

# AGAWAM

## ADVERTISER NEWS

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### 'Cooler Communities' highlights environmental awareness

By Quinn Suomala  
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – Agawam schools hosted a Cooler Communities event where students got to display different science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics projects they had worked on this year.

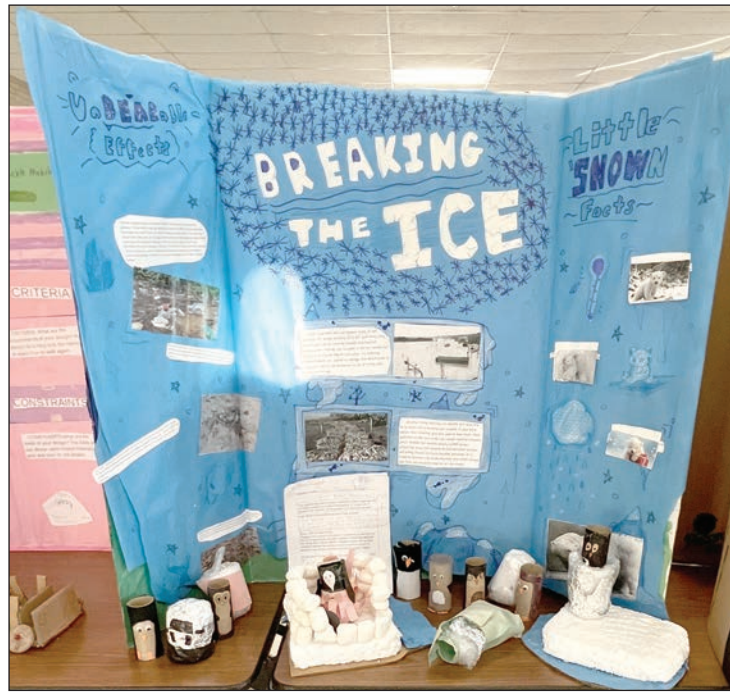
Cooler Communities and Agawam schools worked together to put on this event to encourage children and their families to learn more about how they can help the environment.

"We're trying to bring real life science to everyone in the community, especially my students," Science Teacher Tammy Rumplick said. "I think it's really important to have projects be real-life based."

Throughout the event parents were encouraged to make Cooler



Some students created animal prosthetic prototypes as part of the Cooler Communities event.



People were invited to write their wishes for the environment on the tree drawing. TURLEY PHOTOS BY QUINN SUOMALA

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### Parade Committee pleased with parade participation despite band's absence

By Quinn Suomala  
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – Several social media posts showed some residents were upset at the absence of Agawam High School's band in the St. Patrick's Day Parade on Mar. 17.

The school district and Mayor Christopher Johnson have made no comments on this matter at this time, but the St. Patrick's Committee chair had positive things to say about the community's participation in the event.

Agawam Parade Committee President Abbie Malouin was pleased with the overall participation from the town in the parade, though she said the parade committee is always looking to increase participation levels.

"We are always looking for everybody to come out and join us and we had members from town council, we had school committee members, the mayor was involved too, we did have our contingent with all of our award winners," Malouin said. "So we did have our participation in the parade but we're always looking for more participation from the town...we had a great season."

Malouin also emphasized that the parade day is about the Colleens and the award winners.

"Our girls and our award winners are the center of our contingent for that day," she said. "To see the girls so excited, it makes us so excited. To honor award winners that are so deserving of their award that day it's just a great sense of pride for Agawam and we really want to be able to celebrate that."

Malouin also expressed her pride in everything the parade committee had pulled together for the parade this year.

"Each year we build on what we started and we're always moving, we feel, in the right direction," she said.

Malouin and the rest of the parade committee want to focus on celebrating Irish heritage throughout the parade season.

"Celebrating your heritage and having engagement with your community is really important and that's what our Colleen and court try to do so much," Malouin said.

Already the committee is working toward planning parade season for next year.

"We already have so many ideas moving forward for the next green season," Malouin said. "We're ready to go at our next meeting about planning out our

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### Town gearing up for multiple elections

By Quinn Suomala  
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – This year is a big year for elections, especially in Agawam due to the additional election for the high school project.

Already Agawam has had the presidential primary election on Mar. 5. City Clerk Vince Gioscia reported that they had prepared well for the election, though it wound up being a slower day than expected.

"Everybody was ready to go in March but it was kind of slow election-wise," Gioscia said. "It was busy but it wasn't what people expected. I think a lot of people are just waiting for the November election."

There will be the state primary on Sept. 3 and the general election on Nov. 5.

In 2020, Gioscia found that there was a 72% voter turnout for the presidential election. He anticipates the turnout will also be large in November of this year.

Additionally, the town will have the chance to vote on the high school project, which will take the form of a debt exclusion override vote.

The city council voted unanimously at their Mar. 6 meeting to approve the debt exclusion override and the funding of the high school, so long as the residents vote in favor and the MSBA approves their portion of the funding.

With this vote they also approved a June 11 election so the town can vote on whether or not to approve the high school project.

The city clerk's office has been busy preparing for the different elections this year.

"To be honest with you it does slow the office down because we have to devote so much time and manpower to the elections," Gioscia said.

*"To be honest with you it does slow the office down because we have to devote so much time and manpower to the elections,"*

– City Clerk Vince Gioscia

According to Gioscia they have had to switch to doing marriage licenses by appointment only and they have experienced some delays on distributing documents such as birth certificates due to the busy election season.

"Usually when someone calls for a birth certificate they can come right in and pick it up and now sometimes we're saying they have to come tomorrow morning to get it," he said.

Gioscia and his staff have been working hard to keep on top of everything they can as elections approach.

"We just plow through it," he said. "We just get through it sometimes."

Additionally, multiple elections in a year can be costly for the town.

While every election is slightly different, the March primary election cost the town a little over \$20,000 according to Gioscia.

"We had to hire extra workers to assist with the mail in balloting and we have the week of early voting as well as election day itself," Gioscia said. "That includes outgoing postage to mail out ballots and the programming of the election machine."

The mail-in voting ballots are some of the bigger costs for planning an election day.

"We sent out a little bit more than 28,000 mail-in ballots for March and it's 88 cents a ballot," Gioscia said.

This cost has increased even further in recent years, thanks to the pandemic increasing the need for mail-in voting.

"Prior to mail-in balloting in 2020 we didn't have postage expenses to mail out thousands of ballots," Gioscia said. "Then there's the logistics of processing all the applications for mail-in balloting."

To learn more about election schedules and where to go to vote, go to <https://www.agawam.ma.us/231/Election-Information>.



# Agawam Senior Center announcing upcoming events

AGAWAM – The Agawam Senior center, 954 Main St., has great events planned for the month of April. The Center is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information please call 413-821-0605

## Experience Dramatic Staged Readings of New Short Plays

*Presented by BAM Productions, on Wednesday April 3, at 1 p.m.,*

*Center Stage at Agawam Senior Center*

The Script Incubation Stage Show aims to nurture entertaining and engaging scripts by providing readings to discover, support, and workshop unpublished plays by local playwrights.

Featuring new plays by established writers Betel Arnold, Angela (Shuman) Grout, and Michael “Buster” McMahon. Each play will be 10-15 minutes.

Audience members willing to provide feedback can request a feedback form to contribute to the next stage of develop-

ment. To reserve a seat contact Kristina Lynch 726-2836.

## What Is Probate?

*Wednesday, April 10 at 1 p.m.*

Join Attorney Marie Jablonski as she helps to explain this mysterious process of Probate that will be explained in detail. Probate with a will after death. Probate with no will. What is estate administration? What does a voluntary administrator do? How is real estate handled after a death? Fees and costs estimated and explained. Your questions answered. Call Kristina at 413.726.2836 to register.

## Fraud Seminar

*Wednesday, April 24 1 p.m. in Seminar Hall*

With Tax returns going out, the uptick in scams on seniors has increased dramatically. Join Freedom Credit Union for this informative seminar.

Current fraud and how to protect your-

self seminar presented by Freedom CU. We will discuss the increase of fraud we have seen in our local area especially targeting the elderly population. These scams range from grandparents' scams, check washing, online banking scams and more. Call Kristina at 726.2836 to register.

## Paper Making with Chris Lyons

*Thursday, April 25 1-4:30 p.m.*

*in the Garden Room*

Would you like to learn the art of Paper Making? Paper was first created over 2000 years ago by Ts'ai Lun, an official attached to the Imperial court of China, who created a sheet of paper using mulberry and other bast fibers along with fishnets, old rags, and hemp waste. The history of papermaking is quite amazing and has helped civilization grow & expand through the centuries. Can you imagine a world without paper products today?

