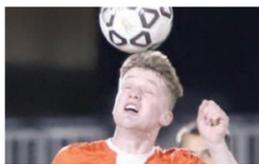


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AGAWAM

ADVERTISER NEWS

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ELECTION RESULTS 2025

Newcomers discuss their wins, priorities

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

AGAWAM – Unseating incumbent elected officials can be difficult no matter what office you are running for. Just ask Peter McNair, who had run for Agawam City Council in the past, but only made the council for the first time last Tuesday, when he placed seventh out of 16 candidates with 2,188 votes.

McNair said hard work made the difference in a successful campaign this year.

“I actually just rebranded myself and outworked all of my opponents,” McNair said. “Knocking on over 3,600 doors and with a new mar-

keting campaign.”

McNair set the record straight on some social media posting about an alleged promise to rid the community of a Battery Energy Storage System facility, which has been a hot-button topic in town recently. He plans to fight hard to try and give the town a say in whether the facilities can be built in Agawam.

“I never pledged or promised to keep these dangerous BESS out of our community,” McNair said. “What my campaigned messaged was to combat against these projects. My “no” was a firm against this. Agawam was meant to be governed “by the people,” not ruled by



Peter McNair



Christine Rickmon

(Gov.) Maura Healey and her insatiable appetite for more money and control. Why no ballot question asking my friends and neighbors if they want lithium battery storage in their backyards? Do understand Westfield and Blandford have blocked BESS. I would be a vo-

cal councilman against these projects.

McNair said he wants to see term limits, ward representation, and a charter review happen.

“The last time the town charter was reviewed was back in the early

1970’s,” McNair said.

Christine Rickmon came in under the wire, placing 11th in the field of 16 council candidates. But she did win a term in her first try. When she found out she made the cut, she was surprised.

WINS | page 12

Three challengers make the cut

Three incumbent city councilors lost their seats in last Tuesday’s election

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

AGAWAM – Last Tuesday, voters in the community returned one person to the city council, and two newcomers, while unseating three incumbents.

Former Councilor Cecilia Calabrese, who ran for mayor two years ago unsuccessfully,

gave her up her seat on the council for the run. She was elected back to the city council this year.

Newcomers Peter McNair and Christine Rickmon also won seats. McNair won a seat for the first time after multiple attempts running for council. Rickmon earned a seat in her first-ever election.

Departing the council are two first-term members, Maria Valego and Peter Smus. Also departing is Gerald Smith, who served the council for three terms.

CUT | page 12

Lions Club collects food



Mel Gaynor, Janet Brown from Feeding Hills Congregational Church, along with Lions Club member Tim Gaynor with the donation of food to FHCC food pantry.



At recent meetings, the Agawam Lions Club took in donations to help residents who were unable to get their SNAP benefits during the ongoing government shutdown. Donations collected went to the newly-created food pantry at Feeding Hills Congregational Church. Lions Club member Mel Gaynor and member Al Rauh with some of the food donations.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Zoom session scheduled for municipal aggregation plan to be held on Dec. 10

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

AGAWAM – The Department of Public Utilities will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, Dec. 10 at 2 p.m. The live session will be held via Zoom with the link to the meeting located on the town’s website, www.agawam.ma.us.

Last month, the Town of Agawam filed a request with the Department of Public Utilities for approval of a municipal aggregation plan pursuant to G.L. c. 164, § 134. General Laws c. 164, § 134 authorizes a municipality to procure electric supply on behalf of consumers within its municipal borders through a municipal aggregation program (“Program”).

Eligible electricity consumers not already enrolled with a competitive electric supplier would be automatically enrolled in the Program unless they choose to opt out, in which case they would continue to receive basic service provided by their electric distribution company, Ever-source Energy. The Department docketed this petition as D.P.U. 25-153. The Town has retained Colonial Power Group, Inc. to serve as its consultant in this proceeding and to assist in the implementation of the Program.

Participation in the program was something approved earlier this year by the Agawam City Council.

The plan was created by the town and made available for people to see and view.

The DPU’s hearing will allow residents to have their voices heard and put on the record.

Attendees can join by entering the link, <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84483459121> from a computer, smartphone, or tablet. No prior software download is required. For audio-only access to the hearings, attendees can dial in at 646 931 3860 (not toll free) and then enter the Meeting ID# 844 8345 9121. If you anticipate providing comments via Zoom during the public hearing, to the extent possible, please send an email by the close of business (5 p.m.) on Tuesday, Dec. 9, to Lauren.Morris@mass.gov with your name, email address, and

Zoom | page 12

Students learn school construction



Two groups from Agawam High School’s Advanced Manufacturing and Welding classes on a tour of the construction site at the first phase of the new high school. This allowed them to take what they learn in the classroom and apply it to the real world.

SUBMITTED PHOTO



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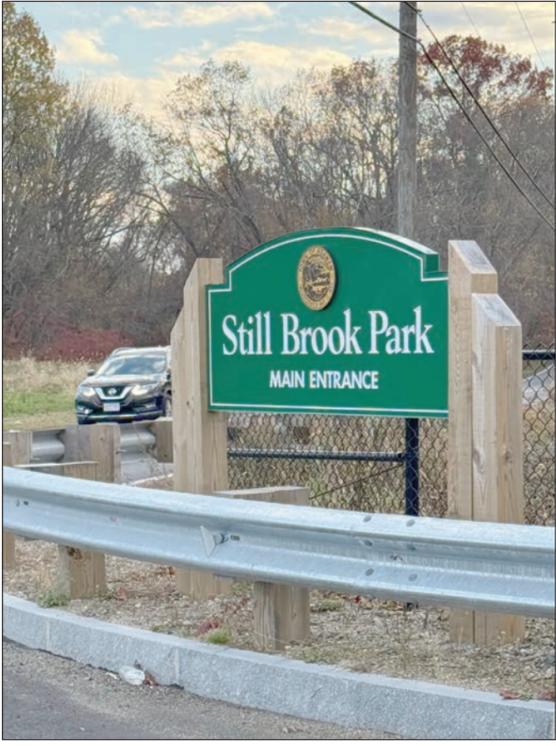
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Still Brook Park takes shape

AGAWAM – The passive recreation at Still Brook Park has taken shape with walking trails, hiking areas, and a recently completed small playground now available. The park has been worked on for the past couple of years funded by a variety of sources, including state grants and Community Preservation Act funds.



Still Brook Park's main entrance is located on Pine St.



The new playground recently just completed.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



The play area, which includes a soft surface, also has a swing set.



There is a new pavilion located next to the playground.



There is a one-car wide driveway that leads to the final parking lot at the park.



The park features a lot of wide open space for various activity.

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Many activities still available for kids and teens at library

AGAWAM – Here are the programs remaining this month for kids and teens that will be offered at the Agawam Library this November. Some programs require registration. To register, go to our website agawamlibrary.org or call us at 413-789-1550 ext. 3.

Art and Stories - For ages 3 – 5

Tuesday, Nov. 25 - Drop-in.
Join us for a short story time followed by an art project. We will explore simple art concepts and experiment with materials. Please wear clothing that can get messy.

Baby Story Time - For birth – 18 mo.

Thursday, Nov. 20 at 6 p.m. - Registration is required
Come design and make your own beaded bracelets! To register, go to our website agawamlibrary.org

Family Take and Make

Crafts - For all ages

Monday and Thursday - While supplies last - Drop-in and pick up

A new Take and Make Craft will be available Nov. 17 and 20: Colorful Chicken Craft. Nov. 24 and 26: Racoon Hand Puppet.

Family Trivia - For all ages

Wednesday, Nov. 19 at 6 p.m. - Registration is required

Bring the family in for a pub-style trivia night. The winning team will receive a snack filled gift basket. To register, go to our website agawamlibrary.org

Volunteer-run Free Family Photo Shoot - For all ages

Grow, Play, and Learn - Wednesdays and Fridays

Ages 0-2 at 9:30 a.m. Ages 3-5 at 10:30 a.m.

This program is provided by Pathways for Parents.

No class Friday, Nov. 28.

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

Music with Mr. Liam - All Ages

Saturday, Nov. 15 at 9:30 a.m. - Registration is required

Join us for an energetic show filled with drums, the ukulele, puppets, and comedy as Mr. Liam (Liam Hurley) plays old favorites & silly parodies! This program is provided by Pathways for Parents. To register, go to our website agawamlibrary.org

Pre-K Pals - For ages 3 – 5

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



We will provide activities to support your child to learn by playing. This program is provided by Pathways for Parents.

Open Lego Building - For grades 1-4

Tuesday, Nov. 18 at 4:30 p.m. - Registration is required

Show off your Lego building skills. Use Legos to build something awesome. Creations will be put on display in the Children's Room. To register, go to our website agawamlibrary.org

Special Saturday Craft: Clothespin Dinosaur Craft - For All Ages

Saturday, Nov. 29 All Day - While supplies last -

Drop-in & pick up.

