

# AGAWAM

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# Agawam elections starting to take shape

By Gregory A. Scibelli  
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AGAWAM – There will be challengers for the Agawam City Council as well as potential challenges for seats on the school committee in the municipal elections this fall.

One elected official that

may not face a challenge is incumbent Mayor Christopher Johnson.

Johnson is currently unopposed as he seeks re-election for a second term in this latest “run” as the top official in Agawam. Johnson was Agawam’s first mayor when it changed to that form of government in 1990.

He served for 10 years before leaving. He returned to the mayor’s seat last year following the retirement of former Mayor William Sapelli. Johnson also had several terms on the city council, most of them as council president prior to becoming mayor again. Johnson announced his

intention to seek re-election in late June and has returned his nomination papers to run for office.

According to information provided by Town Clerk Vincent Gioscia, Johnson is the only to have taken out papers for the mayor’s seat. As the deadline approaches, Johnson could run for a sec-

ond term unopposed.

His former main challenger is looking to re-claim her seat on the Agawam City Council. Two years ago, Johnson, who was council president, was challenged by his own vice president, Cecilia Calabrese. Calabrese was defeated by Johnson and she lost her seat on the city

council through her run for mayor.

Calabrese is among the challengers for one of 11 seats on the city council. According to Gioscia’s records, all 11 current city councilors have returned papers and are seeking election.

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A variety of emergency vehicles and other crucial vehicles for the town were on display for people to check out at Agawam’s National Night Out.

## Highlight of the summer set to return

By Gregory A. Scibelli  
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AGAWAM – Though it is a little bit earlier than normal and on a different day of the week, one of the largest community events of the summer is set to take place on Friday, July 25.

The Agawam Police Department and its community public safety partners will host National Night Out from 6 to 8 p.m. at School Street Park.

Agawam has hosted a National Night Out for many years and is one of more than 16,000 communities in

the United States to host the event.

Holyoke and Chicopee are among the surrounding communities that host the event.

It has normally taken place on the first Tuesday in August, in line with the tradition across the country,

but the event was moved to a Friday in order to pave the way for more resources to be available and potentially get larger attendance.

Agawam’s event has always been large and like many of the Night Out

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## Escape from APL

By Quinn Suomala  
Correspondent

AGAWAM – The Agawam Public Library had teens work together to solve puzzles and mysteries in order to escape from a Wizard’s Tower.

This event took place on Thursday, July 17 and any person in grades seven through twelve was invited to come and participate.

During this escape room the teens had to work together to cast spells, brew potions and solve riddles in order to escape on time.

Children’s Librarian Pamela Weingart and the other Children’s library staff were inspired to do the escape room as they felt it fit the theme of summer reading.

Since the theme for our Summer Reading Challenge this year is “Level Up at Your Library” we are celebrating all sorts of games and puzzles,” Weingart said. “This escape room was a chance for teens to put their puzzle solving skills to the test and see if they could figure out the puzzles and solve the locks in time to Escape the Wizards Tower. Don’t worry,

everyone escaped and no one was trapped in the library.”

Weingart was grateful to Matt Donle of Wicked Fun Games, as he is the one who came up with the design for the escape room and set everything up.

“He planned all the puzzles, set everything up and helped answer the teens’ questions as they went along,” Weingart said.

Weingart enjoyed seeing the teens come in and work together as they tried to escape from the wizard’s tower.

“We were delighted when the teens would work together to solve the clues,” Weingart shared. “[A highlight] was seeing people work together.”

There were a multitude of different puzzles and challenges within the escape room, so Weingart felt that everyone really had a chance to shine and show off their skills.

“There was something everyone could succeed at,” Weingart said.

The library has hosted escape rooms before for the teens to enjoy, and they

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## General Ulysses S. Grant to visit historic Thomas Smith House

AGAWAM – The grounds of the historic Thomas Smith House at 251 North West Street in Feeding Hills, will be the site of a first-person visit from General & Mrs. Ulysses S. Grant, and the General’s horse, Egypt, on Saturday, Sept. 6. An open house at the National-Registered property will take place from 12 to 3 p.m.; General and Mrs. Grant will arrive (with Egypt) at 1 p.m.

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

Since 1989, Sam Grant has dedicated his life to understanding Ulysses S. Grant, one of the greatest leaders this nation has ever known. After years of study and experience, and portrayal of General Grant, his professional interpretation of the

General’s physical stature and character have won him the intellectual admiration and heartfelt appreciation of novice spectators and the most serious students of Civil War history alike. A highly acclaimed academic and motivational speaker, film producer, and United States Navy veteran, Sam Grant’s in-spiring and informative presentation will leave you with the overwhelming sense you have experienced the true General Grant, up close and personal, as history should be. Photo opportunities with the General, Mrs. Grant, and Egypt will follow the presentation.

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

The private, non-profit, all-volunteer Agawam Historical Association preserves and presents Agawam and Feeding Hills history at its

two locations and provides educational opportunities at its quarterly meetings. The association archives and displays artifacts pertaining to the Town of Agawam and its Marilyn P. Curry History Room and Chief Russell “Rusty” Jenks Apparatus Room of the Agawam Historical & Fire House Museum, located in the former Elm Street Fire Station at 35 Elm Street in Agawam Center. The association has preserved the ca. 1757 Thomas Smith House, at 251 North West Street in Feeding Hills, in largely original, unrestored condition; the property was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2005. The association also offers an annual scholarship to an Agawam senior pursuing higher education in a history related field. For more information, please visit agawamhistory.org or follow the Agawam Historical Association on Instagram and Facebook. Volunteers and new members are always welcome!



The Agawam Historical Association will host a first-person visit by General and Mrs. Ulysses S. Grant on Saturday, Sept. 6 at the historic Thomas Smith House, 251 North West Street, Feeding Hills, Mass. An open house will take place from 12 to 3 p.m.; General and Mrs. Grant will arrive with the General’s horse, Egypt, at 1pm, with presentation by acclaimed Grant portrayalist Sam Grant to follow.



# Glascow Lands Scottish festival next weekend

NORTHAMPTON – On Saturday, July 19, beautiful Look Park comes alive with Celtic Dancers, Highland pipers and drummers, a clan parade, sheep herding, Scottish dogs and other animals, wool spinners and weavers and lively Celtic music. Celebrate your Scottish heritage – real or coveted – with kilt-wearing, tree-tossing Scotsmen at the Highland athletic games and delight in plates piled high with scones, shortbread, brides or meat pies. Over 30 pipe bands competing with 600 to 700 pipers and drummers marching in opening cere-

monies. Come celebrate the second largest Scottish Festival in New England, and the only one in Massachusetts. We have been chosen to host the first ever EUSPBA Northeast Branch Amateur Drumming championships. Fencing Demonstrations by Mass Historical Swordsmanship. Saving Scottish Wildcats organization. Doug Fluie Jr. Foundation for Autism. Honored guests: State Representative Lindsay Sabadosa, 1st Hampshire District. Mayor Gina-Louise Scia-

rra, City of Northampton This family fun event includes children's athletic games and a water spray park. Many Clans and a genealogist will be present to assist in tracing your Scottish ancestry. Vendors will be offering a variety of imports, Scottish and other foods. Listen to the beautiful Celtic harp music of the Pioneer Valley Harpers' Guild. Learn about spinning and weaving from the Weavers' Guild of Springfield. Relive history with the Historic Highlanders. For 2025, Glasgows Lands Scottish Festival presents

world class Celtic music in the Ceilidh tent from 9:45 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Featured artists The Devil's Brigade, Albannach, and Waking Finnegan. Whether sitting in the Ceilidh Tent watching the show, quenching your thirst in the Celtic Pub with local microbrews provided by New City Brewery, Easthampton, or just having a picnic on the grass nearby, plan on enjoying great live Celtic music all day long. Again this year – Whisky Tasting! – sponsored by ImpEx and Four Seasons Wine & Liquor, Hadley, MA. New this year –Wine and Mead from Four Phantoms

Brewing Co, Greenfield. The Glasgows Lands Scottish Festival, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. Its mission is to support other nonprofit organizations and to provide scholarships for qualifying Scottish dance, pipe and/or drum students. Event co-sponsored by: Westfield Bank, New England Public Media, Burger King of Northampton, and New City Brewery, Westfield Gas & Electric, Accelerated IT, Walker's Shortbread, Four Seasons Wine & Liquor and ImpEx Beverages and many others. All Festival Proceeds Ben-

efit: River Valley Counseling Center, a multi-service agency in Hampden County, MA, is a licensed mental health clinic, offering a range of traditional and non-traditional outpatient services to adults and children. Also, Forum House, Westfield, a service of Viability, Inc., a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization serving disabled and disadvantaged adults in Hampden, Hampshire and S. Worcester Counties. For more information and schedules, visit our web site: [www.glasgowlands.org](http://www.glasgowlands.org) or call (413) 862-8095/4539.

