



LOCAL
Senior center
PAGE 2



SERVICE
Rotary fundraiser
PAGE 6



SPORTS
Road Race
PAGE 7

AGAWAM

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Zero Waste Club hosts clothing, book drive

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – On Saturday, Mar. 9, the library hosted a book and clothing drive put on by the Agawam Zero Waste Club.

They mainly focused on collecting clothing items for kids and teens, though any clothing was welcome. People were also encouraged to bring used books to donate.

The day prior to the actual drive, Friday Mar. 8, members of the Zero Waste Club and other volunteers collected donations from the community throughout the afternoon.

The volunteers then organized the donated clothes and had them arranged like a clothing store in the community room of the library for people to peruse from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the actual shopping day.

About a hundred people came throughout the day to shop around and get clothes for themselves, their families or other people they knew.



NHS Students Colin Smith, Bianca Banaru and Alyssa Beaver all volunteered to help with the Agawam Zero Waste clothing drive.

TURLEY PHOTO BY QUINN SUOMALA

DRIVE | page 3

Debt exclusion heads for ballot vote

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – At the latest city council meeting Mayor Christopher Johnson clarified the purpose of the debt exclusion override for the high school project.

Johnson responded to comments concerning the current tax levy capacity, including the fact that proposals for debt service show the town could afford debt service without the need for a debt exclusion.

The town has approximately \$38 million in the stabilization fund, the free cash fund and the undesignated fund ballots, which already makes up a significant portion of the tax levy.

The overall tax levy limit is currently at about \$88 million. Currently is raising about \$73 million through property taxes to fund the fiscal 2024 budget.

Under projections presented at the Feb. 26 public meeting about the high school project, the first year of debt-service is about \$10 million.

The tax levy limit also continues to rise each year, accounting for new growth.

Johnson clarified that the debt exclusion would simply

prevent the high school project from being included in the tax levy limit, it would not cost the taxpayers more than they would be taxed anyway.

“The debt exclusion simply means that the payments on that bond will not count toward the town’s levy limit, it doesn’t mean that it costs any more, it doesn’t mean that it affects the taxes any more, it just means that in the calculation of the levy limit for the town, the bond payment will not count towards that number,” Johnson said.

The debt exclusion will not create another tax bill or add another line item on the tax bill.

The levy each year is calculated based on the levy from the last year, it can rise up to 2.5% plus new growth.

Johnson had proposed a debt exclusion override originally as he and others on the team felt it would be best to preserve the financial flexibility that the town of Agawam enjoys today.

Following Johnson’s clarification, the city council voted unanimously to approve the debt exclusion override and the funding of the high school, so

DEBT | page 6

Families get creative at library’s Spaghetti Tower Night

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – The public library hosted a spaghetti tower event, in which children in kindergarten through second grade were challenged to build as tall a spaghetti tower as they could.

The children were provided with spaghetti, marshmallows and fruit snacks as the materials for their towers.

As they entered the room, kids and their caregivers were given the challenge to build the tower and provided with materials to do so.

The kids were welcome to work on their own, with their caregivers or with other people around them.

“They could work with other people at their table, with siblings who came, with friends they had their and a couple groups did decide to work together as teammates, some did it on their own, some had a little more parent help than others, and everyone’s ended up looking completely different, which was really fun,” Youth Services Associate Isabell Malvezzi said.

She was very pleased with how the event went.

“We had a total of eight participants, and it got a little competitive,” Malvezzi said. “The challenge was to build the tallest tower that they could individually...but a few



The Abdow family and their second grader Savannah Abdow enjoy the spaghetti tower evening at Agawam Public Library.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS



Children and their families got to experiment with different spaghetti tower structures at the public library’s spaghetti tower building event.

LIBRARY | page 12



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SPORTS

St. Patrick's Road Race set for this Saturday

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

HOLYOKE – The weekend of St. Patrick's Day is synonymous with the popular parade in the streets of downtown Holyoke. But equally tradition is the 10K St. Patrick's Day Road Race.

The road race was disappointingly cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and again in 2021 when COVID-19 rates rose due to the vaccine not being as widely available at the time.

But last year, the race returned to the joy people throughout the region and beyond and Holyoke once again became a hub of activity beginning with "Race Day."

And the sights and scenes of St. Patrick's Day weekend were also back in the Paper City the past two years as the downtown

RACE | page 8

Agawam falls to Longmeadow in Suburban semifinals

CHICOPEE – Last Friday evening, Agawam 5/6 Division 3 Girls Suburban Basketball was defeated by Longmeadow in the playoff semifinals. The league did not report the final score of the game. Longmeadow moved on to face Belchertown last Sunday in the division finals.



Juliana Fleury shoots on target.



Emma Mercier takes a shot.



Bianca Calabrese holds the ball break before making a pass.



Riley Georgina sends a pass inside.



Reese Vanderhoof eyes a teammate to make a pass to.

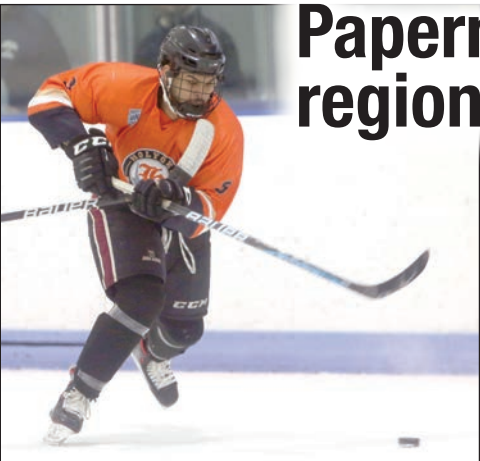
TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM



Nick Cambria looks to center the puck.



Zach Paisley heads up the left side of the ice.



Vinnie McAllister sends a pass away.

Papermen represent region in new league

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Papermen, an amateur adult hockey team, was in action last Saturday afternoon. The Papermen are brand new adult team participating in the Union Hockey League, a new adult league in the New York and New England region. The new team got started in January and is playing a 32-game season with seven other teams that joined the league. Home games are played at Fitzpatrick Rink in Holyoke.



Nick McNally comes into the ice and immediately takes control of the puck.



Gaetano Delonge receives a pass.

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Mark Laviolette, of Ludlow makes his way up the right side of the ice.