

Chicopee Register

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Dine-Out supports Halfway Home Cat Rescue

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
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CHICOPEE - The community stopped by The Rumbleseat Bar & Grille from 4 to 7 p.m. on Jan. 29 for a Dine-Out Fundraiser to support Halfway Home Cat Rescue.

Halfway Home Cat Rescue Inc. is a nonprofit rescue group in Chicopee that has been around since 2012, dedicated to the care and adoption of cats and kittens.

Throughout the evening, 15% of all purchases made at the Rumbleseat were donated to the organization and for a \$10 donation, people could also meet some of the kittens up for adoption. Those interested in adopting could also fill out an application.

There were also raffle prizes up for grabs—including items donated by local organizations and businesses—and community members dropped off donations of wish list items from wet and dry kitten food to kitty litter.

Amongst the local businesses lending their support was Bob Pion Buick GMC, with owner Bob Pion stopping by with his family to meet the kittens.

Pion shared how one of his employees has been a long-time supporter of the organization.

"It's a great cause. Things are tough for everybody and a lot of extra animals out there, so anything we can do to help and make their lives a little better is good for everybody," Pion said.

Pion emphasized the importance of supporting local



Terri and Joseph Aldrich, longtime supporters of Halfway Home Cat Rescue, show off one of the kittens they got to meet.

organization, hoping attendees get more information and awareness about the organizations and the people behind it. Also, adopt one of the cats and kittens.

"It's important. All the local organizations, people work really hard, thankless jobs—a lot of it—and it's just nice to have the opportunity to be part of the community as they are," Pion said. "It's just kind of a nice, low-key event and everybody gets to have a little bit of fun."

Pion encourages other local businesses to get involved in their community.

"Just do a little research, reach out, watch. If you're in a business, talk to your employ-

ees, get to know what they're involved in, because it can open the doors to a lot of new opportunities for you as well," Pion said.

Robin Fiskaa, president of Halfway Home Cat Rescue, shared this was the second annual event to support the organization.

"Billy always welcomes us here and we bring in people who eat and it's a Dine-Out event first and foremost, and then we always have raffle prizes and kittens for people to cuddle," Fiskaa said. "And so the backroom is completely full right now with people and it's just a good way to raise money and awareness and just for people to come out and

have fun. Everybody likes the Rumbleseat."

For Rumbleseat Owner Billy Stetson, he was humbled to be part of the event.

"There's a lot of work behind the scenes this group does that nobody sees and it takes money and it takes some donations. I'm really, really happy to be associated with this group," Stetson said.

Fiskaa and Stetson were thrilled with the turnout.

"It's pretty incredible that in this weather right now where it's about -1 windchill and the snow piles are all over the place, it's pretty in-

See **CAT RESCUE**
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Ella Desrosiers and Isabel Vershon demonstrate checking on a patient in the Health Simulation Lab.

A look inside the CHS Health Simulation Lab

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
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CHICOPEE - Chicopee High School offers pathways for students to pursue a career path for the future, with one of those being the Health Simulation Lab.

CTE Director Carl Ingram explained how the district decided to offer more program areas for students rather than the 10 career-tech programs at Chicopee Comp.

"We offer 19 career-tech programs at both high schools. Chicopee High School, we offer pathway programs, which are a little different," Ingram said.

Ingram shared back in 2020, ESSER money was secured through federal funds to help transform a drafting lab on the high school's fourth floor into a medical

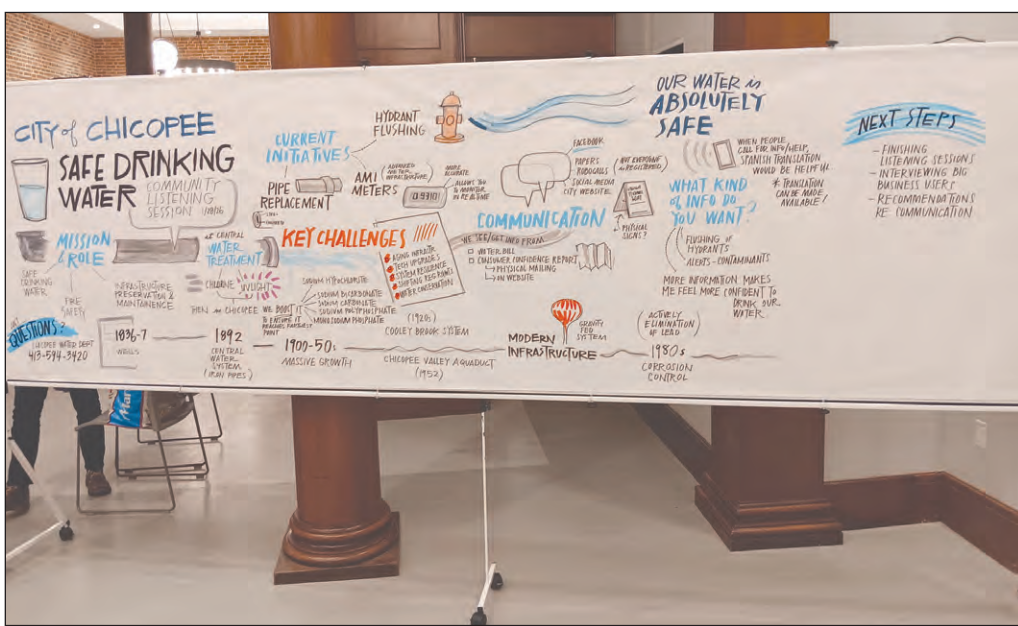
simulation lab, which is now offered during the school day.

"Our Health Science program has been around for a few years, but we've never had the hands-on portion of it. We're now able to offer the hands-on portion," Ingram said. "Traditionally, in the past, our health science students have had to go to HCC to actually do this part of the simulation. We're now able to offer it in the building."

Ingram added the Health Simulation Lab needs a full-time teacher to teach the course. Currently, a professor from Holyoke Community College comes in Monday through Friday for periods six and seven to do a full certification certified nursing assistant class.

"HCC has been a great

See **HEALTH LAB**
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A visual presentation drafted and documented by Sita Magnuson from Dpict, Text and Visual Documentation

Community attends safe drinking water forum

By Brendan Rooney
Correspondent

CHICOPEE — The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC), in tandem with representatives from the Chicopee DPW, held an open public forum on Jan. 28 to provide insight into how the city's water is filtered, along with disclosing the initial process and holding the opportunity to yield questions from the general public.

The event drew residents to The Hub at Market Square for the listening session, with local supermarket Fruit Fair co-sponsoring the event and providing food and refreshments for attendees.

The purpose of the gathering was for the PVPC to seek feedback, which would then be implemented and utilized to craft a regional drinking water plan, which has been an initiative in the work "for some time now," according to comments

from PVPC Chief Environment Planner Patty Gambarini.

Gambarini noted that the PVPC has sat down with over 26 regional suppliers to understand how well accessible drinking water is in terms of protection, and she told the crowd, "Everyone in the region is a little bit different than the next."

The initial presentation was then led and introduced by Quinn Lonczak, the Chicopee DPW Project Manager, who offered a brief timeline of how the Water Department in the city first came into inception—with it first started in the early 1830s—and then evolved into Unified Water Company in 1892, before the system kept growing and found its footing in the turn of the century, most notably in the during the 1920s, where the Cooley Brook Reservoir was built.

It then turned into an aqueduct system to kickstart the 1950s, which led to the con-

struction of the 13 mile long Chicopee Valley Aqueduct, which is still in use today.

Lonczak then explained the additions of modern infrastructure before transitioning into the overall treatment process.

"We have a storage tank on Royal Street, which can be found in Fairview, which is a low-pressure area, and we want to note that the entire city of Chicopee is a gravity-fed system, so when the water comes down from the Quabbin, it's strictly gravity, which means higher areas provide better water pressure," Lonczak said.

He then pivoted to how the overall water treatment process works, which starts by Chicopee purchasing water from the MWRA (Massachusetts Water Resources Authority), which oversees the

See **CLEAN WATER**
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Catching up with the Boutins

By Christina Gioscia
Correspondent

CHICOPEE - Chicopee's brand-new firefighter Jacob Boutin has finished his time at the academy, graduating alongside the Career Recruit Firefighter Class S43 at the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy.