## Commission on Disabilities celebrates its own pride month

By Emily-Rose Pappas  
Staff Writer  
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SOUTH HADLEY – July is National Disability Pride Month, and it commemorates the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which was signed on July 26, 1990.

The ADA makes it so that it is illegal to discriminate against anyone with disabilities and helps to ensure there are equal opportunities in employment, public accommodations like ramps and elevators, transportation, and other areas like playgrounds with wheelchair accessible parts.

Disability Pride Day happened on the same day as a signing, and Chicago later hosted the first Disability Pride Parade in 2004.

"I enjoy working towards and for inclusion. There is also considerable creativity and a solution-oriented perspective," said Tay Silveira, Chair of the Commission on Disabilities.

The Commission began in November of 2019, and its first meetings were held in early 2022, during the pandemic, where they began to find ways to make the town of South Hadley more accessible for all.

Tay Silveira has been the Chair of the Commission for the past three years, and officer elections are coming up

at a future meeting, but Silveira has

The town of South Hadley has a Commission on Disabilities, whose main function is to, according to the Commission's website:

"The function of a disabilities commission is to advise and assist municipal officials in ensuring compliance with federal and state disability laws; review policies and activities of municipal departments and boards as they affect persons with disabilities; provide information, referral, advocacy and technical assistance to individuals, businesses and organizations in all matters pertaining to disability; and coordinate the activities of other local groups organized to meet the needs of persons with disabilities."

"There are some disability related matters that are outside our scope, but the Commission on Disabilities exists, in part, to support various disability related matters within the Town. We can be engaged for various disability related purposes," said Silveira. "Our scope includes the physical environment and also programs and services, for example."

Right now, the Commission on Disabilities has a vacancy, and there is also a vacancy for the Human Rights Commission, both of which help to serve our community.

"Anyone interested in serving on the COD or as a COD appointee to the Human Rights Commission may consult the qualifications and apply," said Silveira.

You can learn more about the commission on their website, by going to <https://www.southhadley.org/1016/Commission-on-Disabilities>, and people who are interested in serving can apply, and they can be reached at [cod@shadley.ma.org](mailto:cod@shadley.ma.org).

"Members of the public are also encouraged to contact us or join a meeting. We typically meet the 3rd Wednesday of the month, but sometimes need to reschedule," said Silveira. "The next meeting will be on Wednesday, July 23, at 5 p.m. via Zoom."

A few times a year, you can find the Commission at the Senior Center with a table of information people can utilize, and they are working alongside other departments in order to find other ways to bring these resources to those who need them.

"As we continue to grow as a local Commission, we will continue to expand our outreach and ability to support local efforts to improve accessibility for everyone and the overall experience of people with disabilities," said Silveira.

## Extreme Heat and Medications Caution and Care During Periods of Intense Heat

PIONEER VALLEY – As temperatures continue to rise across the region, MiraVista Behavioral Health Center is reminding community residents who may be taking medication to support their mental health to be extra cautious in summer heat.

According to MiraVista Behavioral Health Center Medical Director, Dr. Kenneth Richmond, "Increased temperatures can affect the impact of medications. It is important for anyone on medications, including those which may be prescribed for a mental health condition, to talk with their health care provider about how extreme temperatures and exposure to sun may

change how they feel, cause certain side effects and what they can do during periods of increasingly hot weather to be safe."

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than 1,200 people in the United States die from extreme heat every year, with individuals who take medications that affect thermoregulation among those at higher risk.

Dr. Richmond added, "Many people don't realize that the medications they take to support their mental health may also impact how their body manages heat. Be informed, take precautions, and know the warning signs of heat-relat-

ed stress such as dizziness, confusion, excessive sweating, blurry vision or skin rashes."

The CDC has made an Extreme Heat guide available to visitors on its website with tips on staying cool, staying hydrated, identifying individual risk factors and knowing the symptoms associated with overheating and when to seek medical care. Their guide can be found at [https://www.cdc.gov/heat-health/about/index.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.w.cdc.gov%2Fextreme-heat%2Fabout%2Findex.html](https://www.cdc.gov/heat-health/about/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.w.cdc.gov%2Fextreme-heat%2Fabout%2Findex.html) or on the MiraVista website at [www.miravistabhc.com](http://www.miravistabhc.com).

## Trips offered to Agawam seniors

AGAWAM – Insider's Travel, LLC, in cooperation with the Agawam Senior Center, will be announcing two new trips for area seniors on July 22 at 1 p.m. in the Agawam Senior Center. The trip reveal will include updates on currently planned trips, the new Insider's Travel Website, and a chance for a \$99 raffle drawing if you RSVP by July 21 and are present at the reveal.

Two new exciting and

affordable trips have been added to this season's schedule, which includes trips to Saratoga Race Track on Aug. 6, and beautiful Water's Edge Resort and Clinton Outlets on Sept. 9. There is also a Las Vegas concert at the famous Aqua Turf Club on Oct. 14.

With highly successful and entertaining trips already to Newport, RI and Thimble Islands, CT, two more trips are set to be revealed to 55-and-over res-

idents. The response from our travelers have been overwhelmingly positive regarding attention to details, scheduling, and overall planning.

Please come Tuesday, July 22 at 1 p.m. in the Agawam Senior Center for an opportunity to build your own travel experiences in a fun, safe, and affordable way.

RSVP to Jo at (413) 478-4698 or email [insiderstravel2025@gmail.com](mailto:insiderstravel2025@gmail.com).

## Stanley Park hosting dance sessions

WESTFIELD – Join us Aug. 18 on the Stanley Park Acre Lawn next to the Pavilion Annex from 6 to 7 p.m. for two Chakra Dance sessions led by Harlene Simmons from All Natural Reiki.

Chakra dance is rhythm for your soul, a movement-based practice that combines dance, music, and visualization to balance and activate the body's seven energy centers, or chakras. This dance is to balance your Chakras (energy centers) and discover a deepened connection to

your true self and feeling of coming home.

Music for your Base Chakra : vibrational, connecting your body to earth

Music for your Sacral Chakra: sensual, connecting to your inner goddess or god

Music for your Solar Plexus Chakra : fiery & dynamic, strong defined movement.

Music for your Heart Chakra: uplifting, joyful softening of your heart.

Music for your Throat Chakra: more ethereal, chanting as you dance, expressing your inner truth.

Music for your Third Eye Chakra: High vibrations, opens up to intuitive guidance through dance.

Music for your Crown Chakra: opening to a feeling of oneness, connected to the divine.

Dress comfortably, easy, flowing clothes are recommended.

Donations to the Park of \$5 per person, per class, is suggested.

For more information on Chakra Dance classes and all other Stanley Park events,

check online at: [www.stanleypark.org](http://www.stanleypark.org).

