posted shutouts in the Amherst from 1987-89. He then enjoyed an eight-year professional baseball career, reaching Triple-A while with the Atlanta Braves system. Don joins his brother, Pat (Class of 2021) in the Western Massachusetts Baseball Hall of Fame.

Earl Lorden: Lorden served as Head Coach at Turners Falls before taking the helm as Head Coach at UMass Amherst from 1948-1966. He won 189 games during this span, ranking third on UMass's all-time wins list. Lorden was a continuous supporter of UMass baseball until his passing in 1984 at the age of 87.

1942 Turners Falls State Championship Team: A true underdog team of 15 players that won the 1942 Massachusetts State Championship well before population-based divisions were instituted. Their undefeated regular season was shortened by gas rationing during World War II before defeating Arlington in the championship game at Fenway Park by a score of 5-4. The team induction coincides with the individual induction of their head coach. Earl Lorden

Ron Chimelis (Garry Brown Sports Media Award): A long time columnist and sports reporter for the Springfield Republican, Chimelis served as Red Sox beat reporter during their 2004, 2007, and 2013 World Series championship seasons. He will be the second recipient of the Garry Brown Award, the first of which was posthumously awarded to Garry Brown in 2023.

Buoniconti.

The Pacers did cut the deficit in half when senior Connor McDonell, who's from Granby, scored a power-play goal with 8:30 left in the first period. Caleb Lundgren, who lives in South Hadley, was credited with the

als in a game. They scored 12 goals at Mc Cann Tech in December.

'We're here to play hockey for 45 minutes and you don't want to keep passing the puck around when you have a big lead," Rowley said. "We played all of our players and some of them haven't played a lot of minutes this season."

Despite winning almost ten games this season, the Brownies were ranked 38th out of 40 teams in the MIAA Division 2 state tournament power rankings. They can clinch a berth in the state tournament with one more victory.

'They use a couple of different things to determine the power rankings," Rowley said. "The PVIAC makes our league schedule. We can schedule our non-league opponents. We still have non-league games left with Hudson, Longmeadow, and West Springfield. Those games should help improve our power rankings. We just need to continue playing well."

The Brownies probably won't be one of the four teams playing in this year's Western Mass. Class A tournament.

Robbins gave his thoughts about his memorable performance.

Freshman Camden Saltmarsh was credited with the assist.

Senior Devin Carleton (9 saves) and freshman Gabe Loinaz (8 saves) also saw



Camden Saltmarsh goes after the puck near the boards.

tırst two meetings against Chicopee.

"Frankie wasn't here today because he was sick, but we were planning on starting Dmitri anyways," Rowley said. "He's a solid goalie and we have a lot of trust in him. He played a great game."

Robbins second goal came at the 3:41 mark, which was assisted by senior Anthony



The final goal of the first period was scored two minutes later by Peyton Buffum. Sophomore Thomas Connery was given the assist.

Robbins scored two more goals during the first five minutes of the second period, which gave Agawam a commanding 5-1 lead.

With 5:21 left in the second period, Saltmarsh scored an unassisted goal, which was the first goal of his varsity career.

"Cam has had a couple of assists this season, but he hadn't been able to find the back of the net before today," Rowley said. "Hopefully, he'll be able to score a lot more goals for us now. He has a very bright future."

Junior Trevor Del Barba, who's also a defenseman, netted his first varsity goal in the third period.

"All of the kids wanted Trevor to score a goal," Rowley said. "We moved him forward, and he scored a rebound goal during the third period, which was awesome.

The Brownies, who had a week off between games, other two third period goals were scored by junior Landon Ashford and Peyton Buffum.

Drew Scherban heads for the goal chased by opponents. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY

### **Voices of Resilience: Photo exhibit shines light on opioid crisis**

By Nick Boonstra nboonstra@turley.com

BOSTON – State officials and community members gathered in the State House on Tuesday to debut a photography exhibit focused on amplifying the lived experiences of those who have been affected by the ongoing statewide and nationwide opioid crisis.

