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AGAWAM

ADVERTISER NEWS

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Candidates to make their positions known

By Gregory A. Scibelli
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AGAWAM – Coming up in next week's edition of the Agawam Advertiser News, the 16 candidates for Agawam City Council and seven candidates for Agawam School Committee will have an opportunity

to have their voices heard and their positions on several local issues made known to the community.

The Advertiser asked the city council candidates six questions and school committee candidates four questions about various issues facing the community in the coming

two-year term they are vying for.

There questions being asked of city council candidates are:

1. The town recently approved and is making a massive investment in a new high school as well as a new police headquarters. What should

be the town's next big capital improvement project, and with the debt payments from the school project being so large, what ideas do you have to make this capital improvement project a reality without a major budget/tax impact?

2. Affordable child care and after school programs are a

big need for working parents. Agawam currently offers a before and after school program in the elementary schools. Do you think the town should offer more options to fit this need and how will the town afford it?

3. There are have been a number of investments in cre-

ating "complete streets" with bike lanes. But there is still a need for more. What streets in town should the town invest in for bike lanes and how would you go about funding it?

4. As a city councillor, you have the ability to sponsor

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Still Brook getting new additions



CPA funds have resulted in the construction of a new playscape area at Still Brook Park. SUBMITTED PHOTOS



The new playscape is the latest addition to the park, which features passive recreation such as fishing, walking and hiking trails, and other individual recreation options.

In-person early voting gets underway

AGAWAM – Residents in town looking to get their ballots in for Agawam City Council and Agawam School Committee will be able to do so starting next Wednesday.

From Wednesday, Oct. 22 through Wednesday, Oct. 29, early in-person voting will be available to all residents in the Seminar Room at the Agawam Senior Center on 954 Main St.

During all weekdays of that period, voting hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 25 voting hours will be 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. There will be no voting hours on Sunday, Oct. 26.

There will be no early voting after Oct. 29 and then Election Day will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 4 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Voting precincts on Election Day are as follows:

Precinct 1
William P. Sapelli School (formerly Robinson School) 65 Begley Street

Precinct 2
Clifford Granger School 31 South Westfield Street

Precinct 3
Agawam High School 760 Copper Street

Precinct 4
Roberta G. Doering School 68 Main Street

VOTING | page 8

Three unions have new contracts

By Gregory A. Scibelli
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AGAWAM – Though they are a bit overdue, the Agawam City Council agreed to fund new contracts for three of the town's unions.

Union contracts, which typically come up every three years, were up on July 1, more than three months ago. The mayor's office has been negotiating with the various unions for several months, and brought forward agreements with the administrative, nurses, and clerical unions.

Still be funded will be contracts with the schools' teacher unions, Department of Public Works, and public safety unions.

According to the reso-

lution sponsored by Mayor Christopher Johnson and approved by the city council at its Oct. 6 meeting, the administrative union and the town agreed to 2.5% cost-of-living increases retroactive to July 1 and again on July 1, 2026. That will be followed by a 3% increase on July 1, 2027. Employees also receive their step increases each year as well.

The nurses and clerical unions agreed to the same cost-of-living increases as the administrative unions.

The city council had to approve transfers from salary reserve accounts in order to fund the new contracts. Johnson budgeted for the increases with the salary reserve account

The city council approved

\$35,146 for the nurses, \$83,025 for the clerical, and \$105,922 for administrative to cover the cost-of-living increase for FY2025.

The increases for FY2026 and 2027 will be built into those year's budgets with the contracts already settled.

There were not any funding transfers introduced as new business on the Oct. 6 agenda. More funding requests will be forthcoming as the unions reach agreements with the town.

There will be a funding request coming in front of the school committee to settle the teacher's union contract. The last negotiation between the Agawam Education Association and the public schools took several extra months to get settled.

A look at the new high school



Agawam High School Principal James Blain shared an update on the first phase of the new high school construction. These drone photos were taken earlier last week. The foundation of the Community Wing is well underway. Next week the cranes arrive, followed shortly thereafter by the structural steel, Blain said. Progress is on time for a January 2027 move into the wing. SUBMITTED PHOTOS



ACC announces 'Trunk-or-Treat' event

AGAWAM – Agawam Congregation Church will hold its annual Trunk-or-Treat event in the parking lot of the church on Sunday, Oct. 26 from 4 to 6 p.m. Please bring a box of elbow macaroni or a jar of spaghetti sauce to benefit our loaves and fishes ministry to be entered in a special raffle prize.

Vehicles interested in distributing candy must preregister as there is a limited number of spaces available. To register your trunk contact ACC at 413-786-7111 or email office@agawamcong.com with your name, email, phone number, and trunk theme.

All candy donations are welcome to be dropped off

at the church by Oct. 25.

There is no access to electricity and generators are prohibited.

Jumper cables will be available for graveyard batteries.

Only vehicles participating will be allowed to park in the lot. All others must park along Elbert or Monroe Streets.



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Many exciting programs available this month at library

AGAWAM – Autumn is in full swing at the Agawam Public Library. Library staff are excited to offer a variety of exciting and educational programs in the month of October. We are proud to partner with our colleagues at the Tewksbury Public Library to provide career and networking resources for folks 50 and over.

Our second Adult Take and Make will be made available beginning Saturday, Oct. 18. Inspired by the thrifted ghost paintings trend, this take and make will help you add a bit of ghoulishness to your autumn décor. Each kit includes two postcards featuring vintage landscapes, as well as black and white acrylic paint and paintbrushes to use to add cute ghosts throughout the scenery. Take and makes are for ages 18 and older. One kit per person, please!

Fall Qigong takes place at

10:30 a.m. in the Judith Clini Community Room on Tuesday, Oct. 21, and 28 and will continue into November. Qigong classes are kindly sponsored by the Agawam Center Library Association.

Test your wits at our monthly Tea & Trivia with a couple of rounds of Halloween-themed Jeopardy and pub style trivia! Come by yourself or with a team; prizes will be awarded to the winning players. Tea and snacks will be served. We will use the same questions for both sessions, so choose the time you prefer and join us for some fun! The evening session will be Tuesday, Oct. 21 at 6:30 p.m. and the afternoon session will be Wednesday, Oct. 29 at 2:30 p.m. These programs are for patrons ages 18+ and registration is required.

Library Tech classes return. Come learn all about the C/W MARS App and Cat-

alog on Tuesday, Oct. 21 at 10 a.m. If you're interested in finding items you're looking for or placing holds on the items you want, be sure to sign up for this class! We'll cover regular searches for authors and titles, as well as how to put items on hold and add items to customized lists. Feel free to bring along any device you plan on accessing the catalog through to follow along and your library card! We'll also provide a brief overview of the CW MARS app. It will be helpful to know your CW MARS login information in advance. Please register for either session online.

On Thursday, Oct. 16 at 6:30 p.m., the Agawam welcomes Julia Nadolny back for a special program called **Discover Guidance and Training with Oracle Cards**. Julia is a sound healer, educator, and intuitive guide. In this interactive program, Julia will

introduce the wisdom of Oracle cards, explain how they can be used as a supportive practice, offer readings to participants as well as guide participants how to give each other and themselves readings. Whether you are curious about card readings, seeking insight into your own journey, or simply looking for a relaxing and enlightening evening, this program is open to all. Come with an open heart and leave with fresh perspectives and a renewed sense of connection. This program is sponsored by the Agawam Center Library Association. Registration is required.

Cryptid enthusiasts unite! Join us for an evening of stories, discussion and evidence of Bigfoot sightings in western Massachusetts with brothers Tim and Eric Vogel. On Monday, Oct. 27 at 6 p.m., the library will host the Vogel brothers for Let's Talk

Bigfoot. The brothers have been intrigued with the idea of Bigfoot since 1976 when they discovered footprints in the snow in their back yard, and they've been investigating this creature ever since. Come hear their compelling research, sightings and other evidence that Bigfoot is indeed afoot! This program is sponsored by the Agawam Center Library Association. Please register for this event.

This month, the library also features an exciting lineup of **Virtual Author Talks**. Ten Years of Daring Heists and Lovable Outcasts in YA Fantasy. Sure to be a special event, Finding My Way with Malala Yousafazi will take place on Wednesday, Oct. 22 at 7 p.m. Come listen to Malala talk about her latest book. The "Queen of British Historical Fiction", Philippa Gregory will discuss Courtly Intrigue and Whispers as Weapons on Wednesday,

Oct. 29 at 2 p.m. For more information and to register, please visit our Virtual Author events page <https://library.org/agawamlibrary>.

Taylor Swift fans, take note. The Agawam Library is pleased to announce yet another partnership with the Tewksbury Public Library. The library will offer three virtual programs all about the cultural influences of Taylor Swift in the past several years. Please register for one or all of the following programs using our online events calendar:

Thursday, Oct. 16 at 7 p.m.: The Poetic and Musical Genius of Taylor Swift

Monday, Oct. 20 at 7 p.m.: Taylor Swift Fashion through the Eras

Thursday, Oct. 30 at 7 p.m.: Taylor Swift by the Book: The Literature behind the Lyrics

Please note that these are virtual programs that will take place via Zoom.