## Stanley Park announces fundraiser

AGAWAM – Stanley Park is pleased to invite the community to its Annual Fundraiser on Saturday, Sept. 13 at 5 p.m. in the Beveridge Pavilion. This cherished event helps sustain the Park's natural beauty, facilities, and free public programs.

The evening will feature hors d'oeuvres, a buffet dinner, dessert, a cash bar, and show-stopping entertainment from Howl2Go Dueling Pianos—a high-energy, interactive, request-driven

musical experience where two pianists battle it out with your favorite songs and a healthy dose of humor.

Returning this year is an exciting online auction with an added raffle, filled with must-have prizes you won't want to miss out on, including an hour-long scenic plane ride for three, a week-long Cape Cod vacation, gift certificates to your favorite local businesses, museum passes, and much more.

Follow Stanley Park on

Facebook for exclusive previews of auction and raffle items leading up to the event.

Seats are limited, so don't wait—reserve yours now at <https://auctria.events/ivorykeysandmelodies> and enjoy a memorable night while making a lasting difference for Stanley Park.

Please call the Development Office at 413-568-9312 x108 or email [development@stanleypark.org](mailto:development@stanleypark.org) with any questions.

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# Upcoming activities at the Agawam Senior Center

AGAWAM – The Agawam Senior Center will be holding the following activities and events in the coming weeks:

Agawam Senior Center Computer Tech & Support Club

July 22, Aug. 12 and 26 from 10 to 11 a.m.

The Agawam Senior Center Computer and Technology Club will meet on July 8 and 22 and again on Aug. 12 and 26.

### Continuing Sessions with Glenn Olsen

Friday, July 25 and Aug. 22 at 1 p.m. in the Conference Room

A little about me, I was a long term successful Physical Science Special Educator. In January of 2010 I had a severely disabling stroke. For the past 15 years I have focused on rehabilitation from my injuries with both traditional and non-traditional methods. We have discussed topics essential to living a healthy life style such as foods, nutrition, and vitamins. We will continue to talk about fascinating topics such as muscle testing, energy levels, orbs, the significance of color and more. I look forward to having you a part of our discussion.

### Jewelry Making with Sandy

Tuesday, July 29 at 5 p.m. in the Garden Room

We are excited to offer Jewelry Making with Sandy. Sandy will bring all the materials you need and you bring your creativity. Cost for the class is \$3 per person plus the cost of your supplies. Call Kristina at 413.726.2836.

### Nutrition and Cooking Educational Seminar

July 30 at 1 p.m. in the Garden Room

Ascentria Care Alliance SNAP-Ed is pleased to offer a four-week nutrition and cooking course. During the course we will cover a variety of topics including healthy eating guidelines, demystifying food labels, grocery shopping on a budget and more. Each class includes an interactive cooking demo with the opportunity to taste test the recipe. Please call the Senior Center to register for this four-week seminar.

### Computer Classes

Monday, Aug. 18 from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

The Agawam Senior Center in conjunction with Revitalize Community Development of Springfield will provide Computer Literacy Work Shops twice a month at the Senior Center. Andrew Fluit who is a Digital Navigator/IT Support from Revitalize will be here to provide this service at no cost to you. The class will be available to 9 students per time. We will be sharing the computers. Please call Kristina at 726-2826 to register. First come first serve.

### Coffee Talk with Veterans

Wednesday, Aug. 20 in the Coffee Shop

Are you a Veteran? We here at the Agawam Senior Center would like to offer you a space to have a coffee or tea on us. Come alone or bring a buddy. We would love to get to know you.

# A month into Summer, let's not forget about Adolescent Mental Health

By Shelley Zimmerman, MPA, MHM, BSN, RN, Hospital Administrator, MiraVista Behavioral Health Center



Shelley Zimmerman

It's been a month since school let out for the summer. The daily grind of early alarms and packed lunches has been replaced by late mornings, camps, part-time jobs, and plenty of screen time. For many teens, summer brings a welcome break. But for others, especially those facing emotional or mental health challenges, these unstructured weeks can be anything but carefree.

We talk often about "learning loss" during summer break. But what about the loss of structure, connection, and routine that schools provide? For adolescents, these aren't just conveniences, they're lifelines. Teachers, counselors, and trusted adults offer stability, and their absence over the

summer can leave vulnerable youth feeling isolated and unsupported.

Recent national data highlights what many parents and providers already know: youth mental health is in crisis. According to the CDC, more than 40% of high

school students report persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness. And anxiety and depression diagnoses among adolescents have risen sharply in the past decade, with anxiety increasing by more than 60% and depression by nearly 45%.

At MiraVista Behavioral Health Center, we see the effects of this seasonal gap firsthand—and we're here to help fill it.

"We want families to know that help is available—and accessible," says Shelley Zimmerman, Hospital Administrator at MiraVista. "Our direct admission process allows adolescents in need of inpatient mental health care to be admitted without the delays and stress of an emergency department visit. It's a more

compassionate, streamlined approach to care."

Our adolescent inpatient program, serving youth ages 13 and older, remains fully open and active throughout the summer months. Because we know that mental health doesn't take a break—and neither do we.

Parents, caregivers, pediatricians, and community leaders: If you know a young person who's struggling emotionally, please don't wait. Early support can make all the difference.

To learn more about our services or to refer a teen for care, visit [www.miravistabhccare.com](http://www.miravistabhccare.com).

Mental health matters in every season. A month into summer, it's worth remembering: when school is out, support must stay in.

# HMC recognized for stroke care

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Medical Center (HMC) has once again received the American Heart Association's Get With The Guidelines Stroke Gold Plus with Target: Stroke Honor Roll Elite with Target: Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll quality achievement award. HMC has been recognized annually with Get With The Guidelines Stroke awards since 2007.

Stroke is the No. 5 cause of death and a leading cause of disability in the United States. A stroke occurs when a blood vessel that carries oxygen and nutrients to the brain is either blocked by a clot or bursts. When that happens, part of the brain cannot get the blood and oxygen it needs, causing brain cells to die. Early stroke detec-

tion and treatment are key to improving survival, minimizing disability and accelerating recovery times.

Get With The Guidelines puts the expertise of the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association to work for hospitals nationwide, helping ensure patient care is aligned with the latest research- and evidence-based guidelines. Get With The Guidelines - Stroke is an in-hospital program for improving stroke care by promoting consistent adherence to these guidelines, which can minimize the long-term effects of a stroke and even prevent death.

To qualify for the American Heart Association's Target: Stroke Honor Roll Elite award, HMC met specific

criteria to reduce the time between an eligible patient's arrival at the hospital and treatment with thrombolytic therapy.

The Target: Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll award aims to ensure patients with Type 2 diabetes, who might be at higher risk for complications, receive the most up-to-date, evidence-based care when hospitalized due to stroke.

Holyoke Medical Center meets specific scientific guidelines as a Primary Stroke Center, featuring a comprehensive system for rapid diagnosis and treatment of stroke patients admitted to the emergency department. HMC also participates in educating patients to help them manage their health and recovery at home.

# Holyoke Rows announces free youth kayaking

HOLYOKE — Holyoke Rows is pleased to announce another great lineup of free summer programming to help our community get out and explore on the Connecticut River. From free all ages kayaking days to a free learn to row week for Holyoke, Chicopee and Springfield middle and high school students, there are endless options to

enjoy the outdoors from our boathouse at Holyoke Rows, 25 Jones Ferry Rd, in Holyoke.

Holyoke Rows is pleased to announce Free Summer Nights for Youth and Families that will take place Mondays/Wednesdays July 7 to Aug. 20 5:30 to 8 p.m. Children, youth, and families are invited to come down to the

boathouse for free kayaking, fishing, and more. No registration needed, all equipment & instruction provided. Enjoy the outdoors from our boathouse at Holyoke Rows, 25 Jones Ferry Rd, in Holyoke. This program is offered as part of the Massachusetts DCR Summer Nights grant program.