The exhibit, entitled "Voices of Resilience," remained on display on the fourth floor of the capitol building through Jan. 12, where it was visible to legislators and visitors alike, and included Ware as one of the Massachusetts communities on which the project focused.

The exhibit marked the culmination of work done through the National Institutes of Health HEALing Communities Study, part of the larger NIH HEAL Initiative, commissioned in 2019. According to the HEALing Communities website, Massachusetts ranked among the top 10 states with the highest rates of opioid overdose deaths in a 2017 National Institute on Drug Abuse report.

Researchers with the study went into communities in four states to connect individuals with helpful resources and with each other, and to learn from participants what additional resources were still needed locally to aid those seeking recovery.

Alyssa Curran, a clinician with the Hampshire County Sheriff's Office and the study's Community Coordinator for Ware and Belchertown, explained that the images used for the exhibit were chosen and presented through a method known as photovoice, in which study participants share reflections about meaningful photographs. Some of these reflections were printed anonymously on the displayed photographs, adding context and poignancy to them.

One evidence-based practice encouraged at the event was that of carrying Narcan, also known by its generic name naloxone. Narcan is a life-saving medication that can reverse an opioid overdose and can be purchased at many pharmacies without a prescription.

Representative William "Smitty" Pignatelli, of the 3rd Berkshire District, emphasized the importance of carrying Narcan in remarks he gave at the event.

He related the tragic story of a young man who passed away as a result of an opioid overdose while his family and a police officer were present as they waited for an ambulance to arrive with Narcan.

Because of this and similar stories, Pignatelli said that he was supporting a bill that would require all first responders in Massachusetts to carry Narcan. The bill, H. 2008, most recently had a joint hearing in October, according to the Massachusetts General Court's website.

"You never know who's going to show up at your front door," Pignatelli said, emphasizing that this was especially true in rural communities, and demonstrating that EMTs should not be expected to be the only ones with Narcan available.

Department of Public Health Commissioner Robert Goldstein also spoke at the event, sharing the startling news that the 2,359 overdose deaths recorded in 2022 were a record for the Commonwealth.



Ware resident Randy Gratton spoke at the State House during the "Voices of Resilience" exhibition.

In addition to further stressing the importance of carrying Narcan, Goldstein laid out the evolution of the opioid crisis in Massachusetts, starting with prescription drugs around 2005, and escalating with the influx of fentanyl, a synthetic opiate, over the last decade.

"The drug supply is poisoned," he said, referring to the fact that illicit street drugs are now frequently contaminated with substances like fentanyl and xylazine, an animal tranquilizer, unbeknownst to the user.

Dr. Jeffrey Samet, Boston Medical Center physician and Principal Investigator for the HEALing Communities Study in Massachusetts, said that the Commonwealth had taken on a leadership role in addressing the national opioid crisis, but that there was still a long way to go.

"The essence of the HEALing Communities Study was to see if we can engage community members to come together in coalition within their communities," Samet said. Specifically, Samet highlighted how the study empowered participants to make decisions about the most helpful ways to allocate resources within their own communities.

Randy Gratton, a fourth generation Ware resident, shared how the HEALing Communities Study had helped him in his own recovery, expressing his gratitude to the Study for "giving the little town of Ware the big help it needed."

Gratton said that community members in recovery had been having similar ideas about what was needed, but that they "didn't know how to put them together." As a result of individuals coming together, Gratton said, the Recovery Center of HOPE was opened on Main Street in Ware, and a van was also commissioned that would be able to connect community members without access to transportation to recovery resources.

Gratton closed by sharing the personal story of how one of his mentors in recovery encourages him every year on the anniversary of his sobriety with the words, "Good start." In the same way, he said that the efforts undertaken as a result of the HEALing Communities Study were good, but that they were just a start.



Community Coordinator Alyssa Curran spoke about the photovoice project held in Massachusetts' communities.