The cell walls of all plants contain cel-

lulose fibers, an organic material with high strength and durability which makes up one-third of the structural material of annual plants and about one-half that of perennial plants. Until the introduction of wood pulp in 1843 the prime source of paper making ingredients were recycled textiles like cotton, hemp and linen along with pure plant materials. The fibers combine to give paper a strong & durable smooth surface and the ability to soak up ink to allow it to maintain words and images.

This is a basic introduction to paper making. The paper we create will be somewhat rough and wavy but can have very nice looks for writing, cards and a base for drawing and painting. Come learn this amazing process and have lots of fun making your own paper from recycled materials that is yours to keep. The cost of the class is \$30.

Please call Kristina at 726.2836 to register. This class needs at least 4 people to run.

## Job Fair in April

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Mall will host its spring job fair on Wednesday, April 17, from 2 to 5 p.m. on the lower level near Macy's. The Get Hired Job Fair is a convenient opportunity for Western Mass employers to interview and hire workers, and to help job seekers connect with businesses who need their skills. Employers from a variety of industries will be in attendance looking for candidates at all skill levels. The event is free to attend for all job seekers. Employers that have already signed up to staff a table include Baystate Health, PeoplesBank, Holyoke Community College, YMCA Greater Springfield, and more.

Last year, the September job fair drew more than 40 employers, representing over 10 industries, and nearly 400 candidates.

Employers interested in participating in the upcoming job fair should contact Jim Geraghty, Advertising Representative for Holyoke Mall, at 617-840-2998 or JamesGeraghty@pyramidmg.com. For full details regarding the Holyoke Mall Job Fair event, please visit <https://www.holyokemall.com/event/get-hired-job-fair-3/>.



## ACC to have Easter service

AGAWAM – At the 10 a.m. Easter Sunday service at Agawam Congregational Church, the Sanctuary cross, that had been draped in black throughout the Lenten season as a reminder of the need for repentance and self-reflection during the most Holy Christian season will have the black cloth removed from the cross in Celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus.

Fellowship hours with baked and packaged snacks, coffee, tea, juice, and water are always held in the church hall following services.

Agawam Congregational Church, at 745 Main St., is located in Agawam's Historic District.

Sunday services are always live on the church website and YouTube.

## FHCC needs supplies

AGAWAM – Members of Feeding Hills Congregational Church is working together to assemble health kits and school packs for Church World Service. CWS was created in 1966 as a hands-on opportunity for congregations, service groups, businesses and others to come together and love their neighbors in a tangible way.

CWS Kits are bags of supplies to be shared with neighbors in need. Feeding Hills Congregational Church has been designated as an official Drop-Off Location for other groups. Drop-Off dates are as follows: April 4 from 9 a.m. to noon; April 23 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; April 27 from 9 a.m. to noon and May 3 from 5 to 7 p.m.

## College workshop held next week

AGAWAM – The Agawam High School Counseling staff will be holding a college admission workshop on Wednesday, April 3 in the AHS Auditorium from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Representatives from different institutions will talk through the college search and application process.

They will describe how college lists should be built, how to make the most of a campus visit, discuss how applications are reviewed, review what transfer options exist from community colleges, highlight what makes an application stand out, and more.

## Life at Woodland Ponds lecture on April 1

SPRINGFIELD – On Monday, April 1, at 7 p.m. the Allen Bird Club of Springfield, will host the presentation, “Life at Woodland Ponds” in the Tolman Auditorium of the Springfield Science Museum, 21 Edwards St.

In this program, photographer and naturalist Bill Platenik will use his capti-

vating images and charming narration to lead viewers on a visual tour of nature at three Hampden County ponds where Platenik has quietly observed birds and other wildlife for the beauty, joy, and insight they bring. Progressing through the seasons, this presentation reveals mysteries and relationships seen only by those keen ob-

servers willing to sit, wait, and watch as scenes unfold.

The Allen Bird Club is a nonprofit organization dedicated to bringing Greater Springfield area birders together since 1912. This presentation is open to the public free of charge. For more information, please visit [www.AllenBirdClub.org](http://www.AllenBirdClub.org).

## Town's annual Easter Egg Hunt rescheduled for this weekend



AGAWAM – On Saturday, March 30, the Agawam Parks & Recreation Department, Agawam Lions Club, and Agawam Rotary Club will present the 2024 Easter Egg Hunt at School Street Park. The event will begin at the pavilion though parking will be available on both sides of the park.

No advance registration is necessary and there will be a charge of \$5 per family/car payable on entrance to the park.

Participants are advised to arrive early as the hunt will begin at promptly at 10 a.m. Please bring a container of some kind to collect eggs.

There will be hunts for three age groups, age four and younger, age five to seven, and age eight and older, with special prizes in each area.

Allergy-free gift bags will also be available on request.

The event was rescheduled after being rained out last weekend.

## New England Mosaic kits available

AGAWAM – The New England Mosaic invites the Western MA creative community to create and display visual art representing a favorite aspect of New England. This year's Mosaic theme is “I love New England”. Canvas kits will be available in partner libraries across the Pioneer Valley beginning March 11.

The New England Mosaic was organized in 2022 by the ACAA as a community art project to give individuals in Western MA an opportunity to creatively express their love of New England via painting, photography, fabric art, pouring, or any other media. Professional artists, hobbyist, and any member of our Pioneer Valley creative community are invited to create a canvas tile and see their work become a part of this unique wall of art. Tiles created for the Mosaic are donated to the Mosaic and sold to help fund art scholarships for local students.

The New England Mosaic invites individuals to create a canvas tile, which when displayed with others, becomes part of a 24-foot fine art Mosaic wall that

captures the beauty and diversity of New England life. Free tile kits are available at the following libraries: Agawam, Southwick, Westfield, West Springfield and at three Springfield branch libraries, Central, East Forest Park, and East Springfield, by March 11. Completed tiles must be returned to these libraries by May 15. Supplies at each library are limited so stop by and pick a kit up.

The New England Mosaic will be unveiled at a Mosaic grand opening at the Agawam Municipal Golf Course, Club, 128 Southwick St., on July 11.

All Mosaic artists and the public are invited to the unveiling. The Mosaic will also be showcased at the Agawam Community Artists and Artisans' Pioneer Valley Art Festival on Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 24-25, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Polish American Club, 139 Southwick St. The Mosaic will also be on display at the Scantic River Art Exhibit on Sept. 14 and 15. Please visit our website at [www.agawamarts.com](http://www.agawamarts.com) or Scantic River's website at [www.scanticriverartists.com](http://www.scanticriverartists.com) for more information.

# Agawam Public Library lists adult April events

AGAWAM – The Agawam Library offer many great adult programs during the month of April. National Library Week is April 7 through April 13. Stay tuned to our social media channels for daily posts highlighting the “Ready, Set, Library!” theme.

On Monday, April 8, there will be a solar eclipse viewable in Western Massachusetts. The library will host a small eclipse-viewing event for Adults from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. in the Peirce Conference Room. Activities include a craft, outer space themed photo ops and snacks while we wait for the main event. Please register for the indoor part of the program. Weather permitting, visitors are welcome to join at any time during the eclipse, as it will be visible from 2:15 to 4:30 p.m. Participants will receive special-purpose eclipse glasses that are ISO certified for safety. The library has a limited amount of eclipse glasses that will be available beginning April 1. Families can have up to 4 pairs of glasses on a first come, first served basis. For all viewing safety precautions during a solar eclipse, please visit [www.eclipse.aas.org/safety](http://www.eclipse.aas.org/safety).

April is National Poetry Month and to celebrate, we are creating a Poetry Chap-

book and Exhibition.

Adults can submit their original poetry to be exhibited at the Agawam Public Library and included in our 2024 poetry chapbook. To enter, please pick up a submission form at the Information Desk or email your poem to Charlie at [cpope@agawamlibrary.org](mailto:cpope@agawamlibrary.org). Please include your name as you'd like it to appear in the chapbook, your age, and your poem's title. Submissions will be accepted April 1 through April 13 and be on display April 15 through April 30. The chapbook will be available to view in our collection after April. All poets who submit a poem will receive a copy of the chapbook.

Looking for something different to do during the week? Join us for an old-fashioned game night on Wednesday, April 3 at 6:30 p.m. Bring a game or enjoy one of ours. The board game collection is growing with fun classics like Monopoly and Scrabble, but we also have Munchkin and Ticket to Ride. Light refreshments will be available. This is a drop-in event for adult age 18 and older. The library will also offer two Tea and Trivia Programs for those who want a little competition. Our evening Tea and Trivia

program will be held Tuesday, April 16 at 6:30 p.m. and our afternoon Tea and Trivia program will be held on Wednesday, April 17 at 2:30 p.m. Both events are held in the Judith Clini Community Room. Please register for one or both online or by calling the Information Desk.

