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# AGAWAM

## ADVERTISER NEWS

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### MSBA sends high school project to next schematic design phase

By Quinn Suomala  
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – The Massachusetts School Building Authority has approved the Agawam High School Building Project to go onto its next stage, the Schematic Design phase.

The MSBA voted to approve the AHS project at their meeting on Dec. 13. They approved the favored add/renovation option for the school, Option 1C.

Option 1C was put forward to the MSBA based on feedback from the community and involved stakeholders. It will include two separate wings, one more community focused and one for academics, in order to ease access.

“They’ve approved the con-

cepts that the school committee had recommended in our schematic report,” Project Manager and Chief Procurement Officer Jennifer Bonfiglio said.

This option will involve new construction for the majority of the project, while keeping at least 10% of the original AHS building.

Throughout the Schematic Design phase the district will then work toward producing the designs for the project.

Bonfiglio and her team have submitted an application to the state to do an alternate procurement method, which will involve selecting a construction manager. They are currently in that process and have issued a

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### New Senior Center director makes first appearance

By Quinn Suomala  
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – The new Senior Center Director Cindy Sullivan made her first appearance at the senior center, along with Mayor William Sapelli, on Dec. 15.

Seniors were invited to sign up for lunch and get a chance to meet Sullivan, who made her way around the room throughout the meal.

Over 100 people signed up for the lunch. Sullivan enjoyed meeting all of the community members who she would soon be working for.

“I’ve heard great things about Agawam and I’m honored to have the opportunity to be

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Mayor William Sapelli introduces the Senior Center Director Cindy Sullivan. TURLEY PHOTO BY QUINN SUOMALA

### Volunteers make holiday gift baskets for homebound seniors

By Quinn Suomala  
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – The senior center held a gift basket assembly event on Friday, Dec. 15 to make gift baskets for homebound seniors.

This event was organized by Outreach Coordinator Lori Arsenault, who started this annual event five years ago. It has been a popular favorite in the center ever since.

“It’s one of our newest favor-

ite traditions,” Assistant Director Kristina Lynch said.

Arsenault was happy to report that this year’s event was the biggest one yet, with enough items and baskets donated from the community to create 90 gift baskets.

“It only gets bigger,” she said. “There’s 90 this year and there’ll be 100 next year.”

There were 15 volunteers signed up to assist in the event and even more people decided to

show up once the event had started, leading to over 20 people helping to assemble the gift baskets.

“I just wanted to help spread Christmas cheer,” Volunteer Linda Connolly said.

Arsenault has found that many volunteers return year after year. They have made a party out of the event, with attendees coming dressed in festive wear and holiday playing in the background as they work.

“They’ll all be wearing holiday

sweaters or goofy things on their heads...I have the same people who come back every year because they just had such a great time,” Arsenault said. “It makes them feel good.”

On top of the volunteers, many people also made donations to the cause. Arsenault said around 50 people, if not more, came in and brought donations, as well as four organizations from the community: Golden Agers, the Friends of the Senior Center, the Knitting Group and the Quilting Group.

“A lot of times I would go to lunch and come back and there would be bags sitting outside my door or people, if they couldn’t go shopping, they’d stuff money in my hand to put toward the baskets,” she said.

Arsenault was beyond grateful for all those who volunteered or donated money or items to the cause. Without them, she said, the event would not be possible.

“My favorite part is watching all the seniors come together to do the assembly and seeing how much it means to them to do it,” Arsenault said. “To see their enthusiasm for helping out their fellow seniors, that’s what my office is all about.”

The gift baskets were filled with a variety of items for homebound seniors. The main focus was personal items, including toothpastes, shampoos, soap,

chapstick, hats and more.

“Things like that they need but they’re not always going to spend their money on, as they don’t always have enough money and so some things are going to go by the wayside,” Arsenault said.

However, Arsenault did not want the seniors to just get needed items, so she also made sure to include candy, sparkling cider and some puzzle books.

“We started adding treats like chocolates and candy canes... there’s sudoku books and word searches because a lot of people are stuck at home, it gives them something to do,” she explained.

She emphasized that this was so important to do as so many homebound seniors struggle financially and have to choose between things like food and heat. She is happy to try to ease some of their difficulties.

These gift baskets will be delivered to the seniors by the meals on wheels drivers.

It was meals on wheels that initially inspired these gift baskets, as Arsenault noticed how many seniors were signed up for the program and wanted to give those who were homebound something to brighten their holidays.

“A lot of people who are on wheels on meals because they are stuck at home and may have no

BASKETS | page 12



After about an hour of work by more than 20 volunteers, 90 baskets were produced for homebound seniors.

TURLEY PHOTO BY QUINN SUOMALA



# Anna's Dry Cleaning under new ownership

By Quinn Suomala  
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – Anna's Dry Cleaning, which is well-known and loved in the community of Agawam, is now under the ownership of Quay Vuong.

The previous owner, Anna Liquori, had run the business for many years and was well-known and loved by the community. Those who went always appreciated the customer friendly atmosphere and how welcoming Liquori was to everyone who came through the doors.

It was this friendly atmosphere that drew Vuong to the business when it went up for sale.

"I saw that it was a really great cleaner because of her ties to the community," Vuong said. "Typically when you look at a dry cleaners, they don't have that deep of a tie into the community, but for some reason Anna Liquori, she just brought that to the business. Every customer knew every customer's name and every single person I met standing alongside her, the relationship was so deep. That's why I decided to buy it."

Vuong was honored to be chosen by Liquori to continue on her business when she stepped down for retirement. He knew that Liquori wanted someone who would truly take good care of her customers, and he is proud that she saw potential in him.

"She had almost 10 people come to try to buy the cleaner, she said no to every single one," Vuong said. "It was my second attempt to try to buy it when she realized that maybe this young, 41-year-old candidate is the best to take care of the customers."

Vuong, since taking over the business, has worked to improve upon Anna's Dry Cleaning while still keeping that community feel that made everyone love the business in the first place.

"We're trying to provide the best service and go above and beyond for every custom-



Longtime Feeding Hills business Anna's Dry Cleaning has changed owners, with Quay Vuong recently taking the helm.

TURLEY PHOTO BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

er," Vuong said. "A lot of people just say it, but I try to train for it."

In making his improvements, Vuong has implemented several changes into the system of the business.

One such change is the use of barcodes on clothing to help prevent lost items.

According to Vuong, one of the biggest issues many people have with dry cleaning is a continued problem of the business losing their items.

Vuong burns barcodes onto the care labels of clothing so that the clothing can be found, even if it gets dropped off to the side during cleaning.

"We have a barcode burner which burns at 400 degrees and we take your care label and place the less than one inch barcode on it," Vuong said. "What that does is it ensures it will last up to 400 cleanings, it will never fall off."

Therefore, with this system if an item is misplaced, Vuong and his employees can instantly use the barcode to discover whose item it is.

Additionally, Vuong has set up an on-line system so customers can keep track of their clothing. When a customer comes to Anna's Dry Cleaning for the first time, they can sign up for an account where they can see each clothing item turned in and the expected time and date for when it will be done.

The barcodes on clothing are used to upload and categorize clothing items to this site, so that customers can even keep track of it through their account.

"Once you sign into your account you can see your jacket with the brand, the color, the fabric, the price of everything total and when it is going to be complete," Vuong said.

Once Anna's has completed the cleaning of the clothes, the customers are notified instantly by text so they can come in and pick up the items.

"You'll get a text the moment the clothes are ready to be picked up," Vuong said. "And when I say moment, I mean the literal second that the cleaning is done."

On top of these improvements, Vuong has also ensured that people's clothes are washed with fluids and detergents that are safe and green to use.