NAMI Western Mass. offering family-to-family education

HOLYOKE – NAMI Western Massachusetts is pleased to offer their NAMI Family-to-Family Education Program in person, starting Saturday, Oct. 25 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon in Holyoke.

NAMI Family-to-Family is a free, 8-session educational program for family, significant others, and friends of people with mental health conditions. It is a designated evidenced-based program. This means that research shows that the program significantly improves the

copied and problem-solving abilities of the people closest to a person with a mental health condition.

NAMI Family-to-Family is taught by NAMI-trained family members who have been there and includes presentations, discussions, and interactive exercises.

NAMI is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental health conditions. NAMI-WM is an affiliate

of NAMI Massachusetts. NAMI Western Massachusetts and its dedicated volunteers, members, and leaders work tirelessly to raise awareness and provide essential education, advocacy, and support programs for people in our community living with mental health conditions and their loved ones.

Pre-registration is required.

For more information contact: Bonnie Puschel at 413-426-7644 BpishL21@gmail.com or visit: namiwm.org/support

Grange hosting Feline Friends fundraiser

AGAWAM – Feline Friends are happy to announce that the Community Grange #382 has invited us to participate at their Halloween bake sale and small tag sale on Saturday, Oct. 25 from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. The address is 47 North West Street in Feeding Hills. Their sale benefits Wreaths Across America.

We will have three raffle baskets. Winners to be drawn at 1 p.m. We will be selling beautiful and fragrant catnip mats for \$10 or 2 for \$18 as well as catnip toys for \$3 or 2 for \$5. All donations are welcome.

We are incredibly grateful for the response to our appeal for help with supplies. We have

received packages at the dental office at 532 Springfield St. (at the corner of Cleveland St.) in Feeding Hills and at the Agawam Public Library. Financial donations have arrived by check at P.O. Box 174, Feeding Hills 01030 as well as PayPal: @FelineFriendsRaffle. Venmo: @FelineFriends. Please include name/contact information with donations if you would like an acknowledgment. Venmo



donations do not provide addresses or email information.

We are grateful for every single donation. Local pickup is available by calling 786-5019

Feline Friends Inc. is a community-based, non-profit sanctuary that does not discriminate against any cat based on age, gender or disability.

More information about our sanctuary may be found on our website at felinefriendsinc.org or our Facebook page at Feline Friends Cat Sanctuary. Contact us with questions at info@felinefriendsinc.org or by phone at 413-786-5019.

AFD to hold open house

AGAWAM – The Agawam Fire Department will host its annual open house event from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at its headquarters located at 800 Main St.

Events will include demonstrations, fire apparatus tours, firefighter chili cook-off, and fire safety education.

Kids welcome to playgroup

AGAWAM – Come join the Agawam Congregational Church Family Playgroup - where we will play, learn and grow together.

Every Tuesday from 10 to

11 a.m. starting on Tuesday, Sept. 16, Agawam Congregational Church at 745 Main St. Agawam. The group is for all children from birth to five-years-old.

Harvest Fair next weekend

AGAWAM – The Agawam Rotary Club will present its annual Harvest Festival on Saturday, Oct. 18 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at School Street Park. The

event is free and will include live music, a car show, food and craft vendors, and activities for children and adults. Rain date is the following day, Sunday, Oct. 19.

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WHEN: Every Tuesday from 10 am – 11 am
Starting on Sept. 16th

WHERE: Agawam Congregational Church 745 Main St

WHO: All children from birth to 5 years old with an adult.



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Contact the office at 786-7111 or office@agawamcong.com with questions or more information and to let us know if you will be joining us!

Come Join Us For Sunday Service at 10 am & See Us on YouTube at AgawamCongregationalChurch, MA

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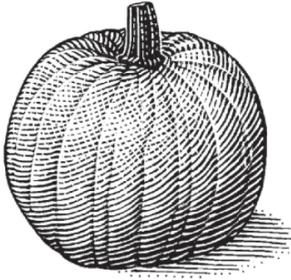
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Lions Club Harvest breakfast

AGAWAM – That Agawam Lions Club will host its annual Harvest Pancake Breakfast. The event will be held on Saturday, Oct. 26 from 8 to 11 a.m. at the Agawam Lions Den located on the grounds of the Big E. Parking will be free and can be found at Gate 1. You can buy tickets at the event or from any member of the Agawam Lions Club. The cost is \$7 for adults, \$5 for children age 10 and under.

School Street Park to host ‘Out of the Darkness’ suicide prevention walk Oct. 25

AGAWAM – Suicide is a leading cause of death in the United States and the 16th leading cause of death in Massachusetts. It is also the second-leading cause of death for individuals age 15-34, yet suicide can often be prevented.

Volunteers from western Massachusetts are joining the thousands of people who are gathering this season in towns across the United States to promote suicide prevention. The annual Greater Spring-

field Out of the Darkness Community Walk, hosted by the American Foundation for Suicide Foundation - Massachusetts Chapter will be held on Saturday, Oct. 25 at 10 a.m. (registration begins at 9 a.m. at School Street Park, Agawam, MA.

This gathering will support the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's education, research and support for survivors of suicide loss. In addition to raising awareness and funds to

fight suicide, the walks give those who attend a chance to connect with others and know they are not alone, whether they walk in memory or in support of a loved one or in honor of their own mental health journey.

“Suicide touches one in five families in the United States. We hope that by connecting with one another, we will draw attention to this issue and keep other families from experiencing a suicide loss. Our goal is to save lives and bring hope to

those affected by suicide,” said Lyndsey Nunes, Greater Springfield co-chair and AFSP Massachusetts Board Member.

The Greater Springfield Out of the Darkness Community Walk is one of the hundreds of events being held nationwide this year. Speakers at the Greater Springfield Out of the Darkness Walk will include local legislators and Western Mass community members who have been personally affected by suicide.

Volunteers wanted to flag graves

AGAWAM – The Agawam Veterans’ Council is seeking volunteers for flagging veteran graves at local cemeteries in preparation of veteran’s Day on Saturday, Oct. 25.

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

Grange bake sale set for Saturday

AGAWAM – Community Grange #382 located at 47 North West St. in Feeding Hills will have a Halloween-themed bake sale on Saturday, Oct. 25 from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

There will be cookies, brownies, cakes, pies, breads, candy and more for



purchase. Proceeds will benefit Wreaths Across America.

At the same time there will be a small tag sale. Come check out our stuff. There will be household items, lots of fabric and more.

Also, the Grange will host Feline Friends Cat Sanctuary, a

501(c)(3) non-profit organization, for a collection of supplies. Supplies needed include clumping, unscented cat litter, Purina indoor cat dry food in the green bag (15/20 pound bag), Kirkland purple bag dry cat food, Churu lickables, corrugated cardboard cat scratchers, paper towels, extra-large puppy pads. Also accepted are Costco or BJ’s gift cards.

Library announces October photo exhibit

AGAWAM – The Agawam Public Library is excited to share works from the Springfield Photographic Society during the month of October. Pieces from the exhibit, titled The Towns of Franklin County, will be displayed on the main floor gallery walls.

This exhibit will feature pictures from each of the 26 towns in Franklin County. The images have been provided by 26 members of the Springfield Photographic Society, capturing the uniqueness of the communities, and illustrating their history, culture, public spaces, and natural beauty. Each photographer chose one perspective that they felt was important to understanding their town. One of the strengths of the exhibit is the large number of contributing photographers - providing a wider range of perspective than what could have been achieved with one or two

contributors. Those photographers with a passion for nature found the natural beauty in their assignment. Other photographers wanted to feature historical sites or local businesses. The Towns of Franklin County is the final installment of a long-term project undertaken by the club to capture images from all 101 towns in the four counties of Western Massachusetts.

Visitors are welcomed to explore these art exhibits throughout October during the regular hours of the library. The library will be closed Monday, Oct. 13 for Columbus Day. Any questions about the exhibits can be routed to the Information Desk at 413-789-1550 x4. Please contact Adult Services Library Associate, Erica LeFebvre at (413) 789-1550 x8858 or elefebvre@agawamlibrary.org if you are interested in displaying artwork at the library.

Church holding Polish fare dinner

WESTFIELD – St. Joseph’s National Catholic Church at 73 Main Street in Westfield is hosting a Community Dinner featuring authentic Polish Fare on Sunday, Oct. 19 at 12 noon. This community feast will feature delicious Cheese Pierogi, Kielbasa, Galumpki, Lazy Cabbage Pierogi, Pickled Beets, Rye Bread, and Apple Crisp with Vanilla Ice Cream for Dessert. Coffee, Apple Cider, and Bottled Water will also be available.

