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AGAWAM

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Members of St. Martha's Guild at Sacred Heart Parish, Joanne Cappuccilli, Joyce, Mary Ellen, and Mary.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY CHRISTINA GIOSCIA

St. Martha's Thrift Shop becoming hidden gem

By Christina Gioscia
Correspondent

AGAWAM – Sacred Heart Parish's thrift store, St. Martha's Thrift Shop, has been open for around three-and-a-half years now. This hidden gem located in Feeding Hills has so much to offer the community from vintage glassware to classic records. The shop is primarily run by parish members, Joanne Cappuccilli and Dee Ziegert.

What started off as a simple way for the parish to raise extra money has turned into a staple for the community.

"It was just something that we wanted to see if we could raise some extra money for our parish," said Cappuccilli.

St. Martha's Thrift Shop has grown significantly in the past three-and-a-half years. Cappuccilli shared that the shop initially was just one room in the church office building but due to large quantities of items generously donated by community members, they

have been able to expand to an additional room in the building as well as keeping many of the donated books in the hall, creating a makeshift library set up.

About how the parish distributes proceeds from St. Martha's Thrift Shop Cappuccilli said, "We use them

St. Martha's Thrift Shop accepts a wide variety of items, including but not limited to, small furniture pieces, small appliances, records, glassware, jewelry, books, paintings, picture frames, lamps, clocks, and other trinkets. "Everything but clothing and electronics.

munity as a whole.

"Well number one, we like each other," Cappuccilli says.

"We enjoy working together, and the people who come in, we have regulars who come in. And they get to be like family. You know what they like, what they're looking for. They come in because everyone's cheerful and happy, and we have nice things. I think that's why we like to do it, is because we enjoy it," says Ziegert.

Regarding the donation process and why donating items is so rewarding, Cappuccilli tells us this, "The people who donate, I mean, we come in on Tuesdays and Thursdays, so the two days that we're open, our bench outside in the hall always has boxes and packages. People just come in and they leave things. And that's the really wonderful part about it, because they're doing something too. They may not be

We enjoy working together, and the people who come in; We have regulars who come in. And, they get to be like family

– Dee Ziegert

for events. We use from for; a big one is our scholarships that we do each year. And dinners, breakfasts, we have a parish picnic, and the St. Martha's Guild, which is the men and women's group here at the church. St. Martha's Guild has been around for almost twenty years. Mainly because we're very dedicated to our parish. And, as you know, things are expensive."

We don't accept that, mainly because of our room. We advertise in our weekly bulletin donations accepted. We try to keep it a little vintage, as they say," Cappuccilli said.

Ziegert adds, "Clean and gently used."

Cappuccilli and Ziegert enjoy volunteering their time to St. Martha's Thrift Shop and collaborating with each other and other members of the parish and com-

THRIFT | page 12

Mayor presents capital improvement plan

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

AGAWAM – Fiscal responsibility is a key theme for many communities during this budget cycle, and that includes capital needs and improvements.

The Agawam High School project is completely underway, but as shown earlier this week, it is not the only need for the town.

Mayor Christopher Johnson presented the city council with the five-year Capital Improvement Plan, which is sometimes called a "wish list" for the subsequent four years of the plan. Typically, the items proposed for the next fiscal year are also part of the mayor's budget request.

As Johnson reported in his presentation, the town has actually made some significant capital improvements in recent years. In addition to the high school project, which will take another three years to complete, the town has recently opened a brand-new police headquarters.

A new early childhood center will be a part of the high school project, addressing another capital need. Johnson also mentions the work completed at Still Brook Park. He said all of these things were accomplished with limited funds.

"Fiscal restraint and careful planning are required to assure long-term financial stability," his presentation states. "And care must be taken in project development and implementation in order that bond sales are timed, so that principal and interest costs occur in the year scheduled."

The town plans to tackle the roofs at its four elementary schools. The town should receive significant help with those projects after applying to the Massachusetts School Building Authority's Accelerated Repair Program.

According to Johnson's proposal, there is more than a half million projected for DPW equipment, \$250,000

CAPITAL | page 12

AHS students take first place at 2026 Western Mass. Chemistry Olympiad

By Christina Gioscia
Correspondent

AGAWAM – On March 17 the University of Massachusetts held the 2026 Western Mass Chemistry Olympiad in Amherst. The Western Mass Chemistry Olympiad is held every year; all High Schools throughout Western Mass are eligible to compete. The Agawam High School Chemistry Teams performed outstandingly with both the AP Level team, as well as the first-year chemistry team scoring first place in their re-

spected divisions. The relay team, Quiz Bowl Team, also won first place. The teams are coached by Agawam High Teachers, Dr. Mitchel Chambers, Teresa Buklerewicz, Brian Melloni, and Julie Scannell.

"We are so proud of our students," says Buklerewicz.

This victory follows up their accomplishment in 2025 where the first-year chemistry team scored first place and their victory in 2024 when the AP-Level team scored first place. It

AHS | page 12

Former State Senator Linda Melconian unveils new book

By Christina Gioscia
Correspondent

AGAWAM – On April 17, the Agawam Public Library hosted a reading done by Former Massachusetts State Senator Linda Melconian. During Melconian's time as senator, she focused on issues involving anti-discrimination in genetic testing, Route 57, and education.

On Thursday evening, she presented, "Ella Grasso: The First of the Firsts". Grasso was the first female state governor elected on her own. Melconian states Grasso encouraged her to pursue a career in politics, this led to Melconian becoming the first female senate majority leader in Massachusetts. Copies of Melconian's book were sold at the event; and she donated

all proceeds from the event to Friends of the Agawam Public Library.

Melconian shares how Grasso inspired her.

"I try to emulate her in a sense of being everywhere," Melconian said. "She was all things to all people." Melconian called Grasso a "change agent" and "ray of sunshine."

"She was always there for people," Melconian says. "I didn't care about appearance. I want to radiate sunshine. I worked hard for my constituency."

Agawam Public Library Adult Services Library Associate Kristen Frost talked about the organization of the event.

"Linda first contacted me last September to let me know about her new biography of Ella Grasso and to ex-

press her interest in coming to talk about the book," Frost said. "Although I was still fairly new here at the library, I knew from my supervisor, Cher, that Linda had presented here before on a previous book she wrote about Congressman Tip O'Neill. When I met with her, she expressed her desire to not only share information about the book in her presentation but to also donate the full proceeds of any books sold back to the Friends of the Agawam Public Library group. I was certainly touched by her generosity, and I was also excited to have a former state senator appear at our library."

Melconian's book perfectly encapsulates how important strong role models are for women. Grasso and Melconian herself, paved the way for

more women to pursue higher education and work hard in their respected careers.

Frost highlights the role Mount Holyoke College had in the paths of Melconian, Grasso and so many more women, "Reading the book, you immediately understand that Senator Melconian is championing women who have made important changes in our world and who have impacted women in future generations. It is special that the book presents several women who have ties to Mount Holyoke College, demonstrating their connectedness and drive for excellence in their various fields. Each woman profiled in the book, from Mary Lyon to Ella Grasso made some

BOOK | page 12



Former Massachusetts State Senator Linda Melconian presenting her book, "Ella Grasso: The First of the Firsts" last Thursday, April 17 at Agawam Public Library.

TURLEY PHOTO BY CHRISTINA GIOSCIA



Pynchon Point cleanup set for this Saturday morning

AGAWAM – Volunteers along the Westfield River and its streams will celebrate Earth Day on Saturday, Apr. 24 by cleaning up the banks of the Westfield River watershed. This year's Westfield River Watershed Association's (WRWA) cleanup will be in honor of Agawam's environmental activist, Jack Coughlin. Coughlin, well-known for his daily litter clean-up activities, was picking up "nips" bottles at the roadside when he was struck by a car and left paralyzed this past January.

Sheryl Becker, coordinator of the Agawam site and WRWA Board member, invites everyone to come out for a morning and support the work the Jack did every day. "Jack has been a tireless and constant supporter of

the environment. We are so happy to be able to honor him by carrying on his work this way."

According to Mark Damon, coordinator for the WRWA Earth Day cleanup projects, people can just show up at one of the gathering sites to participate in the morning's cleanup. "Come out and celebrate with us. Once again, we are coordinating our cleanup with Mayor Humason's program. We invite everyone, including young families and teens, to join us as we clean up our local river and its streams and banks so that they are safe for everyone to enjoy."

"Earth Day is a great reason to come out and help keep our river clean for people and wildlife," said Sheryl Becker, another WRWA

cleanup coordinator. "We find all kinds of garbage from old tires and bike parts to plastic water bottles and snack wrappers. The kids (and adults, too) love how good their section of Westfield River looks when they finish—and they can point to what they did with such pride."

This year the water level has been low, exposing debris along the banks. "Because of the pandemic, many more people have been out along the shores of the river and its streams. Not everyone practices "Leave No Trace," says Damon, "so we have some spots that have significantly more trash than usual. Safety is our priority. COVID-19 precautions, including masks, will be in place for work groups beyond a family

unit. If the weather or conditions are really severe, we'll post an update on our website Friday evening/Saturday morning at www.westfield-driver.org." The rain date is Sunday, April 25.

Mark Damon is appreciative for the groups that participate. "Besides individuals who just show up at one of our gathering points, we get groups from businesses and organizations, and students from the local schools and colleges. We've been doing this clean-up for 25 years or so. Schools like Agawam High send crews almost every year." Damon, who teaches at Westfield State University invites his students to join in. "The kids from the sports teams really help out by moving some of the bigger items we find."

WRWA encourages people to come and join them for the morning on Saturday, April 24. Volunteers for the Spring 2021 Westfield River cleanup will gather at one of two locations by 9 a.m., meeting in Westfield in the public parking lot at the end of Meadow Street near the green bridge or in Agawam at the Pynchon Point parking lot near the South End bridge circle on River Road. WRWA will distribute gloves and trash bags and offer safety tips, then send off site teams. Note that most of the cleanup is done from shore—no river wading needed. Organizers target watershed sites in Westfield, Russell, Huntington, West Springfield and Agawam. Assignments are generally completed by 1 p.m. or earlier.