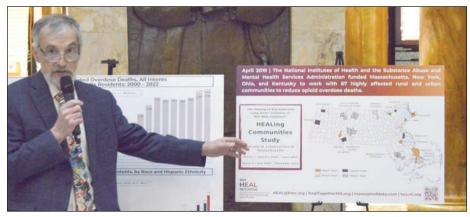
State Representative Smitty Pignatelli spoke in support of a bill that would require all first responders in Massachusetts to carry Narcan.



Department of Public Health Commissioner Robert Goldstein speaks at "Voices of Resilience."



From left are Department of Public Health Commissioner Robert Goldstein, state Rep. Smitty Pignatelli, Dr. Jeffrey Samet, Randy Gratton and Alyssa Curran.



Dr. Jeffrey Samet shared opioid overdose statistics.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY NICK BOONSTRA



"I would encourage you all to continue to work, and more than anything to continue to care," he said.



These photos were taken from the community of Ware during the photovoice project.



The "Voices of Resilience" exhibit was on display at the State House in Boston.

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Narcan was available at the

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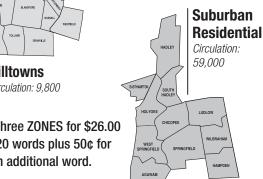


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## Public Notices

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Representative and can peti-

#### MEDICARE from page 1

public health, not generating profits for big health insurance corporations," Hendrickson said in a recent press release. "Every other developed country in the world recognizes healthcare as a right and has some form of single-payer or nationalized healthcare system; it's time for Massachusetts to do the same."

This insurance would be key in creating savings for the town.

"A single-payer system would be significantly cheaper and more financially efficient than our current system," Hendrickson said in the press release. "It's estimated that in FY2023, the Town of Agawam would have saved almost \$13 million on health insurance costs under a single-payer system."

This \$13 million could be used on schools, water and sewer infrastructure, roads and other town financial needs.

"That \$13 million over 10 years would pay for the town's costs for the new school," Resident Susan Grossberg said. "So this is a significant savings for the town."

Additionally, this healthcare could be key for supporting small businesses, according to Resident Guy Qvistgaard.

Qvistgaard explained that the U.S. healthcare system places implicit taxes on small businesses due to high broker fees, fixed administrative costs and adverse selection.

Based on Qvistgaard's research, small businesses pay up to 18% more per worker than larger firms for the same healthcare insurance policy.

"98% of small employers offering health insurance are concerned that the cost of providing health insurance to their employees will become unsustainable in five to ten years," he said. "Medicare for all, as proposed, is a single-payer system that would... take the burden of rising healthcare costs off of most small businesses, municipalities and families."

Medicare for all could also help to drive down prescription drug prices, as stated by Grossberg and Qvistgaard.

Medicare for all would be negotiating

#### COUNCIL I from page 1

whether Johnson should look into new, more economical options.

Currently the town has Blue Cross Blue Shield, but they are investigating if there is any benefit to going to the Government Insurance Commission Plan, which is the largest organization in the state.

Johnson is going to compare the GIC's information and rates to the present rate and get that information back to the council for them to take the next steps.

Additionally, they discussed how Johnson will allocate Chapter 90 money, or the money for roads and sidewalks.

On top of that, they addressed safety issues present in the town. This included any issues with intersections, sidewalks or crosswalks.

'We also talked about safety issues, such as which intersections are an issue or unsafe

**Protected Person** 

date, but a deadline date by

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara

with Big Pharma on behalf of all residents of the state.

"That gives the Medicare for all trustees a very powerful leverage to keep prescription drugs low," Grossberg said.

Not only would the single-payer Medicare be beneficial for the town and small businesses, but it could also help individual residents of Agawam.

"If it's going to save \$13 million for the town of Agawam government budget, imagine how much money it's going to save for the rest of us," Grossberg said.

Medicare for all would help to guarantee coverage of procedures for those in need.

"It eliminates the insurance companies' pencil pushers from the decision of who gets care," Grossberg said. "If your doctor says it's medically necessary, then you get the care."

