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AGAWAM

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Full-day pre-school may be green-lit

By Gregory A. Scibelli
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AGAWAM – Many years ago, making full-day kindergarten a reality was a big priority for education. Now, ac-

ording to Agawam Schools Superintendent Sheila Martin, full-day pre-school is in the pipeline.

Martin told the school committee on Feb. 10 that officials in the public schools

are looking into a full-day program for four-year-old children at the district's Early Childhood Center.

Martin says there are studies that have been done stating that high-quality, full-day

early childhood education aids in literacy development.

"It provides the extended instructional time necessary to master foundational phonics and vocabulary," Marin said.

The research shows an expanded schedule offers the consistent social-emotional learning needed so the small children are more ready for kindergarten.

Martin says a full school

day has the potential to set up participants for long-term academic success.

The research tells the district that students who have

PRE-SCHOOL | page 12

Project update coming



As you drive through campus you can see the substantial progress on the community wing that is scheduled to open in January 2027. Recent progress includes the near completion of steel erection, the beginning of the gymnasium roof, underground electrical and plumbing, fireproofing and exterior framing. On Tuesday, Mar. 3, there was a community meeting scheduled at Agawam Public Library with a major updates on the projects. We will have a look at that in next week's edition.



Golf course loan paid back to town ahead of schedule

By Gregory A. Scibelli
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AGAWAM – A loan made to the Agawam Municipal Golf Course recently is already being paid back, with the interest promised to the town and 22 months ahead of schedule after the Agawam City Council unanimously approved a fund transfer from golf course to the Capital Stabilization Fund, which was the source of the loan.

City councilors were elated to learn that recent earnings at the course led to the loan being paid off early, helping Mayor Christopher Johnson keep a promise he made to the city council late last year, that unlike previous loans made by the town to the golf course's enterprise fund, this one would be paid back.

"I was particularly happy to see loan was being paid off early," said Councilor Robert Rossi. "I'm happy for the community to see that the golf course is thriving."

Council Vice President Anthony Suffriti thanked the mayor for keeping his word and showing great leadership.

"I know once during my tenure the town made a loan to the golf course and it was not paid back," Suffriti said. "Thank you to the mayor. This is an example of great leadership. It also the great

leadership at the golf course. It shows us that we can have these kinds of relationships."

The course needed the temporary loan in order to purchase new golf carts to replace the current fleet, which was nearing the end of its useful life and was costing the course more to maintain.

The council would support the loan after Johnson presented a specific plan for repayment as well as the knowledge that the current management at the golf course had been leading the town-owned business in the right direction, with increasing revenues that would pay the loan back within two years and with the interest promised to the town.

"I have always strode to have the golf course be able to pay its own bills," said Johnson when he pitched the loan to the council.

On having the town loan the course some funds temporarily is economics, the mayor said. He said other borrowings that would be needed to purchase the carts would have cost the town and the golf course more. The town being the loaner of the funds made the most sense, he said.

He also said, funds from the stabilization fund will be needed for other capital needs.

"We are trying to give the

golf course some flexibility," Johnson said. "It's very possible the loan will be paid sooner than two fiscal years."

Johnson, who is running unopposed and should be mayor the next two years, also went out on a limb to allay concerns about yet more taxpayer funds being used for the golf course would not be repaid.

According to the funding proposal made by Johnson, \$158,700 of the funds needed would come from the golf course's stabilization fund, while the remaining \$100,000 will come from the town's Capital Stabilization Fund. However, that funding will be a loan which will be paid back by the Municipal Golf Course's Revolving Fund at 4% interest. Paybacks are scheduled to take place with payments made in the next two fiscal year budgets.

Johnson said in a memo to the city council the \$100,000 loan allows \$200,000 to remain in the golf course's stabilization fund while also making sure the town benefits from the loan to the golf course. The golf course would also save substantial funds from not having to pay a traditional bond for the carts.

The old cart fleet was previously leased, and the new fleet will be a purchase with a five-year service plan for major repairs, Johnson said.

Whalen seeks to challenge Neal for congressional seat

SPRINGFIELD – On Tuesday, Feb. 10, public school teacher Jeremie Whalen pulled papers to begin his campaign to challenge longtime incumbent Congressman Richard Neal in a bid to represent the people of Massachusetts' 1st Congressional District.

A proud product of Western Massachusetts, Whalen grew up in Belchertown, built a life with his wife in South Hadley, and earned three degrees from the University of Massachusetts Amherst, most recently his Ph.D. in Mathematics, Science, and Learning Technologies in 2025. He has spent over a decade as a high school teacher in the Pioneer Valley.

"I'm coming from outside the traditional politi-

cal world, and I think that's exactly what we need right now," said Whalen. "Old-school establishment thinking and the corporate greed that has seeped into our campaign finance system have pushed this country in the wrong direction. The way forward is electing real people from our communities who are not tied to those entrenched systems and who will actually fight for the policies we need to create change."

Massachusetts' 1st Congressional District represents 83 cities and towns across Western and Central Massachusetts, including communities in Hampden, Hampshire, Franklin, Worcester, and Berkshire counties. The district spans a wide range of urban, sub-

urban, and rural areas. Neal, who has held the seat since 1989, once served as chair of the House Ways and Means Committee.

"Some worry about losing perceived influence in the halls of Congress," said Whalen. "But when I hear about the power our current congressman is supposed to have, I can't help but ask who he's actually using that power for. When nearly all of your funding comes from corporations and large donors, it means Congressman Neal is motivated to support policies that benefit those contributors rather than the people in his district. What you're left with is a congressman who's rarely around,

WHALEN | page 12

Starting on a high note



The Winterguard has started their season on a high note. They debuted their 2026 production, "Green Garden" at the New England Scholastic Band Association's Winterguard Evaluation show on Jan. 31 in Salem. This past weekend, on February 21, the group competed at NESBA's Blackstone show at Blackstone-Millville Regional High School. The show was a favorite of the judges and the group was awarded first place this week, with a score of 68.66, a seven-point jump from the Eval show. Their next show will be Mar. 7 at Melrose High School. The captains are: Clarissa Kotjahasan, Emma Hart, Reed Cusson, Nevaeh McNamee, Finn Mansur, and Brihana Dupre.



March activities for adults at Agawam Public Library

AGAWAM – March is National Craft Month, and there's no better way to celebrate than by joining other artists and crafters at our Bring Your Own Craft Day! We invite you to bring your materials to the library for a morning of creativity and connectedness. Dust off your scrapbooking kit, load up your basket of yarn, gather your drawing pad and colored pencils! Please bring all materials you may need to complete your work. This event will take place on Saturday, Mar. 7 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Clini Community Room and registration is required. The crafting fun doesn't end there; our annual favorite Crafterpalooza is back! Donate new or gently used crafting supplies to the collection bin at the library between March 2nd and March 16th. Then join us for our free shopping days to stock up on favorite craft materials or try something new at no charge! Our shopping days will take place on Friday, Mar. 20 from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., and Saturday, Mar. 21 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Clini Community Room. Attendees may fill one bag and take one larger carry out item. If you're interested in making art but aren't sure where to begin, check out our Stitched Journal Workshop

on Monday, Mar. 30 at 6 p.m. Local artist Lisa Hersey will guide participants through the process of creating a pamphlet stitch journal with a pocket on the back. This is a beginner friendly class and no prior bookbinding skills are necessary. This event will take place in the Clini Community Room; please register to attend.

Can't get enough music? We're thrilled to welcome back singer/songwriter Matt York on Monday, Mar. 23 at 6:30 p.m. in the Clini Community Room for Bob Dylan and Johnny Cash: Songs & Stories. York will perform songs and tell stories about these two musical icons and the important role their friendship played in the trajectory of folk and country music, creating a new lane of music that we now think of as Americana. Please register to attend both of these events.

Preparing for job interviews can feel overwhelming, especially if you've never had the chance to practice in a real-world setting. Alleviate your worries at our Mock Speed Interviewing Night on Monday, Mar. 9 at 6:30 p.m. in the Clini Community Room. Hosted in partnership with the Employers Association of the NorthEast (EANE), this program offers a supportive, low-pressure environment

where participants will rotate through short mock interviews and networking conversations with experienced HR professionals and hiring managers. This event is ideal for high school students, college students, and young adults preparing for their first job, internship, or career move. Please register to attend.

If one of your goals this year is to focus on your well-being, then the library is the place to be! Qigong for Spring is a weekly class held throughout the season that will help you harness the expansive energy of spring to build strength and flexibility while balancing mind, body, and spirit for a fresh new year. With similarities to yoga and tai chi, Qigong is an ancient healing art that blends fitness, breathwork, and meditation. Classes are drop-in and will meet on Tuesdays at 11 a.m. in the Clini Community Room beginning March 3rd and ending June 23. Join us for weekly Chair Yoga at 9:05 a.m. on Wednesdays in the Clini Community Room. Led by yoga instructor Heidi Taberman, these drop-in classes are perfect for folks of all fitness levels. Instructor Siubhan Clark returns for Root to Rise Sound Healing, a restorative sound bath experience designed to sup-

port grounding, stability, and gentle expansion. Through layers of therapeutic sound, you'll be guided into a deeply relaxed state that helps settle the nervous system, anchor awareness in the body, and create a sense of inner support. From this place of grounding, the sound journey gradually invites subtle uplift—encouraging clarity, renewed energy, and a feeling of steady forward movement without force. This event will take place on Thursday, Mar. 5 at 6:30 p.m. in the Clini Community Room and registration is required. Come as you are. Root deeply. Rise gently.

Did the 2026 Winter Olympics inspire you to focus on your fitness? Then you're invited to join us for a special event with the Hydrow Team, comprised of an Olympian, a Paralympian, a U.S. National Champion, and a former Division 1 rower. Meet the Hydrow Athletes: Rowing, Motivation & Performance will take place on Thursday, Mar. 19 at 6:30 p.m. in the Clini Community Room. Come hear their stories, learn about the sport of rowing, and discover what it takes to stay strong, focused and motivated. Attendees will have an opportunity for hands-on experience using one of the Hydrow rowing

machines, and there will be a fun mini-rowing competition with prizes. The Agawam Public Library Walking Group will be held at the Riverwalk in Agawam on Saturday, Mar. 28 at 9 a.m. for a morning session of movement and motion. Led by librarian Kristen Frost, this group is a great way to increase your daily step count and get some fresh air and exercise. We will meet at the Borgatti Field parking area (257 River Road, Agawam). Please register to attend both of these events.