Everyone is welcome;

children must be supervised by an adult, and Covid precautions will be observed. WRWA will arrange with local communities for pickup of trash and debris recovered at each site. For questions, contact Mark Damon regarding Westfield locations at 413-977-1577, markjdamon@gmail.com or Sheryl Becker for Agawam area sites at 413-374-1921, sherleath69@gmail.com.

The Westfield River Watershed Association was established in 1953 to protect and improve the natural resources of the watershed, as well as to expand recreational and other land use opportunities for people's enjoyment and for sound ecology. To learn more, visit www.westfieldriver.org or visit our Westfield River Facebook page.

Springfield CROP Hunger Walk this Sunday

AGAWAM – No one in this world should be hungry. That's why CROP Hunger Walks are more than just a gathering of people in a place. CROP Hunger Walkers are part of a movement, taking steps and raising funds to provide meals for those in their own community who need them - and supporting programs that create greater food security in communities around the world.

The annual Agawam/West Springfield CROP Hunger Walk is on Sunday, April 26. Agawam Congregational Church, 745 Main Street in Agawam, is hosting the event this year. The Registration Rally begins at 1 p.m., with the Agawam Lion's Club providing lunch. There will be music and raffle prizes before the

1:30 p.m. kick-off. There are options for walkers of all ages of one, three and six mile routes. The two longer routes will take in the Connecticut River walkway. The event takes place rain or shine with the motto, "We walk because they walk." Around the world, there are many people who walk miles for water, food and fuel for cooking.

Three quarters of funds raised will go to Church World Service (CWS) while one quarter of funds will support the Parish Cupboard (which serves families in Agawam, Feeding Hills and West Springfield.) CROP Hunger Walkers raise more than \$6 million annually to bring help and hope to those who need it most. 500 walks across the country are building a world

where there is enough for all. The 2025 local CROP Hunger Walk raised over \$11,000 and hopes to exceed that this year!

People can sign up online at www.events.crop-hunger-walk.org/chw and searching for the Agawam/West Springfield Walk. Faith communities and organizations who have formed teams include Agawam Congregational Church; Agawam, West Springfield and Westfield United Methodist Churches; Feeding Hills Congregational Church; St. David's Episcopal Church, First Congregational West Springfield; Grace Lutheran and Good Shepherd Churches; the Islamic Society of Western MA; and the Parish Cupboard. People can also sign up as individuals or create their own teams.

Friends of Veterans holding Engraved Brick fundraiser

AGAWAM — The Friends of the Agawam Veterans Council (FAVC) are proud to announce the launch of their Engraved Brick Fundraiser in support of the Veterans Memorial at School Street Park.

This meaningful initiative offers community members the opportunity to create a lasting tribute honoring veterans who have served our nation. Participation is open to everyone— you do not need to be an Agawam resident to purchase a brick.

Supporters can purchase a 4x8 engraved brick for \$125, which will become a perma-

nent part of the memorial. Each brick is designed to maintain a uniform and respectful appearance and may include:

- Name
- Branch of Service
- Years of Service

(Up to 3 lines of text, 18 characters per line, including spaces.)

"This memorial is a way for our community to come together and recognize the sacrifices of the men and women who served," said representatives of the Friends of the Agawam Veterans Council. "Each brick tells a story

and ensures that these individuals are honored for generations to come."

The Veterans Memorial at School Street Park is being developed as a place of reflection, remembrance, and community pride.

Community members are encouraged to participate by honoring a family member, friend, or loved one who served—no matter where they reside.

For more information or to purchase a brick, please contact: Patrick Asta-Ferrero at agawamvetfriends@gmail.com.

Yard Waste Collection dates announced

AGAWAM – Yard Waste Collection will take place on scheduled recycling days during the weeks listed below.

*Yard Waste must be out by 6:30 a.m. of 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:

- Brown kraft bags or

30-gallon barrels with handles may be used.

- Barrels must be labeled as Yard Waste, no heavier than 40lbs.
- Loose brush/branches, under 3" in diameter and 3' in length, must be tied in bundles with biodegradable twine, weighing no more than 40lbs.

Not acceptable:

- Loose brush or branches
- 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
- Yard waste in plastic bags

A Week
May 11-15
June 22-26

B Week
May 4-8
June 15-19

A message from concerned Agawam residents

Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs) are being installed in Agawam



They are Flock cameras.


Part of a nationwide surveillance network owned by a for-profit company.

They use AI 24x7 to identify and record all vehicles and their characteristics.


License plate and "vehicle fingerprint" data go to Flock's cloud database, made for access by law enforcement nationwide.

The cameras were quietly approved* and installed without community knowledge or consent.

*see Agawam TR-2025-67



Annotated ALPR image, courtesy of DeFlock.org



See more ALPRs mapped at DeFlock.org

Troop 82 to hold annual bottle and can drive

AGAWAM – Troop 82, Agawam's longest-running Scout group, will host a bottle and can drive from 9 a.m. to 12 noon on Saturday May 2 at Agawam Congregation-

al Church located at 745 Main Street, Agawam. Funds raised will support troop activities, training and gear. The troop runs programs year-round and accepts new

members aged 11-17 at any time during the year. Scouts are also offering donation pick up before May 2; email troop82agawam@gmail.com to make arrangements.



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Take Action

Learn: DeFlock.org, dontgetflocked.com/home.

Talk with your neighbors: Many are unaware of Agawam ALPRs. Mass surveillance affects everyone, regardless of politics.

Request public records: Grant application/amendment, contracts, data-sharing agreements, camera locations.

Contact elected officials: Push for policies that ban or restrict mass-surveillance technologies.

Attend City Council meetings: Share your feedback.



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Suffield Garden Club hosts May Market

SUFFIELD, CT – When you see the merry, yellow and white striped tents next to the Phelps-Hatheway House barn in Suffield, CT, you know it's time for May Market.

Now in its 48th year, the Suffield Garden Club's May Market always delights. Thirty-five vendors will be offering everything from plants, garden art, pottery, house signs, metal work, wooden ware, unique wreaths, and second-hand treasures to power equipment, jewelry and food. Shoppers can patronize returning favorites as well as new additions like the Dirty Sip, an on-trend drink that mixes soda with flavored syrup and creamer. Also new this year is live entertainment for children and adults in the Summer House just south of the main house.

Gardeners can enjoy extra benefits such as the availability of Spear Head

Spades, roses and shrubs, and Suffield High School's Agriscience students with a selection of student-grown plants and herbs. The Garden Club also offers "Member Plants" – locally grown perennials and annuals at amazingly low prices – and free gardening advice at the Club's booth.

Admission is free, but don't forget to bring cash or your checkbook since not all vendors take credit cards. Visitors are encouraged to bring their own reusable shopping bags, as well as a wagon or cart for transporting their treasures back to their cars.

The Suffield Garden Club, organized in 1934, is a non-profit organization dedicated to the beautification of Suffield. Proceeds from this event support civic beautification, high school scholarships, town conservation, horticulture education, and garden therapy programs.

Catholic Women's Club Banquet

AGAWAM – The annual May Banquet for the Catholic Women's Club of Agawam will be held on Wednesday, May 20 at Storrowtown Tavern in West Springfield, MA. It will begin with a social time at 6 p.m. and the buffet will be served at 6:30 p.m. The menu will consist of fruit and cheese platter/veggie and dip platter, salad, bread and butter, potatoes, seasonal vegetables, Chicken

Francaise, Yankee pot roast, broiled scrod, tea, coffee and dessert ice cream puff. The price is \$38 per person and checks payable to CWC can be placed in the St. John the Evangelist's collection baskets at Mass or mailed to Paula Raiche, 181 Leonard St., Agawam, MA 01001, no later than May 10. There will be no refunds. The club's monthly business meeting and annual meeting will follow the dinner.

ACC to hold Mother's Day Plant Sale

AGAWAM – The Agawam Congregational Church is having a Mother's Day Plant Sale to be held on May 9 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Come bright and early for the best blooms. We will have over 50 hanging plants, hypertufa planters with sedums, annuals, perennials,

bulbs, hostas, hypertufa lady bugs, pine cone flowers that last forever.

If you have a garage or basement full of old pots (any size) and you want to get rid of them this is the time. Drop them off outside the back door of the church, 745 Main St. Agawam.

Grant to visit historic site

AGAWAM – The grounds of the historic Thomas Smith House at 251 North West Street in Feeding Hills, Mass., will be the site of a first-person visit from General & Mrs. Ulysses S. Grant on Saturday, May 2. An open house at the National-Register-listed property will take place from 12 to 3 p.m., with a presentation by General and Mrs. Grant at 1 p.m. This event is suitable for all ages; 19th century-style clothing will be available for children to try on and have their photos taken with the General.

After a brief introduction and survey of the General's life by Mrs. Julia D. Grant, the engagements, habits and contributions of the great Civil War general will be explored by Sam Grant through the use of lively and often humorous anecdotes, letters and impressions of the times.

Since 1989, Sam Grant has dedicated his life to understanding Ulysses S. Grant, one of the greatest leaders this nation has ever known. After years of study and experience, and portrayal of General Grant, his professional interpretation of the General's physical stature and character have won him the intellectual admiration and heartfelt appreciation of novice spectators and the most serious students of Civil War history alike. A highly acclaimed academic and motivational speaker, film

producer, and United States Navy veteran, Sam Grant's inspiring and informative presentation will leave you with the overwhelming sense you have experienced the true General Grant, up close and personal, as history should be.

Photo opportunities with the General and Mrs. Grant will follow the presentation.

This program, free and open to the public, is supported in part by a grant from the Agawam Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

The private, non-profit, all-volunteer Agawam Historical Association preserves and presents Agawam and Feeding Hills history at its two locations 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 of the Agawam Historical & Fire House Museum, located in the former Elm Street Fire Station at 35 Elm Street in Agawam Center. The association 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



The Agawam Historical Association will host acclaimed Ulysses S. Grant portrayist Sam Grant for a first-person visit by General & Mrs. Grant on Saturday, May 2 at the historic Thomas Smith House, 251 North West Street, Feeding Hills, Mass. An open house will take place from 12 to 3 p.m.; with a presentation by General and Mrs. Grant at 1 p.m.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Places in 2005. The association also offers an annual scholarship to an Agawam 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.