Join us on Wednesday, April 17 at 6:30 p.m. or on Tuesday, April 23 at 10 a.m. for a crash course in the new look. Erica will highlight how to navigate the new system, including how to locate items, how to place holds, and how to use the new customized lists! Since our Library Tech programs fill up quickly, please register online or by calling the Information Desk.

In observance of Autism Acceptance Month, speaker Mario Bonavita joins us on Monday, April 22 at 6:30 p.m. in the Judith Clini Community Room. “All About Me” will highlight Mario’s experiences with an Autism Spectrum Disorder throughout his life. Mario is a life-long Agawam resident and is eager to share his perspective of what it’s like with his unique abilities.

It’s time for Spring Cleaning. What better way to get started than with professional organizer Jenna Elliot. Jenna is the

founder of The Naked Flower, Professional Organizers. With over 20 years of experience, she will offer participants a step-by-step approach to a cleaner house and less clutter. Join us on Saturday, April 27 at 10 a.m. for an informative and helpful presentation. Please register online or by calling the Information Desk.

This month, our virtual author series will feature Paula J. Johnson on Tuesday, April 2 at 2 p.m.; Diane Foley and Colum McCann on Tuesday, April 9 at 2:00 p.m.; and Xochitl Gonzalez on Wednesday, April 17 at 8 p.m. Please visit <https://library.org/agawamlibrary/upcoming> for more information and to register for these online author events.

The library welcomes visitors Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Friday and Saturday,

9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Many of the programs are sponsored by the Agawam Center Library Association. Please note that the library will be closed on Monday, April 15th in observance of Patriot’s Day. Online registrations for Adult programs opens April 1. Please visit our website for more information and to register [www.agawamlibrary.org](http://www.agawamlibrary.org).

## Catholic Women’s club host potluck

AGAWAM – Members of the Catholic Women’s club of Agawam will enjoy a potluck supper at their April 8, meeting. It will start at 6:30 p.m. in the St. John the Evangelist Parish Center, 833 Main St. Members will be contacted by phone or e-mail to select a dish to bring. After dinner the club’s monthly business meeting will take place.

The speaker for the evening will be Maryann Dietschler on her group, Wreaths with a Reason, which supports organizations that fight human trafficking. Any Catholic woman residing in Agawam or Feeding Hills or is a member of either of the town’s two Catholic parishes can join the members for this event by phoning or e-mailing Paula at 413-537-1174 or [praiche@comcast.net](mailto:praiche@comcast.net) by April 1.

## City Council seeks new members for CPA Committee

AGAWAM – Please be advised that there are two openings effective April 30, 2024 for the Agawam Community Preservation Act Committee. Interested parties should contact Barbara Bard in the Agawam City Council office as soon as possible at (413) 726-9716 or email at [bbard@agawam.ma.us](mailto:bbard@agawam.ma.us).

## Girls Inc. of the Valley host annual gala

HOLYOKE – Girls Inc. of the Valley’s annual major fundraiser is back at the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame, 1000 Hall of Fame Ave, on March 22 from 5 to 7 p.m. Spirit of Girls: Rewind / Fast Forward features co-lead sponsors PeoplesBank and the Women’s Foundation of Boston.

Guests and attendees will hear the impactful stories of Girls Inc. youth, families, alumni and more. The evening will include heavy appetizers, along with a cash bar.

Girls Inc. of the Valley is actively seeking sponsors and volunteers to support the event.

“The need for investments in programs that work towards gender equity and providing safe spaces for girls, and youth who would benefit from pro-girl environments, is greater than ever” said Suzanne Parker executive director of Girls Inc. of the Valley. “We will raise \$110,000 at Spirit of Girls to provide that safe space, especially during the summer months.”

Thank you to our sponsors: PeoplesBank; Women’s Foundation of Boston; Hazen Paper Company; bankESB; BonaVita Aesthetics; The Collins Companies; Monson Savings Bank; SourcePass; UMass Amherst; Parker’s Portables; Kuhn Riddle Architects; and Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts.

If interested, or have questions regarding this event, please contact Meghan Rothschild at (413) 218-4994 or [meghan@chikmedia.us](mailto:meghan@chikmedia.us).

## Spring Yard Waste Collection starts in April

AGAWAM – On Monday, April 15, Spring Yard Waste Collection will begin. Yard Waste Collection will take place on recycling weeks as identified on the 2024 Waste Collection Schedule.

A Week Streets will be collected on their recycling collection day on the following weeks: April 15-19; May 13-17; June 10-14; August 19-23;

B Week Streets will be collected on their recycling collection day on the following weeks: April 22-26; May 20-24; June 17-21; August 12-16;

Residents must have their yard waste out by 7 a.m. of their scheduled collection day.

Yard Waste is defined as grass clippings, leaves, weeds, shrub trimmings,

and brush or limbs under 3” in diameter.

Acceptable Yard Waste preparation: 30-gallon biodegradable brown bags. (Bags left out all winter will not be picked up and will need to be re-bagged by the resident); Bundled branches and brush up to 3 inches in diameter and up to 3’ in length, no heavier than 40 lbs bundled with organic twine; Barrels no heavier than 40 lbs marked as Yard Waste; please be sure containers are empty of any rainwater.

Not acceptable: Bundles tied with wire, nylon or plastic (these items harm grinding equipment); Bundles heavier than 40 lbs; Brush and limbs greater than 3” in diameter; Yard waste bags contaminated with rocks, soil, or wood chips.



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# Opinion

## Guest Column



**Dear Rusty**

*I'm not sure what I should sign up for in terms of Social Security; I am 64 and I am still employed full time and intend to stay employed until age 70.*

*I am retired from the Navy and receive military retirement payments and have military TriCare, as well as medical, dental, eye and life insurance through my employer. I don't want to lose benefits, but I also don't want to take Social Security until it reaches the maximum at age 70 (I think that is correct?). I will turn 65 in four months. Can you advise me?*

**Signed: Uncertain Veteran**

**Dear Uncertain Veteran**

First of all, thank you for your service to our country. From what you've shared, and since you're still working full time, not claiming Social Security yet is a smart decision. If you were born in 1959 your Full Retirement Age is 66 years and 10 months and, if you claim SS before your full retirement age, you'll be subject to Social Security's earning test, which would likely make you ineligible to receive SS benefits at this time.

The 2024 earnings limit (limit changes yearly) when collecting Social Security early is \$22,320 and, if that is exceeded, Social Security will take away \$1 in benefits for every \$2 over the limit (half of what you exceed the limit by). If you significantly exceed the limit, SS will declare you temporarily ineligible to collect SS benefits until you either reach your FRA or earn less.

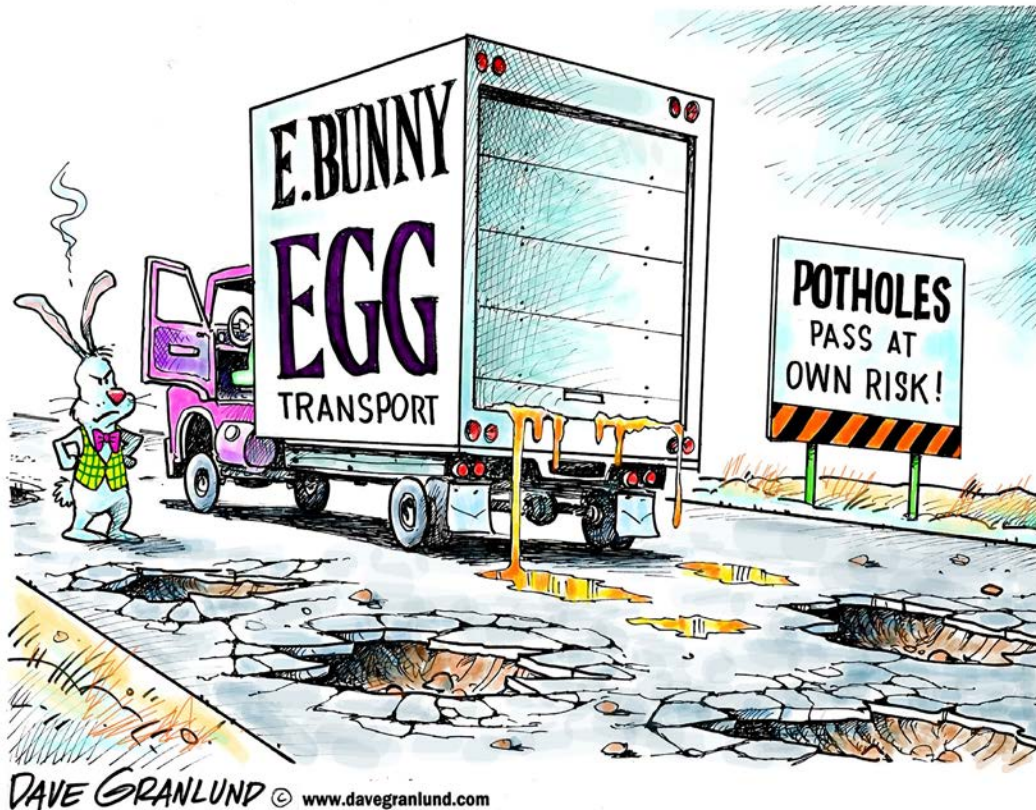
The earnings test no longer applies after you reach your FRA. So, if you're now employed full time and plan to stay so until age 70 and you expect at least average longevity (about 84 for someone your current age), delaying until age 70 to claim Social Security is how to get your maximum Social Security benefit.

