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# AGAWAM

## ADVERTISER NEWS

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### Historical Association dedicates Agawam's new

By Christina Gioscia  
Correspondent

AGAWAM - On Sunday April 19, at the Thomas Smith House in Agawam, the Agawam Historical Association hosted the dedication of Agawam's very own Liberty Tree. The dedication was free and open to the public. There for the dedication were members of Agawam's Historical Association as well as members of the 25th Continental Regiment for a musket salute. Agawam High Chamber Choir member, Chelsea Casamento sang the National anthem. The Thomas Smith House and the Delmore Hawthorne Garage were open for attendees to walk around and see the artifacts inside. Inside the Thomas Smith House were warm refreshments, perfect for the chilly rainy afternoon.

President of the Agawam Historical Association David Cecchi provided some insight on the symbolism behind the Liberty Tree dedication.

"We wanted it to be on Apr. 19," Cecchi said. "It's an important day in our history. I wish the weather cooperated, but we figured the people who appreciate that it's the nineteenth will be here. The Liberty Tree was a meeting place for early colonists who

were rebelling against the rule of King George. It became kind of a rally point. Throughout the colonies there were similar groups, and they had similar liberty trees. So, it is really a symbol of our early fight for liberty."

Former Agawam City Councilor Peter Smus talked about what the Liberty Tree here in Agawam means to him.

"A lot of stuff, if you don't pay attention to what happens in the past, good or bad, it can be repeated in the future," Smus said. "Some of it, you don't want to repeat. And it's always really nice to know your heritage, everything about it. It's very important for the town."

Agawam Historical Association Treasurer Katy Krause mentioned significance of hosting the Liberty Tree dedication on Apr. 19.

"It's what kicked off the American Revolution," Krause said. "So, out in the Boston area, there was a crowd of people who were, you know, kind of harassing the soldiers, and they were harassing them back, and somehow, accidentally, a shot went off. The Boston Massacre. We don't usually do Sunday events, but be-



Members of the 25th Continental Regiment with Agawam's new liberty tree at the dedication ceremony on Apr. 19.

TURLEY PHOTO BY CHRISTINA GIOSCIA

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### City council tables eminent domain takings for intersection

By Gregory A. Scibelli  
gscibelli@turley.com

AGAWAM - Last week it took fewer speakers, but a large turnout of support as the Agawam City Council heard the public's concern about the effects plans to im-

prove the five-way intersection at the Cooper St., Rowley St. and Suffield St. (which is Rte. 75).

The council would not even discuss the eminent domain takings that were presented as a resolution, instead unanimously voting

to table the measure at the city council meeting held last Tuesday evening.

The main speaker during Citizen's Speak Time was Alfred Pajer, owner of Pajer Superette, a long-standing Agawam business located at the corner of Cooper and Rowley

streets.

Plans to improve the five-way intersection would have involved taking some land from the Pajer property, and would have eliminated parking spaces at the location.

Employees and customers of the business stacked the

Agawam Senior Center to support Pajer as he pleaded with the city council not to approve the eminent domain takings.

"They're going to take us out of business if we lose one-third of our parking lot," Pajer said.

He expressed a willingness to work with town officials on the design, but said not at the sacrifice of his business.

The land takings would occur in the front of his store.

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### City Council approves borrowing \$2.57M for two new fire trucks

By Gregory A. Scibelli  
gscibelli@turley.com

AGAWAM - Two fire trucks in the Agawam Fire Department's fleet are reaching the end of their useful life and the Agawam City Council last week approved borrowing \$2,577,398 to purchase two new fire engine pump trucks.

According to Mayor Christopher Johnson, "the Agawam Fire Department currently has four fire engine pump trucks with two assigned to each station. Two of the current fire engine pump trucks were purchased in 2018 and they are currently deployed as front line vehicles in each station, and the other two fire engine pump trucks were purchased in 2008 and they are deployed as reserve in each station. The 2008 fire engine pump trucks are nearing the end of their serviceable life and there is considerable lead time to have new vehicles manufactured and deliver."

Johnson said the delivery team to build the truck and get it to Agawam is approximately 850 days, well more than two years.

Because of that, Johnson said the debt would not come into play in the town's budget for a couple of years.

There is also a discount of more than \$124,000 per truck if the bill is paid in advance at the time the order is placed. However, Johnson advised against doing such as thing after analyzing the interest in borrowing the funds now versus when the vehicles are delivered. He said the town is currently making more than 4% interest on reserve funds, making it prudent to hold onto the money.

Chief Alan Sirois, in a memo to the Agawam City Council, said the two older pump engines have higher maintenance costs and a greater likelihood of mechanical failure during emergency response.

"While still functional,

they no longer provide the level of reliability expected of reserve apparatus and instead present a growing operational vulnerability," Sirois said.

With the current estimated build and delivery time, Sirois puts the timeline sometime in late 2028 or early 2029 to have it available for use.

The cost of the new apparatus also includes \$45,000 per truck for trade-in.

"Approving this project will ensure the fire department maintains a reliable and modern fleet capable of supporting both front-line and reserve operations for the next 20 years," Sirois said. "Replacing aging apparatus will reduce maintenance costs, minimize downtime and improve overall system enhancing firefighter safety and operation effectiveness during emergency incidents."

The council approved the request, allowing the proposal to build the new pump engines to move forward.



### AHS announces top graduates

Last week, Agawam High School announced who its valedictorian and salutatorian would be for the Class of 2026. The Valedictorian is Matilda Larochele, and the Salutatorian is Keira Murphy.

SUBMITTED PHOTO



# Senior Center announces some upcoming activities

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

## Planning for Medicare - Countdown to 65'

Tuesday, May 5 at 10 a.m. in Seminar Hall

Presented by Blue Cross Blue Shield Medicare Outreach Representative Brian Guagnini, this is a fabulous presentation if you are wondering what your insurance options will be when you leave employment or if you are planning to enroll - or if you are already actively enrolled - on Medicare. Topics will include: Explanation of Original Medicare; Medicare Supplement (Medigap) and Medicare Advantage plans; Programs available to early retirees, such as COBRA; and Insurance options if you retire before age 65.

## Education Against Senior Exploitation Program

Wednesday, May 6 at 1 p.m. in the Dining Room

Hampden District Attorney Anthony D. Gulluni is pleased to present Education Against Senior Exploitation (E.A.S.E.), a presentation focusing on scams and financial exploitation. Scammers are always trying new ways to access your money. As part of DA Gulluni's continuing effort to protect seniors and prevent abuse, the District Attorney will provide information on the latest: telephone, mail, internet, and door-to-door scams and offer practical knowledge and tips to help you avoid becoming a victim.

This one-hour presentation is aimed at protecting seniors and preventing abuse by providing the information they need to avoid becoming victims of financial exploitation and scams. This program has been presented to numerous assisted/independent living facilities and senior centers throughout Hampden County. The EASE program is presented by Assistant District Attorney Nina Vivencio.

## Diabetic Support Group

Wednesday, May 6 at 1 p.m. in the Garden Room

We're excited to announce that our Diabetic Support Group will begin meeting in May. The first Wednesday of every month - May 6 in The Garden Room at 1 p.m. Each month will offer something a little different—some sessions will feature guest speakers, while others will bring special surprises. We look forward to supporting one another and building a strong, encouraging community.

## Manicures with Jane

Monday, May 11 in Seminar Hall

Jane is a licensed nail specialist, who will give your fingernails that extra special attention and love they deserve. She is offering simple manicures that include clipping, filing, soak, massage of the hands and your choice of color. These appointments are 15 minutes each. The cost is \$15 per person. Call Kristina at 413.726.2836 to book.

## Register of Deeds invites homeowners to an Informational Seminar

Wednesday, May 13 at 1 p.m. in the Dining Room

Who we are and what we do:  
 \*Homestead Act  
 \*Consumer Notification System  
 \*Title Fraud  
 All attendees are eligible to receive a free certified copy of their deed!