Tickets are \$18 for adults and \$10 for children under 12. For tickets, phone or text Cliff at (413) 977-2007. Deadline for purchasing all tickets is Oct. 16. A limited number of Meals-To-Go will be available at 12:30 p.m. (when buying your tickets, please indicate if you are dining with us or planning take-out). All are welcome. Please join us for an authentic, traditional Polish dinner.

Taste, vote, celebrate at Food Fest West

AGAWAM – The West of the River Chamber of Commerce is excited to announce the return of Food Fest West, a community-favorite culinary celebration, on Thursday, Nov. 13 from 5:30 to 8 p.m. at Crestview Country Club in Agawam.

This highly anticipated event showcases the region’s finest eateries, offering guests the opportunity to sample a wide variety of delicious dishes and vote for their favorite restaurant of the night. From

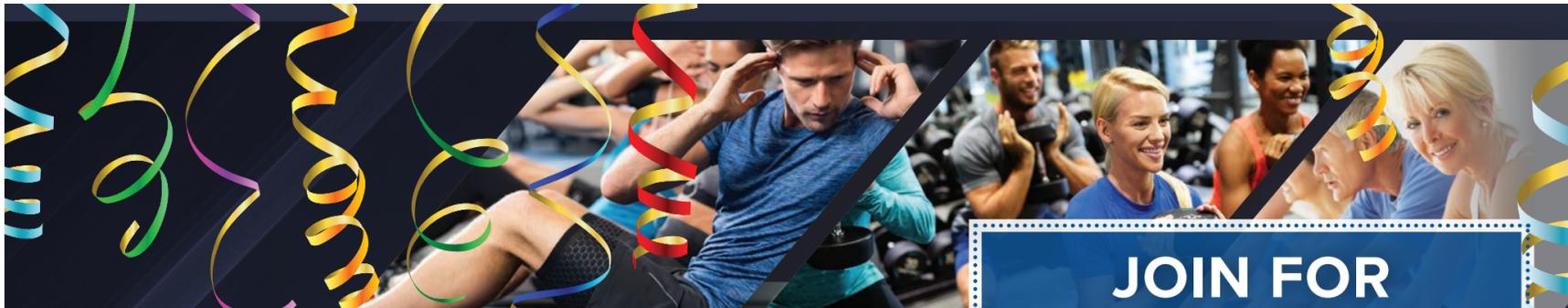
savory bites to sweet treats, attendees will experience the very best of Western Massachusetts’ local cuisine — all under one roof.

In addition to the mouth-watering food, guests will enjoy a fun-filled evening featuring a silent auction, raffles, photo booth, and cash bar. It’s the perfect way to connect with friends, colleagues, and community members while supporting local businesses and restaurants.

“Food Fest West is one of

our most exciting community events of the year,” said Robin Wozniak, Executive Director of the West of the River Chamber of Commerce. “It’s a great opportunity to bring people together, celebrate our local dining scene, and have a great time doing it.”

Tickets are available now through the West of the River Chamber of Commerce. Don’t miss your chance to eat, mingle, and vote for the best cuisine in Western Mass.



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- Free Family Pool and Pizza Party 1pm - 3pm (Call to Reserve)
- Free Chair Massage 11am - 2pm (Call to Reserve)

Opinion

Letters to the Editor

Younger voices desperately needed on council

Dear Editor:

Having lived in Agawam most of my life, at the age of 83, I am very concerned that young people do not have a strong enough voice in our Town government. That is why I think it is so important to re-elect 26-year-old Tom Hendrickson, the youngest member of the City Council, to a third term.

As a Councilor, Tom has supported the new Agawam High School project, passed legislation to reduce energy prices and improve government transparency, and supported making important investments in Agawam's infrastructure and public parks. If reelected, he will fight to create a municipal internet provider to compete

with Comcast's monopoly, expand Agawam's housing supply to meet our community's needs, and improve quality of life for all of Agawam's residents.

I strongly encourage all who care about the future of Agawam to vote for Tom Hendrickson in our town election on Nov. 4.

Corinne M. Wingard

Resident endorses Rickmon for city council

To the Editor,

I am pleased to endorse Christine Rickmon in her campaign for City Council. Christine brings a fresh perspective and innovative ideas, grounded in her experience as a teacher. She is solutions-focused, collaborative, and committed

to finding practical ways to address community needs. I believe her ability to work with others and approach challenges creatively would be a real asset to the City Council and to the residents of Agawam.

Julie Warzecka

Guest Column



Should I take Social Security now or at age 70?

Dear Rusty:

I was born in April 1958 and my plan has been to take my Social Security at age 70.

However, my sister-in-law says that it is smarter to take it now while I am still working. I will be 70 in 2.5 years. Her husband collects his SS and has kept working. She believes their strategy will net more money than mine due to the fact he has continued to pay into the system and she believes it has super boosted his monthly benefit. What say you? BTW, Lord willing and the creek don't rise I plan on living at least till 87.

Signed:

Questioning My Plan

Dear Questioning:

You have already reached your SS Full Retirement Age, so you can earn as much as possible without your SS benefit being negatively affected by Social Security's Annual Earnings Test. In fact, if your current earnings are among the highest over your lifetime, your SS benefit amount will continue to increase because of your higher current earnings. You are now also earning Delayed Retirement Credits, which will improve your monthly amount by 67% for each month (8% for each full year) you delay. That means that if you wait and claim at 70 you will get about 127% of what you would have gotten had you claimed at your FRA of 66 years and 8 months plus you'll also get all COLA increases which occur between now and then. So your life expectancy is key.

It usually takes about 12 years to break even money wise by claiming at age 70 vs. at FRA. In other words, if you claim at 70 instead of FRA, you'll have received the same amount of SS money after you are 82. Thus, if your life expectancy is greater than age 82, you'll get more in cumulative lifetime benefits by waiting until 70 to claim. Of course, no one really knows how long they will live, so it is a judgement

you need to make. "Average" life expectancy for a man your current age is about age 84, but if you'd like to get a more personalized longevity estimate you can use this tool we use here at the AMAC Foundation: <https://socialsecurityreport.org/tools/life-expectancy-calculator/>

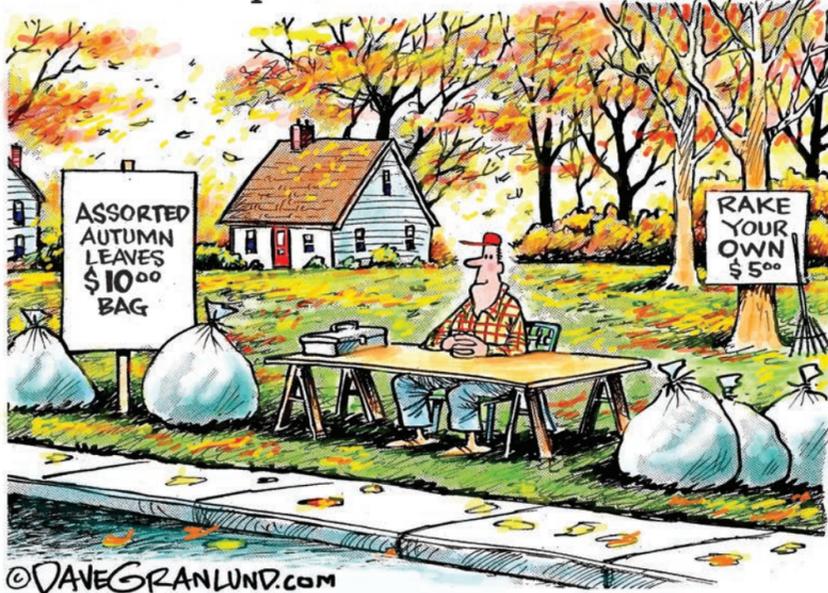
Another thing to keep in mind is whether your wife will get a widow's benefit if you die first. A widow will get the higher of either her own SS retirement benefit or the husband's benefit amount when he died. So, if you claim at age 70, your surviving spouse will benefit if her own SS is smaller because you waited until 70 for your higher SS amount. Just something else to keep in mind.

Yet another is whether your wife will be entitled to a higher benefit as your spouse while you are both living. FYI, a spouse will get a "spousal boost" if her own SS retirement benefit at FRA is less than 50% of her spouse's FRA entitlement. If so, your wife cannot claim her spousal benefit until you take your own SS retirement benefit. If your wife will be entitled to more as your spouse while you are both living, then delaying until age 70 means your wife cannot collect her higher spousal amount until you claim. Depending on your financial needs as a couple, that may affect your decision as well.

When to claim is always a judgement call which should consider your life expectancy, your financial needs and your marital status. If you don't need the SS money now while you are working and believe you will, indeed, live "at least till 87," then waiting would likely be your best long-term decision. If you have doubts about your life expectancy, and/or if your wife will substantially benefit from a "spousal boost" if you claim earlier, then claiming now would also be a wise choice.

SECURITY | page 5

Fall entrepreneur...



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Guest Column

Jack Frost has come and gone; time to review

Usually we have a few nights that teeter around the freezing mark each fall, giving us an advanced warning of sorts, before a real deal killer frost strikes. Not so this year.

