

Chicopee Register

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COMMUNITY



PHOTOS SUBMITTED BY MELISSA BREOR

Hayley Procon, Michelle and Peter Wirth, co-owners of Mercedes-Benz of Springfield, and Jeremy Procon pose for a group photo as the Wirths are honored as Business of the Year at the 39th Annual Shining Stars Awards Gala.

Community members celebrated at 39th Annual Shining Stars Awards Gala

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com

CHICOPEE - The community gathered at the Castle of Knights on March 1 to celebrate this year's recipients at the 39th Annual Shining Stars Awards Gala.

The recipients were Ashley Kohl as Citizen of the Year, Mercedes-Benz of Springfield as Business of the Year, Daryl Grabowski as Volunteer of the Year and Junior Achievement of Western Massachusetts as Non-profit of the Year.

This year's theme was "The Greatest Show in Chicopee" and was presented by The

Greater Chicopee Chamber of Commerce, with father-daughter duo Jeremy Procon of Interstate Towing and Hayley Procon of Aura Day Spa serving as masters of ceremony.

Melissa Breor, executive director for the chamber of commerce, and Marie Laflamme, city treasurer and chairperson of the Event Committee, introduced the recipients and provided remarks throughout the night. SHOW Circus of Easthampton also provided a cirque performance art performance.

Kohl was humbled by the honor, recognized for her work with her dance studio, Ohana School of Performing Arts.

She praised the chamber

for holding an event like this to spotlight the positive in the community.

"These events are so important. They generate energy, they bring people together. It's about connection, it's about inspiring people to do good. It's about a ripple effect, so you hear about things people are doing in the community and you're inspired to do more good," Kohl said.

Kohl encourages people to make a difference in their community.

"I want people to know that you don't need to have a high-powered position. You don't need to have a big job or

See **SHINING STARS** page 5

COMMUNITY

Chicopee raises flag for Dominican Republic Day



TURLEY PHOTO BY KRISTIN RIVERS

From the left, State Rep. Shirley Arriaga (D-Chicopee), Emma Rodriguez, assistant registrar at the City of Chicopee's Registrar of Voters, Mayor John Vieau, Charina Rosado, manager at Key Food Marketplace, City Councilor-at-Large Gerry Roy and State Sen. Adam Gomez at the Feb. 27 Dominican Republic Independence Day Flag-Raising ceremony.

The ceremony is the first in city history

By Kristin Rivers
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CHICOPEE - Local and state elected officials, residents and community members gathered outside City Hall on Feb. 27 to raise the flag for Dominican Republic Independence Day.

The flag-raising is the first in the city's history, recognizing the country's independence from Haiti beginning on February 27, 1844, and ending on January 24, 1856.

"In his remarks, Mayor John Vieau shared the history of the Dominican Republic's fight for independence during the

19th century, explaining Feb. 27 "marks a pivotal movement in their history, a testament to the resilience and courage of the Dominican people."

"Their journey to freedom is one of perseverance and determination. As we honor the sacrifices of their ancestors, let us reaffirm our commitment to liberty, democracy and unity," Vieau said. "Beyond that history, the Dominican Republic captivates with its natural beauty, vibrant culture and rich traditions. To our Dominican residents, your contributions enrich our community and today, we celebrate your heritage and spirit."

State Sen. Adam Gomez (D-Springfield) shared his reflections in Spanish before

See **FLAG RAISING** page 6

COMMUNITY

Barry Elementary School Feasibility Study approved for phase two

By Kristin Rivers
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CHICOPEE - The proposal to move forward with plans to replace or repair Anna E. Barry Elementary School received state approval on Feb. 28.

In a meeting with the Massachusetts School Building Authority, Chicopee was one of five districts in the state considered for an invitation to a feasibility study after completing the necessary prerequisites, finalizing enrollment and securing feasibility studies and schematics and design for their projects.

The school, built in 1963, has many concerns, including asbestos and mold, single-paned glass windows that are super-inefficient, no air conditioning, dated HVAC controls and thematic temperature controls, lack of an elevator for handicapped students and no sprinkler sys-

tem.

The project has received three letters of support from State Sen. John Velis (D-Westfield), State Rep. Shirley Arriaga (D-Chicopee) and State Sen. Jacob Oliveira (D-Ludlow), along with approval from the City Council.

Mayor John Vieau thanked the MSBA for the opportunity to have the project considered for state funding, explaining the city is "highly motivated to either renovate or replace our Barry Elementary School."

"There's just many deficiencies in the building and I really feel that, as a city, replacing this school with a more organic renovating would create a nice, safe, modern learning environment for our students," Vieau said.

After breaking down the many issues in the school, Vieau added, "The site is very small" and the city plans to potentially look at Article 97 for the project.