This healthcare insurance would also mean there was no co-pay, no deductible, no share of costs and no co-insurance in the doctor's office.

People would also be able to select their doctors based on their needs, rather than whether or not they would be covered by vour insurance.

"Any provider you chose would be accepted by the new insurance," Qvistgaard said.

Additionally, this insurance would cover vision and dental care.

Grossberg recommended that the councilors, and any interested in learning more about this system, watch the video "Fix It: Health Care at the Tipping Point" on You-Tube.

"It's jaw-dropping in how this would work and how much money we would save," Grossberg said.

The city council sent this resolution to the legislative committee, where it will be discussed and ideally sent back to the council for their Feb. 5 meeting.

Should the council pass the resolution at the Feb. 5 meeting State Representatives Michael Finn and Nicholas Boldyga and State Senator John Velis, none of whom currently publicly support single-payer healthcare.

and how we can correct that," Sandlin said.

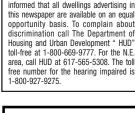
They look forward to when the blacktop plants open up so they can begin road reconstruction.

The council also took the time to go over social media "dos and don'ts," especially for newer councilors. Social media is forever and they wanted to ensure that councilors wouldn't spread misinformation, even accidentally.

"When anything important is going on in town, social media has pros and cons," Sandlin said. "We just wanted to talk about how important it is to not fall into a response trap, knowing that your response is forever."

The council felt this meeting was productive and will help pave the way for their meetings going forward.

"It was a good meeting," Sandlin said. "It was productive, because the new people got to ask questions and senior members got to clarify issues."



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#### APPEALS LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Agawam Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing at the Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main St., Agawam, MA on Monday, February 26, 2024 at 6:30PM for all parties interested in the request of Recai Bayram, who is seeking a Special Permit in accordance with the Town of Agawam's Zoning Ordinances Ch. 180. Sections 17 and 8.1 to allow for the keeping of hens at the premises identified as 31 Reed Street.

Doreen A. Prouty Chairperson Zoning Board of Appeals 02/01.02/08/2024

#### Commonwealth of Massachusetts **The Trial Court** Probate and Family Court Hampden Division Docket No. HD24P0160EA

#### Emily Connolly Date of Death: January 10, 2023 **INFORMAL PROBATE** PUBLICATION NOTICE To all persons interested in the above captioned est-

ate, by Petition of Petitioner Mark J. Beglane of East Longmeadow, MA

a Will has been admitted to informal probate

Mark J. Beglane of East Longmeadow, 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

tion 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. 02/01/2024

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court **Probate and Family Court** Hampden Probate and **Family Court 50 State Street** Springfield, MA 01103 Docket No. HD19P2228GD In the matter of: Alice A MacDonald Of: Agawam, MA RESPONDENT **Incapacitated Person/** 

#### CHAILON GIVING **NOTICE OF PETITION** TO EXPAND THE POWERS OF A **GUARDIAN**

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by Jewish Family Service of W. MASS. of Springfield, MA in the above captioned matter requesting that the court:

Expand the powers of a Guardian of the Respondent. The petition asks the court to make a determination that the powers of the Guardian and/ or Conservator should be expanded, modified, or limited since the time of the appointment. The original petition is on file with the court.

You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of 02/20/2024. This day is NOT a hearing

which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you in addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

#### **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 abovenamed 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.

M. Hyland, First Justice of this Court.

#### Date: January 22, 2024 Rosemary A. Saccomani Register of Probate 02/01/2024

#### Notice of Private Sale

Notice is hereby given by USA Towing, 71 Garden St., Feeding Hills, MA 01030, sale of a motor vehicle pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L. C. 255, Section 39A, that on February 05, 2024 at 8 a.m., at USA Towing, said motor vehicle will be sold at a private sale to satisfy the garage keeper's lien for towing, storage and costs of sale.