Vuong uses hydrocarbon as his dry-cleaning fluid, which is a green cleaning fluid. Additionally, all of his detergents are biodegradable and hypoallergenic.

Vuong was inspired to use these green items as he thought about what he would want his own family's clothing items to be washed with.

"Cleaners don't normally purchase these types of things," Vuong said. "Once my wife got pregnant I had to think about my wife's jacket, if I got it dry cleaned, what are they using to dry clean her jacket?"

Keeping items clean and safe for people to wear is more important to Vuong than the extra expense of purchasing these green items.

Vuong is proud of all the improvements he has made to the business so far, and hopes to use these improvements to show the community the hard work he and his employees have put into the business.

"I want the people of the town to know that I work extremely hard to get that done," Vuong said.

Liquori herself, according to Vuong, still drops by her own dry cleaning to the business and keeps in touch with Vuong. Vuong was happy to report that Liquori still hears good things around town about the business.

"She had said that a lot of the people she sees around town rave about how well clean and well finished all the cleaning is," Vuong said.

## Christmas Tree Collection starts Jan. 8

AGAWAM – The Department of Public Works is pleased to announce that Republic Services will be providing a collection of Christmas Trees during the week of Jan. 8 through the 12.

Christmas trees will be collected on the same day as scheduled trash collection. Please be aware that the regular trash truck will not be collecting trees, a separate truck will be running for the col-

lection of trees.

Christmas trees 7' or larger must be cut in half and placed on the tree belt no earlier than 7 a.m. of the collection day listed above.

Trees in plastic bags will not be collected.

It is not the responsibility of the hauler to dig out trees buried in the snow due to plowing or excessive snowfall prior to the

scheduled collection days.

In the event of a snow delay during the scheduled collection week, residents should make alternative arrangements to recycle their trees at the Bondi's Island Landfill. Collection routes for trees will not be re-scheduled.

Residents may dispose of trees prior to or after the scheduled collection days at the Bondi's Island Landfill.

## Sheriff, city councilor giving sand to seniors

AGAWAM – This Saturday, Dec. 23, Agawam City Councilor Anthony Russo, along with the Hampden County Sheriff's Department's TRIAD Division will be offering free sand to local seniors.

The free sand will be available at the Agawam Public Library, 750 Cooper St., in the parking lot from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Seniors can come and get free buckets of sand for their driveways and walkways in an effort to help prevent falls during the slippery winter months. Supply will be limited and sand will be given on a first-come, first-serve basis. However, if supply runs out, more orders can be taken on-site and will be delivered to seniors residence at a later time.

As of press time, there was no snow, sleet, or freezing rain in the weather forecasts over the next two weeks.

## Friends of APL looking for new members

AGAWAM – The Friends of the Agawam Public Library has been in existence for over 20 years. They are a dedicated group of local citizens who support the library with both time and money. The Friends hold monthly meetings to discuss ways they can best help with the library's mission.

Over the years the Friends have supplied the library with numerous items that were not included in the town's budget, such as: a slide projector, a people counter, a Laser HP color printer, a wireless Lavalier microphone system, a portable Public Address system, an ongoing lease for a color photocopier, furniture for the children's room, protective sleeves for library cards, a DVD player and computers and software for the Children's Room.

The Friends help the library in various

other ways too. Some ways are by funding library events throughout the year, such as the Elementary Summer School Reading Challenge (where cash prizes are awarded to Agawam's 4 grade schools), English as a Second Language classes and a number of museum passes. They raise the money for funding by holding an annual Holiday Basket Raffle, presenting an annual Juried Photography show, selling used books, offering canvas tote bags and mugs with the Friends logo created by Agawam's own David Cecchi, and volunteering in various library-supported activities.

The Friends welcome all who want to bring attention to the library's vital role in our town by becoming a member, volunteering at activities, or simply offering support through book and monetary con-

tributions. The Friends are always grateful for any volunteer help with library projects. If community members are interested in becoming a Friends member, you can find the application on our website <https://www.agawamlibrary.org/about-2/friends/>, print it out and mail it in or look for the Friends form in the Friends kiosk in the library and pay in person.

And, to make things even more exciting, if you are interested in becoming a Friend and pay your Friends membership by Jan. 1, 2024, you will be entered in a drawing on Jan. 4 (at the Friends January meeting), to win a \$50 Amazon gift card.

The time is now for the community to join The Friends of Agawam Public Library, it is loads of fun and extremely satisfying.

## Agawam Day to be celebrated in Florida

ST.PETERSBURG, FL – 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 Drownowski by cell phone call or text at 860-462-7273 or by email at [hdrew2452@gmail.com](mailto:hdrew2452@gmail.com).



**Wishing You Good Health, Good Fortune & TREEmendous Happiness**

As we put the finishing touches on another holiday season, we can't think of a better place to celebrate than right here with all of you. Your friendship and support mean the world to us, and we hope this holiday season delivers everything on your wish list and more.

**Best wishes to you and yours for a merry and bright holiday season!**

**AGAWAM ADVERTISER NEWS**

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## Advent service to be held Dec. 24

AGAWAM – On Sunday, Dec. 24, Agawam Congregational Church will hold its special Advent 10 a.m. service in addition to a 10 p.m. Christmas Eve service with special lighting of the Sanctuary.

All are invited to attend. Located at 745 Main St. in Agawam's Historical District, the church is handicapped accessible with a large, well-lit parking lot.

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

## Christmas Eve services at ACC

AGAWAM – On Sunday, Dec. 24, Agawam Congregational Church will have a 10 a.m. morning service and 10 p.m. evening service with special Sanctuary lighting for those who would like to attend a special Christmas Eve service.

The church is located at 745 Main St. in Agawam's Historic District. The church is handicapped accessible with a large, well-lit parking lot. For more information, contact the church at 413-786-7111.

## Christmas vigil mass schedule at Sacred Heart

FEEDING HILLS – The Sacred Heart Parish will be holding Christmas Vigil Masses on Sunday Dec. 24, at 4 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. Solemn Sung Christmas Mass at Night with Organ, Choir, and Trumpet will be at 10 p.m. Christmas Day Mass will be on Monday, Dec. 25, at 10 a.m.

Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God (New Year's Day) will be at 4 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 31 and on Monday, Jan. 1 at 10 a.m.

## Library announces upcoming events

AGAWAM – Agawam Public Library will be hosting a Penguin Drop-In Craft For all ages Dec. 26 to Dec. 30 all day. Stop by any time this week to make a penguin craft at the craft table.

APL will also be hosting Catch the Gingerbread Men For all ages Dec. 26 to Dec. 30 all day.

Come to the Children's Room and see if you can find all the Gingerbread People hiding around the library. Winners will be chosen and will each get a \$5 Barnes & Noble Gift card.

For more information about these, or other programs at the Agawam Library take a look at our website agawamlibrary.org. Or call 413-789-1550 ext. 3.