## Carfit helps improve comfort and safety "Fit" for Senior Drivers

Friday, May 15 from 10 a.m. to 12 noon

To help the 10,000 Americans turning 65 every day and all senior drivers find a better "fit" with their cars for comfort and safety, mobility experts are hosting a safety program designed to help older drivers and their families. CarFit is national program developed by AAA, AARP and the American Occupational Therapy Association and is designed to give a quick, yet comprehensive check on how well an older driver and their vehicle work together. Agawam Senior Center will host CarFit check-ups at the former senior center parking lot behind Agawam Housing Authority. At a CarFit event, trained volunteers complete

a 12-point checklist with each driver. Among the items checked are: correct position of driver's seat, driver's ability to easily reach pedals, and proper adjustment of mirrors.

## Occupational therapists are on hand also to provide a consultation, if needed, that will teach drivers how to maintain and improve aspects related to their driving health. The therapist can also provide information to participants addressing individual needs, including information about local community resources on exercise, nutrition and other programs to help keep them safe on the road. It is critically important that mature drivers make safety a personal priority. Driving today is more difficult than ever because of increased traffic congestion, longer commute distances, new technology and faster speeds. Older drivers can take important measures to mitigate the stress associated with driving. CarFit is an opportunity for older drivers to make sure their personal vehicles are adjusted to their needs. Call Kristina to register for this great opportunity 413.726.2836.

## Powerback Rehab Seminar

Tuesday, May 19 at 1 p.m. in the Garden Room

"Why travel for outpatient therapy? Powerback Rehab to You provides rehabilitation services in your home or meeting you out in the community. Come join Emily from Powerback and learn about the different ways PT and OT can not only help you remain safe in your home but continue doing the things you love without having to drive to a clinic."

## Sheryl Faye as: Ruth Bader Ginsburg - "I Dissent"

Tuesday, May 19 at 5:30 p.m. Dining Room

Ruth Bader Ginsburg was an American lawyer and jurist who served as an associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States from 1993 until her death in September 2020. She was the second woman and the first Jewish woman ever appointed to the Court and became the longest serving Jewish Justice. She championed fairness and equality and objected to different expectations for men and women, prejudice against minority groups in places like hotels and restaurants, and women having fewer job opportunities than men. Ruth served on the national board of the ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union) and launched The Women's Rights Project. She continued to be a leading voice for gender equality, women's interests, and civil rights and liberties. Ruth Bader Ginsburg's life continues to be one of achievement: as a lawyer, professor of law, a judge, and then a Supreme Court justice, she stands out because she was not afraid to dissent, dis-

## CPR and AED Training

Wednesday, May 20 from 1 to 3 p.m. in Veterans Hall

The Agawam Senior Center is extremely excited to offer this potentially "life saving class" to our staff and any senior interested in joining us. On Wednesday, May 20 from 1 to 3 p.m. in the Veterans Hall we will be offering CPR and AED training with Marsha Chappel from Baystate Hospital. Marsha is the certified AED and CPR trainer at Baystate Hospital and has kindly offered her training to the Agawam Senior Center. The cost is a \$20 donation due on the day of the class, all monies collected on that day will be donated to the American Heart Association. If you are interested in joining this class, PLEASE call Kristina at 413.726.2836 to reserve your spot. Spaces will be limited to 25.

## Comedy Show

Wednesday, May 20 at 1 p.m. in the Auditorium

Comedians "On The Hill" are better than Under the Hill. Hosted by Angela Grout, better known in the comic world as Tangelia G. Join Tangelia G & friends for an hour of laughter with 5 comics from WMASS. This comedy showcase is filled with humorous stories, and laughs for those over the limit in age or miles.

# 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 permanent 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.

# State Ornithologist Andrew Vitz to discuss latest in bird conservation

SPRINGFIELD – On Monday, May 4, at 7 p.m. the Allen Bird Club of Springfield, MA invites the public to attend, From Wood Thrush to Goshawks: Using Traditional and Contemporary Approaches to Promote Bird Conservation. This program will be presented by State Ornithologist Andrew Vitz, who will

explain how a combination of traditional and advanced technologies are used in studying bird biology for improved conservation. Dr. Vitz will highlight species such as the American Goshawk, Eastern Whip-poor-will, American Bald Eagle, Wood Thrush, and American Kestrel. This presentation will be held, free

of charge, in the Tolman Auditorium of the Springfield Science Museum, 21 Edwards Street, Springfield, MA.

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.

# Garden Club hosting Green Thumb Guru

AGAWAM – The next meeting of the Agawam Garden Club will be held

Tuesday, May 12, at 6:30 p.m. at the Agawam Public Library, 750 Cooper Street. After a short business meeting Ed Sourdiffe, WMass Green Thumb Guru, Master Gardener, and Garden Educator will present a talk on organic gardening. He is the go-to gardening expert on NBC's channel 22's Life Style program, Mass Appeal. Covered will be the basics including how to make your garden work for you instead of against you. How to save money and have amazing results with age-old and modern gardening techniques. It's all about creating a healthy environment for you, your plants, and the planet.

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.

# ACC to hold Mother's Day Plant Sale on May 9

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.

## NOTICE

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# Rotary to host guest speaker at APL

AGAWAM – The Agawam Rotary's Guest Speaker Series date will take place on Wednesday, May 6. In recognition of Mental Health Month, Lois Nesci, CEO of Gandara will speak at the Agawam Public Library from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. about mental wellness and the scope of services available in our community.



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GFWC Agawam Junior Women's Club and Agawam Cultural Council co-hosted an event honoring America's 250th anniversary.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS



## Events celebrates America 250

AGAWAM – The Agawam Cultural Council in conjunction with the GFWC Agawam Junior Women's Club sponsored the Agawam Public Library event documented at <https://www.facebook.com/share/1Czn6JYWcp/>

In celebration of America's 250th anniversary, the Agawam Public Library hosted a spirited America 250 event last Tuesday, Apr. 21, featuring Boston's national award-winning musical ventriloquist Kevin Driscoll, performing as Paul Revere and Friends.

As communities across the nation commemorate

two and a half centuries of American independence, Driscoll brings Revolutionary-era history to life with wit, music, comedy, and interactive ventriloquism designed to engage audiences of all ages. Blending patriotic storytelling with family-friendly entertainment, the program celebrates the enduring ideals of liberty, courage, and unity that de-



fine the American experience. While historians agree there is documented evidence that Paul Revere owned a talking dog, the library audience may have found themselves imagining otherwise. If such a companion had joined Revere on his legendary midnight ride, he might very well have

looked and sounded like Doug The Talking Dog, one of Driscoll's most beloved characters. Doug added humor, heart, and a contemporary twist to the Revolutionary narrative, helping younger audiences connect with the spirit of 1776.

Driscoll recently entertained large crowds at the Boston Parks Department's America-themed extravaganza on the historic Boston Common, further solidifying his reputation for delivering high-caliber, educational entertainment that resonates across generations.

## Grinspoon award 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, Arrha Credit Union a division 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](http://hgcf.org).

## 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](mailto: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.

## Canvases for Mosaic due back May 15

AGAWAM – The New England Mosaic project, sponsored by Agawam Community Artists and Artisans, is about to conclude the first part of the project where people throughout Western Massachusetts can create art on a 6x6" canvas. Libraries in Agawam, West Springfield, Southwick, Westfield, East Longmeadow, Longmeadow, East Forest Park

and Chicopee and the West Springfield Senior Center have collectively given out over 280 free canvases. Canvases are due back by Friday, May 15.

Once the canvases are returned, they will be assembled into a 24-foot Mosaic display showing what each artist loves about New England. The canvases are then sold, with the net proceeds funding scholar-

ships for high school and college students pursuing further education in visual arts.

Be sure to fill out the Artist Statement and include your email so we can personally invite you to the New England Mosaic Unveiling on Wednesday, August 5 at the Agawam Municipal Golf Course, 128 Southwick Street, Feeding Hills.