Chomp, chomp! Kids will have a blast assembling these dino-mite crafts and then pressing the clothespin pieces together to open and close each dinosaur's mouth.

Stroller Strides with Fit4Mom - For parents and child ages 1 month - 10 years old

Tuesdays, Nov. 18 and 25 from 2 to 3 p.m.

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

Tuesdays, Nov. 18 and 25 from 2 to 3 p.m.

Stop by the library after school and visit the Activity Room. Play our Nintendo Switch, try out the button maker, eat snacks, or just hang out. No registration necessary.

Teen Fall Pride Meetup - For grades 7-12

Saturday, Nov. 22 from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Celebrate LGBTQ+ Pride all year round. Mark your

calendars for our Fall Pride Meetup. Hang out, do a craft, eat snacks, and play a Pride-themed trivia game. Registration on our website is optional. All are welcome, whether or not you've registered!

Teen Take and Make Craft - For grades 7-12

Available starting Nov. 1

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

Teen Trivia Thursday - For grades 7-12

Thursday, Nov. 20 from 2 to 3:30 p.m.

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

Toddler Time - For 19 mo. - 36 mo.

Monday, Nov. 24 at 9:30 a.m. - Drop-in.

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

Annual 'Sand for Seniors' to be held on Nov. 21

AGAWAM – On Friday, Nov. 21 from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m., the annual Sand for Seniors event will take place at the Agawam Senior Center in the back parking lot. Seniors in the community in need of sand for the upcoming winter season can come and have a buck-

et filled. Sand and buckets will be dispensed on a first-come, first-serve basis. Orders will be taken if supplies run out at the event. If you received sand last year through the program and need a refill, please bring your bucket from last year with you to this event.

Wreaths Across America to hold event at Veterans Cemetery on Dec. 13

AGAWAM – On Saturday, Dec. 13 at 10 a.m., the Friends of the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Agawam will join Wreaths Across America in our annual mission to Remember, Honor, and Teach.

Together, we will lay Remembrance wreaths on the graves of our nation's heroes at the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery, located at 1390 Main Street, Agawam, MA.

Parking and Shuttle Information:

Parking will be available at Six Flags New England, with shuttles running to the cemetery beginning at 8 a.m. Please plan to arrive early to allow for shuttle transport

and seating before the ceremony begins.

The Friends of the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Agawam is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to honoring those who have served, comforting their families, and enhancing the beauty and dignity of this eternal resting place.

By sponsoring a wreath through the Friends, you help ensure that every veteran resting at the cemetery is remembered with a wreath of honor and gratitude.

For more information or to sponsor a wreath, please visit our website at agawam-friends.org or email us at wreathfriends@gmail.com.



Last year volunteers layed more than 10,000 wreaths were layed at the Veteran's memorial Cemetery in conjunction with Wreaths Across America.

FILE PHOTO

Upcoming events scheduled for Agawam Senior Center

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

Jewelry Making

Monday, Nov. 17 at 1 p.m.

Sandy brings the new pieces for you to create one-of-a-kind jewelry and you bring the creativity. Cost is \$3 plus cost of supplies. Call Kristina to register 726-2836.

Trivia with Cindy

Tuesday, Nov. 18 at 5:30 p.m. in the Dining Room

Join Cindy for a thrilling evening of Trivia and Laughs come as a single or bring a team

Coffee Hour

with Mayor Johnson Wednesday, Nov. 19 from 10

to 11 a.m. in the Coffee Shop

Want to know the latest and greatest in Agawam? Have a question or concern for Mayor Johnson? Join him Wednesday, Nov. 19 at 10 a.m. in the FRIENDS Coffee Shop.

Raymond Rose hosting technology session

AGAWAM – Resident Raymond Rose announced he will be holding a "Learn to use iPhones and iPads" workshop at the Agawam Senior Center.

Rose has held the session in the past for residents. In the workshop, you will learn: security and passwords, understanding

iCloud, using artificial intelligence (AI), use of YouTube and the App Store, understanding your Health app, learning all the settings, cutting TV costs, and much more. Please bring your iPhone or iPad device with you to workshop and feel free to bring a friend. The workshop will take

place on Tuesday, Nov. 18 at 1 p.m. You can register with Kristina Lynch at (413) 821-0604 or email klynch@agawam.ma.us.

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September 22, 2024

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- Ware River News
- The Wilbraham-Hampden Times

Deadline for photos and forms is Friday, December 12, 2025

Opinion

Guest Column

SOCIAL SECURITY Matters

By Russell Gloor

Consider the 'wearing out' factor while deciding when to claim Social Security

Dear Rusty:

Enjoyed your recent article on claiming SS benefits.

I feel, however, any decision making should also include what I call the "wearing out" factor. Yes, financial need, health and longevity are definite criteria for a decision. The inevitable problem, I just turned 83, is the speed at which many of us descend down the back side of that hill after we hit around age 65.

Yes, one might live to 85-90 but as you age after 65, many physical limitations begin to appear. Only then does one realize their earlier retirement decision, waiting to max out SS, might not have been honestly evaluated to the extent needed.

I speak from experience: after having reached 60 in excellent health, I took early retirement from work, then Social Security at 62 and glad I did so. I figure the degree of slope on the backside of that "hill" will increase with age (it did quickly for me), so one best start enjoying a retirement life as soon as financially possible.

claiming Social Security at age 62, after evaluating all factors, enables one to do that, then that is exactly the right choice. It obviously was for you.

Age does, indeed, tend to slow us down, so if taking the SS money early means being able to enjoy life while you still can, then that is a good decision. But having more money as you age can also make your "golden years" a lot more comfortable.

As we have recently witnessed, inflation has an insidious way of reducing our financial comfort in retirement. Despite having a retirement pension from your primary working career, imagine how another 25% in your monthly Social Security payment, had you claimed at full retirement age instead of age 62, would help make your senior years more comfortable.

The fact is that no one can predict how long they will live nor whether they will do so in good health. All we can do is evaluate all our options under varying circumstances and make our claiming decision based on that analysis. And that is precisely what we advocate for at the AMAC Foundation's Social Security Service. In no way did I intend to say that claiming at 62 was never the right choice; only that everyone should look at their complete personal circumstances when deciding when to.

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.

Signed:
Glad I claimed at 62

Dear Glad I Claimed at 62:

Thank you very much for your excellent perspective on the "wearing out" factor. And please know that I wholeheartedly concur with your opinion that waiting for a higher Social Security benefit is not always the most prudent choice. For perspective, however, we have found that far too many people claim Social Security as soon as they are eligible at 62 simply because "it is there," without fully analyzing whether that is the best option considering their personal circumstances.

You are correct, enjoying your retirement life while you are still physically able is a valid consideration. And that is why we always suggest that evaluating both your financial needs as well as your health and life expectancy is important.

Fulfilling one's "bucket list" is, indeed, an important consideration and if



Guest Column

A healthy orchard begins in the planning phase

It was a lot of fun to take part in a "meeting of the minds" this past week, where we were discussing key maintenance tasks in the young orchard at Old Sturbridge Village.

I left the meeting inspired for my own young orchard, and with renewed interest in heirloom apples altogether.

I must make a trip to Cold Spring Orchard to get some Caville Blanc for the Thanksgiving pies before they are all gone! They are surely the best pie apples, to me at least!

Perhaps indulging in your favorite apple varieties have inspired you to consider a home orchard as part of your landscape. If so, this column, straight from the archives, is for you. Enjoy the re-visit, as



haps you'd like to make cider or bake lots of pies.

There are apples that are specifically suited to how you'd like to use them.

My favorite place to buy trees by mail order is through Fedco in Maine. Call 207-426-0090 or log on to fedcoseeds.com/ to request their "Trees" catalog.

You will glean lots of useful information within the pages of this catalog. I am thrilled to know that they are grafted on site and accustomed to our climate!

How tall to you want your trees to get? Apple trees are available in dwarf, semi-dwarf and standard size.

Their ultimate size is determined mostly by the root-

GARDEN | page 5

Animal bites, even from pets, can be dangerous



your health

By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN
Guest Column



Summertime and the warming climate in general usually bring about an increase in the number of animal bites reported to health authorities. As you might expect, the main culprits are dogs, but while cats are responsible for fewer bites, they are responsible for more infections.

And as people spend more time outdoors, they may be more likely to encounter wildlife, such as raccoons, skunks and foxes.

All this is to say that animal bites are nothing to be ignored. In the United States, there are between 2 million and 5 million bites each year, the vast majority of reported

bites being caused by dogs, with the remainder caused by cats (5 to 10 percent) and rodents (2 to 3 percent). Children are bitten more often than adults.