I tuned into the weather last Tuesday night and to my shock, we were expecting temperatures to dip into the mid to high 20s Thursday night into Friday morning! That meant going into extreme harvest mode to get everything indoors that needed to be and trying to cover what I couldn't get to.

I was trying to hold off on harvesting my Butternut winter squash, hoping for the green tinges of the skin to fade to a warm buff color, but by the time Wednesday rolled around I had to give in and pick them. I think they are mostly ripe.

I grew three total hills this year, two of a variety Mom had saved the seeds of and one of a highly touted, powdery mildew resistant F1 hybrid by the name of "Little Dipper." I was lured in by the catalog description that promised seven plus fruits per plant.

From my two plants in that one hill, I harvested 15. Pretty good, I'll say! They range in weight from just about a pound and a half to over five pounds, with most around the 3.5 pound mark.

I already cut into one, and roasted it. Not being used to such a dry texture, I added a little water when I whipped it up and it was flavorful enough. And true to its description in the Fedco catalog

(fedcoseeds.com) it was indeed powdery mildew resistant.

The leaves were incredibly green and still pumping out flowers until they were struck by frost. Will I grow it again? Yes.

One mention: the seeds took forever to germinate. I start mine indoors in early May. They were easily a week or 10 days behind the open pollinated squash and pumpkins I germinated indoors.

Another squash that was new to my garden this year was an Acorn squash by the name of "Festival" from Renee's Garden (reneesgarden.com). I typically don't veer from growing butternuts due to a heavy load of squash vine borers on all other species, but the seed packet was so pretty that I succumbed to an "impulse buy."

I figured I could grow them to eat, and also use them for autumn decorations. The cream-colored squash are splashed with orange, yellow and/or green and reportedly will keep up to three months.

From four plants I harvested 21 squash; not too shabby for vines that are semi bush. I tried two plants in one of my raised beds as an experiment, and they did great there, as did the two in the main garden.

I cut one in half, removed the seeds and roasted it cut side down until fork tender. To me, acorns are on the blah side but all that changes with the addition of some maple syrup.

As far as the vine borers go, the plants were early to bear and quick to ripen. By the time the borers discovered them most fruits were curing right on the plants. I'll definitely be growing them again.

Mouse Melon, also known as Cucamelon was a newbie as well, and one that I was not sad to see go when the frost hit. I sowed the seeds indoors and planted the transplants along one side of an A-frame trellis. By August I had the cutest mini-watermelons, think the size that would be perfect Barbie Doll food!

My appreciation for this trial ended with its cuteness, however. To me it tasted like a bitter cucumber, with a little bit of a kick to it. Not a fan.

I did enter them in the Ware Grange fair, however, and won first place in the "any other" category!

Stay tuned next week for more reviews and also what strategies worked and what didn't!

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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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.

Hibernians host clothing, food drive for Providence Ministries

HOLYOKE – The Ancient Order of Hibernians of Hampden/Hampshire Counties along with the Polish National Credit Union Announce the Annual Clothing and Food Drive for Providence Ministries from September to Dec. 1.

Please drop off gently used clothing, blankets, sleeping bags, and/or non-perishable food items

to the Polish National Credit Union 270 Westfield Rd. Holyoke. Make a donation and be entered to win a raffle basket.

Please help those who are experiencing food insecurity and assist Providence Ministries as they continue to transform lives through their life-changing programs. Stop by the PNCU-your efforts will be greatly appreciated.

Senior Center announces upcoming events

AGAWAM – Here are some of the upcoming activities and events being held at the Agawam Senior Center.

Reverse Mortgages

Thursday, Oct. 16 at 1 p.m. in Seminar Hall

Are you a homeowner 62 or older curious about how your home can help support your retirement? Join for an informative seminar on reverse mortgages designed specifically for seniors. I'll break down how these loans work, who qualifies, dispel rumors and how they can provide financial flexibility

without giving up your home. Whether you're exploring options for future planning or just want to learn more, this relaxed, no-pressure session is a great place to start.

Annual Health Expo

Friday, Oct. 17 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon in Veteran's Hall

Friday, Oct. 17 the Senior Center will once again host the Annual Health Expo with over 30 vendors from the surrounding community to offer you their knowledge and expertise.

Continuing Sessions with Glenn Olsen

Friday, Oct. 24 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.



Recent alumni invited to free fall celebration

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College is inviting graduates from the last decade to attend a free evening of fun and food at the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute.

HCC's first-ever "Fall Back Together: Graduates of the Last Decade," or "GOLD," event will be held on Monday, Oct. 20, from 5 to 7 p.m. All HCC graduates from 2015 through 2025 are invited.

The culinary arts institute is located at 164 Race St. on the corner of Appleton Street.

In addition to complimentary gourmet appetizers and desserts prepared by students and faculty

in HCC's culinary arts program, "GOLD" event attendees will be able to build their own HCC swag bags, play corn hole and bingo, tour the HCC culinary arts food truck and culinary arts kitchens, meet President George Timmons, reconnect with their favorite HCC professors, win raffle prizes, network with other alumni, get a free professional headshot, and learn about the new HCC alumni podcast (The Green Thread), volunteer opportunities and other alumni events.

"This is the first time at Holyoke Community College that we've done this type of event for graduates

of the last decade," said Julie Phillips, HCC director of development. "It's an opportunity for recent graduates to meet members of our Alumni Council, get a LinkedIn headshot, and just have fun together."

The menu for the evening includes an artisan cheese and harvest charcuterie board, slow roasted Puerto Rican-style pork on plantain chips, mini cups of New England clam chowder, Vietnamese chicken meatballs with maple-chili glaze, Thai corn fritters with chili-lime sauce, tomato confit crostini with whipped ricotta, mini Jamaican beef

patties, mini Boston cream pies, cider doughnuts, and sweet corn Ice cream with cornflake crumble and blueberry sauce, plus an assortment of beer, wine, and mocktails.

"We're hoping our GOLD graduates will come hungry, leave inspired, and build connections that will last a lifetime," said Natalia Castagno, assistant director of alumni relations. "And it's all free."

Space, however, is limited, so pre-registration is requested. To register, please go to hcc.edu/gold

For more information, please contact Alumni Relations at alumni@hcc.edu or 413-552-2576.

Elks hosting annual free throw hoop contest

HOLYOKE - The Holyoke Lodge of Elks #902 proudly announces its annual Elks Hoop Shoot Free Throw Contest, to be held on Saturday, Nov. 8, at the Holyoke Boys and Girls Club.

Registration begins at 9 a.m., and the contest starts promptly at 9:30 a.m.

This event is free of charge and open to all boys and girls ages 8 through 13 as of April 1, 2026. Contestants will compete within their age and gender divisions.

Winners from the local contest will advance to the district competition, with the opportunity to continue on to the state, regional, and na-

tional levels. National champions will have their names permanently inscribed on a plaque at the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield, Massachusetts — an honor that celebrates their dedication and achievement.

The Elks Hoop Shoot is a proud tradition that encourages youth to develop character, sportsmanship, and perseverance — one free throw at a time.

Don't miss this exciting opportunity to test your skills, have fun, and represent your community.

For more information, please contact Sal Canata at (413) 883-1561.

Annual 'Trunk or Treat' returns to Holyoke Community College Oct. 24

HOLYOKE – Visitors to Holyoke Community College on Friday, Oct. 24, can expect to see witches, ghouls, ghosts and an assortment of characters from popular children's movies, games, books, and TV shows as the college celebrates Halloween with its eighth annual Trunk or Treat event.

Every year, the event draws thousands of children and their parents to the HCC campus for a fun, safe, and early Halloween celebration as dozens of HCC departments, programs, and student clubs, as well as community groups and area businesses, decorate

their cars and trucks with a wide assortment of themes.

Trunk or Treat runs from 5 to 7 p.m. in Parking Lot M by the Bartley Center for Athletics and Recreation on the main HCC campus, 303 Homestead Ave.

Last year's trunk themes included Charlotte's Web, the Wizard of Oz, Minions, mummies, Dr. Seuss, pirates, enchanted forest, haunted vet clinic, aliens, Ratatouille, monsters, Jurassic Park, Shrek, the zoo, STEM, Fairly Odd Parents, castles, Wednesday Adams, spiders, skeletons, scarecrows, witches, sharks, and

the Justice League.

In the past, trunk sponsors from HCC have included the Early Education program, Student Engagement, Veterinary and Animal Science, Dance Club, ASL Club, Japanese Anime Club, C.A.M.O. (military club), Radiologic Technology, El Centro, Student Records, Early Childhood Grants Initiative, Culinary Club, Business department, President's Cabinet, Disney Club, Nursing program, Student Senate, STEM Club, Latinx Empowerment Association, Psychology Club, Radio Club, Animation Club, and Dungeons &

Dragons Club.