## 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.

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## Opinion

## Guest Column



## Should I collect SS now or wait two years until age 70?

### Dear Rusty:

I am 67 and 9 months old, collecting a modest SS survivor benefit with plans to collect my own much larger benefit at age 70.

I was confident this plan was a good one, but recent turbulent events make me nervous that cuts could come to Social Security at any time without warning. Would it be prudent to file for my own Social Security as soon as possible so that my benefit might be "grandfathered" in before any sudden and drastic cuts occur? I do not generally panic, but these are unprecedented times. I would be quite comfortable with the benefit listed on my 2024 statement for my current age; I was just hoping to maximize the benefit by waiting.

When I go to the Social Security website to view my 2025 annual statement to see the personalized monthly retirement benefit estimates for ages 68, 69 and 70 that section no longer shows. This omission makes me uncomfortable. Can I find out what my current benefit estimate would be for ages 68, 69 and 70? Or should I just rely on the 2024 statement?

Signed: Nervous in Portland

### Dear Nervous:

Please do not be nervous that recent "turbulent events" pose a threat to your future Social Security benefits. Those events do not, in any way, jeopardize your future Social Security benefits, because Social Security is completely separate from all other federal political issues and finances. The primary problem with Social Security became an issue long before the current administration took office.

The Trustees of Social Security have been warning Congress for decades that Social Security's finances require Congressional attention. The fact is that Social Security revenue (as predicted decades ago) became insufficient to pay all benefit obligations in about 2021. Since that time, money from Social Security's reserved funds (Trust Funds) has been used to pay full benefits to all.

In 2020, there was nearly \$3 trillion in SS reserved funds, but that has now dwindled to about \$2.5 trillion as reserves are used to supplement SS payments. And that problem continues. The Trustees of SS now predict that the reserves will be fully depleted in about 2032, at which time, lacking program reform by Congress, So-

cial Security will be forced to pay out only what it receives in revenue. And that would mean an estimated cut of about 23% to everyone's monthly SS benefit. In the unlikely event that happens, wouldn't a 23% reduction to your larger age 70 benefit be better than a 23% cut to your lower age 68 benefit?

No one wants those cuts to happen least of all politicians because it would amount to political suicide (seniors are, after all, a very large voting bloc). Thus, we believe that Congress will act to reform Social Security to prevent any general benefit cuts from happening. It will, however, require Congressional bipartisanship because the reforms needed for Social Security are likely unsavory to some.

Those reforms may include SS tax increases and changes to the basic structure of the SS program to align it with today's demographic reality. The program needs reform, which Congress has, unfortunately, neglected to provide for many years.

And this neglect will likely also continue, at least through the forthcoming mid-term elections. It seems the nature of Congress is to wait until the last possible moment to offer corrective legislation.

Here's what to keep in mind: Congress already knows how to reform Social Security to avoid any future benefit cuts; they just lack the bipartisanship to accomplish that reform. For our part, the Association of Mature American Citizens has offered to Congress a commonsense reform plan via its "Social Security Guarantee." AMAC's proposal has received a positive reception in Congressional circles and we are optimistic that the proposal will provide financial stability to the program for generations. AMAC continues to advocate for SS reform in Washington, D.C. on a regular basis, even more intensely as the depletion of the SS Trust Funds grows closer.

We do not suggest changing your strategy for claiming Social Security benefits based upon fear the program will cut benefits. That's because it's unlikely that all benefits will be cut because we believe Congress will eventually enact reform. And even in the unlikely event that Congress neglects to reform the program by 2032, the percentage of reduction to a higher monthly SS ben-

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## Alternative to airport TSA lines ...



## "Beets," me

I was so happy to finally get into the vegetable garden this past week.

My peas seeds are sown! Yippee!

Next on my list is beets. I have to admit that I am no beet aficionado. In fact, I began eating beets only a few years ago.

Who knows what turned me off in my younger years. Maybe it was the fact that I only knew beets by way of a can - we never grew them in our home garden. They honestly didn't look or taste all that yummy, especially to a kid who ate a total of two other vegetables; that is, of course, if corn counts.

Anyway, I think what finally convinced me to include beets in my garden was the fact that the plants are multipurpose (you can eat both the greens and the roots) and beets themselves are wonderful "keepers." Lately, there is a lot of talk about the benefits of eating them in relation to heart health.

Let me give you a brief run down on how to grow beets.

degrees plus) for germination.

# In the Garden

by Roberta McQuaid



Beet seeds are unique in appearance. I can only describe them as multi-faceted "orbs."

The orb is a grouping of seeds. You can go through the trouble of trying to separate them by way of wax paper and a rolling pin, but most folks don't bother.

Because the orb is thick, however, and moisture must penetrate it in order for it to germinate, a good soaking is beneficial. Although you can try starting beets nearly as soon as the soil can be worked in spring, it is probably best to wait until two weeks before the last expected frost.

In our location that translates into the first or second week of May. This timeframe will give them the most desirable soil temperature (sixty

degrees plus) for germination. Be sure that you keep the seed bed moist until the seeds pop up, and continue to provide at least one inch of water throughout the growing season if Mother Nature does not. Steady moisture will keep your beets sweet and crack-free.

I should also mention that beets prefer a soil that is slightly alkaline, and well-drained but fertile. In other words, sprinkle some lime and work a couple inches of compost into the soil!

Beet seeds should be sown an inch or so apart - my theory is to sow once and sow heavy. Because multiple plants may come from one "orb" it is critical that you thin your plants: first to one and a half inch spacing and then, when beets are the size of a marble, to a final spacing of three inches apart.

Don't feel badly when you are thinning - you are honestly doing your plants a favor. Beets that are grown too

GARDEN | page 5

## Protein: The big food craze of 2026

First it was low-calorie. Then it was fat-free. Then high fiber and low carb. Then gluten-free and zero sugar.

And now, it's protein. Walk down the aisle of your favorite store and you'll see shelves packed with protein powders, shakes, chips, bars, coffee, cereal, even protein soft drinks, alcoholic drinks and ice cream.

Food giants such as PepsiCo, Kellogg and Pop-Tarts maker Kellanova have rolled out protein-boosted versions of their products. Starbucks and Kroger are offering protein-fortified coffees and French toast sticks. The global market for protein-fortified foods is projected to hit \$100 billion by 2030, according to Grand View Research.

What's going on? These companies hope to profit off a key concern of consumers: Getting more protein in their diets. According



By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN  
Guest Column

to a 2025 survey from the International Food Information Council, 70 percent of Americans said they're trying to eat more protein, up from 59% just three years ago.

We've always known that our bodies need protein to build and maintain lean muscle, hair, bones, connective tissues and general health. But what's driving the current fad, and how much protein do we need anyway?

The protein push seems to be partly the result of the boom in semaglutide (GLP-1) medications, such as Ozempic, Wegovy, Mounjaro and the like. They are helping people lose weight and maintain it, but users are also losing muscle because "every pound is water, fat and muscle," registered dietitian Kim Shapira said in an interview.

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## AGAWAM ADVERTISER NEWS

We Want to Hear From You

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must include a name, address, and daytime telephone number for author verification purposes. We do not publish anonymous letters.

All letters are subject to editing for content and length. The deadline is Monday at noon. Please send letters to Agawam Advertiser News, care of Turley Publications Inc., 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, or e-mail aan@turley.com.



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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](mailto:obits@turley.com).

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.

## 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](mailto:aan@turley.com). Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by noon Monday to be considered for

that 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.

# 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](http://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.

## 'Nacho Average Wellness' event to be held at Heritage Woods May 7

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 professionals time to step away from their busy lives, reconnect with themselves, and connect with others, according to Chantal 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@hcc.com](mailto:tiffany.lagacy.genesis@hcc.com).

## ACAA seeks art for August festival

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](http://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](mailto:tocarefree2@hotmail.com).

## Volunteers needed to flag veteran's 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.

the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit [amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at [ssadvisory@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadvisory@amacfoundation.org). Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

### SS MATTERS ■ from page 4

efit amount would be better than a similar reduction to a lower benefit amount. In other words, your original plan is still a prudent one.

