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AGAWAM

ADVERTISER NEWS

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Mayor, council president propose moratorium on data center projects

By Gregory A. Scibelli
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AGAWAM – A little more than a month after the City of Holyoke placed a limit on the size of a data center, the Town of Agawam, like several other communities, is seeking to place a moratorium on them as they seek time to develop regulations to handle their potential impact on the community.

Data Centers, which are a huge draw of energy from the power grid, have been the most recent subject of controversies, much similar to Battery Energy Storage Systems. Agawam is familiar with the latter as a proposal to install a BESS is ongoing, though the town's stringent local regulations are hopefully going to keep the facilities safe and under control while also generating a very high amount of tax dollars for the town.

Holyoke recently contended with a large data center coming into the city. Holyoke has been especially welcoming to any type of business that has helped re-vitalization dilapidated

buildings, or generate more tax revenue, such as marijuana growing facilities and dispensaries.

Mayor Christopher Johnson, in a memo to the city council, said the town needs to time prepare if they are to have to welcome a data center to the community.

"Based upon published reports, the state is experiencing a data center boom, which is being driven by the expansion of the artificial intelligence industry," Johnson stated. "The Commonwealth is actively courting AI developers with tax incentives in an effort to bring their well-paying, high tech jobs to Massachusetts.

"Our town code contains no specific provisions which determine the appropriate location or regulation of data centers."

A proposed ordinance sponsored by Johnson and City Council President Anthony Russo will put a 270-day moratorium on applications for data centers so the town can research and

DATA | page 6

ACAA contributes to TIME CAPSULE



SUBMITTED PHOTO

David Cecchi stands with contributions made to a time capsule that will be soon buried for the next 100 years. On Saturday, July 4, Agawam Community Artists and Artisans presented a written record of the history of the group to David Cecchi, President of the Agawam Historical Association. ACAA was formed in 1992 with about 30 members. Today the ACAA is a non-profit with 107 members. We are a group brought together not by profession, status or background, but by a shared love of creativity and artistic expression that we hope will last for 100 years. This time capsule document was prepared in 2026 to be opened on July 4, 2126. The document will give future generations a glimpse of our world when the time capsule was sealed. We thank the Agawam Historical Association for giving us the opportunity to participate in this event.

Keeping seniors safe in the heat

By Quinn Suomala
Correspondent

With summer time in full swing, already communities have been facing record temperatures. It is important to keep in mind key safety tips to keep seniors safe in the heat.

High temperatures lead to an increased risk for conditions like heat stroke and heat exhaustion.

Seniors are especially at risk for heat stroke due to a decrease in the body's ability to regulate temperature as they age.

Signs to watch out for for heat stroke include: a body temperature of 104 degrees Fahrenheit, a change in mental state (including confusion, delirium, or irritability), a change in sweating pattern, nausea, flushed skin, rapid heart rate or breathing, and a headache.

If you notice any of these signs, call for medical assistance and then get the person inside or into shade, remove excess clothes and take action to cool them down immediately.

Senior centers do their best to remind elders of steps to take for prevention.

"We encourage them to turn their air conditioners on, even despite the costs, and to drink lots of water," Executive Director of the Agawam Senior Center Cynthia Sullivan said.

Senior centers like Agawam's also have people on staff who keep an eye on seniors who are visiting.

"We're always checking up on people to see how they're doing," Sullivan said. "We see many of the people here quite often, so we know when they don't look okay."

If people do want to get outside in the heat, it is best they do so in the early morning or later in the evening.

HEAT | page 6

U.S. Senate race candidates Markey, Moulton campaign locally



Incumbent Sen. Ed Markey



Rep. Seth Moulton

By Brendan Rooney
Correspondent

CHICOPEE – The race for the Senate is on, and last Wednesday, July 8, 79-year-old incumbent Sen. Ed Markey (D) took the stage in the first televised debate against challenger 47-year-old Rep. Seth Moulton (D-MA-06), right here in Western Mass.

This was the 1st official debate between the candidates, as the state primary election fast approaches, on Sept. 1, with early voting beginning on Aug. 22.

The debate was included panelist from multiple local media outlets.

Markey, the incumbent, is seeking another six-year term. He was first elected to the House of Representatives in 1976 and has served in the Senate since 2013. If victorious, Markey confessed this would be his last year running for re-election.

"I need one more term to finish the agenda, this progressive agenda," Markey stated. "And then I will step down. But we need to complete the agenda. We need Medicare for all, we need a green new deal, we need to make sure that we are fighting for every family who is out there who justifiably feels that they have been left

behind."

Moulton argued it's time for a new generation of Democratic leadership.

"A lot of people in Massachusetts feel like they don't have a voice in politics, and they're struggling to afford basic needs, and we need a fighter," Moulton said. "We need someone who's going to change the playbook, invest in a new generation of the years, and start making Democrats win again."

Rallies for both candidates took place prior to the debate.

Moulton first arrived and

SENATE | page 10



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Historical Association to pay tribute to Knox

AGAWAM – The Agawam Historical Association’s yearlong commemoration of the United States Semiquincentennial continues with a special event paying tribute to Henry Knox and his Noble Train of Artillery at the historic Thomas Smith House, 251 North West Street, Feeding Hills on Saturday, Aug. 1, from 12 to 4 p.m.

During the winter of 1775-76, Knox’s “Noble Train of Artillery” passed through several nearby towns en route from Fort Ticonderoga to Boston. There, 59 pieces of captured British ordnance, hauled 300 miles over frozen rivers and snow-covered mountains, played a crucial role in forcing the British evacuation of the city in the spring of 1776.

Citizens along the entire route remembered for their entire lives the experience of seeing this collection of artillery, hauled by horses and oxen, as it passed through their communities.

Skilled costumed educators from Fort Ticonderoga, friendly, well-trained oxen, and reproduction cannon bring to life the Noble Train of Artillery. This educational program features skilled oratory and dramatic demonstrations, led by staff trained at the origin of this signature event in our War for Independence. Visitors will be invited to handle reproduction, inert cannon ammunition, and examine reproduction cannon, to better understand the power of these weapons. Watch

as oxen move sleds bearing heavy cannon and discuss the challenges faced by Henry Knox and these teamsters driving from Ticonderoga to Boston. This fascinating living history event is perfect for the whole family!

The c. 1757 Thomas Smith House and 1920 Delmore Hawthorne Garage will also be open for tours that afternoon. Also on display will be items to be included in a time capsule the association will seal later this year, not to be opened again for another century. Visitors are encouraged to provide letters to future Agawam residents describing 21st century life for inclusion in the time capsule. Brochures and business cards from local businesses are also wanted.

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

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Costumed educators from Fort Ticonderoga will provide demonstrations, with oxen and cannon, commemorating Henry Knox’s Noble Train of Artillery at the historic Thomas Smith House on Saturday, Aug. 1 from 12 to 4 p.m. This ca. 1855 Van Ingen engraving depicts Knox (on horseback) with soldiers transporting a disassembled canon on a sled through the snow following his capture of artillery at Fort Ticonderoga in the winter of 1775-76.



Summer Reading for adults at APL

AGAWAM – Celebrate the 250th anniversary of America at the Agawam Public Library! We’re excited to welcome back Jon and Li Waterman of Sultana for an evening of live music and military history on Thursday, July 16 at 6:30 p.m. in the Cline Community Room. Their program Popular Music and Veterans consists of songs, history, and an accompanying slideshow pertaining to some of the experiences of veterans of World War I, World War II, the Civil War, and other conflicts alongside the history of popular music in America. Registration is required for all of these events.

On Monday, July 20 at 7 p.m. on Zoom, author, independent scholar, and herstorian **Gracia Collins Rich** will present **The Black Experience of the Revolution**. Gracia will discuss the extraordinary efforts of Black Americans whose invaluable contributions during the Revolutionary War helped bring about U.S. Independence. Space is limited for these virtual events, so be sure to register soon!