As for your healthcare coverage as a veteran: TriCare requires you to enroll in Medicare Part A inpatient hospitalization coverage and Part B coverage for outpatient services at age 65, but you do not need to take Social Security when you enroll in Medicare. You must, however, enroll in Medicare at age 65 or you will lose your TriCare military healthcare coverage.

You could choose to delay enrolling in Medicare at 65 because you have "creditable" employer coverage, but if you do so you will lose your current TriCare coverage and need to rely solely on your employer healthcare plan. In that case, you would still be able to enroll in both Medicare and TriCare-for-Life without penalty prior to your employer coverage ending and have coverage under both programs thereafter. I suggest you contact TriCare directly at 1-866-773-0404 to discuss your personal TriCare coverage after age 65. You can also go to [www.TriCare4U.com](http://www.TriCare4U.com).

Whenever you enroll, Medicare will be the primary payer of your healthcare

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## Letters to the Editor

### Youth football program appreciates donation

**Letter to the Editor**

The Agawam Youth Football Association would like to thank the Polish American Club in Agawam for their generous donation to our league from their Tuesday night Bingo.

It is always great that local organizations support the youth of Agawam. Again, thank you for your generosity.

**Dawn and David DeMatteo and everyone**  
from Agawam Youth Football

## Guest Column

### Primroses serve double duty



This week's column was half done when I received a text from a good friend who I haven't seen in a few months.

She had just read last week's article and was reaching out to congratulate me on my impending delivery. What? If I were having a baby, my name may end up in more than just the local paper- try the Guinness Book of World Records.

Anyhow, I accidentally sent an old column in, not the one I revamped in honor of my first born's birthday. I am sorry you all missed out on a few new things I had to say about the Gerber daisy, but I hope this gave you a good laugh.

Another dear friend visited Cape Cod this past week. She left the morning that we had some freezing rain and light snow.

Later in the day I received a picture in a text message that said, "at least it's spring somewhere!" I chuckled as I looked at the pretty Polyantha Primroses (*Primula* spp.) planted outside of an establishment, almost beckoning tourists to jump start the busy season!

I countered her picture with one of my own, a picture of a primrose in my garden, just greening up but still weeks away from flowering. Why not

take a closer look at this double duty plant, just in time for Easter giving.

What exactly do I mean by double duty? Pick one up at the grocery store to enjoy indoors this spring and then plant it in the garden.

Better yet, purchase a primrose as an Easter hostess gift and it will be a spring harbinger for years to come - a memory of you! Even though they are usually sold in small pots, it's hard to miss their brightly colored flowers poking up through basal foliage.

They come in almost every color of the rainbow. Like the infamous pregnancy gift from last week's column, primroses also fall into the happy plant category!

Many types of primrose make great garden plants; check the label to make sure the one you purchase is hardy before planting it outdoors. I have had a clump of primroses blooming for years now that originally started out as a potted plant.

If it's been growing indoors for a while, be sure to let it harden off a bit before planting it in the ground; a partly shady spot with moisture retentive soil is best.

Typically, primroses need to be divided every three years or so, evident by die-out that begins in the center of the plant. Simply separate a chunk from the outer portion of the plant and replant it in rejuvenated soil.

I prefer to do this early in the season, but it can also be accomplished right after flowering has ended. In the heat of the summer, and especially in drier soils, the plant can look a little yellow and ragged.

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**EMAIL**

Advertising Sales  
Wendy Delcamp  
[wdelcamp@turley.com](mailto:wdelcamp@turley.com)

**Editor**

Gregory Scibelli  
[aan@turley.com](mailto:aan@turley.com)

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

## AGAWAM ADVERTISER NEWS TEAM



**EDITOR/SPORTS**  
Greg Scibelli  
[aan@turley.com](mailto:aan@turley.com)  
[sports@turley.com](mailto:sports@turley.com)



**ADVERTISING SALES**  
Wendy Delcamp  
[wdelcamp@turley.com](mailto:wdelcamp@turley.com)

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## Election letters to the editor welcome

The Agawam Advertiser News welcomes readers to participate in this year's election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to The Agawam Advertiser News, care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to [aan@turley.com](mailto:aan@turley.com). Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by noon Monday to be considered

for that Friday's newspaper. No attack letters will be printed. No letters written by candidates supporting their own candidacy will be printed. If the volume of letters received is larger than the space available in the newspaper, or if the letters become repetitive, the newspaper reserves the right to print a representative sample. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last edition before the election. For more information, call 413-283-8393.

### Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the news-

paper plans to print stories about contested races for Congress, state Senate, state House, district attorney and Governor's Council during the weeks leading up to the election, as well as a question-and-answer voters guide. In order to ensure fairness to all candidates, no political press releases will be printed, nor will reporters cover political rallies or fundraisers.

Candidates who wish to further publicize their candidacy, beliefs and events may contact advertising, 413-283-8393 about paid advertising in The Agawam Advertiser News.

# Opinion



## Comments on CONGRESS

By Lee Hamilton

### Justice Sandra Day O'Connor championed civics education

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, who died in December, was rightly celebrated as a trailblazing jurist who brought common sense and moderation to the Supreme Court.

She also was a champion of civics education, especially after she retired from the bench – and civics education needs champions in this era of partisanship and conspiracy theories, which thrive when Americans lack understanding of our system of government.

O'Connor, who left the court in 2006, enjoyed talking to students and promoting the study of how citizens participate in governing.

She told the National School Boards Association in 2008 that civics education would be her primary focus in retirement. She created the iCivics program to carry out that mission.

She and I served as co-chairs of the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools and partnered to make public service announcements promoting civics education. The Center on Representative Government at Indiana University, where I serve as a senior adviser, also promotes civics education, using similar approaches to iCivics.

O'Connor was, of course, the first woman to serve on the Supreme Court. Her nomination by President Ronald Reagan made history.

A rancher's daughter and a proud West-



Justice Sandra Day O'Connor is shown with Lee H. Hamilton circa 2010.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

erner, she built a reputation as a moderate in her 24 years on the court. She often provided a swing vote on abortion, voting rights, sex discrimination and other controversial issues.

Unlike many justices, O'Connor started out in local politics; she served as a state legislator and majority leader of the Arizona Senate. She traced her interest in civics to her days as a precinct committeewoman gathering signatures to get candidates on the ballot.

That real-world background influenced her approach to jurisprudence.

She valued facts and experience over legal theory and ideology. Her views on affirmative action, for example, evolved from serving alongside Justice Thurgood Marshall, a legendary civil-rights litigator.

She could compromise, a key quality in civic decision-making.

O'Connor's experience in local and state politics forged her commitment to civics education. She said in a 2012 interview that Americans have a never-ending obligation "to teach our young generation about citizenship."

But we haven't always fulfilled that obligation as well as we might.

In a recent survey by the Annenberg Public Policy Center, one-third of Americans couldn't name the three branches of government. Most could identify only one of the five rights protected by the First Amendment.

Other surveys have found a lack of knowledge about the filibuster, the length of Senate terms, the Electoral College and

other matters.

When people don't understand how government works, they're more likely to believe the worst of their elected representatives. Divisions and distrust infect our politics.

Worst of all, people of good will give up and disengage from political and civic activity.

That's the bad news. The good news is that the work that O'Connor and others have done has had an impact.

The iCivics project recently found that 38 states now require stand-alone high school civics course, a significant increase from previous years, and six states require a full year of civics study. Crucially, more schools teach citizenship in the early grades.

And it works.

Studies find that young people who have taken civics classes score higher on assessments of what they know about government. They are more likely to rate voting, public service and jury duty as important.

They voted in higher numbers in the 2020 election.