Golf Tournament to support Wreaths Across America

AGAWAM – The Friends of the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Agawam and the Friends of the Agawam Veterans Council proudly announce their Second Annual Golf Tournament in support of Wreaths Across America, a national effort to honor and remember our fallen veterans during the

holiday season.

This exciting event promises a day of camaraderie, remembrance, and community support. Golfers, sponsors, and community members are invited to participate and help lay wreaths at the graves of veterans resting at the Agawam Veterans Memorial Cemetery this December.

The Tournament will be held on June 28. Registration begins at 10:30 a.m. and golfing starts at 12 noon at Agawam Municipal Golf Course. The costs are \$135 for an individual golfer, \$540 for a team of four, \$30 for dinner only, and \$100 to sponsor a tee. Other sponsorships are also available.

To Register or Sponsor, contact Marline Claremont at 413-221-9548 or email wreathfriends@gmail.com. Registration forms are available upon request. Join us in honoring those who served with a round of golf, good food, and great company—all for a noble cause.

Nacho Average Wellness' Event at Heritage Woods

AGAWAM – A group of local eldercare agencies and facilities is sponsoring "Nacho Average Wellness," Thursday, May 7 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at Heritage Woods, 464 Main St., Agawam.

The event is designed to offer caregivers and profes-

sionals time to step away from their busy lives, reconnect with themselves, and connect with others, according to Chanda Bernard, founder of Chanda Care, one of the sponsors.

The featured topic of the evening is "Don't be a Burnt Taco: How to Come Back

to Yourself," with a focus on conversation around simple, practical ways for caregivers to reduce stress and prevent burnout.

Margaritas, including a non-alcoholic option, will be available along with a taco bar and other light bites. In

addition, guests will be able to enter a raffle for a wellness basket valued at \$100.

The event is sponsored by Chanda Care, Chanda's House, Brookhaven Hospice, and Heritage Woods. There is no charge to attend. R.S.V.P. to tiffany.lagacy.genesis@chandacare.com

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Opinion

Guest Column

SOCIAL SECURITY Matters

By Russell Gloor



Must I set up a Social Security account to enroll in Medicare?

Dear Rusty:

I turn 65 this November 2026. Someone told me I need to set up a Social Security account at least three months ahead of time before applying for Medicare for the first time. I do not intend to take any Social Security benefits until, perhaps, age 67 or later. Please advise and thank you.

Signed: Looking Ahead

Dear Looking Ahead:

You don't technically need to "set up" an online SSA account to enroll in Medicare, but it would be more efficient to do so. We always recommend creating your online "my Social Security" account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount well before you are ready to claim your Social Security benefits. That's because you can monitor your projected Social Security benefits to help you decide when to claim, but it also facilitates other things you might need to do at the Social Security Administration such as claiming your SS retirement benefits online and enrolling in Medicare online.

As for Medicare, you can enroll in Medicare up to three months before the month you turn 65, and you can contact the Social Security Administration by phone up to three months prior in order to schedule an appointment to enroll over the phone (call 1-800-772-1213 to make the appointment). You can enroll via telephone, even if you don't have your "my Social Security" online account set up.

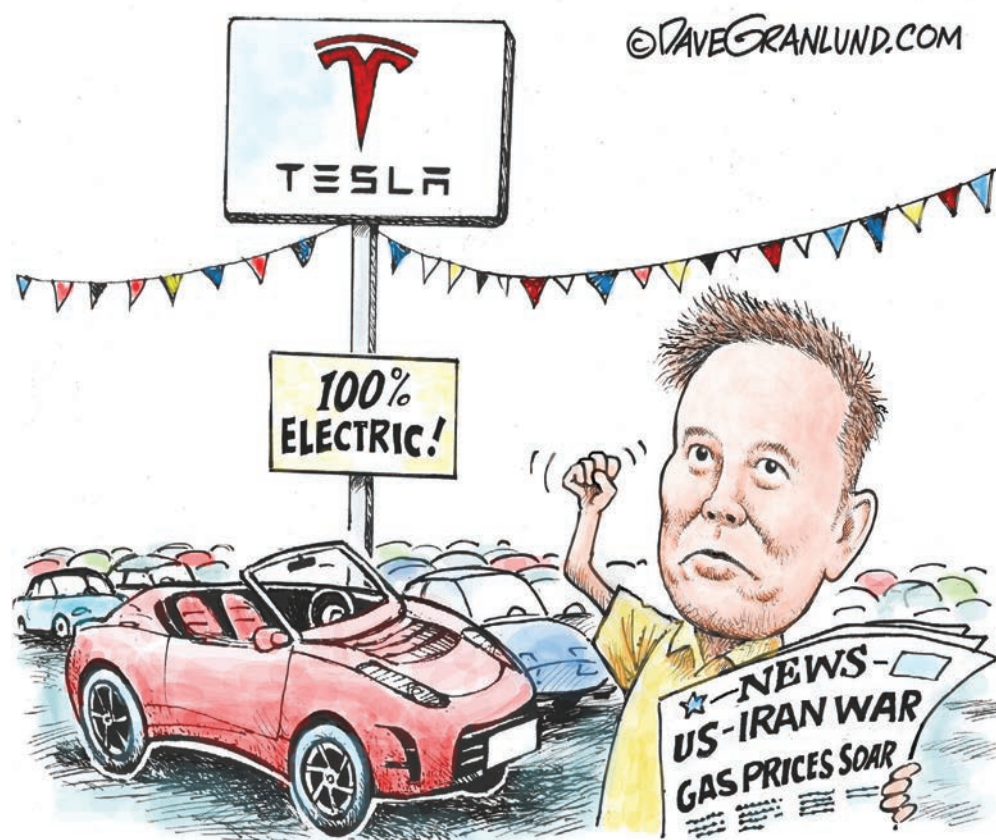
However, an advantage to creating your personal online Social Security account is that you could then enroll in Medicare online as described at this link: www.ssa.gov/medicare/sign-up. And you can, as you wish to do, enroll only in Medicare without also taking your

Social Security benefits at this time.

I want to also make you aware that if you are still working and have "creditable" healthcare coverage from your employer ("creditable" is an employer group plan with at least 20 participants), then you can delay enrolling in Medicare until your employer coverage ends (thus saving the usual Medicare Part B monthly premium). When your employer's healthcare coverage ends, you will enter a Special Enrollment Period during which you can enroll in Medicare without incurring a Late Enrollment Penalty.

Finally, please be aware that whenever you claim your Social Security benefits, you will be automatically enrolled in Medicare Part A (inpatient hospitalization coverage) and Part B (coverage for outpatient medical services). Since there is a monthly premium associated with Medicare Part B (but not with Part A), you can choose to decline Part B if you are still working and covered by your employer's creditable healthcare plan, until your employer's healthcare coverage ends.

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



In honor of Mother Earth

This week, we celebrate Earth Day. Lots of towns host bulk waste days or a town-wide clean up as ways to note the day.

While most of us garden with great intentions such as beautifying our yards or producing home grown vegetables, it is important to note that the gardening/greenhouse industry hasn't always been what you'd call "earth-friendly." From mountains of plastic pots not rotting away in our landfills to story after story of chemical misuse, we inadvertently hurt the very source of our pleasure.

So, in honor of Earth Day, read from the archives eight easy things we can do as gardeners to tread a bit more lightly on 'ole Mother.

Feed the soil, not the plant

Have your soil tested and ask for organic recommendations to correct nutrient deficiencies. Replenishing your garden with amendments like rock phosphate and greensand will help to create long-lasting nutrient storehouses.

Healthy soil will produce plants that are less prone to insect and disease problems.

Start a compost pile

Layer your vegetable and yard waste, keep it moist and give it a turn. After a short time it will decompose, leaving behind a great source of organic matter.

In the Garden

by Roberta McQuaid



No matter how you garden, be it vegetables, flowers, herbs, fruits or even shrubs, each benefit from a yearly top dressing of "black gold."

Make compost tea

Are your transplants looking a little pale? Rather than sprinkling them with "blue water," perk them up with home-brewed compost tea.

Mix one part well-rotted compost or manure to five parts water and allow it to sit for a week or more. Strain before foliar feeding your plants.

Shop Mom and Pop

Buying local, directly from the grower usually means a knowledgeable sales team! Form relationships and learn from their expertise.

Ask them to carry organic seeds, potting soils and pest control options.

Reduce, reuse, recycle!

I first became familiar with this catch phrase back in 1990, when Earth Day celebrations went global. In the context of plastic pots and other containers used to grow or move plants, I'd like to think that the local Mom and Pop shop would take back the pots you bought

their plants in and use them to grow next years crop.

If not, maybe you could reuse them to start some home-grown seedlings and recycle the rest.

An even better solution for earth conscious growers would be to replace plastic with fiber (stronger than peat and made from recycled materials to boot).

Use least toxic measures to control bugs and other garden thugs

Beer to trap slugs, and baking soda for black spot – the list of remedies to fight garden maladies is numerous and not always a stretch of the imagination. If you must choose a chemical option follow the manufacturer's recommendations. Assuming that more is better is outdated and dangerous thinking!

Conserve water

We all know that watering during the heat of the day results in lots of moisture lost to evaporation while watering in the evening can make plants more prone to disease. What to do?

For happy, hydrated plants water in the early morning hours instead. Hand watering at the base of each plant or using soaker hoses or drip irrigation is far better than overhead sprinklers when it comes to conservation and disease prevention.

GARDEN | page 5

Red-breasted nuthatch

Last Wednesday, April 8 while waiting at the bus stop for my grandson, I saw two red-breasted nuthatches in a small grove of pine trees near the road.

They were going up and down several pine trees most likely in search of insects. The red-breasted nuthatch is about 4.3 to 4.7 inches long and exhibits the typical head-down nuthatch behavior of its larger cousin, the white-breasted nuthatch.

Male and females are similar with a black eye stripe, white eyebrow and buff orange underparts. It has a blue-gray back.

They inhabit conifer forests and in winter may be found in other trees. They nest mostly in conifers such as spruce, fir, hemlock.