# Parish Cupboard to hold pickleball fundraiser

AGAWAM / WEST SPRINGFIELD – West Springfield Agawam Parish Cupboard 3rd Annual Pickleball FUNdraiser will

be held Saturday, Sept. 13 at Mittineague Park in West Springfield. All ages welcome – Recreational and Competitive play

divisions. For info or to register: [www.theparishcupboard.org](http://www.theparishcupboard.org) or call 413-734-7969.

# Greek Festival to be held August 23

HOLYOKE – A Greek Festival will be held on Saturday, Aug. 23 at the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church Grounds from 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 410 Main

Street, Holyoke. Greek food, pastries music, vendors and family-friendly features. We look forward to sharing another "Greek Day in Holyoke" with you. Admission

is free; Ample parking. For more information, contact Sharon at 533-9880 or email [holytrinityofholyokey@gmail.com](mailto:holytrinityofholyokey@gmail.com)

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# Opinion

## Guest Column



### What is the formula for deciding when to to claim?

**Dear Rusty:**

I am curious about the "formula" to decide when to take Social Security while still working.

I am past the Full Retirement Age. How do you best address such? Should we schedule a call?

**Signed: Wondering When**

**Dear Wondering:**

Well, you can always contact us by phone on 1-888-750-2622 to speak to one of our certified Social Security Advisors or you can send your questions to us via email at SSadvisor@amacfoundation.org. You don't need to pre-schedule a meeting, as we have multiple advisors answering the phone on most normal business days. If they all happen to be busy when you call, simply leave a voicemail and an Advisor will return your call promptly.

For starters, since you have reached your Full Retirement Age, know that your work earnings will no longer negatively affect your Social Security benefits. You can earn as much as possible and your monthly SS amount will be the same, based on your average lifetime monthly earnings for your highest 35 years and based on your age when you claim. Since you have not yet claimed SS, you are already earning Delayed Retirement Credits, which increase your monthly SS amount by .667% for each month you continue to delay. That's 8% for each full year you delay past your FRA. You should not, however, wait longer than age 70 to claim because that is when you will get your maximum SS benefit amount. For you, that means that your age 70 amount will be 28% more than the amount you would have received at your FRA of 66 years and 6 months in October 2023 and about 15% more than if you were to claim now.

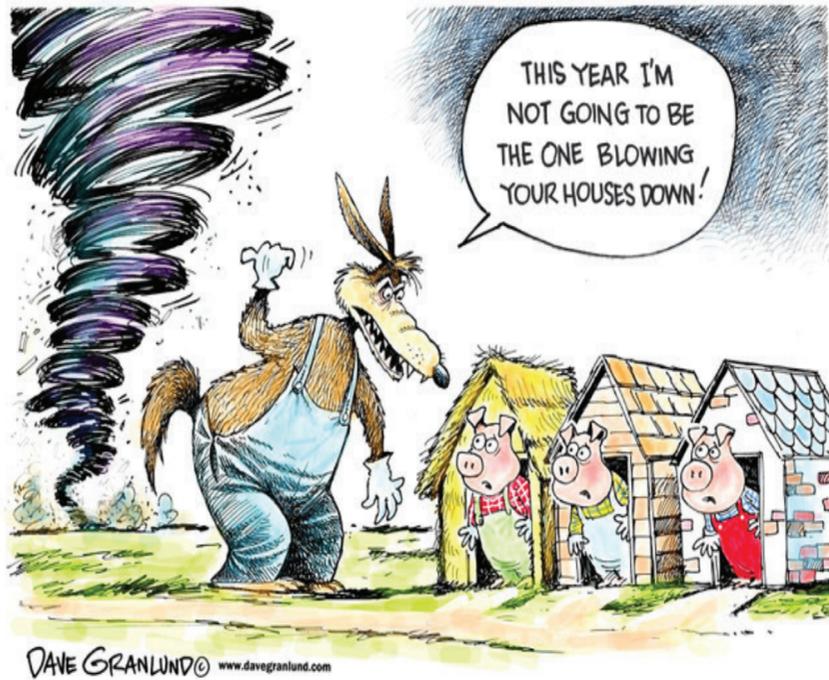
Note too, that if your more recent income is among the highest of your lifetime, Social Security will automatically increase your monthly SS retirement amount to account for that event. They will check your work earnings each year to see if you are entitled to a larger SS amount because of

your recent earnings.

Since (according to your AMAC member record) you are married, you may also wish to consider whether your wife will get a spousal benefit from you when you claim. If your wife's personal SS retirement amount at her FRA is less than the amount you were entitled to at your FRA, then she will get a spousal boost when you claim. With her spousal boost (if claimed at her FRA), her total SS benefit should be about 50% of your FRA benefit amount not half of the higher amount you will get because you waited longer to claim. But your wife cannot get a spousal boost until you are collecting your SS.

And here is something else to think about: received SS benefits will become part of your overall income taxed by the IRS when you submit your income tax return. If you file your income tax as "married/jointly" and your combined income from all sources is more than \$32,000 then some of your SS benefits will become taxable income. If your combined income is between \$32,001 and \$44,000, then half of the SS benefits you received during the tax year becomes part of your taxable income. Or, if your combined income from all sources exceeds \$44,000, then about 85% of your received SS benefits will become part of your income taxed by the IRS. Just something to keep in mind, especially since you are still working.

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



## Guest Column

### Revisit wildflower gardening

After driving by an exquisite wildflower border, I was prompted to revisit and update a column I wrote some years back on the topic of wildflowers.

If you wish to give the natural look a go, preparation is the key. Read on for more useful advice.

Wildflower or meadow gardens can be beautiful, even breathtaking, if properly cared for. Besides being pretty, they are low maintenance and environmentally friendly, and they often attract butterflies, bees and other pollinators.

Our goal at the time of sowing is a grass-free, weed-free seed bed. Since wildflower seed is sown in winter or early spring, we have lots of time to achieve that goal.

At summer's end rototill the spot intended for your wildflowers. If the grass is especially thick you may need to go over it several times. Allow what is left of the grass to decompose.

Pull any weeds that sprout, or lightly cultivate the soil - don't go too deep or you'll expose more weed seeds to the light! You can also skip the tiller, and eradicate the grass by use of black plastic or a tarp- of course you'll have to look at it for several weeks!

If that's okay, then start now by mowing the grass as close as possible. Lay the black plastic or tarp on top and secure it in place with bricks or rocks. The heat, coupled with the absence

of light will kill the grass underneath. By early fall you will be able to rake away any debris that remains. Plan to sow your seeds in early spring. There are many wildflower mixes to choose from. I'd recommend selecting one that is suited to the northeast. A mix that contains both annual and perennial flowers is a good option - the annuals providing you with color the first year while the perennials are establishing themselves. Don't skimp on the seed. In fact, use up to three times more than the packet says you need to ensure you'll end up with lots of blooms. To avoid bare spots, divide the entire area with the first half, then go to the second. Don't cover the seed at all, just firm it into the soil. A lawn roller works great! Gently water until your seeds have sprouted and your plants are up and growing - this will usually take at least a month. Watch now, as the season unfolds in all of its beauty!

At the end of the growing season, after the plants have gone to seed, you should mow the entire field with

your mower on its highest setting. This will prevent trees and shrubs from establishing themselves in your meadow. The mower will do a fair job of chopping up spent stems and leaves - just let them fall where they will. First, they will act as winter mulch. Then, over time they will break down and add organic matter to the soil - just as leaves and twigs do in the woods. In the absence of a mower you can go the old fashioned route and cut the meadow with a scythe or hedge clippers. In all instances care should be taken not to damage the crown of the plants, this can severely weaken or even kill perennial wildflowers.

As far as fertilizers go, wildflowers generally don't need it! In fact, rich soil does more harm than good, causing weeds to thrive and compete with your flowers for sunshine and water. Speaking of water, once your meadow is established it will only require water in cases of severe drought or if you plan to re-sow annual seeds in bare spots the following spring.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 33 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.