Of course, most animal bites aren't reported to authorities or treated in the ER or doctor's office, so there are likely many more.

Here are some things to know about animal bites.

Cat bites can be more serious than dog bites

That cute little kitten may look harmless compared to a snarling dog, but if it bites or scratches you, watch out. The likelihood of a cat bite becoming infected is double of that of a dog bite, accord-

ing to the World Health Organization.

Dogs' teeth may be bigger, but cats' slender, sharp fangs can penetrate a wound deeper, causing damage to tendons or ligaments. Cats don't necessarily have more bacteria in their mouths, but, as self-groomers, their mouths are anything but clean. Women are the most frequent victims of cat bites.

Unvaccinated feral cats are dangerous, though they probably won't let you come near. Among domestic cats, the most common cause for a bite is when they're being medicated. If you've ever tried to get a cat to swallow a pill, you know this to be true.

If the vet prescribes a pill for your cat, have them demonstrate how to administer it. Better yet, ask if the medication comes in a liquid form that you can administer using a syringe.

Cat scratch disease is a thing

Cat scratch disease (CSD), also known as cat scratch fever or Bartonellosis, is a bacterial infection, most commonly transmitted through scratches or bites from cats,

HEALTH | page 5

3

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

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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.

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Guest Column

Feed Me Seymour, Feed Me!

By Dr. Nancy Alpers
Guest Columnist

A couple of weeks after my older son was born, I gave in. It was time to feed the dog for breakfast. The problem was that I was recovering from a c-section, and it physically hurt to lean over to scoop food out of the dog food bin. I felt sad. Our dog also looked really sad. He had been doing such a great job with having a crying newborn in the house. Clearly, he deserved a hot dog, and unlike the dog food bin, the refrig-

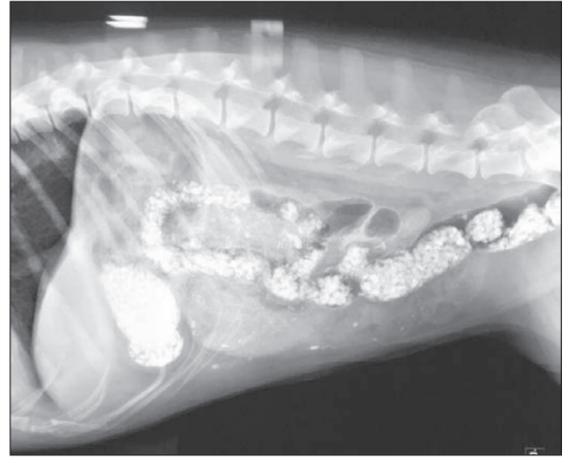
erator was easy to reach. Not long afterwards, he vomited, and the undigested hot dog came right back up. The dog continued to be sick, so my husband took him to the vet. I was horrified to learn he told her about the hot dog. I still remember asking how she reacted. He said she reacted like it was the most logical choice in the world. She just wanted to know if it was chewed up or whole.

That was not my only dog that got sick from eating bad things. When I was in vet school, my dog was such a frequent flier in the hos-

pital that any time a golden retriever was being seen for "dietary indiscretion," I would get a text asking if it was my dog. Legos, crayons, wrappers, and chicken bones all brought my dog to the vet. Sometimes my dogs got sick from items that I gave to them before I was vetted because I didn't know they could cause any issues. Some memorable snacks included grapes, raisins, and corn cobs. So why does all of that matter?

It matters because I hate it when clients act embarrassed or ashamed about

something their dog ate. It is even worse when that embarrassment prevents them from sharing pertinent information. Trust me, whatever your dog has eaten, I've seen it before. However, it can make a huge difference in their treatment and sometimes even be a matter of life and death. Here are some examples. Those raisins or grapes that your dog ate could affect their kidneys. If I know that in time, I may be able to induce vomiting to prevent your



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especially kittens, that have fleas carrying the bacteria. The bacteria can also be spread through exposure to cat saliva or flea bites.

CSD is rarely serious on its own, but those with weakened immune systems and children are more vulnerable. There are two tell-tale signs: swollen lymph nodes and bumps or cysts under the skin, usually near the wound. It usually goes away on its own, but if you develop fever or the infection seems to be spreading, get medical attention.

Rabies is nothing to laugh at

Rabies is a viral disease that is more common in wild animals (skunks, squirrels, raccoons, foxes) than domesticated ones, which are usually vaccinated. If you're taking a nature walk and encounter wildlife, even though it's cute and you want to share your granola, keep your distance. Rabies is also more common with a cat bite.

Though rabies cases in the U.S. are extremely rare, if you are bitten, you need

immediate treatment.

Report animal bites

You should contact animal control or your local police if you are bitten by an animal that behaves in an odd way; an unknown pet or one that's unvaccinated; or a stray or wild animal. In Massachusetts, any non-domestic animal biting or scratching a human must be reported to Department of Public Health Epidemiology at 617-983-6800.

How to avoid animal bites

These tips seem like common sense, but they bear repeating, especially where children are concerned:

- Don't scream or run near an animal.
- Avoid eye contact
- Don't have food out when a strange animal is nearby.
- Stand very still with your hands at your sides.
- Don't pet or catch a wild animal.
- Never bother an animal while it's eating.
- Never tease or chase an

animal or pull its ears, tail or paws.

- Once the animal loses interest, slowly back away until you no longer see it.

- Walk away if an animal is growling. Don't run.

- If attacked, give the animal your jacket, book bag or anything you can put between you and it.

- If you fall down, curl into a ball with your hands over your ears and don't move. Try not to scream and roll around.

We love our companion animals, but keep this in mind: They are still just that - animals that may behave unpredictably.

Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, a registered nurse and board-certified patient advocate, is the founder of Northshore Patient Advocates LLC (NShore). She is also founder and CEO of Nurse Advocate Entrepreneur, which trains medical professionals to become successful private patient advocates. Teri offers a free phone consultation to newspaper readers as well as to nurses interested in becoming advocates. Reach her at Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com.

GARDEN | from page 4

stock onto which the named variety is grafted.

Each has their pros and cons. Dwarf trees can generally be maintained without a ladder. They come into bearing sooner but because of their size produce fewer apples than larger trees.

Staking and irrigation are often necessary, because of limited root systems. They can be planted relatively close together (six-eight feet) and are generally short-lived.

Semi-dwarf trees are mid-sized, bear well and are most productive for two or three decades. They are usually spaced 12-14 feet apart from one another.

Standard, or full-size trees are those beauties of our grandparent's era. Extremely hardy, many are still around and might even be bearing fruit! Plan on 18 feet or more between trees, with a mature height of 15-20 feet tall!

Where will you plant them? With the size of the trees determined, you can now figure out how many will

fit in the space designated for your home orchard.

The best spot is one that receives six-eight hours of full sun per day.

Deep, well-drained soil is ideal; never plant where you know the water table is high. In my opinion, a few trees positioned close to the house will be maintained better because they are in eye-shot as compared to those placed strategically out in the back-forty. They tend to nag you as you walk by: "Time to prune!" "Why are those leaves curled?" You get the idea.

Is my soil any good? Fall is a great time to take a soil test.

First, slice a six-inch core of soil from your intended orchard with a stainless steel trowel. Remove surface debris and air dry.

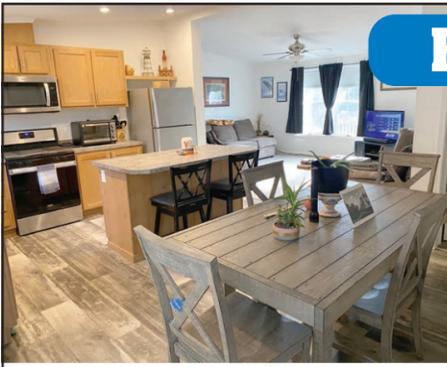
Repeat several times and mix the cores together. Then, measure out a cup of soil to send to the lab. If the locations you plan on planting your apple trees vary considerably, test them separately.

Official directions and an order form are found on <http://soiltest.umass.edu>. The standard soil test is \$20. Mention on the test that you are growing apples and pH and fertilizer recommendations will be specific to that crop.

You can do something this fall to make planting easier next spring. Mark out where your trees are to go and dump a generous amount of compost on top of the grass in a circle three feet in diameter. This will start to break down the sod and get the microbes in the soil working.

With the planning part behind you, it will be a lot of fun to await the arrival of your trees come springtime.

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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EARLY DEADLINES FOR ADS & LEGAL NOTICES

Thanksgiving will bring early deadlines for all legal notices to run in TURLEY PUBLICATIONS the week of November 24-28, 2025.