Community groups and businesses sponsoring vehicles last year included Jan's Flowers, the Girl Scouts of America, Holyoke Chicopee Springfield Head Start, Elms College Teachers Lounge, Holyoke High School North Campus, Western MA Furs, Agawam Bowmen Club, and Holyoke High School Class of 2025.

Prizes are awarded to vehicle sponsors in various categories including best executed theme, scariest trunk, best costumes, and most original.

Each vehicle will be handing out free Halloween treats and also have non-food items for children with dietary restrictions.

Trunk or Treat at HCC started in 2017 as a safe, fun, and early alternative to traditional trick-or-treating on Halloween night. Rather than going door to door seeking Halloween treats, children

go "trunk to trunk" to collect their candy, visiting cars decorated with seasonal themes and familiar stories and characters.

The event is free and open to the public and will be held outdoors, rain or shine. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

To sponsor a vehicle, please contact Student Engagement at studentengagement@hcc.edu. The deadline is Monday, Oct. 20.

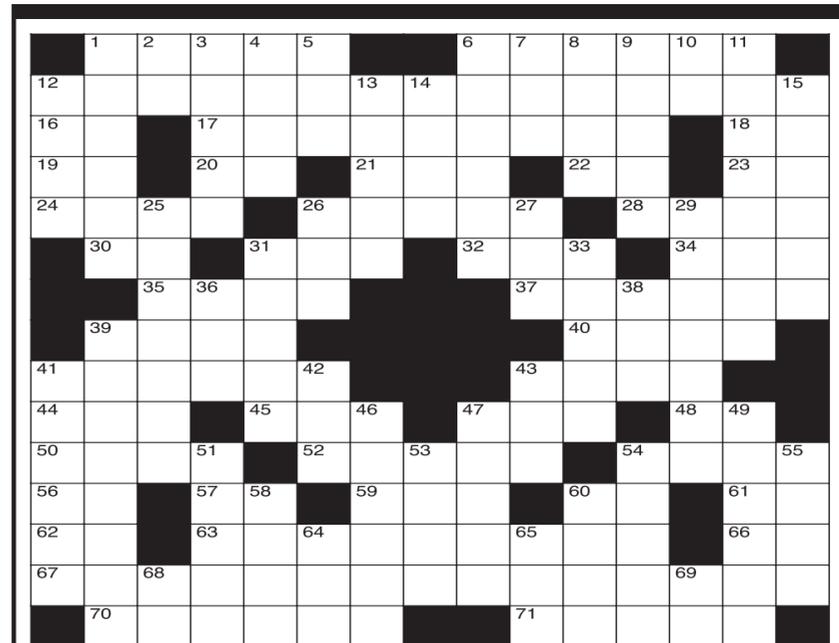
SECURITY ■ from page 4

Finally, it's also important to understand that your SS benefits may be taxable by the IRS and, if you are still working, your IRS tax rate will likely be higher now than it would be after you retire from working. Note: The so-called "one big, beautiful bill" provides only temporary tax relief (thru 2028) on

SS benefits - the IRS will still tax SS benefits but also allow a separate tax deduction to offset those SS taxes you pay.

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.



CLUES ACROSS

- Martial arts in China
- The butt of jokes
- Nevertheless
- Sportscaster Michaels
- A firm believer
- Atomic #18
- One's bestie
- Of I
- Hamburger accessory
- Thus
- Partner to Pa
- Scottish tax
- Cuts away
- Require
- Government lawyer
- Own (Scottish)
- Body cavity
- Brew
- Young woman (French)
- Platforms
- Pair of points in mathematics
- Attack suddenly

CLUES DOWN

- Ate quickly
- Peyton Manning's alma mater
- Moves through water
- Run away from
- Utah resident
- Natural objects
- Children's game
- Obligation to prove
- Ancient Greek building for performances
- Soldier
- Decorated
- Catches
- Russell __, author
- Speak indistinctly
- Students get them
- Japanese warrior
- Dessert
- Doleful
- Most cushy
- Moon crater
- Small evergreen Arabian tree

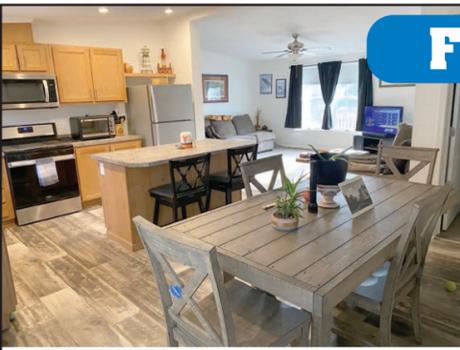
- Something fugitives are "on"
- 007's creator
- Paintings on hinged panels
- Type of bomb
- Japanese classical theater
- U.S. gov't department
- Flightless bird
- One who cuts wood or stone
- Buttock and thigh together
- A way to gather
- Body part
- Argentinian city
- Undergarments
- Jai __, sport
- Container for shipping
- Type of screen
- Get free of
- Indicates position
- Business department

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Better Business Bureau advise on how to avoid hotel booking scams

If you are planning an upcoming trip, keep an eye out for hotel booking scams. BBB Scam Tracker continues to receive reports of travelers falling victim to lookalike websites. Always confirm you are on the right website before making hotel reservations.

What you'll learn

- How scammers use fake hotel websites and ads to trick travelers
- Key red flags to watch for before entering payment details
- The safest ways to confirm and book your hotel reservations

How the scam works

You search for hotels in the city you plan to visit. Among the top search results is what appears to be an official hotel website or a legitimate travel booking agency. When you click the link, you find a website with professional photos from the hotel and reasonable pricing.

Everything looks normal, so you decide to book a room. You enter your credit card information and check out. However, when you review your credit card statement, you notice you've been charged a much higher rate than you agreed. It turns out that you weren't on the official hotel website after all! You accidentally clicked on a third-party site without affiliation with the hotel.

In a recent BBB Scam

Tracker report, a consumer shared, "Purchased a hotel reservation for a Hilton hotel in Chicago. But when I called the hotel they said they don't have any record of the reservation. Same answer after I called them multiple times. Then they transferred the call to Hilton reservation and they said the same. Then only I realized that they are a fraudulent company. And when I researched them online I found lot of similar incidents. These people should be prosecuted and their company should be banned."

In a different BBB Scam Tracker report, a consumer shared, "I thought I was on the actual hotel website to book directly (two rooms, one night, at \$139.00 per room), but the "Reservation Confirmations" came from [website redacted] and reflected "Resort Fees" and "Tax Recovery Charges and Service Fees" amounting to \$220.83. I searched for [website redacted] but found that it did not exist. I asked the hotel manager to look at the charges. He said that the hotel records showed the booking came from a third party, which was [website redacted]. I understand that [website redacted] is a real website, but I also understand that [website redacted] becomes a conduit for this fraud, and unless it refuses to be used this way, becomes



a co-conspirator to defraud a lot of people. Here is the takeaway: book hotel rooms directly with the hotel, either by phone or making very sure that you are on the hotel website and not a third party site. In my experience, the website I booked through looked exactly like the hotel's website but apparently was not. Never book through a third party provider if at all possible."

In another example of an online hotel booking scam, a consumer lost over \$600 and reported their experience to BBB Scam Tracker: "The scammer accepts hotel reservations at one rate over the phone and then changes the rate with new amount in an email confirmation. Reservation desk also adds hundreds of dollars in taxes and fees on top of the changed rate and then refuses to make

any changes or offer a refund once the customer realizes what has changed. When attempting to dispute the rate, Reservation Desk also will make the customer wait 5-7 business days per request to draw the process out longer while never offering any resolution."

Another consumer reported this experience on BBB Scam Tracker: "When searching the web for a particular hotel, like [company name redacted], the hotel's logo appears on their website. You think that you are contacting the hotel that you searched for, but you are not. They are a third party that operates under the guise of being associated with the hotel. They told me they handle overflow calls for the hotel, not true. In addition to the cost for the hotel, they assess a \$16 "service" fee

without advising you."

When you contact the company to cancel your reservation, you may not be able to get through to anyone. And even if you do, they'll likely tell you you've made a non-refundable reservation. The best they can do is cancel your reservation and charge you for it anyway.

How to avoid

hotel booking scams

- Only book hotels through official websites. The best way to avoid this kind of scam is to check and double-check you are on an official hotel website before you enter your credit card information. Scammers are pros at building fake lookalike websites to fool you into giving up your information. Look closely at the URL to ensure you are on the hotel's official website or a booking agency you know and trust.
- Only make reservations through secure websites. You'll also want to ensure websites and their payment pages are secure, meaning they start with https:// and display a padlock symbol. If a web page isn't secure, don't enter your personal information and close the tab.
- Contact the hotel directly. If you're unsure about a booking site or deal, call the hotel directly to confirm that the offer is real and that your reservation is in their system.
- Look for red flags in

communication. Be wary of unusual payment requests, such as wire transfers, prepaid cards, or payment through untraceable methods. Also, be on the lookout for typos and grammatical or spelling errors. Legitimate hotels typically do not have these errors.