Regarding your question about your estimated benefits, I expect your most recent SS statement didn't include future benefits because you are already collecting SS survivor benefits. You can con-

tact SSA at 1-800-772-1213 to obtain the future SS retirement estimates you seek.

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

### HEALTH ■ from page 4

"This has just boomed an entire industry of protein," she said.

The problem is that a good deal of these protein-packed foods may not be good for us. A 2024 survey by Spanish researchers, posted on the National Institutes of Health website, that found 91% of foods with "protein" marketing claims (PCs) were less healthy overall because they are ultraprocessed and often have added sugar, fat and sodium.

"The perception that foods with PCs are healthy is incorrect, and consuming them may pose an additional health risk," the researchers wrote.

The protein we need everyday varies with age, weight, level of activity and other factors. To estimate your minimum recommended daily allowance (RDA), multiply your weight in pounds by 0.36 grams. For a 140-pound sedentary woman, that comes to about 50 grams a day.

Pregnant women and active adults benefit from more

protein, but researchers really don't know how much is too much. (The USDA has a nutrition calculator on its website at [myplate.gov](http://myplate.gov).)

They do recommend spacing out protein consumption throughout the day rather than consuming most of it at dinner, as most Americans do.

Jumping on the protein bandwagon takes careful consideration. It's not just a question of jacking up protein consumption, but doing it in the context of healthy eating. In other words, eating six protein bars a day is not likely to help your overall health.

If you're ready to boost your protein intake, here are some tips:

**Turn to protein-rich unprocessed or lightly processed foods**, which you may have in your pantry and fridge. According to the USDA, some of the best are:

- Tuna: 21 grams of protein in 3 ounces
- Cooked chicken or turkey: 19 grams in 3 ounces
- Plain Greek yogurt: 17 grams in 3 ounces
- Cottage cheese: 14 grams in ¼ cup

Other good sources are beans, nuts, low-fat dairy and eggs.

**Don't translate "eat more protein" as "eat more beef and cheese."** The saturated fats in these foods are not good for cardiovascular health.

**To avoid weight gain, cut back on other foods.** If you're consuming more calories as protein, reduce the calories you get from breads, sweets and alcohol. Rather, up your intake of fruits, veggies and legumes.

Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, R.N., a registered nurse and board-certified patient advocate, is the founder of [www.NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com](http://www.NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com), which trains medical professionals to become successful private patient advocates. A Monson, MA resident, she is the author of "How to Be a Healthcare Advocate for Yourself & Your Loved Ones" and her new book, "Advocating Well: Strategies for Finding Strength and Understanding in Health Care," available at [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com). Contact her at [Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com](mailto:Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com) to set up a free phone consultation.

### GARDEN ■ from page 4

close together will never develop to their full potential.

Instead of letting the thinnings go to waste, make a salad and be grateful for some early season greens. Even when beets are at their final spacing I will rob the patch of some leaves every now and then for the very same reason. As long as I am prudent, no harm will be done to the developing roots.

Some beet varieties are grown especially for their greens. Try "Bull's Blood," an heirloom variety known for its large and sweet reddish-purple leaves. "Early Wonder Tall Top" is another oldie – prized as much for its early beet greens as it for its beets.

Looking for less leaf and

more beet? Try "Detroit Dark Red Short Top." Well over one hundred years old, this late variety is great for canning.

Beets also come in a wide array of colors. For a dependable and tasty yellow beet try "Touchtone Gold." Another interesting heirloom beet is "Chiogga" (aka "Bassano").

Cercospora Leaf Spot of Swiss Chard, Beets, and Spinach is a common fungus that appears as circular rings on the leaves, making them unsightly and barely edible.

There are a number of tactics that claim to help if this is a problem for you. Water at the base of the plant, and do it early in the day so it dries out by evening, especially in the summer months when humidity heightens the spread.

Likewise, if you make suc-

cessive sowings, space them a distance apart from one another. There are organic and chemical means of control that are worth investigating.

If that's not for you, give growing these plants a break for two-three years and likely you'll be in the clear to attempt trying again. Some companies offer disease free seed, too.

It's worth looking into.

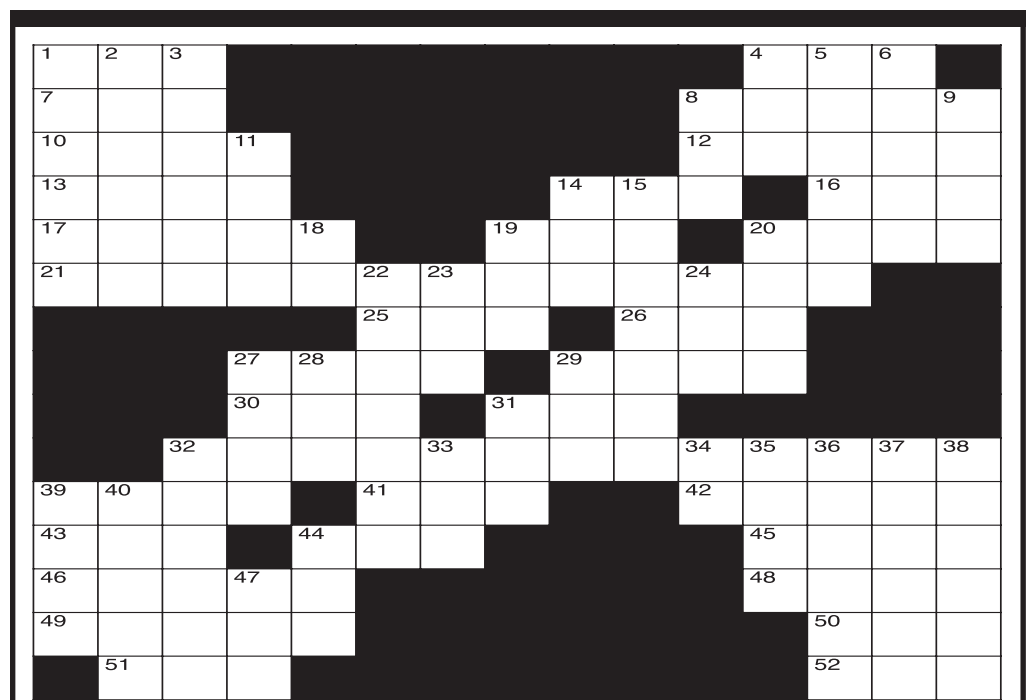
Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 34 years, she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to [pouimette@turley.com](mailto:pouimette@turley.com) with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.

## 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](http://agawamgardenclub.com)



- CLUES ACROSS**
1. Purchase
  4. British news organization
  7. Midway between northeast and east
  8. Language specialist group
  10. Fancy automobile
  12. Small loop or series of loops
  13. Exploiter
  14. Don't know when yet
  16. Group of languages
  17. One who's finished
  19. After B
  20. Angled
  21. A place to adopt pets
  25. Swiss river
  26. Young boy
  27. Unexciting
  29. American comedian Vidale
  30. Peyton's little brother
  31. Corporate higher-up
  32. "All in the Family" star
  39. Strike something forcefully
  41. Up in the air (abbr.)
  42. Clay earth pigments
  43. Means to record brain activity
  44. Small constellation
  45. Embraces
  46. Brief description
  48. Exclude
  49. White (French)
  50. Insect
  51. A major division of geological time
  52. Soviet Socialist Republic
- CLUES DOWN**
1. Type of whale
  2. In tune
  3. A citizen of Yemen
  4. Actress Ling
  5. One who supports
  6. Circus performer
  8. Yearly tonnage (abbr.)
  9. Quantitative fact
  11. Utah city
  14. Where a golfer begins
  15. Attendant
  18. The ancient Egyptian sun god
  19. Book of Chronicles (abbr.)
  20. Benedictine monk
  22. Not turbulent
  23. Car mechanics group
  24. Buffer used in chemistry
  27. Fall heavily
  28. Pie \_\_\_ mode
  29. The Brits love it
  31. Children's TV channel (abbr.)
  32. Jacksonville footballer
  33. Helps little firms
  34. \_\_\_ and behold
  35. A way to resemble
  36. Fingers
  37. Excessive indulgences
  38. You might be an "empty" one
  39. "How the West Was Won" writer
  40. European river
  44. They begin the alphabet
  47. The body's messenger

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# Michael A. Fenton declares run for Governor's Council

SPRINGFIELD — Michael A. Fenton, a Springfield attorney, today announced his candidacy for the Massachusetts Governor's Council, District 8, representing 102 cities and towns, primarily located in Hampden, Hampshire, Franklin, and Berkshire counties.