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## Veterans Cemetery friends group holding golf tournament

AGAWAM — The Friends of the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Agawam and the Friends of the Agawam Veterans Council proudly announce their First 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.

Event Details: 18 Holes of Golf with a cart, lunch, dinner and a raffle entry.

Location: Agawam Municipal Golf Course

Date: Aug. 31

Time: 12 noon

Registration Options:

- Individual Golfer: \$125
- Team of Four: \$450
- Dinner Only: \$30

• Tee Sponsor: \$100 (Company or "In Memory of" dedication)

• Other Sponsorship Opportunities Available

Payments Accepted:

- Check (payable to FM-VMCA, PO Box 03, Feeding Hills, MA 01030)
- Venmo
- Credit Card (by phone)

To Register or Sponsor:

Contact Marlene Claremont at 413-221-9548 or email wreathfriends@gmail.com. Registration forms are available upon request.

Join us in honoring those who served with a round of golf, good food, and great company—all for a noble cause.

## 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

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

### Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the 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.





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# SPORTS

## Tommy Catalano scores win at Monadnock

WINCHESTER, New Hampshire – For Tommy Catalano, watching his brother Trevor earn his first NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour victory at Monadnock Speedway last year was emotional for several reasons.

Trevor's triumph came in only his eighth NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour appearance. Entering Saturday's Duel at the Dog 200 at Monadnock Speedway, Tommy had 96 career starts on his resume, none of which had resulted in a win despite several close calls.

Years of patience and hard work brought a second Catalano to Monandock's Victory Lane in thrilling fashion.

Tommy was tasked with fending off Patrick Emerling during an overtime restart while on older tires. Emerling briefly took the lead from Tommy, but a nudge to Emerling's back bumper knocked him out of the groove just enough for Tommy to earn an emotional breakthrough victory by the slimmest of margins – .007 seconds.

"I didn't really want to get [Emerling] like that into [turn three]," Tommy said. "I was hoping to kind of move him up the hill a little bit. Everyone was kind of tight right there. Justin [Bonsignore] was right on my bumper. It's unbelievable."

"Hopefully this isn't the last one."

After starting 12th, Tommy cycled to the second position after electing to stay on track during a caution with 42 laps remaining that, ironically, involved his brother Trevor.

Tommy lined up second behind Luke Baldwin for the ensuing restart, with Tyler Rypkema providing the two a buffer between Emerling, who led the remaining lead lap cars off pit road. Knowing he needed to move quickly, Tommy dove underneath Baldwin in Turn 1 to take the lead, which also pinned Emerling on the top line.

By the time Emerling worked his way back to second behind Tommy, another caution would trigger an overtime restart. The fastest car at Monadnock all evening would now be lined up to Tommy's outside for the final two-lap sprint, but even with the odds against him, the seasoned veteran was not ready to surrender the win just yet.

Emerling led at the white flag. Through determina-

tion and sheer will, Tommy led at the checkered flag, albeit just barely.

The scene in Victory Lane was nearly identical to last year's Duel at the Dog 250, with the only difference being the role reversal of the brothers.

As the Catalanos celebrated, Emerling felt a mix of frustration and disappointment with his second-place effort. He was critical of the maneuver Tommy pulled on him to take the victory but does not plan to linger on Saturday's defeat for long.

"We had the best car today," Emerling said. "We led basically the whole race and the whole team executed really good. We were doing exactly what we had to do and had the race won in the last corner but got smashed out of the way. That's not the type of racing that I do, but I guess that's how it goes."

If Emerling had edged Tommy at the line, he would have snapped a streak of different winners to open 2025, having previously won at New Smyrna Speedway. Austin Beers' victory at Lancaster Motorplex last weekend tied the record for seven different winners in seven events that was set in 1999.

Instead, Tommy's valiant effort during the final laps set a new NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour record; eight winners in the first eight races.

Building up Catalano Motorsports has been a prolonged, methodical effort not only by Tommy, but his mother Amy, his father Dave, his brothers and every member of his team. That elusive first victory finally arrived on Saturday, a day Tommy wasn't sure would ever materialize.

"It's just nuts," Tommy said. "You see all the people that have won so far this year and if you said any of them were going to win their second race [this year], that wouldn't have surprised me at all. To come here and do what we did is phenomenal."

"You start getting down thinking it's not meant to be, but you keep plugging away and keep at it."

Kyle Bonsignore finished third in his 100th NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour start, followed by his cousin Justin Bonsignore and Beers. The rest of the top 10 included Rypkema, Baldwin, Stephen Kopeik, Craig Lutz and Anthony Nocella.

## Western Mass. softball captures gold

DEVENS – Earlier this month, the entrant from Western Massachusetts captured the gold in this year's Bay State Summer Games for softball.

The tournament began this year with West team actually suffering a loss 3-0 in the opener playing in the Willard Field Complex in Devens. The tournament started on July 8 with two games. Following an opening loss, the West bounced back with a 4-3 win over the Northeast team.

Action continued on Wednesday July 9 as the

West scored two wins in the game. They defeated Metro 2-1 and then trounced the Central Mass. team 10-2 to earn a spot in the gold medal game, which took place on Thursday, July 10. The West found itself in a rematch with Coastal and this time prevailed in a slugfest, winning 11-7.

Among the players on this year's team from Western Mass., Chelsea Hull of Monson High School, Agawam's Alexina Lentes, and Holyoke's Mia Bauer were on the team.



## Brownies hand Wilbraham first loss of summer

WILBRAHAM – Last Wednesday evening, Agawam handed Wilbraham A Girls summer soccer their first loss of the season.

Agawam prevailed 3-1 in the matchup to notch its sixth win of the season. Agawam is in fifth place in the A Division standings while Wilbraham is in third with a 7-1-2 record.

The playoffs are set for next week in the PVSSL.

### SUMMER SOCCER

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Left: Megan Fitzgerald fights for possession.



Makayla Rosario takes a shot on goal.



Gabriella Ramos looks to settle the ball.



Laura Parolo carefully dribbles into the offensive end.



Bella Shunaman focuses on the ball as she nears the sideline.



Above: Rees Sheppard socks a free kick away. Right: Jose Suarez Monaco goes after the ball.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

# Western Mass. Pioneers grab win in playoffs

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW—Four days after giving up a pair of stoppage time goals and having to settle for a tie against rival Vermont Green FC in the regular season finale, the Western Mass. Pioneers hosted the Long Island Rough Riders in a USL League Two play-in match.

Once again, the Pioneers held a two-goal advantage late in the second half, but this time there wouldn't be any miracle comeback by the opposing team. The Pi-

oneers advanced into the Eastern Conference quarterfinals with a 2-0 shutout victory before a large crowd at Lusitano Stadium, last Tuesday night.

"We're very happy with this result, especially after what happened on Friday night," said longtime Western Mass. Pioneers head coach Federico Molinari. "It was in the back of my mind during tonight's game. You just hope it doesn't happen again."

The Pioneers, who finished the regular season with a 10-1-3 record, played

their last home game of the season.

Pioneers' goalie Trey Sheppard, who made his first home start of the season against Vermont, was feeling much better after posting his first shutout against the Rough Riders.

"I didn't sleep very well the other night, but I received a lot of support from my teammates," said Sheppard, who's from Columbus, Ohio. "I just forgot about the past and focused on tonight's game. I'm really looking forward to playing for this team again next year."

Sheppard is also one of the goalies listed on the Amherst College men's soccer roster. The Mammoths are the defending NCAA Division 3 National Champions.

Sheppard, who's going to be a sophomore in the fall, missed most of the Pioneers regular season because the Amherst men's soccer team made a trip to Europe where they played several matches.

"It was definitely a very cool experience," he said. "We played a few games over there, but I'm very glad they gave me an opportunity to play here."