Get crafting! This month, we have two exciting adult take and makes that will spark your creativity. Our Pressed Flower Collage Adult Take & Make will be available beginning Monday, July 27 and includes everything you’ll need to create a beautiful floral collage to display in your home. Please note that these kits are for ages 18 and older and will be available at the Information Desk while supplies last. 1 kit per person, please.

If you’ve been needing a place to get away and read for a bit, look no further than our **Silent Book Club!** Join us on Thursday, July 23 from 6 to 8:30 p.m. in the Cline Community Room for an hour and a half of quiet reading, as a way to get away from the hectic outside world. 6 to 8:30 p.m. and 8 to 8:30 p.m. will be optional socialization time, and silent reading time will run from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Whether you’d like to join us to talk with others about your reading or just want to come in for the reading time, all are welcome! Registration is preferred for headcount

but not required.

Join us for a **botanical-themed Escape Room** as part of our Summer Reading theme “Plant a Seed, Read!” Solve puzzles, break codes, and complete the challenge before time runs out! This event will take place on Wednesday, July 29 in the Peirce Conference Room and we’ll have three time slots that participants may register for: 2 to 3 p.m., 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., and 7 to 8 p.m. Sign up with a group during your preferred time slot or join on your own to make some new friends! This event is for patrons ages 18 and older.

Our Summer Reading Challenge has officially begun! Log your reading, complete activities, and contribute to our Community Reading Goal in exchange for raffle tickets that can be entered to win one of our grand prizes. To participate online, please visit agawamlibrary.beanstack.org. To participate in person using our paper packet, please visit the Agawam Library Information Desk. The last day of this challenge is Friday, Aug. 7.

Our regular programs are a great way for folks to pursue their interests or try out something new! Join us for weekly **Chair Yoga** at 9:05 a.m. on Wednesdays in the Cline Community Room. Led by yoga instructor Heidi Taberman, these drop-in classes are perfect for folks of all fitness levels. Tea & Trivia will be held Tuesday, July 21 at 6:30 p.m. in the Cline Community Room. We’ll have a couple of rounds of both **Jeopardy and pub-style trivia**, and prizes will be awarded to the winning teams. The questions are the same for both sessions, so register for the time you prefer and join us for some fun! Are you a writer looking to connect with other writers? Join our **Writers Group** hosted by author Katherine Anderson on Thursday, July 16 at 6 p.m. in the Peirce Conference Room. There will be opportunities for peer and host feedback, learning the basics of self-publishing, finding opportunities for submission to magazines, literary journals, and presses, assembling a portfolio, and the basics of a query

package for submissions and publications. Please register to attend!

If you’re curious about eBooks or are seeking a free alternative to Audible, register for one of our **Library Tech Classes: Learning About Libby!** We’ll show you the essentials on how to find and borrow new eBooks and audiobooks, along with some helpful hints and tips. We’ll have a morning session on Monday, July 20 at 10 a.m. in the Cline Community Room. Registration is required.

Join us for a thought-provoking conversation with bestselling author **Reyna Grande** as she discusses her ambitious new memoir **Migrant Heart: Essays About Things I Can’t Forget**. In this newest work, Grande illuminates the hidden cost of the American Dream and the complex journey of healing that follows survival. This event will take place on Thursday, July 16 at 2 p.m. How do we make and keep friends in an era of distraction, burnout, and chaos, especially in a society that often prizes romantic love at the expense of other relationships? **Dr. Marisa G. Franco** explores this question and others in her book **Platonic: How the Science of Attachment Can Help You Make—And Keep—Friends**. Don’t miss out on this conversation with one of the world’s leading experts in human connection! This event will take place on Tuesday, July 28 at 2 p.m. To register to attend any or all of these virtual talks, please call the library or visit library.org/agawamlibrary.

Thank you to the Agawam Center Library Association and the Friends of the Agawam Library for sponsoring select library programs. Agawam Public Library welcomes visitors Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. We are closed Saturdays in the summer.

Signup for youth field hockey

AGAWAM – Girls in grades 1-8 (26-27 school year) will learn the fundamental skills, techniques, and strategies of Field Hockey while practicing and playing in this fun program. Girls will be broken into four different divisions based on grade.

New Player “Try It” day will be held on Thursday, June 18 at the AHS Stadium from 6 to 7 p.m. This is a great opportunity to try the sport and meet the coaches before registering.

Registration begins in person and online Wednesday, June 10 through July 12.

Effective Monday, July 13 all registrations must

be done in person and fees will increase by \$25. No new player registrations will be accepted after July 20.

New players or players purchasing a new uniform will need to visit the Parks & Recreation office to be sized. To ensure we have enough time to order uniforms all players will need to be sized by Monday, July 20.

To access online payments and registrations log onto agawam.ma.us, then go to the Parks and Recreation Department page, then click on the “Online Payments & Registration” button, then click on agree. This will send you to the Unipay Gold site where you

can select specific program registrations under transactions.

Coaches will contact players at the beginning of August. Girls will meet from mid August through October. Practices will be held in the early evenings and games will be played against neighboring communities.

Players need to supply their own stick, shin guards and mouth piece.

The costs for the programs are as follows: Grades 1 and 2: Returning \$100, New player \$125. Grade 3 and 4: Returning \$125, New player, \$150. Grades 5 to 8: Returning \$150, New player, \$200.

Registration, volunteer signups open for 14th Annual Run Stanley 5K

WESTFIELD – Stanley Park is excited to announce that registration is now open for the 14th Annual Run Stanley 5K, taking place on Sunday, October 4, 2026. Participants and volunteers can sign up online at <https://runsignup.com/Race/MA/Westfield/RunStanley>.

Run Stanley is a beloved community tradition that brings together runners, walkers, families, students, and their four-legged companions for a morning of fitness, fun, and support for Stanley Park. The event welcomes participants of all ages and abilities through a variety of race divisions, including the 5K Trail Run/Walk, K9 Division, 1-Mile Stroll & Roll, and the ¼-Mile Munchkin Run for elementary school students.

Elementary schools are also encouraged to participate in the School Spirit Challenge. The elementary school with the most registered participants will take home the coveted Run

Stanley School Spirit Trophy.

In addition to participants, Stanley Park is seeking volunteers to help make the event a success. Volunteers are needed for a variety of roles, including registration, course marshaling, water stations, finish line support, and event setup and cleanup. Community members, service groups, students, and local organizations are encouraged to get involved.

As a private nonprofit organization, Stanley Park relies on the support of events like Run Stanley to help maintain its nearly 300 acres of gardens, trails, wildlife sanctuary, and recreational spaces, which are enjoyed by more than 400,000 visitors annually. The park remains free and open to the public year-round.

To register for the race or sign up to volunteer, visit:

<https://runsignup.com/Race/MA/Westfield/RunStanley>

Frederick Douglass exhibit on display

HOLYOKE – Frederick Douglass: Advocate for Equality, is now available for view at the Holyoke Public Library through Thursday, July 23.

This 6-panel exhibition



from the Gilder Lehrman Institute explores Douglass’s epic life from 1818 to 1895, examining his escape from slavery, his work as an abolitionist, and his relentless fight for equality for all individuals during the Jim Crow era.

Groups and individuals welcome to view during all Library hours

Presented in recognition of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence and its ongoing promise.

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Opinion

Guest Column



Should I claim spouse benefits now, or my own Social Security benefit?

Dear Rusty:

I am writing to get advice on the optimal time to sign up for Social Security benefits.

I am a 64-year-old female and my birthdate is August 1961. My husband is already taking his SS benefits, so I have also wondered if it be advisable to take spousal benefits or full benefits.

Signed:
Wondering Spouse

Dear Wondering:

If you take your Social Security benefits at age 64, they will be permanently reduced.

And, for information, you cannot take only your spousal benefit; you must take your own SS retirement benefit whenever you claim and, if you are entitled to more as your husband's spouse, you will also get a "spousal boost" to bring your monthly payment up to what you are entitled to as a spouse.