Fenton enters the race with a focused mission: bringing the legal expertise, impartiality, and regional advocacy that Western Massachusetts communities need.

"The Governor's Council is one of the most consequential and least understood bodies in Massachusetts government, and our region needs to take full advantage of the power of the position, both through its constitutional authority and the influence that comes from the position's proximity to the Governor" said Fenton. "It shapes the future of our courts and provides extraordinary opportunities to advance our region's interests even beyond the confirmation of appointments. Our Governor's Councilor needs to have a strong working relationship with the Gov-

ernor, not a combative one. When I am at the table, I will work with the Governor to advocate for nominations and funding of critical projects in Western Mass."

The Governor's Council is an eight-member elected body that advises the Governor on judicial nominations, confirms appointments to the bench, reviews pardons and commutations, and oversees other critical state appointments. The Lieutenant Governor presides over Governor's Council meetings. "I will fight for regional equity and work to recruit and confirm serious, accountable judges to the bench. I intend to be a strong voice on the Council advocating for Western Massachusetts" said Fenton

Fenton pointed to the fact that no current member of the Supreme Judicial Court, the Parole Board, or the Appellate Tax Board hails from Western Massachusetts. "These appointees make decisions that impact the lives of everyone in our Commonwealth, and Western Massachusetts deserves to be represented. There is a long

tradition of regional diversity on the Supreme Judicial Court, the Parole Board, and the Appellate Tax Board. In recent years, the Governor's Council has gotten away from that practice, and our region has been left behind. If elected, I will restore that proud tradition of regional diversity and ensure Western Mass has representation on the SJC, the ATB, and the Parole Board."

### A Proven Attorney

Fenton focuses his law practice in the areas of commercial real estate, business planning, commercial finance and estate planning. He is a graduate of Western New England University School of Law, where he served on the Law Review, and earned a Master of Business Administration. He is currently an adjunct professor at the law school. His practice involves representing principals in business formation and succession planning, businesses in the purchase and sale of enterprises, lenders and borrowers in commercial financing transactions, developers in the acquisition and permit-

ting of projects, and individuals in establishing comprehensive and sophisticated estate plans. He regularly represents businesses, lenders, and individuals throughout Hampden, Hampshire, Franklin, and Berkshire County. Fenton brings to this race something no other candidate offers; years of firsthand experience evaluating legal arguments, judicial reasoning, and the standards that separate good judges from great ones.

"The Governor's Council confirms our judges and oversees our courts," said Fenton. "We deserve a Governor's Councilor who is a member of the bar, understands the law, and can evaluate a nominee's judicial temperament from experience."

### Public Service Experience and Impartiality

Fenton's record in public service has been defined by impartiality and sound judgment. As a member of the Springfield City Council for seventeen years, a former five-time City Council President, Fenton has earned a

reputation for making decisions based on evidence and the public good. He would bring that same standard to the Governor's Council.

"First and foremost, the Governor's Council must evaluate nominees on their legal qualifications and fitness for the bench," said Fenton. "I will bring impartiality and legal rigor to every confirmation."

### A Proactive Advocate for Western Massachusetts Courts

Western Massachusetts has real needs on the Governor's Council. The region's Superior Court recently faced a critical judicial shortage; a gap that built up over time and left communities without the judicial resources they need and deserve. Fenton has spent his career being proactive, not reactive, when it comes to delivering results for the region.

"Western Massachusetts went without fully staffed courts for too long, and the impacts were real. Members of the bar have been very vocal about these issues and have brought their concerns

to me" said Fenton. "District 8 needs a representative who will be proactive, not reactive, when it comes to ensuring our region has the judicial resources it deserves."

### Rooted in District 8

Fenton has spent his entire life and career in Springfield and Western Mass. "I know these communities, practice law in these communities, and have spent decades advocating for the people who call them home. Our area has some of the busiest court houses in the Commonwealth, and it is critical that the citizens of the four western counties receive full access to justice, through property funded and staffed court rooms."

Fenton and his family are longtime residents of Springfield. He is an active member of the Western Massachusetts legal community and has spent years in public service at both the local and regional level.

To learn more about Mike Fenton's campaign for Governor's Council District 8, visit [www.votemikefenton.com](http://www.votemikefenton.com) or follow the campaign on social media.

## New kids, teen activities at Agawam Library

AGAWAM - April shows bring May flowers, which works beautifully for us at the Agawam Library, as we have just rolled out our brand new plant inspired logo! We are also rolling out a slightly smaller program roster this month as we begin our Summer Reading Challenge preparations. Our Summer Reading Challenge will begin Monday, June 29th and go through August 8th. During the Summer Reading Challenge there will be lots of activities, games, and prizes to keep kids of all ages reading throughout the summer. But we still have some fun activities planned before that. Below is a listing of everything that's going on for kids & teens this month. Some events require registration. To register, call 413-789-1550 ext 3 or go to our website [agawamlibrary.org](http://agawamlibrary.org).

### Art and Stories - For ages 3 - 5

Tues. May 12 and 26 at 9:30 a.m. - Drop-in

Join us for a short story time followed by an art project. We will explore simple art concepts and experiment with materials. Please wear clothing that can get messy!

### Baby Story Time - For birth - 18 mo.

Thursday, May 14 and 28 at 9:30 a.m. - Drop-in

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

### Community Helper Story Time - For all ages

Tuesday, May 5 at 4:30 p.m. - Registration is suggested

Join us for a special story time where we'll learn about different community helpers. We will have a special guest City Councilor Christine Rickmon.

### Family Movie: Lilo & Stitch (2002) - For all ages

Thursday, May 21 at 6 p.m. - Drop-in

Join us for a showing of the original Lilo & Stitch film. Bring a small (not messy) picnic to eat during the movie. We'll have some snacks and coloring sheets available during the movie.

### Family Take and Make Crafts - For all ages

First Day of the Week & Thursdays - While supplies last - Drop-in & pick up.

A new Take & Make craft will be available the first day of each week and again on Thursdays. May 4 and 7: Foam Owl Ornament May 11 and 14: Butterfly Hand Puppet May 18 and 21: Construction Site Scene May 26 and

28: Robot Mask

### Grow, play and Learn - This program is provided by Pathways for Parents.

Wednesdays and Fridays Ages 0-2 at 9:30 am Ages 3-5 at 10:30 a.m. - Drop-in.

Stories, songs and skill building, led by an Early Childhood Developmental trained staff member, guiding caregivers in strengthening interactions with their child.

### Polymer Clay Crafting - For students in grades 5-6

Wednesday, May 27 at 6 p.m. - Registration is required

Come craft small trinkets out of polymer clay! We'll be able to bake it in our mini oven to set it for you.

### Pre-K Pals - For ages 3 - 5 This program is provided by Pathways for Parents.

Mondays in May at 11 a.m. - Registration is required

No class Mon. May 25 Each week, we will focus on an area of development and provide fun activities to support your child to learn through play.

### Special Saturday Drop-in Craft: Dogs in Rain Gear Craft - For All Ages

Saturday, May 30

All Day - While supplies last - Drop-in and pick up.

These pups are playing

in the rain. This craft kit features two different designs that show images of dogs in colorful rain gear holding umbrellas and grinning while standing in the falling rain.