Our monthly programs are an excellent way for folks to pursue their interests or try out something new. Tea and Trivia returns on Tuesday, Mar. 17 at 6:30 p.m. and Wednesday, Mar. 18 at 2:30 p.m. in the Clini Community Room. We'll have a couple of rounds of both Jeopardy and pub-style trivia, and prizes will be awarded to the winning teams. The questions are the same for both sessions, so register for the time you prefer and join us for some fun! Are you a writer looking to connect with other writers? Join our Writers Group hosted by Katherine Anderson on Thursday, Mar. 19 at 6 p.m. in the Peirce Conference Room. This in-person workshop is open to writers of all levels and genres. Registration is

required. Do you need help using digital library resources like Libby, Hoopla, or Kanopy? Book a One-on-One Library Tech Help Appointment with librarian Erica LeFebvre to get started! We'll have three 45-minute appointments on Wednesday, Mar. 18 between 5:30 to 8 p.m. as well as Monday, Mar. 23 from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. To book an appointment, please visit bit.ly/APLTech.

Our Virtual Author Talk Series continues on Thursday, Mar. 12 at 7 p.m., acclaimed author Kate Quinn will discuss her latest fantastical work, The Astral Library, which poses the question: Have you ever wished you could live inside a book? Welcome to the Astral Library, where books are not just objects, but doors to new worlds, new lives, and new futures. Join us for a special conversation between award-winning journalist Shoshana Walter and best-selling and award-winning author Barbara Kingsolver as they chat about Walter's book Rehab: An American Scandal. This event will take place on Tuesday, Mar. 24 at 2 p.m. To register attend these virtual author talks, please call the library or visit library.org/agawamlibrary.

Feline Friends still in need of donations

AGAWAM – We are incredibly grateful for the response to our appeal for help with supplies. We have received packages at the professional office at 532 Springfield St. (at the corner of Cleveland St.) in Feeding Hills and at the Agawam Public Library. Financial donations have arrived by check at P.O. Box 174, Feeding Hills 01030 as well as PayPal: @FelineFriendsRaffle. Venmo: @Feline-Friends. Please include name/ contact information with donations if you would like an acknowl-

edgement. Venmo donations do not provide addresses or email information.

We appreciate every single donation. Local pick up is available by calling 786-5019.

We are hoping to hold a donation drive in March or the beginning of April; whenever there is no snow on the ground.

Like everyone else, this winter has been challenging for us with heating bills and snow plowing costs. We really need Friskies multipacks as well as Scoop Away clumping

litter and dry food. Costco and B.J.'s have the best deals for multi-cat households.

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.

STCC to host eighth annual Community Dental Day offering free dental care

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Technical Community College Dental Sciences Department, in partnership with the Valley District Dental Society, will host the eighth annual Community Dental Day on Saturday, March 28, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., in Building 20 at STCC.

This free event provides an opportunity for area residents who may not be receiving regular dental care to obtain necessary treatment at no cost.

Licensed dentists from the Valley District Dental Society, along with STCC dental hygiene and assisting students, will provide a range of services, including patient education, health screenings, diagnosis, X-rays and limited treatments such as fillings, extractions, sealants and assessments of urgent issues. While cleanings will not be provided during the event, patients needing one may schedule a low-cost follow-up visit at STCC's

dental clinic.

"Community Dental Day plays an important role in helping meet the needs of our community while giving our students meaningful, real-world clinical experience," said Christopher Scott, Dean of the School of Health and Patient Simulation at STCC. "We invite community members who need dental care to make use of this no-cost service. Through our collaboration with local dental professionals, we're able to provide high-quality care while also equipping our students with the skills they need to succeed in their future careers."

STCC offers pathways to dental careers through two programs. Students can seek a two-year associate degree in Dental Hygiene or a one-year certificate in Dental Assisting.

Dr. Michael Nardi, an event organizer with the Valley District Dental Society volunteer dentists, high-

lighted the impact of Community Dental Day.

"Too often, people delay getting dental treatment because it can be expensive or difficult to access," Nardi said. "This event allows us to offer timely care to individuals who need it most, while also helping them understand how to maintain their oral health in the long run. I'm proud to take part in an initiative that has such a positive impact on our community."

Valley District Dental Society is a supporter of STCC through generous financial support for scholarships and dental kits.

The event is open to the public, and no insurance is required. Patients can also return to STCC's dental clinic for affordable follow-up care if needed.

Community Dental Day is open to the public on a first-come-first-served basis. Please call (413) 755-4900 if you have questions.

Garden Club holding March meeting

AGAWAM – Agawam Garden Club's first meeting for the 2026 season will be held Mar. 10 at the Agawam Public Library at 6:30 p.m. The library is located at 750 Coo-

per Street, Agawam.

After a short business meeting John Milos, co-owner of Red Branch Landscaping, will present a talk on "Walls that Work: Form,

Function, and Flowers. Members are reminded to bring their annual dues. All club meetings are open to the public and not restricted to Agawam residents.



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Residents wanted to serve on Conservation Commission

AGAWAM – The Town of Agawam is seeking dedicated residents to serve on the Conservation Commission.

The Conservation Commission plays a vital role in protecting our community's natural resources, including wetlands, open space, wildlife habitats,

and water resources. Commission members review applications, participate in site visits, help guide local environmental policy, and work to preserve the natural character of our town for future generations. Conservation Commission meetings are held on the

second and fourth Thursday of each month at 6 p.m.

This is a volunteer position and a meaningful way to contribute to the future of our community.

If you are interested, please submit a letter of interest to Mayor's Office.

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USDA INSP. FRESH PORK SIRLOIN CUTLETS..... **\$2.22** lb

USDA INSP. S SMOKED PORK SHOULDER PICNIC..... **\$1.99** lb

USDA INSP. TURKEY BREAST..... **\$3.99** lb

USDA INSP. PROVOLONE CHEESE..... **\$4.44** lb

USDA INSP. FROZEN CUBED GOAT MEAT..... **\$6.69** lb

USDA INSP. FRESH SOUP CHICKEN (FOWL)..... **\$1.49** lb

USDA INSP. FRESH BEEF RIB EYE STEAKS **\$9.99** lb

USDA INSP. FRESH BONE-IN BEEF CHUCK ROAST or STEAK **\$6.19** lb

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USDA INSP. FRESH CHICKEN DRUMSTICKS 10 LB BAG **77¢** lb

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March Programs for kids, teens at the Agawam Library

AGAWAM – This March, the Agawam Public Library is excited to present some great programs for kids and teens, including Baby Storytimes for infants & their caretakers, weekly crafts, a Teen Crafternoon and so much more! All of our programs are free and open to the public. Some programs do require preregistration. To register, go to our website agawamlibrary.org or call us at 413-789-1550 ext. 3.

Baby Story Time - For birth - 18 mo.
Thurs. March 5, 19 at 9:30 am Drop-in.

Join us as we learn a little American Sign Language, read stories, sing, & play together.

Crafternoon - For grades K-2
Tuesday, Mar. 10 at 4:30 p.m. - Registration is required

Join us for some crafting time. We will have coloring sheets and paper crafts available, or you can bring some-

thing from home to work on.
Family Take and Make Crafts - For all ages
First day of the week and Thursdays - While supplies last - Drop-in & pick up.

A new Take & Make craft will be available the first day of each week and again on Thursdays.

March 5: Western Cat Magnet
March 9 and 12: Bee Hand Puppet

March 16 and 19: Leprechaun Hat
March 23 and 26: Bookworm Mask
March 30: Sheep Paper Doll

Grow, play, and learn - This program is provided by Pathways for Parents.
Wednesdays and Fridays Ages 0-2 at 9:30 a.m. Ages 3-5 at 10:30 a.m. - Drop-in.

Stories, songs and skill building, led by an Early Childhood Developmental trained staff member, guiding

caregivers in strengthening interactions with their child.

Make Shrinky Dinks - For grades 5-6
Wednesday, Mar. 25 at 6 p.m. - Registration is required
Come design your own keychain or earrings on special materials, then watch it shrink before your eyes.

Music with Mr. Liam - All Ages
This program is provided by Pathways for Parents.

Saturday, Mar. 21 at 9:30 a.m. - Registration is required
Join us for an energetic show filled with drums, the ukulele, puppets, and comedy as Mr. Liam (Liam Hurley) plays old favorites & silly parodies!

Open Lego Building - For grades 1-4
Tuesday, March 24 at 4:30 p.m. - Registration is required

Show off your Lego building skills. Use Legos to build something awesome. Creations will be put on display

in the Children's Room.
Pre-K pals - For ages 2 - 5
This program is provided by Pathways for Parents.
Mondays in March at 11 a.m. - Registration is required
Each week, we will focus on an area of development and provide fun activities to support your child to learn through play.

Special Saturday Drop-In Craft Basketball Sign Craft - For All Ages
Saturday, March 28 - All Day - While supplies last - Drop-in and pick up.

Kids can create a basketball sign to hang up at home.

Stroller Strides with FIT4MOM - For parents & their child ages 1 month - 10 years old
Saturday, Mar. 7 at 9:30 a.m. - Registration is required

This program is brought to us by FIT4MOM. Stroller Strides is a 60-minute total-body workout with

strength, cardio, and core training, all while engaging the little ones in a stroller.

Teed Advisory Board - For grades 7-12
Wednesday, Mar. 11 at 6 p.m.

Make plans for teen library programs and the Teen Space, and eat pizza! Members of the Teen Advisory Board can earn community service hours for their participation. If you'd like to join, contact Evan at edelano@agawamlibrary.org or 413-789-1550 extension 3.

Teen After School Drop-in - For grades 7-12
Every Monday the Agawam Public Schools are in session (new day) 2 to 3 p.m. in the Activity Room.

Stop by the library after school and visit the Activity Room. Play our Nintendo Switch, try out the air hockey table, eat snacks, or just hang out! No registration necessary.

Teen Crafternoon - For

grades 7-12
Wednesday, Mar. 25 at 2 p.m.
Visit the Teen Space for some crafting time. Do our suggested craft or use our materials do make something totally different.

Teen Take and Make Craft - For grades 7-12
Available now
Stop by the Teen Space to pick up a Take and Make Craft kit. They'll be available until we run out of supplies. No registration necessary.

Teen Trivia Thursday - For grades 7-12
Every Thursday the Agawam Public Schools are in session at 2 to 3:30 p.m.

Visit the Teen Space and answer a trivia question to get a small prize.

Toddler Time - For 19 mo. - 36 mo.
Monday, Mar. 16 and 30 at 9:30 a.m. - Drop-in.

Join us as we read stories, sing, & play together.