If you claim at any time before your SS Full Retirement Age of 67, both your own SS retirement amount and your spousal boost amount will be actuarially reduced for claiming early.

All of which means that claiming before your FRA (e.g., at 64) will mean your monthly benefit will be less than 50% of your husband's monthly FRA amount.

Now, for clarity, it's important to know how spouse benefits are calculated: if your FRA entitlement is less than 50% of your husband's FRA entitlement, then you will get a "spousal boost" added to your own SS retirement amount.

Note that FRA amounts are always used to calculate spousal amounts, regardless of the age at which benefits are claimed. If your husband waited until age 70 to get a higher monthly benefit or even if he claimed before his FRA, your spousal amount would still be based on his FRA entitlement. If your FRA benefit is less than half of his FRA entitlement, you will get a spousal boost. If not, you won't.

Assuming you will be entitled to a "spousal boost," the decision you must make is whether to claim early (e.g., now at 64) or wait until you are 67 to get your maximum amount as your husband's spouse. The factors

to consider are these:

Are you still working? If so, claiming before FRA means you will be subject to an annual earnings limit until you reach FRA. The earnings limit for early filers in 2026 is \$24,480 and, if that is exceeded, SS will take away benefits of \$1 for every \$2 you are over the limit (the limit increases a bit yearly).

If you substantially exceed the earnings limit by working, you may even be temporarily ineligible for SS benefits until you either reach your FRA or stop working full time.

Do you expect your husband to predecease you? If so, then your benefit as a widow will be 100% of the larger amount he is collecting when he passes provided when that occurs you've reached your FRA and your own SS retirement is less.

Depending on timing, that may mean that taking a reduced spouse benefit now, which will be replaced by your larger widow benefit later, is a logical choice.

What is your own life expectancy? If you have health issues or have other reasons to believe you will not achieve "average" life expectancy average is about 87 for a woman your current age, then claiming your Social Security benefits early is likely a prudent choice.

So, as you can see, you must evaluate your personal circumstances to make this decision. Although we aren't able to say exactly when you should claim your SS benefits, I hope this provides the information you need to make an informed decision.

The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. This article is intended for information purposes and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadviser@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO
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Letter to the Editor

Thank you for supporting historic house

Dear Editor:

The Board of Trustees of the Captain Charles Leonard House wishes to thank all those who attended the popular Summer Craft Beer Tasting & BBQ sponsored by Bobby Patel at McCarthy Liquors of Agawam, Andy Patel at Phipps Discount Liquors of Feeding Hills, and Joey's Deli in Feeding Hills. The proceeds will go to the Leonard House to help with the maintenance and preservation of the historic 1805

stage coach tavern and local landmark.

Thank you as well to all the vendors who provided and served the many varieties of domestic and craft beers for tasting, helping to create an enjoyable summer evening on the grounds of the Leonard House. Everyone enjoyed the delicious food prepared by the staff of Joey's Deli and Market in Feeding Hills.

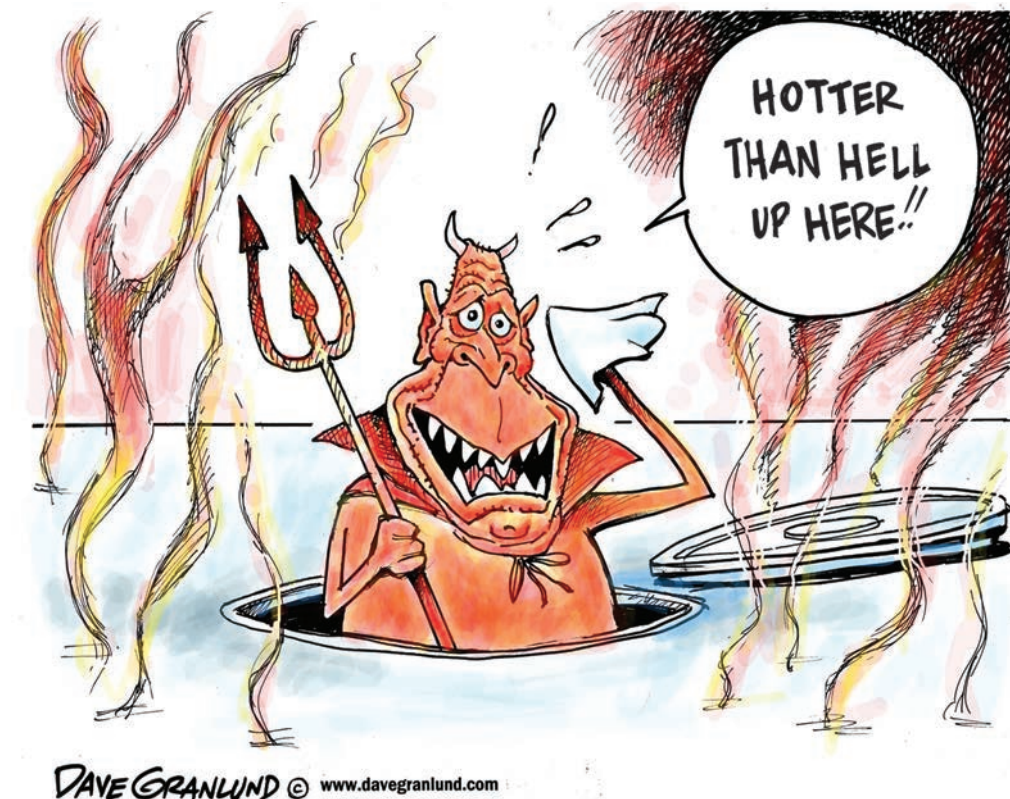
A big thanks goes out to Les Tingley for his help in organizing the live music

concert performed by Ultimatum Live. The music for the night was supported by a grant from the Agawam Cultural Council.

The Trustees would also like to thank Sarat Ford, Allied Flooring, Paint & Design, and Budget Cabinet Sales for their generous donations to our event.

We hope to see everyone on Oct. 16 for our Annual Beer & Wine tasting.

Trustees of the Captain Charles Leonard House



Guest Column



My daughter, Paula, saw a black and white warbler and as the name implies it has black and white feathers.

The black and white warbler is easy to spot and easy to recognize. Its former name was the black and white creeper. Like the white-breasted and red-breasted nuthatches and the brown creeper, it climbs about on the trunks and major limbs of trees seeking insects in the bark crevices. It often feeds low, and nests even lower, usually on the ground.

This warbler inhabits forests, woodlands, shrubs, Savannas, and thickets from Alaska and the north, California, eastern Canada, Florida, Great Lakes, mid Atlantic, New England, northwest, Plains, Rocky Mountains, southeast, southwest, Texas and Western Canada.

Spring migration begins rather early and takes place mainly at night. Migration is spread over a lengthy period in both spring and fall.

The sexes are similar and are about 4.3 to 5.1 inches long. The black and white warbler feather pattern is stripes, white central crown

stripe and black streaks on back and sides.

The adult male has black throat and cheeks and the female and young paler or whitish there.

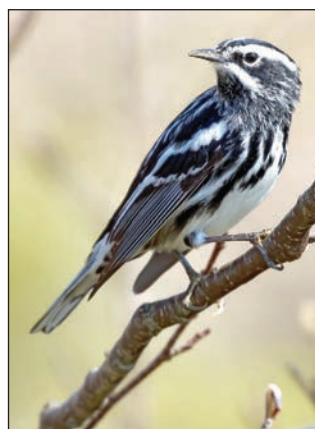
Their song is a thin, high-pitched, monotonous "weezy-weezy-weezy-weezy" like a squeaky wheelbarrow. The call is a chirp or chip.

The black and white warbler breeds in mature or second-growth forests, deciduous and mixed. Males arrive on breeding grounds in late April, before the females.