**Greyson Dominick Kallfa**

February 4, 2023

Parents: Nicholas & Kathryn Kallfa, Manassas, VA

Grandparents: Greg & Pat Kallfa, Westfield  
Dominick & Sandi Blasioli, Naples, FL



**Crew Costa**

September 7, 2023

Parents: Steven & Kerri Costa, Agawam

Grandparents: David & Despina Costa, Agawam  
William & Lucinda Egan, Agawam

Great Grandparents: William & Denise Egan, Agawam



**Raelynn Brown**

July 20, 2023

Parents: Ryan & Ashley Brown, Hampden

Grandparents: Art & Lynn Anderson, Wilbraham  
Rick & Joanne Brown, Monson



**Ethan J. McEwan**

Birthdate: June 5, 2023

Parents: Danielle Sheldon & Neil McEwan III, Agawam

Grandparents: Betty Jo & Craig Jalbert, Monson  
Steven Sheldon, Westfield

Joan & Gary Merlo, Myrtle Beach, SC  
Betty Ann Halgas, Bondsville

## Penguin Plunge to be held at Hampton Ponds State Park Jan. 27

WESTFIELD - Amelia Park Children's Museum is announcing the 20th annual Penguin Plunge to be held at Hampton Ponds State Park, on Saturday, Jan. 27, 2024. Check-in begins at 11:30 a.m. and the plunging starts at 1 p.m. All proceeds from the Penguin Plunge will benefit Amelia Park Children's Museum.

Amelia Park Children's Museum and the Penguin Plunge have been a longstanding institution and tradition respectively in Westfield. Through the years participants and sponsors of the Plunge have helped to raise over \$350,000 to support Amelia Park Children's Museum.

"We are striving to attract more plungers to this event," says Diane Chambers, executive director. "It's a fun outing for the whole family or a group of friends whether they are plunging or watching. We're adding new activities and entertainment, plus incentives to entice more plunge participants in 2024."

New this year is the Petite Plunge for children ages 2 - 6. Little ones will have the opportunity to dip their toe or boot into a kiddie pool. Fun games like cornhole and



a "snowball" toss will be added to the activities. S'mores and other refreshments will be available. Lively musical entertainment will be provided by Jay Pagluica of JP Lighting and Sounds.

Join as an individual or as a team. Each participant pledges to raise a minimum of \$75 from friends and family and is encouraged to collect as many sponsors as possible. Full time students will receive a registration discount of \$25 with valid school ID and pledge to raise at least \$50. The registration fee for the Petite Plunge participants is \$25.

The following prizes will awarded dependent on amount of money raised per individual:

Penguin Plunge 2024 T-shirt to those adults that raise \$75 - \$149 (\* \$25 for those 2 -6, \$50 for those 7 - 18); Penguin Plunge 2024 hat and T-shirt for those that raise \$150 - \$299; Penguin Plunge 2024 drinkware, hat and T-shirt for those that raise \$300 - \$499; Penguin Plunge 2024 jacket, drinkware, hat and T-shirt for those that raise \$500 or more; Monetary prizes of cash for the top 3 individuals or teams that raise the most money; 1st Place - \$300, 2nd

Place - \$200, 3rd Place - \$100.

A costume contest is part of the fun, and there are prizes for Best Individual Costume and Best Team Costume.

Register in advance online or the day of the event from 11:30 am to noon. All participants will receive a free 2024 Penguin Plunge T-shirt.

Sponsorship opportunities, registration and pledge forms are available via the museum website <https://www.ameliaparkmuseum.org/penguin-plunge> or can be picked up at the museum. Penguins may also use the Fundly page to collect sponsors; <https://fundly.com/penguin-plunge-2024>.

The money raised by the Plunge goes to providing playful learning for area children and their families. This event is crucial in supporting the work of Amelia Park Children's Museum

Amelia Park Children's Museum is located at 29 South Broad St. and is open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday-Tuesday. The museum offers hands-on learning for children ages 1-7 in a safe and welcoming environment. Cost of admission is \$8 per person; grandparents have a reduced rate of \$4. Admission is \$2 per person on Thursday afternoons from noon 4 p.m. Call us with questions at (413) 572- 4014 or email questions to: [fun@ameliaparkmuseum.org](mailto:fun@ameliaparkmuseum.org). Learn more about the museum at [www.ameliaparkmuseum.org](http://www.ameliaparkmuseum.org).

# Opinion

## Guest Column



This weekend was supposed to be the weekend when all four of us partook in a cookie-making marathon.

Usually, we start baking right after Thanksgiving, but this year the kids were involved in a play, then a concert, and alas, there was no time. We started out strong yesterday and then I began to feel a little funny.

By midafternoon I was definitely under the weather and that was it for my cookie-making. We got two batches in before I left the kitchen.

One is an almond covered thumb print, and the second is a coriander cookie – one of my all-time favorites. It must have been a favorite to a few other folks along the line because the recipe dates back to the early 19th century!

I tried them for the first time at Old Sturbridge Village's Christmas by Candlelight some years back and making them has been a tradition in our house ever since. Why don't we take this opportunity to learn about a very versatile plant.

Most gardeners already know that Coriander (*Coriandrum sativum*) is one of the few herbs that goes by two different names depending on the part of the plant used.

### Cookies made with a familiar herb

Its foliage, known as Cilantro, is used fresh in a number of culinary delights. When the plant goes to seed, known as Coriander, it can be used in that stage as well, eaten whole, crushed or powdered.

I liken cilantro to being the "marigold" of the herb world. Either you love the smell/taste of it or you hate it.

I, for one, immensely dislike it and if given the chance to pick it out of my salsa I will certainly do it! Even in a restaurant.

I found it interesting to learn that some people possess a genetically predisposed aversion to it, according to studies by Charles J. Wysocki of the Monell Chemical Senses Center in Philadelphia. To me it has a bitter taste that I have a hard time describing beyond that. Dirty? Soil-like?

Most people that do dislike it have a similar lack of descriptive ability; they just can't put their finger on it, but they don't like the taste...or the smell of it. It's funny that when my oldest daughter received her Ancestry DNA results, she was shown not to possess the genetic aversion. Well, she didn't get that from me.

Cilantro is often used in salsa and other Mexican, Asian and Italian dishes including curries, sauces, salads and soups. If you prefer to grow the plant more for its greens and less for its seeds, manage it as you would spinach.

Sow seeds in the ground in the cool of the season and in succession every two weeks. It dislikes being transplanted but doesn't mind pot culture.

Harvest greens rather aggressively – about one-third of the plant at a time. Just like spinach, there are slow-to-bolt varieties to choose from such as aptly named "Slow Bolt" and "Longstanding". Cilantro's flowers are edible, and they attract

lots of beneficial insects such as lady beetles, parasitic wasps and syrphid flies.

Coriander seeds, on the other hand, have a pleasant (at least to me) fragrance once dried. The scent is easier to pin-point too; nutty and spicy (ever so slightly) come to mind.

Coriander seed is also well known in various ethnic cuisines and is a favorite in spice blends, curry being the most popular. It is also used in the making of a number of distilled spirits, herbal liqueurs and Christmas cookies as I have come to find out and favor!

The Herb Society noted that during World War II coriander seeds were coated in white or pink sugar and thrown from carnival wagons, earning the name "confections" or "confetti." When the seeds were replaced by balls of colored paper the name confetti stuck.

Take this one to your next game of Cruise Ship Trivia!

It is easy to harvest the seeds. Simply let the heads dry to brown right on the plant. Clip them and place inside a paper bag; as they dry further, they will open, and the seeds will pop out.

Even if you are only interested in harvesting the seeds, multiple plantings (or a big garden patch) are necessary to get a decent-sized harvest. Let a few drop their seeds and you will be blessed with a few self-sown plants next spring.

*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.*

### I'm 65 and working; can I collect ex-spouse benefits?



Dear Rusty

I turned 65 earlier this year and I still work full time.

I was divorced four years ago after 38 years of marriage, but my ex-husband has been collecting Social Security for at least 10 years now. Can I start collecting Social Security and still work full time? And can I collect my ex-husband's amount if it is more than mine and what is the best way to achieve this? When I went to my local SSA office, they said they had no way of knowing that.