Thursday, Nov. 20 at 2 PM for November 27 issue

- Agawam Advertiser News • Country Journal
- The Register • Wilbraham-Hampden Times

Friday, November 21 at 2 PM for November 27 Issue

- Sentinel • Quaboag Current

Monday, November 24 at 2 PM for November 27 Issue

- The Journal Register • Ware River News • Barre Gazette

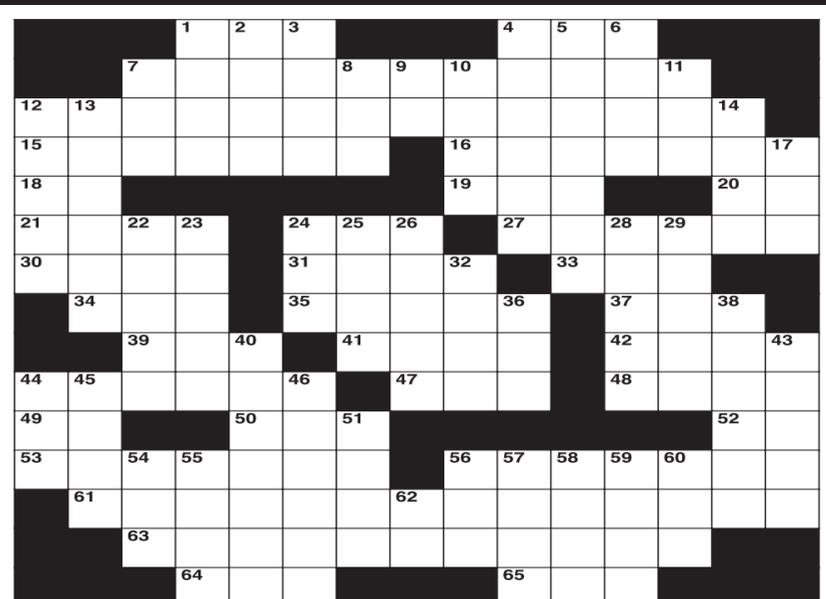
Tuesday, November 25 at 2 PM for November 28 Issue

- Town Reminder • The Holyoke Sun • Chicopee Register

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Expression of surprise
4. Keyboard key
7. One who works on lights
12. Notable children's story
15. Fall back into a bad pattern
16. Eye parts
18. Atomic #18
19. Of she
20. Farm state
21. One point south of southeast
24. British media entity
27. Asian garment
30. Drench
31. Expressions of pleasure
33. Turf
34. UK trade union (abbr.)

35. Bleated
37. Fifth note of a major scale
39. Paddle
41. Monetary unit of Italy
42. American classical pianist
44. Shuts down for the day
47. Seize
48. Soluble ribonucleic acid
49. Greeting
50. Some cars still need it
52. Atomic #22
53. Let go
56. Marched in public
61. U.S. residents, Mexicans and Canadians
63. Hostilities
64. Speak aloud
65. River in NE Scotland

CLUES DOWN

1. Razorbill genus
2. Longtime Baltimore tight end
3. Performs on stage
4. Supports a sentiment
5. Rugged mountain ranges
6. Broadway songwriter
7. Snake-like fish
8. Men's fashion accessory
9. Hospital worker
10. Something to scratch
11. No (Scottish)
12. Volcanic ash
13. Of this
14. American jazz drummer
17. Drop down
22. English dialect
23. Predatory seabirds
24. Imams' deputies
25. Fertility god
26. Fence material

28. Parks and DeLauro are two
29. Distinctive smell (Brit.)
32. Protein-rich liquids
36. Touch lightly
38. Season for Catholics
40. Boat race
43. Police actions
44. Chinese river
45. Waterfall (Scottish)
46. Walk ostentatiously
51. Type of carpet
54. Mauna __, Hawaiian volcano
55. Sea eagles
56. An enclosure for confining livestock
57. Dry
58. An increase in price or value
59. The highest point of something
60. Government lawyers
62. Larry and Curly's pal

CROSSWORD SOLUTION ON PAGE 11



the best around

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Special Police make donation



Members of the Agawam Special Police and Traffic Control Unit were recently joined by Mayor Christopher Johnson for the presentation of support checks to various High School and Doering School organizations. Students are invited each year to help support Big E Parking at Town Hall and Doering School alongside members of the Special Police and Traffic Control Unit. Through their participation, students learn the value of earning and develop a sense of ownership and pride. Their efforts benefit themselves and strengthen their connection to the community.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

St. Patrick's Committee hosting painting event

AGAWAM – Join members of the Agawam St. Patrick's Committee on Tuesday, Dec. 2 from 6 to 9 p.m. for a holiday gourd painting event. Gather your friends for some holiday painting therapy.

The cost to participate is \$35 and tickets are available at zefly.com/en-us/ticketing/holiday-gourd-painting. You can also email agawam-stpatricks37@gmail.com or call 413-244-2610.

The event will take place at Take 5 Restaurant on Springfield St.

Upcoming adult activities available at Agawam Public Library

AGAWAM – Here is a look at activities remaining this month at Agawam Public Library. Our annual Bizarre Bazaar returns this month and is a great chance to stock up on decorations just in time for the holidays. Donate your gently used holiday decor and holiday themed items to the library between now and Saturday, Nov. 8. Items can be related to any major holiday and can include all kinds of decor (wreaths, wall hangings, signs, statues, flags, ornaments, gift wrap, etc.). We will organize all of the donations for our Bizarre Bazaar, which runs Friday, Nov. 21 from 1 to 3 p.m. and Saturday, Nov. 22 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. or the public to browse and “shop”. Bags will be provided.

The virtual Career Workshops and Networking Group continues this month for two informational sessions. Join this vibrant group of networking professionals

led by Professional Coach and MBA, Deborah Hope. Debi specializes in assisting mature job seekers and providing career and networking resources. The online group will meet on Nov. 19 to discuss Interviewing Strategies. Both presentations are from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., but there is an opportunity for informal networking at 9 a.m. Meetings will continue through December. Registrants can sign-up online to receive the Zoom meeting links. These workshops are supported by the Agawam Center Library Association.

Looking for ways to improve wellness before the holidays arrive? The library has a few options to keep your body and mind in shape. **Join yoga instructor Heidi Taberman for an hour of gentle Chair Yoga** on Wednesday mornings at 9:05 a.m. in the Cline Community Room. Qigong will be offered three times this month. Exercises

will focus on strengthening the breath, expanding the chest, and fortifying the immune system in preparation for winter. Chairs are available for modified movements and a yoga mat is suggested for those practicing in bare feet or socks. Join us for a morning fall qigong session on Tuesday, Nov. 18 at 10:30 a.m. in the Cline Community Room. Evening qigong will be held on Thursday, Nov. 20 at 6:30 p.m. These programs are sponsored by the Agawam Center Library Association.

If you're looking for some friendly competition, then our **Tea & Trivia events** will be right up your street. Come by yourself or with a team and take part in a couple of rounds of jeopardy and pub-style trivia; prizes will be awarded to the winning teams. Our evening session is Tuesday, Nov. 18 at 6:30 p.m. and our afternoon session is Wednesday, Nov. 19 at 2:30 p.m. We will use the same

questions for both sessions, so register for the time you prefer and join us for some fun.

Spooky season may be over, but it's never too late to delve into the mystical and reflective world of divination.

Are you a writer looking to connect with other writers? Then stop by on Thursday, Nov. 20 at 6 p.m. for our monthly Writers Group, hosted by award-winning author Katherine Anderson. This in-person workshop is open to writers of all levels and genres. There will be opportunities for peer and host feedback, learning the basics of self-publishing, finding opportunities for submission to magazines, literary journals, and presses, assembling a portfolio, and the basics of a query package for submissions and publications. Registration is required.

Our Library Tech Classes this month will help users get started with our digital

library app Libby. We'll show you the essentials on how to find and borrow new eBooks and eAudiobooks, along with some helpful hints and tips. Feel free to bring your smart devices and/or your e-Readers with you to the class. This month's classes will take place on Wednesday, Nov. 19 at 6:30 p.m. and Tuesday, Nov. 24 at 10 a.m. Please register to attend.

The holidays have begun, which means our **annual Festival of Trees** will be here before you know it. Get ahead of the game – and get your creative juices flowing – at our **Adult Craft Night** on Monday, Nov. 24 at 6 p.m. Rather than just having folks decorate an artificial tree, we challenge you to build one from scratch. Come check out the variety of items we will have on hand for creating your own uniquely designed tree, or feel free to bring materials you have at home that you want to use. When you

finish your creation, leave it here at the library to be part of our Festival of Trees celebration in the month of December. What kind of tree will you design? Registration is required for this craft night.