On O'Connor's death, her colleague Justice Sonia Sotomayor said that she had "transformed how children learn about our shared responsibility as citizens." That alone would be a remarkable legacy, for a Supreme Court justice or anyone else.

Lee Hamilton is a Senior Advisor for the Indiana University Center on Representative Government; a Distinguished Scholar at the IU Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies; and a Professor of Practice at the IU O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.

#### SECURITY ■ from page 4

costs and TriCare will be the secondary payor. Your vision, dental, and prescription drug coverage would be through TriCare (Medicare does not cover those services) or acquired separately. Just remember, you must be enrolled in Medicare Part A and Part B to have TriCare-for-Life coverage after age 65.

The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administra-

tion 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](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at [ssadviser@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadviser@amacfoundation.org). Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

#### GARDEN ■ from page 4

Keeping it well watered helps.

One year, when money was tight, I divided a plant and potted up one of the divisions and gave it to my sister in law as a hostess gift. She still has it growing in her garden, and every once in a while, will send a picture of it happily blooming.

I've tried in earnest to grow Japanese Primrose (*Primula japonica*) but something in my soil apparently isn't right. I will probably buy another one this year and

hope beyond hope to eventually end up with a stand of them like they have in the display gardens at Positively Perennials.

The sea of whorled flowers in light and dark pink is arboretum worthy.

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

#### PARADE ■ from page 1

entire year."

They hope to try to encourage further participation in celebrating Irish heritage by increasing the amount of events they offer throughout the year. They hope to bring Irish season out of just January through March and to instead make it a whole year event.

Malouin mentioned that they hope to announce some fundraisers soon and that they are working on planning out some community involvement events as well.

They hope to also reach out to different organizations within the town. Specifically, they plan to reach out to the school committee and to try to organize some events within the schools to promote Irish Heritage.

The parade committee is also still looking for a spot to build a float and would appreciate any support on the matter so they can resume their float building tradition.

"If we get a spot to build it, we already have so many cool ideas on what we want the float to look like," Malouin said.

The committee is also open to anyone

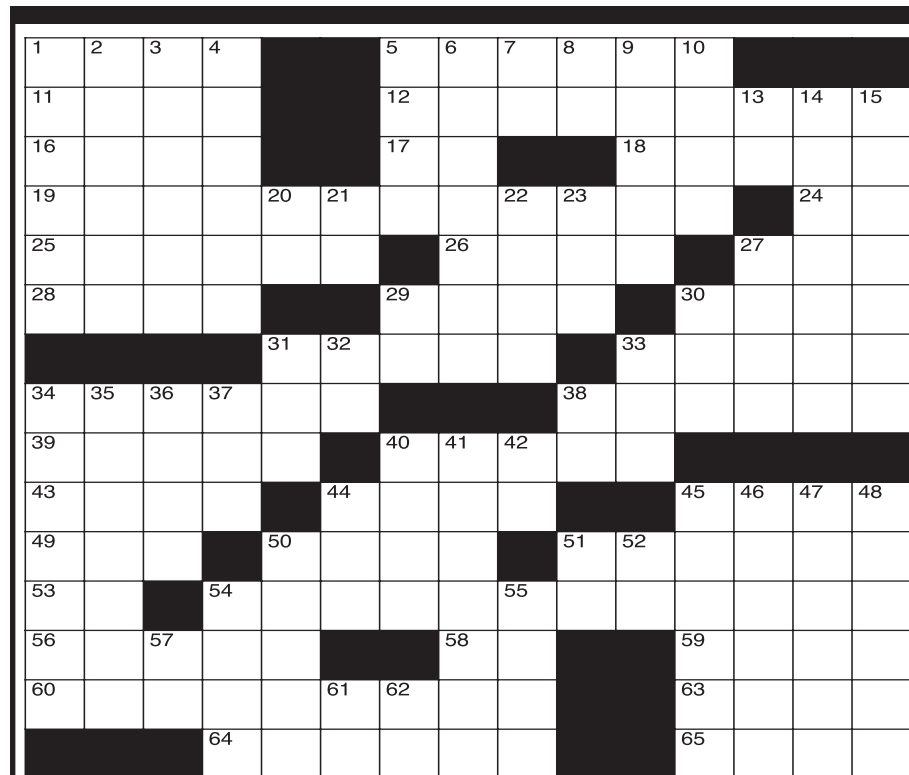
who is interested in joining them. They meet once a month and anyone is welcome to sit in on a meeting.

"We'd love to have people join us because many hands make light work and we get so many other ideas from people that haven't been involved before," Malouin said. "We really pride ourselves on making every voice at a meeting heard and making it a collaborative event."

Malouin mentioned that there are a variety of different events that people on the committee can work on, so people can select which events interest them the most.

Additionally, there is a virtual option for the monthly meetings for people who cannot make the in-person ones. "We really try to make this meeting as accessible as we can, especially because we know that people have a million things going on in their lives, but we want to give them the opportunity to be involved if they'd like to be," Malouin said.

If interested in attending a meeting or joining this committee, go to <https://www.facebook.com/AgawamStPatricks-Committee> to see when their next meeting will be.



#### CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Database management system
- 5. Medical procedures
- 11. \_\_\_ Clapton, musician
- 12. Defender
- 16. Exert oneself
- 17. Indicates position
- 18. Quay
- 19. Atrocities
- 24. A way to address an adult man
- 25. Ends
- 26. Unable
- 27. Taxi
- 28. Gratuities
- 29. A famous train station
- 30. Japanese persimmon
- 31. Sours
- 33. Beneficiary
- 34. Baseball official
- 38. Confused situation
- 39. Unworldly
- 40. Yemen capital
- 43. Type of soil
- 44. Beloved beverage \_\_\_-Cola
- 45. Lying down
- 49. \_\_\_ Angeles
- 50. Fail to amuse
- 51. Collapsible shelter
- 53. Commercial
- 54. Taste property
- 56. Lordship's jurisdictions
- 58. It cools your home
- 59. Dismounted
- 60. Charge in a court of law
- 63. One less than one
- 64. Spoke
- 65. Famed garden
- 5. Abba \_\_, Israeli politician
- 6. Observed
- 7. "Westworld" actor Harris
- 8. Belonging to me
- 9. Shoelace tube
- 10. Takes to civil court
- 13. Early multimedia
- 14. Produces anew
- 15. Horse races
- 20. Of I
- 21. Equally
- 22. Changes color
- 23. A place to stay
- 27. Town in Galilee
- 29. Mathematical figure
- 30. Klingon character
- 31. They \_\_\_
- 32. Atomic #58
- 33. Showed up extinct
- 34. Loosen grip
- 35. Unpleasant smell
- 36. Innermost membranes enveloping the
- 37. Esteemed college "league"
- 38. Partner to Pa
- 40. Small American rail
- 41. A salt or ester of acetic acid
- 42. Sodium
- 44. Military figure (abbr.)
- 45. Lighted
- 46. Paid to get out of jail
- 47. All of something
- 48. Ohio city
- 50. More abject
- 51. A radio band
- 52. Scientific development (abbr.)
- 54. Monetary unit
- 55. Scored perfectly
- 57. A punch to end a fight
- 61. The Golden State (abbr.)
- 62. The Beehive State (abbr.)

## Veterans trip to Battleship Cove

AGAWAM – On Sunday, April 7, The Agawam Veteran's Council will be hosting a trip to Battleship Cove. The price is \$50 per person which includes round trip motor coach transportation and museum admission. Take an incredible journey to historic landmarks and honor those who served aboard them. Step aboard six war-time vessels, including the Battleship USS Massachusetts and Destroyer Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Enjoy a unique dining experience onboard the Morse Code Galley. To make reservations or to find more information call 413-593-3939 or email amy@king-gray.com.

## Historical Association to hold tag sale in April

AGAWAM – The Agawam Historical Association is planning a community tag sale on Saturday, April 27, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Thomas Smith House, 251 North West St. and is seeking vendors and craftspeople to participate. Crafters and vendors are also welcome.

This is the first time the historical association has organized such an event and is relying on community participation to make it a success for everyone involved. Local historical societies and community organizations have also been invited to attend to promote their organizations.

12' x 12' spaces are available for \$25 and vendors must provide their own tables and/or tents. Space availability is first come, first

served. All proceeds from the space rental will benefit the Agawam Historical Association's efforts to preserve the town's history at the Agawam Historical & Fire House Museum and the Thomas Smith House.

The National Register-listed Smith House and recently preserved 1920s garage will also be open for tours, and newly planted daffodils may still be in bloom on the one-acre property, which is the remaining parcel of an original land grant to Mathew Noble in 1715. The house remains in near-original condition, with no central plumbing or central heat and can be visited virtually at <https://mls.kuu.la/share/collection/7Jq2q?fs=1&vr=1&initload=0&thumbs=1>.