### Spring Carnival - For all ages.

Wednesday, May 20 at 6 p.m. - Registration is required

Celebrate Spring with fun activities, crafts, and games! This program is hosted by the Agawam Public Library Teen Advisory Board.

### Teen Advisory Board - For grades 7-12

Wednesday, May 13 at 6 p.m.

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

### Teen After School Drop-in - For grades 9-12

Every Monday the Agawam Public Schools are in session at 2 p.m.

Stop by the library after school and visit the Activity Room. Play our Nintendo Switch, try out the air hockey table, eat snacks, or just hang out. No registration necessary. Note: there is no drop-in

on Monday, 5/25.

### Teen Take and Make Craft - For grades 7-12

Available starting Friday, May 1

Stop by the Teen Space to pick up a Take & Make Craft kit! They'll be available until we run out of supplies. No registration necessary.

### Teen Trivia Thursday - For grades 7-12

Every Thursday the Agawam Public Schools are in session 2 to 3:30 p.m.

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

### Teen Volunteer Work Party - For grades 7-12

Wednesday, May 6 from 6 to 8 p.m.

Get a couple of volunteer hours in. We'll have a few different kinds of volunteer projects available to work on. Stop by for an hour or stay the whole time. Make sure you turn in a volunteer application before the event and let Evan know you're coming. Contact Evan at [edelano@agawamlibrary.org](mailto:edelano@agawamlibrary.org) or 413-789-1550 extension 3.

### Toddler Time - For 19 mo. - 36 mo.

Mon. May 11 at 9:30 a.m. - Drop-in.

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

## 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 Storrows 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.

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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*

**TREE** | from page 1

cause it's April nineteenth, we did it. History is important, you know, you learn it, you remember it, and you repeat what you should. And you don't repeat what you shouldn't, you know. I think every community should be celebrating our anniversary."

Kathy Keenan, a member of the 25 Continental Regiment shared why keeping history accessible throughout communities is important.

"Liberty is important. It means that I have a free place to live, where I can pursue what I want to pursue, given the time period what a woman could pursue," Keenan said. "But it means freedom. I think people need to know what happened before them. I think they don't realize how much it affects their lives today. We where we are because of what those people did 250 years ago, and they need to know that. They need to know that life was rough back then and it can be rough to now. The historical society contacted us, wanted to know if we were available to be here, once they realized we were in the area and available to do those kinds of events. We have been in contact ever since."

A lot of thought and planning went into the organization and execution of this



important day for Agawam. The Agawam Historical Association picked the perfect location for Agawam's Liberty Tree, on the day that started our country's journey towards independence. For more information about upcoming events hosted by The Agawam Historical Association, visit, The Agawam Historical Association.

Above: The 25 Continental Regiment doing the Musket salute at the Liberty Tree dedication on Apr. 19. At right: Agawam's brand-new Liberty Tree

TURLEY PHOTOS BY CHRISTINA GIOSCIA



The Thomas Smith House was open for attendees to come in and see some of the history it has to offer.



# Send Us Your Summer Event Information

**Turley Publications will print your summer calendar listings FREE OF CHARGE in our SUMMERFEST Supplement which publishes June 3.**

**Deadline for submissions is May 6.**

## Community Summer Events

**Event Should Be Non-Profit & Open to the Public**

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Contact name & phone number for more information \_\_\_\_\_

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

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**\*Be sure to indicate "Summer" in the subject line of your email.**

# SPORTS

## Brownies eek out win over Longmeadow

AGAWAM – Last Monday afternoon, Agawam High School baseball squeaked out runs in the fourth and fifth innings to take a 3-2 lead, holding it down for the win at School Street Park. Cole Ingham and Gavin Cruz had two

hits each. Cruz, Joseph Wilkinson, and Parker Bean all drove in runs for the Brownies. Bean also tossed a complete game, scattering two runs on six hits. He walked three and struck out four. Agawam is now 4-6 this season.



Above: Aiden Wykes scampers home with a run. Below: Dominic Chriscola gets ready to swing.



Parker Bean delivers a pitch to the plate.



Lukasz Korcz leads off third base.



Above: Cole Ingham comes up throwing in center.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Dominic Chriscola gets ready to swing.



Zachary O'Connor throws home to start a run-down.

## Pitching still needed for the 2026 season of the Pioneer Valley 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 two games in and there are 20 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](http://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 Satur-

day mornings with 10 a.m. starts typical and on Tuesday evenings with start times in the 5:30 to 6 p.m. range. The league will start play in late April and run through the end of August. There are slots open for both full-time players and part-time players. The fee for full-time players will be \$260 with part-time players getting up to 11 games for \$130. Fees paid go toward the operation of the

league, paying for insurance, umpires, fields, and baseballs. No one profits in any way. 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.

The league hopes interested players will come out and join the fun this spring and summer.

# Sports

## Railers conclude their season with OT win

WORCESTER – This is strictly a judgment call, but it can be said with some certainty that the Railers' last shot of 2025-26 was their best.

It was taken by Gleb Veremyev at 5:06 of overtime Sunday, Apr. 19. It gave Worcester one of its most emotional victories of the 72-game season, a 4-3 decision over the Adirondack Thunder that capped a dramatic comeback. It provided the home team with its sixth straight victory, second straight in overtime.

How is it that things work this way in sports?

One of the assists on the overtime winner went to Railers goaltender Thomas Gale. It was the first, and last, assist by a Worcester goaltender of the entire season.

The OT goal was Veremyev's second of the game. He got the tying goal at 16:39 of the third period as the Railers fought back from a two-goal deficit. The winner came on a long, long breakaway — something like 150 feet — when the puck squirted free from a scrum in front of Gale.

Thus, Veremyev was able to ponder his move as he closed in on Thunder goaltender Henry Welsch.

"I saw I had a lot of time," Veremyev said, "and I saw the goalie was super far out so I knew that with speed I could beat him wide and I went for it."

As he got ready to make the play Veremyev checked the rearview mirror.

"I took a peak behind me," he said, "and saw there wasn't anybody really close so I knew I had a lot of time."

It was thanks to Gale that the Railers were in position to tie the game. They were badly outshot and outplayed into the early minutes of the third period but led, 1-0, on Vincent Corcoran's goal in the first period.

Adirondack then scored three goals in a span of 4:01. Jeremy Hanzel got the first at 7:18. Jace Isley scored his first

pro goal, then Brannon McManus connected for his 31st of the season at 11:19 and the Railers looked disorganized and disheartened.

That changed just 62 seconds after McManus scored.

Max Dorrington won a faceoff in the right offensive circle, sending the puck cleanly to Mitton. He sizzled a wrist shot home from 25 feet. Worcester then tied it at 16:39 on Veremyev's deflection of Case McCarthy's shot from the left point, Mitton getting another assist.

Both teams had chances in overtime but Gale stopped all the visitors shots, then set up Veremyev for the winner.

"That line has been hounding the puck the last couple of games," coach Nick Tuzzolino said of the deciding breakaway, "and even tonight I thought they were great and I think he almost scored almost a whistle before that. I think it was one of those things where if you give him a chance he's gonna score."