Sheppard certainly enjoyed having a solid defense in front of him led by Pioneers captain Aidan Kelly, who's a member of the UMass-Amherst men's soccer team.

"Aidan is a great defender," Sheppard said. "He makes all of the plays."

The other three Pioneers starting defenders in the home finale were Jaiden Willems, Juan Hermoso, and Gustavo Barosa.

Willems suffered an injury in the middle of the first half against Long Island (9-3-1). He was replaced by Jar-

ed Smith.

"I thought Jared was the man of the match," Sheppard added. "We have a very good defense."

The play-in match was scoreless until the 26th minute of the opening half.

That's when Mamadi Jiana, who graduated from Chicopee High School, received a pass from Israel Neto before blasting a shot into the net.

"I felt very good after scoring what turned out to

PIONEERS | page 10

# Mass. Pirates near end of regular season

GREEN BAY, WI – The Massachusetts Pirates were held to just 10 points in the second half as the Green Bay Blizzard clinched a berth in the upcoming Indoor Football League playoffs with a 56-27 victory at the Resch Center. The Pirates (7-8) led three times in the first half but could not slow down the Blizzard (10-5) as Green Bay swept the season series from Massachusetts.

The Pirates took the opening kickoff and put together an 11-play drive that resulted in a 24-yard field goal by Josh Gable for the first points of the contest. The Blizzard wasted no time coming back as quarterback Max Meylor threw two passes to JT Davis and then handed off to Kymani Clarke for a two-yard touchdown run for a 7-3 lead.

The Pirates would reclaim the lead with 52 seconds on the clock in the quarter as quarterback Kenji Bahar scored his 26th rushing touchdown of the season on a one-yard scamper, capping a six-play 44-

yard drive, giving Massachusetts a 10-7 lead after one.

The second quarter saw both teams turn the ball over. The Blizzard were deep in their own territory and on second and 12 from the 12, Meylor was intercepted by defensive back Smoke Monday, who returned it to the four-yard line. On the next play, Bahar fumbled the ball as he tried to hand off to Pooka Williams Jr. Scean Mustin recovered the ball, and it led to the Blizzard's second score. Meylor threw a five-yard shovel pass to Lowell Patron for the third lead change of the game, with Green Bay out front 14-10.

The Pirates' offense almost misfired again on the next possession. With a first and goal at the three, Bahar fumbled again. This time he recovered at the 19. A defensive pass interference penalty moved the ball back to the four-yard line, and two plays later, it was Bahar running it in for his second rushing touchdown of the night to put Massachusetts back

out front 17-14 with 3:36 remaining in the first half.

Green Bay would answer as Meylor threw his second touchdown pass of the half, as Andre Williams pulled in a 12-yard strike. Andrew Mevis added the point after for a 21-17 lead with 60 seconds on the clock. The Pirates drove all the way to the Green Bay six, but Gable's 14-yard field goal attempt was no good as the Blizzard led by four points at the break.

Green Bay started the third quarter with a bang as on the first play Meylor threw a 30-yard touchdown pass to Williams, his second TD reception of the game, to give the Blizzard an 11-point lead at 28-17.

The Pirates added a 25-yard field goal from Gable to close the deficit to eight points with 8:12 remaining in the quarter, but the lead increased to 15 as Meylor connected with Patron for his second touchdown. The successful six-play, 30-yard drive gave the Blizzard the confidence to attempt an onside kick. The kick was re-

covered by Green Bay's Kevin Ransom, and five plays later, it was Meylor throwing his fifth touchdown pass of the game. Clarke made a six-yard TD reception, and the quarter ended with the Blizzard leading 41-20.

The fourth quarter began with the Pirates scoring on a six-play 30-yard drive with Bahar hitting Teo Redding with a clutch four-yard touchdown pass from five yards out. Gable's PAT made the score 41-27 with 9:42 to play.

The Blizzard would score the next two touchdowns as TJ Davis found the end zone from 27 yards out on Meylor's sixth TD pass of the game. Then Ransom intercepted Bahar and returned it 28 yards for a touchdown. Green Bay's good fortune continued as the conversion snap bounced to Mevis, who executed a perfect drop kick to make the final score 56-27.

The Pirates' final regular season game will be next Friday night at the Tsongas Center at 7:05 against the Bay Area Panthers.

# Quabbin Valley set to host second over-28 fall league

Following up on the resounding success of its inaugural campaign, the Quabbin Valley Baseball League, an over-28 adult baseball league will hold its second Fall League this September and October.

Seeking to create a similar competition environment to its spring/summer league, Quabbin Valley, with contributions from the Valley Wheel Over-28 Baseball League, created a four-team fall league last year featuring the Braves, Dodgers, Cardinals, and Twins.

Those same four teams are set to return and each team tends to have openings on them. Additionally, the league is open to welcoming more teams in to the league if it finds enough interest.

While the fall league schedule is still under construction, it will mostly feature Sunday morning games played with wood-bat only, which is customary for fall baseball. There could be some Saturday games added

to the schedule depending on the completion of the spring/summer season as well as to makeup rainouts, potentially. Games are nine-innings long and there is a small playoff and championship held at the end of the season. Last year's fall season was eight games and that is the goal for this year. Free and low-cost fields are used as well as just one umpire in an effort to keep the costs lower for players. The cost to play will likely range from \$40 to \$60 for the eight-game schedule. Players from outside the Quabbin League may also pay a small fee for insurance as well.

An interest/registration form, will be forthcoming soon, but until then, to express interest in the league, you can email the coordinators of the league at either GScibelli22@yahoo.com or ikhandfield@gmail.com.

Scheduled and team placement for unaffiliated players will be finalized in mid-to-late August. Please join in the fun this fall.

# Valley Blue Sox scored slugfest win over Mainers before break

HOLYOKE – The Valley Blue Sox had great offensive success in their 14-11 victory over the Sanford Mainers. Valley (16-19) had the bats going early thanks to shortstop Michael Elko and right fielder Isaac Wachsmann, however, Sanford (18-18) started the offensive explosion first.

In the top of the first, Mainers' Zack Kent singled up the middle to score Domenico Tozzi. Peter Koblinisky scored an earned run on an E2 by Hayden Perry and Kent scored unearned. Sanford had a dominant top of the second inning, scoring

four more insurance runs thanks to wild pitches and an error by the Blue Sox.

Valley found their footing in the bottom of the inning. It started with Wyatt Hunt being hit by a pitch which was followed by Andrew Loikits' double. An E6 error occurred which allowed Hunt to score and Loikits to advance to third. Kai Cunningham then singled into center field scoring Loikits. Cunningham found his way down to second base on a nice steal and was then driven in to score off of a single by Chris Carson. It was now 7-3 at the end of two innings.

Sanford acquired two runners on first and second before Sam Miller nuked a three run home run shot into left field to make it 10-3 heading into the bottom of the third.

Just when it looked like the Blue Sox were going to be crushed by the Mainers, Valley had an incredible offensive explosion. Wachsmann crushed a homer into left field to start the scoring frenzy. Nichoals Spaventa and Hunt walked and then Loikits reached first base on an E1 which allowed Spaventa to score to make it 10-5. Cunningham hit a sac ground out to score Hunt and ad-

vance Loikits. Hayden Perry walked to reach first. Carson drove a ball into left center to score Loikits and advance Perry to third. Then Michael Elko came to the plate. Elko ripped a triple into right field scoring Perry, Carson and himself on a E4 to tie the game at 10-10. Wachsmann came up to bat for the second time that inning and crushed a homer into the same exact spot as before to give Valley their first lead of the night 11-10 to end the inning.

Wachsmann was hyped about his home runs. "There was not a lot going through my head [during the home

runs.] I was just trying to put together good at bats and help the team get back into the game."

Valley's Head Coach Endy Morales was impressed with Wachsmann's performance. "He's a super talented guy and when pitchers make mistakes and when facing really good hitters, you make them pay, that's just the name of the game right there."