Limited space is available. For more information, or to reserve your space, please contact David Cecchi at (413) 786-3236 or [cecco@davidcecchi.com](mailto:cecco@davidcecchi.com) before April 12. In the event of rain, the tag sale will be held the following day, Sunday, April 28, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.



## Library's virtual photography show on display

AGAWAM – The Friends of the Agawam Public Library 4th Open Judged Virtual Photography Show is on Display. The virtual photography show can be viewed by going to [www.agawamlibrary.org](http://www.agawamlibrary.org), and scrolling down to the Friends of the Library widget. From there you will be able to click on a link to the show.

The show provided a platform to recognize and encourage photographers, and it benefited the Agawam Public Library. Twenty-one awards totaling \$1,540 were determined by judges Dave Roback and Tim Donelan.

There is 124 entries from 41 photographers are in the show.

The show was divided into four categories of photography: creative, nature, photojournalism and pictorial. Awards for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd in each category, 8 honorable mentions, and a Best in Show for a total of 21 awards were given out. For further information please contact Bob Kadis at [r.kadis@comcast.net](mailto:r.kadis@comcast.net) or at 413-789-4814.

## Agawam Garden Club scholarships now available

AGAWAM – Applications are now available for the Agawam Garden Club 2024 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, earth 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 environmental related studies. The recipient will be awarded a \$1,000 scholarship at the clubs annual June meeting. Completed applications along with transcripts and references must be submitted to Denise Carmody, 40 Primrose Lane, Agawam MA 01001 by April 1. Applications are available through Agawam High School or can be found on our website at [agawamgardenclub.com](http://agawamgardenclub.com).

## Antique appraisals hosted April 6

AGAWAM – Feeding Hills Congregational Church, located at 21 North Westfield St., is hosting an antique appraisal Saturday, April 6 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The cost is \$5 an item or 3 for \$12 with a three item limit. All appraisals are ver-

bal to give the owner an idea of value and a sense of history. Items should be small enough to be hand carried.

Please no firearms or weapons of any kind. For further information call Kathy 413-786-0195.

## Scholarship applications now available

AGAWAM – The Agawam Rotary Club is now accepting applications for 4 scholarships the club offers annually. The awards cover a diverse range of interests and include vocational/technical training, cultural arts, the legal profession, and assistance with attending college.

Except for the Ray and Reita McCarroll Memorial scholarship which is awarded to graduating seniors from both Agawam and West Springfield, the awards are limited to residents of Agawam.

A full description and application for each of these scholarships can be found at the Agawam Rotary Club webpage at [agawamrotary.org](http://agawamrotary.org). Click on "Scholarships" at the top of the home page. Please note that applications must be received by April 1.

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# SPORTS



Jack Cravo heads down the court.



Agawam 7-8 Suburban Boys Basketball won their division title on March 16 by defeating Chicopee in the finals. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

## Agawam's 7-8 boys basketball take title

BELCHERTOWN – On Saturday, March 16, Agawam 7-8 Suburban Boys Basketball won its division title in a matchup at Belchertown High School.



Gabe Natale goes for the open layup.



Dylan Jorgensen makes his way down the court to start a play on offense.

## Senior All-Star showcase

SPRINGFIELD – Last Thursday evening, the Nasmith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame hosted three basketball games to honor 60 seniors throughout Western Massachusetts. Among the participants was Colin Smith, who represented Agawam High School in the Class A/B game.



Colin Smith represented Agawam High School in the Senior All-Star Game.



Smith plays for the Class A/B squad in the final game of the evening. TURLEY PHOTOS BY SOFIA DIGRANDE



Luke Loughlin looks for an opening to pass.



Jacob Quinby gets a shot on the hoop.

# Sports

## Pioneers fall in Open Cup

LUDLOW – Last Thursday night, the Western Mass. Pioneers opened their season with a matchup in the US Open Cup. The Pioneers faced Union Omaha and unfortunately were shut out by a 4-0 decision. With the loss, the Pioneers Open Cup chances have ended after just one game. The Pioneers will now gear their preparations toward the May 18 season opener. The Pioneers will also have an exhibition contest on May 10 against Third Eye FC.



Abdel Talabi sends a pass away ahead of pressure.



Gianluca Cersosimo sends a free kick away.



Santiago Blasco Gomez dribbles up the field.



Joaquin Lauria Calvo settles the ball before making a pass.



Tomas Duben and Khalid Rose fight to keep the ball with some pressure from the opposition coming on.

## Worcester Railers pick up much-needed win

READING, PA – The Worcester Railers HC (27-28-5-3, 62pts) beat the Reading Royals (26-31-5-2, 59pts) on Sunday afternoon by the final score of 6-3 in front of a crowd of 3,310 at Santander Arena. Worcester heads back home to take on the Newfoundland Growlers for the first time from the DCU Center this season on Wednesday, March 27th at 7:05 p.m.

Reading's Joe Nardi (1-1-2) scored his second goal of the weekend to open the scoring with 6:43 left in the first. Worcester fired back with three unanswered in the second from Ashton Calder (1-0-1), Keeghan Howdeshell (1-0-1) and Anthony Callin (1-1-2) to put Worcester ahead 3-1 going into the third. Andrei Bakanov (1-1-2) scored along with two empty net goals from Trevor Cosgrove (2-1-3), while Reading got goals from Jake Smith (1-0-1) and Tag Bertuzzi (1-0-1) en route to a 6-3 Railers victory.

Reading controlled the flow of play in the first, testing Tikkanen with nine shots on goal. Joe Nardi (16th) found a rebound along the near goal line and hammered it back towards Tikkanen, beating him near side to give Reading the late 1-0 advantage in the first. Worcester was outshot 9-6 in the first period.

The second period played out similarly for the Railers to their third period on Friday, which was headlined by a flurry of goals. First it was Ashton Calder (16th) in

the slot off a nice feed from Ryan Scarfo to beat Maier and tie the game 1-1 2:04 into the period. The assist was Scarfo's first point as a Railer. Just 3:21 later, Keeghan Howdeshell placed a perfect wrist shot over the blocker hand of Maier to put Worcester ahead 2-1. Mason Klee picked up his first professional point on the goal, notching the secondary assist. Worcester's Anthony Callin piled on with a goal 3:26 later. Zach White hit him with a pass on the tape while he sped into the offensive zone and sent a wrist shot top shelf past Maier and give Worcester a 3-1 lead going into the third.

The Railers tagged on one more early in the third with a shot from Andrei Bakanov (11th). He picked up the loose puck in the slot and wristed it past Maier to open Worcester's lead to 4-1. Reading bounced back 1:06 later as Jake Smith outwaited Henrik Tikkanen and wrapped it into the open net to make it a 4-2 game for most of the third. With the net empty, Trevor Cosgrove found the puck in open ice thanks to Andrei Bakanov chipping at it and sailed it into the empty net to make it 5-2 Worcester. Reading came back thirty seconds later with a goal from Tag Bertuzzi past the left arm of Henrik Tikkanen and cut it back down to a two-goal game. Cosgrove once again scored an empty netter, this time from 180 feet as Worcester skated away with a 6-3 win over Reading on Sunday afternoon.

## Registration now open for Quabbin Valley baseball

The Quabbin Valley Over-28 Baseball League is looking to infuse new talent into its league for the 2024 season.

Registration for the 2024 season is now open and any interested players can go to [www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org](http://www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org) to get registered, or to seek more information or make inquiries about the league. The league website will also be updated over the next month with information about the upcoming season.

There are many open roster spots available in the league for the 2024 season, which is tentatively scheduled to begin on Sunday, April 21. The league plays most Sunday from late April through late August with playoffs following that. The league plays a 15-game schedule and typically fields six teams each year. Games are usually played at 10 a.m. with fields in Easthampton and South Hadley nor-

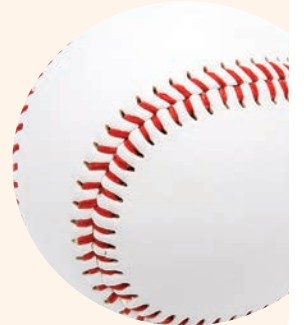
mally used.

The Quabbin Valley league is an all-abilities league and all are welcome to join. Eligibility is players who are age 28 and over. You must be 30 to be eligible to pitch in the league. Your age for eligibility is whatever age you will turn in 2024. The league is also able to entertaining taking in an entire group as a team to add to the league. Please email the league board for to inquire about entering a team.

The league is currently in the process of preparing for the 2024 season and held a meeting on March 24 to discussion plans for the upcoming season. The next meeting will be held after the league's open practice for all players, including players interested in joining the league. The open practice will be at Beachgrounds Park in South Hadley at 10 a.m. on April 7.