St. Joseph's holding church community dinner

WESTFIELD – St. Joseph's National Catholic Church at 73 Main Street in Westfield is hosting a Community Dinner on Sunday, Mar. 15 at 12 noon. This community dinner will feature baked fish with crumb topping, scalloped potatoes, and cold slaw. Dessert served will be lemon cake, coffee and bottled water will also be available.

Tickets are \$18 for adults and \$10 for children 12 and under. Everyone is welcome. To purchase tick-

ets and reserve your place, text or telephone Cliff at (413) 977-2007. If leaving a message, provide your name and telephone number. Take-out meals-to-go will be available for pick-up at 12:30 p.m.

When ordering tickets, indicate if dinners are to-go. Deadline for purchasing tickets is Mar. 12. All community members are welcome. Please join us for a wonderful and delicious Sunday dinner. Everyone is invited.

HCC hosting health careers open house March 26

HOLYOKE — Holyoke Community College will host an open house at its Center for Health Education & Simulation on Thursday, March 26, for anyone interested in exploring educational programs and careers in healthcare, human services, and veterinary and animal science.

Visitors to the Health Careers Open House are welcome to tour HCC's state-of-the-art health education facility from 4 to 6 p.m. and talk to representatives from the college's programs in nursing (RN and LPN), radiologic technology, veterinary and animal science, medical assisting, Foundations of Health (public health), CNA (certified nursing assistant), medical billing and coding, and human services.

The event is free and open to the public.

The building, located at 404 Jarvis Ave., just off the main HCC campus, is home to the college's nursing and radiologic technology programs, and medical simulation labs.

There will also be representatives attending from the offices of financial aid, admissions, advising, and workforce development to talk to prospective students about their educational options and career pathways.

"This is a fantastic chance to dive into all of our health majors in one exciting event," said nursing resource coordinator Dee Westcott. "We welcome everyone to explore our cutting-edge simulation labs, connect with our dedicated faculty



An HCC nursing student and instructor in one of the patient simulation rooms at the HCC Center for Health Education and Simulation.

and staff, and discover the exceptional student support services that set us apart."

If you can't make it in

person, please contact Dee Westcott at dwestcott@hcc.edu for more information.

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Agawam Public Schools
Kindergarten Information Night

For ALL Agawam students who will be 5 by September 1
March 12, 2026 ~ 6pm-7pm
Sapelli Elementary School, 65 Begley Street

- Learn about the screening process
- Receive enrollment information
- Learn how to prepare your child for K
- Meet educators and principals

Questions?
Contact
Andrea Polley
apolley@agawamed.org

Scan below to RSVP



Snow Date
March 19, 2026

Preschool Enrollment

Agawam Early Childhood Center

Are you an Agawam resident looking for a comprehensive, competitively priced preschool experience for your 3 or 4 year old child? The Agawam Early Childhood Center (ECC) will begin accepting applications for both morning and afternoon sessions for the 2026-2027 school year beginning March 23, 2026.




- The ECC provides all students with a standards-based education that builds the foundation for all future learning with the Agawam Public Schools.
- We meet the needs of children with and without disabilities and follow a developmentally appropriate curriculum where all children learn through play hands-on activities.
- We offer half-day sessions at the ECC Perry Lane 3-year-olds 8:30am-11:10am and 4-year-olds 12:10-2:50 pm.
- Applications are currently available at the Family Resource Center or you can download the application via the Agawam Public Schools website (agawamed.org). Select "Schools" - Early Childhood Center, select "Menu" - select "ECC Enrollment Information."

Contact Us
(413) 821-0597




Best Of Luck To The

2026 COLLEEN AND COURT!



Peter McNair

City Council



Opinion

Guest Column



I lost money as a widow and ex-spouse by not knowing the rules

Dear Rusty:

I just found out, as someone who was collecting widow's benefits on my second husband, a very small amount, for some time, that I was, all along, entitled to divorce benefits from my first husband, which are much more. I thought I had to wait until my first husband passed before I could collect anything from him. Now I learned I have the right to collect as a divorcee. All of these years I have been missing out on a bigger benefit because I didn't know this. Please make this clear and stress it for others in my position.

Signed: Lost Benefits

Dear Lost Benefits: I am truly saddened that you lost out on benefits from your first husband for such a long time. Although you could not collect an ex-spouse benefit from Husband #1 while you were married to Husband #2, as soon as your current husband died you again became eligible for ex-spouse benefits from Husband #1.

Basically, the rules say you cannot collect benefits from an ex-spouse if you have remarried and remain married. In other words, you cannot be "currently married" to collect benefits from an ex-spouse. But the death of Husband #2 meant that you were now eligible to collect ex-spouse benefits from your first husband - husband #1. I hope when you later filed for your ex-spouse benefits you asked for six months of retroactive benefits.

In your situation, when your Husband #2 died, you actually had a choice - either collect your surviving spouse benefit from your recently deceased husband #2, or to collect a regular ex-spouse benefit from your first husband if that is more than your benefit as your second husband's widow. Regular ex-spouse benefits from your first husband are available even though he is still living (and, indeed, even if he remarried) because you are no longer married to husband #2.

This, however, is not always the way things work out for someone who has had multiple marriages. It all depends on the SS benefit each former spouse was

entitled to. That's because your survivor benefit as your 2nd husband's widow is based on the full (100%) amount he was receiving from Social Security when he died.

In contrast, your benefit as your first husband's ex-spouse while he is still living will be based upon half (50%) of his full retirement age SS entitlement. And often, 100% of a deceased person's SS benefit is more than 50% of another living person's amount. But not always.

It's important to also know that if you claim any SS benefit before reaching your personal Rull Retirement Age, the monthly amount will be reduced. Benefits as a spouse (or a surviving spouse) do not reach maximum until the spouse reaches FRA, which is somewhere between age 66 and 67 depending on the spouse's year of birth.

It's also important to know that if a surviving spouse is working, any SS benefit received will be subject to Social Security's Annual Earnings Test, which limits how much can be earned before SS benefits are affected. For 2026, the earnings limit for those collecting early SS benefits is \$24,480 and, if that limit is exceeded, Social Security will take away some of your benefits. Note that the earnings test goes away when you reach your full retirement age.

Finally, be aware that if your first husband also predeceases you, you will then become eligible for a surviving ex-spouse benefit from him, even if he has remarried.

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 sadvvisor@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.



Garden related chores to ease in the season

Last week I'm writing about a blizzard, while this week it looks as if the mercury is going to climb! How about our crazy New England weather?

If the skyrocketing temps have you feeling the urge to get a jump on the gardening season, you are not alone! Here are a few tasks, straight from the archives that will get you outside, and a few more to get you back indoors, because inevitably, winter is here for awhile long-er. I think.

Perform appropriate garden chores.

I am usually negligent in cutting down asparagus foliage in the fall. Weather per-

your specimens. If you are not experienced at it, consult any number of good books on the subject before you head outdoors with your pruning shears and loppers.

Assess your tools

Was the rototill-er running rough last fall? Perform or schedule a tune up for later this month and beat the rush. Same goes for the weed whacker and lawn mower.

Hoe and spade blades can be washed of dirt and debris then sharpened with a metal file. Medium grit sandpaper works wonders to smooth out the wooden handles

mitting, in other words, if the snow melts enough over the course of the next two weeks, I will get out there and cut it back to its base soon, then haul off the branches to prevent any bugs that overwintered there from infesting this year's spears.

It is also time to prune blueberries, apples, raspberries and grapes.

Pruning can vary depending on the age and health of



GARDEN | page 7

Impact of words not realized

To the Editor:

After reading Councilor George Bitzas' comments in the AAN I have concluded that he sadly does not seem to grasp the meaning or impact of his words. Nonetheless, I totally agreed with the headline in the excellent Editorial in the AAN, "Councilor's comments offensive, regardless of intent."

I think the councilor simply does not realize that Agawam has changed hugely and significantly since he was first elected 37 years ago.

For many years Agawam was a predominately, almost 100% white, commu-

nity. While in the FY18-22 Housing Study Agawam was 96.7% white in 2000, and 93.4% in 2014, as of the December 2023 Housing Study, the numbers had changed to 86% white. And a recent report about language in our schools stated that almost 300 students speak 30 different languages other than English as their first language. So we are slowly changing into a much more diverse community.

Further, our income levels are all over the place. For many years new housing in Agawam has been very high end. At the same time, as reported in the Dec 2023 Hous-

ing Study, we have 4,105 or about 35%

low-income households, with people who have lived here for generations now being displaced from their homes.

These are all our neighbors who support our community.

My hope is that the controversy stirred by Councilor Bitzas remarks will lead to much needed conversations about the kind of town we want to live in, and how we can create a community that truly is welcoming and inclusive of all.

Sincerely,
Corinne Wingard

Councilor entitled to opinion

Dear Editor:

This proposal by Councilor Thomas Hendrickson (to allow domestic partnerships for town employees) was voted down primarily because it was poorly written, allowing for more than one domestic partner and would have created a nightmare in its administration as well as an excessive cost to tax payers.

Councilor George Bitzas' remarks were interpreted as being politically incorrect,

offensive and out of touch by several citizens at public speak time. Bitzas made reference to the importance of marriage and family and his objection to Agawam becoming another one of those liberal cities, like Cambridge, as an example.

He was entitled to his opinion. He has always had a heartfelt love for the Town of Agawam that has been well demonstrated by his numerous elections. He was correct about the city

of Cambridge- it is ranked #23rd most liberal city in the country and 9th in the state of Mass. He was justified to express his opinion and those that called for his censure and resignation, I fear, are a little to self-absorbed and self-righteous. It's one thing to disagree- but trying to discredit and demean a loyal town official because of the manner in which he expressed his opinion is not a civil way to act.

Rick Locke

City Council contends comments are not directed at people

Dear Editor:

I am compelled to respond to Gregory Scibelli's recent editorial regarding my comments at the Feb. 2 Agawam City Council meeting. Unfortunately, his column was not an objective analysis but a one-sided opinion piece that omitted critical context, ignored my direct responses to his questions, and advanced a narrative that appears driven more by

personal and political bias than by a commitment to fair reporting.

For the record, my remarks were directed at municipal policies and governance trends in certain cities—not at the residents of those communities. At no time did I disparage individuals, lifestyles, or any group of people. I have served the residents of Agawam for 37 consecutive years, elected

repeatedly by wide margins. My record demonstrates that I have always treated every resident with respect and without discrimination.

Scibelli states that I am "unapologetic," yet he fails to print or acknowledge the explanations I provided to him when he contacted me. He chose not to include my full answers to his seven questions, while giving substantial space to critics and

commentary that supported a predetermined conclusion. That is not balanced journalism.