Both sexes excavate a nest cavity in a rotten stub or snag, usually five to 40 feet about the ground. Sticky pitch is smeared around the entrance

of the nest hole possibly to prevent other creatures from entering. Adults avoid getting stuck in the pitch by flying straight into the hole. Sometimes they are seen with pitch on their feathers.

The female lays five to six white, spotted eggs. The female incubates the eggs and the male brings food to her. Both parents feed the nestlings. Young nuthatches leave the nest about two to three weeks after hatching.



By Ellenor Downer

They have a soft, musical song used especially in courtship by the male. These nuthatches eat insects, spiders and seeds in summer. In winter they eat many seeds especially those of conifers.

Nesting bluebirds

BACKYARD | page 5

Agawam Advertiser News welcomes letters to the editor

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. 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 Thursday'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 newspaper

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*.

AGAWAM ADVERTISER NEWS

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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.

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Agawam Advertiser News

OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries. One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place. The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice (with a word limit of up to 500 words) 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.

Schools & Youth

Gloria McLellan Scholarship available

AGAWAM – The Agawam Community Artists and Artisans (ACAA) have kicked off their annual scholarship fundraising program, designed to be awarded to high school and college students from Western Massachusetts who are pursuing further education in Visual Arts.

Deadline to apply for the Gloria McLellan Memorial Scholarship is May 1. Students can apply at www.agawamarts.com.

Anthony Nguyen of Springfield, Sarah McDonald of Longmeadow, and Charles Santiago of Chicopee were each awarded \$1200 scholarships last year.

The scholarship is named after Gloria McLellan, a local artist and one of the founding members of ACAA.

Funds for the scholarship are raised through the ACAA's New England Mosaic Project,

which has just launched in local Western Mass libraries. Through the libraries, anyone can pick up a blank canvas, apply art to it, and return it by May 15. The canvases become part of a 24-foot Mosaic display. The canvases are sold at two events in August with net proceeds going directly to the scholarship.

Scholarships will be awarded in June for the 2026 fall semester.

CWC Scholarship applications available

AGAWAM – Application forms for the Catholic Women's Club of Agawam's scholarship are available. Applicants must be a child or grandchild of a club member and a graduating high

school senior. The forms will be available at the club's monthly meetings in March and April or at the St. John the Evangelist Parish Center office at 833 Main St., Agawam MA, Monday-Thursday,

9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Completed forms and all requested information must be returned by Apr. 30 to the email or mailing address on the application. No late applications will be accepted.

BACKYARD ■ from page 4

On Saturday, April 11 I received an email from a Hampden resident. She said, "Our bluebirds are back and have completed their nest. We are awaiting the first egg. I'm surprised they use mostly pine needles constructing the nest."

Brimfield birds

A Brimfield resident said he saw a female brown-headed cowbird in his yard. He said it was unusual as he usually sees the male before the female.

He said, "On Sunday I did a tour of local ponds. There was a pair of ring-necked ducks on Sherman Pond in Brimfield and several on a pond in Warren. Also in Warren I saw an osprey at the pond where they have nested for several years. I've been checking the pond since early March and this is the first sighting of an osprey this year. I hope its partner shows up soon."

He also said, in Warren, there was a bald eagle at a pond on New Reed Street. There has been one or two there frequently during March. A pair of eastern bluebirds was seen perched on



Red-breasted nuthatch

two different trees with holes possibly suitable for a nest. I often see bluebirds using nesting boxes, but have never seen them using a natural cavity. I'll keep checking to see if they nest in either tree."

Non-bird sighting

The Brimfield resident reported a non-bird sighting. He said "while driving out of the driveway yesterday I saw a small frog hopping off of the driveway. Probably a spring peeper. I'll have to check a nearby small pond in the woods nearby to see if there are peepers there. The frog could have been a pickerel frog, we see those every year in the yard. They come in three sizes; small, medium

and large. I try to be careful when I mow or weed whack to avoid them."

Raven

My granddaughter while walking her dogs on Saturday, April 11 heard the croaking sound of a raven. It startled both the dogs and her.

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by emailing mybackyard88@aol.com or edowner@turley.com or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005. The Palmer office has a new phone system and I will be getting an extension where messages may be left. I will publish the number as soon as it is set up.

GARDEN ■ from page 4

Extend the harvest

Do you know how far most fruits and vegetables have to travel to reach the local supermarket? Probably far more than the average American travels in a year's time. Frustrated? Then read up on various methods of extending the use of your own garden boun-

ty past the growing season. This could mean growing a few veggies like winter squash, onions or garlic – all of which store well. It could also mean trying your hand at freezing or drying some of your produce for use in the offseason.

Few of us can feed ourselves entirely, but whatever we can grow offsets the rest.

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

Library unveils new logo during National Library Week

AGAWAM – The Agawam Public Library looks to the future and embraces its roots as we launch a rebranding initiative this Spring. In recognition of National Library Week (April 19 to April 25), the Agawam Library is unveiling our new official logo and brand redesign. Beginning very soon, visitors and patrons of the Agawam Library will notice a concerted effort to expand its vision as a vibrant and cohesive gathering place for the greater Agawam community. Over the past several months, the library's management team has been working with graphic designer, Heather Bulmer to create a logo designed to be sustainable and meaningful to the patrons and staff at the library. "It was a joy to work with the team at the Agawam Public Library", Ms. Bulmer noted. "Their warmth, dedication, and genuine care for the community made the process truly collaborative. Together, we created an identity that reflects both the library's roots and its welcoming, forward-looking spirit."

When visitors come to the Agawam Library, they are welcomed by a variety of plants that have come to define the warm, communal spaces throughout the building. The

management team aimed to capture that impression in its rebranding efforts. The new logo also honors the traditions of the printed page and the town's agricultural history. The timing is right for the library to reimagine its role in the Agawam community and also consider what lies ahead. After the challenges of the pandemic and a 10-month relocation, the library is ready to greet the future with a renewed dedication to its mission:

"The mission of the Agawam Public Library is to provide materials and services to help residents of all ages and abilities obtain information meeting their personal, educational, recreational and professional needs. The library strives to promote and encourage lifelong learning, self-improvement and self-expression. Emphasis is placed on access to and assistance in using technologies that serve as a gateway to information resources within the library and beyond. The library has a special mission serving young children and their parents; bringing the joy of reading and learning at the earliest possible age to enhance lifetime literacy."

The library strives to cultivate a sense of belonging and

the plant collection creates an atmosphere that encourages growth and inspires connections. The community lies at the heart of everything the library does. The new tagline "Connecting Community, Cultivating Curiosity" recognizes the library's role in providing access to ideas, resources and learning opportunities, as well as being a place that fosters creativity, discovery and lifelong learning. Library visitors can always rely on access to traditional materials and look forward as the library introduces new and innovative programs and services.

There will be a special visual exhibit in the library lobby during National Library Week. In the coming weeks, the library will be converting all of its printed and digital material to reflect the new branding. A new website is soon to follow. The library is especially grateful to Heather Bulmer for her guidance, expertise and patience in working with the library's management team. According to Assistant Library Director, Cher Collins "we are thrilled about the branding redesign for the library. The images and colors capture our commitment to our past, present and future."

Grinspoon banquets scheduled for next month

HOLYOKE – The Pioneer Valley Excellence in Teaching Awards will honor 90 teachers from over 20 Western Massachusetts school districts at celebratory banquets at the Log Cabin in Holyoke on May 6, 12 and 20.

The program will feature an awards presentation honoring the winners, who will each receive an engraved plaque and monetary award in recognition of their achievement, along with generous tuition incentives and scholarships offered by the following colleges and universities in the region: American International College, Bay Path University, Elms College,

Springfield College, Western New England University, Westfield State University, and the University of Massachusetts.

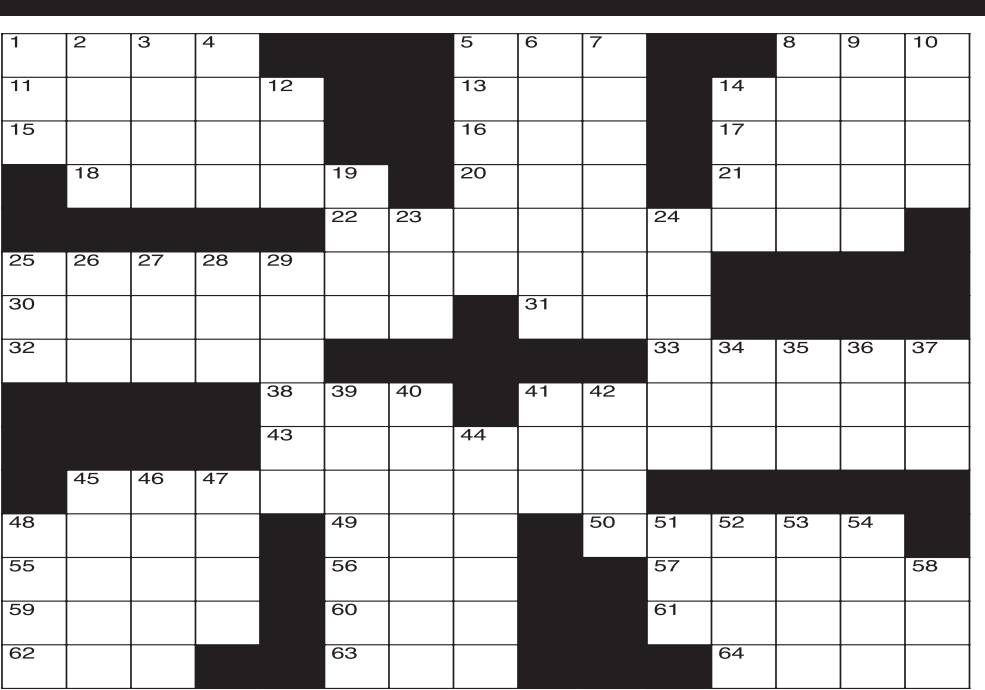
Winners also receive a 3-month membership to one of the six regional YMCAs and a 1-month membership to the Springfield Jewish Community Center.

The Pioneer Valley Excellence in Teaching Awards program, now in its 23rd year, is made possible by the Harold Grinspoon Charitable Foundation in partnership with the Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation and supported by the American International College, Smith College, Arha Credit Union a divi-

sion of BrightBridge Credit Union, Country Bank, and Meyers Brothers Kalicka.