After being sworn in in July 2025 alongside Tyler Moreau, Jimmy Tran and Austin Gower, he began his journey through the academy, completing his training there in December 2025.

Jacob Boutin reflected fondly on his time at the academy.

"The academy is 10 weeks long and I had a great time. My recruit class was

full of mostly amazing people; we were always having a fun time no matter what wild activity they had us doing. It feels awesome and I couldn't be happier. The academy was the most fun that I never want to have again," Jacob Boutin said.

Jacob Boutin then shared with us how his family inspired him to follow his path, and how he manages to stay prepared for the job.

"I always wanted to be a firefighter ever since I can remember. My parents, grandparents and uncle inspired me to become a firefighter, as they are all firefighters and the most fantastic people who would do anything to help someone in need. I am very grateful that I was

able to pass my NREMT test on the first try, as that test is very hard and many people do not get it first try," Jacob Boutin said. "You have to be prepared. If you're not going to the gym consistently, then now is the time to start and you need to get your EMT certification. For me, this looks like eating healthy meals, going to the gym consistently, keeping a healthy relationship with the people I am close with, and trying to catch up on sleep when I can."

He expressed gratitude to his parents for their support.

"I would like to thank my parents, as they have raised me well and have been the people I have always looked up to, as mom and dad, but also firefighters," Jacob Boutin said.

Jacob then shared what it was like to be sworn in by City Clerk Keith Rattell last summer.

"Being sworn in was a great feeling. My father's group was working that day, and a lot of them showed up to the pinning as well as other members of CFD which meant a lot to me; seeing that they too were excited about us getting pinned," Jacob Boutin said.

Deputy Fire Chief Bill Boutin shared how proud he is of his son, Jacob, for completing his time at the academy and offered his perspective on his journey.

"What I am most proud of with Jake would be the effort he put into the academy. I come from a firefighting background as my



Firefighter Jacob Boutin and his father, Deputy Fire Chief Bill Boutin, in a photo together.

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IN THE CITY

Comp Colts hold annual 'Comp v. Cancer' Night

By Brendan Rooney
Correspondent

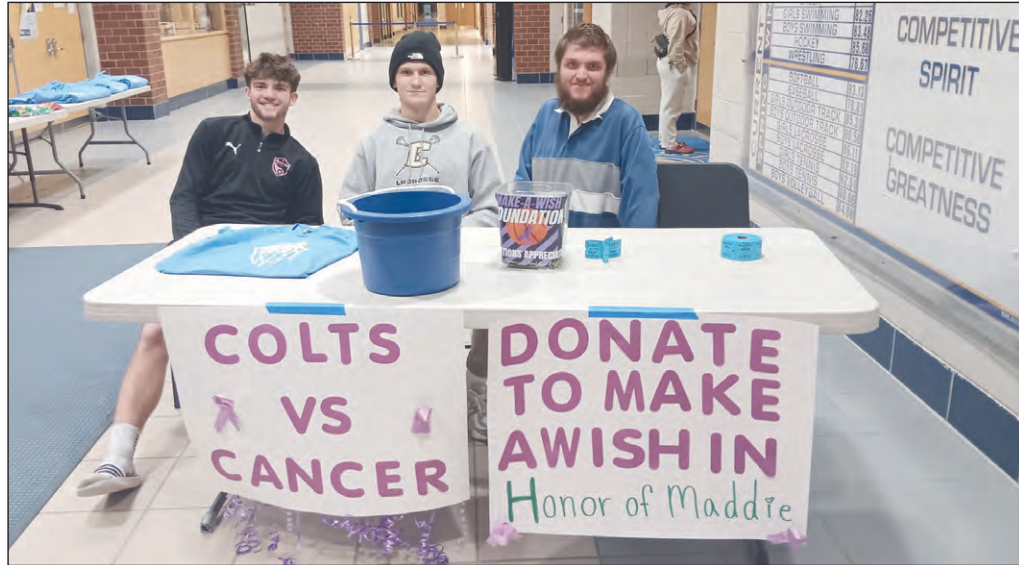
CHICOPEE — Last month, on Jan. 15, the Chicopee Comp Colts held its annual "Comp v. Cancer" Night, which continues to be a long-standing tradition in the city.

This year proved no different, as what turned out to be a simple matchup between the Lady Colts Basketball team and the West Springfield Terriers played host to a special moment of community awareness from within the Herbert Curry T. Gymnasium.

Gone were the shades of brazen gold and cosmic blue; now replaced with ribbons of purple among the bleacher stands, and posters bearing different messages such as 'Box Out Cancer', 'Together we Fight', and 'For us it's a game, For them it's a battle' across the walls, exemplifying the distinct message of unity that remains steadfast in the unwavering battle of cancer, illustrating that the disease affects all backgrounds and ages.

Reflecting on the origin of this timeless staple was Alyssa Stefanelli, the Colts' head girls basketball coach.

"Events like this one began under our previous coach, Tony Couture, when I was a player within this program," Stefanelli said. "I remember



Students running the entrance at the event.

our Colts vs Cancer Nights as very uplifting community gatherings, where it felt like everyone, opponents and fans alike, were a part of our 'team,' working together for the same cause. It was a way for us as high schoolers to make an impact and contribute to positive change, and I felt like that was an important experience to continue to bring to my current players."

The Colts then stormed the court, debuting new white warm-up shirts that read "Colts V Cancer" on the front, and on the back was the phrase "No One Fights Alone", and on the left sleeve was the #24 encased in a heart, forever etched in remembrance of

17-year-old Madelyn "Madde" Robillard, a shining star and pivotal part of the Colts community who recently lost her five-year battle to Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia last year on January 5, 2025, just months before graduating.

She is now forever enshrined in the Colts' graduation class of 2025.

Before tip-off, Stefanelli took a moment to reflect on the importance of this special event being dedicated to the memory of Robillard and her

legacy.

"While Madelyn was a member of the Class of 2025 and is now considered Comp Basketball Alumni, her impact extends to all of the players in our program, new and old. It is extremely important to me that we were able to continue to honor her memory as a team and community," Stefanelli said.

She also explained that all proceeds from the game were returned to the Make-A-Wish Foundation, as per the



A side view of the Comp Bench.

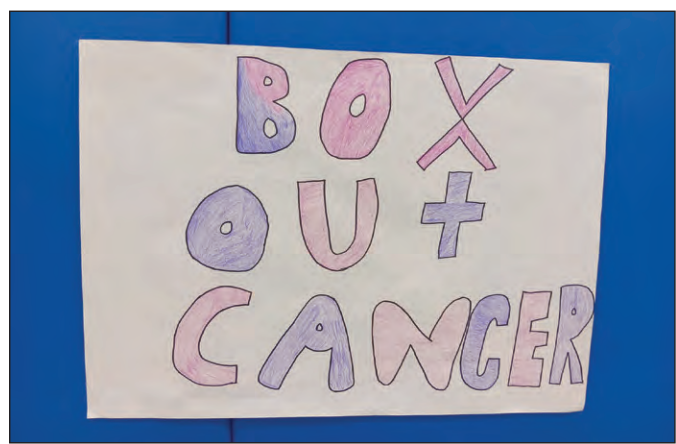
family's wishes.

"This year, like last, the money that was raised was sent to the Make a Wish Foundation in honor of Madelyn," Stefanelli said. "Last year, the family had asked that any monetary donations be sent to this organization, and I felt that it was fitting to continue our support in that way."

Stefanelli then closed her thoughts by declaring an ode of gratitude and a point

of strength to the continued resilience and unwavering support from the community.

"The Comp Girls Basketball team would like to extend their gratitude to everyone in attendance at this year's Colts vs Cancer game," Stefanelli said. "Thank you for your support and your generous contributions in making sure that No One Fights Alone."



TURLEY PHOTOS BY BRENDAN ROONEY

The "Box Out Cancer Sign."