- Watch out for misleading ads. Look at search results carefully. Just because a website is the first result on the page doesn't mean it's legitimate. Watch out for high-ranking ads that scammers could sponsor.
- Research businesses you aren't familiar with. If you find a booking site that looks professional but you haven't heard of it before, proceed with caution. Search for reviews on third-party websites and keep a close eye out for reports of scams. Never share your personal information with a person or business until you know they are trustworthy.
- Check the cancellation policy. Review the hotel's cancellation policy carefully. Scammers might not provide clear information on this, making it difficult to get a refund.
- Search BBB.org. It's always best practice to search hotels near you on BBB.org to check reviews, ratings, and BBB Accreditation. When booking a hotel online, look for the BBB Seal; it's The Sign of a Better Business.

Mall hosting Halloween event

HOLYOKE – Families and children of all ages are invited to Holyoke Mall's annual Halloween Mall-O-Ween, trick-or-treating event, on Thursday, Oct. 30 from 4 to 6 p.m. Participating mall retailers will be handing out candy throughout the center, making it the perfect destination for little ghouls

and goblins to safely enjoy trick-or-treating.

Attendees can also participate in a Social Media Costume Contest. Simply snap a photo while trick-or-treating at the mall, post it on Facebook and/or Instagram, follow and tag the mall @HolyokeMall, and use the hashtag #Holyoke-

MallHalloween2025. Contestants must be at least 18 years of age. Winners will be announced on November 3rd and awarded spooktacular prizes.

For full details regarding Halloween Mall-O-Ween, please visit <https://www.holyokemall.com/event/halloween-mall-o-ween-2025/>.

Come explore volunteer opportunities at Harmony House

CHICOPEE – Harmony House of Western Massachusetts is a non-profit social model home for hospice care located in Chicopee. The beautiful new facility reopened in the spring of 2024 and has been a safe and loving home for people who are isolated and have little or no resources. Potential volunteers are invited to explore the opportunity to help care for individuals who are in the final stage of their lives. Harmony House is currently in need of caregivers and

support people. Operating around the clock, volunteers can offer a few hours a week or a few hours a month.

A Meet-and-Greet event is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 18 from 10 to 11:30 a.m. at the Holyoke Public Library, 250 Chestnut Street, in the Board Room. Please come and meet members of the Board of Directors and current volunteers to learn more and have your questions answered by those who are directly involved in residential care.

Harmony House was founded in 2007 by Ruth Willemain, a long-time hospice volunteer, who was devoted to providing personal, emotional, and spiritual support to those in need through a dedicated team of staff and volunteers.

If interested in learning more or becoming a volunteer, please complete the online volunteer application form at www.harmonyhousewma.org/volunteer-1 or email us at admin@harmonyhousewma.org.

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• Basement • Brick Exterior • Paved Parking for ±30 Vehicles •
• Public Water & Sewer • Zoned Business-A • Assessor's ID: G11-2-9 •
• Hampden County Registry of Deeds: Book 20566, Page 409 •

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• (16) Unit Apartment Building • ±20,909 S/F (0.48 Acres) Of Land •
• (16) One Bedroom Units: w/ Kitchen, Living Room & Full Bath •
• All Units w/ Electric Heat • A/C Wall Units • Carpeted & Vinyl Flooring •
• Basement • Brick Exterior • Paved Parking for ±23 Vehicles •
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• (2) Two Bedroom Units w/ (2) Bedrooms, Living Room, Kitchen & Bath •
• All Units w/ Electric Heat • Slab Foundation • Wood Shingle Exterior •
• Carpeted & Vinyl Flooring • Parking for ±10 Vehicles • Public Water & Sewer •
• Zoned Business-A • Assessor's ID: H14-4-4 •
• Hampden County Registry of Deeds: Book 23653, Page 186 •

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SPORTS

Agawam field hockey wins three straight

AGAWAM – The Agawam High School field hockey team propelled itself into the state tournament with three straight wins last week.

The Brownies shut out Northampton 4-0, edged East Longmeadow 3-2, and defeated Southwick 3-1 to rise to 8-5-1. The Brownies have

remaining matchups with Minnechaug and on Friday, Oct. 17, close the regular season with Greenfield at 4 p.m. on the road.

The Brownies have a good shot at making the Western Mass. tournament and should have no issue making states.



Sydney Frasier is chased by a Northampton midfielder.



Brooke Dwyer sends a shot toward the goal.



Finnola Mahoney heads into the circle.



Gianna Battista follows through on a shot.



Olivia Govoni sends a pass back.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



John Carra is pressured near the middle of the field.



Dylan Jorgensen chases down a loose ball.



Aiden Monaghan looks to clear the ball out of Agawam's end.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Dawood Athane is focused as he tries to settle the ball.



Aiden Lavelle reaches his leg out to make a stop.

Brownies soccer suffer tough home loss

AGAWAM – Last Monday night, Minnechaug Regional High School boys soccer defeated Agawam 2-1.

Gavin Goldrick scored twice in the span of a minute to net the win. Dylan Jorgensen had the lone goal for Agawam.

The two teams tied in their first meeting. With the state tournament looming, Minnechaug is in as of now at 6-3-4 and a No.

22 ranking. Agawam is just on the outside, at 3-5-5 and ranked No. 35. Both are in Division 2.

Girls soccer team edged by Ludlow

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW – Prior to the start of the 2025 regular season, the Ludlow girls' varsity soccer team joined the Kurty/Fielding Division.

The Lady Lions' two league matches against the Agawam Brownies were very similar.

In the first meeting between the two teams, which was held at Harmon A. Smith Field in Agawam back in the middle of September, the Brownies trailed the Lady Lions 3-0 at halftime. The home team battled back during the second half and the contest ended in a 3-3 draw.

Ludlow held a 2-0 halftime lead in the second match-up and once again Agawam came storming back in the second half.

The Brownies scored four second half goals, but the Lady Lions managed to hang on for an exciting 5-4 victory at the Ludlow Sports Com-

plex, last Tuesday night.

"When we faced Ludlow the first time, we were down 3-0 at halftime and wound up tying them 3-3," said Agawam head coach Laura Wray-Ramos. "We were in the exact same scenario in tonight's game, and we just left everything that we had on the field. If we had played with the same type of intensity in the first half, the outcome of tonight's game might've been a little bit different. I'm still very proud of my players."

Agawam made the trip home with a 2-7-2 overall record.

"It has been an up and down season for us," Wray-Ramos added. "A couple of our players have suffered season ending injuries. We're also a young team this year."

The Brownies hopes of qualifying for this year's state tournament looks to be very slim. They were ranked 43rd in the latest MIAA Division 2 power rankings. Only the top



Makayla Rosario advances up the field.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY

32 teams in each Division automatically qualify for the state tournament.

Agawam does still have a chance to qualify for the Western Mass. Class A tournament.



Kylie Warner makes her way across the middle of the field.

Ludlow, who won three of the previous four meetings against Agawam prior to this season, had a 9-1-1 overall record following the home victory. They'll be participating in both postseason tournaments.



Megan Fitzgerald dekes with the ball with pressure.

The Lady Lions were ranked ninth in the Division 3 state power rankings and were also the top ranked in the Western Mass. Class B rankings. Their only loss came against league rival Northampton.



Madalynn Fluery rears back to kick the ball away.

"It feels awesome to qualify for both tournaments," said Ludlow head coach Amanda Nacsin. "Our main objective right now is to finish first in our new league. We can do

Sports

Worcester Railers unfortunately wrap up preseason with loss

B I D D E F O R D , ME – The Worcester Railers HC (0-2-0-0) lost to the Maine Mariners (2-0-0-0) on Saturday, Oct. 11, in front of a crowd of 1,000 by a final score of 3-2 in favor of Maine at the Harold Alfond Forum in Biddeford, ME. The Railers open the regular season against the Maine Mariners next Saturday at the DCU Center on October 18th at 6:05 p.m. EDT.

Worcester opened up the scoring for the game early on, with JC Campagna (1-0-1) nailing a shot into the Mariners net at just 0:30. Mariners responded 69 seconds later with a goal from Ty Cheveldayoff (2-1-3) at 1:39 to make it 1-1. Mariners center Wylum Deveaux (1-0-1) landed a rebound goal towards the end of the period at 17:42,

which gave Maine a 2-1 lead to finish the first. Worcester evened the score early in the second with a goal from Tyler Kobryn (1-0-1) off a rebound shot 3:59 into the frame. Mariners' Robert Cronin (1-0-1) secured the win for the night at the 17:26 of the third period after a battle at the net with Railers' goaltender Gale.