"Our teachers serve not only as educators, but also as mentors, community leaders, and innovators. They play a fundamental role in supporting families and building communities. It is a great privilege to recognize outstanding teachers in the Pioneer Valley," Michelle Moon, Director, Excellence in Teaching Awards at the Harold Grinspoon Charitable Foundation.

For a complete list of the 2026 award winners, please visit the Harold Grinspoon Charitable Foundation website: hgcf.org.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Egyptian bull-god
- 5. Romanian monetary unit
- 8. Will Ferrell holiday film
- 11. "It Ain't Half Hot Mum" actor
- 13. Error-related negativity
- 14. Volcanic crater
- 15. Boston Herald columnist Margery
- 16. True market value
- 17. Italian term for exchange rate
- 18. Informal loan clubs
- 20. Men's fashion accessory
- 21. Children's craft supply
- 22. Extra benefits
- 25. In an early way
- 30. A judge has one
- 31. Soviet Socialist Republic

- 32. Tractor unit
- 33. Defunct supercomputer developer
- 38. Promotional materials
- 41. A forgetful state
- 43. One who beheads
- 45. Photographers
- 48. Small, rich sponge cake
- 49. Clergy's vestment
- 50. Expressed pleasure
- 55. Abba ____, Israeli politician
- 56. Zero
- 57. Ancient Greek word for "earless"
- 59. Nigerian governmental area
- 60. Mild expression of surprise
- 61. Places to hang things
- 62. Keyboard key
- 63. Make a mistake

- 64. One-time president of Republic of Korea
- #### CLUES DOWN
- 1. Bridge building degree
 - 2. Expression of sorrow or pity
 - 3. Large, stocky lizard
 - 4. Romanian river
 - 5. Communication
 - 6. Stoats
 - 7. Showcases
 - 8. Bird of prey
 - 9. King of Thebes
 - 10. Cleaving tool
 - 12. Large African antelope
 - 14. Three are particularly notable
 - 19. Meet one's needs
 - 23. C. European river
 - 24. Dictator
 - 25. Indicates how much out of 100 (abbr.)
 - 26. The 17th letter of the Greek alphabet
 - 27. Consume food

- 28. Woman (French)
- 29. Scrape a surface
- 34. Green vegetable
- 35. Pacific Standard Time
- 36. Capital of Brazilian city
- 37. Paddle
- 39. Cause to become insane
- 40. Drier and flakier
- 41. Mimic
- 42. ESPN personality Kimes
- 44. One who moves slowly
- 45. Secret political clique
- 46. Behind the stern of a ship
- 47. Supernatural force
- 48. Sanctuary
- 51. Swiss river
- 52. Grayish white
- 53. Engrave by coating
- 54. North Carolina university
- 58. Midway between south and southeast

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HCC hosting 'Fresh Check Day' Wednesday, April 29

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College is hosting a day dedicated to promoting mental health and wellness on Wednesday, April 29.

"Fresh Check Day" will run from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the HCC Courtyard.

This innovative program, developed by the Connecticut-based Jordan Porco Foundation, is designed to bring together the campus community to "check in" on the mental health and wellness of college students. The event is free and open to all.

Organized by the Office of the Dean of Student Experience and HCC Student Engagement, with support from other campus partners and student clubs, Fresh Check Day will transform the HCC Courtyard into a vibrant expo-like setting with interactive exhibits, food prizes, giveaways – and friendly puppies.

"Student well-being is an

essential part of the overall student experience at Holyoke Community College," said Julissa Colón, HCC dean of student experience. "By increasing awareness of mental health resources and creating opportunities for connection, we remind students that they are supported not only academically but as whole people throughout their time here."

Highlights include interactive exhibits and activities designed to educate and engage students on mental health topics, such as stress management, anxiety, depression, and suicide prevention; community engagement opportunities where students can connect with their peers and to campus resources in a positive, community-focused environment; and prizes and giveaways.

The Jordan Porco Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit based in Wethers-

field, Conn. It was founded in 2011 by Ernie and Marisa Porco after they lost their son Jordan to suicide when he was a freshman in college.

The goal of Fresh Check Day is to create an approachable and hopeful environment for discussing mental health and supporting student wellness.

"Many of our students are navigating competing responsibilities and an increasingly complex world," said Colón. "Events like Fresh Check Day help strengthen a campus culture where students feel seen, valued, and encouraged to reach out."

In the event of rain, the event will be held inside, on the second floor of the HCC Campus Center.

For more details about Fresh Check Day at HCC, please contact Julissa Colón at 413-552-2508 or jcolon@hcc.edu

Spring Clean Up Is for the Birds

SPRINGFIELD – This Earth Day, the Allen Bird Club of Springfield, MA offers tips to make your spring yard cleanup beneficial for birds.

• Clean out any bird houses on your property. A mouse may have moved in over the winter. If the house was used last year, remove old nesting material. It could harbor parasites detrimental to new nestlings.

• Western Mass's Ruby-throated Hummingbirds typically return in late April or early May. Be ready for these fairy-like wonders by cleaning your hummingbird feeders with hot water (no soap). Fill with a cooled solution of ¼ cup refined white sugar fully dissolved in 1 cup boiling water. Clean twice weekly thereafter.

• In warm weather, feed

birds not bears. In place of bird feeders, plant native plants, trees, and shrubs that produce nectar, seeds, or fruit. These natural food sources will attract birds to your yard year round.

• In addition to planting native plants, learn to tolerate caterpillars. Birds rely heavily on caterpillars to rear their young. Many caterpillars require specific, native plants to survive. A yard without native plants means fewer caterpillars and fewer birds.

• Get lazy about your lawn. Perfect lawns are the "empty calories" of the ecosystem. By letting go of a green-carpet ideal, you'll add color to your landscape by allowing dandelions, violets, and white clover to decorate your grass. More important, these

"weeds" feed pollinators which, in turn, feed birds.

• Offer a water source. Maintaining a clean, fresh water source in your yard will make birds frequent visitors, especially on dry summer days.

• Keep chemicals on the shelf. Rather than being upset at signs of insects eating your plants, just remind yourself that the plants are doing their job—taking energy from the sun and channeling it to the next layer of the food web. Remember, birds are part of that food web – and so are we!

The Allen Bird Club is a nonprofit organization dedicated to bringing Greater Springfield area birders together since 1912. For more information, please visit www.AllenBirdClub.org.

ACAA New England Mosaic project officially underway

AGAWAM – The Agawam Community Artists and Artisans' 2026 New England Mosaic project is officially off and running.

This year's Mosaic theme is "New England Treasures." Net proceeds from the project fund scholarships for Western Massachusetts high school and college students pursuing an education in visual arts.

The 2026 Mosaic project kicked off recently at eight local libraries and the West Springfield Senior Center.

The Mosaic effort invites the public to paint/create a small 6x6-inch canvas. Last

year over 200 artists participated. The returned canvases are assembled onto a 24-foot Mosaic display and are sold at two events in August.

Whether this would be your first canvas or if you are a seasoned artist, we invite you to pick up a free canvas at any of the following libraries: Agawam, West Springfield, Westfield, Southwick, East Forest Park, East Longmeadow, Longmeadow, and Chicopee; or, at the West Springfield Senior Center. Details are included with each canvas. You can paint, draw or apply anything to a canvas that

illustrates what you love about New England. Canvases need to be returned by May 15.

Whether you create a canvas or not, please join us at our Mosaic Unveiling on Wednesday, Aug. 5, from 5 to 7 p.m., at the Agawam Municipal Golf Course. There, you can view the Mosaic, perhaps see a canvas you would like, and support our scholarship.

The Mosaic will also be on display at the sixth annual Pioneer Valley Arts Festival, to be held on Aug. 21 and 22 at the Polish American Club in Feeding Hills.

Compost bins for sale this spring

AGAWAM – The Town of Agawam is pleased to once again offer home compost bins at a reduced rate to all town residents.

Home composting is a simple way to restore nutrients in our soil. The addition of compost enriches soil, stimulates plant growth, and reduces the need for chemical fertilizers. In addition, composting food scraps with yard waste, has the added benefit of keeping those wastes out of our trash carts.

It's easy to make compost, and the Town of Agawam makes it even easier by offering rodent-resistant home composting bins for \$35.00, over 40% off the retail price. According to Environmental Project Coordinator Tracy DeMaio, a portion of the cost is funded by a grant awarded by the Mass Department of Environmental Protection.

"We are pleased Agawam

is able to offer compost bins at an affordable rate to residents," stated Mayor Johnson. "Agawam is committed to providing its residents with quality services while promoting a sustainable future."

The New Age Composter is made in Massachusetts, constructed of thick, rugged 100% recycled plastic. The composter is adjustable and has a capacity of 24 cubic feet, the equivalent of about 12 bags of leaves. It has a cone shaped floor and cover which provide air and moisture to the composting material, requiring a minimum maintenance while producing compost in about 3 months.

The compost bin helps hold in heat and moisture, keep animals out, and look more attractive than open compost heaps. Organic material will start to turn to

compost in the bin in 3 to 6 months. Compost, known as "black gold" to gardeners, replenishes nutrients in the soil, helps retain moisture, makes the soil easy to work, and helps plants resist disease. Compost makes plants healthy so they can overcome adverse conditions without pesticides or chemical fertilizers.

Pre-paid orders will be accepted until Friday, Apr. 24. Residents must pick up compost bins between 3 to 5 p.m. on Thursday, May 7, or by appointment, at the Department of Public Works.

Order forms may be picked up at the Department of Public Works or downloaded on the town website at www.agawam.ma.us Residents may also visit the DPW section of the town website for more information on how to compost and how to set up the New

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Class of 1967 needs help organizing reunion

AGAWAM – Agawam High School Class of 1967 will be holding its 60th reunion sometime in calendar

year 2027. We are seeking our classmates that have not been contacted recently. Please contact John DeVec-

chi with your name, address and phone number(s) to agawam67@aol.com



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Congratulations Karly Smith! We are so very proud of you and your accomplishments. Good luck at Springfield College!