More scoring occurred in the bottom of the fourth. Hunt tripled which was then followed by Loikits walking and stealing second. Cunningham then walked to load the bases up. Perry's sac

ground out scored Hunt and advanced Loikits to third. Carson walked and then Elko slapped a double off the center field wall to drive in Loikits and Carson. The Blue Sox were now up 14-10.

Sanford was ultimately not able to catch up to Valley's explosive offensive momentum as the game ended 14-11 in favor of the Blue Sox. Morales was hyped about the win. "Absolutely incredible [game]. I told the [team] in the second inning this game was going to be a dog fight and they responded," Morales said.



Clockwise from above: Gustavo Barbosa gets a leg on the ball; Juan Hermoso heads up the field but eyes an open teammate.; Israel Neto makes a quick pass during recent action.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM



**PIONEERS** ■ from page 9  
be the game winning goal in front of the hometown crowd," said Jiana, who mostly likely played his final match wearing a Pioneers jersey at Lusitano Stadium. "It's always very special

whenever we're playing at home."

A couple of minutes later, Neto fired a shot from the top of the box, but Long Island goalie Ethan Wood managed to knock the ball over the crossbar resulting

in a corner kick.

The Pioneers held a 1-0 halftime advantage.

In the middle of the second half, Neto chipped a pass from the right side of the box to a wide Santiago Blasco Gomez, who put the

ball into the net giving the Pioneers a 2-0 advantage.

Unlike what happened in the regular season finale, Sheppherd and the defense didn't allow the Rough Riders to make a late comeback.

## Public Notices

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampden Probate and Family Court  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
Docket No.  
HD24P1821PM  
In the matter of:  
Deborah Ann Bradford  
Of: Feeding Hills, MA  
RESPONDENT  
(Person to be Protected/  
Minor)  
CITATION GIVING  
NOTICE OF PETITION  
FOR APPOINTMENT OF  
CONSERVATOR OR OTHER  
PROTECTIVE ORDER  
PURSUANT TO G.L. c. 190B,  
§5-304 & §5-405**

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by **Stephanie M Bradford** of Feeding Hills, MA in the above captioned matter alleging that **Deborah Ann Bradford** is in need of a Conservator or other protective order and requesting that (or some other suitable person) be appointed as Conservator to serve **Without Surety** on the bond.

The petition asks the court to determine that the Respondent is disabled, that a protective order or appointment of a Conservator is necessary, and that the proposed conservator is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court.

**You have the right to object to this proceeding.** If you wish to do so, you or your attorney

must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 a.m. on the return date of **08/11/2025**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

**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. **Barbara M. Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.

Date: July 14, 2025  
**Rosemary A. Saccomani**  
Register of Probate  
07/24/2025

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampden Probate and**

**Family Court  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
Docket No.  
HD25P1411GD  
In the matter of:  
Roberta Fletcher  
Of: Feeding Hills, MA  
RESPONDENT  
Alleged Incapacitated Person  
CITATION GIVING NOTICE  
OF PETITION FOR  
APPOINTMENT OF  
GUARDIAN FOR  
INCAPACITATED  
PERSON PURSUANT TO  
G.L. c. 190B, §5-304**

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by

**Donna Rosenberg** of East Windsor, CT

**Lynn Szatrowski** of Feeding Hills, MA

in the above captioned matter alleging that **Roberta Fletcher** is in need of a Guardian and requesting that

**Donna Rosenberg** of East Windsor, CT

**Lynn Szatrowski** of Feeding Hills, MA

(or some other suitable person) be appointed as Guardian to serve on the bond.

The petition asks the court to determine that the Respondent is incapacitated, that the appointment of a Guardian is necessary, and that the proposed Guardian is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court and may contain a request for certain specific authority.

**You have the right to object to this proceeding.** If you wish to do

so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 a.m. on the return date of **08/14/2025**.

This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

**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. **Barbara M. Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.

Date: July 17, 2025  
**Rosemary A. Saccomani**  
Register of Probate  
07/24/2025

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Hampden Probate and Family Court**

**50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
Docket No.  
HD22P0152PM  
In the matter of:  
McKenna J O'Brien  
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 first account(s) of **Robert Francis O'Brien** of Agawam, 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 **08/19/2025**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to object to the account(s). If you fail to file the written appearance and objection by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you, including the allowance of the account(s).

Additionally, within thirty days after said return day (or within such other time as the Court upon motion may order), you must file a written affidavit of objections stating the specific facts and grounds upon which

each objection is based and a copy shall be served upon the Conservator pursuant to Rule 3 of the Supplemental Rules of the Probate & Family Court.

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

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

The outcome of this 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. **Barbara M. Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.

Date: July 16, 2025  
**Rosemary A. Saccomani**  
Register of Probate  
07/24/2025

**Town of Agawam  
Request for Proposals**

The Town of Agawam is requesting sealed proposals for **Workers' Compensation Third Party Administration**. RFP Packages will be available at **10AM 7/21/25**. Packages are available via email at **agawam.ma.us**. Proposals due by **8/7/25 at 3:30 PM**.  
07/24/2025



**NOTICE**  
ERRORS: Each advertiser is requested to check their advertisement the first time it appears. This paper will not be responsible for more than one corrected insertion, nor will be liable for any error in an advertisement to a greater extent than the cost of the space occupied by the item in the advertisement.

**ELECTIONS** ■ from page 1

They are: President **Rosemary Sandlin**, Vice President **Anthony Russo**, long-gest-serving member of more than 30 years **George Bitzas**, **Ed Borgatti**, **Thomas Hendrickson**, **Dino Mercadante**, **Robert Rossi**, **Peter Smus**, **Anthony Suffriti**, and **Maria Valego**. **Gerald Smith** has taken out papers, but has not returned them as of press time.

**Smus**, **Valego**, and **Borgatti** were elected to their first terms in the place **Johnson**,

and **Paul Cavallo**, who retired after many terms on the council.

As of press time, other challengers besides **Calabrese** are **Mark Del Negro**, **Uduak Athalia Enyiema**, **Peter McNair**, and **Christine Rickmon**. **Richard Borsari** has taken out papers but has not returned them yet.

On the School Committee, incumbent members **AJ Christopher**, **Shelley Borgatti-Reed**, **Dawn DeMatteo**, **Catherine MacDougall**, **Michael Perry**, and **Wendy Rua** have all taken out nomination papers. Only **MacDou-**

**gal** and **DeMatteo** have not returned them. **Heather Zielenski** is a possible challenger, having taken out papers, but not returned them as of press time.

The deadline to turn in nomination papers is **August** and the general election is **Tuesday, Nov. 4**.

A primary would be held four weeks before if there are more than two candidates per elected seat. In the case of mayor, that would be three candidates, city council, more than 22 candidates, and school committee, more than 12 candidates.

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**THE TOWN OF HUNTINGTON IS SEEKING A PART-TIME TREASURER.**

\$20,384 - \$23,110 annual salary based on experience. Approximately 16 hours per week. Application and complete job description are available online at [www.huntingtonma.us](http://www.huntingtonma.us) or by emailing [admin@huntingtonma.us](mailto:admin@huntingtonma.us). Position is open until filled. Town of Huntington is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

**TOWN OF WORTHINGTON HIGHWAY POSITION OPENING**

The Town of Worthington is soliciting letters of interest and resumes from qualified candidates for a **full-time Equipment Operator/General Laborer** position within the Highway Department. Valid MA CDL operator, Hydraulic Hoister's licenses and OSHA-10 certification is preferred.