The Railers opened the first period with a winning faceoff that allowed them to get a point on the board early with a goal at just 0:30 from JC Campagna (1st), assisted by Lincoln Hatten and Tanner Schachle to make it 1-0. The Mariners didn't wait long to even the score with a goal from Ty Cheveldayoff (2nd) at 1:39, just 69 seconds after the Worcester goal was made, assisted by Xander Lamppa and Linus Hem-

strom. Neither team found the net for the next stretch of the first, until Mariners' Robert Cronin sent a shot off the pads of Railers' goaltender Luke Pavicich, setting up a rebound shot for Wylum Deveaux (1st), which broke past the goal line for Maine's second of the night at 17:42. Worcester looked to even the score, but found themselves trailing by a goal at the end of the period. Maine outshot Worcester 12-8 with no penalties or power-plays on either side.

Worcester had another early scoring start in the second period with a goal at 3:59 from Tyler Kobryn (1st), who was able to get a rebound off Maine's Arvanitis from a shot by defenseman Benjamin Lindberg and tie the game at 2-2. Maine's Jacob Perrault

followed the goal with serving a two minute penalty at 4:42 due to too many men, which allowed the Railers to head onto their first power-play of the game. Worcester split time between their goaltenders on the night, as Thomas Gale skated into the net around the eighth minute of the second period and took the place of starting goaltender Luke Pavicich. Worcester went onto a second power-play at 16:45 from a slashing call on Mariner's left defenseman James Marooney. The Railers' left the ice with a tie game at the end of the second. Worcester had two total power-plays in the second, the only two of the game so far, with two penalties from Mariners' Jacob Perreault and James Marooney. Maine outshot

Worcester 17-9.

The Railers entered the third looking to take the lead for the second time. An early attempt to take the lead from Mariners' Zachary Massicotte passed the goal line after the referee whistle—on-ice officials determined no goal for the defenseman to keep the game nodded 2-2. Worcester's Nathan Burke received a two minute minor for tripping at 5:32, allowing the Mariners to go onto their first power-play of the game. Maine's Jacob Perrault followed Burke into the box shortly after with a slashing minor for four-on-four play and a brief 40 second power-play for Worcester. The Railers didn't wait long to head back into the box as Nick Pennucci served two minutes for a

holding minor on Mariners' Tyler Cheveldayoff. Both teams looked to score and take the game, but it would be Maine's Robert Cronin (1st), assisted by Shawn Element and Xander Lamppa, who would secure the win for the Mariners at 17:26 by making it 3-2. Worcester followed the goal with a delay of game at the faceoff dot at 17:41, leading Maine to their third power-play of the night. Worcester had a late game opportunity, pulling Gale for an extra man on the ice to try and grab another goal but failed to find the net. Worcester had three penalties for the period, Nathan Burke, Nick Pennucci, and a delay of game served by Matt DeMelis. Maine had one with Mariners' right wing Jacob Perrault.

Doiron doubles up at Lee, Robie clinches GSPSS Championship

LEE, N.H. – The Granite State Pro Stock Series' 14th season drew to a close Sunday evening as part of Russ Conway's Oktoberfest, the season-ending spectacular at Lee USA Speedway.

And while Joey Doiron locked down his second series win of 2025, rookie Cole Robie celebrated his first GSPSS championship at "New Hampshire's Center of Speed."

Jeremy Sorel edged out Cory Casagrande in time trials, but Doiron wasted little time establishing himself as the man to beat. The winner of July's Iron Sight 125, the two-time GSPSS champion planted his Petit Motorsports entry at the front of the field early in the feature.

Jimmy Renfrew, Jr. closed in on Doiron midway through the race, hoping to reverse a July miscue and steal his first series win since 2022. But with Renfrew breathing down his neck, Doiron turned up the wick, outpacing the recently-crowned Lee track titlist.

Renfrew soon faded into Eddie MacDonald's grasp, with "The Outlaw" making the pass for second on a late restart. But MacDonald had nothing down the stretch for Doiron, who stretched his advantage to

nearly a second as he took the checkers.

Doiron's victory was his fourth GSPSS win at Lee, leading the series among all drivers. The 2019 and 2022 series champion from Berwick, Maine, now sits behind 2020 champ Joey Polewarczyk for the second-most career GSPSS wins.

MacDonald held on for second, with Renfrew clinging to third in the final sprint. Fast qualifier Sorel finished fourth, his best run at Lee by far since 2022. Dave Farrington, Jr. avoided an early skirmish to come home fifth, his best result of the year.

Polewarczyk was sixth at the stripe, ahead of Ryan Green, who wheeled Doiron's backup car to a seventh-place performance. Lee regular Frankie Eldredge matched his season best from Hudson Speedway in eighth. Robie wrapped up the night in ninth while Casagrande rounded out the top ten.

Robie entered the evening having virtually clinched the title a week ago. With the drop of the green flag, the 17-year-old from Windham, Maine, officially became the series' 12th different champion and its youngest titlist ever.

Robie joins Doiron and 2023 champ Travis Benjamin as the GSPSS' third champion from the Pine Tree State.

Robie's title comes on the back of a consistent season in which he finished no worse than tenth all year, winning once in July at Monadnock Speedway and completing all but seven laps. The reigning NELCAR Legends champion has strong Granite State ties; grandfather Carleton and father Jarod fielded their racing efforts from the family shop only a few towns away from Lee.

Title hopeful Evan Beaulieu, last season's runner-up, could only manage a 14th-place finish. Nevertheless, the Durham, Maine, veteran celebrated a career season with two wins. Reigning champ Casey Call was swept into an early crash, ending his evening and ceding third in the standings to Casagrande.

Eight different drivers visited a GSPSS winner's circle in 2025, including four former series champions. Beaulieu and Doiron were the season's only multiple-time feature winners, with Beaulieu joining Robie and Alexandre "Fireball" Tardif as first-time GSPSS winners.

Comeback falls short for T-Birds

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds (0-1-0-0) battled valiantly, but could not overcome an early three-goal hole in a 4-3 loss to the Charlotte Checkers (1-0-0-0) before a sold-out Opening Night crowd of 6,793 inside the MassMutual Center on Saturday night.



The season began with a dose of adversity just 19 seconds into the opening period, as Hunter Skinner and starting goaltender Vadim Zherenko miscommunicated on control of a loose puck, and Charlotte newcomer Jack Studnicka pounced to poke the loose puck into the yawning net to give the Checkers a 1-0 advantage.

The defending Eastern Conference champions then flexed their power play muscles at the 9:04 mark, as Ben Steeves rifled a one-timer over Zherenko's glove off a slick feed from Ryan McAllister, and the visitors' lead grew to 2-0.

Before the T-Birds could stop the barrage, Charlotte

added still another when rookie defenseman Ludvig Jansson squeaked one through Zherenko on the short side at 11:28, and the deficit became 3-0.

Despite the tumultuous beginning, Springfield fought back, beginning with Otto Stenberg pursuing a loose puck after being denied on a first attempt on Charlotte goalie Cooper Black. The second-year Swede chopped the second chance past Black, cutting the lead to 3-1 at 14:37.

Just 1:33 later, former Checker Matt Luff continued the momentum shift, arriving at a loose puck at the blue paint after a Skinner shot ricocheted off a teammate in the crease. Luff played through to the whistle and jammed it under the fallen goaltender, and after so much had gone wrong to begin the night, the T-Birds had clawed to a 3-2 score heading into the second.

Charlotte, however, got right back to their power

play excellence to begin the second, with rookie Jack Devine wiring a one-timer over Zherenko's shoulder at 2:11 of the second, restoring the insurance marker, 4-2.

After six goals in the game's first 22 minutes, both goaltenders settled down through the duration of the middle stanza, and the 4-2 score carried into the final period.

The third period proved to be tough sledding for both teams to locate offense, but with Zherenko on the bench with 1:23 to play, Juraj Pekarcik unleashed a one-time slapper past Black, cutting the lead back down to one, 4-3. Theo Lindstein also picked up his first AHL point with the primary assist.

Despite the tough beginning of his night, Zherenko showed great resilience in making 32 saves for the night. Black earned the victory with 26 stops in the Charlotte goal crease.

The T-Birds take to the road for the first time in the 2025-26 season next Saturday and Sunday for a pair of contests against the Hershey Bears.

SOCCER ■ from page 7

that if we win our final two league games against Chicopee Comp and South Hadley. All of our league games have been very competitive"

The last time that the Ludlow girls' soccer team won a league title was in 2015.

It didn't take the Lady Lions very long to build a 2-0 lead in the second meeting of this season against the Brownies.

Six minutes into the opening half, junior Audrey Afonso blasted a shot into the back of the net past sophomore goalie Kayleen Sullivan. It was Afonso's team-leading tenth goal of the regular season.

A minute later, senior Catarina Mazza, who assisted on Afonso's goal, netted an unassisted goal.

Agawam had a couple of scoring chances in the middle of the first half on shot attempts from sophomore Madalynn Fleury and senior Kylie Warner.

Ludlow junior goalie Madelyn Riley didn't allow any of the shots to get past her during the first 40 minutes of the match.

With 22 seconds left in the first half, a free kick taken from about 25 yards out by Mazza sailed high over the crossbar.