Signed Working Divorcee

Dear Working Divorcee

Although you are eligible to claim Social Security at age 65, because you are working full time you may wish to wait a bit longer to do

so. That's because Social Security has an "earnings test" which applies to anyone who collects benefits before Full Retirement Age and you have not yet reached yours.

The earnings test imposes a limit on how much you can earn before SS takes away some of your benefits. If you exceed the annual earnings limit (\$22,320 for 2024), Social Security will want back \$1 in benefits for every \$2 you are over the limit and you will need to repay that, usually by having future benefits withheld. If you significantly exceed the limit, you may even be temporarily ineligible to receive SS benefits until you either earn less or reach your full retirement age (FRA) of 66 years and 8 months.

So, if your earnings from working will significantly exceed the annual earnings limit, which changes yearly, it's likely that your wisest move would be to wait longer to claim your Social Security. As a bonus for doing so, your monthly payment will have grown and will be higher when you claim later. The earnings test no longer applies after you reach FRA.

Regarding benefits from your ex-husband, you cannot collect his instead of yours. What

you may be able to do, when you claim your own benefit, is to get an additional amount, which brings your monthly payment up to 50% of his. In order for that to happen, you would need to satisfy the following criteria:

You are not currently married.

The personal benefit you are entitled to at your FRA must be less than 50% of your ex-husband's FRA entitlement.

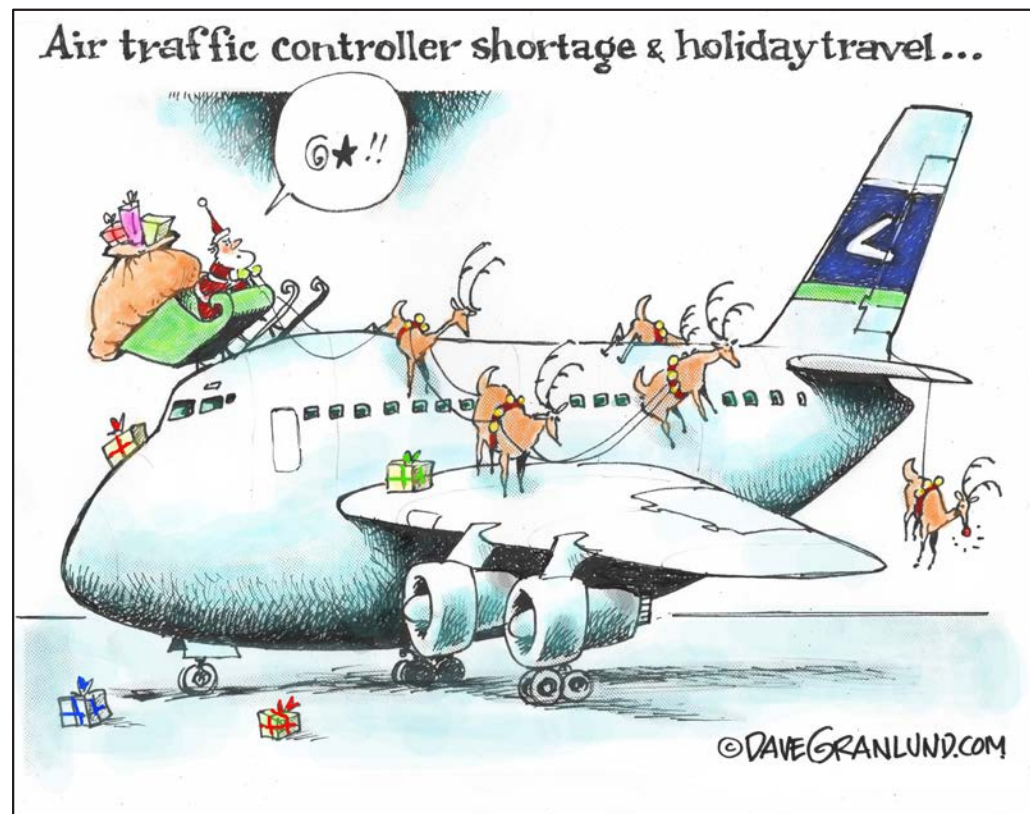
If the above are true, when you claim your own SS retirement benefit you will also get a "spousal boost" to bring your payment up to what you're entitled to as an ex-spouse. The amount of the spousal boost, if you claim Social Security at your FRA, will be the difference between half of his FRA entitlement and your FRA entitlement. If you claim your benefit before your FRA, not only will your own benefit be reduced for claiming early, but the amount of your spousal boost will also be reduced. Benefits claimed before FRA are always reduced.

Whenever you decide to claim Social Security, you will be automatically deemed to be filing for benefits from your ex-husband as well (you shouldn't need to apply separately). You've already satisfied the basic criteria of at least 10 years married to get benefits from an ex-spouse and, if you satisfy the above criteria as well, you will be entitled to a spousal boost when you claim.

But your current earnings from working full time will likely affect your eligibility to collect Social Security benefits at this time, so waiting until your full retirement age to claim may be your best choice.

If you will only slightly exceed the annual earnings limit you can consider claiming earlier, as long as you are comfortable with receiving a permanently reduced amount, and the prospect of not getting benefits for a number of months if you exceed the earnings limit, the number of months you will go without benefits depends on how much you exceed the limit by.

*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.*



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# Schools & Youth

## STCC secures funding for decarbonization efforts

SPRINGFIELD – Springfield Technical Community College received \$791,694 from the state Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance to support projects to advance decarbonization efforts, address deferred maintenance and increase climate resilience.

STCC will use the funding for energy efficiency projects that lessen the consumption of onsite fossil fuels or increase efficiency.

STCC also will make repairs to campus buildings to increase efficiency, including but not limited to window replacements, door replacements, insulation and weatherization.

On Dec. 11, Sen. Adam Gomez, D-Springfield, joined the Healey-Driscoll administration in announcing that STCC received funding through Fair Share funds as part of the fiscal 2024 budget.

“STCC continues to benefit from a regional legislative delegation that supports public higher education needs,” said STCC President John B. Cook. “To Senator Gomez, Representative Williams, and all of our delegation, we are thankful knowing these funds help the college with decarbonization and energy efficiency requirements that carry a high cost.”

“Combating climate change and securing resources for environmental justice

communities continues to be a priority of mine for my district and our Commonwealth,” Gomez said. “The securing of this grant for STCC falls in line with two of my legislative priorities next year that ensure the state is able to meet net zero carbon goals as set forth in the Climate Change Road Map Act of 2021.”

DCAMM provided \$11,875,404 to be divided among the 15 community colleges, including STCC, to assist with meeting Massachusetts’ decarbonization goals and focus on energy-efficient measures where decarbonization is not possible. Each community college received \$791,694.

## Conservation leader finishes Master’s

AGAWAM – Resident Megan Chapman has been applying the tools of science, education and conservation to become a leader in the conservation community. In December 2023, Chapman concluded her master’s course of study with a Master of Arts in Biology from Miami University through Project Dragonfly.

Since joining the Global Field Program master’s in 2020, Chapman has traveled to Baja, Borneo and Namibia and conducted projects that have made a difference in the Agawam area.

Throughout her time in the GFP, Chapman developed a master plan, a kind of personal mission statement for what she wanted to accomplish in the program.

In many of the master’s courses, Chapman designed projects that supported this plan, which culminated in a final portfolio, “Bridging the Gap Between Zookeepers and Conservation,” presented in a Capstone course.

Chapman works as a wild animal keeper at Wildlife Conservation Society.

## Winter pickleball classes available at HCC

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College is running a series of pickleball classes in January and February for beginners, intermediates, and tournament-level players in the warmth and comfort of the college’s indoor athletics facility.

The group classes will be led by pickleball coach and racquet sports instructor Kelly Canniff, who has 25 years’ experience educating children, adolescents, and adults.

Sessions run on both Tuesday and Thursday mornings on the pickleball courts inside the David M. Bartley Center for Athletics & Recreation on the main HCC campus, 303 Homestead Ave.

Each class runs 90 minutes. The cost for each three-week, three-session series is \$90.

Pickleball 101: Tuesdays, Jan. 16-30, or Thursdays, Jan. 18-Feb. 1. Classes start at 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Pickleball 101 is geared toward beginners or those who have played a few times and covers topics such as serving, developing a forehand, scoring, basic rules, positioning, and strategy.

Pickleball Intermediate Level: Tuesdays, Feb. 6-20, or Thursdays, Feb. 8-22. Classes start at 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. This series is designed for players who have taken beginner classes or already

have some familiarity and experience with the game and want to advance their play by improving their groundstrokes, overhead shots, volleys and serves, and adding direction, control, and accuracy.

Pickleball Tournament Ready Prep: Tuesdays, Feb. 27- March 12, or Thursdays, Feb. 29-March 14. Classes start at 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. These classes are designed for players who want to prepare for tournament-level play, with practice that will help them improve shot variety and accuracy and develop better strategies for playing doubles.

To register, please go to: [hcc.edu/health-and-fitness](http://hcc.edu/health-and-fitness).

## Scholarship applications for Polish heritage students

AGAWAM – The Polish Junior League of Massachusetts welcomes area college students of Polish heritage to apply for one of the annual academic scholarships. Students must have a permanent address in one of the four Western Massachusetts

counties: Hampshire, Hampden, Franklin or Berkshire. Application forms with related information are available at [www.polishjuniorleaguema.org/applications](http://www.polishjuniorleaguema.org/applications). The deadline for all applications and related materials is May 1, 2024.

PLEASE RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

## Resident named to the Dean’s List

AGAWAM – Edward Cyran, a Freshman Culinary Arts major was among approximately 800 Bob Jones University students named to the fall 2023 dean’s list.

The Dean’s List recognizes students who earn a 3.00-3.74 grade point average during the semester.

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
17					18						19			
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42					43					44				
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52	53	54				55				56		57	58	59
60					61				62		63			
64					65						66			
67					68						69			

### CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Droops
- 5. Subatomic particle
- 10. Not in danger
- 14. Nursemaid
- 15. Black band worn in mourning
- 16. Long song in opera
- 17. Edible seed of a Philippine tree
- 18. Chicago political family
- 19. Pursues pleasure from one place to another
- 20. Appetizer
- 22. Hill (Celtic)
- 23. Simple shoe
- 24. Songs to one you love
- 27. Secret activities
- 30. Upset
- 31. Popular hot drink
- 32. Body art (slang)
- 35. Fired
- 37. Blood relation
- 38. Identical
- 39. Porticos
- 40. Partner to cheese
- 41. Type of sword

- 42. Enough (archaic)
- 43. Surface layer of ground
- 44. Cotton fabric woven like satin
- 45. Choose for a post
- 46. Father
- 47. Tell on
- 48. Indian title of respect
- 49. Fonts
- 52. Fencing sword
- 55. Mock
- 56. Vaccine developer
- 60. Atmosphere surrounding a person or place
- 61. Marten with a short tail
- 63. Chinese temple
- 64. Invests in little enterprises
- 65. Popular cut of meat
- 66. Charity
- 67. Iron-containing compound
- 68. River in Northern Europe
- 69. One point east of southeast

### CLUES DOWN

- 1. Exhausts
- 2. Genus of fish related to gars
- 3. Impudent behavior
- 4. Adherents to Islam
- 5. They come after A
- 6. Spoke
- 7. Room to receive guests
- 8. About opera
- 9. End-blown flute
- 10. Heroic tales
- 11. Member of a Semitic people
- 12. Dog’s name
- 13. Opposite of west
- 21. Political divisions in ancient Greece
- 23. Ocean
- 25. Cool!
- 26. Young woman about to enter society
- 27. One from central Caucasus
- 28. Indian city
- 29. A way to serve ice cream
- 32. Emaciation
- 33. Escort aircraft carrier
- 34. Italian city
- 36. Mythical settler of Kansas
- 37. Unhappy
- 38. High schoolers’ test
- 40. Measured in pace
- 41. Satisfies
- 43. Gullible person
- 44. Enclosed space
- 46. Substance used to color something
- 47. Shirt type
- 49. Discover by investigation
- 50. \_\_\_-Castell, makers of pens
- 51. Semitic Sun god
- 52. Grads wear one
- 53. French river
- 54. Part of a cap
- 57. Digestive fluid
- 58. Metrical foot
- 59. Body part
- 61. Very fast airplane
- 62. Supplement with difficulty

CROSSWORD SOLUTION ON PAGE 9

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# Wreaths Across America



9,528 wreaths were placed on veterans' graves by volunteers after a short ceremony held on Dec. 16 at the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery National Wreaths Across America Day event.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

## DIRECTOR ■ from page 1

able to come here," she said.

She made sure to emphasize to the seniors that she is there for them, and truly wanted to hear their opinions on her proposals for the center.

"I'm here and I have an open-door policy," Sullivan said. "I love to hear ideas and be able to help people navigate what their issues are, what they need help with and also provide programming that is important and relevant to them."

Sullivan wants to ensure that it is the seniors who are being represented at the center, their wants and needs.

"I could have this great idea that's a great idea for me, but it might not walk for seniors," she explained. "So, I don't get offended by people not liking ideas or making their own suggestions, I think that's really important."

As she begins her work in Agawam, Sullivan hopes to focus on truly getting to know people and learning what they want to see at the center.

"First I am just going to get the lay of the land," she said. "Talk to the staff, talk to the COA board, the seniors who are here, see what things they would like to expand on or change. Really get their ideas."

She does not want to come in and make big changes at the start, she wants to first take the opportunity to truly get to know what the community of Agawam wants.

"I really believe in communication and collaboration," Sullivan said. "The senior center building and services are for the seniors, so it's really about the seniors."

Over the next year Sullivan hopes to learn what the community wants and then work toward making positive changes. She knows how important the senior center is to the community and wants to keep it that way.

"I think that it's not a place where people just go because they have nowhere else to go, they're coming here because they want to, they want to have the experiences that a senior center offers and also the community outreach pieces," she said.

Sullivan has spent her whole life working with people. She started her career at a private foster care agency and worked there for 17 years. Following that, she worked in the Southwick Council on Aging from 2013 on.

Several of her years in Southwick were also spent working in Parks and Recreation. Sullivan thought moving to Agawam was the perfect opportunity to focus her work on seniors again.

"I saw the opportunity open up in Agawam and it is a fulltime COA position," she said. "I thought this was a great opportunity to strictly work with seniors in a COA setting."

Throughout her career she says she has learned a lot about communication and collaboration, and she hopes to bring that culture to Agawam.

"Mentoring and role modeling is also really important," she said. "If you're willing to work hard, then people are willing to work hard with you."

With these ideas in mind, Sullivan looks forward to beginning her term as COA director. She will officially start her position on Jan. 2.



New Senior Center Director Cindy Sullivan introduces herself to all of the seniors.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY QUINN SUOMALA



Hundreds of people gathered at Agawam Senior Center last Friday morning to meet the new director, Cindy Sullivan.

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# SPORTS

## Road kind to Agawam in opening week

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

WILBRAHAM – After beginning the new season with a 76-40 win at Westfield High School on December 11, Agawam boys basketball traveled to Wilbraham last Friday night and came away with a hard-fought 66-55 victory over the Minnechaug Falcons.

“We’re now 2-0 and we haven’t played a home game yet,” said Agawam head coach Tim Sheehan following the Minnechaug game. “We did get off to a slow start in tonight’s game, which is something that we’ve done every time that we’ve played a game in this gym over the past couple of years. This is a good quality win for us, but there is still a lot of room for improvement.”

The two boys’ basketball teams were members of the Suburban North Division the past two seasons.



Melih Tomak waits for a rebound.



Andrew Regnier holds the ball away from a Minnechaug player.



Gavin Cruz and Elijah Maldonado try to block a shot.

BASKETBALL | page 8

TURLEY PHOTOS BY SOFIA DIGRANDE

## Brownies pick up win in opener

AGAWAM – Last Tuesday evening, the game stayed close for three quarters before Agawam pulled away in the final frame and picked up a 45-37 win over visiting Drury.

The Brownies got 14 points from Mia Canavan to lead the team. Isabella Laprise had nine points and Katelyn Cleavall added seven points.



Isabella Laprise tries to cross midcourt and avoid an opponent.



Marlee Montagna makes her way down the court.



Katelyn Cleavall inbounds the ball.



Sophia Laprise makes a three-point attempt.



Mia Canavan attempts a free throw.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

## Brownies fall in two straight

WEST SPRINGFIELD – After winning their first match-up of the season, the Agawam High School hockey team suffered a pair of losses during the past week, losing 3-2 against Amherst and then 4-1 against Taconic on Saturday afternoon.

AJ Robbins had the only goal for Agawam in the loss to Taconic.

In the 3-2 loss to Amherst on Thursday, Dec. 14, Landon Ashford and Evan Connery had goals while goalie Frankie DiSanti had 30 saves in the defeat. Agawam is 1-2 so far this year.

## How to contact the Sports Editor

Have the scoop on a local sports story?

Want to submit a team photo, pass along a potential story idea, or just find out how to get a copy of that great photo of your young athlete?

Please send all sports-related press releases and information to Agawam Advertiser News’ Sports Editor Greg Scibelli at:

[sports@turley.com](mailto:sports@turley.com)  
or call,  
1-413-283-8393.

# Sports

## Worcester Railers fall short to Adirondack Thunder

GLEN FALLS, NY – The Worcester Railers HC (8-11-2-2, 20pts) fell short to the Adirondack Thunder 13-6-2-1, 29pts, on Saturday night by the final score of 4-1 in front of 3,841 fans for their Teddy Bear Night at the Cool Insuring Arena. The Thunder extended their win streak to 4 games. The Railers will head back home to face the Trois-Rivières Lions at 5:05 pm on Friday, December 23rd, as one of their three “Home for the Holidays” matchups.

The Thunder scored the first three goals of the game as Patrick Grasso (10th) and Nico Blachman (2nd, 3rd) put Adirondack ahead 3-0 after two. Joey Cipollone tallied his first professional goal on a tip-in out in front before Ryan Smith (11th) gave the

Thunder back their three goal lead, and delivered the game’s final score of 4-1.

The first period saw a lot of physicality which led to a total of 24 minutes in penalties. It all started with a Rock ‘Em Sock ‘Em fight toward center ice with Railers forward Jake Schultz (0-0-0) and Adirondack defenseman Darian Skeoch (0-1-1). Adirondack let the teddy bears fly early in the period after an odd-man rush goal by Patrick Grasso (1-0-1). Grasso received a pass by Grant Jozefek (0-1-1) from across the slot, moving left to right, to beat Henrik Tikkanen on his high glove side. The next goal didn’t come until the 16th minute when the Thunder Forward Ryan Smith (1-2-3) placed a low shot on net from in-between the dots on the

rush to give a rebound opportunity to Forward Nico Blachman (2-0-2) and beat the outstretched blocker of Henrik Tikkanen. The Thunder lead the period in shots on goal 13-5.

The second period was a lot quieter compared to the first. Henrik Tikkanen made a lot of high-quality saves throughout the period. Blachman and the Thunder would break through, however. After a failed offensive zone entry by the Railers, Adirondack’s Forward Erik Middendorf (0-1-1) entered the right half of the Railers’ defensive zone slowly and stopped at the top of the circle. He found Blachman crashing towards the net late and blasted it past Henrik Tikkanen’s low blocker side from the

high slot to make it a 3-0 game with 4:37 left in the period. The Thunder led the period with shots on goal 9-8.

The Railers finally got on the board early in the third period after a blast from the left point by Ryan Verrier (0-1-1) that was then deflected in the slot by Joey Cipollone (1-0-1) for his first professional goal. The Thunder would capitalize on a breakaway opportunity in the middle of the third after Colin Felix’s (0-1-1) minor penalty expired. Felix passed the puck up to the speedy Ryan Smith who elevated the puck upstairs where it hit the crossbar, hit a Railers back-checker, and inadvertently ended up in the back of the net to make it 4-1 Thunder. The Thunder led the period in shots on goal 11-9.

## Thunderbirds suffer 1-0 shutout against Bears

HERSHEY, PA – The Springfield Thunderbirds (14-9-2-0) could not solve the top-ranked defense in the AHL, as the Hershey Bears (22-6-0-0) skated off with a narrow 1-0 triumph on Sunday inside Giant Center.

The battle of the Eastern Conference’s two best defensive teams lived up to that billing in the opening 20 minutes, as neither Springfield’s Malcolm Subban nor Hershey’s Hunter Shepard showed nerves in their goal crease. Subban had a trio of high-danger denials off odd-man rushes, including a right-pad kick out on a Jimmy Huntington breakaway. Shepard had his own sterling saves, including a point-blank snapper from Kean Washkurak.

The biggest fireworks of the period came in the form of mitts dropping between former T-Bird Dylan McIlrath and Sam Bitten less than four minutes into the action. The early scrap between two of the toughest customers in the AHL added a big boost to both benches but ultimately did not lead to either team cracking into the scoresheet in the first 20 minutes.

As difficult as it was for the teams to establish in the first, it became even

more difficult in a second period that saw only seven combined shots between the two teams, with Subban stopping four Hershey attempts and Shepard blocking three Springfield offerings, forcing the scoreless draw into a final period.

The game gave every indication that the first goal would be pivotal, and at 5:31 of the third, Pierrick Dube finally got on the board for the Bears, blasting a slapper that glanced off Subban’s left shoulder and squeaked across the line just moments before a T-Birds defender could get to the goal line to save it.

The winger’s 14th of the season proved to be the only tally, as Springfield could not dent Shepard the rest of the way. Former Bear Jakub Vrana had perhaps the best chance to tie the game on a one-timer from the right circle, but Shepard slid from right to left to deny the chance, and Springfield succumbed to their first shutout defeat of the season.

The two teams will have a grudge match on Friday night inside the MassMutual Center as the T-Birds begin a seven-game homestand. Puck drop on Friday is set for 7:05 p.m. for another Deuces Wild Friday.

## Michael Shenette declares for NASCAR modifieds tour

WORCESTER – Driving the No. 8, John-Michael Shenette will chase the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour Rookie of the Year honors in 2024. When the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour begins a 16-race schedule in February at New Smyrna Speedway in Florida, Shenette plans to be in attendance. It will be the first race in his quest to compete in a majority of the races on the schedule to chase the prestigious award.

Formerly based in Thompson, Connecticut, Shenette is the CEO of Eighty-Two Services, a General Contractor located in Concord, North Carolina. The team, Eighty-Two Autosport, will also contest additional SMART Modified Tour and Open Modified events when available in 2024.

Shenette made his debut on the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour at Langley Speedway in 2023 and finished 12th. He also competed in events at North-Wilkesboro Speedway and Martinsville Speedway prior to the end of the season.

“We’re excited for 2024,” John-Michael Shenette said. “Last year was about putting a car on the track. We struggled with a mechanical issue that plagued us at all three events and prevented us from log-

ging laps. All-in-all, it was a good year - we were able to build a great group, add a second car and square away all the bits and pieces that it takes to run. The NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour is the best of the best in modified racing, if not NASCAR as a whole. Our team is ready for the challenge. Chasing the prestigious Rookie of the Year award is on our bucket list, but we’re also looking for consistency and to chase our first career win in Modified in 2024.”

Shenette was born in Worcester, and started racing at 7-years-old at Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park’s “Little T” track in Connecticut. He’s raced on and off his entire life - running in the Pro Stocks, Thompson Modifieds, PASS Super Late Models, ARTS Trucks, Karts and now Tour-Type Modifieds 30 years later.

Shenette and his NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour team, led by crew chief Scott Morin and car chief Stephen Robinson, will open the 2024 season at New Smyrna Speedway on Saturday, February 10, as NASCAR opens their 76th season of racing. For more information on the team, fans are encouraged to follow the team on Facebook on their new page, Eighty-Two Autosport, for the latest news and information, including race day updates.

### BASKETBALL ■ from page 7

Agawam is still a member of the Suburban North, but Minnechaug (1-1), who had won the previous three meetings on the hardwood by less than ten points, moved to the Suburban South Division.

“I’m disappointed in tonight’s result,” said Minnechaug head coach Mike Orzech. “I thought the effort was there, but we had too many turnovers and missed too many shots in the second half.”

The driver of the bus in the first two road games for the Brownies was senior guard Colin Smith. He scored a total of 67 points in the two victories.

“Colin is a very good basketball player,” Sheehan said. “The difference this season is he isn’t forcing his shots. He’s letting the game come to him.”

After scoring 34 points with the help of four 3-pointers in the season opener, Smith scored 21 of his game-high 33 points against the Falcons in the second half. He scored most of his points in last Friday’s contest on lay-ups. He also had six steals, five rebounds and two assists in last Friday’s game.

“We played with a lot more energy in the second half than we did in the first half,” Smith said. “We also made a lot more shots. We have a lot of very good players on this year’s team, and it’s been a lot of fun so far.”

Smith, who has scored close to 600 career points, joined the boys varsity basketball team as a freshman. Sheehan, who was previously the boys’ varsity basketball coach at Granby High School, coached Smith for the first time the following year.

“Colin has improved so much since I began coaching him as a sophomore,” said

Sheehan, who had the opportunity to coach a couple of 1,000-point scorers at Granby. “He’s a senior now and nothing ever seems to rattle him. He still has a lot of room to get better. He’s also an unselfish player.”

The duo of junior forward Melih Tomak (13 points) and junior guard Elijah Maldonado (10 points) also provided a spark offensively for the Brownies in the second half.

The Falcons were led offensively by sophomore guard Miles Fergus, who scored 13 points of his team-leading 16 points during the first 16 minutes of the contest. Junior guard Gus Przybyl netted nine of his 13 points in the second half. Junior forward Nate Pace added eight points.

In the middle of the opening quarter, an old fashion three point play by senior guard Nick Disa (5 points) gave the home team a 9-2 lead.

The Falcons also led by seven points (13-6) late in the first quarter following back-to-back lay-ups by senior forward D.J. Johnson (6 points) and Przybyl.

Following a steal and lay-up by Smith, the visitors entered the second stanza trailing 13-8.

Fergus made three 3-pointers in the second quarter, which helped Minnechaug build a 26-18 halftime lead.

The Falcons eight point lead slipped away like sand in an hourglass, as the Brownies scored the first ten points of the second half.

“I told the kids in the locker room at halftime that our shot selection in the first half was pretty good, but the problem was we didn’t make very many of them,” Sheehan said. “We made a lot more shots in the second half, and it stopped their transition

game, which was probably the biggest difference.”

Smith began the comeback by sinking a pair of free throws.

A reverse lay-up by Tomak tied the score at 26-26 with 6:10 left in the third quarter.

Less than a minute later, Agawam took the lead for the first time at 28-26 when freshman forward Gavin Cruz (4 points) made a shot while falling to the ground in the middle of the lane.

The Brownies entered the final eight minutes of the contest holding a slim 41-40 lead.

The duo of Tomak and Smith combined



Elijah Maldonado tries to work his way away from the sideline.

to score the first twelve points of the fourth quarter for Agawam.

With 4:25 remaining in regulation, a steal and lay-up by Smith increased the Brownies advantage to 53-44.

Agawam sealed the deal by making nine free throw attempts during the final three minutes.

The Brownies players enjoyed another bus ride back home.



Colin Smith makes his way down the court.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



# Public Notices

## AGAWAM ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Agawam Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing at the Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main St., Agawam, MA on **Monday, January 8, 2024 at 6:30PM** for all parties interested in the appeal of Laurie Littlefield, as allowed under MGL Ch.40A, Section 8 and the Town of Agawam's Adopted Charter, Section 2, Paragraph C, from the Inspector of Buildings October 20, 2023 Zoning Ordinance Violation Notice regarding the premises identified as 655 Cooper Street.

Doreen A. Prouty  
Chairperson  
Agawam Zoning Board of Appeals  
12/14, 12/21/2023

Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Hampden Probate and Family Court  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
(413)748-7758  
Docket No. HD22P0628EA

Estate of:  
Martha Burns  
Also known as:  
Martha K Burns  
Date of Death: 01/28/2022  
CITATION ON PETITION FOR ORDER OF COMPLETE SETTLEMENT

A Petition for Order of Complete Settlement has been filed by Patricia Burns of Feeding Hills, MA requesting that the court enter a formal Decree of Complete Settlement including the allowance of a final account, a determination of heirs at law and other such relief as may be

requested in the Petition. .  
**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 01/19/2024.**

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

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara M. Hyland, First Justice of this Court.

Date: December 14, 2023  
Rosemary A. Saccomani  
Register of Probate  
12/21/2023

## LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given by Langanet Towing pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c.255, Section 39A, that on **January 2, 2024** at 63 Ramah Cir S, Agawam the following Motor Vehicles will be sold at private sale to satisfy the garagekeeper's lien thereon for storage, towing charges, and expenses of notices and sale of said vehicle.

**2000 Toyota 4Runner**  
VIN: JT3HN86R8Y0289699  
Gary Croteau  
14 Meadow Ave  
Agawam, MA 01001  
12/14, 12/21, 12/28/2023

Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Hampden Probate and Family Court  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
(413)748-7758  
Docket No. HD19P2234EA

Estate of:  
Helen Beane  
Date of Death: 01/20/2017  
CITATION ON PETITION FOR ORDER OF COMPLETE SETTLEMENT

A Petition for Order of Complete Settlement has been filed by John J Ferriter of Holyoke, MA requesting that the court enter a formal Decree of Complete Settlement including the allowance of a final account such relief as may be requested in the Petition.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
You have the right to

obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 01/17/2024** This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara M. Hyland, First Justice of this Court.

Date: December 11, 2023  
Rosemary A. Saccomani  
Register of Probate  
12/21/2023

Agawam Advertiser News

## OBITUARY POLICY

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. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: [obits@turley.com](mailto:obits@turley.com).

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

## Early Deadlines

for all LEGAL NOTICES...

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**

*Happy Holidays!*

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Country Journal \$31/year (\$36 out-of-state)

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# HCC Foundation welcomes new board members, officers

HOLYOKE – HCC Foundation, Inc., the nonprofit fundraising arm of Holyoke Community College, has added nine new members to its Board of Directors, including six alumni, and also voted in a new slate of officers.

The new board members are; Jasarah Burgos of Springfield, program director of New North Citizens Council; Steven Clement '11, of West Springfield, a certified public accountant and former controller for ServiceNet; Kate Douglas, of South Hadley, president emerita of SUNY Cortland Community College; Luindy Espinal '19, of Granby, senior accountant at Colony Hills Capital; Dean Gallagher, of Florence, retired; Johnnie McKnight '10, founder and president of Massachusetts Scholars With A Goal; Matt McMahon '06, of Franklin, senior technical advisor with Booz Allen; Ryan Rege '08, of Belchertown, director of vocational programs for Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School in Fitchburg; and Jim Shevlin '80, of Alpharetta,

Georgia, division president of ESIS, a Chubb Company.

“When I first enrolled at HCC, I was not a very good student,” said Rege, explaining his interest in the HCC Foundation. “It took me 10 years to earn my associate degree. By the time I did, HCC had instilled in me a passion for learning that I still carry with me today. I’ve made a career working in education. HCC helped me find my path and supported me when I needed it.”

The Foundation board approved the appointment of the new directors at its annual meeting on Dec. 5 while also welcoming a new slate of officers.

Susan Goldsmith, of Longmeadow, president of Marcus Printing in Holyoke, will serve as chair; Lynn Starr '95, of Southamptton, executive vice president and chief information officer at bankESB as vice chair; and Tiffany Madru, of West Hartford, Conn., founder of Analytics Labs in Holyoke, as secretary.

“We are thrilled to welcome such an impressive group of individuals to our board,” said Amanda Sbriscia, HCC’s vice president of Institutional Advancement and executive director of the HCC Foundation. “The diverse perspectives and professional experiences they bring will further elevate the work of the foundation, and their passion really is a gift to the HCC community.”

The HCC Foundation has total net assets of \$28.3 million and an endowment of \$18 million, the largest of all 15 community colleges in Massachusetts, due in large part to nearly 200 endowed scholarships and other funds established by alumni, faculty, staff, and friends of the college.

In January, the HCC Foundation Board of Directors was recognized by the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges with the John W. Nason Award, a national honor that recognizes exceptional leadership and initiative.

# Big Y’s third vaccination week a huge success

SPRINGFIELD – Big Y Pharmacy and Wellness Centers continue to set records not only from their big vax week but also as their vaccination numbers increase daily. This third community wide event spanned every one of Big Y’s supermarket locations throughout Massachusetts and Connecticut through a combination of their pharmacy locations and on-site clinics for all customers, employees and their families.

While clinic locations offered seasonal and high dose flu as well as COVID-19 vaccines, in-store pharmacies offer a variety of additional vaccines such as Pneumococcal (pneumonia), Shingrix (shingles), Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis), Hepatitis A and B, Meningococcal (Meningitis), MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella), Gardasil (HPV). Big Y Pharmacy teams admin-

istered over 19,000 vaccines between flu and COVID-19 vaccines during their 2023 Big Y Big Vax week.

Overall, Big Y Pharmacies have administered over 26,000 flu shots this year. Health officials continue to make another urgent push to encourage the public to get vaccinated. Experts say it’s not too late to get vaccinated.

Each Big Y Pharmacy location still offers flu vaccines, no appointment is necessary. According to Dave Argento, senior manager of pharmacy operations, “As we continue to expand our community vaccination program, we are grateful to our pharmacy staff and store teams for their efforts especially during Big Y Vax Week. Their dedication to protecting our friends and neighbors through our immunization program has made a tremendous impact in the area we serve.”

# Photography submissions needed for library show

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 recognized 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](http://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](mailto:r.kadis@comcast.net) or at 413-789-4814.

## PROJECT ■ from page 1

request for qualifications so they can also hire a contractor.

“The big thing for us right now, the most important, exciting thing is going to be to pick the contractor,” Mayor William Sapelli said. “That’s going to be crucial. Once the contractor gets on board and the architect finalizes our design—because there are still a few pieces they need to fine tune with our design—then we’ll really be in good shape.”

It will take about two months until they can get a contractor on board. In the meantime, their designer will work on refining the design plans.

“They’re working more on the footprint and refining the design,” Bonfiglio explained.

Following this, the contractor and the designer will work together in order to finalize plans further.

Up to this point, in the feasibility study, the designer, Bonfiglio and the rest of the team had determined the concept of the building and what the site would look like, but have yet to finalize a floor plan.

That will be the main focus in the Schematic Design phase.

“The schematic design is going to begin looking at the space that we need and identifying all the classrooms and where they’ll be located in the building,” Bonfiglio said.


The district hopes to complete this phase by the end of May, so that they can submit the final design plans to the MSBA for their meeting on June 26.

At that meeting, the MSBA will vote on approval for the project to move into the construction phase.

Throughout the Schematic Design phase they will also be sure to have opportunities for the community to give input about the project.

“We’re looking to do some workshops after the new year and really involve the public,” Bonfiglio said. “We’ve had a lot of visioning sessions up to this point, but as we refine the plan we’ll definitely be hosting some additional workshops and public meetings.”

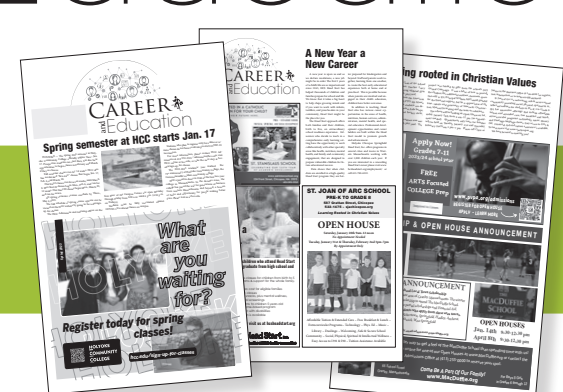
The school building committee will also continue meeting twice a month, and the public is welcome to attend any meeting. The meeting dates and times are posted on the AHS project website, which you can access at <https://agawamhsproject.com/>.




# CAREER

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The 2024 Career & Education edition publishes **the week of January 10th-12th**  
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Items were donated from community members and community organizations for the gift basket assembly.



Event Organizer and Outreach Coordinator Lori Arsenault instructed the volunteers on how to assemble the gift baskets.

**BASKETS** ■ from page 1

relatives around, so I thought to myself 'if they're stuck at home and they can't get a meal, then there's probably a lot of things that they can't get out for,' she said.

For a lot of homebound seniors, these gift baskets are the only things they get for the holidays. Arsenault said there is always a rush of grateful phone calls after the baskets are delivered.

"They love it," she said. "I get phone calls from the seniors afterwards thanking us, a lot of them are in tears, they're just so grateful. They just love it."



The room was filled with community members ready to donate their time and efforts to assembling the gift baskets.

Over 20 people gathered in the senior center in order to assist with the gift basket assembly for homebound seniors.



Seniors and members of the senior center all worked together to assemble the 90 gift baskets for homebound seniors.



New Senior Center Director Cindy Sullivan donated her time to helping with the gift basket assembly.



Outreach Coordinator and Event Organizer Lori Arsenault helped with the gift basket making efforts.



Chief of Staff at the Mayor's Office Jennifer Gannett stopped by to help with the making of the gift baskets.



Volunteer Linda Connolly and Assistant Director Kristina Lynch volunteered their time to help with the gift basket assembly.



Over 90 gift baskets were made by volunteers for homebound seniors.