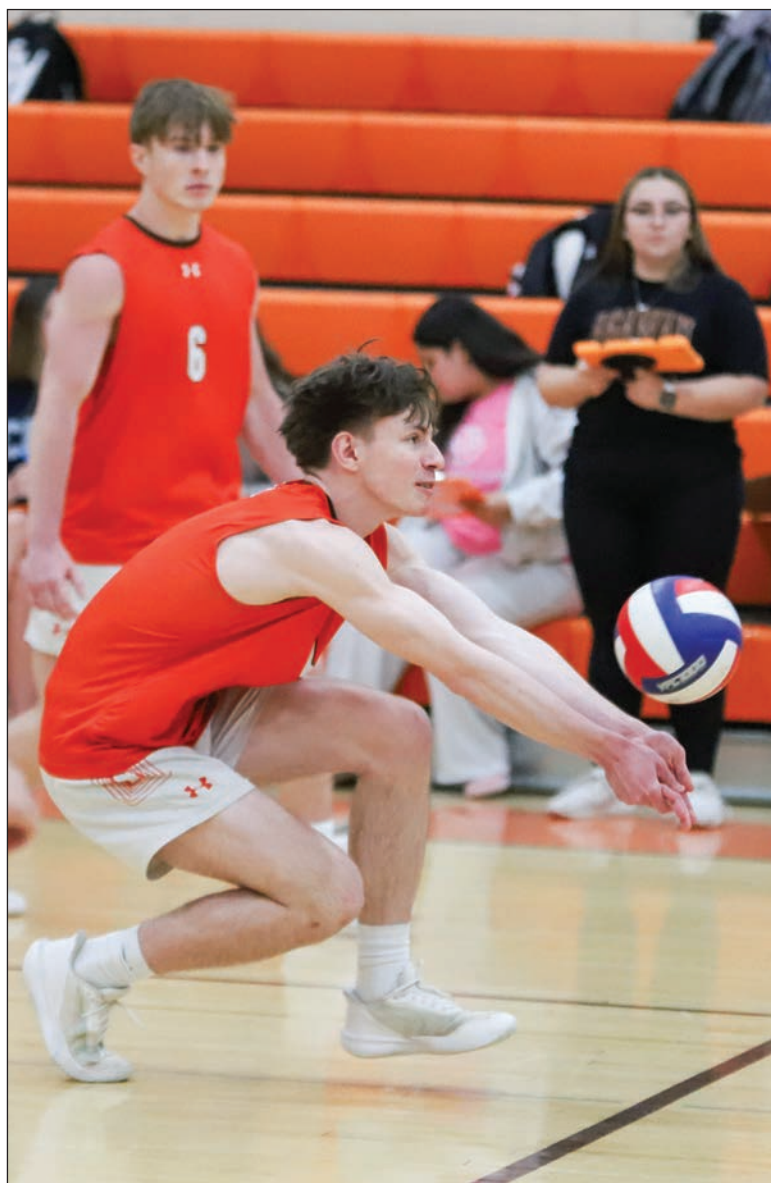
"He's very hot right now."

The Thunder held a 7-0 edge in shots on goal as the first period approached the 9-minute mark but Worcester withstood the early pressure thanks to some fine saves by Gale. The offensive tide turned just about when the period was half over. Not long after that the Railers took the lead.

Vinny Corcoran got the goal, his second of the year, at 13:16. Anthony Callin set it up with a pass from the right.

The second period was scoreless but not chanceless. Adirondack had the better of those chances by far. Gale stopped all 16 shots he faced as the Thunder had twice as many shots on goal as Worcester. The Railers buzzed around the Adirondack net on occasion. Jordan Kaplan had a nice bid rejected by Welsch.

The Railers also had a Liberty Bell ringer off the right post at 3:38.



Michael Lukomski lifts a bump.



Mark Stepchuk goes for the set.

## Brownies get sweep of Haverhill

AGAWAM – Last Wednesday afternoon, Agawam High School boys volleyball defeated Haverhill 3-0. The Brownies were in control through the entire matchup and

managed to score the sweep quickly against the Eastern Mass. opponent. Agawam is now 7-3 on the season and next plays on Friday, May 1 at East Longmeadow at 6 p.m.



Left: Andrei Batranciuc goes for a spike. Above: Elijah Ramos gets a set near the net.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

## Thunderbirds move into next round of playoffs

CHARLOTTE, N.C. - The Springfield Thunderbirds proved to be the comeback kids for the second straight night, defeating the Charlotte Checkers 2-1 in overtime in the deciding Game 3 of the clubs' First Round Calder Cup Playoff series.

For a third straight game, a Checkers blueliner broke the ice within six minutes of game action. With the teams skating 4-on-4, Jack Studnicka skated up the right side before sliding a pass across the slot to Tobias Bjornfot, who flipped a wrist shot past Georgi Romanov's glove hand at 5:58 to give Charlotte the 1-0 advantage.

As he did in Game 2, though, Romanov helped stabilize the defensive zone, turning away a sneaky backhand effort from Noah Gregor and the remaining seven shots that came his way in the opening period.

Springfield's offense only got four shots on the net, but chances began to arrive late in the period, with Otto Stenberg catching the post on a sharp angle chance and Julien Gauthier forcing Charlotte goalie Cooper Black to hold the fort on two net-crashing efforts. The T-Birds also got a power play opportunity late in the period that came up empty, then carried a second man advantage into the opening 1:38 of

period two.

The Springfield power play had a difficult time getting offense established, and the T-Birds were limited to just eight shots for the duration of period two, then failed to get on the board with a power play to open the third period as well.

Despite the odds, Steve Ott's club continued to dig deeper, and at 5:45 of the third, a greasy goal changed the T-Birds fortunes when Chris Wagner rolled a puck into the blue paint, where Calle Rosen crashed the net front and tucked it across the line to even the score, 1-1.

Black and Romanov kept things locked down for the remainder of the third, forcing the winner-take-all game into sudden death overtime.

Springfield managed just two shots in the extra period, but the second of those two, at 14:54 of the frame, proved to be the dagger as former Checker Julien Gauthier power-drove the right side of the net, flipping a backhand that glanced off the post, then off Black's backside before finding its way home for the series-clinching goal.

The T-Birds now move on to face the Providence Bruins in the Atlantic Division Semifinals; Game 1 is slated for Friday, May 1 at 7:05 p.m. at Amica Mutual Pavilion.

## 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 sea-

son opener.

For the 2026 season, the cost will be \$215 and will include a 16th game added to the regular season schedule. Those who sign up after the season begins will be charged a prorated fee.

During the 2025 season, the league experimented with playing on Mother's Day Saturday as well as a weeknight game to allow players an opportunity to play under the lights.

While the night games were very successful, the

Mother's Day Saturday games were rained out.

Those elements will return along with a 16th game with an opponent to be determined as the league's board explores possibilities for interleague matchups with another league in the region.

The season began on Sunday, Apr. 26, but there are still spots open and 15 games to play.

The registration is live at [www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org](http://www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org). Players must regis-

ter 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.

## Follow Turley Sports on Instagram

Turley Publications sports department has recently joined Instagram. You can find our account by searching "turleysports." We

will regularly feature samples of photos that you will see in our publications on a weekly basis.

Please follow and share

with your friends and loved ones.

We will be featuring photos from all 11 of our sports sections, but as always, you

can see all the photos that appear by subscribing to your local paper or picking up a copy in your community.

# Sports

## Agawam softball team falls to Tantasqua

AGAWAM – Last Wednesday on a chilly afternoon, Agawam softball was defeated 13-3 by Tantasqua

Regional High School. The Warriors handed Agawam their fourth loss of the season, though the Brownies re-

bounded to pound Westfield 12-2 last Friday. Agawam softball is now 6-4 for the season.

Agawam will host Longmeadow on Thursday, Apr. 30 at 4 p.m.



Above: Taylor Stairs connects on a base hit. Right: Elizabeth Saunders retreats back to first base on a play.



Jordyn Rosario fouls off a pitch.



Alexina Lentos runs in a ball after cutting it off.



Avery Gordon fires home a pitch.