Reasonable people can disagree on the domestic partnership ordinance or any other policy. That is the essence of democracy. But disagreement over policy should not be turned into personal attacks or used to question someone's character after decades of public

service.

I remain committed to serving all residents of Agawam with professionalism, respect, and integrity, as I have for nearly four decades. I welcome honest, balanced dialogue on the issues facing our city—dialogue that reflects all perspectives, not just those that fit a particular political narrative.

Sincerely,
George Bitzas



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your health

By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN
Guest Column



betes altogether.

And avoiding elevated blood glucose means you also lessen the risk of its associated outcomes, such as a higher chance for stroke, heart disease, kidney failure, limb amputation and blindness.

Even if you have regular bloodwork at your doctor's office, it may not include A1C, which requires a separate testing procedure. There were sometimes hassles with insurance coverage if the test was being used for screening and not diagnosing, but in 2024 Medicare began covering two screening A1C tests a year. If you have commercial insurance, you will want to check with them to see if the test is covered for you.

What does A1C measure?

An A1C test (also known as an HbA1C test) looks at a sample of your hemoglobin to find your average estimated blood glucose level over the

previous three months, which is a more useful measure than a single point in time. While the standard blood glucose test requires fasting, the A1C test does not, making it easier on patients and their providers.

The number that comes back is expressed as a percentage. For example an A1C of 5.7 means that 5.7% of the hemoglobin is "glycated," or linked to sugar.

What's a normal A1C?

Typically, an A1C lower than 5.7 is considered "normal"; between 5.7 and less than 6.5 is considered "pre-diabetic." This is the blinking yellow light that tells you it's time to make some lifestyle changes to prevent full-blown diabetes. You know what these changes are: a healthier diet and more exercise, probably coupled with medication.

An A1C of 6.5 or higher indicates diabetes. That said,

A1C can be affected by other factors, such as blood transfusions, medications, stress and hormone levels, so there's no "one size fits all" interpretation. That's why Medicare decided to cover two screening tests a year, in case levels are being affected by something else.

Should you get screened?

The American Medical Association is hopeful that making it easier for patients to get two A1C screenings a year will lead to earlier diagnosis of pre-diabetes and prevention of full-blown diabetes. Some of the symptoms of diabetes can be so subtle you may not even notice them, so if you have a family history of Type 2 diabetes, ask your doctor about getting screened.

Also let your primary care provider know if you're experiencing any of these symptoms:

- Extreme thirst and/or hunger
- More frequent urination
- More fatigue
- Slow-healing sores
- Blurry vision

A special offer from the American Red Cross

This November in honor of Diabetes Awareness Month and its theme – "Taking Action to Prevent Diabetes-Related Health Problems" – the American Red Cross is offering free A1C screenings to all blood donors who haven't received the test in the past 12 months. It has found that about one in every five donors has an A1C in the pre-diabetic or diabetic range.

To receive your free A1C result, make a successful blood, platelet or plasma donation and ensure you haven't received an A1C test through the Red Cross in the past 12 months. Results will appear within one to two weeks in

HEALTH | page 12

Be aware of your A1C

The people dancing and singing in pharmaceutical commercials brag that "Drug X lowered my A1C!" This seems to make them happy, so you may be wondering what A1C is and why it may be an important number for you to know – especially during November, which is National

Diabetes Awareness Month.

It's important because an elevated A1C is a possible signal that you are at a higher risk of developing Type 2 diabetes. The good news is that if you can catch this disorder while it's still in its "pre-diabetes" phase, you have a good chance of avoiding Type 2 dia-

SUMMER CAMP

Check Out These Great Camps!

summer@HCC

Holyoke Community College Summer Youth Programs for Ages 8-16

Save your spot and register today for summer fun!

July 27-31, Minecraft Designers (ages 8-10, 11-14)
August 3-7, Python Programmers (ages 8-10, 11-14)
July 20-24, Make Your First Video Game (ages 8-10, 11-14)
July 13-17, ROBLOX Coders (ages 8-10, 11-14)
July 6-10 and 13-17, Fun Bites with Chef Swanigan (ages 9-16)
July 20-24 and 27-31, Around the world with Chef Swanigan (ages 9-16)
July 6-10 and 13-17, Cooking without Borders with Chez Vargas-Gonzalez (ages 9-16)
July 20-24 and 27-31, Passport to Flavors with Chef Vargas-Gonzalez (ages 9-16)

**HOLYOKE
COMMUNITY
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Check out our adult enrichment courses, too! hcc.edu/bcs

Make the most of the summer camp

Summer camp season will soon be here, and throngs of children will board buses each morning or pack their parents' cars full of essentials to survive a few weeks away from home.

Looking back, many adults who experienced summer camp have fond memories of their adventures — whether they all went according to plan or there were some hiccups along the way. Parents want their children to make their own summer camp memories. Even if the canoe capsizes or the cabin leaks during a summer thunderstorm, such experiences can build character and strengthen friendships.

According to RegPack, an online registration software company, more than six million American children participate in some form of camp each year, including sleep-away camp or day camp. The American Camp Association says that number is closer to 14 million, with the most popular camp session length around one week or less. Families getting prepared for camp can follow these guidelines to ensure the experience is one kids won't soon forget.

Search for an accredited camp

Accredited camps must meet more than 300 standards related to program quality, safety and health, according to the ACA. An accredited camp will likely give parents the most peace of mind.

Consider children's readiness

There's no magic age when a child may be ready to go to camp, but generally kids who are ages seven or eight may be fine to start a resident sleep-away camp. Day camp kids can begin as early as age three, the same age kids often begin preschool programs. Gauge whether the child has spent time away from home at friends' or family members' homes to decide if a resident camp will be the right fit or if a day camp is a better fit.

Connect with fellow campers

If possible, attend a meet-and-greet prior to the start of the season. Neighborhood day camps tend to draw kids from local communities, so there's already a chance kids will know a few fellow campers.

Get to know camp counselors early on

Campers can introduce themselves to camp counselors and other program directors and are urged to ask questions about specific programs. Counselors can direct campers toward activities they may enjoy.

Make the most of all situations

Much of summer camp will likely be smooth-sailing, but it's reasonable to expect some bumps along the way. Campers shouldn't expect perfection, but use the situations that may go awry as learning experiences on how to handle adversity — trying to find the fun in them anyway. Even a medical situation can be overcome, particularly because camps staff qualified medical personnel to ensure campers are safe and well.

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The Bement School
94 Old Main Street
Deerfield, MA 01342

Registration Link
bement.org/summer

Gain the skills needed to ace that important job interview

AGAWAM – Preparing for interviews can feel overwhelming, especially if you've never had the chance to practice in a real-world setting. This interactive Mock Speed Interviewing Night is designed to help students and early-career job seekers build confidence, sharpen communication skills, and better understand what employers are really looking for. Hosted in partnership

with the Agawam Public Library and the Employers Association of the NorthEast (EANE), this program offers a supportive, low-pressure environment where participants will rotate through short mock interviews and networking conversations with experienced HR professionals and hiring managers. EANE members are employers and HR professionals from industries and orga-

nizations of all sizes across the Northeast, ranging from small local businesses to larger regional employers. Many of these professionals regularly hire, interview, onboard, and support employees as part of their day-to-day roles. For this program, EANE member volunteers will participate as mock interviewers and conversation partners, sharing real-world insight, encouragement, and

practical feedback based on current hiring practices. Throughout the evening, participants will:

- Practice answering common interview questions
- Receive immediate, constructive feedback by HR Professionals from local businesses that are EANE members
- Learn how employers evaluate communication, professionalism, and first im-

pressions

- Gain insight into how interview skills transfer across industries and career paths

The evening will begin with a brief overview of today's workforce and interview expectations, followed by guided speed interviewing sessions and a group wrap-up discussion. Attendees will also receive a take-home checklist with practical interview tips they can use

right away. This program is ideal for high school students, college students, and young adults preparing for their first job, internship, or career move. No prior interview experience is required. Please register for this program through the Agawam Public Library's website or by calling the library at 413-789-1550, as space is limited.

Registration open now for HCC Summer Youth programs

HOLYOKE — It's still winter, but it's not too early to start thinking about summer.

Registration is now open for 2026 Summer Youth Programs at Holyoke Community College.

Starting July 7 and running through August 8, HCC will offer 16 week-long, in-person summer programs for youth aged 8 to 16.

For more than 40 years, HCC has offered fun, challenging summer education activities for youth, providing early opportunities for students to experience a college environment guided and encouraged by experienced professionals.

HCC's 2026 on-campus summer youth programs run Monday through Friday, some for a full day and others for a half day.

All in-person programs will be held on the main HCC campus, 303 Homestead Ave., except for cooking classes, which

are held at the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute, 164 Race St., Holyoke:

July 6-10:

Cooking without Borders with Chef Marangelly Vargas-Gonzalez (ages 9-16): In this lively hands-on camp, young chefs will team up to chop, stir, and create tasty dishes from around the world. Each day brings a new theme and a chance to discover fresh ingredients, cool cooking techniques, and the joy of working together in the kitchen. By week's end, they'll walk away with new cooking skills, delicious recipes to show off at home, and plenty of tasty memories. (9 a.m. - 3 p.m., \$425)

Fun Bites with Chef Diana Swanigan (ages 9-16): Join us for an exciting week of hands-on culinary fun, where young chefs will discover the joy of

cooking delicious, easy-to-prepare meals to share with family and friends. Participants will work together to chop, season, cook, and taste a variety of recipes - all made from scratch. Each day introduces new menu themes, ingredients, and techniques designed to build confidence in the kitchen. (9 a.m. - 3 p.m., \$425)

July 13-17:

Cooking without Borders with Chef Marangelly Vargas-Gonzalez (ages 9-16, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., \$425)

Fun Bites with Chef Diana Swanigan (ages 9-16, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., \$425)

ROBLOX Coders (ages 8-10; 11-14): Discover the Lua coding language while designing experiences in ROBLOX, an online universe where you can create anything you dream of. New developers will learn to use ROBLOX's Studio software

to reimagine the popular game genres with their own custom code. Instructor Brittany Pietskowski. (9 a.m. to noon for ages 8-10; 1 to 4 p.m. for ages 11-14, \$199)

July 20-24:

Around the World with Chef Diana Swanigan (ages 9-16): Cuisine around the world serves as a universal language that unites people across cultures through shared flavors, traditions, and stories. Learn to prepare full-course meals from Asia, Puerto Rico, Greece, Italy, and New Orleans. (9 a.m. - 3 p.m., \$425)

Make Your First Video Game (ages 8-10; 11-14): Go beyond the limitations of traditional 2D game design classes and create an immersive 3D world. Students will learn the physics behind 3D games, explore beginner event scripting, level design, controlling

the flow of gameplay, and storytelling. Instructor Brittany Pietskowski. (9 a.m. - noon for ages 8-10; 1 - 4 p.m. for ages 11-14, \$199)

Passport to Flavors with Chef Marangelly Vargas-Gonzalez (ages 9-16): This hands-on cooking camp takes kids on a delicious journey across global cuisines, exploring flavors, techniques, and ingredients that make each culture unique. Dive into fun daily themes like diner classics, Mexican favorites, Mediterranean feasts, Filipino street bites, and southern comfort food, all while building confidence one tasty dish at a time. (9 a.m. - 3 p.m., \$425)

July 27-31:

Around the World with Chef Diana Swanigan (ages 9-16, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., \$425)

Minecraft Designers (ages 8-10; 11-14): Learn how to

create a custom map, design structures to share between worlds, build with Redstone and Command blocks, and create custom textures for you to import at home or share with friends. Instructor Brittany Pietskowski. (9 a.m. - noon for ages 8-10; 1 - 4 p.m. for ages 11-14, \$199).