Get yourself primed for the holiday season and join us on Tuesday, Nov. 18 at 2 p.m. for an **online conversation with Charles Duhigg**. Author of the bestselling book *Supercommunicators: How to Unlock the Secret Language of Connection*, Duhigg will unveil the secret to communicating and connecting with anyone at work, home, and in life. To register to attend any of these author talks, please visit our virtual authors' events page: library.org/agawamlibrary.

Please note that the library will close at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 26 and remain closed for Thanksgiving. We will be open normal hours Friday and Saturday.

Zero Waste Club announces annual holiday used toy collection

AGAWAM – The Agawam Zero Waste Club, Agawam High School Environmental Club and National Honor Society are hosting the 10th Annual Holiday Used Toy Exchange. This event was created to become a source of holiday gifts for residents on tight budgets, as well as increase the lifespan of consumer goods which are discarded long before their usefulness is waned.

Gently used, clean, working toys may be dropped off at the Agawam Public Library on Friday, Dec. 5, from 12 noon to 4:30 p.m. Gently used toys wanted include musical

instruments, action figures, dolls, sports equipment, books, bicycles, electronics, video games, DVDs, stuffed animals, model kits, art supplies, building toys, creative learning toys, outdoor toys and structures, games, puzzles and baby toys. No dirty, broken or incomplete toys will be accepted. All donations should be inspected before being dropped off.

General public free shopping of these gently used toys will be on Saturday, Dec. 6, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. In order to share with as many families as possible, families will be limited to an amount

they are able to carry in one trip to their vehicle. Shoppers are asked to bring their own reusable shopping bags, as this is a zero-waste event. Any toys remaining will be donated to local charities. Children should not be brought into the shopping area, so that each toy will be an exciting surprise. An activity will be available to children while adults shop. For more information, visit www.agawam.ma.us under the events column or email Nancy Bobskill at AgawamZeroWaste@gmail.com. The Agawam Public Library is located at 750 Cooper St.

High School to hold 'Stakeholder Summit'

AGAWAM – On Monday, Nov. 24, Agawam High School is hosting the first of three Stakeholder Summits this year.

The summits include teachers, students, parents, and community members. It will take place at AHS and the tentative agenda includes an alumni panel, focus groups (led by our current students), and even a tour of our outdoor classroom with an activity hosted by two of our Survival Science instructors.

The goal of the summit is to get feedback on in-

structional vision, gauge progress over the last two years, and to find opportunities for future growth. Last March the high school hosted a larger Summit with over eighty students off campus, and it was met with great appreciation.

Hosting three smaller events this year will allow us to listen to more stakeholders to help chart a path forward for improved outcomes for our students.

The plan is for roughly 40 students, 10 parents, 10 teachers, and community members to attend.

New members welcome to join 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.

PLEASE RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

Feline Friends announce winners, holding new raffle

AGAWAM – Feline Friends announced the winners of a recent raffle as well as a new raffle taking place next month. The following is a statement from the group:

“We thank Pauline Sosnowich and the Community Grange #382 for their warm welcome at the Halloween bake sale and small tag sale on Saturday, Oct. 25 at 47 North West Street in Feeding Hills.

The winners of the raffle baskets were Carol Hager, Ken Kurowski and Joyce Siana. Betty Sosnowich donated the great cat basket. We sold beautiful & fragrant catnip mats and toys created & donated by Joan Woods.

We have been invited to participate in their largest fundraiser/sale on Saturday, Dec. 13.

Mini Raffle- We are cur-

rently selling tickets for \$10 each for a fall mini raffle from Nov. 2-16. Please include your contact information. Winners will be chosen & announced each evening from December 1-15 on our Facebook page (Feline Friends Cat Sanctuary).

We are incredibly grate-

ful 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: @Feline-Friends. Please include name/ contact information with donations if you would like an acknowledgement. Venmo donations do not provide addresses or email information.

We appreciate every single donation. Local pick up 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.



Jammie Jingle ongoing

AGAWAM – The Agawam Health Department is collecting new pajamas now through Dec. 5. All sizes infant to 3X (new/with tags).

Pajamas are donated to local charities to give children a new pair of pajamas to wear this holiday season and throughout the year.

Allison Gaynor is the founder of Jammie Jingle and has been collecting pajamas for over 10 years and hopes

to have an awesome turnout this year.

We have been able to donate over 3,000 Jammies to local charities including Shriners Hospital for Children, CHD for Kids, DCF Springfield and Ronald McDonald Houses of Springfield/Hartford. Contact Pam Franco (726-9722) with questions or donations of pajamas.

Collection box located at Town Hall Health Dept.



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SPORTS

SOCCKER

Boys soccer scores upset in Round of 32



Aiden Monaghan keeps play moving forward.

AGAWAM – The Agawam High School boys soccer team is enjoying a fun run in the Massachusetts Division 2 state tournament. After winning their preliminary round match-up against Middleborough, Agawam advanced into the Round of 32 as the No. 26 seed. The Brownies battled King Philip High School and played to two scoreless overtimes. The Brownies then won the penalty kick phase 4-2 to score the winning “goal” for a 1-0 win. Agawam moved into round of 16 last weekend and scored a 1-0 win over Ashland. Their quarterfinals opponent was not determined as of press time.



Daniel Abrahchuk looks for the header.



Thomas Poulin and an opposing player chase a bouncing ball going out of bounds.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Patrick Keating tries to corral the bouncing ball.



Benjamin Grechka intercepts the ball.



Dawood Atnane makes a pass back.

COLLEGE

Agawam's Wesley helps lead Owls

WESTFIELD – Westfield State junior Dylan Wesley (Agawam) scored the first of three second half goals as the third-seeded Owls pulled away from sixth-seeded Worcester State 3-0 in a Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference quarterfinal match from Alumni Field in Westfield on Wednesday night.

Westfield reaches the double-digit victory mark for the first time since 2011 after the winning result. The Lancers season comes to a close, finishing with an overall mark of 5-11-1.

On the Owls 21st shot of the match, Westfield was able to break a scoreless tie with Wesley maneuvering through a pair of Lancers defenders at the edge of the box, splitting both before blasting a low left-footed shot past the diving Tobias Schneider (Hudson, Wis.) for a 1-0 lead with 35:13 left in regulation.

Westfield was able to double their advantage in the 70th minute buoyed by the return of senior captain Sonny Mazza (East Longmeadow) who possessed and shielded the ball from a Worcester defender up the far sideline, sliding a pass between two Worcester players to the feet of Tim Tkacz (Suffield) who deposited a low shot inside the far post for a 2-0 lead with 20:57 to go. Mazza missed five games late in the season due to injury before returning to action in the regular season finale against MCLA as a tune-up before the playoffs.

The Owls managed to put the game out of reach with a third goal with just over ten to play with Carter Hebert (Easthampton, Mass.) juggling a centering pass before leaving it for Carter Daughdrill (Easthampton) who chipped a high shot that was batted in the air by Schneider, but over his head and into the net with 10:46 remaining.

The Lancers generated a few chances in the second half after one shot in the first. In an effort to find the equalizer, their best chance coming from Brian Arias (Pawtucket, R.I.) who took the space in front of him before taking a shot from about 20 yards out that was saved by Marko Kononenko (Kyiv, Ukraine) moving to his left. Then trailing by two goals, Wilber Garcia (Bilbao, Spain) teed up a look from just outside the penalty area, sailing high and over the bar.

Westfield had a plethora of scoring chances in the opening 45 minutes, outshooting the Lancers 14-1 while attempting seven corners to Worcester's zero.

The Owls nearly found the back of the net with about 23 minutes remaining in the first half. Tkacz hooked a crossing pass into the box where Char-



Noah Bushnik makes a block on the defensive line.



Cole Ingham looks for a way to avoid the tackler.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

FOOTBALL

Late interception hurts Brownies

AGAWAM – Last Thursday evening, Agawam engaged in a great nonplayoff matchup with AA Conference member Longmeadow. Agawam was up by a touchdown when Longmeadow tied the score late 34-34.

Agawam then started driving down the field as time waning in the fourth quarter. But quarterback Domenick

Pisano's pass attempt toward the sideline was picked off by the Lancers and returned for a touchdown. Longmeadow then shut Agawam down in their next possession and added an insurance score to ice the game for the Lancers.

Agawam dropped to 5-4 on the season and drew Westfield on the road for Week 10.



Jonathan Forand makes a block on the offensive line.



Josiah Wyner comes down with a great catch near the end zone.



Joseph Duffy heads toward the sideline after making a reception.

Sports

Making plays



Gavin Cruz blocks on an offensive play.



Giovanni Verducci and Cole Ingham work together to make a tackle.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

T-Birds suffer loss

BRIDGEPORT, CT - The Springfield Thunderbirds (1-8-1-1) fell victim to a second-period surge by the Bridgeport Islanders (5-6-1-0) in a 6-1 loss on Saturday at Total Mortgage Arena.