Love, Mom & Dad



Cooper's Accepting Men and Women's Professional Attire Donations

AGAWAM – For a limited time, Cooper's Gifts, Apparel, Home of Agawam, Mass., is accepting professional attire donations for Dress for Success of Western Massachusetts and Suit Up Springfield.

Both causes request interview-appropriate women's and men's clothing, shoes and accessories. Items will be collected at Cooper's now through April 30. "We invite everyone to spring clean their closets and change a life," said Kate

Gourde, owner of Cooper's Gifts, Apparel, Home.

Donations must be like new, clean and on hangers. All professional attire is welcome, but casual clothing will not be accepted. "Just ask yourself 'Would I wear this to an interview?' If the answer is 'yes,' Dress for Success and Suit Up Springfield can put it to good use," Gourde said.

The mission of Dress for Success (DFS) is to empower women to achieve economic independence by providing a network of sup-

port, professional attire and development tools to help them thrive in work and in life. They provide each client with professional attire to secure employment, but they are about much more than simply a new outfit. Besides physically equipping the client with apparel and accessories, their programs furnish her with a confidence that she carries forever and the knowledge that she can actively define her life, the direction she takes and what success means to her.

Suit Up Springfield (SUS) is a community organization focused on providing the men of Springfield with professional attire. Their goal is to help everyone find a suit that will give them the confidence, knowledge and tools to help them become a successful member of our community. Both organizations have boutiques in downtown Springfield.

"We have held clothing drives for years; our customers consider it a convenience. Especially for people west of

the river, it's easier to bring donations here, and we are open 7 days a week," Gourde said. Items may be brought to the shop anytime during the month of April. Cooper's is located at 161 Main St., Agawam, Mass., and is open daily 10am-5pm, Saturdays 10am-4pm and Sundays 12-4pm.

"This drive coincides with Dress for Success as our April Round-Up charity; so, it's the perfect time to spread the word about their mission and really help them out," Gourde said. Each month

Gourde chooses a local charity to receive the profits of the store's Round-Up Program through which customers are invited to round up their purchase total to the nearest dollar amount. Gourde will then match 50% of the total collected. The program has donated more than \$67,000 to local organizations since its inception in 2014. More information on the Round Up program and how to nominate a charity may be found on Cooper's website www.coopersgifts.com/round-up/.

Agawam Community Artists and Artisans 'Call for Art'

AGAWAM – Agawam Community Artists and Artisans (ACAA) is inviting artists and artisans to participate in its Sixth Annual Pioneer Valley Art Festival.

The Art Festival will be held on Friday, Aug. 21, and Saturday, Aug. 22 at the Polish American Club in Feeding Hills. Show hours are from 2 to 8 p.m. on Friday, and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday.

The ACAA is encouraging artists, artisans, and writers to submit their work for review. Among the artistic mediums included are watercolor, acrylic, oil, mixed media,

sculpture, photography, ceramic, stained glass, wood, fashion, textile, and jewelry.

All work must be original and handmade by the artist or artisan, of professional quality. Prints and giclees will be accepted. No kits, food, soap, candles, or AI-generated work will be accepted.

Tent space is available on the paved parking lot for \$50.

Students from any area high school are accepted free of charge, and must have a tent set up.

The Pioneer Valley Art Festival is highly promoted

through local TV stations; Agawam Media Channel 15 and 1074HD; Agawam Cultural Council website; newspapers; town forums; Mailchimp; the ACAA website, www.agawamarts.com; and the ACAA Facebook page, that has over 850 followers.

The week before the festival, there will be over 20 street signs placed around Agawam.

Further information, including registration forms, can be obtained by contacting Ceil Rossi at email: tocarefree2@hotmail.com.

Stanley Park announces Whimsical Fairy Walk Opening Weekend

WESTFIELD – Join us for a magical opening weekend at Stanley Park's Whimsical Fairy Walk, where creativity and the beauty of nature come together in an enchanting outdoor experience. This family-friendly event invites visitors of all ages to stroll through the Woodland Wildflower Garden, where charming fairy houses line the path and lead to the Enchanted Oak Tree.

Handcrafted by dedicated volunteer builders, these whimsical fairy and gnome homes are made from nat-

ural materials, encouraging a deeper appreciation for nature while sparking imagination and wonder.

Guests can enjoy delicious offerings from The Pit Stop BBQ and What's Your Brew food trucks, which will be on site both days serving a variety of food and beverages.

Peacock's Nest Studio will also be in attendance throughout the weekend, offering face painting with a variety of design options available for purchase. In addition, Stanley Park will offer Fairy Hair Extensions

for a \$5 donation, which includes two extensions available in a variety of color, perfect for adding a touch of magic to your visit.

Arts and crafts activities will be available in the Beveridge Pavilion both days, providing an opportunity for attendees to create their own magical keepsakes.

There is still time to be part of the magic. Those interested in sponsoring the event or building a fairy or gnome house are encouraged to register by emailing development@stanleypark.org.

HCC opens registration for classes

HOLYOKE — Registration is now open for summer and fall classes at Holyoke Community College.

Summer classes at HCC begin Tuesday, May 26. Full-term summer classes run for 14 weeks, from May 26 to Aug. 28. Half-term summer classes run in consecutive seven-week sessions: Summer Session I (May 26-July 10) and Summer Session II (July 13-Aug. 28).

The fall 2026 semester starts Tuesday, Sept. 8. In addition to traditional 15-week semester classes, HCC will run three accelerated fall flex start sessions: Flex Start I classes also begin Sept. 8 but

run for seven weeks until Oct. 27; Flex Start II classes begin Monday, Sept. 21, and run for 12 weeks; Flex Start III classes begin Monday, Nov. 2, and run for seven weeks. All fall classes conclude by Dec. 22.

To view course offerings for summer, please visit hcc.edu/summer-2026 or hcc.edu/fall-2026 for fall.

To help prospective students get ready, HCC will be hosting a special Walk-In Week May 18-21 when prospective students can apply for admission, take the college placement test, meet with an academic adviser, register for classes, and set up financial aid.

Other Walk-In Weeks are scheduled for June 22-25, July 20-23, and Aug. 17-20.

"Our admissions and financial aid staff members are always available to help guide prospective students through every step of the application process and apply for financial aid," said Mark Hudgik, dean of recruitment, admissions and financial aid.

Anyone interested in starting this summer or fall can find more information at hcc.edu/admission or by calling 413-552-2321.

To arrange a campus tour, please contact the HCC Admissions office at admissions@hcc.edu.

Garden Club plans annual plant sale

AGAWAM – Agawam Garden Club is planning its annual plant sale for Saturday, May 30. This year's event will be held at the Historical Thomas Smith House, 251 North West Street, Feeding Hills and

will run from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. The sale will include many perennials and shrubs all from members gardens and all a bargain. Because the plants are all grown locally in members gardens they are well acclimated


to the area. Proceeds from the sale go towards funding the club's scholarship and providing educational programs for the year. Please check the club's website for further information. agawamgardenclub.com

Volunteers needed to flag veteran graves

AGAWAM – The Agawam Veterans Council is seeking volunteers for flagging veteran graves at local cemeteries in preparation of Memorial Day on Saturday, May 2. (Rain

date May 3) Anyone interested in participating, please meet at 8 a.m. in the Springfield Street Cemetery (across from Sacred Heart Church) in Feeding Hills.

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Turley Publications will print your Summer event FREE OF CHARGE in our Summer Fest Supplement which will be published June 3, 2026. Total circulation of 85,000 which reaches over 200,000 readers in the Pioneer Valley. Event Should Be Non-Profit & Open to the Public

FREE Calendar Listings Reaching over 200,000 Readers in the Pioneer Valley

Event Name _____
 Date/Time _____
 Location _____

 Description _____

 Cost _____
 Contact name & phone number for more information _____

Please specify if you would like your name and number printed in the paper.

Deadline for Calendar submissions is May 6.

MAIL YOUR LISTING INFORMATION TO: Turley Publications, Attn: Jamie Joslyn, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069 or email* them to: jamie@turley.com *Be sure to indicate "Summer Event" in the subject line of your email.

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SPORTS

Strong second half leads Brownies over Falcons

WILBRAHAM – After a great start to the regular season, Minnechaug Regional High School boys lacrosse has run into a few tougher opponents. Last Monday afternoon, Agawam outscored the Falcons 6-1 in the second half for a 9-4 win. Both teams battled in the first half hard with Minnechaug scoring

a late goal to make it 3-3 at halftime. But Agawam's offense came alive in the second half with the Falcons not able to answer back. Agawam got three goals from Casey Thomas while Cam Faneuff scored two goals for the Falcons. Agawam is a perfect 5-0 awhile Minnechaug is now 5-3.



Brayden Martin looks to get around a Minnechaug defender.



Grant Gionfriddo sends a pass away.



Casey Thomas circles toward the goal.



Justin Lareau sends a pass away. TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Matthew Chobotaru picks up the ground ball on defense.



Liam Grealis sprints for the goal.

Roster spots remain open in the Quabbin Valley Baseball League

SOUTH HADLEY – While the new player draft has come and gone in the Quabbin Valley Baseball League, there are still several open roster spots for players age 28-and-up. The regular season is set to get underway in a little more than a week and the six teams in the are still looking to add more players.

Players can go to the league website and fill out the registration form so they can get placed on a team immediate in front of the season opener.

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 determine as the league's board explores possibilities for interleague matchups with another league in the region.

The regular season was scheduled to get underway on Sunday, Apr. 19, but games were postponed due to rain, pushing the start of the season to Sunday, Apr. 26. There-

fore, anyone who is able to sign up before that date will be able to participate in the full 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.

Sports

Brownies boys volleyball sweeps St. John's

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

SHREWSBURY—The Agawam boys' volleyball team are the defending Division 2 state champions.

The Brownies won't be repeating as Division 2 champions this spring because they were moved up to Division 1 during the off season.

"They were thinking about adding another division in volleyball, but there wasn't

enough teams," said Agawam head coach Kevin Pender. "Because of our school enrollment, we were moved up to Division 1 instead. It's going to be a little more challenging, but we're hoping to earn a higher seed, so we can play a couple of home matches during the state tournament."

The other Division 1 volleyball teams from Western Mass. are Springfield Central, Putnam Voc/Tech, West

Springfield, and Minnechaug Regional.