Passport to Flavors with Chef Marangelly Vargas-Gonzalez (ages 9-16, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., \$425)

August 3-7:

Python Programmers (ages 8-10; 11-14): Learn the world's fastest-growing programming language favored by Google, NASA, YouTube, and the CIA. Learn how to code with Python to create engaging apps and games. Instructor Brittany Pietskowski. (9 a.m. - noon for ages 8-10; 1 - 4 p.m. for ages 11-14, \$199).

Senior Center announces activities

AGAWAM – Here are some upcoming activities happening at the Agawam Senior Center. Some require registration or confirmation. Information in the details below:

German Language and Culture Experience

Have you been interested in learning a new language and about a new culture? Now you have the opportunity to do so. We are looking for five or six participants who want to learn to speak German and learn more about its culture, community and population. Call Kristina at 726-2836 to register.

St. Patrick's Day Parade

The Agawam Senior Center may participate in the

St. Patrick's Day Parade this year, if you are interested in joining us please see Cindy to sign up.

Property Tax Exemptions with, Agawam Assessor Kelly McCormick

Tuesday, Mar. 10 at 1 p.m. in the dining room

Agawam Assessor, Kelly McCormick, will be at the Senior Center on Tuesday, Mar. 10 at 1 p.m. to discuss property tax exemptions. She will provide information on the property exemptions available for FY2026, and review the criteria to qualify for each one. Applications will be available and Kelly will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Here are the exemptions

she will be covering: there are qualifications to each exemption

*Senior Exemption (Clause 41C) - \$1,000.00

*Surviving Spouse, Minor and Elderly Exemption (Clause 17D) - \$258.00

*Veteran Exemption (Clause 22) - \$400.00

*Veteran Exemption (Clause 22E) - \$1,000.00

*Veteran Exemption for Surviving Spouse (Clause 22D) - Full Tax Exemption

*Blind Exemption (Clause 37) - \$437.50

If you are unable to make it, please contact the Agawam Assessor's Office at (413) 786-0400 x8700 and they can provide you with further information.

Carillon Tower Dinner Experience Raffle announced

WESTFIELD – Did you know that Stanley Park of Westfield offers a private dinner inside its iconic Carillon Tower? The community has a rare opportunity to win this truly unforgettable experience.

Stanley Park is hosting a special raffle for a once-in-a-lifetime evening inside the historic Carillon Tower. On Saturday, May 2 at 5 p.m., one lucky winner and three guests will enjoy an exclusive four course gourmet dinner, perfectly paired with wine, in a setting few ever get to experience.

The evening begins with appetizers and wine or

champagne served on the outdoor balcony overlooking the Park's stunning Rose Garden. Guests will then move inside the Tower for a candlelit dinner surrounded by the glow of its beautiful stained-glass windows, creating an intimate and memorable atmosphere.

Private Chef Daniel Mahoney has curated three distinct menu options, allowing the winner to personalize this extraordinary culinary experience to suit their tastes.

Tickets are \$20 each, and only 200 tickets will be sold, making this a limited opportunity to support Stanley

Park while entering to win an exceptional evening.

The dinner will take place on May 2 at 5 p.m. The date and time are not subject to change. The drawing will be held on Friday, Apr. 10 at 3 p.m. The winner will be notified through Auctria.com and by Stanley Park staff.

An extraordinary setting, a remarkable meal, and an evening you will never forget.

Tickets may be purchased online at: <https://carillon-towerdinner.auctria.events>

For more information about Stanley Park and its programs, please visit www.stanleypark.org.

Lions Club sets dinner for March 11

AGAWAM – The Agawam Lions Club will hold its annual Corned beef and cabbage dinner on Wednesday, Mar. 11 from 5 to 7 p.m.

at Agawam High School. You can dine in or take out and there will be a raffle table at the event. Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$7 for

children under 12. You can purchase tickets at the door or contact the Lions Club for a QR code to buy tickets in advance.

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Schools & Youth

Holyoke Community College scholarship season open

HOLYOKE — The Holyoke Community College Foundation is now accepting scholarship applications for the 2026-2027 academic year.

The application deadline is Friday, March 13, 2026.

Last year, the HCC Foundation awarded 410 scholarships worth about \$364,000 to 379 incoming, current, and transferring HCC students. Some students received multiple scholarship awards. The average scholarship award is typically around \$900.

“The scholarship program is the flagship initiative of the HCC Foundation, and it reflects the incredible generosity of our donor community,” said Amanda Sbriscia, vice president of Institutional Advancement and executive director of the HCC Foundation. “Every scholarship tells two stories – one of a donor who believes in the power of education, and one of a student whose path forward is made possible by

that belief.”

Students must be currently enrolled at HCC or have been accepted for the upcoming academic year to be eligible for scholarships.

Applicants only need to fill out a single online form to be automatically matched with the scholarships they are most qualified to receive. There are scholarships for new students, current students and students transferring to other institutions, scholarships based on financial need, scholarships for students in specific majors, scholarships for residents of certain communities, and scholarships that recognize academic achievement.

“Last year’s 410 scholarship awards represent 410 opportunities for students to focus on their studies rather than financial stress,” said Sbriscia. “We’re proud to continue this tradition of supporting HCC students as they work toward their goals.”

To view scholarship opportunities and begin the application process, please go to: www.hcc.edu/scholarships.

The HCC Scholarship Resource Center, on the first floor of the Donahue Building (Room 158), is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., to help current and incoming students navigate the process of applying for scholarships.

The HCC Foundation is a 501(c)(3) that works to advance the college’s mission, vision, and values. Founded in 1968 as the Friends of Holyoke Community College, in response to a devastating fire that forced the college to rebuild on a new campus, the Foundation now manages assets of more than \$20 million, the largest community college foundation endowment in Massachusetts.

Questions should be directed to the HCC Foundation office at 413-552-2182, or by email to scholarships@hcc.edu.

Smith Scholarship applications now being accepted

WESTFIELD – The Horace Smith Fund will be awarding \$317,000 in scholarships and fellowships to residents of Hampden County, who have also graduated from an eligible high school or private school. This year 21 scholarships, four fellowships and one William R. Rooney Award for students with special needs will be presented to recipients at the June 18 Awards Night ceremony at Storowton Carriage House in West Springfield.

Scholarships are offered not only to graduating high school seniors but also to students already in college

or those wishing to return to college. Scholarships of \$12,000 are distributed as \$3,000 annually and renewable each year until graduation. Fellowship awards of \$15,000 are distributed as \$7,500 annually and renewable for one additional year to students pursuing a full-time graduate degree. Students must maintain at least a B average to renew.

Recipients are selected on a variety of criteria, including academic records, merit, and financial need. Of great importance is a personal written account of why the student feels deserving of financial as-

istance. Applicants must submit their transcripts and, if applicable, college entrance exam scores or graduate degree specific tests, and three letters of recommendation.

Completed applications must be received either electronically or be mailed to The Horace Smith Fund at 16 Union Avenue, Suite 2K, Westfield, MA 01085 no later than March 15, 2026. Applications are available at local high school guidance offices, college financial aid offices, and on-line at www.HoraceSmithFund.org or by phoning (413) 739-4222.

Garden Club scholarship applications now available

AGAWAM – Applications are now available for the Agawam Garden Club 2026 scholarship. To qualify for the scholarship students must be a graduating senior of Agawam High School or a college student who graduated from Agawam High School and is planning to attend an institution of higher learning in the Fall. Applicants must be majoring in or planning on majoring in one of the

following: botany, environmental engineering, environmental science, earths systems, forest management, natural resources, plant soil and insect science, sustainable agriculture, sustainable horticulture or food and farming, turf grass science and management, landscape design and management technology, clean energy, technology studies: waste water or other environ-

mental related studies. The recipient will be awarded a \$1,000 scholarship at the clubs annual May meeting. Completed applications along with transcripts and references must be submitted to Denise Carmody, 40 Primrose Lane, Agawam MA 01001 by Apr. 1. Applications are available through Agawam High School or can be found on our website at agawamgardenclub.com.

Agawam Junior Women’s Club offering scholarships

AGAWAM – The GFWC Agawam Junior Women’s Clubs offers scholarships to graduating AHS and home school students who live in Agawam/Feeding Hills.

Please consider apply-

ing through our website ~ easy to do with all electronic applications. Download the application form, save and rename, and submit it.

We offer two separate applications ~ one general

and one for field of education.

The April 1 deadline will be strictly adhered to. For more information, go to <https://www.agawamgfwc.com/scholarships>

Class of 1970 planning fall reunion

AGAWAM – Agawam High School Class of 1970 will be holding its class reunion in the fall. We are looking for our classmates. Please contact one of the commit-

tee members listed below with your name and email address. Thank you and hope to see you all soon.