Starting his first game of the season, Will Cranley was busy in the opening period in the Springfield crease, but the 23-year-old answered the bell with 14 first-period saves, which included a handful of beauties as the T-Birds survived nearly 90 seconds of a two-man disadvantage at the end of the period.

At the other end, Marcus Hogberg was equally sturdy in the Bridgeport crease, keeping Springfield off the board through nine shots in the first 20 minutes.

Bridgeport finally broke through on Cranley at 1:26 of the second when Alex Jefferies picked the corner over Cranley's blocker to give the Isles a 1-0 lead. Eetu Liukas added to the lead during a Bridgeport penalty kill just 2:10 later, driving to the front of the net and tipping a Daylan Kuefler pass over Cranley's shoulder.

The Islanders only added to the T-Birds' tough stretch at 9:02 when Adam Beckman crashed the paint and deflected a Matt Maggio cross-ice pass in behind Cranley to make it a 3-0 game.

The T-Birds finally answered the Bridgeport run with a power play tally from Juraj Pekarik at 15:32, as the rookie fired a shot from the left-wing circle off a defender's legs and past Hogberg, cutting the margin to 3-1 entering the third. Marc-Andre Gaudet picked up his first AHL point on the primary assist.

Springfield had two more opportunities to cut into the lead in the third on the power play, but again Hogberg and the Bridgeport penalty kill stood tall.

Worcester Railers fall to Maine Mariners 4-2

WORCESTER - The Mariners won again Sunday afternoon, 4-2, although it was a close game that the Railers might have taken, or at least tied.

Worcester had yet another goal disallowed due to goalie interference, this one deposited by Riley Ginnell at 19:28 of the first period. It would have closed a 2-0 deficit to 2-1 but was waved off. Since the fourth Maine goal was into an empty net, the wave-off was huge.

It was also the second in the last two games that call went against the Railers.

"Both nights, I think they were wrong," coach Nick Tuzzolino said. "They decide what they decide but I think it happens a lot to us in this building."

These goalie interference

reviews are becoming a plague. There seem to be one or two every game. They take up time and kill the flow. They are like football pass interference calls. If six people look at them you'll get six different interpretations.

"I definitely saw our guy being physical with their defenseman outside the paint," Tuzzolino said. "There was a fight for ice. That's bound to happen...I think you can call goalie interference on almost every goal, but it is what it is."

The game marked the Railers debut of former Holy Cross goaltender Thomas Gale, who played two ECHL games for Wheeling last year. Worcester's goaltending has been inconsistent thus far. Gale seemed to play well enough to earn another

start. "He was good," Tuzzolino said. "I think maybe the first two he might like back. Then in the second period he stops maybe two or three Grade As, at the end of the first he stops a breakaway. Great energy, great attitude, really fought down to the wire."

"He was a fire starter, a spark. Not a knock on our other goalies but they've had a lot of mental battles and needed a mental break."

The Railers goals were scored by Drew Callin and Kolby Johnson, playing in just his third game of the season. Lynden McCallum had two for Maine, giving him five for the two games here this weekend. Jacob Perrault and Sebastian Vidmar had the other Maine

goals, Vidmar into an empty net.

Luke Cavallin made 22 saves for Maine to improve his career record versus Worcester to 11-5-0.

Maine scored early and late in the first period.

Perrault notched a power play goal at 1:58, blasting a shot home from the left circle on the first shot Gale faced in a Worcester uniform. Maine's man advantage came about after Railers forward Jesse Nurmi was called for an obvious slashing penalty at 1:50.

McCallum scored his fourth goal of the weekend at 17:17. He snapped a shot under the crossbar from the right circle; the Mariners have been very good so far this season against Worcester at putting the puck on

the top shelf.

The home team closed the gap on a power play goal of its own just 1:48 into the second period. Callin beat Cavallin from between the dots with a quick wrist shot after taking a pass from Ryan Miotto. It was a one-goal game for about six minutes.

McCallum went top shelf at 7:46 to re-establish the Mariners' two-goal lead. It could have been worse for the Railers, though. Maine had a 17-7 edge in shots and Gale made several excellent saves.

Johnson scored at 9:35 of the third period, right off a draw in the left circle. The puck found him alone about 15 feet away from Cavallin and he beat him with an instant release.

Cougars set for opener



The Holyoke Community College Women's Basketball team was set to open up their regular season this week.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

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OWLS ■ from page 7

lie Anischik (South Hadley) headed the ball to the far post, past Schneider but not by defender Braiden Corbett (South Kingstown, R.I.) who kicked the ball off the back line and away from the goal. A return shot followed from Ethan Margolis (Wakefield) who drilled a low shot that forced Schneider to make a diving stop to his left.

Another high danger scoring chance followed with under 20 remaining in the half after a cross from Aidan Ferguson (Augsburg, Germany) resulted in a header by Nick Parakilas (Broad Brook, Conn.) which flew just above the crossbar and out of play. Parakilas had another opportunity with 11:30 left in the period when the ball found him in a swarm of players, rocketing a right-footed shot

over the bar.

Minutes later, Tkacz touched a pass to Paul Whalley (Southwick) who gathered possession and unloaded a low shot which was swatted off the back line by Schneider. Schneider recorded seven first-half saves to keep the Lancers even at the break.

The lone Lancers shot came with 1:50 left in the first, with Garcia corraling

the ball and taking a shot that was partially blocked by Dominic Cirelli (Springfield), falling into the hands of Kononenko who came off his line to grab the ball out of midair.

The Owls had a 30-10 shot advantage in the match with Kononenko stopping all four shots faced to secure the shutout. Schneider was terrific in goal for Worcester, making 12 saves.

HCC opens registration for 2026 classes

HOLYOKE – Registration is now open for Wintersession and Spring 2026 semester classes at Holyoke Community College.

HCC's 10-day Wintersession term begins Monday, Jan. 5, and ends Friday, January 16. The Spring 2026 semester begins Tuesday, Jan. 20.

Students can earn up to four transferable credits by taking Wintersession classes in anthropology, communications, criminal justice, economics, environmental science, geography, law, management, mathematics, nutrition, psychology, social science, and sociology.

Most Wintersession classes are offered entirely online. Full 15-week spring se-

mester classes begin Jan. 20. HCC will also run three accelerated spring flex start sessions: Flex Start I classes begin Jan. 20 and run for seven weeks; Flex Start II classes begin Monday, Feb. 2, and run for 12 weeks; Flex Start III classes begin Monday, March 23, and run for seven weeks.

Thanks to the state-funded MassEducate and Mass-Reconnect programs, a community college education is now free for all Massachusetts residents who have yet to earn a bachelor's degree.

"MassEducate provides an exciting opportunity for eligible students to attend college without the concern or weight of how to pay for it," said Mark Hudgik, HCC

dean of strategic recruitment initiatives, admissions, and financial aid. "There has never been a better time to enroll."

Eligible students who want to earn a certificate or degree need only to complete the standard HCC application, complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) for the 2025-2026 school year, and register for at least six credits (typically two classes).

Students who were admitted for the fall 2025 semester but unable to begin classes for any reason do not need to reapply for spring. They can make an appointment with the HCC Advising Center to register for classes by going to hcc.edu/act.

"Our admissions counselors, academic advisers, and financial aid staff are available to make sure prospective students get all the assistance they need," said Hudgik.

Class schedules for both Wintersession and Spring 2026 semester classes can be found on the HCC website: hcc.edu.

To enroll, please go to hcc.edu/admissions.

HCC Admissions and Financial Aid offices are open Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Fridays, 1-4:30 p.m. The Advising, Career, and Transfer center is open Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Fridays, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Annual Hibernian Clothing and Food Drive for Providence Ministries 2025

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 Na-

tional 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.

Taber Art Gallery displays 'Hyper Color'

HOLYOKE – Five artists from western Massachusetts use brilliant colors to explore spirituality, memory, intuition, time, and rebellious joy in the latest exhibit at the Holyoke Community College Taber Art Gallery.

"HyperColor" opened Monday, Nov. 3 and runs until Thursday, Dec. 18. The show features the work by Andrae Green, Donnabelle Casis, Kim Carlino, Sharon Leshner, and Sunny Allis. The gallery will host a reception on Thursday, Nov. 13, from 5-7 p.m. with an artists' panel discussion at 6 p.m.

"On its face 'HyperColor' is an exhibition about color, but it's also about the ways people explore and express themselves without shame or hesitation," said Taber director Rachel Rushing. "The artists in this exhibition are fearless in their use of color

to explore the internal worlds of dreams, memory, and intuition as well as the ways we connect to the world around us with curiosity and play."

All five artists are active in community and education. Carlino and Leshner are local muralists. Leshner's most recent mural is located at 787 Dwight St. in Holyoke and made in partnership with The Children's Museum at Holyoke. Carlino's latest project is located at 23 Laurel St. in Northampton and was commissioned by Valley Community Development for a set of newly renovated affordable apartments.