During courtship, a male chases female, with much singing and fluttering. The female lays five creamy white eggs flecked with brown in a cup shaped nest on the ground or less than than two feet above under dead leaves or limbs or against a shrub or tree. They are commonly parasitized by cowbirds.

Both parents feed the young and the young leave the nest in eight to 12 days after hatching. The young are able to fly well.

Adapted to creeping along limbs and on tree trunks to feed, they forage on dormant insects from tree trunks and branches in early spring. They switch body from side



Black and white warbler

to side at each hop while foraging. Sometimes, they fly out after insects in the air.

They eats primarily insects. It feeds on a wide variety of caterpillars including those of spongy moth, beetles including bark beetles, click beetles, and wood borers, ants, flies, bugs, leafhoppers, aphids and other insects, spiders and daddy longlegs.

Massachusetts Audubon sightings

Unusual bird sightings reported in late June to the Massachusetts Audubon Society included swallow-tailed kites in Mashpee, a Mississippi kite in Harwich and a Franklin's gull and two royal terns in Provincetown.

Central Massachusetts sightings in the Ware River watershed included: a great blue heron, belted kingfisher, yellow-bellied sapsucker, two northern flickers, two eastern wood pewees, two alder flycatchers, two least flycatchers, three eastern

BIRDS I page 5

AGAWAM ADVERTISER NEWS

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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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Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice**

listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice (with a word limit of up to 500 words) and may include a photograph.

Death Notices & Paid Obituaries should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

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

Agawam Advertiser News welcomes letters to the editor

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

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

Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the newspaper

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

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

Opinion



your health

By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN
Guest Column

If there's one habit every doctor wishes you would break, it's smoking. Quitting significantly improves health and reduces the risk of diseases.

And this is true no matter what age you are, from your 20s right into your 70s. While some older adults may believe it's "too late" to change, evidence shows that about one-third of older adults who attend specialized clinics successfully quit and stay off cigarettes for at least a year.

Research has also found that even 75-year-olds who are able to stop cigarettes gain an average of one year of life expectancy. That's one more year to do some of the things you enjoy, like visiting with grandchildren (and not being relegated to the patio to light up).

Besides life expectancy, other benefits for older quit-

ters are:

- A lower risk of disease: Older adults who quit have lower rates of death from heart attacks, strokes and cancer compared to those who continue to smoke.
- Reduced frailty: Stopping smoking is associated with a lower degree of "frailty" (a measure of increased vulnerability and weakness) over time, promoting healthier aging and better physical function.
- Cognitive and sexual health: Quitting smoking can lead to improved brain function and has been shown to improve long-term sexual function recovery following procedures like prostate surgery.
- Surgical success: For older adults facing surgery, quitting at least eight weeks prior can significantly decrease the risk of lung-related compli-



Smoking cessation is beneficial at any age

cations. If you can go eight weeks, you can keep going.

Quitting cigarettes is really, really hard because of the addictive properties of nicotine, which has been shown to boost dopamine in the reward circuits of the brain, but causes cravings and withdrawal symptoms when it's stopped. This is true whether your source of nicotine is a cigarette or a vape.

Most adults who smoke say they want to quit. A 2022 survey found that more than half of adult smokers tried to quit in the previous year. If you fall into that group, don't go it alone, especially if smoking is a decades-long ingrained habit. Chances of success improve with support from doctors and family.

Support for smoking cessation is everywhere you look. The National Cancer Institute hosts a website, smokefree.gov, which is chock full of tips and techniques to help you on your journey to becoming a former smoker.

For example, there's guidance on nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), which has been shown to increase the success rate, especially when several forms are used, such as a nicotine patch supplemented by lozenges or gum. Some studies suggest that older adults may actually have higher success

rates using NRT compared to younger smokers.

You can also find apps, texting and social media sites that offer support, along with how to build a quit plan.

Medicare wants you to quit smoking, too. After all, it will save them money. Medicare covers counseling sessions to help you stop smoking under Part B, allowing up to eight sessions every 12 months at no cost if your provider accepts Medicare. Additionally, Medicare Part D covers certain prescription medications to assist with smoking cessation.

Medicare Advantage Plans are required to cover counseling and some medications as well, though benefits vary by plan.

Here in Massachusetts, 1-800-QUIT-NOW is Massachusetts' tobacco and nicotine Quitline, where you can connect to a free trained quit coach by phone or line. They share strategies to curb cravings, handle life's big and small stresses and tackle. You can track your progress and learn how to access free NRT supplies.

Talking to your healthcare provider is also important, both as a source of support and advice on using certain prescription medications to curb smoking such as varenicline (Chantix). This



medication can be used by older adults, but caution is advised because of a higher likelihood of age-related kidney issues. Your doctor may also recommend cognitive behavior therapy (CBT).

What does a quit plan look like? Pick a date you're going to quit and rid the house of cigarettes, ashtrays and other smoking paraphernalia. You might need to take some things to the dry cleaner to get the cigarette smell out. Tell everyone that you've made a quit plan and you need their help.

Be proud of what you're accomplishing! Let people know when you've been smoke-free for a week, a month, a year. If you do happen to light up, don't give up. Tomorrow is another day.

And you may have more tomorrows when you've become an ex-smoker. Good luck.

Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, R.N., a registered nurse and board-certified patient advocate, is the founder of 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. Contact her at Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com to set up a free phone consultation.

Guest Column

An endless supply of flowers for the windowsill

I must admit that I feel unmotivated in the flower garden this summer. It took me forever to sow my seeds, and even longer to install the resulting plants.

The seedlings finally went into the ground a good two weeks after Memorial Day (gasp!) but they are making up for lost time despite my bad attitude! Just last week the first bouquet graced the kitchen windowsill.

In a few weeks I will have a collection of different vases filled with flowers in that very spot; it's something I look forward to doing every summer. But if I am going to have flowers to fill the vases, I have to keep up with maintenance.

It's not enough to sit back and watch them grow. Here is some great advice worth repeating that will help to keep summer annuals looking their best.

Deadhead

Most annuals will continue to bloom abundantly if they are deadheaded on a regular basis. Deadheading is an entertaining term used to define the removal of spent flowers.

You see, a plant produces flowers for one purpose: to survive. Once a flower has been pollinated it will produce seed, seed that will grow future plants.

If a plant has produced enough flowers that have gone to seed it will consider its job to be done, flower production will cease and it will begin to decline.

By deadheading, we keep the plant in reproductive mode, in other words, in flower! When you remove dying blossoms, make sure to pinch off the entire flower, not just the petals, or it will do no

in the Garden

by Roberta McQuaid



good. Include the stem as well to keep the plant tidy.

Petunias, marigolds, zinnias and salvia, among others, are examples of plants that require regular deadheading to look their best throughout the growing season.

Shear them back to encourage new growth

Some annuals start to get a leggy appearance about now. Others may have brown tips. These plants require more drastic measures to bring back their youthful good looks.

Give them a good haircut. Simply look within the plant and find healthy, green growth. Cut calendulas, pansies and snapdragons back to that point.

Alyssum or lobelia can often be sheared to within inches of the ground.

Don't worry; they won't look bad for long! You can jump start regrowth with a bit of liquid fertilizer.

Feed your plants

Occasionally, even plants that are well fertilized at planting time begin to have issues. If foliage is pale and flower production is nil, pull back the bark mulch and sprinkle some organic fertilizer granules at the base of each plant.

Cultivate gently and water in.

You can also use a water soluble liquid fertilizer every couple of weeks. If going natural is your cup of tea, make some! Compost or manure tea has long been used to

keep growth lush. Steep a burlap bag of either compost or aged manure in a large trash bucket filled with water and use as needed. Smaller batches can be made right in a watering can.

Likewise, there are numerous blends of seaweed and fish emulsion on the market that can be watered in or used as a foliar feed.

Water, water, water

If Mother Nature fails to provide at least an inch of rain each week, then unfortunately we must make up the difference. It is so easy to forget to perform this very obvious maintenance task, especially when we are busy doing other things.