Gale Sullivan: GaleP-Sullivan@verizon.net

Holly Cloran: Pohner-Holly@gmail.com Scott Macey: mace1459@comcast.net Gail Donais: GCDonais@cox.net Shirley Porter: ShirleyPorter525@gmail.com

Annual CROP Walk set for Apr. 26

AGAWAM – The Agawam/West Springfield CROP Hunger Walk will take place on Apr. 26 to help neighbors facing hunger around the block and around the world. With recent cuts to federal nutrition, healthcare, and humanitarian aid programs, organizers say this year’s Walk is more urgent than ever. A portion of funds will support the Parish Cupboard, which serves people from Agawam, Feeding Hills and West Springfield. The balance of money raised will support CWS (Church World Service) programs world-

wide. Across the United States, reductions to key safety net programs - including SNAP (food stamps), Medicaid, and the Child Tax Credit - are pushing more families to seek help from commu-

nity food programs. At the same time, the withdrawal of U.S. foreign assistance has shuttered lifesaving services abroad, leaving organizations like CWS to keep vital food, health, and shelter programs running in refugee and crisis-affected communities.

Here in West Springfield, Agawam and Feeding Hills, the annual CROP Hunger Walk helps to stock the Parish Cupboard with emergency groceries and supports the lunch program. Globally, donations sustain emergency food assistance, healthcare access in refugee settings, climate-smart agriculture, and long-term solutions that strengthen food security.

Faith communities, school and civic groups, and local businesses can all participate in the Apr. 26 event.

To register or donate, visit <https://events.crophungerwalk.org/chw/event/aga-wamma>. Groups can also form a walk team online. Promotional resource packets will be available at the Mar. 7 Parish Association meeting at Grace Lutheran Church, 1552 Westfield Street in West Springfield from 9 to 10 a.m. Materials are also available by contacting Diana Forfa at First Congregational Church in West Springfield. For more information, please email drforfa@hotmail.com or call 413-739-6608.

Those who can’t walk can donate or sponsor a walker - every step and dollar helps! The local event raised over \$11,000 in 2025. Organizers hope to surpass that total this year to meet the growing need.

GARDEN ■ from page 4

of these and other garden tools.

After which, boiled linseed or tung oil can be applied to both the handle and the metal blade. It helps the wood resist moisture which leads to cracking and prevents rust on the blades.

I love my Dad’s old spade. It has a great, hand-made wooden handle that is about to crack through; sure wish I had oiled it 20 years ago!

Take inventory.

Many of us have our seed orders in by now. If you don’t, or if you plan to buy your seeds locally, it is a great idea to go through your leftovers.

Before you decide whether or not they are keepers, consider their age and how they were stored. My rule of thumb is that if any seed is over three years old it isn’t worth the risk. Some seeds, such as those for parsley, hybrid onion, carrot and parsnip expire even sooner. These are discarded after only one year.

If seeds were stored in a moist or overly hot location, their viability can be cut short sooner than normal. If

you have concerns that they might not germinate, sow a few seeds indoors in pots in a warm location and see what kind of results you get.

Nothing is more upsetting than planting seeds in the garden and having few or no seedlings come up. Time is wasted and the harvest is delayed by unknowingly utilizing dead seeds.

We can also take inventory of the various supplies we use during the growing season. How are you set on lime, grass seed, and fertilizers?

Plan to take advantage of pre-season sales by knowing what you need ahead of time. Do you have enough containers, trays and labels?

If you find yourself short, you need not buy them. You can start seeds in repurposed fruit and vegetable boxes, the kind that mushrooms, strawberries and lettuce mixes come in. They work great as long as you make a few drainage holes in the bottom.

Pint sized ice cream containers are perfect for a second transplanting of tomato or pepper plants. Seeds of squash or annual flowers can be sown in single serving ice cream cups. As a kid

I always saved our Popsicle sticks for labeling seedlings or garden rows.

When I run out of labels, all it takes is a trip to the recycle bin to make some more.

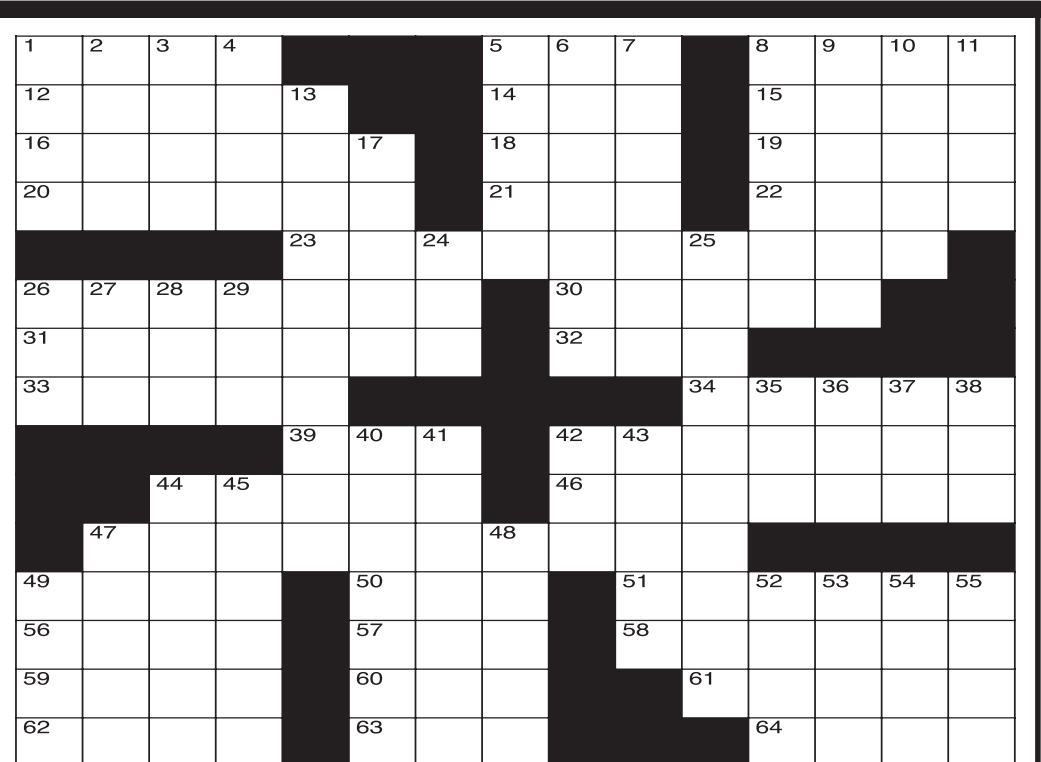
Last year I cut them out of quart-sized yogurt containers; they were the perfect length.

Practice good garden hygiene

Disinfect any containers, labels, stakes etc. that you wish to reuse this gardening season by washing them in hot soapy water then a quick rinse of one part bleach to nine parts water. This mixture will kill any pathogens left behind from previous gardening endeavors.

Out with the old, and in with the new – all in due time!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 34 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.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Unit of dry measure
5. One who defies authority
8. Social media giant
12. Render holy
14. “Much ___ about nothing”
15. Computer manufacturer
16. Creed
18. Immoral act
19. Mountain pass
20. Winged nut
21. Don’t know when yet
22. Elected officials
23. Corrupt tendencies
26. Popular adult beverage
30. Made a mistake
31. Morally correct
32. Type of whale
33. Portable conical tent

34. Native people of the Congo
39. More (Spanish)
42. Classroom implements
44. Cognizant of
46. One who tells
47. Free from bondage
49. Thick piece of something
50. Containing two adjacent nitrogen atoms
51. Removed from the record
56. Legendary singer
57. Broke up the earth
58. Hunting expedition
59. Contributes
60. Unit of work or energy
61. Wreckage on the sea bed
62. Affirmative! (slang)

63. Witness
 64. Scrape (Archaic)
- ### CLUES DOWN
1. “___ and flows”
 2. Humble request for help
 3. A position of leadership
 4. Continent
 5. Adherent of a particular religion
 6. Things that can be eaten
 7. Self-governing Netherlands territory
 8. Long-tailed crow
 9. Repeated
 10. Bluish greens
 11. Humanities
 13. Someone who serves in the armed forces
 17. Labor (Spanish)
 24. Zero
 25. Shared by involving three parties
 26. Queens ballplayer

27. Consumed
28. Rest here please
29. Men’s fashion accessory
35. American time
36. Sound unit
37. They ___
38. Soviet Socialist Republic
40. Places to play video games
41. A sudden attack of illness
42. When you hope to arrive
43. Charges
44. Actress Seyfried
45. A tributary of the Ohio River
47. Omit when speaking
48. Armored fish
49. Remain
52. From a distance
53. Adventure story
54. Geological times
55. Eat dinner

SPORTS

Agawam hockey gets win in WMass tournament

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

AMHERST – Senior assistant captain Andrew Holton had a team-leading 13 goals and 12 assists for the Agawam

hockey team this winter. Holton's final high school goal was very memorable.

The Western Mass. Class B quarterfinal match between the fifth-seeded Brownies and the fourth-seeded Am-

herst Hurricanes was tied 4-4 a minute into overtime. That's when Holton received a pass from junior Kaeden Clifford before firing a shot into the net past Amherst senior goalie Jason Kim

(34 saves), which gave the Brownies an exciting 5-4 victory at Orr Rink located on the Amherst College campus on Presidents Day, Feb. 15.

"I've never scored a game winning goal before and it's

just an amazing feeling," said Holton after celebrating with his teammates. "We worked very hard in tonight's game."

Holton, who joined the varsity squad as a freshman, described his first career

game-winning goal.

"After Kaeden passed me the puck, I cut to the middle of the slot and fired a shot. I just knew that the puck

HOCKEY | page 10

Offensive falters in middle, Brownies fall in state tourney

AGAWAM – Last Tuesday evening, Agawam High School boys basketball got off to a good start, but their offense had a power outage

in the second and third quarters, limited to just 15 points, causing Agawam to go from a six-point lead to a six-point deficit. Despite a strong fin-

ish, Agawam was not able to come all the way back and fell to Norwood High School 60-56 in the preliminary round of the Division 2 state tour-

nament. Gavin Cruz would lead Agawam with 17 points, while Dylan Jorgensen, Brody Sheehan, and Caeden Roeder had 11 points all each.



Caeden Roeder tries to get around a Norwood guard.



Yusuf Ebrahim makes a three-point attempt.



Matthew Letellier tries to get the rebound.



Dylan Jorgensen gets ready to pass over midcourt.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Trevor Moynihan calls out a play



Gavin Cruz attempts to make a pass.



Brody Sheehan makes his way down the court.

Sports

HCC Women celebrate final home game

HOLYOKE – Women's basketball played their last regular season game on Friday evening, Feb. 20, hosting regional opponent Bunker Hill CC. The Lady Cougars defeated their opposition 67-56 to earn their seventh straight win. Holyoke's two second-year players, Emily McGrail (Ware, MA / Ware HS) and Erin Bullough (South Hadley, MA / South Hadley HS), were honored with a sophomore night that included a pregame ceremony recognizing the athletes and their accomplishments. Posters, photos and decorations were hung on the walls and in the stands around Golas Court.