Green maintains studio space in Holyoke, teaches at the Hartford Art School and has work on view at the Boston Center for the Arts. Casis hosts "Art Beat Report" on WHMP 101.5 FM, a segment about art news in the Pioneer

Valley, and has work on view through 2026 at both the Albany International Airport and the Wing Luke Museum in Seattle, Washington.

Allis has worked for years as an educator with schools and communities of all ages and backgrounds on topics like sculptural storytelling, world building, kinetic sculpture art and puppetry. The most recent positions include Clark Art Institute and Hampshire College.

"I hope visitors connect with the passion of these artists and the joy and curiosity their work inspires," Rushing said.

The Taber Art Gallery, located off the lobby of the HCC Library on the second floor of the HCC Donahue Building, is free and open to the public Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. during regular school sessions.



This is one of the works on display for the "Hyper Color" exhibit at the Taber Art Gallery at Holyoke Community College in Holyoke now through Dec. 18. SUBMITTED PHOTO

Jewish Federation joins food drive

SPRINGFIELD – The Jewish Federation of Western Massachusetts joins with Jewish Family Service of Western Massachusetts and Rachel's Table of Western Massachusetts in leading a community-wide food drive to support local families who may face food insecurity as a result of the ongoing federal government shutdown.

Due to the shutdown, millions of Americans including families, seniors, and people with disabilities—are at risk of not receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits in November. This includes many here in Western Massachusetts.

Together with Jewish Family Service, Rachel's Table, area synagogues, and partners across the lower Pioneer Valley Jewish community, the Federation is working to help meet urgent local needs by coordinating the collection and distribution of essential food items. People can contribute by donating at designated drop-off sites; the Jewish Family

Service, Springfield Jewish Community Center, Sinai Temple, and Temple Beth El or by sending items directly through an Amazon Wish List.

"The Jewish Federation of Western Massachusetts is committed to standing with our neighbors during times of uncertainty," said Adam Solender, Interim Executive Director of the Jewish Federation of Western Massachusetts. "When families are faced with the impossible choice between paying bills or putting food on the table, our community steps forward. This food drive represents the Jewish values of compassion and collective responsibility in action."

The Federation also stands with the Jewish Federations of North America, which welcomed recent federal court rulings allowing the use of emergency contingency funds to help ensure that millions of families continue receiving SNAP benefits in November. These funds provide critical, short-

term stability for households that depend on them to feed their families.

"Hungry families can't wait," Solender added. "Every donation, and every act of generosity helps strengthen the safety net that sustains our community. Together, we can ensure that no one is left behind."

Community members are encouraged to drop off non-perishable food items at any of the following locations: Jewish Family Service, 15 Lenox St., Springfield; Springfield Jewish Community Center, 1160 Dickinson St., Springfield; Sinai Temple, 1100 Dickinson St., Springfield and Temple Beth El, 979 Dickinson St., Springfield.

Donations may also be made through the Amazon Wish List by visiting

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/2W7Z-1RTM4DSDS/ref=hz_ls_biz_ex. To learn more about the Jewish Federation of Western Massachusetts, they may visit <https://jewishwestern-mass.org/>.

Gas pump prices decrease by a penny

WESTWOOD – Pump prices across the region are little changed from last week as oil prices hold steady in the \$60 to \$64 a barrel range and domestic inventories of gasoline tighten on higher demand and a widening import and export imbalance.

The Energy Information Administration last week reported a 470,000 barrel a day jump in gasoline demand, rising to a solid 8.9 million barrels a day. While strong for a late October week, the figure landed 230,000 barrels a day lower than the comparable week last year.

Gasoline exports, on the

other hand, fell last week by 363,000 barrels a day to 849,000 barrels a day, according to the EIA, but imports fell as well. All told, 2.7 million more barrels of gasoline left United States than came in last week, which contributed to a sizable 5.9 million barrels decline in inventories, which are now 3% below the 5-year average for the season.

"Along with tightening supplies, petroleum prices gained momentum last week after reports of a temporary trade agreement between the United States and China, which could spur economic activity – and demand for oil and gas," said Mark Schiel-drop, senior spokesperson for AAA Northeast. "Pump prices could stabilize in the short term if inventories stay below seasonal averages."

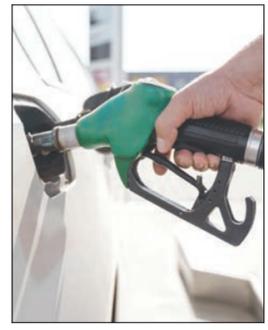
The average gas price in Massachusetts is down a penny from last week (\$2.99), averaging \$2.98 per gallon. Today's price is nine cents lower than a month ago (\$3.07) and six cents lower

than this day last year (\$3.04). Massachusetts' average gas price is five cents lower than the national average.

AAA Northeast's Nov. 3 survey of fuel prices found the current national average down two cents from last week (\$3.05), averaging \$3.03 per gallon. Today's national average price is 12 cents lower than a month ago (\$3.15) and seven cents lower than this day last year (\$3.10).

Today, Oklahoma and Texas have the lowest prices in the nation at \$2.54 and \$2.55, respectively. California and Hawaii hold the highest prices in the nation this week at \$4.65 and \$4.47 respectively. Massachusetts holds the 18th place on the list of highest gas prices in the nation.

AAA Northeast is a not-for-profit auto club with offices in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, New Hampshire and New York, providing nearly 6.8 million local AAA members with travel, insurance, financial and auto-related services.



Access Care Partners and Knights of Columbus join forces to deliver free Thanksgiving meals to those in need

CHICOPEE – Access Care Partners, formerly known as WestMass ElderCare, is proud to announce its continued partnership with the Knights of Columbus Council #4044 to ensure that no one is left without a warm meal this Thanksgiving. On Thanksgiving Day, November 27, volunteers will deliver hot, traditional Thanksgiving dinners to individuals who are without family or who would otherwise go without a holiday meal.

This long-standing community tradition reflects the dedication of both organi-

zations to providing care, comfort, and connection to neighbors in need. "Thanksgiving is a time to come together," said Mary Wetzel, Access Care Partners Nutrition Director. "We're honored to work alongside the Knights of Columbus Council #4044 to share a meal and a sense of belonging with members of our community."

In addition to meal deliveries, a Thanksgiving meal will also be served at the Castle of Knights in Chicopee for anyone who would prefer to share the holiday with others. The meal is free and open to the public, offer-

ing guests a warm, welcoming space to enjoy a delicious Thanksgiving dinner in good company. To reserve a space, please contact Grand Knight Ron Grenier at 413-626-2550.

Meal Registration

Individuals who would like to receive a Thanksgiving meal delivery should contact the Access Care Partners at 413-538-9020 extension 503 to register no later than November 14th.

Volunteer Opportunities

Access Care Partners and the Knights of Columbus are also seeking volunteers to help deliver meals on Thanksgiving Day. Volun-

teers will play a crucial role in ensuring meals reach older adults, individuals with disabilities, and others who may otherwise be isolated during the holiday. Those interested in volunteering are encouraged to call Access Care Partners at 413-538-9020 extension 464 or 483.

This cherished collaboration is more than just a meal—it is a reminder of the strength and compassion of the Western Massachusetts community.

About Access Care Partners: Access Care Partners (formerly WestMass Elder-

Care) has been serving the needs of older adults, individuals with disabilities, and caregivers in Western Massachusetts for over 50 years. Through comprehensive, person-centered services, Access Care Partners supports independence, dignity, and community connection.

About Knights of Columbus:

The Knights of Columbus is a Catholic fraternal organization dedicated to service and charitable initiatives. Each year, the Knights host events to support local families, including their annual Thanksgiving meal tradition.

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Museum Shop set to be open on 'Bazaar Day'

AGAWAM – The Agawam Historical Association Museum Shop will be open on Bazaar Saturday, Nov. 22 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Agawam Historical and Fire House Museum, 35 Elm Street in Agawam Center.

Among items on sale will be the Agawam Historical Association's new Images of America title "Around Agawam and Feeding Hills," which features more than 200 historical photos depicting our town's past.

Bazaar Special – Saturday, Nov. 22 only – Author David Cecchi has donated a limited number of copies of his book

"The Big E - Eastern States Exposition" (2016) to be given as a free gift (\$25 value) with the purchase of all three "Agawam and Feeding Hills" titles: "Agawam and Feeding Hills" (2000), "Agawam and Feeding Hills Revisited" (2005), and "Around Agawam and Feeding Hills" (2025). The author will be available to sign copies during this event.

Copies of Edith LaFrancis's town history book (1980) will also be available. All books are \$25 each.