If we are negligent often enough, however, our plants will suffer.

Sometimes pale green foliage is a nitrogen deficiency from simply a lack of water. When you water the garden, remember to do so in the early morning, if possible, to avoid evaporation.

Early evening is another good option, but try to get the job done with enough time for the foliage to dry before darkness sets in.

Deep waterings twice a week are far better than numerous quick showers. The former will promote deep, penetrating roots and future drought tolerance.

Well-watered, well-fed and well-groomed annuals will reward you with beautiful bountiful blossoms for another two months or more – well worth the effort for vases of flowers on the windowsill!

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

BIRDS ■ from page 4

Phoebes, four great crested flycatchers and two eastern kingbirds, a yellow-throated vireo, a blue-headed vireo, six warbling vireos, 110 red-

eyed vireos, a common raven, two red-breasted nuthatches, two house wrens an eastern bluebird, 43 veery, a hermit thrush, a wood thrush, 34 gray catbirds and four cedar waxwings.



Also reported were a blue-winged warbler, four yellow warblers, seven chestnut sided warblers, three black-throated warblers, three green warblers, a Blackburnian warbler, seven pine warbles, on prairie warbler, three black and white warblers; two redstarts, 56 ovenbirds, 28 yellow-throated warblers, a Canada warbler, nine scarlet tanagers, six eastern towhees, a field sparrow, three swamp sparrow, a rose-breasted grosbeak, four indigo buntings, two bobolinks and three red crossbills.

People may report a bird sighting by emailing edown-er@turley.com or calling or texting 774-262-5882.

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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Tire pressure measurement
- 4. Request
- 7. Clairvoyance
- 10. 007's creator
- 11. Adult male
- 12. God of battle (Scandinavian)
- 13. Cloths spread over a coffin
- 15. Breeze through
- 16. Ladyfish genus
- 19. We all take them
- 21. Earl's jurisdiction
- 23. Members of U.S. Navy
- 24. Rummy-like card game
- 25. Affected by injury
- 26. Member of a Semitic people
- 27. Withdrew from a union
- 30. Woman's cloak
- 34. Spanish river

CLUES DOWN

- 35. Prohibit
- 36. Something you can take
- 41. Dish soap brand
- 45. Ottoman military commanders
- 46. Ancient Italian-Greek colony
- 47. Makes somber
- 50. Discuss again
- 54. A tool to inject
- 55. Support
- 56. Informal term for money
- 57. Catch doing something wrong
- 59. Prehistoric people
- 60. Large African antelope
- 61. Vehicle
- 62. Georgia rockers
- 63. High resolution microscope
- 64. Pitching statistic
- 65. Attempt

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Indoor plant
- 2. Marketable
- 3. Rather
- 4. Collected
- 5. A bag-like structure in a plant or animal
- 6. Irish hip-hop trio
- 7. Ageless
- 8. Course requirements
- 9. Pokes at
- 13. TV channel
- 14. They ____
- 17. Cooking material
- 18. Investment account
- 20. Iron-containing compound
- 22. Swiss river
- 27. Small coin (French)
- 28. Electronic countermeasures
- 29. Taxi
- 31. Helps little firms

CLUES DOWN

- 32. Unhappy
- 33. Midway between northeast and east
- 37. Glowing
- 38. Item to be addressed
- 39. An informal body of friends
- 40. Intrinsic nature of something
- 41. Neural structures
- 42. Brews
- 43. A place for ships
- 44. One who sings holiday songs
- 47. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)
- 48. Scottish town
- 49. The most worthless parts
- 51. Sticky
- 52. Put to work
- 53. Precursor to the EU
- 58. Retrospective analysis (abbr.)

Florence Bank opens new branch in Holyoke

HOLYOKE – Florence Bank opened its fourth Hampden County branch at 1490 Northampton Street in Holyoke on July 6.

The new 2,500-square-foot branch, designed by H|AI Architecture in Northampton, has a spacious lobby, traditional teller stations, five offices, a drive-up teller window and a drive-up ATM.

“The Holyoke branch is an exciting new chapter in our 153-year history, and we look forward to supporting the people, families, organizations, and businesses of

the Paper City,” said President and CEO Matt Garrity. “We couldn’t be more thrilled to be opening our doors to Holyoke and to meeting new friends and neighbors in the coming weeks and months.”

Shadia Coley will serve as branch manager for the new location. Coley has over 10 years of banking experience and holds a bachelor’s degree in business administration and a master’s in business administration with a concentration in finance, both from Southern New Hampshire University. In

addition to managing Florence Bank’s newest branch, she will oversee business development, community outreach and engagement, and customer service.

Coley is excited for the new branch to be open. “Serving Holyoke is more than banking; it is investing in the people and dreams that make the community thrive. My goal is to empower, engage, and educate Holyoke,” she said.

In addition to Coley, five team members will staff the branch, where customers can be assisted by tellers,

meet with a customer service representative or apply for a mortgage. Katherine Ravenelle will be the Assistant Branch Manager, and Paola Sherman, the bank’s Spanish-speaking mortgage originator, will also be based in the new branch.

Florence Bank has nearly 6,700 customers living in Hampden County, including 1,100 business customers; over 1,200 of those customers in Holyoke. Garrity said the bank looks forward to deepening its impact in the region.

Morgan joins Mass Humanities as new Director of Development

HOLYOKE – Mass Humanities is thrilled to welcome Jillian Morgan to its staff as the humanities council’s new Director of Development. An expert in cultivating philanthropy in the nonprofit space, Morgan will lead fundraising and donor relations for the organization. Her hire comes at a pivotal time, with the National Endowment for the Humanities facing continued pressure from the federal government.

“We’re thrilled to welcome Jillian to our team,” said Brian Boyles, executive director of Mass Humanities. “Her unique expertise and her long commitment to the Valley will be invaluable as we deepen our partnerships in the region and continue to steward our resources to impact the entire commonwealth.”

Morgan previously served as the Director of Development at the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts from 2022-2026, where she brought in \$7M in annual donations. She also supported a \$30 million capital campaign for FBWM, as well as oversaw the annual March for the Food Bank with Mon-

Heritage in Bloom fundraiser tickets available

WESTFIELD – Stanley Park invites the community to join us for Heritage in Bloom: Stanley Park’s Annual Fundraiser, taking place on Saturday, Sept. 12 at 5 p.m. in the scenic Beveridge Pavilion.

This signature evening celebrates the history, natural beauty, and enduring legacy of Stanley Park while supporting the ongoing care and preservation of one of the region’s most treasured public spaces.

Guests will enjoy a memorable evening surrounded by the park’s gardens, beginning with light hors d’oeu-

vres during cocktail hour and a guided garden tour highlighting the beauty, history, and stewardship of the landscape. The evening continues with dinner stations and dessert catered by The Bubble Mug at the Pottery Cellar, along with a cash bar available throughout the event.

Festivities will also include expanded online and in-person raffles, a dynamic online auction, and the interactive Stanley Park Heritage Challenge, a team-based competition celebrating the park’s history, landmarks, wildlife, and

memorable moments from more than 75 years of community impact.

Stanley Park is also honored to welcome Ward Caswell, great-grandson of founder Frank Stanley Beveridge, as guest speaker. He will share reflections on the park’s founding vision and the shared responsibility of preserving this special community resource for future generations.

“Heritage in Bloom” celebrates the generations of donors, volunteers, staff, and visitors who have helped Stanley Park flourish. The event underscores a

simple message: heritage is what we inherit, and legacy is what we leave behind.

Tickets are now available for purchase online at: <https://spwi.betterworld.org/events/annual-fundraiser-heritage-bloom>



DATA ■ from page 1

develop the appropriate zoning ordinances needed to properly regulate data centers. The proposed ordinance contains a 90-day extension allowed if more time is needed to develop and put the ordinance through the legislative process, which would include planning board hearings as well as a city council public hearing.