At the midway point of the regular season, the Brownies had a 6-2 overall record following a 3-0 (25-18, 25-11, 25-20) non-league win at St. John's of Shrewsbury, last Wednesday night.

"We graduated almost all our starters from last year's team. The younger players have done a very good job of stepping into their roles," Pender said. "We came off

the bus focused and we played well against a very good Division 1 opponent in tonight's match."

The Brownies lost at Needham High School, 3-0, in the second match of the regular season. Needham lost to top-seeded Brookline, 3-1, in the 2025 Division 1 state finals.

Agawam also suffered a 3-2 road loss against North Division rival Westfield High School, who's still a Division

2 team, on April 8.

"Our two losses this season were against high quality opponents," said Pender, who replaced Patricia Demers as the varsity coach in 2016. "We learned a lot in those matches, which will only help us moving forward."

A year ago, the Brownies lost to Westfield, 3-1, in the Western Class A finals before defeating Wayland High School, 3-1, in the Division 2 state finals, which took place

a couple miles away from St. John's at Shrewsbury High School. They also captured the Division 2 state title in 2013 and 2023.

The Brownies have won the past three matchups against the Pioneers. They hold a slim 3-2 lead in the overall series since the start of the 2022 regular season.

"We've built a very good

VOLLEYBALL | page 10

Agawam girls lacrosse falls at home to Terriers

AGAWAM – The Agawam High School girls lacrosse team was defeated last Thursday evening by rival

West Springfield 11-6. The Brownies got two goals each from Finn Mahoney and Gianna Goodrow. Grace Curto

and Bella Santaniello also had single goals. Agawam fell to just 1-6 on the season.



Olivia Govoni tries to get around pressure.



Taeva Brogan runs across the middle of the field.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Above: Gianna Goodrow goes for the free shot on goal.

Left: Bella Santaniello eyes the goal for a shot.

Pitching still needed for Pioneer Valley Adult Baseball League

SOUTH HADLEY – The Pioneer Valley Baseball League, an adult baseball league for players who are age 18 and over, still has open roster spots for 2026 season.

The league is especially in need of some additional pitching for a couple of its teams. The season is just one game in and there are 21 games remaining through the summer with playoffs taking

place in August.

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.quabbinvalley-baseball.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 throughout the season, will be fielding a sixth team this season.

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 play-

ers 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. Those who sign up after the season begins will pay a prorated fee for the season.

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.

Springfield T-Birds defeat Wolf Pack, await playoff opponent

SPRINGFIELD - The Springfield Thunderbirds (32-32-6-2) overcame another hard charge from the Hartford Wolf Pack (26-38-5-3) to emerge with a 4-3 win on Saturday night before a sell-out crowd of 6,793 inside the MassMutual Center.

After a disheartening third period on Friday, the T-Birds came out with a clear purpose to their game in the opening 20 minutes, outpacing Hartford on the shot board, 18-4. Despite that disparity, it took until the 14:14 mark and the club's 16th shot of the period to find the back

of the net. Dillon Dube did just that, deflecting an Alek Kaskimaki shot past Callum Tung's glove to make it a 1-0 lead for Springfield.

Dube's work was not done, either, as the veteran forward cranked a one-timer through Tung at 19:07 off a pass into the high slot from Calle Rosen, giving him 20 goals in just 46 games this season and joining Chris Wagner and Kaskimaki as 20-goal scorers for this season's T-Birds squad.

Juraj Pekarcik helped buoy the lead further when he stole a puck from two de-

fenders and quickly chipped a forehand shot past Tung at 5:45 of the second to make it a 3-0 lead for the home team.

However, for a second straight night, the Wolf Pack refused to go away quietly, as Brendan Brisson's second goal in two nights got Hartford on the board at 7:56 of the second. Then Aidan Thompson stole a puck off the right wing wall and quickly funneled a forehand shot through Will Cranley on the stick side to cut it to 3-2 at 12:48 of the period.

From there on, though, the T-Birds' rookie netmind-

er was monstrous, as Cranley would make 37 saves by the time his night was done.

Just 33 seconds after Thompson's goal, Springfield got a much-needed response when Hugh McGing put a shot off a defenseman's stick and past Tung's shoulder, giving the T-Birds a two-goal cushion heading into the third.

Controversy made an appearance 3:46 into the third when Brisson poked a puck, along with Cranley's pad, across the line on a power play to make it a 4-3 game. The T-Birds argued heavily,

but the officials stayed with the goal call on the ice, and the margin was down to one heading down the stretch.

McGing appeared to have Springfield's fifth goal of the night moments later, but after video replay, he was deemed to have kicked the puck over the line, so the 4-3 score was upheld.

Despite a furious push of 36 shots over the final 40 minutes of play, the Wolf Pack wound up finishing one goal short.

By virtue of their win and Hershey's regulation loss to the Islanders, Springfield

now awaits the final outcome of the Bears' Sunday contest with the Rochester Americans to determine who their first-round opponent will be.

If Rochester defeats the Bears, Springfield will secure the 5-seed and face the Bridgeport Islanders, who locked in the 4-seed with their win over Hershey on Saturday.

If the Bears defeat the Americans, Springfield will be the 6-seed and face the Charlotte Checkers, the 3-seed who would host all three games of the best-of-three series.

Railers get win in penultimate game

WORCESTER - For the Railers' loyal fans, the 2025-26 hockey season has gone from being "wait till next year" to "we can't wait for next year."

The home team increased its winning streak to five games with a wonderful 3-2 overtime victory over the Adirondack Thunder Saturday night. Drew Callin, assisted by Anthony, got the winner at 4:05 of OT.

The game went into extra minutes thanks to a late goal by the Thunder.

Adirondack, though, carried no momentum into overtime. The Railers outshot the visitors, 4-0, in the fourth period. At times it looked like Worcester was playing with a two-man advantage.

The winning goal came via a short pass from Anthony to Drew in close. The older Callin had a tap-in, although a minute earlier he had missed what looked like a gimme from in close on a similar

play.

The goal was Drew Callin's 25th of the season. He is merely the fifth Railers player to reach that plateau and has two of Worcester's eight overtime goals this year.

"We love that OT," he said, adding, "We came into the weekend knowing it was the last weekend and we wanted to go out the right way. We wanted to get the first one and do it again (Sunday)."

MacAuley Carson and Max Dorrington had the other Railers goals, both in the first period. Dylan Wendt and Grant Loven scored for the Thunder. Loven's goal came with only 2:09 left in regulation and just six seconds after a delay of game penalty on Adam Samuelsson had expired.

Parker Gahagen was the winning goaltender with another great performance. He made 23 saves to improve his record to 20-11-1. Gahagen is only the second individual

Railers goalie with a 20-win season. Mitch Gillam won 20-plus in the team's first two years as members of the ECHL.

It is Gahagen's second personal 20-win year as pro, at least with the same team. He was 20-10-3 with the Florida Everblades when they won the Kelly Cup in 21-22. Gahagen has been beyond good at the DCU Center. He is 10-4-0 at home with a 1.96 goals-against average and .930 saves percentage.

The Railers got ahead early on Carson's goal at 4:41 of the first period. He received a neat pass from Riley Piercey along the left boards and beat Thunder goaltender Tyler Brennan along the ice from about 20 feet out. It was Carson's seventh goal of the season and third in the last five games after he endured an 11-game drought.

Worcester retained its 1-0 lead for about 14 minutes. Dorrington made it a 2-0

game at 18:26 His goal came on a bad angle shot from the right of the net with Gleb Veremyev and Adam Samuelsson picking up assists. The goal was Dorrington's seventh and he has four in the last five games.

The Railers kept Adirondack off the scoreboard for more than half of the second period but Wendt got his team a goal at 10:41. It was a very nice play all around as Thunder defenseman Connor Hutchison slid a diagonal pass from the left point to Wendt between the circles.

He re-directed it over Gahagen's glove into the top corner.

Worcester nearly regained its two-goal lead shortly after that as Lincoln Hatten had the puck and some space about 25 feet out but was denied by Brennan.

Adirondack's tying goal came from in close, set up by a shot from Kevin O'Neil.

VOLLEYBALL ■ from page 9

relationship with St. John's during the past five years," Pender said. "We won in five sets in this gym two years ago. We executed very well in tonight's match."

Two of the Brownies returning varsity players are junior Jacob Nesen, and senior Tim Karcha, who was credited with a team-high 15 kills.

"We didn't have to get to Tim as much in tonight's match because we had some other guys contribute," Pender said. "He had 27 kills in our four set win against Chicopee Comp last night."

Nine other players were credited with kills in the road match against the Pioneers.

The Brownies other seniors are Michael Lukomski, Jaiden Briotta, Andrei Batranciuc, David Zhmaidziak, Chase Gerani, Alex Williams, and Elijah Ramos, who had a team-high 21 assists against the Pioneers.

Nesen, who has enough credits to graduate a year early, is a libero. He finished the match against St. John's with seven digs.

"We have a couple of

home school players who graduated early in the past," Pender said. "We would love to have Jacob back again next year, but he's thinking about graduating early."

A couple of the Brownies juniors are Jason Mihalicenco, Aiden Torres, Brady Cross, and Dominic Manes (17 assists).

The Brownies led from start to finish in the opening set of last Wednesday's road match. Their largest lead was 23-14.

There were six ties early in the second set before the Brownies pulled away with the help of an 8-1 run and they never looked back.

The third set was a lot closer. The score was tied for the final time at 19-19 before the Brownies sealed the deal with a 6-1 run.

"Playing close sets like the last one is only going to help us improve," Pender said. "The players are working very hard and are learning every day."

The members of the Agawam boys' volleyball team are hoping to still be playing meaningful matches in the middle of June just like they did a year ago.

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Public Notices

Town of Agawam Request for Sealed Bids

The Town of Agawam is requesting sealed bids for Road, Sidewalk, Driveway Parking Lot Maintenance. IFB Packages will be available at 10AM 4/22/2026. Pre-bid 5/5/2026. Packages are available via email at bids@agawam.ma.us. Due by 5/13/2026 @ 2:30 PM. 04/23/2026

PUBLIC HEARING

AGAWAM CITY COUNCIL The Agawam City Council will conduct a public hearing on Monday, May 4, 2026, at 7:00 p.m., at a Regular Meeting of the Agawam City Council to be held at the Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main Street, Agawam, MA, on TR-2026-20 which is the Capital Improvement Program for Fiscal Year 2026 to Fiscal Year 2030 as submitted by Mayor Christopher Johnson on April 6, 2026.