Other items for sale will be new Thomas Smith House magnets and Fire House Mu-

seum enamel pins, Agawam Historical Association tote bags, reproduction maps, vintage town reports, and other items and souvenirs.

All proceeds benefit the efforts of the Agawam Historical Association to preserve the history of Agawam and Feeding Hills at the Agawam Historical & Fire House Museum and the Thomas Smith House.

The Agawam Historical Association Museum Shop will be open on Bazaar Saturday, Nov. 22 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Agawam Historical and Fire House Museum. SUBMITTED PHOTO



Wreath bazaar set for Nov. 22

AGAWAM – The Agawam Congregational Church will once again host its Holly Wreath Bazaar this Christmas season, taking place on Saturday, Nov. 22 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Browse a variety of goods from our talented crafters and stop by our country store and bakery for fresh vegetables, pies, bars, cookies, and candy. Try your luck at our raffle table—plus, one lucky visitor will win a door prize. Before you head out, treat yourself to lunch at our hot lunch café.

CUT ■ from page 1

For the second straight election, Edward Borgatti, owner of EB's Restaurant, was the top vote-getter among the 16 candidates for city council.

Borgatti beat out Council Vice President Anthony Russo for the top spot, garnering 3,176 votes. Russo was second with 3,137 votes. Dino Mercadante came in a distance third with 2,587 votes. Others making the cut were Robert Rossi, George Bitzas, Rosemary, Sandlin, Thomas Hendrickson, and Anthony Suffriti.

Rickmon placed 11th, garnering 1,932 votes.

Richard Borsari, a political newcomer, was the first runner-up. Smus, Smith, Valego, and Uduak Enyie-ma all finished outside the top 11.

The School Committee race yielded one big surprise as Heather Zielenski, the only challenger on the ballot for one of the six seats against the incumbents, won the entire field. She received 3,079 votes to be the top finish for a two-year seat on the school committee. Zielenski attributed her victory to making a lot of good connections (see related story).

The odd person out in the school committee race was Catherine McDougal, who joined the committee just two years ago. She placed seventh, receiving only 1,955 votes.

Also winning new terms to the school committee were Shelley Borgatti-Reed, Wendy Rua, Dawn DeMatteo, AJ Christopher, and Michael Perry.

As previously reported,

Mayor Christopher Johnson ran for a new two-year term without an official opponent on the ballot. Johnson handily defeated Calabrese two years ago to return to the mayor seat he held from 1990, when he was elected the town's first mayor. Johnson received 3,122 votes, though there were 578 write-in votes for various people. There were a couple of residents who mounted weak write-in campaigns in the few days leading up to the election. A total of 5,088 residents filled out ballots, out of 23,403 registered voters, a turnout of 21.7%, Town Clerk Vincent Gioscia said.

The new terms for all three elected positions will begin on the first Monday in January. A swearing-in ceremony for the candidates will be scheduled in the coming weeks.

WINS ■ from page 1

"Honestly, I was in shock. I had just gotten my four-year-old to sleep when a friend who was at a restaurant getting the results in real time texted me that I might be in 12th place — and then said I was actually the 11th councilor," Rickmon said. "My first response was, 'No I'm not.' I couldn't believe it. I barely slept that night and was running on pure adrenaline and caffeine the next day."

The shock became reality when she attended the city council meeting the following night," Rickmon said. "The following evening, I attended the City Council meeting and was invited to sit with the councilors and speak at the end. That's when it really started to sink in. I'm deeply grateful to everyone who supported me and believed in a campaign built on connection and listening. Since then, I've been working to get ready — I've already started coordinating monthly office hours at the library, updating my website to share important information, and getting looped into meetings so I can hit the ground running in January."

Rickmon will be working over the next two months to prepare for her first term on

the council. Her priorities show an interest in transparency for the city council.

"My immediate priorities are focused on making town government more accessible and understandable for residents," she said. "I plan to continue creating videos and resources that explain council decisions and town issues in plain language, so people know what's happening and how it affects them."

"I'm also conducting a listening tour on summer day camps to hear directly from parents about needs and ideas. Residents can reach me anytime at christine.rickmon@gmail.com to share their thoughts. At the same time, I'm focused on learning the ins and outs of the council — understanding the charter, ordinances, and procedures — so I can participate effectively and make informed decisions for the community."

Rickmon said the Community Relations sub-committee is an assignment she is interested in. She is very interested in open communication with residents.

Heather Zielenski will join the school committee after running in her first election and not only winning a seat, but being the top vote-getter among the seven

candidates for six seats.

"I really credit this win to the amazing relationships I've built right here in our community," Zielenski said. "I was born and raised here, and I've been lucky to spend my career helping people by building connections, supporting families, and doing what I love most: helping others. I've watched kids grow up, helped families buy their first homes, and worked with folks to plan for their futures. This community means everything to me, and I'm so grateful for the trust and support they've shown. I can't wait to keep giving back to the place that I am proud to call home."

Zielenski hopes to be a positive voice for the schools and she plans to listen, learn and work together with the committee in her first term. She wants to support the educators who work hard in town.

"Our teachers and school staff are the heart of our schools," she said. "I'll advocate for the resources, respect, and professional development they deserve so they can continue to inspire our kids every day."

All the elected newcomers will take office in early January.

ZOOM ■ from page 1

mailing address.

Alternatively, any person who desires to comment on this matter may submit written comments to the Department no later than the close of business (5 p.m.) on Wednesday, Dec. 10. Please note that in the

interest of transparency any comments will be posted to our website as received and without redacting personal information, such as addresses, telephone numbers, or email addresses. As such, consider the extent of information you wish to share when submitting comments. The Department

strongly encourages public comments to be submitted by email. If, however, a member of the public is unable to send written comments by email, a paper copy may Page 2 D.P.U. 25-153 be sent to Peter Ray, Secretary, Department of Public Utilities, One South Station, Boston, Massachusetts 02110.

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dog from digesting it and causing further damage. Am I going to judge you for this? No. I do not care, and I have done my best. f. I just want your dog to be healthy.

Perhaps your dog suddenly started vomiting and having diarrhea because you gave them a steak. This isn't a rare occurrence, and I get it. When my kids were toddlers, my dogs had a steady diet of bologna. For that matter, my spouse still can be almost brought to tears when recalling the three-pound roast that he claims may have been the best thing that he ever cooked, even though he only sampled one slice before turning his back and inadvertently leaving the rest for the dog to grab. No vet judged us, and I won't judge you, but I do need to know. Vomiting and diarrhea from that tasty steak can present like a swallowed object, parasites, or an infectious disease. There are so many differen-

tials (or causes) that it can take a while to narrow down the diagnosis. Testing and treatment can be faster (and less expensive) if I have all of the facts.

Maybe your dog got into your medication. Some people are uncomfortable sharing that they are on certain medications. It is okay. Please tell me. Lots of people are on medications for various reasons, and you do not have to reveal any details about your medical history. Even more people seem uncomfortable admitting that the dog got into their teenager's pot. That happens too. In fact, it happens a lot. Every vet I know has treated at least one dog who got into pot. I just want to know what it is and how much you think they got. I won't even judge you if you gave the dog medicine intentionally. I know so many clients who have tried to take care of a sick dog late at night, when they didn't have a babysitter, and decided to consult with Dr. Google. Dr. Google

sometimes seems to recommend over-the-counter medicine or a prescription lying around the house for another dog, or even a human family member. I've been there and done that, too, but when I am treating your dog, I really need to know what medicines they may have taken before I prescribe anything. Not only are different medications countered by different treatments, but certain medications cannot be combined. If a vet does not know that a dog has accessed a particular medication, the vet can unknowingly make your dog sick by putting your pet on a contraindicated medication.

As I reflect, there is one thing that I only saw once. A couple of years after I became a vet, my dog got into a 5 lb. bag of crushed oyster shells I had bought for my chickens. Crushed oyster shells are very high in calcium so in addition to having to monitor her for the subsequent vomiting and diarrhea, I also had to

monitor her blood calcium. That experience was even more memorable because the shells looked almost fluorescent on the x-ray, which happened to be brightly visible at the very moment that my clinic's regional leadership happened to be passing through on a visit. A glowing and gleaming X-ray with a lot of senior vets present garnered a lot of questions and a lot of advice, but even that did not lead to judgment.

About Nancy Alperson

Dr. Alperson is a small animal and exotic vet at Belchertown Veterinary Hospital. She and her husband have two grown sons, two dogs who love to get into the garbage, four cats who like to get into the dogs' food, eight chickens, and are grandparents to a leopard gecko. Dr. Alperson and her older son run the Zoe's Rocks Facebook page in memory of her son's friend Zoe Wolfus and to help raise awareness of mental health issues and encourage kindness.

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Deadline for Calendar submissions is Nov. 26, 2025.