Johnson emphasized in his memo to the council that he, to his knowledge,

has not received any contact from any developer looking to place a data center in Agawam. He said it is not a response to any proposed development and more of a proactive measure.

A BESS facility in the planning stages could be active in Agawam in about three years.

According to the city council agenda, a public hearing on the moratorium could be held at the Aug. 3 council meeting. However, the moratorium

would not go into effect until well into September because the ordinance will require two readings, meaning it could not be voted on twice until at least the first meeting in September. The city council only meets once in July and once in August due to its summer schedule.

Residents wishing to be heard on the matter should attend the public hearing. The planning board will have a hearing on the moratorium on Thursday, July 16.

HEAT ■ from page 1

when the sun is not at its peak. Also, activities should be kept to low impact to prevent over exertion.

Additionally, many senior centers are open as cooling centers for the public during heat waves. The Agawam Senior Center, the Holyoke Senior Center, the RiverMills Senior Center and the Wilbraham Senior Center are just some of the options available.

These senior centers also offer a variety of activities to help keep seniors enter-

tained while also beating the heat.

The Agawam Senior Center, for example, has a performance by the band Solar Eclipse on July 14 at 5:30 p.m. (with free ice cream included) and Bunko (a dice game) on July 21.

The Holyoke Senior Center is offering Tai Chi lessons on Thursdays from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. from now through Sept. 3.

For those interested, the RiverMills Senior Center is also offering an ice cream social on July 17 at 1:30p.m. They also have a visit from

Paul Revere on July 28 at 2 p.m.

In addition to these activities, the senior centers also offer meals for people to come in, purchase and enjoy.

“Come in and eat, our meals are \$4,” Sullivan said. “There is no need to turn on your stove or oven and make your house warmer.”

The senior centers always welcome people to come by while they are open and take advantage of their activities and air conditioning. Utilizing them is a great way to beat the heat and have some fun.

Public Notices

**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. HD23P0805EA
Estate of:
Thomas Ernest Cascio, Jr.
Also known as:
Thomas E. Cascio, Jr.
Date of Death: 03/01/2023
CITATION ON PETITION FOR ORDER OF COMPLETE SETTLEMENT**

A Petition for Order of Complete Settlement has been filed by Jennifer Metz of Feeding Hills, MA requesting that the court enter a formal Decree of Complete Settlement including the allowance of a final account, and to construe the will all as more fully set forth in said petition and other such relief as may be requested in the Petition.

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 08/03/2026.

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.

WITNESS, Hon. Claudine T. Stoudemire, First Justice of this Court.
Date: July 09, 2026
Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
07/16/2026

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Division
Docket No.**

**HD26P1302EA
Estate of:
Mary Shannon Kieter
Also Known As:
Mary J. Kieter
Date of Death: 04/18/2026
INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE**

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner Marjorie H. Savoie of Agawam, MA

a Will has been admitted to informal probate.

Marjorie H. Savoie of Agawam, 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 Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.
07/16/2026

Sale of Motor Vehicle

Notice is hereby given by Langonet Towing pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c.255, Section 39A, that on **July 24, 2026** at 63 Ramah Cir S, Agawam the following Motor Vehicles will be sold at private sale to satisfy the garagekeeper’s lien thereon for storage, towing charges, and expenses of notices and sale of said vehicle.

2005 Buick Lesabre
VIN: 1G4HP52K25U276668
Alfred Dimauro
4 Colony Drive
Hampden, MA 01036
07/09, 07/16, 07/23/2026

**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. HD26P1453EA
Estate of:
Ronald S. Midura
Date of Death: 03/17/2021
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION**

To all interested persons:

A Petition for **Late and Limited Formal Testacy and/or Appointment** has been filed by **Bradley M. Dimiero of Holyoke, MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

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 08/03/2026. 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. Stoudemire, First Justice of this Court.
Date: July 06, 2026
Rosemary A Saccomani,
Register of Probate
07/16/2026

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SPORTS

Brownies, Tigers end in scoreless draw

SOUTH HADLEY – Last Monday evening at South Hadley High School’s turf field, Agawam and South Hadley battled it out in A Division action. The game ended with neither team scoring a goal. South Hadley is now 4-3-1 and in line for a playoff spot while Agawam is just 1-5-2 and is unlikely to squeeze into the top eight.



Victoria Papova socks a free kick away.



Julianna Castro tries to break away from the pack.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM



Kaelynn Paquette nearly collides with an opponent for the ball.



Taeva Brogan fights for possession of the ball.



Bella Santaniello hustles to meet the ball.

St. Joe’s grabs win over PeoplesBank

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

HOLYOKE – Since 1995, the PeoplesBank baseball team has built a dynasty in the Tri-County League, capturing 21 championship titles, including each of the last 13 seasons. The St. Joseph’s Saints, who are looking to win the TCL championship title for the first time in two decades, are determined to knock PeoplesBank from its perch this summer. In a span of 48 hours last week, the Saints celebrated two victories in the rivalry series. St. Joseph’s traveled to Mackenzie Stadium in Holyoke last Wednesday night and defeated PeoplesBank, 10-5, which kept them in first place in the league standings. “We’ve faced Peoples in the championship series the past couple of years, and they’ve gotten the best of us,” said St. Joe’s short-stop Devin Slattery, who had a base hit and scored three runs in last Wednesday’s game. “We beat them in a regular season game last year and they’re a great team. We’re also outstanding team this year and

Here for Beer shuts out Monson Mustangs

SOUTH HADLEY – Last Thursday evening, Here for Beer scored a big win over Monson Mustangs 5-0 in Women’s summer soccer action. The two teams were in a key matchup with both

teams near the top of the Women’s Division in the PVSSL. Here for Beer is now alone in second place at 6-1 while Monson is now 5-2 heading into the final weeks of the regular season.



Martine Worrall-Turgeon eyes a teammate up the field.



Gwen Duggan makes a pass toward midfield.



Left, Rachel McKenna rushes for the ball.



Right, Shean Smith socks a free kick away.



Taryn Carriveau turns play around taking possession.

Vermont Green hands Pioneers defeat

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW – The members of the Western Mass. Pioneers gathered for a team photo before kicking off their regularseason finale against rival Vermont Green FC last Friday night.

Having been eliminated from the USL League 2 playoffs for the first time since 2018, the Pioneers were hoping to end Vermont Green's long unbeaten streak.

The Pioneers overcame a 2-0 halftime deficit to tie the score early in the second half, but Vermont Green stretched their unbeaten streak to 37 matches following a 4-2 victory before a large crowd at Lusitano Stadium.

"Our main goal was to make the playoffs, which we've been able to do every year since 2018," said Pioneers head coach Federico Molinari. "We battled back in the second half, but it just wasn't enough."

Vermont Green (13-0-1), who are the defending USL League 2 champions, haven't suffered a loss since a 3-0 setback against Seacoast United in the 2024 Eastern Conference semifinals.

Alfred Baafi, who completed his first season playing for the Pioneers, was a member of the Seacoast United squad, which wound up winning the National championship title, two years ago.

"We really wanted to beat our rivals in tonight's game," said Baafi, who led the Pioneers with four assists. "It was a great feeling after my Seacoast team beat them in the playoffs two years ago. I really enjoyed playing for the Pioneers this summer. My dream is to play for a professional soccer team."

One of the Pioneers veteran players is Santiago Blasco Gomez, who was the team captain.

"This is my third season playing for the Pioneers and I love this place," Gomez said. "We've made the playoffs the

past two years, which was an amazing experience. It's disappointing not making it this year. I'm hoping to play here again next year."

Gomez, who's from Alborache, Spain, was a graduate student on the Bryant University men's soccer team a year ago.

The Pioneers, who finished their season with an 8-3-3 overall record, haven't beaten their archrivals from Burlington since a 1-0 road win on June 17, 2023.

Vermont Green, who are hosting the first two rounds of the playoffs this weekend, now holds a 4-3-2 edge in the series against the Western Mass. squad.