The Capital Improvement Program is a prioritized plan of proposed capital improvements over the next five fiscal years. A capital improvement is a project or undertaking which provides for the planning, design, construction, reconstruction, renovation or replacement of a public building or facility; an addition to a public building or facility; the purchase of land, buildings or

facilities for a public purpose; or a long range development study. TR-2026-20 is available for public inspection on the Town of Agawam website (www.agawam.ma.us) or by emailing the office of the City Clerk for an electronic copy at vgioscia@agawam.ma.us.

BY ORDER OF:

Anthony J. Russo, President Agawam City Council 04/16, 04/23/2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 Docket No. HD14P1201PM In the matter of: James J D'Amato of Agawam, MA Protected Person/ Disabled Person/Respondent CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF CONSERVATOR'S ACCOUNT

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, you are hereby notified pursuant to Rule 72 of the Supplemental Rules of the Probate & Family Court, that the Twelfth account(s) of William

P D'Amato of Colchester, VT as Conservator of the property of said Respondent has or have been presented to the Court for allowance.

You have the right to object to the account(s). If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of 05/19/2026. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to object to the account(s). If you fail to file the written appearance and objection by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you, including the allowance of the account(s).

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

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

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The outcome of this pro-

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

Witness, Hon. Claudine T. Stoudemire, First Justice of this Court.

Date: April 14, 2026 Rosemary A. Saccamoni Register of Probate 04/23/2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Division Docket No. HD26P0786EA Estate of: CHRISTINE MARIE MEYER Date of Death: MARCH 5, 2026 INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner Petitioner SHERYL L BAXTER of WEST SPRINGFIELD, MA

a Will has been admitted to informal probate.

SHERYL L BAXTER of WEST SPRINGFIELD, MA LISA RAMSEY of PALMER, MA

have been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve without surety on the bond.

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner. 04/23/2026

Town of Agawam Legal Notice The Agawam Planning Board will hold a public hearing

on Thursday, May 7, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. and the Agawam City Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, May 18, 2026 at 7:00 p.m., both in the Veterans Hall at the Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main Street, Agawam, MA. The purpose of these hearings will be to hear the petition of Charlie's Garden Park for a zone change request for 1399 Suffield Street and Parcel 2 Suffield Street from Business A, Agricultural, and Residence A-2 to just Business A and Agricultural and to include the parcels in the Mixed-Use Business C Overlay District. City Council's public hearing will be livestreamed on the Town of Agawam's website at www.agawam.ma.us and will also be televised on Cable Access Channel 15 or Channel 1074. Copies of the proposed zone change can be obtained from the Planning Department between the hours of 7:30am and 3:30pm at the Agawam DPW, 1000 Suffield Street, Agawam, MA or by emailing the Office of the City Clerk for an electronic copy at vgioscia@agawam.ma.us

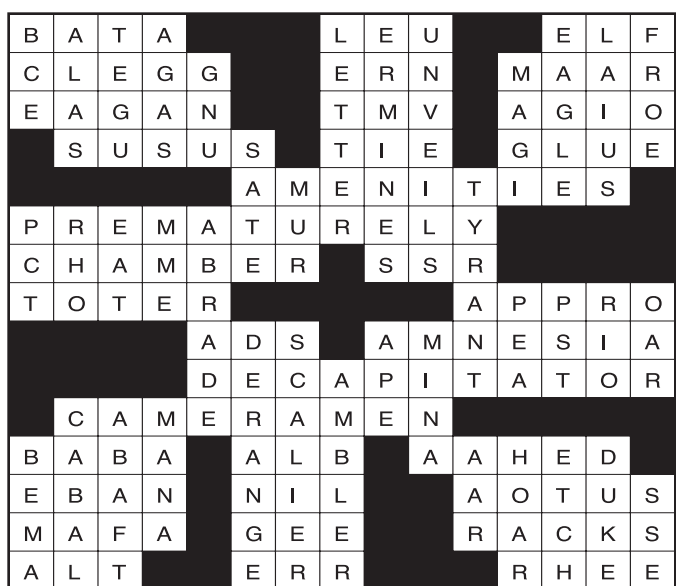
By Order Of: Violet Baldwin, Chair Agawam Planning Board Anthony Russo, President Agawam City Council 04/23, 04/30/2026

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25	Base Price \$34.50	Base Price \$35.00	Base Price \$35.50
26	Base Price \$36.50	Base Price \$37.00	Base Price \$37.50
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28	Base Price \$40.50	Base Price \$41.00	Base Price \$41.50
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33	Base Price \$50.50	Base Price \$51.00	Base Price \$51.50
34	Base Price \$52.50	Base Price \$53.00	Base Price \$53.50
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THRIFT ■ from page 1

working with us, you know, in the store. But they're doing something too. Cause without their donations, we would not have anything. So, you know, it makes other people feel that they're helping, and they are."

St. Martha's Thrift Shop offers beautiful items for reasonable prices. The store is open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Cappuccilli then shares some annual events Sacred Heart Parish hosts. "We have a vendor's craft fair in November, and then in May we have a tag sale. It's a lot of fun, a lot of work." Coming up on Saturday May 9 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. is the St. Martha's Guild Mother's Day Plant, Tag and Bake Sale. For more information regarding St. Martha's Thrift Shop and upcoming Sacred Heart Parish Events, visit, Sacred Heart Parish – A Roman Catholic Church of Feeding Hills.



St. Martha's Second Chance Thrift Shop Sign, outside the entrance located in the Sacred Heart Parish Office building.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY CHRISTINA GIOSCIA



You can purchase used furniture or decorative items.



Joanne Cappuccilli and Dee Ziegert at St. Martha's Thrift Shop.



Older music fans will enjoy this display.



The glassware case.



There is glassware and flatware at the store.



There are numerous items for sale at the shop.

AHS ■ from page 1

seems Agawam High's Chemistry Olympiad teams are making it a tradition to win.

Chambers gave details on how the chemistry students prepare to compete for the Chemistry Olympiad each year.

"This is the third year that I have been teaching AP Chemistry," Chambers said. "I also teach Honors and College Prep levels too, as do the other 3 teachers. The AP level students get excited about the day, and we start talking about it on day

one so that they can prepare along the way. For Chemistry one students, they are asked to compete if they show an aptitude for chemistry, and by the time the trip is organized, many of them have registered for AP Chemistry for the following year. Our past year's success and energy of the first-year students carries forward, and students who took AP Chem as juniors are invited back to attend their senior year. This year we had four returners. Students who then sign up for the trip join our Google Classroom, and

resources and study guides are supplied to them. By the day of the Olympiad, most are well prepared, but there are always questions that the students have not seen before."

"I am very fortunate to work with Ms. Buklerewicz, Mr. Melloni, and Ms. Scannell. We are not only colleagues, but we are also friends. Throughout the entire year, we are all helping each other, sharing labs, ideas, and best practices. We enjoy working with each other," said Chambers.

Chambers expresses his

pride in the Agawam High students.

"The Chemistry Olympiad has been occurring for a few decades and Agawam has always attended, and although Agawam students have always done well, we are unsure if Agawam High has ever swept the competition to the first-place victories in all divisions," said Chambers. "I am very proud of our students and am thankful that my colleagues and I have prepared our students to do well. The success that they achieve in college is rewarding."

Scannell commented on the success of the students.

"This was my first-year teaching chemistry students who go to Chem Olympiad so I'm incredibly proud of them for both helping to win first place and doing just as well as the students from the more experienced chemistry teachers," said Scannell.

The Agawam chemistry teams this year were comprised of 34 students total. Each and every student worked hard throughout the year for this competition, and that hard work paid off in the end with Agawam's

fairly earned victories. By having supportive teachers, these students are able to learn so much about chemistry in a short period of time in preparation for the Chemistry Olympiad. The dedication of Chambers, Scannell, Buklerewicz, and Melloni is truly what allows these students to apply and refine their chemistry skills for class, the competition, and future goals such as college. The Agawam High Chemistry Olympiad teams shocked the community with their victories.

CAPITAL ■ from page 1

for sidewalks, \$600,000 for street and infrastructure improvements to go along with whatever the town receives in Chapter 90 transportation

funding. There is \$200,000 needed for IT Network modernization. The floor at the Junior High School needs work as well, valued at \$135,000. There are also enterprise funds equipment

replacements proposed for the water, wastewater, and golf course.

Johnson's five-year capital plan does not call for anything large scale such as new buildings.

Johnson mentioned Agawam Town Hall in his report. He said the town hall is nearing its 100th anniversary, and says it will need significant renovations or replacement in the next decade or two.

The city council will be asked to vote on whether or not it will endorse Johnson's direction for the capital needs of the town. Johnson will also have to get the council's approval in June for

capital items included in the full FY2027 budget, a proposal that will be forthcoming in the next month, including the budget for the Agawam Public Schools.

BOOK ■ from page 1

kind of significant impact on society, as did the author of the book. I think it is terrific that the book not only highlights the outstanding career of Ella Grasso but also puts

Mount Holyoke College front and center in the development and success of each of the women profiled, showing what a gem the college is here in the Western Massachusetts area. I'm proud that our library was able to highlight

this book and the important role Ella Grasso played in politics. As evidenced from some of the comments in the crowd last night, in light of politics in the country currently, it is important to have women represent constituents and

do the necessary work to help improve life in our country. It is also notable that Linda Melconian was herself a Mount Holyoke College graduate and a First of the Firsts here in Massachusetts."

"The library is grateful to

Linda for coming out to present her work and for donating the proceeds of the book sales to our friends' group." Says Frost.

By Melconian writing her book about Ella Grasso and doing so much to promote it

and share it in communities throughout Massachusetts, she continues Grasso's legacy. Grasso's story is so important and relevant today; Melconian knows this and is working hard to ensure her story continues to inspire people.