### How to contact the Agawam Advertiser News Sports Editor

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





# Sports

## Registration now open to take part in Bay State Games

WOBURN – Registration for the 42nd annual Bay State Summer Games is now open. The 2024 Summer Games will include thirty sports with competitions from May 11 – July 27 at venues throughout eastern and central Massachusetts including Game On in Fitchburg, Boston Sports Institute in Wellesley, Union Point Sports Complex in Weymouth, and North Star Ice Sports in Westborough. Bay State Games participants range in age from 5 to over age 75 and represent more than 300 Massachusetts communities as well as surrounding New England States in some sports. From grassroots participants to accomplished amateur athletes, the Bay State Games provide opportunities for the athlete in all of us.

Seven high school showcase sports will take place for a variety of sports, including baseball, basketball, field hockey, ice hockey, soccer, softball, and volleyball. Athletes currently in grade 8-11 who live or go to school in Massachusetts are eligible to attend regional tryouts during

the month of June. These tryouts will determine teams representing the various regions of the Commonwealth that will compete against each other in July. Check each sport page for specific eligibility requirements.

The Summer Games include a wide variety of individual sports including swimming, track & field, figure skating, pickleball, wrestling, weightlifting, badminton, and more. These sports are open to a wide range of ages and skill levels from youth participants to masters-aged athletes. Adaptive sport divisions in archery, swimming, and track & field are offered, as well. Bay State Games also organizes tournaments for pre-existing teams in rugby, and 6v6 field hockey.

Returning in 2024, Table Tennis will take place on June 1 at PingPod in Boston after a 5-year hiatus from the Summer Games sport lineup. New venues include Babson College, which will host the Girls Basketball Showcase, and NorthStar Ice Sports, which will host Figure Skating

and the Girls Ice Hockey Showcase. Game On in Fitchburg will serve as a hub venue for eight sports. Bay State Games expects 1,500 athletes and their families to attend competitions at Game On during the second week of July.

Bay State Games is pleased to announce a new partnership with Marathon Sports to provide athletes, officials, and volunteers with a special, traditional Bay State Games gift. Details will be released later in March.

“We are excited to present the 2024 version of the Bay State Summer Games where Massachusetts amateur athletes of all ages and abilities can have their ‘Time to Shine,’” said Kevin Cummings, Executive Director of the Bay State Games. “This year will feature the addition of table tennis and ultimate as well as several new host venues including Babson College in Wellesley, Howard Park and Maplewood Park in Malden and NorthStar Ice Sports in Westborough. We look forward to welcoming athletes from across

the Commonwealth as we celebrate the 42nd year of the Bay State Summer Games.”

An additional feature in 2024 is that in over a dozen sports, athletes who win a gold, silver, or bronze medal at the 2024 Bay State Games will qualify to participate in the 2024 State Games of America in San Diego, California. The State Games of America features more than 8,000 athletes from over 25 different state games programs nationwide. To see the list of qualifying sports, please visit [www.stategamesofamerica.com](http://www.stategamesofamerica.com).

In addition to sports programming, Bay State Games offer college scholarships, a sportsmanship initiative, college internship opportunities, and a High School Ambassador program.

For more information on all sports in the 2024 Summer Games, links to online registration, and information on other programs, go to [www.baystategames.org](http://www.baystategames.org).

For questions, email [info@baystategames.org](mailto:info@baystategames.org) or call 781-932-6555.

## Springfield Thunderbirds rebound to defeat Syracuse Crunch

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds (28-29-3-2) got a hat trick from one of their key stars en route to a 6-4 triumph over the Syracuse Crunch (35-20-4-2) on Saturday night before the 11th consecutive sellout crowd of 6,793 inside the MassMutual Center.

It was the home team that drew first blood on the scoreboard. Right winger Will Bitten intercepted a Syracuse pass in Springfield’s defensive zone and went in alone on a breakaway. Bitten made a nifty forehand to backhand move before tucking the puck past Syracuse netminder Hugo Alnefelt, notching his 14th goal of the season and giving the T-Birds a 1-0 lead at 3:37 of the first.

Unfortunately, the Springfield lead slipped away in the waning seconds of Syracuse’s first power play. After taking off on a rush up-ice into the T-Birds zone, Felix Robert filtered a pass into the blue paint that glanced off a defender before slipping in past Vadim Zherenko at 16:22.

The T-Birds, though, responded in kind and regained their one-goal lead with less

than a minute to play in the opening period. After a brief give-and-go between Hugh McGing and Hunter Skinner at the offensive blue line, Skinner made a terrific pass through traffic to the left-wing side. Ryan Suzuki received the pass and wasted no time whistling a release past Alnefelt on the glove side of the net for his 10th tally on the year. That marker gave the T-Birds a 2-1 lead going into the first intermission, and Zherenko made that stand up with a sensational diving stop on Walteri Merela with barely a second remaining on the clock on a crease scramble at the end of the frame.

It only took 30 seconds for the Thunderbirds to add to their lead in the second. Mikhail Abramov found his linemate Jakub Vrana streaking down the left wing on a stretch pass. Vrana took the feed and ripped a perfect shot past the glove of the Syracuse netminder to give Springfield a 3-1 lead.

Still, Syracuse would not go away as they narrowed the Springfield lead back to one less than three minutes later. After a Syracuse shot took a crazy carom

off the plexiglass behind Zherenko, the puck found the stick of Crunch defenseman Devante Stephens, who quickly spun a turnaround shot through Zherenko to make it 3-2 at 2:44.

Tempers flared shortly thereafter as Sam Bitten and Tyson Feist dropped the gloves at the 14:11 mark of the period. As he had done all season, Bitten’s fight fired up the sold-out crowd in the Thunderdome, and it, in turn, led to offensive fireworks a few minutes later. After Quinn Schmie-mann was called for a hooking infraction, Will Bitten got his second of the night, taking advantage of a crazy carom off the corner glass that skittered right to him in front of Alnefelt. While the Crunch goalie got a piece, the puck squeezed home, and the two-goal lead was restored, 4-2, at 9:59 of the middle frame.

Vrana and Bitten’s line was not done, either. As the game went to 4-on-4 in the closing minutes, Vrana and Abramov capitalized on a 2-on-1, as Abramov slipped a left-wing shot over Alnefelt’s glove, giving Springfield a 5-2 lead at 17:46, a lead that

carried into the intermission.

Syracuse did not go quietly into the night, and Ilya Usau’s goal at 4:46 made it a 5-3 game. Zherenko kept the Crunch at bay until Alnefelt went to the bench for an extra skater with under six minutes to play. Just moments after the ensuing faceoff, Cole Koepke redirected a pass in the slot from Alex Barre-Boulet, and the Springfield lead was down to 5-4 with just 5:05 to go.

Things got dicey for Springfield with just over a minute to play when a Barre-Boulet shot squeezed through Zherenko’s legs and rolled precariously across the goal line. Jack Finley seemed to have a wide-open net, but he could not get the puck across the line, and the T-Birds survived the threat.

Bitten capped off his sweet night by racing up ice and chipping the loose puck into the empty net with 1:01 remaining, making it a 6-4 final.

Springfield begins a crucial six-game road trip on Friday night in Hartford against the Wolf Pack.

Agawam Advertiser News

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## Public Notices

**AGAWAM ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS LEGAL ADVERTISEMENT**

Notice is hereby given that the Agawam Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing at the Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main St., Agawam, MA on **Monday, April 22, 2024 at 6:30PM** for all parties interested in the request of Ashley Stewart, who is seeking a Special Permit in accordance with the Town of Agawam Zoning Ordinances Ch. 180, Section 8.1 to allow for the keeping of chickens at the premises identified as 61 Carmen Ave.

Doreen A. Prouty  
Chairperson, ZBA

03/28, 04/04/2024

**Legal Ad AGAWAM HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

The Agawam Historical Commission will be holding a public hearing at **7:00 PM on Tuesday, April 9, 2024** at the Captain Charles Leonard House, 663 Main Street, Agawam. The purpose of this hearing will be to review the Demolition Permit for the Timothy Collins House, 71 Bridge Street, North Agawam, which comes under the Town of Agawam’s Demolition Delay Ordinance.