Vermont Green took the lead when Samson Kpardeh sent a pass from the left side into the box where Jeremy Fancou fired a shot into the right corner past Western Mass. goalie Ben Alexander during the 24th minute of the opening half.

Fancou scored his second goal seven minutes later, which was assisted by Ryan Zellefrow.

The score was 2-0 at intermission.

Nine minutes into the second half, the Pioneers sliced their deficit in half following a corner kick goal.

Ronan O'Brien booted the ball into the box from the left corner. After the ball was headed by Dylan Hunston, Riley Priddy put another header into the left corner past Vermont Green back-up goalie Seth Wilson.

During the 59th minute, Martin Echarren booted a free kick into the right corner tying the score at 2-2. It was also his team leading seventh goal of the season.

Vermont Green retook the lead following a goal by Kpardeh during the 74th minute.

Another goal by William Sawin during stoppage time sent the Vermont Green rowdy supporters into a frenzy.

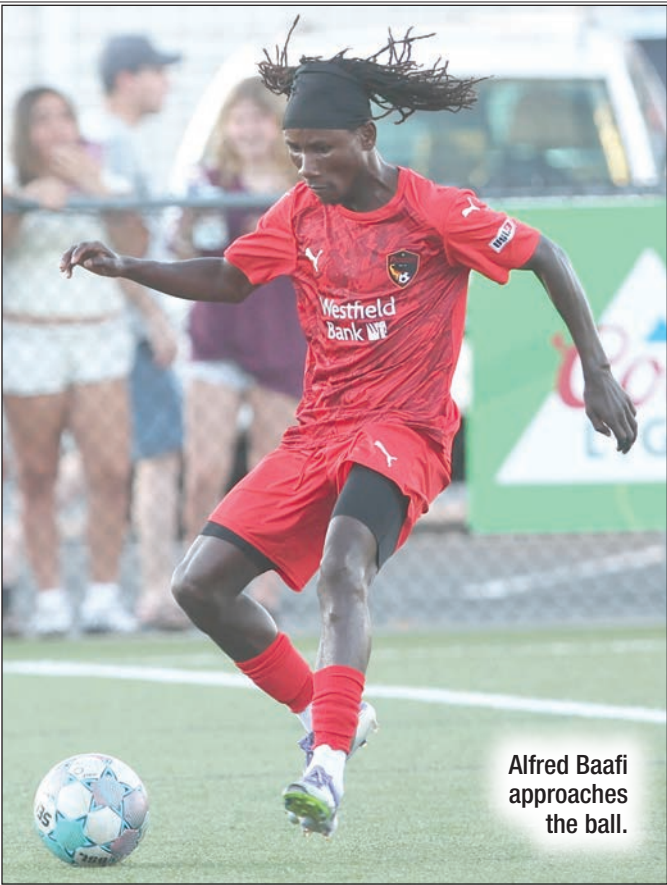
The Pioneers will be looking to qualify for the league playoffs, and they'll also be

looking to celebrate a victory against the Vermont Green during the summer of 2027.

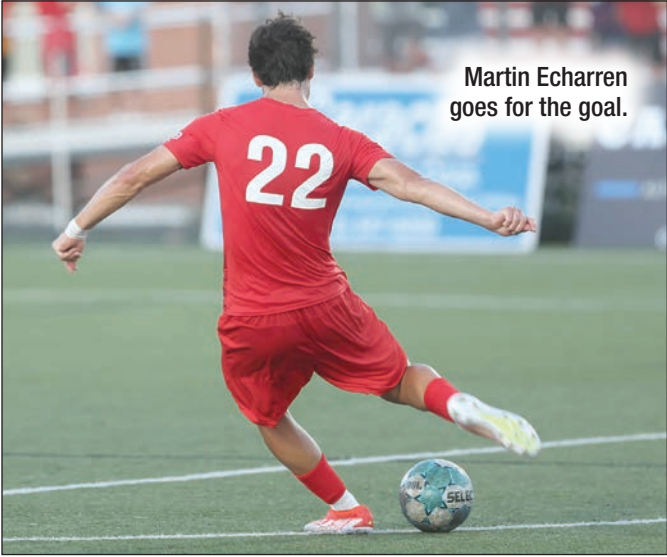
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Santiago Blasco hustles with the ball.



Alfred Baafi approaches the ball.



Martin Echarren goes for the goal.



Shun Murasawa sends a free kick away.



Ronan O'Brien heads past midfield.

LEAGUE ■ from page 7

we're trying to win the championship title."

St. Joe's entered this week's action with a 13-3 overall record, while Peoples had an 11-3-1 mark.

"We made a couple of mental errors in tonight's game," said Peoples player/manager Joe Ferry. "We out hit them, but we left too many runners on base. It's a frustrating loss."

Peoples, who fired a 6-0 shutout victory in the first meeting of the regular season between the teams, never held the lead in last Wednesday's game.

The visitors took a 3-0 lead against lefty James Flahive in the top of the second inning.

After loading the bases with no outs, St. Joe's second baseman Greg Vouras, who's the Athletic Director at Westfield High School, grounded into a double play plating the game's first run. First baseman Dillon

Slattery, who singled to center, and his older brother, Devin, (walk) both crossed the plate on an errant throw

by the catcher that bounced into left field.

"I believe baseball games are won or loss on the bases," said Devin Slattery, who played for Peoples for one season before moving to St. Joe's. "We put some pressure on them in the second inning, and they made a throwing error."

Dillon Slattery, who finished the game with two base hits and scored three runs, and his older brother were teammates on the Ware varsity baseball team for a couple of years.

Peoples first baseman Cam Rivest, who's the varsity baseball coach at Ludlow High School, led off the bottom of the second with a line-drive single into left field before scoring on a wild pitch.

With two outs in the top of the fourth inning, third baseman Joey DeMichele (3-for-4) delivered a two-run single into centerfield, which increased St. Joe's lead to 5-1.

St. Joe's scored five more runs in the following frame with the benefit of only one base hit.



Cam MacDonald sends a throw across the diamond.



James Flahive delivers a pitch for PeoplesBank.



Greg Vouras fields a grounder.

get any closer than five runs, as Feltovic ended the game with a groundball out.

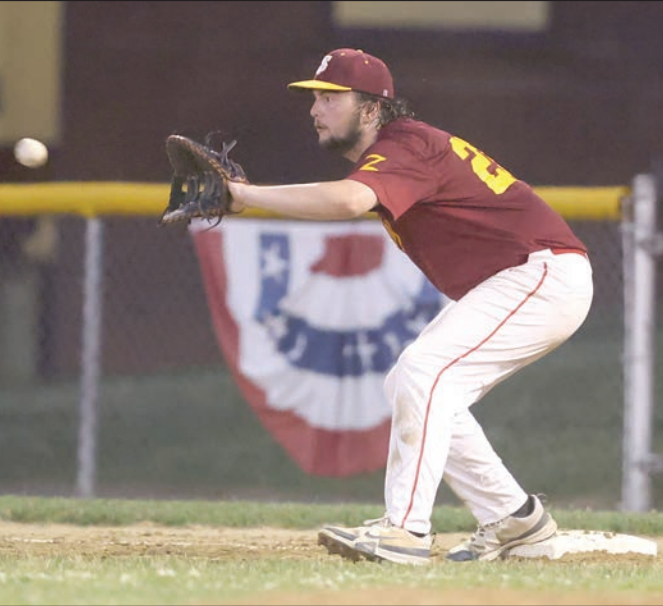
Fueled by a complete game performance from Monson's Trey Yesu, St. Joe's posted an 8-5 home victory in last Friday's contest against the Bankers.

Yesu, who was the ace of the Bridgewater State University pitching staff the past couple of years, allowed five runs on 12 hits with eight strikeouts and just one walk. He threw 108 pitches.

The two rivals are scheduled to face each other again in a make-up game before the end of the regular season.



Jack Feltovic sends a pitch away.