The Lady Lions were leading 4-0 early in the second following two more goals from the senior duo of Aneysha Donais and Rhiley Comeau.

The Brownies began their comeback with a free kick goal in the 59th minute.

Fleury booted the ball into the box from the right sideline where Warner

headed it into the net.

A minute later, senior Juliana Bartolucci stole a pass before scoring an unassisted goal giving the Lady Lions a four goal cushion again at 5-1.

Warner, who was selected as an All-State player as a junior, scored the game's final three goals during the final twenty minutes of the match. Her final goal came with two minutes remaining in the contest, which closed the gap to 5-4.

"Kylie is a very special soccer player for us. It took a total team effort to get the ball to her during the second half," Wray-Ramos said. "She's hoping to continue playing soccer at the college level next year."

Unlike their first meeting with Ludlow, the Brownies were unable to score the tying goal.

Public Notices

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Division
Docket No.
HD25P1976EA
Estate of:
Joyce E. Ruggeri
Also Known As:
Joyce E. Votava
Date of Death: August 08, 2025**

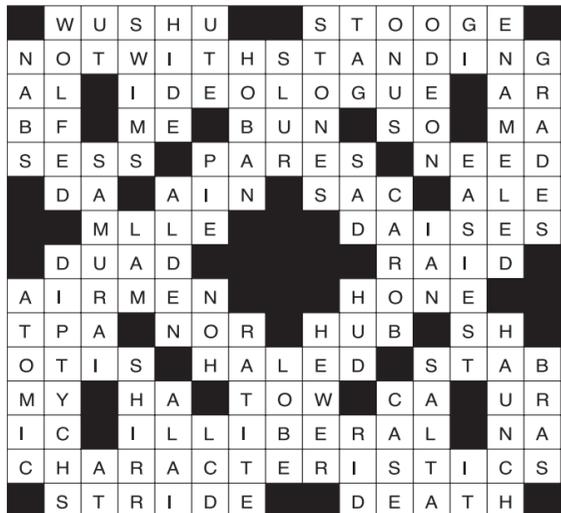
INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE
To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Steven**

Ruggeri of Feeding Hills, MA a Will has been admitted to informal probate.

Steven Ruggeri of Feeding Hills, 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.
10/16/2025



CANDIDATES ■ from page 1

resolutions, orders, and ordinances that can benefit the community, address needs and solve problems. If you are elected, name one piece of legislation you would sponsor in the first six months of your term, whether it is supported by your fellow councilors or not, and defend why it would be a positive for the community?

5. The proposed Battery Energy Storage Facility on Silver Street has drawn a strong reaction from some members of the community in recent months. One of the contro-

versies is the fact that current state law allows them to be installed with virtually no community input. Do you support these facilities being in Agawam? If yes, why? If no, what do you think the community can do to change state law and gain meaningful input in the permitting process for battery energy storage facilities.

6. Please list three things that you believe Agawam's local government does well, and three things that our town needs to work on in the future.

School Committee members will be asked questions about capital priorities fol-

lowing the high school project, bullying, what class or program they believe should be offered in the district, and if MCAS should be replaced with another requirement.

All candidates who participate in the questionnaire will have their responses in next week's edition, to be available on Thursday, Oct. 23.

The 2025 Municipal Election will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 4 with polls open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Voters interested in taking part in the election should be sure to read the candidates responses and register to vote by the deadline.

VOTING ■ from page 1

Precinct 5
Benjamin Phelps School 689 Main Street

Precinct 6
James Clark School 65 Oxford Street

Precinct 7
Agawam Jr. High School 1305 Springfield Street

Precinct 8
James Clark School 65 Oxford Street

For more information on the upcoming election, go to the town's website, www.agawam.ma.us.

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Event draws rare and one-of-a-kind cars to racetrack

By Paula Quimette
pouimette@turley.com

PALMER – Over 300 Porsches of all years and models arrived at Palmer Motorsports Park on Sunday for the highly anticipated return of the Porsche on the Mountain event.

This is the first time the track has held the event since the pandemic, and it was clear that it was deeply missed by automobile enthusiasts.

“We had a good turnout,” said Al Sandy, Club Director at Palmer Motorsports Park. “We had people waiting at the gate.”

Sandy said this year’s event featured several rare and unique Porsches, even a “Horsche,” which was custom-built featuring a Porsche chassis with a Ford Mustang body.

“There were some very, very special cars there. One-of-a-kinds, lots of special paint colors...in the past Porsche was able to build a car for you and they’d paint it in any color,” Sandy said. “It was very unique, very fun to see.”

One unique car was a 1986 930 Turbo with a rare white gold metallic paint color. The 1986 was the first year Porsche was able to bring a turbo engine back to the U.S., due to stricter emissions laws enacted in the early 1980s.

“This is what Porsche started out with – racing,” owner Joanne Rydings said. “They detuned it and let people drive it.”

Owned Rydings and Paul Whoooten of Middleboro, the couple bought this car 25 years ago after Rydings found it online in the early days of dial-up internet.

“It was a rare color,” Rydings said.

Rydings said the car was located in Kentucky, and that Whoooten went down to look at it by himself to see if it was worth buying, when he called her.

“He said, ‘I bought it, you’re going to love it,’” she recalled.

Rydings then flew to Kentucky and drove the Porsche back home to Massachusetts.



Over 300 Porsches were displayed at the Porsche on the Mountain event. TURLEY PHOTOS BY PAULA QUIMETTE



Joanne Rydings is shown with her rare, white gold metallic 1986 930 Turbo.

The couple has had many adventures in the 1986, even traveling through Canada and facing some language barriers with a French speaking traffic patrolmen who pulled them over for speeding.

Porsches are known for being “ridiculously fast” Rydings said with a laugh.

Rydings recalled the pastel blue Porsche Whoooten owned when she first met him, and how she had mistaken it for a Volkswagen, like the 1973 bug she drove.

Learning to drive a Porsche was a “really big difference,” she said.

Rydings and Whoooten have been Porsche Club of America members for many years, and they also own a 2011 Turbo S.

The day before attending Porsche on the Mountain, Rydings brought the 1986 to the Concours d’Elegance at The Elms in Newport, Rhode Island, where it took first place in its category.

Rydings talked about why she has been so loyal to the Porsche brand, which she has loved since she was 16 years old.

“It’s just like home to me, this car,” she said.

Leicester resident and owner of Bay State Brewing Co., Chip Jarry purchased his 2014 911 Carrera 4S this past July and brought it to its first Porsche on the Mountain event. Previous to this model, he owned a 964 for many years.

The 4S is an all-wheel drive vehicle, with more horsepower.



Ron Savenor provided laps in his 911 Cup racer.

er.

Jarry talked about the Porsche being a “driver’s car,” and how versatile it is going from the track to the road.

“Nothing drives like it,” he said. “It holds the road.”

Jarry said Porsches are also reliable and hold their value.

This year’s Porsche on the Mountain event was judged by Adam Wright of Unobtainium, a New York-based business that deals in vintage Porsche cars and parts and provides vital resources to those restoring their project car.

“He knew his stuff,” Sandy said of Wright.

Sandy said there were 23 awards handed out at Porsche on the Mountain, including one for the dirtiest Porsche.

“A lot of car shows are what are called ‘concours’ – the cleanest car wins...Here in Palmer, we’re about driving, not keeping your car spotless,” he said.



Chip Jarry is shown with his 2014 911 Carrera 4S.



Rare and one-of-kind colors were found on Porsches throughout the event.

Sandy said there was also an award for the highest mileage, which has gone each year to Tom Thalmann, who has an astonishing 700,000 plus miles on his 2003 Porsche 911 Turbo.

Proceeds from Porsche on the Mountain helped to benefit Homes for Our Troops, an organization dedicated to rebuilding the lives of severely injured post-9/11 veterans nationwide.

Sandy thanked the events sponsors, including anchor sponsor Porsche Norwell and co-sponsors Musante Motorsports, Intercity Lines, Kachel Motor Company and HMS

Motorsport. About Palmer Motorsports Park

Palmer Motorsports Park has been rated “One of the top 10 road courses in North America” by Road & Track Magazine. Its unique setting and challenging road course draws club members and visitors from New England and beyond for racing, research, recreational, and business-related activities.

Upcoming events include EMP’s 7th annual Charity Car Show to benefit the Wounded Warrior Project on Saturday, Oct. 18 with gates open from 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

All models and makes are welcomed.

A \$20 donation per vehicle covers entry and car show. Optional Charity Laps (\$20 for three laps) are available to purchase at the park.

For more information or to purchase an Accelerated Lap, visit <https://emperformance.online/>.

On Sunday, Oct. 19, Mustangs on the Mountain returns to benefit the West Brookfield-based Central New England Equine Rescue, which has been providing care and homes to horses, ponies and donkeys for over 20 years.

For more information about the event visit www.mustangsonthemountain.com.

For more information about Palmer Motorsports Park, visit palmermsp.com or follow them on Facebook and Instagram.

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