McGrail led the Cougars in blocks during Friday's game and was second in rebounds, tallying six of each. She leads Holyoke in blocks this season with 59 and blocks per game, averaging 3.5. McGrail is sixth in NJCAA Division III in blocks and third in blocks per game. Bullough sunk the Lady Cougars first basket of

the game on Friday. She leads Holyoke in three-point shooting percentage this season and is second in three-pointers made. Bullough has made 41.3% of the three-point shots she has attempted this year, ranking her fourth in NJCAA Division III. She has drained 31 total shots from long range on the year. Anastacia Dixon (Keene, NH / Keene HS) had an outstanding game in the regular season finale, leading Holyoke in points with 24 and rebounds with eight.

Women's basketball closes out the regular season with a 10-3 regional record and a 14-7 overall record. They are the second-place team in the New England (Region XXI) standings and will be the #2 seed entering the regional tournament. This will be HCC women's basketball's first postseason appearance in over 15 years. The Lady Cougars will get a bye to the tournament semifinals and will host the winner of one of the two quarterfinals.



Erin Bullough, of South Hadley, tries to overcome pressure.



Above: Johansy Andrades goes for the layup. Below: Tatiyana Zuniga passes in transition.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM



Annastacia Dixon gets the short jumper away.



Mileidy Rosado avoids a block and gets a shot.



Registration now underway for QVBL

SOUTH HADLEY – Registration has opened for the Quabbin Valley Baseball League, an over-28 recreational league, held its first meeting of 2026 to prepare for the upcoming season.

For the 2026 season, the cost will be \$215 and will include a 16th game added to the regular season schedule.

During the 2025 season, the league experimented with playing on Mother's Day Saturday as well as a weeknight game to allow players an opportunity to play under the lights. While the night games were very successful, the Mother's Day Saturday games were rained out.

Those elements will return along with a 16th game

with an opponent to be determined as the league's board explores possibilities for interleague matchups with another league in the region.

For returning players to the league, the deadline is Mar. 22 at 12 noon to be registered for the 2026 season in order to be guaranteed a roster spot. There will be open practices for all players but specifically targeted at new players scheduled for March 29 and April 4 at times and locations to be announced. The draft is currently scheduled to take place on April 4 following that practice.

The season is currently slated to start on Sunday, April 19 and following the success of the six-team fall

league last year, the league will also have a fall league in September and October this season.

The registration is live at www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org. Players must register and then pay the league dues via Venmo or contact the league leadership if an alternate form of payment is needed.

Aside from the weeknight and Mother's Day games, other games take place Sundays at 10 a.m. outside of Mother's Day, Memorial Day and July 4 weekends. Playoffs will be in August.

This is the 30th season for the league and league officials are looking to celebrate the anniversary with a couple of events.

More players wanted for Pioneer Valley Baseball

SOUTH HADLEY – The Pioneer Valley Baseball League, an adult baseball league for players who are age 18 and over, is now fully open for registration for the 2026 season.

The adult league will be administered by the Quabbin Valley Baseball League, and a registration link is on the home page of the league's website www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org. Thought it will be under the Quabbin umbrella, there will be no major changes in how the league is operated.

This year, the PVBL will have a 22-game regular season schedule followed by a double-elimination playoffs. The league, which had five teams last year and had to utilize multiple byes through-

out the season, will be fielding a sixth team this season.

There are several spots open for that sixth team, so players interested in joining the league should get signed up as soon as possible to claim a spot.

The league is a wood-bat only league utilizing playing under regular baseball rules though all players do bat. The league operates on a Saturday-Tuesday schedule. Games are played on Saturday mornings with 10 a.m. starts typical and on Tuesday evenings with start times in the 5:30 to 6 p.m. range. The league will start play in late April and run through the end of August. There are slots open for both full-time players and part-time players. The fee for full-time players will

be \$260 with part-time players getting up to 11 games for \$130. Fees paid go toward the operation of the league, paying for insurance, umpires, fields, and baseballs. No one profits in any way.

In addition to the new sixth team, there are limited open roster spots on the other teams in the league, so get your registration in as soon as possible to participate in this season.

Games are played at ballfields throughout the region from as far south as Southwick's Whalley Field, through South Hadley's Beachgrounds and up north at Frontier Regional High School in South Deerfield.

For any questions, please go to the league website for more information.

Sports

Different name, but overtime win for Worcester

WORCESTER – Did anyone in the city see their front door blow open unexpectedly at about 5:30 Sunday afternoon?

If so, it had nothing to do with the weather. It was the entire staff and roster of the Worcester Monkey Wrenches exhaling in unison after veteran Drew Callin scored what up to now is their biggest goal of the season.

It came at 4:27 of overtime to give the home team a 1-0 victory over the Adirondack

Thunder, one of the four teams ahead of them in the North Division standings. The goal snapped a four-game losing streak on home ice and allowed Worcester to earn four of a possible six points for the weekend.

The game marked only the second time in team history it was 0-0 after 60 minutes. Worcester won the last one, as well, on March 21, 2018 at Wheeling in a shootout.

The goal was Callin's 20th goal of the season. Anthony

Repaci set it up by stealing the puck in the left circle. Callin was alone on the right side, moved in on Thunder goalie Jeremy Brodeur and beat him with a backhand fake.

"Patch made a great pass over," Callin said, "that gave me some free space. I just picked my head up, saw (Brodeur) sliding over and I figured I'd go the other way."

The overtime victory was the home team's seventh of the season, fifth at the DCU

Center.

The goaltending was great, as it often is in this division.

Brodeur stopped 27 shots. Worcester's Parker Gahagen made 25 saves for his second 1-0 victory in 29 days.

The Monkey Wrenches killed five penalties and had just one power play. They killed them beautifully to keep the game scoreless.

Worcester's penalty kill featured some excellent work by Cole Donhauser, who

played a major role in Sunday's victory.

"We have a little bit of plan going into it," Donhauser said, "but the main thought is to deny the seams, don't let the puck get going east to west, deny the one-timers, try to protect the house and our D-men did a great job blocking shots."

Gahagen's presence has made a huge difference in all the close games Worcester has played recently. Throughout the back-and-forth hav-

oc, especially in the third period and overtime, he looked like the calmest person on skates.

And the home team is playing nothing but close games these days.

"I think everybody deems it important this time of year to play the right way," Tuzolino said.

Callin became the 14th player in team history to score 20 goals. He joins brother Anthony who had 24 last season.

Thunderbirds score much-needed win over Checkers

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds (21-25-5-2) overpowered the Charlotte Checkers (30-18-4-0) on Saturday night before a sell-out crowd of 6,793 inside the MassMutual Center on Military Appreciation Night, coming away with a 5-1 victory.

Zach Dean provided instant offense on Friday night, and the third-year pro experienced deja vu on this night, jabbing home a 2-on-1 pass

from Hugh McGing just 2:20 into the action to give Springfield a 1-0 lead.

Unlike a night earlier, Steve Ott's team was able to build upon its early lead with two successful penalty kills, followed by a power-play redirection by Matthew Peca at 18:57 of the first, as the captain tipped a Calle Rosen shot through Kirill Gerasimiyuk.

The T-Birds' offense proved to be far from finished, as Alek

Kaskimaki took a breakaway pass from Otto Stenberg at 4:30 of the second and stayed with his initial shot to cash in on a rebound past Gerasimiyuk, extending the lead to 3-0.

Charlotte finally got on the board just 52 seconds later when Noah Gregor crashed the net to chip a Brian Pinho pass over the shoulder of Will Cranley, but it proved to be just a small blip on the T-Birds'

radar in what would evolve into a firestorm of offense for the home team.

Only 1:03 of game time passed before Springfield had restored its three-goal advantage, as Jakub Stancl circled the offensive zone to the right circle before firing the puck back toward the goal mouth. Dylan Peterson parked himself right outside the crease and allowed the puck to ricochet off his skate and past Ger-

asimiyuk to make it a 4-1 game, chasing Gerasimiyuk from the game in the process.

Charlotte backup Louis Domingue did not fare much better, as McGing revved up the ice on a breakaway 55 seconds later. McGing was tripped and may have earned a penalty shot, but as he was falling, the puck continued on a straight line path under Domingue's legs, giving McGing credit for the third

T-Birds goal in a 2:50 blitz, extending the lead to 5-1.

There would be no more goals in the final half of the game, but the fireworks were far from done, and with just eight seconds remaining and tempers flaring, Cranley and Domingue met at center and dropped the mitts for a goalie fight, the first in T-Birds history, which left the sellout crowd in an uproar to close out the victory.

HOCKEY ■ from page 8

was going into the net," said Holton, who also assisted on two goals. "This was one of the best hockey games that I've ever played in. We're now hoping to win another Western Mass. title this year."

Agawam, who wrapped up the regular season with a 4-3 overtime loss against Chicopee two days earlier, posted a 6-1 victory over Taconic in last year's Class B finals.

Unfortunately, the Brownies (3-15) didn't make it back to the championship match again this year. Their season came to an end 24 hours later

following a 5-2 semifinal loss to top-seeded McCann Tech at the Olympia Ice Center in West Springfield.

The other seniors listed on the Brownies hockey roster are Jackson Lariviere, Noah Beavis, Joey Wilikinson, Gavin Ogorzalek, Nick Brown, Brady Blanchette, Casey Thomas, who's an assistant captain, and team captain Anthony Barbarini.

"We have a total of nine seniors on this year's team," said Agawam head coach Todd Rowley. "We had an up and down season, but those guys never quit. They work very hard at practice and in every game. I'm very proud

of them. It took a total team effort to win tonight's game."

Blanchette, who's the Brownies starting goalie, was credited with a total of 17 saves against Amherst.

The Hurricanes finished their season with a 6-12-2 overall record. They tied Chicopee (4-4) and Taconic (2-2).

"I thought my players played very well in tonight's game, but it just came down to one shot in overtime," said Amherst head coach Michael Rousseau. "That was the difference maker."

The Hurricanes senior captain is Ethan Mooney, who's a defenseman. He was

credited with three assists in the quarterfinals.

"Ethan joined our hockey team as a sophomore and it's been a pleasure watching him grow during the past couple of years," Rousseau said. "He's the leader of our hockey team."

Mooney, who attends Pathfinder Tech, plays hockey for Amherst as part of a co-op.

The other hockey players from Pathfinder Tech listed on the Amherst hockey roster are sophomore Noah Lattulippe, sophomore Landon Lukasik, sophomore Nolan MacTavish, freshman Mason Sadusky, freshman Lin-

coln Auclair, and freshman Landon LaCroix.