Lady Colts starting line-up for the Comp v. Cancer event on Jan. 15.



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Polish Junior League of Massachusetts launches annual scholarship offering

REGION — The Polish Junior League of Massachusetts has announced its annual scholarship program for students of Polish heritage.

The League will be awarding scholarships to undergraduate students, and one scholarship will be granted to a graduate or returning student. In addition to the Undergraduate Scholarship program, there are two memorial scholarships, the Helen Weber Scholarship and the Josephine Karwoski Memorial Scholarship, each offering a focus on specific areas of study.

The scholarships and services provided by the Polish Junior League would not be possible without funds raised through the League's Annual Fashion Show and public donations. By contributing, individuals, businesses and corporations are helping to expand the level of awards and positively affect students.

Sheryl Mardeusz, president of the Polish Junior League says, "we are proud to continue helping graduate and undergraduate students throughout New England and are extremely pleased to be able to help even more individuals pursue their education-

al goals."

To be eligible, applicants, in addition to being part of the Polish community, must have a permanent address in the Western Massachusetts counties of Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden or Hampshire. Applications can be received after January 2, 2026 with an application deadline of May 1, 2026 and scholarship criteria can be found on the League's website polishjuniorleague.org.

For 87 years, the Polish Junior League of Massachusetts, a nonprofit organization of women developed as civic leaders, has made a demonstrable impact on their community. True to its mission, the League has worked diligently to help students obtain the best education, so they may contribute to enhance the social, cultural and political fabric of civil society.

*Scholarship Program Key Information

Applications can be submitted between January 2, 2026 and May 1, 2026

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IN THE CITY

Chicopee Public Library hosts programs for kids and families

CHICOPEE - Each month the Chicopee Public Library hosts a variety of free programs for children, teens, and families. The Youth Services Department seeks to provide opportunities for entertainment and enrichment that promote literacy and explore creativity. Here is the slate of events for February 2026.

Terrific Twos will be held on Tuesdays, Feb. 17 at 10:30 a.m. Terrific Twos is for two- year-olds and their caregivers. This program features about 25 minutes of structured circle time, followed by about half an hour of semi-structured playtime. During circle time, we will sing songs, do rhymes, do some big movements, and read 1 book. The book choice rotates between either a read aloud picture book or a group read of a board book. Playtime involves a choice of craft, activity, or play.

Sensory Play Saturday will be held on Saturday, Feb. 7 at 9:30 a.m. Come let your babies socialize and explore sensory play! We will have our play area set up with some sensory activities and other play opportunities. For babies 0-24 months and their caregivers.

Saturday Playgroup will be held on Saturdays at 1 p.m. in February. We'll put out some extra toys in the playspace. It's a great time for families with kids of all ages to meet up and play.

Little Kid Dance Party will be on Wednesdays, Feb. 11 and 25 at 10:30 a.m. Moving and grooving for kids and their caregivers. Geared toward ages 0-5, but all are welcome!

45 minutes to one hour of energetic activity including singing and dancing, action rhymes, and playing with props like scarves and shakers.

The Kids Room Sewing Club will meet on Wednesday, Feb. 11, from 3:30 to 5 p.m. Learn basic stitches and

practice skills by making fun projects. Recommended for ages six and up. Kids who are not familiar with using a needle and thread should attend with an adult. Teens are welcome.

The library Homeschool Meetup will be on Friday, Feb. 13 at Noon. This group meets once a month September - June for homeschooling families with kids of all ages to hang out, do activities and learn together. Different activities each month are planned by the group. This month we are celebrating Valentine's Day with a card exchange. (No candy, please).

February School Vacation Week is Feb. 17 through 20

The library will be closed for Presidents' Day on Monday, Feb. 16.

Mario Party

Celebrate everyone's favorite plumber and his friends! We are turning the Kids Room into a Mario Party game! Come enjoy mini games, crafts and more. For kids and families of all ages, no registration required. Stop by the library at any point from 2:30 to 4 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 17.

The library will host a Big Kid Dance Party on Wednesday, February 18 at 10:30 a.m. A bit like our regularly scheduled Little Kid Dance Party, but geared specifically towards elementary age kids. We'll sing and dance and get out the rhythm sticks. Caregivers and younger kids are welcome.

The library will host Bingo for Books on Wednesday, Feb. 18 at 6 p.m. Play bingo for a chance to win books. Fun for the whole family.

Talking Hands Theatre will present their puppet show, Whale Tales, on Thursday, Feb. 19 at 10:30 a.m. Learn about animals under the sea with engaging puppets and original songs. Great for the storytime crowd. Kids of all ages and caregivers are

welcome. No registration required.

Join us for a Crafternoon where we will make Pasta Art on Thursday, Feb. 19 at 2 p.m. Create fun art using dyed pasta of all shapes and colors! For kids and families of all ages, no registration required.

On Friday, Feb. 20, stop by the Kids Room any time during the day to contribute to Community Art: Big Coloring. Help us create a mural for our bulletin boards! We will have paper and all sorts of coloring tools available. Stop by anytime! For kids and families of all ages, no registration required.

The Children's Room is a great place to hang out. Coloring pages and board games are always available. There are also some new things you can play with while you visit. Ask us about food toys for the play kitchen, building blocks, or the art cart.

Teens

Visit the library after school and enjoy the Teen Space with friends! We've got board games, puzzles, the library's Switch, and coloring to enjoy.

Anime Club will be on Wednesday, Feb. 25 at 3 p.m. We'll be celebrating 30 years of Pokémon! With the franchise's big three-oh only days after Anime Club, we'll be talking about our hopes for big announcements and enjoying plenty of themed activities!

Friday Teen Hang

Join us every Friday after school in the Teen Space for some games and crafts! We'll have the Nintendo Switch available to play, coloring pages and paper to doodle, and more!

Teens are invited to join us at LEGO, Sewing Club, and

Visit the library website for more info about all of the library's events! www.chicopeepubliclibrary.org.



Recipients of awards at Connect 351: Representative Jim Arciero, Representative Danielle Gregoire, Senator Brendan Crighton, and Senator Jake Oliveira.

Jake Oliveira given Legislator of the Year Award

By Emily-Rose Pappas
Staff Writer
epappas@turley.com

REGION - The Massachusetts Municipal Association hosted its annual conference, this year called Connect 351, in Boston, in order to award two State Senators and two State Representatives with the Municipal Advocate Award, recognizing them for their service to the communities they represent and serve. The Massachusetts Municipal Association, or MMA, works to connect and support municipal leaders by creating a nonpartisan space for shared learning, ideas, and a voice to bring to Beacon Hill in order to make the 351 towns and cities of Massachusetts more connected and unified.

"The more state support that municipalities can get, the better. Making sure that we have reliable state support for our 351 towns and cities is a lot more equitable. I be-

lieve that we are in a Commonwealth, and we should work together to benefit our towns," said Senator Jake Oliveira.

Oliveira worked hard to file legislation for towns to have the option to make hybrid meetings permanent, offering a way for meetings to become more accessible to the public, amongst many other benefits.

"It's worked so well, even at the state house, and it makes it easier for people to participate in their government. It definitely improves services, and it was a great help in the long run to allow for more flexibility and an easier time to share information," said Oliveira.

Oliveira partnered with the MMA to obtain funding for essential services at the local level, including Chapter 70 funds, school transportation, and much more. He also helped work to change the Chapter 90 funding for-

mula in order to help Western MA communities have better roadways that are more cost-effective.

"It was a good conference, and it was very meaningful for me to receive the award," said Oliveira. "It was great to go to the MMA conference, because you got to see town managers, city councilors, and more, some of whom I worked with while I was part of the school committee."

To further honor Oliveira's dedication and service to the communities, the Selectboard from the town of Longmeadow also presented him with an award.

"As someone who came from municipal government, it was very meaningful to receive this award. We really work and fight hard to get these resources for our towns and cities, and working with that is something that I take a lot of pride in," said Oliveira.

Alden Credit Union supports Lorraine's Soup Kitchen & Pantry

CHICOPEE - Alden Credit Union is proud to announce that we were selected as one of 25 credit card partners nationwide through the Elan Charitable Giving Program, resulting in a \$10,000 donation to Lorraine's Soup Kitchen & Pantry.

Lorraine's Soup Kitchen & Pantry has served the Greater Chicopee community for more than 30 years, providing hot meals and pantry services to individuals and families in need. Their work is rooted in dignity, compassion, and a deep commitment to ensuring no one in our community goes without essential support.

Alden Credit Union chose Lorraine's Soup Kitchen because of the meaningful role they play locally and the impact they have on our neighbors every day. Their mission closely aligns with our credit union philosophy of people helping people, and we are honored to support an or-



SUBMITTED PHOTO

ganization that embodies that value so clearly.

This donation was made possible through Elan's Charitable Giving Program, which partners with credit unions and community banks across the country to strengthen the communities they serve

through purpose-driven giving.

We thank Elan Credit Card for their continued commitment to community engagement and for helping us invest in organizations that make a real difference close to home.

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OPINION

Am I entitled to more Social Security as a Veteran?

Dear Rusty:
I served in the U.S. Army from July 1964 to July 1967. Am I eligible for a higher Social Security payment?

Thank you. Signed: Vietnam Era Army Vet

Dear Army Vet:
Please accept my sincere thanks for your military service. I believe you are referring to the "Special Extra Credit for Military Service," which has been the subject of many published articles. That refers to a special Social Security accommodation available only to those who served in the military during specific periods of time, but it does not add to your monthly Social Security payment. Rather, it adds to your military earnings record for the years you served, which may or may not result in a higher Social Security benefit when you later claim Social Security.

Here's how it works in your case:

Serving between 1964 and 1967, if you told Social Security of your military service when you applied for Social Security benefits or gave them a copy of your DD-214, they would have added up to \$1,200 per year to your military pay record. FYI, those who served after 1966 were automatically given earnings credit for their military service years. However, whether those special extra credits would affect your monthly Social Security benefit depends on your lifetime earnings record when you later claimed Social



By Russell Gloor

Security. If you didn't tell SS about your military service when you applied for Social Security, or if you aren't sure, you should contact the SSA at 1.800-772-1213 and ask if you were given those "special extra credits for military service" for your 1960s military service years when you applied for Social Security. But if you had at least 35 years of higher earnings after you left military service, your current SS benefit is already based on those later higher earning years, and you will not get any additional Social Security benefit because of the "special extra credits" for your military service years.

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.

When you applied for benefits, Social Security reviewed your lifetime earnings and used the highest earning 35 years of earnings over your lifetime (adjusted for inflation) to calculate your "Primary Insurance Amount" or "PIA," which is what you get if you claim benefits to start at your Social Security full retirement age. If, after your military service, you had 35 or more years of earnings which were higher than your earnings while serving in the military, Social Security would have used your later higher earning years to calculate your benefit, and your military earnings would not have had an effect on your Social Security benefit. However, if any of your military earnings including the "special extra credits" were among the highest over your lifetime, then those higher military earnings would be included when calculating your Social Security benefit.

So, whether you would benefit from these "special extra credits for military service" depends largely on your earnings history after you were discharged from active duty. If your military earnings were among the highest earning years over your lifetime, and you provided SSA with a copy of your DD-214 when you applied for Social Security, then your current SS ben-



by Roberta McQuaid

Onion culture, continued

This morning, after reading last week's column, my mom commented, "Boy, I didn't realize onions are so challenging to grow."

Oh no, I truly hope that the column did not convey that message. I've been growing onions for years, and find them no more challenging than any other vegetable that you start indoors.

I hope I didn't discourage anyone. In fact, I hope just the opposite happened, whereby everyone purchased some seed to give growing onions a whirl.

Read on to learn more from where we left off last week.

Growing on

How does one achieve lots of top growth so that by seasons' end a big bulb will result? Provide sufficient moisture and nitrogen, and lots of it, but only early in the gardening season.

Amend a 100 square foot area with a bushel of aged manure or finished compost prior to planting, then top dress when plants are six-eight inches high and again for the last three weeks later. Fish emulsion is a great foliar fertilizer for this purpose.

Because onions have limited top growth and are relatively shallow rooted, it makes it hard for them to compete with more aggressive plants for moisture and nutrients. For that reason, be sure to address enemy #1: weeds!

I have found that a hand held circle hoe is great for getting into the narrow space between plants as well as within the rows. Perform this task once or twice a week and you will be weed-free all summer.

You can also apply grass clippings or chopped up leaves as mulch. It will reduce weeds and conserve moisture, and, as it breaks down add valuable organic matter to the soil.

As the summer solstice draws near, the need for nitrogen drops as the bulb switches from top growth to bulbing up. From this point on, no additional fertilizer is necessary and watering can be cut back some.

Harvesting

In early fall your onion tops will begin to yellow and bend at the necks. As mentioned earlier, reduced daylight has signaled the plant to go into dormancy.

When half have bent, bend the rest and allow them to remain in the garden just a few more days. If no rain is in the forecast, pull them up and lay them on edge in place, turning on occasion. This will begin the curing process.

Should rain threaten, they can easily be protected with a tarp or moved under cover.

After three days to a week of sunshine it is time to move them to an airy, dry location such as a shed to cure for an additional two-three weeks. Should this time frame include lots of rain or humidity, sometimes a household fan can help the drying process along.

Dry onions will definitely be the best for long term storage.

Storage

You have a good idea

that your onions are ready for storage when the necks have withered away and the outer skin is dry and starts to slip. Nineteenth century gardeners would have braided and hung them in the root cellar, where cool and dry conditions would, fingers crossed, keep them fit for use as needed into the spring months.

Onion braids have modern day appeal- they look pretty and it is easy to simply tug the perfect size onion from the braid as you need it. The key to success is to attach twine or string to at least one of the braiding strands - this will give your braid strength, not to mention a way of hanging it up.

We can also store onions in mesh bags or old hosiery in a household location that remains close to freezing and relatively dry. My unheated mudroom works great.

Here simply cut the tops to one inch prior to bagging up. When you are going through them to cut, or braid, be sure to separate out those with double bulbs, as well as those whose necks remain thick; neither will be good keepers and should be used first.

This is also a great time to think about good traits and the prospect of saving some of your best onions for seed production.

Save the seeds

Saving the seeds of your open-pollinated, non-hybrid onions is the next frontier for allium aficionados. In the north, we employ what is called the "bulb to seed" method.

Our bulbs are harvested normally and stored over the winter, and when the ground is ready for planting, three or four of your best onions are replanted three inches apart. Soon a flower stalk will form. It can get quite tall (three-five feet!) so place a stake for support early on and tie it off as you need to.

After the flower head has formed be on watch for the black seeds to ripen and loosen up- you want to catch them before they shatter. This can be accomplished by clipping a few sections of the head at a time.

Dry in an airy spot for a few days before storing in paper envelopes in a cool, dry location for use the following spring. Be advised that to avoid cross pollination, only one variety of onion can be in flower at a time; it is fine, however, to have first year onions in the garden.

Onion seeds are viable for one-to two years. Now that you know the ins and outs of onion culture, embrace the challenge and try growing onions from seed this year.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 34 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.



Should you challenge a medical bill?

Estimates suggest that up to 80 percent of medical bills contain at least one error. That's why I always recommend to my clients that they not pay a medical or hospital bill until they have received an itemized bill and carefully reviewed it.

There are a lot of reasons for mistakes in medical billings, which can cause you to incur a bigger-than-expected bill or your insurance to be denied, as I wrote recently.

Some common types of medical billing errors include: Incorrect diagnostic codes: For example, an administrator might enter the wrong code, indicating that a patient had an X-ray on both legs when only one leg was imaged.

Typo: A typo can cause a single saline drip to be registered as many more.

Incomplete or incorrect information: Information for a patient or provider might be entered incorrectly or incompletely.

Duplicate billing: The same service might be billed for more than once.

When you receive an un-



By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN
Guest Column

your health

Most of them didn't reach out to the health-care provider because they didn't think it would make a difference. But, she wrote, "the experiences of those who did reach out provide evidence to the contrary."

"Most respondents who reached out reported at least one form of financial relief, bill corrections, or better understanding of the bill," she wrote. "These findings suggest that patients benefit from reaching out to the billing office on receiving a problematic bill, and those who do not reach out may be missing financially advantageous opportunities."

The study found few differences in the households reporting problem bills - the residents had different levels of income and education. But these factors did affect a person's willingness to call about their medical bill.

"Those who were uninsured, Medicare insured, and less educated were less likely

See **YOUR HEALTH**
page 8

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Letters to the editor should be 250 words or less in length. No unsigned or anonymous opinions will be published. We require letter writers to include his or her town of residence and home telephone number. We must authenticate authorship prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions deemed to be libelous or contain unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks, defamation of character and offensive language. All unknown or alleged facts and quotations offered by the author need to cite credible, unbiased sources.

Send letters to:
The Chicopee Register,
24 Water Street,
Palmer, MA 01069
or email
chicopeeregister@turley.com.
The deadline for
submissions is Tuesday at noon.

WE CARE ABOUT YOUR NEWS!

The Chicopee Register welcomes submissions of news in or related to Chicopee and its residents. Our "People News," is filled with submitted engagement announcements, wedding announcements, birth announcements, your new baby or news about your 25th or 50th anniversary celebrations. Please e-mail correspondence along with a photo to chicopeeregister@turley.com or send it to: Chicopee Register, c/o Turley Publications, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069.

Election letters to the editor

The Chicopee Register welcomes readers to participate in this year's election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to Chicopee Register care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to journals@turley.com. Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by noon Monday to be considered for that Thursday's newspaper. No attack letters will be printed. No letters written by candidates supporting their own candidacy will be printed. If the volume of letters received is larger than the space available in the newspaper, or if the letters become repetitive, the newspaper reserves the right to print a representative sample. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last edition before the election.

For more information, call the editor at 413-283-8393.

Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the newspaper plans to print stories about contested races for Congress, state Senate, state House, district attorney and Governor's Council during the weeks leading up to the election, as well as a question-and-answer voters guide. In order to ensure fairness to all candidates, no political press releases will be printed, nor will reporters cover political rallies or fundraisers.

Candidates who wish to further publicize their candidacy, beliefs and events may contact advertising, 413-283-8393 about paid advertising in Chicopee Register.

NOTICE

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

Winter that wouldn't quit

By **Brendan Rooney**
Correspondent

that blanketed the region. This week, we have some more to share. Enjoy this photospread of snow-storm pics and again, thank you to everyone who sent in their photos.

CHICOPEE — Many of you shared your snow photos with the Chicopee Register after the recent snowstorm



PHOTO COURTESY OF BERNADINE LEWIS

The dogs observe the snow.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MO SAMSON

The kids having fun on a very snowy slide.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CODY MARIE NALLETT

Kids playing and enjoying a snow day.



PHOTO COURTESY OF LIBBY MARTEL

A back deck—including the chairs—covered in snow.

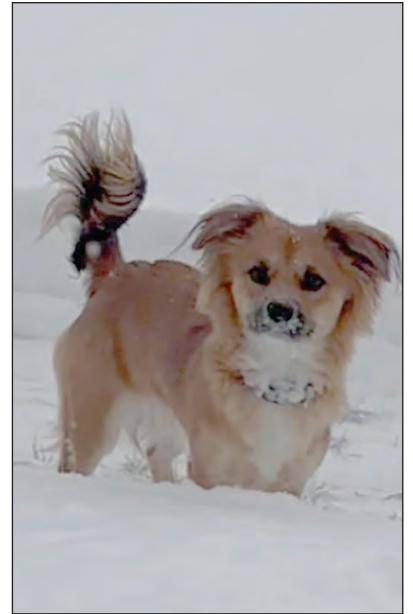


PHOTO COURTESY OF DANIELLE ROBITAILLE

Cali's first time in the snow.

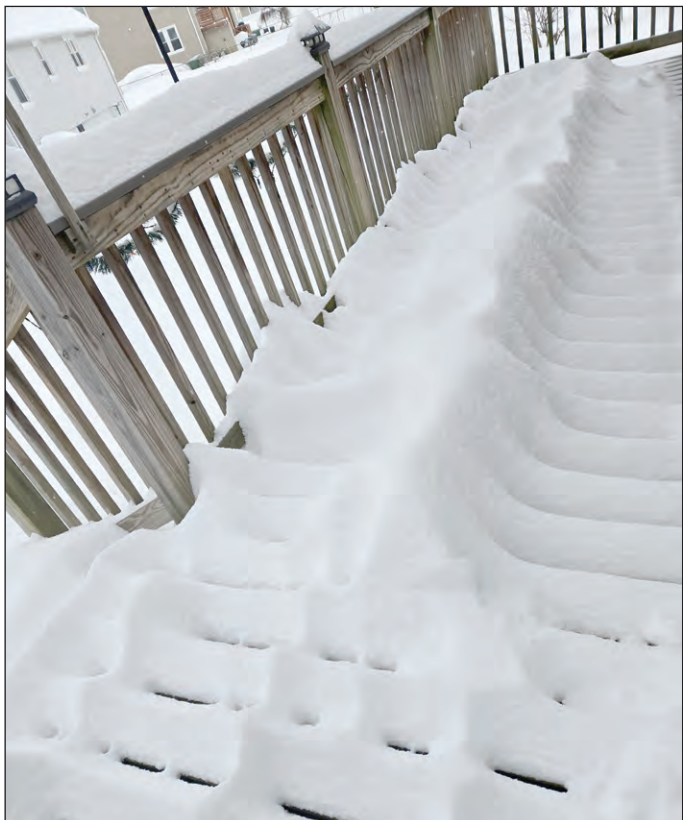


PHOTO COURTESY OF MARY MAJKOWSKI

The snow piles formed this very unique shape on this deck.



PHOTO COURTESY OF TAYLOR HOFFMAN

Looking out the window, the snow was very high.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DALE BUTTERFOSS

The heavy snow also covered this hot tub/jacuzzi.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SAVINA MORIN

You can hardly see anything that's buried under the snow in this photo.

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IN THE CITY

St. Stanislaus School hosting annual auction

CHICOPEE – The St. Stanislaus School is hosting its Annual Auction in March 2026 as an online virtual event.

The Auction begins on March 7 and ends on March 14.

The Auction is to raise funds for a new stage and Performing Arts Fund. During these challenging times in our world, it is more important than ever to have current and relevant curriculum available in all areas of learning. Our goal is to raise \$15,000 to \$20,000 for our school.

The cost of providing a quality, safe and health environment is higher than ever at this time. Your contribution will help us to continue to provide for the 300 students in our school each day.

In order to reach this goal, we need donations from businesses, parents and individual benefactors. Please consider supporting our event by donating a gift certificate, monetary donation, merchandise or services. Your company will be listed in the bidding brochure, and your donation will be displayed in the on-

line catalogue for bidding.

We hope you will donate an item or make a contribution to help support St. Stanislaus School where we believe that we should “Strive to be Servant Leaders for Today and Tomorrow.”

Please contact Katherine Rorrio at 413-592-5135 or email ststanis@saintstansschool.org if you are able to donate. We will gladly have someone pick up your contribution.

Any donations will be tax deductible and will be given a receipt worth the value of the donation.

City of Chicopee data collection program begins

CHICOPEE - The Chicopee Board of Assessors is notifying businesses that data collectors from the assessors’ office will be visiting all businesses starting January 27, 2026 to collect personal property information. Each data collector will carry an official photo identification card issued by Real Estate Research Consultants, Inc. and a letter from the Chicopee Board of Assessors. The Department of

Revenue requires the Assessors to visit businesses every five years to re-list the taxable personal property that is used by the business.

The data collectors will also confirm the legal owner, business name and mailing address for each location.

Data collectors will have identification and any questions can be directed to the Assessors’ office at 594-1430.

Winter Gym Time

CHICOPEE – Winter Gym Time will be taking place at Szetela School. Drop-in playtime with friends in the gym.

Children build strength, coordination and confidence through playful movement. Using games, obstacle courses, music and imagination, children jump, balance, stretch and move in a safe environment. They take place on Wednesdays from 4 to 5 p.m. on Jan. 21, Jan. 28, Feb. 4, Feb. 11, Feb. 25 and March 4.

For information, call Shane at 413-310-1632.

CAT RESCUE from page 1

credible the way we got the word out, and I think we can all agree that no matter what you think about each other, everybody loves animals. The cats bring people together and I think having kittens here is a bonus for people to get their kitty fix,” Stetson said. “The turnout tonight is absolutely incredible. I’ve done so many fundraisers in my life and I’m blown away by how many people are out here tonight.”

“The Rumbleseat is so popular that when they put the word out for us too, it’s a big help,” Fiskaa said. “All of our proceeds tonight will go toward our medical bills, actually. It’s just amazing because so many people are here and they want to cuddle the kittens and it’s just a great night after the storm for people to just come out and just sit and have fun.”

Stetson also emphasized



There was also a senior cat amongst the group, with this 15-year-old Tuxedo cat getting some love and attention.

how every donation adds up.

“Sometimes it’s medical bills, sometimes it’s food. Whatever we raise through the raffle, through my donation on the match of people’s purchases, it all goes towards the organization in one way or another,” Stetson said.

Fiskaa added that being present in the community makes an impact too.

“This just really helps us out and everybody’s just so amazing. They come here just to see us and to eat the great food, but it’s just a great thing in the community to just be out here,” Fiskaa said.

Fiskaa thanked the community for their support.

“I hope they know how much we appreciate this and that all of their money actually goes to a really good cause. I feel like we’re one of the only rescues in the area. We’re not a shelter and I think we are pretty much the most well-known,” Fiskaa said. “I just think that for them to participate in this, I hope that they know how much they are doing for us and how much we appreciate it. Any amount helps at all, whether it’s \$5 or \$20, we appreciate everybody.”

To learn more, check out the Halfway Home Cat Rescue Inc. Facebook page for information on donations, wish lists and future fundraising events.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY KRISTIN RIVERS

Among the raffle prizes were these cat-themed dish towels with different holiday colors, including Valentine’s Day.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHICOPEE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Firefighter Jacob Boutin poses with his certificate after completing training at the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy in December 2025.

BOUTINS from page 1

father was a captain when he retired from the Chicopee Fire Department. It was just something I always wanted to do. It wasn’t a fallback plan; it was the only plan. He too comes from a firefighting background. His mother is a retired captain from Westfield Fire Department; his uncle is a Ludlow firefighter and his grandmother retired from the Agawam Fire Department,” Bill Boutin said. “He made the decision himself; he had other op-

portunities, but saw firefighting as what he really wanted to do. Most kids nowadays don’t know what they want to do. He had that goal early on. As soon as he graduated high school, he went to EMT school, his first step in preparation for reaching his goal. At the end of each long day, he spent a couple hours preparing for the next day. He has kept up this effort at work as he spends many hours studying streets, reading SOG’s and familiarizing himself with CFD apparatus and keeping his

firefighting skills up.”

It’s clear that Jacob and Bill Boutin both share a great respect for firefighting as a career. It takes real strength and compassion to put in the necessary hard work and sacrifice that firefighting demands.

The profession is not an easy one, but it is one that helps countless people every day.

Also, the family legacy of the Boutins serving as firefighters continues, with Jacob Boutin bringing in a new generation to the ranks.

HEALTH LAB from page 1

partner. They’ve been able to help us secure the clinical hours that the kids need as part of the licensing agreement and, again, it just allows the kids to utilize this lab fully with all the mannequins that are in here along with the beds that we have here,” Ingram said.

He also hopes to open the doors to more students as

there’s a waitlist currently.

“We’ve had the posting for the teacher position now for almost a year. Just really haven’t had a candidate because, as we know, the nursing industry or the health science business right now in Western Mass is booming. It’s number one in the labor market demand according to MassHire people. So, they’re making a lot of money out there and it’s hard to recruit them to come

teach right now,” Ingram said.

Ella Desrosiers and Isabel Vershon, seniors at the high school, are part of the program and have enjoyed their experience.

“Ever since I was young, I really wanted to help people out. Seeing that a lot of people struggle with their mental health or physical health, so I want to be an aspect of helping in any way I can. Because I was lucky enough to get help

and have the opportunity to go to the doctor’s when I need to, so I want to be like that first responder or at least somebody in a nursing home or care facility to help those people out,” Vershon said.

“For me, I have a lot of influential people in my life that are part of healthcare, so that was definitely part of the reason why because I want to be just like them when I grew up,” Desrosiers said. “Another

thing is, not a lot of schools around us have a program like this. We really are the only program around here. So, I thought it was a really good program to take up.”

After sharing their biggest lessons were about everyone working together and wanting to succeed, the girls expressed gratitude for the opportunity, especially the hands-on experience and learning so much.

“I love it. I think not only do I get to do what I love, but it doesn’t even feel like school, really. It’s fun. I get to do what I like. I like to learn about new things, I like to be able to look at the healthcare. I don’t see this as a class where I dread to go in. I’m excited to come here, learn new things, because I know that it truly is setting me up for success in the future,” Desrosiers said.

“It’s been fun. The teacher’s amazing, Ms. Katie, she is a really good teacher. I think she really explains the skills really good and everybody understands what to do,” Vershon said.

Vershon added if you aren’t in high school and don’t have an opportunity to do it, it’s “a couple hundred dollars to go through a class like this” and you might not have one-on-one time with the teacher due to class size or a college setting.

“But here, we have Mr. Ingram, we have Ms. Muriel, we have Katie, we have our guidance or VPs to talk to if we’re struggling. We have that support system,” Vershon said. “I’m so grateful that my school offers this type of program for students that are into it because it’s a great chance to learn how to care for somebody, even if you aren’t going

to be in a healthcare setting.”

Desrosiers and Vershon encouraged anyone interested to check it out, adding the program can open many doors and open their minds.

“It’s going to be hard, it’s going to be difficult, but everything is difficult and at the end of the day, everyone knows that their capabilities and their abilities in that everyone is able to be like this. Everyone can really push themselves to be in the healthcare field,” Desrosiers said. “It’s not an easy field, but if you’re doing something that you love, you can’t give up on it.”

“It’s going to be difficult, but you’re going to have to apply yourself. That’s the way that you’re going to succeed. You have to put the dedication in and effort into which you really enjoy. That’s what’s going to make you successful. That’s what’s going to push you through, that’s what’s going to give you the motivation to complete whatever you want to do in life,” Vershon said.

Ingram added middle schools kids also “are having more dialogue about what careers they’re interested in.”

“So kids now are starting to think about what high school to go to and what I’m interested in and what I want to do, so that kind of dialogue has been great because it’s not just great for the kids interested, but also the middle school staff members to really help kids make good choices, so now we’re building better partnerships with the high schools and the middle schools, which is an important part because we all know the 9th grade year is uber important,” Ingram said.

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Comp wins 12th game of the season

WILBRAHAM – Last Saturday afternoon, Chicopee Comprehensive used a strong first half to defeat host Minnechaug 60-48. The two teams, playing a Saturday matinee, were close for most of the first half, but the Colts would build a seven point lead at halftime. They then shut down Chaug’s offense in the third quarter and pulled away. Comp was led with a big game by Elijah Kleps with 24 points. Brody Fay was next with 19 points. Minnechaug got 14 points from Andrew Grasso and 12 points from Cohen Nelson. Miles Fergus added 11 points. Minnechaug fell to 7-8 while Comp improved to an impressive 12-3 on the season.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI
Devynn Charles grabs the loose ball.



Brody Fay sends a pass across the court while under pressure.



Jacoby Haney heads for the hoop.



Elijah Kleps gets the layup.



Francis Jordan makes a pass on the run.



Modesto Gelindrez faces an opponent on his way down the court.



Bailey Neuhauser makes a rebound for the Colts.



Mariah Diaz sends a pass away.

Colts suffer loss at Agawam

AGAWAM – Last Thursday night, a strong second half helped propel Agawam High School girls basketball to its fourth win of the season, a 43-21 win over Chi-

copee Comprehensive. In the win, Sophia Laprise had 11 points to lead all scorers. Alanna Rose had eight points and Carlina Calabrese and Isabella Laprise had seven

points each. Comp was led by Sheyenne Santiago with nine points. Agawam improved to 4-10 for the season while Comp fell to just 1-13 on the season.



Joaneliz Soto-Cintrón tries to grab a loose ball near the sideline.



Taeghan LaPorte tries to get out of the corner.

Chicopee co-op hockey loses to Agawam

WEST SPRINGFIELD – Last Saturday evening, Agawam High School ice hockey defeated the Chicopee co-op team 8-5 at Olympia Ice Center.

Agawam, which had a great offensive effort, got a great game from Andy Holton and Braden Parelli with three goals each.

Chicopee was led by Aidan Nadeau with two goals. Brennan Corcoran, Anthony Bonafilia, and Owen Buchanan all had single goals for the Pacers. Agawam is 2-11 while Chicopee is 1-10-2.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY
WWW.SWEETDOGPHTOS.COM



Landyn Klein looks to center the puck.



Landon Johnson makes a backhand play.



Aidan Nadeau hustles up the ice.



Logan DeJesus gets past center ice.

PUBLIC NOTICES

SALE OF MOTOR VEHICLES UNDER G.L. c.255 Sec. 39A
 Notice is hereby given by Interstate Towing, Inc. pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 255, section 39A, that on February 6th, 2026 at Interstate Towing, Inc the following Motor Vehicles will be sold at private sale to satisfy our garage keeper's lien thereon for storage, towing charges, care and expenses of notices and sale of said vehicles.

2002 Chevrolet Blazer
 VIN: 1GNDT13W82K124496
 David Cote
 44 Greenbrier Rd.
 East Hartford, CT 06118
 2014 Chrysler Town & Country
 VIN: 2C4RC1CG6ER248716
 Rhonda Ann Lorenz
 8743 W 106th Ter.
 Overland Park, KA 66212
 2013 Hyundai Sonata
 VIN: 5NPEB4AC5DH612364
 Jessica Viana Dos Santos
 97 Grape St., Apt. E
 Chicopee, MA 01013
 01/23, 01/30, 02/06/2026

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 Notice is hereby given by Interstate Towing, Inc. pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 255, section 39A, that on February 13, 2026 at Interstate Towing, Inc the following Motor Vehicles will be sold at private sale to satisfy our garage keeper's lien thereon for storage, towing charges, care and expenses of notices and sale of said vehicles.

2001 Honda Civic
 VIN: 1HGEM22221L086515
 William French
 283 River St., 6
 Montpelier, VT 05602
 2008 Nissan Altima
 VIN: 1N4AL21E98N404033
 Joacy Costa De Oliveira

23 School St., Apt. 15
 Rockland, MA 02370
 2014 Honda Civic
 VIN: 19XFB2F52EE234643
 Myrna Baehr
 112 Santa Barbara St.
 Springfield, MA 01104

2023 X Pro Moped
 VIN: L2BB9NCC8PB109039
 Shaun Guyer
 275 Prentice St
 Springfield, MA 01104
 2011 Hyundai Sonata
 VIN: 5NPEB4AC2BH211898
 Brianna Monay
 23 Connecticut Ave., Apt. B
 New London, CT 06320

2006 Honda Accord
 VIN: 1HGCM56316A010508
 Richard Dickson
 30 Bay Meadow Rd., Apt. 30
 Springfield, MA 01109

2005 Honda Accord
 VIN: 1HGCM56775A140312
 Ruth Sanchez
 834 Worthington St Apt 2
 Springfield, MA 01105
 2003 Kawasaki Kx85-A
 VIN: JKBKXFAC93A018212
 Jomar Yadiel Colon
 25 Warner St.
 Springfield, MA 01108

2008 Honda Accord
 VIN: 1HGCP26358A070462
 Malcolm Tiggett
 20 Sullivan St.
 Springfield, MA 01104
 01/30, 02/06, 02/13/2026
 01/23, 01/30, 02/06/2026

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said vehicles.
 2007 Wabash National Corp Base
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 Safety First Trucking LLC
 1022 Boulevard 284
 W. Hartford, CT 06119

2012 Hyundai Elantra
 VIN: 5NPDH4AE4CH112254
 Mildred Baez Hernandez
 176 Centre St., Apt. 2
 Indian Orchard, Ma 01151
 2015 Hyundai Tucson
 VIN: KM8JTCAF5FU038899
 Merlin Alexis
 869 Worthington St., Apt. 3
 Springfield, MA 01105

2008 Honda Civic
 VIN: 2HGFA15858H349787
 Luis Gonzalez
 580 S Summer St., Apt. 12
 Holyoke, MA 01040

2008 Wabash National Base
 VIN: 1JJV532WX8L148636
 Favoree Services Inc.
 24 Kenmar Dr. 226
 Billerica, MA 01821
 02/06, 02/13, 02/20/2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-7758 Docket No. HD25P1528EA Estate of: Justin Paul Laliberte Date of Death: 06/23/2025 CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION
 To all interested persons:
 A Petition for S/A - Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Jocelyn A Laliberte of Kansas City, MO requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and

Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.
 The Petitioner requests that Jocelyn A Laliberte of Kansas City, MO 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 03/02/2026. 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 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. Claudine T. Stoudemire, First Justice of this Court.
 Date: February 02, 2026
 Rosemary A Saccomani, Register of Probate
 02/06/2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Division Docket No. HD26P0130EA Estate of: Dorothy Margaret Neveu Also Known As: Dorothy M. Neveu Date of Death: December 4, 2025 INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petitioner of Whitsett, NC
 Petitioner Robert Neveu of Chicopee, MA
 Petitioner Sandra Suska of Feeding Hills, MA
 a Will has been admitted to informal probate.

Richard Neveu of Whitsett, NC Robert Neveu of Chicopee, MA Sandra Suska of Feeding Hills, MA
 has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve without surety on the bond.
 The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representative.

tatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.
 02/06/2026

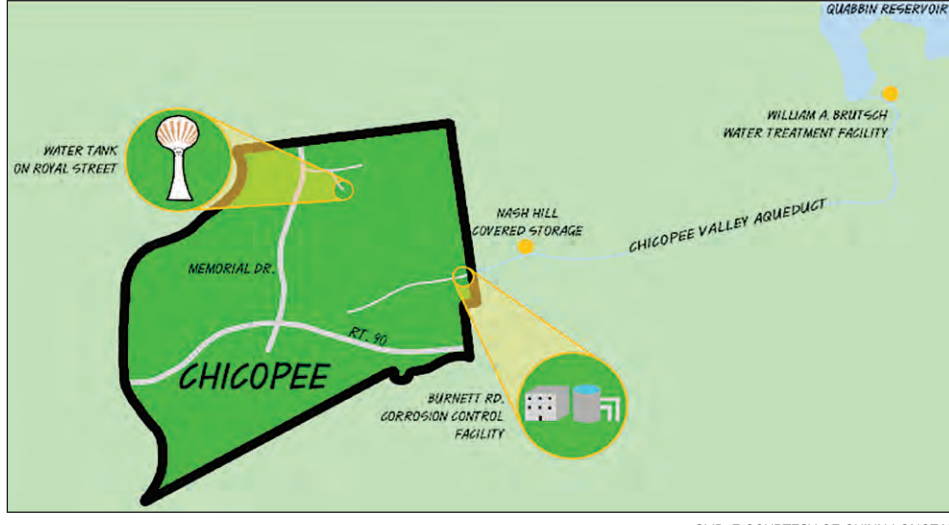
Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Division Docket No. HD25P2599EA Estate of: Michael Albin Radawiec Date of Death: 08/13/2025 INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petitioner of Belchertown, MA
 Judy M Slater of Belchertown, MA has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve without surety on the bond.
 The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representative appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.
 02/06/2026

NEWS BRIEFS from page 1

Quabbin, along with a treatment facility in Belchertown. From there, water is dispersed and delivered by gravity to surrounding communities such as Wilbraham, Chicopee and South Hadley Fire District No. 1, through the Chicopee Valley Aqueduct, where, along the way, it is stored in the Nash Hill Covered Storage Tank in Ludlow before being transferred to the Chicopee Water Treatment Plant on Burnett Road.

"I want to add that the storage facility in Ludlow provides large-scale storage of the water. It then reaches Burnett Road, where it is treated, and then it makes its way out to the general public, and at this moment we currently have two distribution mains from Nash Hill, and an additional two at Burnett Road which makes



A slide showcasing the track of water for the water treatment process. SLIDE COURTESY OF QUINN LONCZAK

their way out to Sheridan Street near Walmart," Lonczak said. "However, we are looking to make repairs to one of the pipes, which is 36 inches in diameter and is reaching the end of its lifespan. The latter is 30-inch diameter, which is running smoothly, but this

change needs to happen sooner rather than later."

Lonczak said that the replacement will be a new ductile iron pipe, which is steel on the exterior and concrete on the inside, with a projected lifespan of up to 100 years.

The meeting also revealed that the DPW is looking to replace and implement new AMI (Advanced Meter Infrastructure) water meters.

"The city is currently going through and replacing those meters with 'smart meters' to go in and find out, which can be read with a handheld digital device, and can transmit readings via cellular, so we don't have to spend so much time reading meters, and that's going to be an ongoing process coming up in the next couple of years, and as always staying in the loop for ongoing

WATER TREATED?

- Water at the Brutsch facility is treated with sodium hypochlorite (a form of chlorine) and ultraviolet light (UV) for primary disinfection. Primary disinfection kills any pathogens that may be present in water.
- When the water reaches Chicopee, it is further treated with:
 - Sodium Hypochlorite - To provide greater residual pathogenic treatment throughout the large distribution system
 - Sodium Bicarbonate (a.k.a. baking soda)- This reduces the corrosivity of the water
 - Sodium Carbonate- This increases pH and adjust along with an increase in alkalinity reduces the water's corrosivity
 - Sodium Polyphosphate- This chemical is primarily used to reduce red water problems caused by iron water mains. It does not remove the iron from the water, but stops it from oxidizing to the visible red state (rust). Therefore, the iron is still there, but in a colorless form. This chemical process is known as sequestering.
 - Monosodium Phosphate- This chemical is primarily used to reduce lead and copper in drinking water. It leaves a protective film (deposition of phosphate compounds) on the inside surface of pipes providing a barrier between the water and the pipe, therefore reducing corrosion.



Additional details explaining how water is treated. SLIDE COURTESY OF QUINN LONCZAK

hydrant flushing," Lonczak said.
 Among those in attendance was Refill Water Store Owner Brian Cabral and his family, who shared this was a great experience for all.
 "I feel this forum was extremely important. Just me being a business owner, especially being in the water industry, I have customers that come in daily, and they are

concerned about their drinking water, tap water, and so coming here, I learned more that I can share, as well as giving the benefits of what we offer, but also let them know that the drinking water in Chicopee is safe and one of the best," Cabral said.
 Those in attendance were, also, invited to participate in a survey to share their feedback.

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YOUR HEALTH from page 1

to reach out to the billing office," Duffy reported. "These differences in self-advocacy may be widening the gap in financial burden of health care between those with higher and lower socioeconomic status."
 Self-advocacy is not easy, and challenging a medical bill can be time-consuming and frustrating. Some of the people in Duffy's study said they had spent five hours or more contesting a bill, and quite a few said they didn't feel the people in charge were respectful to them.
 But if the outcome is a reduced bill or a payment plan, it can be worth the effort. It's estimated that Americans are carrying more than \$200 billion in medical debt, the majority of it by people who owe \$10,000 or more. While the three major credit agencies no longer include medical debts under \$500 on credit reports, it can still impact credit scores if the health organization reports it to the credit agencies.
 Tellingly, only 3.5 percent of the respondents sought help from an advocacy organization to contact the billing office, Duffy said. The time burden plus the fact that many of the people surveyed didn't reach out at all indicates "there may be an unmet need for formal assistance navigating bills," she wrote.
 Patient advocates are one source of such formal assistance. They navigate the intricacies of the health-care system itself and its mind-boggling billing systems, too. A medically trained patient advocate can look at an itemized medical bill and spot duplications and inconsistencies that a lay advocate may miss.
 To avoid mistakes and misunderstandings, understand your health insurance coverage; ask questions when you don't. Know what your

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 visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

deductibles, coinsurance, copays and out-of-pocket maximums are. Ask why your doctor is ordering certain tests or procedures. Call your insurer in advance to find out how much you'll be asked to pay. Always document the answers you receive, who you spoke to, and when. Get promises in writing. And if you're uninsured, be upfront about it.
 After all that, if you still receive a bill you think has errors, advocate for yourself and you may save yourself some money.
 Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, a registered nurse and board-certified patient advocate, is the founder of Northshore Patient Advocates LLC (NShore). She is also founder and CEO of Nurse Advocate Entrepreneur, which trains medical professionals to become successful private patient advocates. Teri offers a free phone consultation to newspaper readers as well as to nurses interested in becoming advocates. Reach her at Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com.

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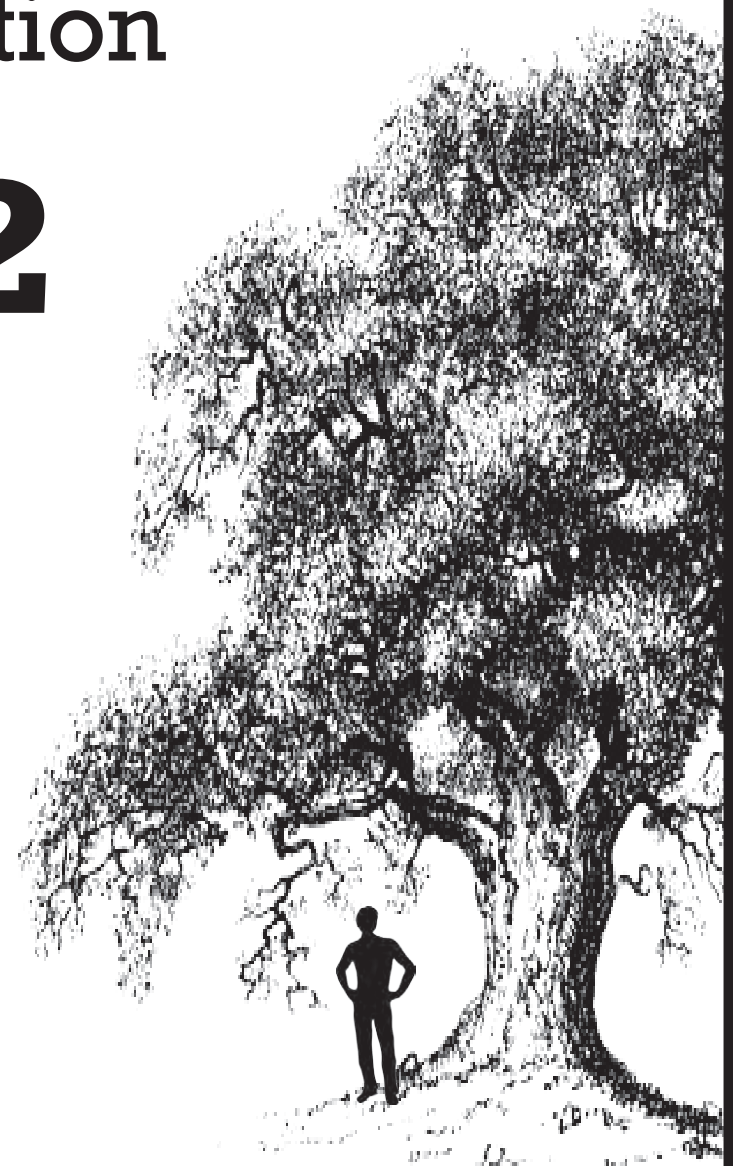
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