2019 Chevy Malibu VIN: 1G1ZD5ST2KF127616 Plate # TRP895 / MA Last known reg. owner: Donna Viel 129 Valley View Ave. Woronoco, MA 01097

01/18, 01/25, 02/01/2024

## Joan Nelson work featured at next ACAA meeting

AGAWAM - The Agawam Community Artists and Artisans will present Joan Nelson as the demonstrator for their Valentine Day meeting Wednesday Feb. 14 that starts at 6 p.m.

Joan will demonstrate the process of Egg Tempera. Egg Tempera is composed of egg yolk, powered pigment, and distilled water. The egg yolk serves as the binder that holds the pigment together. The addition of water binds the paint into a usable paste like form.

Tempera dries to a matte finish. Before oil paints rose to popularity during the Renaissance, tempera paint was favored among many of the world's cultures. The famous birth of Venus by Sandro Botticelli in 1486 was done with egg tempera.

Joan is best known for her highly detailed painting of birds, but other favorite subjects range from portraits to whimsical faeries. She also enjoys creating one-of-a-kind dolls crafted from clay, cloth, or a mixture of both.

She has received numerous awards in many shows, including several First Place and Best in Shows. Her work is in many private collections, and she has work at J. H. Miller's in West Springfield and at Handworks in Acton.

Joan maintains a studio at Indian Orchard Mills where

she offers classes for adults and teens. She also teaches children art classes sponsored by the Red Thread Network for the Arts.

All are welcome to enjoy Joan's demonstration that be-



Joan Nelson will be featured at the next ACAA meeting. SUBMITTED PHOTOS

gins at 7 p.m. at the Agawam Public Library 750 Cooper Street Agawam, Ma. in the Community Room.

For further information please contact Ceil Rossi at email tocarefree2@hotmail.com.



The meeting will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 14 at 6 p.m. at the Agawam Public Library



Agawam library hosted a series of bingo games for children in kindergarten through fourth grade.



Children and their families gathered at the library to play bingo.



Elizabeth Poggi won second place in library bingo and received a small hedgehog stuffed animal.



Charlotte Matys and Annabelle Toth went through an intense game of rock-paper-scissors to determine the winner of weather bingo. TURLEY PHOTOS BY QUINN SUOMALA

with larger things, but everybody got

Charlotte Matys won first prize for the Winter Bingo, receiving a Snoopy stuffed animal as her reward.



brary terms that people don't know about, especially kids, like collection, librarian, fiction, non-fiction, those sorts of terms. So, I'd like them to have at least a passing familiarity with them."

In this round, the children were awarded first, second and third place. Charlotte Matys received the first place prize. Elizabeth Poggi took second place and Annabelle Toth the third.

Finally, they played rounds of winter and weather bingo. For these rounds there was only one winner.

Toth and Matys tied for first in the weather bingo. They played an intense round of rock-paper-scissors (including jumping, spinning and dancing for luck) before Toth took first prize.

Matys was the winner for the winter bingo, receiving a stuffed animal Snoopy for her efforts.

The kids all had an enjoyable time and each walked away with a collection of prizes.

"I like that everyone left with something," Weingart said. "Some people left something."

According to Weingart, the library has done bingo for the children for over 10 years now

"Bingo's always fun," Weingart said. "I do it when I can."

Weingart also mentioned that donations to the library for prizes for these children's programs are always welcome. They greatly benefit the library and help to bring fun to the kids.

At the end of bingo, Weingart mentioned the variety of programs the library currently has available.

Currently, the library also has its winter reading program. Anyone interested, of any age, is welcome to sign up to earn the chance to win prizes.

Children are also welcome to come to the library in order to color a snowflake. These snowflakes will be collected throughout January and February and all completed snowflakes will be displayed at the library.

To learn more about current or future programs at the library, go to https://www. agawamlibrary.org/.



The children in attendance played alphabet, math. library, weather and winter bingo for a variety of prizes.



Children's Librarian Pamela Wiengart informed the children about the Color a Snowflake event at the library.