More in-depth information can be found on the Town's website: [www.worthington-ma.us](http://www.worthington-ma.us)  
Questions will be answered by the Highway Superintendent at 64 Huntington Road, Monday - Friday, 7 AM to 3 PM; the telephone number is 413-238-5830 or send letter of interest, resume and three (3) references with relevant contact information to [highway@worthington-ma.us](mailto:highway@worthington-ma.us) and [sboard@worthington-ma.us](mailto:sboard@worthington-ma.us). This posting will remain pertinent until the position is filled.  
The Town of Worthington is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

**Post your job openings in our classifieds. WE GET RESULTS!**

**HELP WANTED**

**TRUCK DRIVER/LABORER**

The Town of Peru Highway Department is now accepting applications for the position of **Truck Driver/Laborer**. Preferred applicants will have a valid Class B CDL, Class 2A Hoisting license, and a current DOT Physical card. Construction and mechanical experience preferred. Must be able to work in all weather conditions. Position is full time 40hrs/week with mandatory overtime during snowstorms. Excellent benefits.  
Email resume to: [townadmin@townofperu.com](mailto:townadmin@townofperu.com) or mail to **Town of Peru, Board of Selectmen, 3 East Main Rd. Suite 107, Peru MA 01235.**  
For additional information contact the Highway Superintendent at (413) 655-8224. (The Town of Peru is an equal opportunity employer).

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This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertising in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain about discrimination call The Department of Housing and Urban Development "HUD" toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. For the N.E. area, call HUD at 617-565-5308. The toll free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

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Teens worked together to puzzle through a wizard-themed escape room.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

**APL | from page 1**

hope to do many more in the future.

Having the escape rooms at the library can give people a safe and free way to try out the escape room experience.

There is an upcoming escape room planned for adults to enjoy. This will take place on Tuesday, July 29 in three separate sessions.

The first session is 2 p.m. to 3 p.m., the second is 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. and the third is from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Another fun event is video game bingo for kids in grades three and four. This will be on Thursday, July 31 at 3 p.m.

Additionally, the library's

summer reading program is still in full swing. People are still welcome to sign up and join the summer reading challenge for the chance to earn prizes.

The library has a community goal of reading 5,000 hours this summer, so the more people who join the challenge the better.

"We are already at 2,800 hours of reading and we're halfway through our summer programs," Weingart said. "Please sign up today to help us reach our community goal."

To keep up to date on all the different library events, go to <https://www.agawam-library.org/>.

**NIGHT OUT | from page 1**

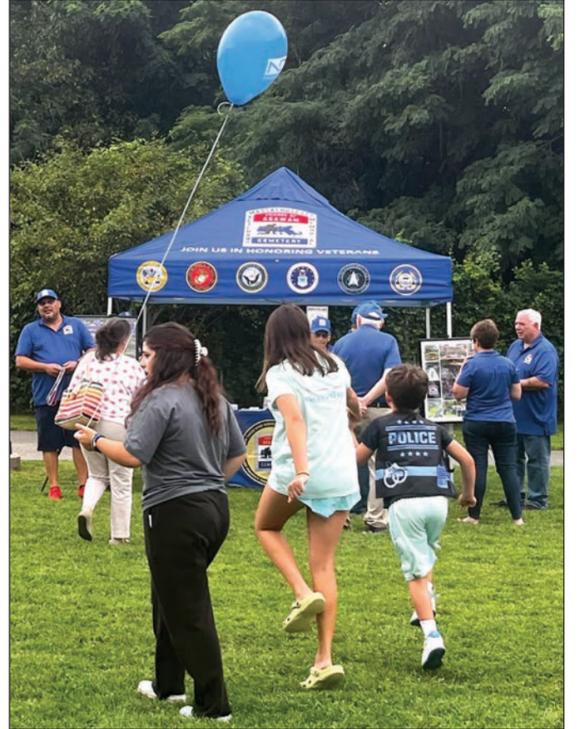
events, features police, fire and EMS, and often features demonstrations and their cruisers, fire trucks, and ambulances on display.

Agawam has also often displayed its DPW and other town vehicles for display, and has added multiple food and other business vendors along with many activities for children.

The Summerfest summer concert series has usually held a concert on the same night in the band shell, but with the event moving to a Friday evening, there will be a movie in the park following the conclusion of National Night Out.

The free movie is scheduled to be "Inside Out 2" and popcorn will be provided to those who attend.

Families and the entire communities are encouraged to come out, meet the police, fire, and other public safety officials that serve the community. The event is for everyone, though there will be many activities geared toward children.



Clockwise from top left: The Emergency Management Department came out to support National Night Out last year; People gathered around the Friends of the Agawam Cemetery tent to receive different bead necklaces and learn about their organizations during the 2024 event; The fire department put on a jaws of life demonstration for the gathered audience.

FILE PHOTOS

# Learn about a proposed natural gas system upgrade in your area.

The **Western Mass Reliability Project Informational & Listening Session (in-person and virtual)** will provide more information on efforts to improve system reliability to existing natural gas customers in the Greater Springfield area. This project includes constructing a new point-of-delivery (POD) station in Longmeadow and installing, upgrading, and operating a steel main between this new POD station and the company's Bliss Street Regulator Station in Springfield.

Please join us in person or virtually at our Informational & Listening Session on Thursday, August 7th, where you'll learn what this project will mean for the Greater Springfield area. Project team members will be available to provide information and answer your questions.

**Location:**

UMass Center at Tower Square, 1500 Main Street, Springfield, MA

**Event Date/Time: Thursday, August 7th**

6:00 PM—Open  
6:30 PM—8:00 PM—Informational & Listening Session

**Guest Services to be Provided:**

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- Spanish and Russian translation available

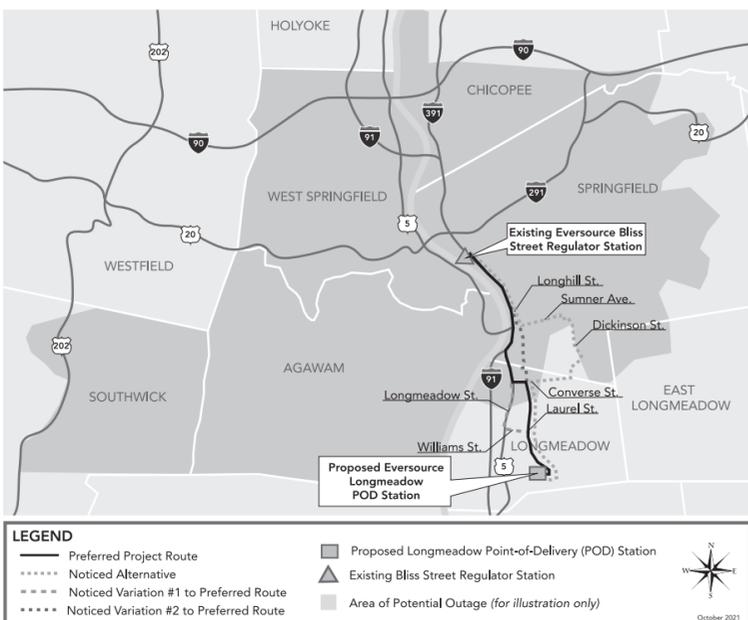
Visit [eversource.com/wma-gas-reliability](https://eversource.com/wma-gas-reliability) to learn more about the proposed project and see details about the Informational & Listening Session, and to access the event virtually if you are unable to attend in person.

**Questions?**

For more information, please email Eversource at [projectinfoma@eversource.com](mailto:projectinfoma@eversource.com) or call **833-836-0302**. You can also keep up to date on the project by visiting our website at [eversource.com/wma-gas-reliability](https://eversource.com/wma-gas-reliability), or by scanning the QR code below with your smart device.



**EVERSOURCE**



Si necesita que le traduzcan esta notificación, envíenos un correo electrónico a [Projectinfoma@eversource.com](mailto:Projectinfoma@eversource.com) y escriba "Gas Reliability Project" en el asunto.

Если вам нужен перевод данного уведомления, отправьте электронное письмо по адресу [Projectinfoma@eversource.com](mailto:Projectinfoma@eversource.com), указав в строке темы «Проект по обеспечению надежности газа».