## Public Notices

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
**The Trial Court**  
**Probate and Family Court**  
**Hampden Division**  
**Docket No.**  
**HD26P0668EA**  
**Estate of:**  
**Frank Stephen Drewniak, Jr.**  
**Also Known As:**  
**Frank S. Drewniak and**  
**Frank S. Drewniak, Jr.**  
**Date of Death: April 24, 2023**  
**INFORMAL PROBATE**  
**PUBLICATION NOTICE**  
 To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner Darrell Drewniak of Chicopee, MA.  
 Darrell Drewniak of Chicopee, MA has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve without surety on the bond.  
 The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal 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 Represent-

tatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.  
 04/30/2026

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
**The Trial Court**  
**Probate and Family Court**  
**Hampden Probate and Family Court**  
**50 State Street**  
**Springfield, MA 01103**  
**(413)748-7758**  
**Docket No.**  
**HD26P0781EA**  
**Estate of:**  
**John A Hanson**  
**Date of Death: 03/06/2026**  
**CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION**  
 To all interested persons:  
 A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Kurt J Hanson of Fairfield, CT** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.  
 The Petitioner requests that **Kurt J Hanson of Fairfield, CT** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.  
**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
 You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or

your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 05/15/2026**. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.  
**UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)**  
 A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.  
**WITNESS, Hon. Claudine T. Stouemire, First Justice of this Court.**  
 Date: April 16, 2026  
**Rosemary A Saccamoni,**  
 Register of Probate  
 04/30/2026

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
**The Trial Court**  
**Probate and Family Court**  
**Hampden Probate and Family Court**  
**50 State Street**  
**Springfield, MA 01103**  
**Docket No.**  
**HD21P2105PM**  
**In the matter of:**  
**John Macedonia**  
**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 third account(s) of **Susan A McCoy of Springfield, MA** 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 05/18/2026**. 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 mat-

ter 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 proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The 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. Stouemire, First Justice of this Court.**  
 Date: April 17, 2026  
**Rosemary A. Saccamoni**  
 Register of Probate  
 04/30/2026

**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](http://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](mailto: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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- 2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.
- 3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts' public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

*Public notice deadlines are Mondays at noon, Fridays noon for Monday holidays.*

visit [www.publicnotices.turley.com](http://www.publicnotices.turley.com)

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For a full job description and job application please visit: **ma-oakham.civicplus.com/216/Highway-Department** or email **admin@oakham-ma.gov**

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# HCC awarded \$455K for clean energy careers training

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College has been awarded a \$455,000 grant from the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center to continue and refine its clean energy careers training programs.

In particular, the grant will pay for two free training programs for up to 30 individuals, Introductory Training in Construction, Electricity and Clean Energy Systems in fall 2026, and Solar Installer / Electrical Pre-Apprenticeship program in spring 2027.

HCC piloted both programs in 2025 after receiving a \$1.42 million grant from the Mass. Executive Office of Education for climate-related workforce training initiatives. The new award is part of a \$7 million allocation in clean energy and climate-tech grants announced last month by the Healey-Driscoll administration.

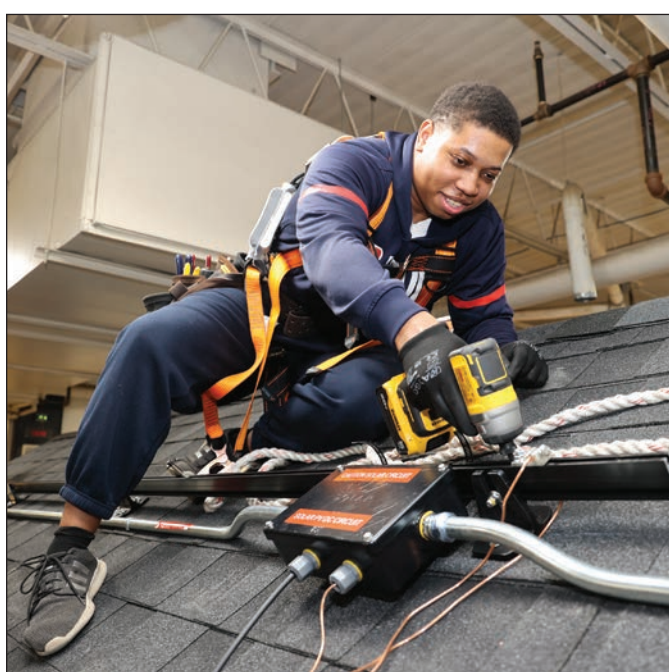
“The first grant was really to design, develop, and essentially figure out what would work in our market,”

said Kermit Dunkelberg, HCC assistant vice president of adult basic education and workforce development. “Now we’ll not just be continuing but refining these programs to achieve even stronger outcomes.”

The MassCEC grants will support 17 organizations through four programs: Equity Training Implementation; Climate Critical Training, Equipment and Infrastructure; Climate Critical Underrepresented Business Support; and Student and Young Adult Career Awareness and Training. They are designed to help local organizations expand inclusive training, career awareness, and business support for jobs such as electricians, solar technicians, HVAC-R technicians, energy auditors, refrigeration technicians, and EV charger technicians.

HCC received its grant through the Equity Training Implementation program track.

HCC was the only community college in Massachusetts



Jayshawn Brown, a student in HCC's solar tech training program, works on a solar panel installation project at Dean Technical High School.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

to receive a dedicated grant, while the Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges, a consortium of all 15 community colleges in the state, received \$120,000

to support HVAC programs across the community college system.

“Massachusetts is leading the nation in clean energy and climatetech, and

that leadership depends on a strong, skilled workforce,” said Gov. Maura Healey. “These investments will connect with residents across the state to good-paying careers while helping employers meet growing demand. We are building a clean energy economy that creates opportunity in every region and real jobs for Massachusetts workers.”

HCC's key partners in the grant are Holyoke's Dean Technical High School, where the clean energy training classes meet, and solar industry companies PV Squared and SolaBlock.

Other partners include MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board, Coalition for Equitable Economy, Springfield Works, Browning the Green Space, and the Entrepreneurship & Business Collaborative.

“Thanks to these grants, we've been able to connect students to career pathways that can be very challenging to get into,” said Mary Wager, HCC workforce and eco-

nomie development training manager. “Through our programs and partnerships, students are introduced to building trades unions, in particular, the electrical workers union and carpentry union, as well as solar installer and electrical apprenticeship opportunities.”

Since 2025, HCC has run the introductory clean energy introductory program three times, the solar tech program once, a weatherization program two times, and recently introduced an Introduction to Manufacturing and Clean Energy Applications pilot program.

“These programs are creating opportunities for underserved populations,” said Dunkelberg. “It's not just opening the pathways but reaching deeply into the community to create the access that's been missing.”

Program enrollment will begin during the summer, but applicants can fill out a general interest form now at [hcc.edu/cleanenergy](http://hcc.edu/cleanenergy).

## 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](http://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 Age Composter.

## 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](mailto:agawam67@aol.com)

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### COUNCIL ■ from page 1

The store's frontage is on Cooper Street, with the north side of the business property along the end of Rowley St.

The takings would help widen the intersection at Cooper St. to allow dedicated turn lanes.

The plans involve installing new crosswalks for all five streets, newer traffic lights, and a left-turn lane on Suffield St.

The cost to renovate the intersection is estimated at \$1.7 million, with about half of the money coming from a grant from the Massachusetts

Casino Community Mitigation Fund. Agawam is in close proximity to one of the state's casinos, MGM in Springfield.

Pajer claimed at the meeting that the town has not been willing to spare his parking spaces with any modifications to the plan.

All of the land takings proposed, would be smaller amounts, but significant space to the businesses that are at the tight five-way corner. There is a dentistry at one corner, and a Mobil gas station at another corner.

The corner can be dangerous because of the confusing traffic pattern, but is only re-

ally particularly busy during the 17 days of the Big E, when traffic heading toward West Springfield gets very congested and backs up to the intersection.

As of press time, the Agawam City Council was planning to hold a public meeting and workshop to allow for more information to be shared and for the public to be able to further share their concerns with the city council earlier this week.

Rules at regular city council meetings prohibit back and forth conversation between city councilors and the public.



## Science on display

At Agawam High School, physics students in Dr. Balli's class conducted a variety of self directed inquiry investigations these past weeks. In the picture, Samantha Izzo, Megan Fitzgerald and Grant Gionfriddo (right to left) are investigating the effect of rotational inertia on motion.



Above: Pajer's Superette has been the center of a lot of complaints about the Rowley-Suffield-Cooper St. intersection project. It led to public outcry at last Tuesday's city council meeting. Left: The intersection has five-ways and town officials were seeking to make improvements to it utilizing casino mitigation grant funding.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI