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AGAWAM

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Public hearing scheduled for name change **protest** petition

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – There is a public hearing concerning the name change of Robinson Park School to William P. Sapelli School scheduled for the next school committee meeting on Dec. 12 at 6:30 p.m in the Agawam Junior High School Auditorium.

Many Agawam residents have expressed their displeasure at this recent name change, with over 50 residents signing a petition started by Resident Joyce Dolat in protest.

Dolat has been instrumental in bringing together community members dissatisfied with this recent name change. She not only started the petition, but also held protests and spread word of her efforts through town Facebook forums.



Joyce Dolat leads a protest at the newly renamed William Sapelli Elementary School. TURLEY PHOTOS BY QUINN SUOMALA



The school was renamed right before the summer and a dedication ceremony was held in early October. Despite that, Agawam resident Joyce Dolat is petitioning for the name to be changed back to Robinson Park School.

Dolat feels that the name change was unnecessary and dishonors the legacy of Robinson Park School.

"I feel this school is part of Agawam's history and should never have been renamed," she said.

According to Dolat's research, Robinson Park School was initially named because of the land John Robinson donated to MA in 1934 for the park.

In 1995, Agawam reclaimed part of park land, which the school, skate park and dog park are now built on.

Many residents, including Dolat herself, have a connection to the school and its original name.

"Many elderly I spoke to were the first Robinson Park School students and do not use computers much," Dolat said. "They

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Elementary school principals discuss their action plans for the year

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – The principals from Agawam's four elementary schools presented updates on their action plans to the school committee at their meeting on Nov. 14. These action plans were based on MCAS results from earlier this year.

Agawam, district-wide, was highly successful in mathematics MCAS testing, even with the difficulties the schools, and many other schools across the country, encountered due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Our math scores continue to be a strong point for us, even with the COVID bubble, across all four schools," William P. Sapelli School

Principal Stephanie Harris said. Additionally, most fourth grade students throughout all four elementary schools met their student growth percentiles.

"This means that from third to fourth grade all kids are making growth," Harris said.

Overall, all four schools are progressing toward their target goals.

However, there were still some downfalls in MCAS scores that they will continue to focus upon improving throughout this school year.

Writing scores across all four schools left room for improvement. Students struggled with making inferences in their writing as well as with writing stamina.

All four schools are working

in improving their vertical alignment of curriculum, specifically focusing on skills they saw were lacking based on MCAS scores. This means that they want to ensure that the skills students need for the tests will be taught as early as kindergarten and then built upon as the years go by.

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Activation an 'eye-opening' experience for Velis

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

Senator and Major in the National Guard John Velis was activated early in the month of October to assist with Massachusetts' Emergency Assistance Shelter System.

During this time period, his office remained fully open and operational. After Velis had completed his National Guard duty shifts, he would receive updates from the office so he could stay on top of all the issues in the district.

"At the end of the day I did and could pick up my phone and call my chief of staff and get my whole team on there to ask what is out



John Velis

there, what are the issues, what is going on," Velis said. "I was keeping up to speed on all the issues."

Velis, who represents Holyoke and Agawam as part of his multi-community district in Hampden and Hampshire counties, said this activation stood out from his past experiences

as the work he did tied in with an issue he is working with as a state senator.

"What's fascinating about this activation is that it directly correlates with what I would argue is the biggest, most robust debate and issue we have in the Com-

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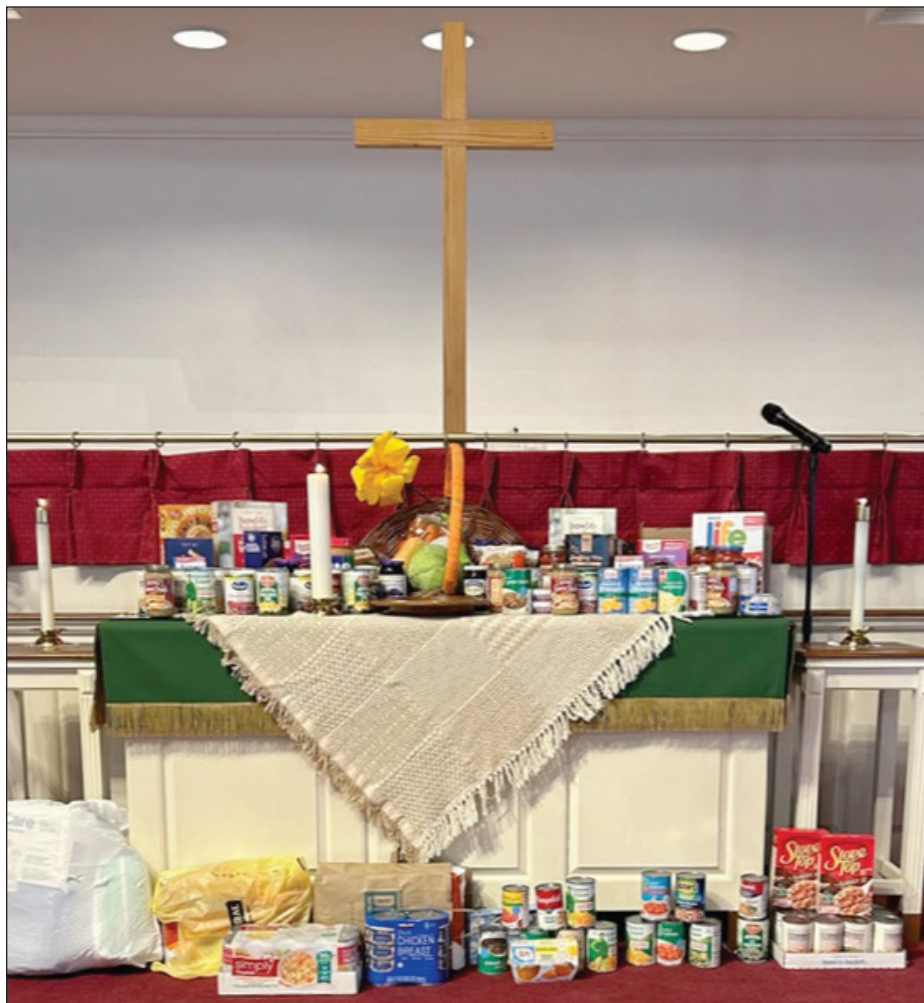
Turkey Day Tradition



The Agawam High School football team competes last Thursday morning against West Springfield team at Clark Field. The teams have been meeting for nearly 100 years on Thanksgiving morning. Agawam came up short in the matchup this year. Details and more photos on page 7.

TURLEY PHOTO BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI





Agawam Congregational Church members gathered food for a nearby food pantry at its Nov. 16 service. COURTESY PHOTO

Congregational Church gathers items for food pantry

AGAWAM – On Thanksgiving Sunday, Nov. 19, Agawam Congregational Church members and friends brought non-perishable food items to be placed at the altar for future delivery to the Agawam-West Springfield-Feeding Hills Parish Cupboard located at 738 Main St. in West Springfield in time for folks to have something for the Thanksgiving holiday.

Agawam Congregational Church will serve Communion on Sunday, Dec. 3. The church is located at 745 Main St. in Agawam's Historic District.

For more information, contact the church office at 413-786-7111 or email office@agawamcong.com.

The church is handicapped accessible with a large parking lot.

Agawam Day in Florida to be held March 6 at national park

ST.PETERSBURG, FLA. – Agawam Day will be held on Wednesday, March 6, 2024, from 10 a.m. to noon, at Fort De Soto National Park, shelter #14, in St. Petersburg.

Agawam Day in Florida has been held on the first Wednesday of March since 1981. Each year 40 to 60 former

Agawam residents join together for a reunion of friends and family for a picnic, raffles, beautiful scenery, hugs and to share old memories.

For more information contact Hank Drewnowski by cell phone call or text at 860-462-7273 or by email at hdrew2452@gmail.com.

Thanks given to Agawam residents for their generosity

AGAWAM – On Nov. 16th, Work Opportunity Center Inc. held their 12th annual food drive in front of Geissler's Supermarket in Agawam to collect items for donation to the Springfield Open Pantry. WOC Inc. would like to thank Agawam residents for their overwhelming generosity.

Together we raised \$276.26 in monetary donations and were able to bring over 530 non-perishable items to The Springfield Open Pantry via the Mayflower Marathon. Many local families will benefit this holiday season from these donations.

WOC Inc. is a nonprofit agency in Western Mass, which services adults

with developmental disabilities.

The Agawam/West Springfield location runs Community Based Day Services program that is designed to enable individuals to enrich their life and enjoy a full range of activities by providing opportunities in social, educational and community activities.

Since its inception, the CBDS program has been building relationships in the community and becoming full participants in what the Greater Springfield area has to offer to its residents and visitors. It was the CBDS program that organized and carried out the food drive to benefit The Open Pantry.

Rotary Club to host Holiday Concert

AGAWAM – The Agawam Rotary Club will present a holiday concert featuring Richie Mitnick and Friends on Thursday, Dec. 14, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main St.

A suggested donation of \$ 5 will be used to help fund the club's community service projects. In addition, the club will be accepting non-perishable food items to help support the Parish Cupboard.

Mitnick and his talented Friends are well known in the area for their excellent performances.



Feline Friends Inc. announces winter fundraisers

AGAWAM – Feline Friends Inc. Cat Sanctuary of Feeding Hills, MA will be holding food/supply drives at Smithland Pet & Garden Center on Saturday, Dec. 2, Jan. 6 and Feb. 3 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Volunteers will be accepting food, litter & monetary donations for our kitties. Opened bags/boxes will also be accepted. Gift cards from various pet stores or Costco would be much appreciated.

Giving Tuesday is on Nov. 28 this year. We appreciate any donations at Paypal-info@felinefriendsinc.org; Venmo - @Feline-Friends and by check - Feline Friends Inc., P.O. Box 174, Feeding Hills, MA 01030.

Our Dec. 2 event will feature a raffle for a Winter themed basket as well as surprises. In January 2024, we will be selling raffle

tickets for our February Calendar Raffle. More information to come.

Smithland, a valued sponsor, is stocked with Friskies Pate or Shreds canned food (single flavored cases preferred), some Fancy Feast varieties and unscented, clumping cat litter. All donations are gratefully accepted. Our donation bin is located near the cash registers.

Other Wish List items: Disinfecting wipes, paper towels, puppy pee pads, dry cat or dog food for strays and colonies.

Special thanks to our monthly donors and everyone who donated in November either at our events, bins, through the mail or Paypal/Venmo: Joanne L, Joan W, Sue B and Kristina L, Crystal M, Kay A, Glen G, George P, and Heidi M.

We are thankful to all of our community members for their support throughout the year. Just a reminder that we have collection bins at the Agawam Public Library & the Agawam Senior Center as well as at Smithland in Agawam. Please add your contact information if you would like an acknowledgement.

Feline Friends Inc. is a community-based, nonprofit 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.

Grange holiday fair on Dec. 9

FEEDING HILLS – Community Grange #382 will hold its annual Holiday Bazaar on Saturday, Dec. 9, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the Grange Hall located at 47 North West St.

Featured will be a bake sale, soup and baked beans to go, ornaments, wreaths, décor, S & S Handmade Soap, Trudi's Sewing Creations, Joelle and Pat's knitted hats, mittens, scarves, Paws-a-tively Delectable and Kathy's hand-sewn items.

New this year will be plushies, crocheted blankets and items for infants.

There will be a basket raffle and the fair is open to the public.

Boldyga joins Republican Caucus in urging release of state employee raises

BOSTON – State Rep. Nick Boldyga, R-Southwick, recently joined his colleagues in the Massachusetts House Republican Caucus to demand action from Democratic leadership regarding the release of pay raises for over 100,000 state employees. In a joint letter addressed to the Democratic leadership, the Caucus urged immediate action to report on part of a larger omnibus spending bill currently in conference committee that would ensure full funding for collective bargaining agreements approved earlier this year.

At the center of the call for action is

the delay in providing funding for the agreed-upon pay raises for a vast number of state workers. Boldyga voiced concerns over the delay caused by disagreement among Democratic leadership, citing that withholding these pay raises demonstrates an ongoing dysfunction and lack of transparency within the Democratic controlled legislature.

"Delaying the funding for essential pay raises that have been agreed upon for over 100,000 state employees is unacceptable," said Boldyga. "Holding these pay raises hostage because they were bundled into a larg-

er spending bill is a stark reflection of the dysfunction in Boston under one-party rule. Our hardworking state employees deserve fair compensation, and it's irresponsible to politicize their livelihoods in this manner."

The joint letter emphasizes the urgency of the matter stating "that the lack of agreement on other unrelated areas of the close out budget does not justify continuing to hold up indefinitely the funding of these CBAs...". The letter further highlights the need to separate the funding for employee pay raises from the broader legislative package to ensure timely and deserved

compensation for state workers.

"There's simply no excuse," said Boldyga. "The cost of living in Massachusetts continues to rise, making it more and more difficult for many hardworking state employees to make ends meet. We owe it to them to approve funding for their pay raises before the Thanksgiving holiday."

Boldyga said he remains committed to advocating for fair compensation of all state employees, urging swift action from Democratic leadership to ensure that these pay raises are not further delayed or are continued to be used as political leverage.



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Agawam Library offers many December happenings

AGAWAM – The Agawam Library has plenty to offer this December. As the holiday rush begins, don't forget about all the great regular and featured programs we have just for adults. Celebrate the joys of a good old game night with board games and snacks. There will be multiple tables for multiple games, so bring a friend or meet some like-minded gamers at the event. Light refreshments like cookies and juices will be available. Anyone with board game recommendations should let the library know. Feel This is a drop-in event for adults and will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 6, at 6:30 p.m., in the Clini Community Room.

Adult Craft Night

Our Adult Craft Night features a patron favorite: Decorate some ugly holiday attire. Bring the item of clothing and the library will provide all the materials needed to make it ugly. Craft Night is Monday, Dec. 11, at 6:30 p.m., in the Clini Community Room. Please register online www.agawamlibrary.org or call the Information Desk at 413-789-1550, ext. 4.

Submitting trees

Trees can be submitted for the Festival of Trees until Dec. 15. Teams, co-workers, classrooms and individuals are invited to make a tree from recycled or up-cycled materials and submit as part of the library's

Festival of Trees. Guidelines and entry forms are available online at <https://www.agawamlibrary.org/adults-2/>. Please contact Adult Services Librarian, Cher Collins at 413-789-1550, ext. 8851 with any questions.

Festival Fun nights

Patrons who submitted trees and the general public are invited to one of two Festival Fun Nights to tour the trees throughout the library and participate in fun, holiday activities. Families with children are invited to attend a Fun Night on Monday, Dec. 18, at 6:30 p.m., for family crafts, games and light refreshments. Adults are invited to join us for a Festival of Trees Fun Night on Tuesday, Dec. 19, at 6:30 p.m. in the Clini Community Room. Activities will include a scavenger hunt, sugar cookie-decorating, an adult craft and a quick round of trivia.

Raffle tickets

There is still time to get your tickets for the Friends of the Library holiday gift basket raffle. Tickets are available at the Information Desk for \$2 each or \$10 for six tickets. Baskets are on display at the library. The drawing will be held at noon on Saturday, Dec. 16. Please be sure to get tickets soon.

Boston Tea Party

Did you know that Dec. 16, 2023 marks

the 250th anniversary of the Boston Tea Party? Thanks to colleagues at the Tewksbury Public Library, the library is able to co-host a fascinating presentation that examines the interesting history that led to the infamous Tea Party. Anglophile and former UK resident Claire Evans joins author, genealogist and librarian Debra Dudek for a joint discussion of the tea party's most famous "partiers" and how to use genealogy to learn more about those who participated. Join the library for a special virtual program on Saturday, Dec. 16, at 2 p.m. via Zoom. Participants can register through our online calendar www.agawamlibrary.org. Links to the presentation will be emailed to registrants prior to the presentation. This program is sponsored by the Agawam Center Library Association and the Friends of the Tewksbury Public Library.

Tea and Trivia

Tea and Trivia will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 20, at 2:30 p.m. Participants should get ready to have their wits tested with a mix of general knowledge and holiday/winter-themed trivia. Adults will play one round of Jeopardy-style trivia and one round of pub-style trivia. Prizes will be awarded to the winning teams and tea and refreshments will be served. Please register online www.agawamlibrary.org or by call-

ing the Information Desk at 413-789-1550, ext. 4.

Winter reading challenge

Get ready for our Winter Reading Challenge by learning all about Beanstack. The library also uses Beanstack for its summer reading program, and will use it for the upcoming winter reading challenge as well. Outside of challenges, patrons may also use Beanstack to record what and how often they read. Please bring whichever mobile device is most comfortable to use. Library Tech sessions will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 20, at 6:30 p.m., and Tuesday, Dec. 26, at 10 a.m. Please register online www.agawamlibrary.org

Holiday hours

Please note that the library will be open 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 22, and Saturday, Dec. 23. The library will be closed on Monday, Dec. 25 and Jan. 1. Visitors are welcome at the library Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Friday and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. During the winter months, any closings or late openings will be reported to local television stations 22 and 40, as well as the stations' websites. In-clement weather closings or delays will also be posted on the library's social media platforms. Please visit the library website for more information www.agawamlibrary.org.

Photography submissions needed at APL

AGAWAM – The Friends of the Agawam Public Library is looking for entries to their 4th Open Judged Virtual Photography Show, to be on display after March 15, 2024. The show provides a platform to recognize and encourage photographers and benefits the Agawam Public Library. Twenty-one awards totaling \$1,540 will be determined by judging done on March 1, 2024. Dave Roback and Tim Donelan, both well recog-

nized photographers, will be the judges.

The show is divided into four categories of photography: creative, nature, photojournalism and pictorial. The entry fee is \$25 per entry. Deadline for submissions is Feb. 15, 2024. If we have not received sufficient entries, the show will be cancelled and all fees returned.

All images must be original, made by the photographer, captured by film or digitally,

and cannot be previous entries in our show.

The Prospectus and Entry Form can be accessed by going to www.agawamlibrary.org and scrolling down to the Friends of the Library widget. From there you will be able to click on a link to the show's information.

For further information please contact Bob Kadis at r.kadis@comcast.net or at 413-789-4814.

Pinocchio showing at ACC Dec. 2

AGAWAM – Pinocchio is coming to Agawam Congregational Church on Saturday, Dec. 2 at 6:15 p.m. the original, animated movie made in 1940 will be shown for free in the church hall complete with a full-sized movie screen, popcorn, and water.

Children must be accompanied by an adult. Reservations are to be made by Thursday, Nov. 30 at noon by contacting the church office at 413-786-7111 or office@agawamcong.com. The church, located at 745 Main St., is handicapped accessible with a large parking lot.

Yuletree Jubilee now underway

WEST SPRINGFIELD – Starting Friday, Nov. 20, the Red Thread Network for the arts will host the Seventh Annual Yuletree Jubilee in the West Springfield Public Library Community Room, 200 Park Ave. Admission is free.

Twenty two trees, decorated and donated by local businesses, organizations and individuals, will be displayed and raffled

off for 10 days to the delight of visitors. The hours are Thursday, Friday, Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. The drawing will take place on Sunday, Dec. 3 at 2 p.m. For More information contact Jane at jane.trompe@comcast.net or log on to the web page www.redthreadnetworkforthearts.org or visit our Facebook page Yuletree Jubilee.

PLEASE RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

Positions open on Board of Appeals

AGAWAM – Please be advised that there are two openings on the Agawam Zoning Board of Appeals effective January 2024. One opening is for a regular position and the other for the alternate position.

Interested parties should contact Barbara Bard in the City Council Office at 726-9716 or send in a letter of interest to bbard@agawam.ma.us as soon as possible.

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Opinion

Guest Column



Christmas-time questions for the Garden Lady

A reader from Palmer wrote in with this holiday question for the Garden Lady: "I enjoyed your wreath-making column last week. I thought it was interesting that you advised scouring the landscape for suitable greenery. Overgrown boxwood shrubs are plentiful at home. Can I harvest the tips for making my own holiday wreaths and swags? If so, how do I ensure that the shrubs look good come spring?"

Yes, you can certainly harvest boxwood, especially since your plants are considered "overgrown." A haircut doesn't sound as if it will do much harm, even though it's the off season.

Rather than snip just the tips, however, insert your clippers further into the plant where the growth has become woody. Cutting deeper in several random spots will make "windows" for new growth, at a reduced size!

The addition of boxwoods to your wreaths, planter boxes and swags will offer a nice variation in texture to coarser greenery.

Tabletop "trees" made almost entirely out of boxwood make great Christmas centerpieces.

Here is how you do it, straight from the archives: Cut a piece of wet floral foam into an elongated triangle and secure it in your container of choice. I prefer to use a plastic centerpiece base available from the florist - the bottom of the foam fits in perfectly.

From your collection of boxwood or other greens, choose a nice, pointed piece for the top of the tree and place it into the foam an inch or so; three or four inches will be left sticking out the top. If leaves or other stems along the branch are in the way of insertion, remove them first so that the smallest hole possible will be made in the foam.

Now, gauge the size of the rest of your tree by inserting pieces of greenery at the halfway point as well as at the very bottom.

After that, fill in between the top and middle and middle and bottom, turning the foam as you go, so that a multidimensional tree results. Once greenery completely covers the foam, you can decorate it any way you like.

Tiny glass balls, battery-powered lights, dried cranberries or cinnamon sticks are just a few options. Don't forget to water the tree at the base - the foam will absorb moisture and keep the greens hydrated for weeks of enjoyment.

Marissa, who reads the Ware River News, posed this timely question concerning flowering gifts. "I purchased an amaryllis kit as a gift for my sister. Do you have any tips for to make sure it grows and flowers well?"

Sure! As long as the amaryllis bulb is dry and free of soft spots it should bloom just fine. Like other flowering bulbs, the amaryllis is a self-contained unit ready to do its thing!

Just follow these simple planting instructions: fill the container with moistened growing medium to about one-half to two-thirds full. Position the bulb on top and add the rest of the potting soil - the upper portion and the neck should rest just above the rim of the pot.

JUMP | page ?



Letters to the Editor

About the fairness of WEP and GPO



Dear Rusty

I was married to my ex-husband for 30 years. For 14 of those years, I was an unemployed mom and community volunteer. After my sons were grown, I began teaching in California and earned a teacher pension. That teacher pension eliminates all the spousal benefits my husband paid for. How can that be justified? I, like a number of my retired friends, rent out rooms in my house to be able to live on a small teacher's pension and get none of my earned spousal benefits.

Signed: Frustrated Teacher

Dear Frustrated Teacher

I can only say that your frustration is shared by many retirees from public service in States, which do not participate in the federal Social Security program, that is, neither the employee nor the State contribute to the federal Social Security program. There are about 26 states including California, which exempt at least some of their employees and themselves from paying Social Security payroll taxes, but those states are obligated to provide retirement benefits robust enough to offset the loss of Social Security benefits, which will occur later in life after the employee retires.

As controversial as these laws - the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset - are, they have withstood legal challenges since they were enacted four decades ago.

Because you have a "non-covered" pension from your state employment, WEP reduces any personal Social Security retirement benefit you may have earned elsewhere and, to your specific point, the GPO has eliminated the spousal benefit you might otherwise have been entitled to from your ex-husband.

Like you, many who are affected believe this to be unfair, but Congress has steadfastly failed to enact legislation to repeal these provisions or even to soften their impact. The likely reason is that Congress has evaluated the fundamental premise of the provisions and concluded they appropriately equalize the way benefits are paid to all Social Security beneficiaries.

It might help to think of it this way: in normal circumstances, if one spouse has a personally earned Social Security retirement benefit, which is more than 50% of their partner's Full Retirement Age amount, no spousal benefit is paid (the spouse benefit is offset by the recipient's own SS retirement benefit).

The GPO, the provision which affects SS spousal and survivor benefits) applies that same logic for a spouse who has a "non-covered" pension earned outside of the Social Security program, their spousal benefit is offset by the amount of the person's own "non-covered" retirement pension. The one difference is that the GPO offset is actually a bit smaller (2/3rds of the non-covered pension vs. 100% offset for a spouse with their own SS retirement benefit).

Both WEP, which reduces SS retirement benefits and the GPO, which reduces spousal or survivor benefits, are consequences of working for a State which has chosen to not participate in the federal Social Security program, and those states

SECURITY | page 5



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Schools & Youth



I received an email from a Brimfield resident. He said he had a few song sparrows in his yard in late October along with white-throated sparrows.

The song sparrow is six inches long and has a whitish breast with brown streaks. A distinguishing mark is a black, central spot on its chest. The song sparrow's crown is reddish brown and it has gray eyebrows. Its tail is long and rounded. Song sparrows feed on the ground eating seeds, insects and some fruit.

This sparrow's song is a few repeated notes followed by a rich and varied warble. Its call includes a "tsp" and "tchump." The female lays three to five greenish, white eggs with dark marks in a cup like nest of grasses and occasionally leaves. She place the nest on the ground, in a shrub or weeds.

The male song sparrow defines his ter-



Song sparrow

ritory by singing from prominent perches in about 1/2 to 1 1/2 acres. The male chases the female away when she first arrives and reduces the amount of his singing. Courtship includes male diving at the female and her making a trill like call.

Song sparrows inhabit dense shrubs at the edge of open areas such as fields, yards and streams. They inhabit this area year round.

Other Brimfield birds

The Brimfield resident said he had



Cedar waxwing

juncos and one golden crown and one ruby-crowned kinglet. He also saw four male Eastern bluebirds, a pair of house finches and juncos. He said, "The 'best' sighting was a male American kestrel. It was perched on a wire, flew to a tree and then down into the grass where it caught what looked like a mouse or vole."

Cedar waxwings

My daughter and family saw a flock of cedar waxwings eating berries in Granby near Horse Caves.

Pond birds

The Brimfield resident did a tour of some ponds in Brimfield, Sturbridge and Warren recently. He reported lots of Canada geese, but not a lot of ducks other than mallards. He saw two-ringed necked ducks in Warren and a robin eating fruit from a mountain ash tree.

He compiled a list of birds seen Nov. 18 in Brimfield, Sturbridge and Warren. It included 33 mallards, 76 Canada geese, a pair of hooded mergansers (male and female), two great blue herons and two mourning doves.

Feeders

I still have not put out my suet feeder until I am sure the black bears are hibernating. I have lost too many suet feeders to black bears; they either destroy them or take off with them. There must be a pile of them in the woods somewhere.

I do put some bird seed out during the day, but I only put a small amount for the birds. I include shelled peanuts as the tufted titmice, woodpeckers and blue jays love them. Yes, the squirrels do as well.

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by calling me at 413-967-3505, leaving a message at extension 100, emailing mybackyard88@aol.com or edowne@turley.com or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005.

SECURITY ■ from page 4

are obligated to inform their employees of those consequences. I know that doesn't make your situation any less frustrating, but Congress "justifies" these provisions as being necessary to equalize how benefits are paid to all Social Security beneficiaries.

There are about 2 million beneficiaries affected by WEP and over 700,000 affected by the GPO, most of whom share your displeasure. Nevertheless, Congress has so far maintained both these provisions as originally enacted. If you wish to add your voice to those who believe WEP and GPO are unfair, you may wish to contact your

federal Congressional Representatives to express that point.

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

GARDEN ■ from page 4

The bulb may rot if it stays too wet, so add water only when the soil dries out. Temperatures should be kept around 60 degrees.

Once the sprouting occurs, fertilizer can be added, but the amaryllis will likely bloom well without it. Stake heavy flower stalks as they form to prevent them from snapping.

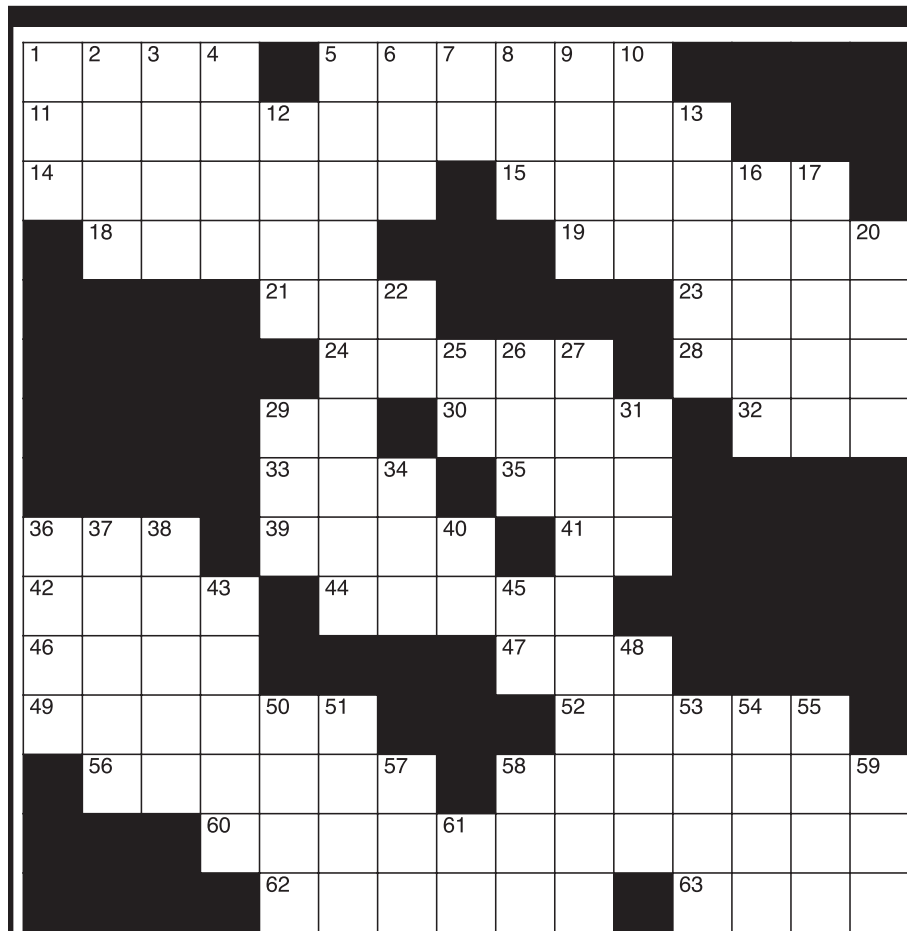
Keep blooms looking their best for the greatest amount of time by pinching away anthers before they form pollen, and by housing the plant in a cool room of the house.

Pet owners be forewarned, toxic alkaloids present in these tennis ball-sized

bulbs can cause vomiting and diarrhea in animals who have consumed them. Dogs, who are more likely to play with and chew objects this size, are at greater risk.

Purdue University states that the stomach upset will likely cure itself within a few hours, but that special medical attention should be given to weak, old, or otherwise in-firmed dogs who have come in contact with amaryllis bulbs.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 31 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.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Old English letters
- 5. Sculpture
- 11. Showing up again
- 14. Tie the knot again
- 15. Washington city
- 18. Stiff structures in invertebrates
- 19. Mark over a vowel
- 21. Explosive
- 23. Popular race: ___ 500
- 24. Pile up
- 28. Mint
- 29. Commercial
- 30. A minute amount (Scottish)
- 32. Small Eurasian deer
- 33. Baseball stat
- 35. Numbers cruncher
- 36. Japanese masked drama
- 39. Gasteyer and de
- 41. Blood group
- 42. Assist in wrongdoing
- 44. Language spoken in Cameroon and Chad
- 46. Grayish-white
- 47. A woolen cap of Scottish origin
- 49. Microorganism
- 52. Place under prohibition
- 56. Calm, dependable
- 58. Congressman
- 60. Force
- 62. As a result of this document
- 63. One of two main branches of Islam
- 3. Geographical region of Finland
- 4. Ejected saliva
- 5. A way of performing
- 6. Scotland's longest river
- 7. One of the six noble gases (abbr.)
- 8. Body art
- 9. Two-toed sloth
- 10. Electronic counter-measures
- 12. Foolish person (Brit.)
- 13. Of the wind
- 16. Grand home
- 17. Sound
- 20. English river
- 22. Symbol indicating ownership
- 25. Exclamation of surprise
- 26. Pouch
- 27. Apart from
- 29. Satisfaction
- 31. The bill in a restaurant
- 34. Sea bream
- 36. Port in southern Japan
- 37. Double-reed instruments
- 38. Center
- 40. South Dakota
- 43. An orderly crowd
- 45. Indicates position
- 48. ___-pedi
- 50. Nonsense (slang)
- 51. Republic of Ireland
- 53. Nocturnal flyers
- 54. American state
- 55. Clusters in fern fronds
- 57. Patriotic women
- 58. A person's brother or sister
- 59. Breed of sheep
- 61. Popular film "Despicable ___"

CROSSWORD SOLUTION ON PAGE 11

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Bright Nights at Forest Park open through Jan. 1



Bright Nights at Forest Park, a three-mile drive through 700,000 lights, will be open in Springfield through Jan. 1, 2024. COURTESY PHOTO

SPRINGFIELD – Bright Nights at Forest Park opened Nov. 22 and will be open through Jan. 1, 2024. It includes a spectacular three-mile drive with more than 700,000 lights. The displays surround the holiday revelers as they travel the three-mile route through arches and tunnels and larger-than-life displays. These include Seuss Land, Toy Land, Victorian Village, Jurassic World, a replica of the Springfield Municipal Group with Santa flying over, towering candles, nativity, menorah, Kwanzaa displays and more.

The 29th season, which opened on Wednesday, Nov. 22, 2023, features more activities than ever before so that visitors can extend their experience outside of the car. At Santa's Magical Forest, which is lo-

ated just after Seuss Land, the Jolly Ol' Elf himself will greet visitors and pose for photographs through Christmas Eve. There will be a grand carousel to ride, snacks to munch on, souvenirs to take home and selfies to take to remember the experience.

On Tuesday, Dec. 4 and 11, there will be free face painting. On Wednesday, Dec. 5 and 12, there will be Zoo Nights with special activities at the Zoo at Forest Park.

Because every member of the family should enjoy Bright Nights, be sure to bring the pets along for the ride. On Friday, Dec. 1 and 15, the furry family members can have their picture taken with Santa.

For those planning ahead, reservations are being accepted for horse-drawn wagon and carriage rides, and Supper with Santa

at the Barney Carriage House.

General admission tickets, valid for any night of the event, are \$23. Discounted tickets for specific dates are also available in limited quantities. Also, \$10 Tuesday admission tickets are valid for Tuesday, Dec 5, and Tuesday, Dec. 12. Limousine admission tickets are available for \$35 each. Big Y World Class Markets has general admission tickets for sale for \$18 with Big Y Membership.

The lights will be lit nightly at 5 p.m., and glow through 9 p.m., Sunday through Thursday, and 10 p.m. Fridays, Saturdays, and holidays that include Christmas Eve, Christmas, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. For more information and all of the activities, visit brightnights.org.

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Deadline for photos and forms is Friday, December 6, 2023

SPORTS

Brownies lead early, but fall on Thanksgiving

AGAWAM – Last Thursday morning, Agawam headed into West Springfield looking to break a four-game losing streak on Thanksgiving. The Brownies got a first-half touchdown from Nicholas Ugolini, who did a lot of rushing for Agawam throughout the game, but West Springfield had a big second half and came away with the 37-20 win. Agawam

would lead 7-6 at halftime after stopping a two-point conversion late in the first half. Agawam got the ball with about a minute remaining in the first half and got two-thirds of the way down the field, but could not score before the break. West Springfield's offense turned it on during the second half. Agawam finishes the season 5-6.



Domenick Pisano looks to make a handoff.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Rian Villareal returns a punt.



Joseph Kravetz blocks on the defensive line.



Benjamin Tokarev kicks an extra point for the Brownies.



Nicholas Ugolini and Michael Sibilia both go for a fumbled ball.



Nicholas Ugolini goes for the left sideline on a carry.

Brianna Manes represents Agawam

HOLYOKE – Last Tuesday night, Brianna Manes represented Agawam girls volleyball in

the International Volleyball Hall of Fame All-Star Game held at Holyoke Community College. The

event featured two games with second teamers facing off followed by first-team selections.

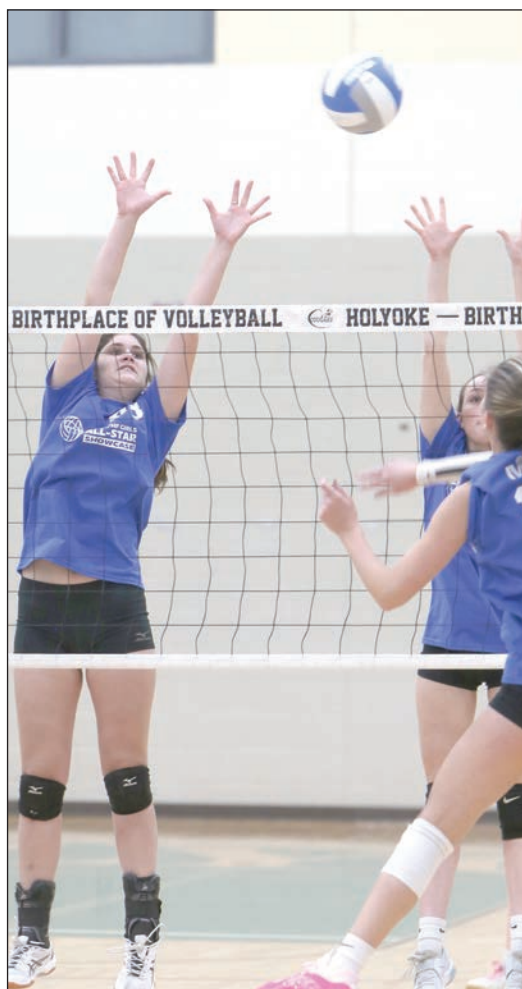
Girls soccer all-stars shine

SPRINGFIELD – Last Monday evening at Pope Francis High School, the Senior All-Star Games were held. Two games took place, with Class C and D playing in one

game and Class A and B playing in another. The games featured the best senior players from all Western Mass. High School girls soccer programs.



Agawam was represented by Alivia Carrier, Isabella Castro, and Angelina Kozhen-evsky. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM



Brianna Manes sends a set to a teammate.



Brianna Manes attempts a block.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

Sports

Team effort results in big shutout of Utica

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds (10-8-1-0) put together a total team effort and dominated the Utica Comets (6-6-3-0) in a 7-0 shutout win inside the MassMutual Center on Saturday night in the team's Hockey Fights Cancer game.

Vadim Zherenko got the start in the net for the T-Birds and had a perfect performance, stopping all 33 saves he faced on the night for his first career AHL shutout. In the opposite crease, Utica goaltender Isaac Poultier surrendered seven goals on 29 T-Birds shots in the loss.

It was a special night for the Bitten family, as the team donned lavender jerseys for the game to support Will and Sam Bitten and the Bitsy's Army cause. Bitsy's Army was created by the brothers to raise awareness for those battling cancer and to honor their late cousin Martin Piche. Piche tragically passed away from brain cancer back in 2021.

Springfield had several prime scoring opportunities in the opening minutes. Nathan Walker saw linemate Adam Gaudette sneak behind the Utica defense on the left side, threading the team's top scorer a perfect breakaway pass. Unfortunately,

Gaudette's shot was stopped by the left pad of Poultier.

The work of the Springfield penalty killers got their team on the board first. While creating pressure in Utica's zone, Walker found Matthew Peca for a one-timer in the high slot after stripping a Utica skater of the puck in the left-wing corner. The captain fired home a perfect one-timer for a shorthanded goal, his fifth goal of the year, which gave the T-Birds a 1-0 lead at 13:16. The score would remain 1-0 as the teams entered their dressing rooms for the first intermission.

Exactly halfway through the second period, the T-Birds struck once again. Defenseman Matthew Kessel controlled the puck at the blue line before firing a low shot toward Poultier. Although Poultier made the initial stop, MacKenzie MacEachern was there to backhand the rebound home for his fourth goal of the season to make it 2-0 Springfield. The scoring did not stop after MacEachern's goal. On a power play, Will



Bitten snapped a shot on goal from behind by Comets forward Kyle Criscuolo. In response, Wyatt Kalynuk stood up for his teammate and engaged in a fight with Criscuolo. Kalynuk's fight fired up his teammates and the crowd, but there would be mayhem that would follow. After a scrum ensued with multiple players going at it, Gaudette and Utica defenseman Cal Foote were given fighting majors with just 13 seconds left in the period. The T-Birds held on to the 3-0 lead, setting the stage for a third period out of the movies.

The T-Birds added to their 3-0 lead in the third, as Zach Dean ripped a shot home for his first professional goal of his career to make it 4-0 at 4:09 off a 2-on-1 rush. The

scoring party would continue after Dean's goal, as Bolduc capitalized for Springfield's second power play marker of the night at 9:54, beating Poultier on the stick side with a perfectly placed wrist.

It was a poetic night for the Bitten family. With 7:02 to go in the game, Will took the puck and raced up ice before dancing around a Utica defender to go in alone on Poultier. Bitten faked a slapper before slipping a five-hole shot into the twine before pointing skyward in celebration. The poetic script got better just a few minutes later when Will tipped in a Coghlan shot for his second of the night. Sam also recorded a milestone on his brother's second tally, as he notched his first AHL point on the secondary assist.

After having just three points in his first 14 games of the season, Will tallied two goals and two assists on this night alone. It was one of five multi-point performances by Springfield skaters on the evening.

The T-Birds return home next Friday, December 1 for another Deuces Wild Friday to take on Wilkes-Barre/Scranton. Puck drop is set for 7:05 p.m. at the Thunderdome.

UMass hosting PV Tip-Off

AMHERST – The Pioneer Valley Tip-Off is a student-run high school basketball showcase featuring some of the best talent in Central and Western Massachusetts.

The PVTO was started in 2011 by Scott Moses and Pat Salle, both students at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and it continues to be entirely student-run by the McCormack Student Leaders Club today.

The PVTO is held each December on the University of Massachusetts Amherst campus, where we strive to create a professional environment for fans and players alike.

This year's event will be held on Dec. 9 and 10 and will feature teams from throughout the region. A schedule is online at www.pioneervalleytip-off.com.

All games will be held at the Mullins Center on the UMass-Amherst campus.

Papermen to join newly-formed Union Hockey League

HOLYOKE – Brian Pratt, president of the Holyoke Papermen Hockey Club, recently announced his team's participation in the newly-formed Union Hockey League. The UHL consists of 16 teams in the northeast and Midwest and is a senior level semi professional league. Pratt said the Papermen are putting together their roster at this point.

"We have 14 skaters and two goalies signed, looking to add about 8 more players," Pratt said. "We have four preseason games in December and 20 regular season games starting Jan 5."

The schedule for the league has not been released yet and Pratt did not say where the Papermen would be playing their home games. Closest to Holyoke are Fitzpatrick Rink, state-run facility right in Holyoke next to Holyoke High School's Roberts Sports Complex, and nearby is Olympia Ice Center in West Springfield.

More information will be forthcoming about the team and the new league as the Papermen prepare to participate in the new league. For more information, go to: <https://www.unionhockeyleague.com/>.



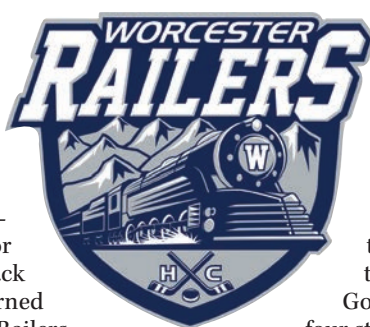
Worcester Railers sweep Adirondack Thunder in ECHL action

GLENS FALLS, NY – The Worcester Railers HC (7-6-2-1, 17pts) took down the Adirondack Thunder (7-4-2-0, 16pts) on Saturday night by the final score of 4-2 in front of a crowd of 4,297 at Cool Insuring Arena. The Railers are back at home against the Kansas City Mavericks this Wednesday, November 29th at 10:05 a.m. ET.

Neither team scored in the first period as Tristan Lennox was excellent in net for Worcester in the first. He made 15 saves on 15 shots to open the game. Scoring opened in the second as Worcester's Anthony Callin (1-0-1) put Worcester ahead 1-0. Adirondack responded with two straight goals from Travis Broughman (1-0-1) and Yushiro Hirano (1-0-1) to give the Thunder the 2-1 lead heading into the third. Worcester

scored three unanswered in the third from Ashton Calder (1-0-1), Jake Pivonka (1-1-2), and Zach White (1-0-1) to seal the win and the weekend sweep, 4-2.

Both goalies were solid in the first period for Worcester and Adirondack as Tristan Lennox turned away 15 shots for the Railers, while Jeremy Brodeur made 7 saves for the Thunder. Two of Lennox's saves came in the dying seconds of the first as the Thunder headed down ice on an odd-man rush. Lennox sprawled across the ice and denied Travis Broughman with an



outstretched right leg to keep the game level going into the second.

Anthony Callin (4th) unleashed a perfect wrist shot from atop the right circle on a spinning feed from Todd Goehring to give the Railers the first goal of the game. Both Callin and Goehring now have points in four straight games. The Thunder struck back with two straight goals to wrap up the second. Travis Broughman (2nd) picked up a Grant Jozefek rebound and deked around Lennox to tie the game 1-1. Four minutes later, Yushiro Hirano (6th) scored on the power play in his third

straight game, putting the Thunder ahead 2-1 going into the third.

Ashton Calder (8th) extended his team lead in goals thanks to a great forecheck from Worcester. Keeghan Howdeshell and Jake Pivonka forced the Thunder defense to turn over the puck. As Howdeshell found it beneath the goal line, he passed it to Calder in front who beat Brodeur five-hole to tie the game 2-2. Jake Pivonka (7th) found the puck alone in the slot about a minute later and beat Brodeur clean glove side to make it a 3-2 Railers lead. Zach White would finish things off with an empty-net goal with just 6.9 seconds left to give Worcester the 4-2 win, picking up all four points this weekend and sweeping the Thunder in Glens Falls.

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HCC opens registration for Wintersession and spring 2024

HOLYOKE – Registration is now open for Wintersession and Spring 2024 semester classes at Holyoke Community College.

HCC's 11-day Wintersession term begins Friday, Dec. 29, and ends Friday, Jan. 12. The spring 2023 semester begins Tuesday, Jan. 16.

With the exception of one environmental science lab course, all Wintersession classes are online. HCC's spring offerings include a mix of on-campus, online, and hybrid courses.

"Wintersession provides a wonderful opportunity for students to add a course they couldn't fit into their schedules in the fall or to get ahead for the spring by taking up to four credits in just two weeks," said Mark Hudgik, interim dean of strategic recruitment initiatives, admissions, and financial aid.

Wintersession classes are offered in anthropology, business law, conflict resolution and mediation, economics, environmental science, geography, management, math, nutrition, sociology, social problems and statistics.

In addition to full-semester, 15-week classes in spring, HCC also offers three accelerated, Flex Start Sessions: Flex 1 (Jan. 16-March 7), Flex 2 (Feb. 5-May 8), and Flex 3 (March 18-May 7).

To sign up for a Wintersession class, please visit hcc.edu/wintersession.

To sign up for Spring 2024, go to hcc.edu/admissions.

In addition, HCC will be hosting a registration express event on Sat., Jan. 6, when prospective students can apply for admission, take the college placement test, meet with an academic adviser, register for classes, set up financial aid, all in one day, as well as learn about MassReconnect, the state's new free community college program for Massachusetts residents 25 and older.

STCC fall student fine arts exhibition on view now through Dec. 9

SPRINGFIELD – The Amy H. Carberry Fine Arts Gallery at Springfield Technical Community College presents the fall Student Fine Arts Exhibition on view beginning Nov. 28. A closing celebration and reception will be held Dec. 9, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Each semester the Fine Arts program faculty at STCC selects their students' finest work. All artwork represents the culmination of a semester's work, from studio paintings, charcoal drawings, traditional gelatin silver photographs and many other outstanding design projects.

"This show is not just a representation of 'art majors,'" said Sondra Peron, associate professor and gallery coordinator. "All artwork is created by students from a variety of academic disciplines. Most fine arts courses at STCC do not require any pre-requisite, and no art experience is required to register for a fine arts course."

For more information about the Fine Arts program: stcc.edu/explore/programs/fine.aa

"This is a great opportunity for our students to showcase their artwork," said Vice President of Student Affairs Darcey Kemp. "While the college has a technical focus, STCC strives to offer a broad educational experience that includes fine arts."

In addition to seeing student art, visitors to the Carberry Fine Arts Gallery can experience the Camera Obscura Room. First conceived in 2013 with analog photography students in the former gallery office, the room offers a unique viewing experience. The laws of optics dictate that light travels in straight lines



The fall Student Fine Arts Exhibition was on view beginning Nov. 28.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

and when light reflects off objects outside a darkened room, some of those rays of light travel through a small hole or aperture in a window, and reform on the opposite wall, upside down. The Camera Obscura Room at STCC is open to the public when exhibitions are on view.

The gallery and camera obscura, located on the campus of STCC in B28, are open Mondays 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Tuesdays 9 a.m.-5:45 p.m., Wednesdays 12:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m., Thursdays 11 a.m.-3pm;

Fridays 10 a.m.-2 p.m., and Saturday 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Parking is available in K Lot. Use Pearl Street gate for easy access. The gallery and all events are free to the public.

This exhibition and associated events are supported in part by the School of Liberal and Professional Studies (LAPS) and the Fine Arts (A.A.) program. stcc.io/carberry

Interested in applying to STCC? Visit stcc.edu/apply or call Admissions at (413) 755-3333.

VELIS ■ from page 1

monwealth right now," Velis said.

"What I was able to see and observe with my own eyes as Major Velis in the National Guard helped me get an incredible understanding when I took that uniform off and put my suit and tie back on and put on my State Senator John Velis uniform."

The activation put him in direct contact with migrant families currently seeking shelter in MA. He worked directly in the hotels that these families were staying in and got to hear their stories for himself.

"It was actually incredibly helpful at a time when we're having this raging debate about immigration, both here in Massachusetts and beyond," Velis said. "It gave me a first-hand look about it so I actually think it really, really helped."

He hopes to use the knowledge he gained throughout this activation to help him lead on this immigration topic in Massachusetts.

Throughout his time service, Velis attended around 20 hotels where people were sheltered. During this time, Velis claims he made a point to really sit down and talk

with them about their lives and what their goals were.

"I couldn't even finish my sentence before they even started answering me or raising their hand and saying 'we want to work,'" Velis said. "And that was every single hotel."

Velis's goal is to continue moving MA in a direction where the state can support the immigrants coming in so they can become self-sufficient.

"Every decision that we should be making should be guided by one principal and one principal only: is what we are doing making the population more or less self-sufficient," Velis said.

Velis wants to ensure the state is enacting policies that will allow and encourage the immigrating people to work.

"The sooner they're self-sufficient, the sooner they can get out and work, the sooner they can afford a place to live and to provide for themselves," Velis said.

However, one of the biggest difficulties Velis claims the state is encountering with the issue of immigration is the lack of federal support.

PROTEST ■ from page 1

had no idea the school was renamed and were quite upset."

With this history in mind, Dolat started the petition that caused the public hearing scheduled for Dec. 12.

"I did the petition so people could have their voices heard," Dolat said.

She collected more than 50 signatures, all of people agreeing with her protest against the name change.

"Those that signed my petition were opposed [to the name change] also," Dolat said. "[They signed] to say that it should never have been changed not just because of the history but because Gerry Smith should not have requested that it be done while the mayor held the position as the school committee chairperson."

Dolat and many others feel it was a conflict of interest for the school committee to vote on this matter while the mayor held a position on the school committee, though Mayor William Sapelli himself did refrain from voting on

the matter.

"I believe there are proper ways to do things and this was not one of them," Dolat said.

Additionally, Dolat felt that the school committee did not give residents of the town ample notice for when they made the vote on the name change.

"Most of the town, as was I, were unaware that any of this had been happening," Dolat said.

Dolat herself didn't even know of the name change until she later read about it on Facebook forum posts, which is what kickstarted her involvement in the issue.

"I don't believe six committee members should ever be the voice of a town without more input," she said.

Through the use of town Facebook forums, Dolat has worked to coordinate efforts to protest the name change.

She hopes that those who signed the petition will be made aware of the upcoming hearing so that they can attend the hearing, should they so desire.

The legal notice for the public hearing is on page 11.

PRINCIPALS ■ from page 1

"We're discussing vertical alignment in k-4 and how we can address these areas early on to set up our students for success," Clifford M. Granger School Principal Stephanie Gendron said. "We own the data as a school and we have to be looking vertically at how to make adjustments starting in kindergarten. Our goal for students is to build upon these skills each year."

Additionally, while the schools are proud of their math scores they hope to continue to increase them.

Throughout the MCAS scores they noticed that students tended to score lower on skills taught earlier on in the year, therefore they will be focusing on circling back to key skills throughout the year so that students do not lose them.

As the year progresses each school will continue to share data with coaches, teachers, staff and the school committee in order to allow time to analyze the data and create plans around it.

On top of looking at the overall achievements of the district, each principal also took the time to reflect on their own school's plans.

William P. Sapelli school specifically is facing obstacles this year as a result of the increased levels of high needs students within the school.

In 2021, according to Harris, the percentage of high needs students within the schools was 50%. By 2023, it was 65%.

This percentage includes students with disabilities, students who are from low-income families and students who are multilingual learners.

It is the multilingual learning students who have seen the greatest population increase, growing from 12% of the school in 2021 to 25% of the school in 2023. Within this population, 16 different languages are spoken.

Sapelli school overall has 288 students. 73 of these students are multilingual learners, and 23 of those students are "newcomers" or non-English speaking students.

Due to this drastic increase, Harris says that Sapelli school has been focused greatly on improving support for these students.

Not only is this important for the multilingual students, but it is important for all students to foster an environment of support and acceptance of differences.

"I want to build a culturally diverse school," Harris said. "When students learn about different cultures through their education they feel more comfortable and safe with those differences later in life."

In order to do this, Harris has been working on training staff and herself on the diverse backgrounds students and their families come from so that all students can be greeted with understanding and respect.

Harris has already had a meeting with Rosa Rodriguez Pion, the new English Learners director. They have discussed how to adjust the program structure at Sapelli school.

Harris has also implemented a Response to Intervention group at each level focused on English Language Learners.

Finally, she has been working in improving professional development, both throughout her school and throughout the district.

"I have been working with the assistant superintendent to [improve PD] so that, whether this is on district professional development days or in-house, we're going to focus on training our teachers properly so that we can build that culturally diverse classroom," Harris said.

This improved PD will focus on addressing the needs of newcomers, refugee students, and multilingual learners with special needs.

Throughout this plan, Harris is working on building trauma-informed classrooms and implementing differentiated instruction for English learners in special education classrooms.

She also is working on an attendance plan specifically focused toward multilingual learning students, as the chronic absence rate for that group is 32%. This will also tie into her work on improving family and community engagement.