By Order of  
David Cecchi, Chairman  
AGAWAM HISTORICAL COMMISSION

03/21, 03/28/2024

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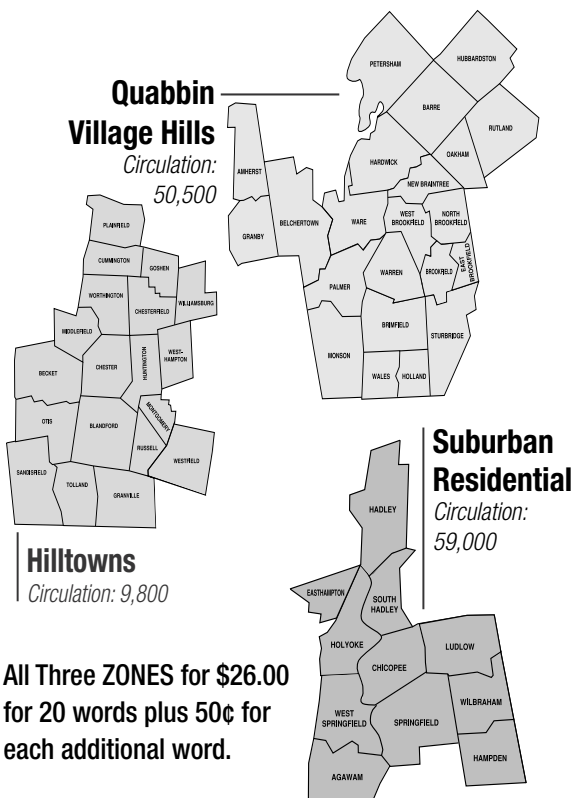
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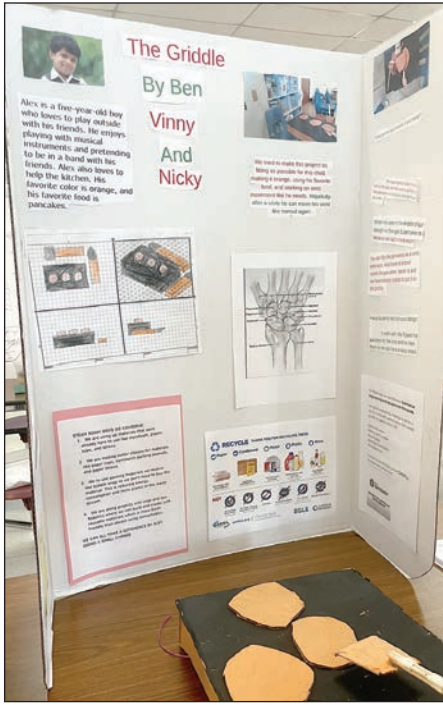
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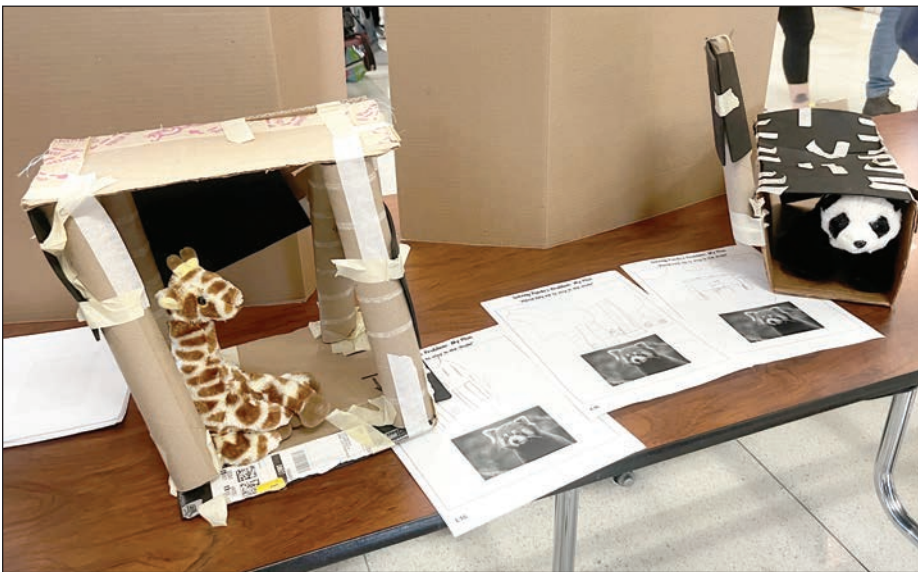


People in attendance of the event were welcome to enter the raffle for a chance to win a prize.



Students came up with ideas for hybrid plants that could help the environment.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY QUINN SUOMALA



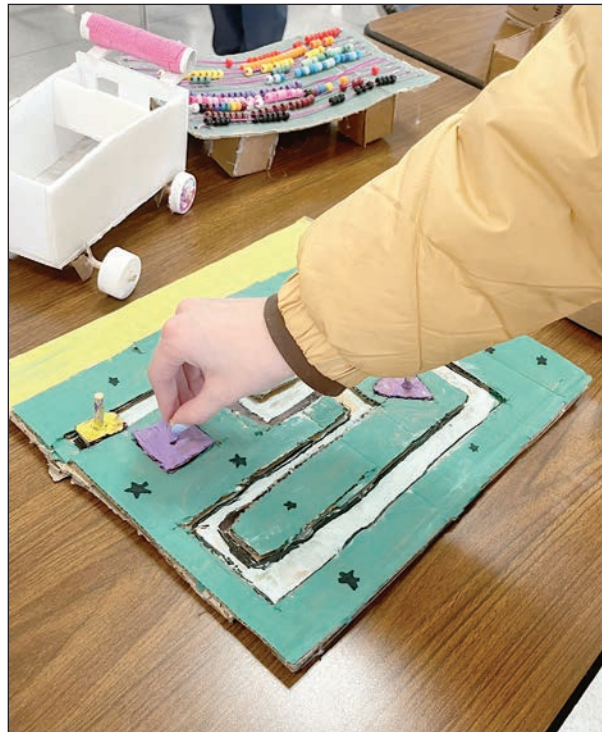
Children were given the option to submit some of their projects to the science fair part of the event. One child created structures that could help provide animals with shade.



Children in Tammy Rumplick's STEAM class were asked to create toys and toy prototypes that could help children with cerebral palsy.



For the science fair section of the event students were welcome to create a project based on a scientific concept or a famous scientist.



Cooler Communities had a Climate Counseling booth where they had parents make pledges on how they could help the environment.



Agawam community members came out to support the students in their science fair and to learn more about how they can help the environment.

**COOLER ■ from page 1**

Communities pledges where they could make a promise on how they could help try to improve the environment.

"We ask the parents to take a pledge so they do something after this on their own road to be more sustainable," Director of the Cooler Communities Program Uli Nagel said.

Parents could pledge to join a community solar farm, to compost to reduce food waste or they could have an energy-efficient audit.

This event allowed children to show off what they have learned in class this year as well as all the hard work they put into their various projects.

"Students get to educate their parents about what they can do to live in climate-friendly and healthy ways," Nagel said. "The most important thing is for the students to feel excited and empowered to be talking about solutions to climate

change or even just energy issues."

This event included two sections. One section was the Cooler Communities projects and the other was for the science fair projects.

The Cooler Communities projects were all projects the students had made in Rumplick's class. All of these projects were made out of recycled materials.

"We're using packing materials and things that we bring from home again and again in better ways so that we're not having to buy new things," Rumplick said. "Kids make all sorts of wonderful projects with trash to treasure."

For the science fair section of the event the children were welcome to create a STEAM project based on a STEAM career, a project that applied an investigative scientific question or a famous inventor or scientist.

All of the projects were very impressive. For the Cooler Communities projects some children designed toys or proto-

types of toys that could benefit children with cerebral palsy. They also created prototype prosthetics for animals in need.

For the science fair children researched ways they could make home more energy efficient, or they learned more about famous scientists.

Agawam has been participating in Cooler Communities for several years now. Rumplick has participated in the program from the start.

"It just seemed like a great project for kids to do to learn about the environment," she said. "I care a lot about our planet and animals, so it's a passion of mine."

Additionally, Cooler Communities is a grant program which provides Agawam Schools with funding for their science programs.

Cooler Communities is a section of the Harold Grinspoon Charitable Foundation. "We provide grants for schools to boost their climate education, focusing

on solutions and local issues," Nagel said.

Cooler Communities has events like this across the state where they encourage children to learn more about their environment and how they can help it.

"Kids really want to learn about these topics and teachers really want to teach about it," Nagel said. "It's beautiful to be able to support them in that."

Nagel mentioned that Cooler Communities tries to emphasize focusing more on the positive aspects of how children can help improve their environment.

"It doesn't have to be doom and gloom or scary, it can be energizing and inspiring and exciting," Nagel said.

Cooler Communities has recently started giving away the book *The Energy Detectives* to elementary teachers and their students to use in their classroom. In only four months they have already sent out 20,000 books.

To learn more about Cooler Communities, go to [www.coolercommunities.org](http://www.coolercommunities.org).