Dillon Slattery makes the catch at first for an out.



Johnny Gegestkas connects on a base hit.

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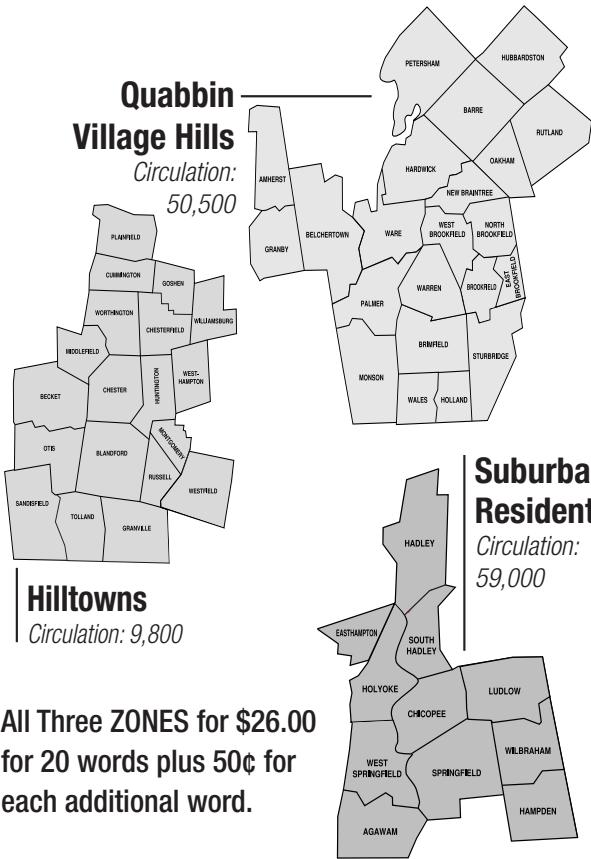
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Incumbent Sen. Ed Markey's supporters standing in unison holding signs as cars drive by as well.



Rep. Seth Moulton supporters standing in unison holding signs as cars drive by.

SENATE ■ from page 1

revealed that this is the 6th time he has been in Western Mass, reinforcing the congressman's emphasis on the region's importance throughout the commonwealth as the race continues to tighten. "Being here in Western Mass is huge, it's where my uncle [Andy] grew up, it's where my chief of staff went to school, my district director grew up here, so as you can see Western Mass has been always close to my heart," Moulton said. He then pivoted to share how he feels that the region has been "left behind" by politicians in Washington and Boston alike.

"I'm here and have been because you deserve a senator who shows up, and I will continue to show up; that's why I'm hosting a town hall/watch party in Chicopee tonight," he said.

It was later revealed that the Moulton campaign took a stake in the city as the Rumbleseat Bar & Grille, which hosted the congressman and his supporters to field additional questions and watch and react to the debate live, which was his 50th town hall across the state.

Markey showed up, citing the list of local endorsements he has garnered, by revealing a few such as Holyoke Mayor Joshua Garcia, Chicopee Mayor John Vieau, and countless others, citing, "I have consistently delivered for Western Massachusetts, and I'm looking forward to

being able to tell that story," Markey said.

Its Showtime

The highly-contested Democratic Primary debate featured a plethora of national issues, as well as a variety of local topics, such as the recent influx of local hospitals struggling, including Baystate, and funding for the West-East Rail project.

Markey kicked off the discussion by revealing that if he returns to the Senate, he would be the chairman of the subcommittee on health if the Democrats can win back the House and the Senate in the midterm elections. He then acknowledged that if that does come to term, then he would restore the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

"We're going to restore the \$300 billion from the Affordable Care Act, which was cut, that went to people out here in western Massachusetts to ensure that there was solvency, and then we have to go beyond that," Markey said. "We have to double funding for community health centers. We have to double the funding for NIH research on Alzheimer's, Diabetes, Parkinson's, Heart Disease, and all of those other diseases that run right through every single family. That has to be the goal. And in Western Massachusetts, I have stood up, and I've fought for this cause; I've met with all the hospital leaders out here, and we are going to deliver next January."

He then added that if funding isn't expanded and

private equity isn't weeded out, Western Mass hospitals will be in crisis.

"You have to make sure on a permanent basis these hospitals in Western Massachusetts are not weighted by private equity, rooted in emergency rooms and our eyes, otherwise our communities are just shut down; that's what happened in Easthampton," Markey said.

Moulton shared that he isn't against universal healthcare, but believes that people should keep the health plan they prefer and those that unions fought for in contract negotiations.

"Look, I stand with President [Obama] and say we should have Medicare for all, but you should also be able to keep the health care plan you prefer if that's what you want," Moulton said.

He then shared that, as an Iraq war veteran, he chose to use Veterans Affairs benefits for healthcare in part to ensure problems with that system are improved. Markey responded, saying VA benefits are a single-payer system and that many people would appreciate the chance to receive those benefits.

Moulton responded by declaring that universal healthcare, housing, and education should be human rights.

The conversation then pivoted to the ongoing development of the West-East Rail project, a proposed concept to bring high-speed rail service from Boston to Pittsfield and Springfield. Markey re-

vealed that he and U.S. Congressman Richard E. Neal, of Springfield, have secured \$157 million for the region to fund the long-overdue project.

"We were able to secure the funding for the project because it is absolutely essential that we connect the Western Mass economy to the rest of the commonwealth. I understand it's been long overdue, and that's why I worked so hard on the infrastructure bill of 2022 to ensure we get that funding," Markey said. "However, we also acknowledge that we needed the funding for Springfield for this asthma crisis, which had happened, and now it is absolutely indispensable that that funding be made available, and it is there, and we are working to ensure that it gets built on in cooperation with Governor Healey as quickly as possible."

Moulton argued that the amount Markey noted will only fund up to 10 miles of rails, which isn't up to par.

"\$152 million will be for about 10 miles of rail; that's not enough to get to Boston, and I want to add that no one is going to ride your train because it is too slow," he said.

He then discussed the prospect of linking the state together if the project was correctly funded, as he drew a comparison to the \$2 billion he delivered to the city of Lynn for infrastructure, and the possibility of what \$2 billion could do for the project

instead of the \$152 million Markey and Neal raised.

"Imagine what \$2 billion would do for so many cities out here in Western Massachusetts," Moulton said. "Imagine what that would do for job opportunities. Imagine what that would do to knit our state together. That's why I think we need high-speed rail transportation, because not only do I think it would be transformative for the state, but I feel Americans in Massachusetts should be traveling the same speed as the rest of the world, and I'm going to continue fighting to get it done."

Post-Debate Questions

After the debate, we then talked to both candidates, where we had an additional chance to inquire about the recent influx of Combined Sewage Overflow (CSO) issues that stem from Holyoke, Chicopee, and Springfield dumping into the Connecticut River.

Markey told us he's aware of the situation and shared a quick comment on how to solve the issue, "Well, I'm going to be senior on the infrastructure committee in the Senate and we need a trillion-dollar infrastructure bill beginning in January of this year coming up to make sure the funding is there for CSO making sure the funding is there for communities who absolutely cannot pay for it by themselves. They're going to need help. They're going to need federal help, and I will be there to make sure that

help is present," Markey said.

Moulton opened his thoughts by sharing, "It's just absolutely appalling that this has happened," he said. "And it's also happened across the commonwealth, in Haverhill, which has dumped into the Merrimack River, which flows through my district; it has closed a lot of beaches right over the holiday weekend, and this is why we need Democrats to win so that we can deliver infrastructure back here. And when the senator says he supports all these great ideas, the reality is that those great ideas cannot come to fruition if Trump and the MAGA Republicans are still in charge."



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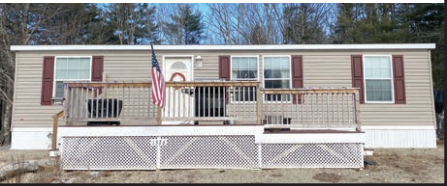
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