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Public Notices

AGAWAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS PUBLIC HEARING Renaming of School Petition

According to the provisions of the Agawam Charter, Article 8, section 8-1 (b), a public hearing shall be held to act by taking a vote on the merits of every petition which is addressed to the School Committee and which is signed by at least 50 voters. The public hearing regarding the name change from Robinson Park School to the William P. Sapelli School is scheduled for **December 12, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.** in the Agawam Junior High School auditorium located at 1305 Springfield Street, Feeding Hills, MA 01030. 11/30, 12/07/2023

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No. HD23P2342EA
Estate of:
Barry Boccasile
Also known as:
Barry N Boccasile,
Barry Nicholas Boccasile
Date of Death: 10/23/2023
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:
A Petition for Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Zachary Landry of Amity, ME requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: **Zachary Landry of Amity, ME** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 12/14/2023.**

This is **NOT** a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice

to you. UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara M Hyland, First Justice of this Court.
Date: November 15, 2023
Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
11/30/2023

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No. HD23P2366EA
Estate of:
Catherine C. Kutz
Date of Death: 06/25/2011
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:
A Petition for Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by **George M. Ross of The Villages, FL** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: **George M. Ross of The Villages, FL** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 12/08/2023.**

This is **NOT** a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections

within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara M Hyland, First Justice of this Court.
Date: November 17, 2023
Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
11/30/2023

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No. HD23P2369EA
Estate of:
Patricia Ann Lindsey
Date of Death: 10/02/2023
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:
A Petition for Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by **Lisa Allen-Geissler of Feeding Hills, MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: **Lisa Allen-Geissler of Feeding Hills, MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 12/15/2023.**

This is **NOT** a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this pro-

ceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

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A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara M Hyland, First Justice of this Court.
Date: November 21, 2023
Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
11/30/2023

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No. HD23P2379EA
Estate of:
Adella H. Ross
Date of Death: 05/31/2008
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:
A Petition for Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by **George M. Ross of The Villages, FL** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: **George M. Ross of The Villages, FL** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 12/12/2023.**

This is **NOT** a hearing date, but a deadline by

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WITNESS, Hon. Barbara M Hyland, First Justice of this Court.
Date: November 21, 2023
Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
11/30/2023



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Turley Publications, based in Palmer, is seeking a storyteller who is curious about everything, and who understands how town government works to join our team of weekly reporters.

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- Qualifications should include:**
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Please tell us in a cover letter why you would be a good fit for this position and send it along with a resume and three writing samples to

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or email directly to ekennedy@turley.com

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Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$225, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph.

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All Papers Will Deadline **Thursday, Dec. 21 at Noon for Publication Dec. 25-29**

Happy New Year!

All Papers Will Deadline **Thursday, Dec. 28 at Noon for Publication Jan. 1-5**

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JOB OPENING

STAFF WRITER

Turley Publications, based in Palmer, is seeking a storyteller who is curious about everything, and who understands how town government works to join our team of weekly reporters.

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If you're a self-starter who enjoys community journalism and who can envision themselves connecting with our communities, we encourage you to apply for this position. Not a remote position.

Qualifications should include:

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Eileen Kennedy, Executive Editor
24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069
or email directly to ekennedy@turley.com

Turley Publications, Inc.
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Artist Alexandra Walters will give demonstration on Dec. 13

AGAWAM – Alexandra Walters will be the demonstrator for the Agawam Community Artist and Artisans meeting on Dec. 13, at 6 p.m., at the Agawam Public Library, 750 Cooper St.

Walters is a multi-media artist who has been exhibiting widely throughout New England for over 25 years. She received her bachelor of art degree from Westfield State College, with a concentration in fine art.

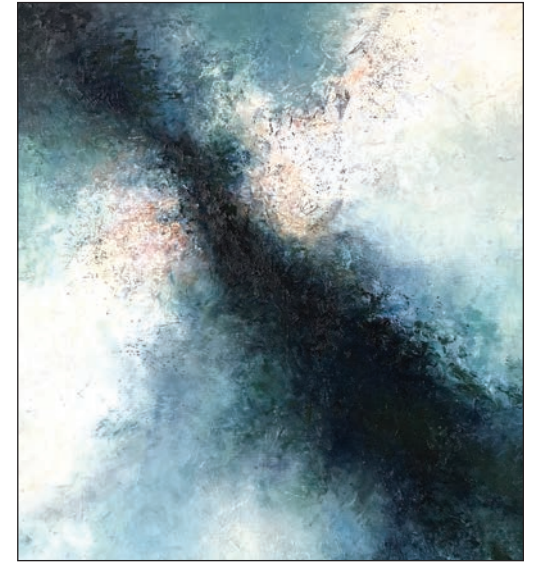
Her artwork has won awards in regional and national juried shows. She has a broad background in many roles within the visual arts community: she has led workshops in several media, is a popular demonstrating artist for art associations and has served as a judge at several local art shows.

Her extensive experience in arranging and hanging art exhibitions includes serving as gallery coordinator for dozens of artists. Walters has been a board member of the Academic Artists Association, the Rockport Art Association's Experimental Art Group, and the Tobacco Valley Art Association. She maintained the Serendipity Art Studio at the Indian Orchard Mills for 16 years, where she taught both group classes and private lessons.

In collaboration with Artworks Westfield, she has recently begun facilitation with the Artists Sharing and Discussion group held monthly in Westfield. She continues to offer art lessons, workshops, and mentoring.



Alexandra Walters will be the demonstrator for the Agawam Community Artist and Artisans meeting on Dec. 13, at 6 p.m., at the Agawam Public Library, 750 Cooper St. COURTESY PHOTO



This art presentation is free and open to the public. The meeting begins at 6 p.m. in the Community room of the Agawam Public Library, 750 Cooper St. She will begin her demonstration after the meeting.

For further information please contact Ceil Rossi at 413-207-1247 or email tocare-free2@hotmail.com.



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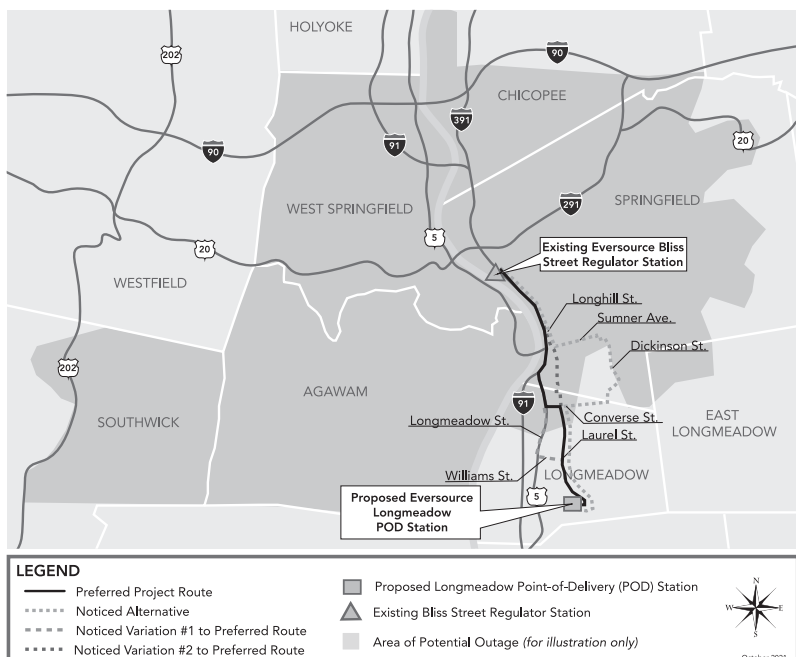
The **Western Massachusetts Natural Gas Reliability Project** will provide system reliability to approximately 58,000 existing natural gas customers in the Greater Springfield area. This project includes constructing a new point-of-delivery (POD) station in Longmeadow and installing, upgrading, and operating a steel main between this new POD station and the company's Bliss Street Regulator Station in Springfield.

Please come to our Open House on December 5th, where you'll learn what this project will mean for the Greater Springfield area. Project team members will be available to provide information and answer your questions.

Visit eversource.com/wma-gas-reliability to learn more about the proposed project and see details about the Open House.

Questions?

For more information, please email Eversource at ProjectInfo@eversource.com or call **800-793-2202**. You can also keep up to date on the project by visiting our website at eversource.com/wma-gas-reliability, or by scanning the QR code below with your smart device.



EVERSOURCE

Si necesita que le traduzcan esta notificación, envíenos un correo electrónico a ProjectInfo@eversource.com y escriba "Gas Reliability Project" en el asunto.