Agawam and Amherst split the regular season series for the second year in a row.

The Hurricanes took a 1-0 lead in the quarterfinal match following an unassisted goal from junior Sawyer Ferro at the 10:46 mark of the opening period.

Less than a minute later, Brown scored the equalizer for Agawam.

The Brownies took the lead for the first time four minutes into the second period when junior Braden Parrelli banged home a rebound shot.

The scoring spree contin-

ued with a goal from Grahm Arguin tying the score at 2-2 with 10:13 remaining in the second period.

The contest was also tied at 3-3, entering the final 15 minutes of regulation. Parrelli and Ferro scored their second goal of the match during the final eight minutes of the opening period.

The Hurricanes retook the lead following a goal by freshman Brody Palmisano 28 seconds into the third period.

Holton scored a short-handed goal with ten minutes remaining in regulation before becoming the hero of the game a minute into overtime.

Public Notices

Agawam Conservation Commission Notice of Public Hearing

The Agawam Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on Thursday, March 12, 2026 at 6:00 PM at the Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main Street, Agawam, MA. The purpose of this hearing will be to hear the application of Ameresco, Inc for the Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation for property at 311 Shoemaker Lane.

By Order of
Henry A. Kozloski, Chairman
Agawam Conservation Commission

03/05/2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No.
HD26P0367EA
Estate of:
Karen Guertin
Date of Death: 12/28/2025

CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Palmer Healthcare Center of Palmer, 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 **Karen Lavoie of Sharon, MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **With Personal 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 03/26/2026. 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

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. **Claudine T. Stoudemire**, First Justice of this Court.

Date: February 26, 2026
Rosemary A Saccomani,
Register of Probate
03/05/2026

Women needed for state commission

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women is currently seeking candidates for the Hampden County Commission on the Status of Women, one of 11 Regional Commissions across the Commonwealth that strives to represent women and girls in the areas of equality and opportunity.

The mission of the Hampden County Commission on the Status of Women (HCCSW) is to provide

a permanent, influential voice for women and girls across the county that facilitates and fosters community and inclusiveness. The Commission stands for fundamental freedoms, basic human rights, and the full enjoyment of life for all women and girls throughout their lives.

HCCSW represents all cities and towns in Hampden County which include Agawam, Blandford, Brimfield, Chester, Chicopee,

East Longmeadow, Granville, Hampden, Holland, Holyoke, Longmeadow, Ludlow, Monson, Montgomery, Palmer, Russell, Southwick, Springfield, Tolland, Wales, West Springfield, Westfield, and Wilbraham.

To apply for the Hampden County Commission on the Status of Women and to submit a resume, please visit: <https://masscsw.org/about/regional-commissions/hampden-county/>

Local author coming to March meeting

AGAWAM – Feeding Hills author, Judy Cosby, will be the guest speaker at the Mar. 9 of the Catholic Women's Club of Agawam. Refreshments will begin the evening at 6:30 p.m., in the Fr. Joyce Room of the St. John the Evangelist Parish Center, 833 Main St., Agawam, MA. At 7 p.m.,

the club's monthly business meeting will take place after which Judy will speak.

Judy has been writing since her college days in 1980 at American International College. The first of her three spiritual memoirs, "Threads," was self-published in 2018. She continues to write, but transi-

tioned in 2023 to historical paranormal fiction with her book "The Attachment." Her books will be available for purchase and signing after her talk.

All Catholic women are invited to join the club members for this enlightening evening.

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Agawam Advertiser News

OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

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The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, 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.

HEALTH ■ from page 5

the Red Cross Blood Donor App or at RedCrossBlood.org. If your A1C is elevated, follow up with your health care provider.

Diabetes is recognized as a global public health epidemic, with the number of cases more than quadrupling since 1990. Cases in the U.S. are expected to surge more than 50% by 2030. More worrisome is that, according to 2021 estimates from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 8.7 million adults met the criteria for diabetes but were unaware of it.

Awareness is the first step toward controlling blood sugar and perhaps preventing diabetes. Your A1C can point the way.

Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, is a registered nurse and board-certified patient advocate and founder of www.NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com, which trains medical professionals to become successful private patient advocates. Teri offers a free phone consultation to Turley Newspaper readers as well as to nurses interested in becoming advocates. Reach her at Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com.

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Abigail Adams subject of next historical association presentation

AGAWAM – The Agawam Historical Association's commemoration of the United States Semiquincentennial continues on Thursday, Mar. 19, when the public is invited to the Captain Charles Leonard House, 663 Main Street, Agawam for the association's Spring Meeting. At 6:30 p.m., actress Sheryl Faye will perform her new multimedia live show "Abigail Adams – Liberty & Legacy," and bring Adams' words, wit, and wisdom vividly to life for modern audiences.

Blending live performance, immersive multimedia, original music and visual design, Liberty and Legacy reintroduces Abigail Adams not simply as a founder's wife, but as a fearless political thinker, advocate for women's rights, and moral compass during the American Revolution and the birth of a nation. Through Adams' own letters and writings—paired with contemporary staging and technology—the show invites audiences to experience her enduring relevance in conver-



The Agawam Historical Association will hold a presentation featuring the history of Abigail Adams.

sations about liberty, equality, leadership, and civic responsibility. This event is free and open to the public.

Other semiquincentennial events planned by the Agawam Historical Association include the dedication of

Agawam's Liberty Tree at the Thomas Smith House on Apr. 19; presentation of George Baker's "Meet John Adams — A Lively and Revolutionary Conversation with America's Second President" on May 28; US Semiquincentennial Ob-

servance & Celebration at the Thomas Smith House on July 4; "The Noble Train Arrives" Henry Knox 250th commemoration and demonstration with live oxen from Fort Ticonderoga on Aug. 1; Sept. 12 presentation by master stone

carver and gravestone conservator Randall Nelson about his work carving replicas of badly deteriorated gravestones of Revolutionary War veterans as replacements for the original stones; and presentation of "Who Made the Gravestones in Agawam's Old Burying Grounds" which will also mention gravestones of Revolutionary War veterans buried in Agawam, by Bob Drinkwater, on Oct. 15. Eighteenth century encampments and living history demonstrations by the 25th Continental Regiment will be featured at the Thomas Smith House on July 4, and Oct. 10.

Information about these, and other Agawam Historical Association events planned for 2026, can be found at agawamhistory.org and the Agawam Historical Association's Instagram and Facebook pages.

The private non-profit, all-volunteer Agawam Historical Association preserves and presents Agawam and Feeding Hills history, and provides educational opportunities at

its quarterly meetings. The association archives and displays artifacts pertaining to the Town of Agawam and its Fire Department in the Marilyn P. Curry History Room and Chief Russell "Rusty" Jenks Apparatus Room, both located in the Agawam Historical & Fire House Museum, housed in the former Elm Street Fire Station at 35 Elm Street in Agawam Center. The association owns, and has preserved, the ca. 1757 Thomas Smith House, at 251 North West Street in Feeding Hills, in largely original, unrestored condition; the property was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2005. The association also offers an annual scholarship to an Agawam high school senior pursuing higher education in a history-related field. For more information, please visit agawamhistory.org or follow the Agawam Historical Association on Instagram and Facebook. Volunteers and new members are always welcome.

WHALEN ■ from page 1

out of touch with the communities he represents, and advocating for corporations instead of constituents."

Whalen has a strong record of civic activism and has dedicated his career to helping future generations gain both the educational opportunities to succeed and the social skills to grow into caring, compassionate members of the community.

"I'm putting in the work to meet people where they are and hope to earn the support of voters across Western and Central Massachusetts in the Democratic primary on Sept. 1. This grassroots campaign is building a new political infrastructure, and I'm proud of the authentic, honest relationships we've built with community stakeholders along the way. At its core, this campaign is about connecting the dots between municipal, state, and federal government and bringing real relief to local communities grappling with shrinking budgets and skyrocketing costs," said Whalen.



Jeromie Whalen, of Belchertown, is seeking to challenge U.S. Rep Richard Neal. Whalen is a public school teacher and will challenge Neal in the primary election later this year.

Previously, Whalen served as communications director and building delegate for the Northampton Association of School Employees (NASE). He has also served as vice president of the board of directors for Northampton Open Media.

As an educator and community media advocate, Whalen led a team of students and local volunteers in the Emmy Award-winning production of "Young@Heart." This Boston/New England regional award was given by the National Academy of Television Arts and

Sciences.

As an academic researcher, he has published numerous studies that have garnered over 1,800 scholarly citations on the impact of technology in education, including examinations of emergency remote teaching and artificial intelligence.

Neal was last challenged in a primary several years ago by former Holyoke Mayor Alex Morse. Morse was unsuccessful in his challenge and since moved on to be the town administrator in Provincetown.

Kids used clothing, books sought for exchange

AGAWAM – The Agawam's Zero Waste Club along with Agawam High School's Environmental Club and National Honor Society are hosting their Eighth Annual Kids' Used Clothing & Book Exchange. This event was created to normalize the reuse of clothing and books that remain in good condition.

Clean, gently used, kids'

clothing and books will be collected at the Agawam Public Library on Friday, Mar. 13 from 1 to 4:45 p.m. All types of clothing and books, from infant through teen are desired. No footwear will be accepted. All donations will be prescreened before the donors leave.

General, free, public shopping of clothing and books

will take place on Saturday, Mar. 14 at the Agawam Public Library from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Shoppers are asked to bring reusable shopping bags, as this is a zero-waste event. Any clothing or books that remain will be donated to local charities.

For more information, email Nancy Bobskill at AgawamZeroWaste@gmail.com

PRE-SCHOOL ■ from page 1

participated in full-day pre-K programs tended outperform students in areas like vocabulary, cognition, physical development, including motor skills, and mathematics.

In Agawam, pre-K is offered at Perry Lane and Sappelli. Students do not attend a full-day program currently. The early childhood center currently offers two sessions, which are geared to-

ward different age groups. From 8:30 to 11:10 a.m., there is an AM session for three-year-old students. The PM session, which runs from 12:10 to 2:50 p.m., is for four- and five-year-old students. The pilot program would apply to only students who are age four.

In order to make full-day pre-K a reality, the town would need to fund the program through the operating budget in order to offer staffing, and other accommo-

dations needed for the program. The program could come up for vote during the budget process, which is just beginning for fiscal year 2027.

It is possible the pilot program, if enacted, could be started this fall in the 2026-2027 school year.

Enrollment for next school year is also underway as applications are currently open for parents to sign their children up for pre-K programs.

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