TURLEY PHOTO BY TEDY MAKUCH

"This building needs to be replaced," Vieau said.

Arriaga emphasized the accessibility issues at the school.

"Some of our students, unfortunately, have to exit the school building and come around

a different door to access certain classrooms, which, of course, it's something that shouldn't be even a thought in today's world where we're thinking about our children getting to their classrooms in a timely fashion," Ar-

riaga said.

Arriaga agreed that the school needs to be replaced.

"We understand that this is a big ask as all the other schools

See **BARRY ELEMENTARY** page 6

Kristin Rivers, new editor, shares her welcome message

Hello to my hometown of Chicopee!

I am so honored to be your editor for the Chicopee Register and continue covering the stories that mean the most to you. I'd like to thank Dalton Zbierski for all that he has taught me and his mentorship as I take on this new responsibility and continue delivering the local news and stories that matter to us. Everything done this past year has been a true team effort and it's one that I don't take for granted. I know, also, Dalton has made the hometown proud with all he has done during his tenure.

In writing for this paper in the last year, I have gained a newfound appreciation for Chicopee. Whether it's covering a City Council meeting, an event at the library or senior center or doing a story on a business grand opening or flag-raising ceremony, I have seen firsthand how much the hometown has grown in making everyone in Chicopee feel they have a place to call home while, also, making sure the top issues concerning residents are addressed and spoken about.

There's also another thing that stays with me that makes this work even more worthwhile.

"Thank you for getting our message out."

Given the chaos and stress of today's world, it is very easy for all of us to focus on that and wonder if there's still good in the world. If there's still people making a difference, if things are changing for the better. I know for myself I've had moments of skepticism and cynicism about people. However, this work has changed that as I sit down for every interview to have conversations about what means the most to you, it's why I



Kristin Rivers

always ask "What would you like the community of Chicopee to know..." because, it's important for the community to know why an event is important, why a story is important, why residents should learn more about who you are and what you do. Because it deserves attention and recognition. It's those positive gestures that remind us, even on our most difficult days, there is still good to be found.

I would not be remiss if I didn't share a little about me in this letter. I have a fluffy black cat named Midnight, I love books and music, I enjoy traveling and nature and am also an advocate for mental health and suicide prevention. You might also see me with a giant water jug, pink of course, when I cover a story. Additionally, I love to write and have found the written word as a place to share authenticity, honesty, deeper perspectives and heart. I hope that heart has come through and continues to in this new endeavor.

As I close this letter, I want to make sure this is reiterated. You all make this paper what it is today because it is your paper. All I simply do is help tell the stories, share the facts, gather the information and research and bring to life the visions you each have.

I hope as your new editor I can continue this work, while also making a bigger impact.

I look forward to our continued work together because we're only just getting started.

— Kristin Rivers

Fairview Cemetery announces Spring Cleanup

CHICOPEE – The Chicopee Parks and Recreation Department will begin cleanup of the Fairview Cemetery beginning the week of March 18th. The Fairview Cemetery Commission and Parks Department asks that all families please remove grave decorations by Sunday, March 17, 2024. Once the cleanup begins all remaining decorations will be removed and discarded by cemetery staff.

Artificial grave ornaments, artificial flowers, enclosures of any kind, and new plantings in the ground are not allowed as they are hazardous to both visitors and workers. Holiday

pots and boxes will only be allowed during the Memorial Day and Holiday seasons.

The Fairview Cemetery Commission and Cemetery Staff would also like to remind the public and families owning lots in the cemetery that planting any shrubs or other plantings in the ground is prohibited.

For a complete list of Fairview Cemetery rules and regulations, fees and charges, and monument policies, please visit www.chicopeema.gov/384/Fairview-Cemetery or call the Parks and Recreation Office at 594-3481.

Zoning Committee continues special permit application for DanceDynamics

By Kristin Rivers
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CHICOPEE - The Zoning Committee continued on Feb. 28 a special permit application from DanceDynamics.

The application concerns a property becoming a mixed property, creating one residential unit in a business building on Chicopee Street.

The applicant, Angela Klusman, explained since her last meeting with the committee on Jan. 31, she has paid the water and personal property tax bills.

"The only thing that I believe that there is still a problem is the landlord's property tax for me purchasing the building," Klusman said.

Ward 4 Councilor George Balakier, upon reviewing the bills, stated this was correct, with real estate taxes still owed on the property totaling \$16,687.73.

Assistant Building Commissioner Carl Ferguson spoke with Building Commissioner Frank Boron earlier that day regarding the building codes.

"He indicated to me that Angela has provided us with some additional drawings, and Frank felt confident that whatever the nature of the building code requirements for the building would be addressed and met subsequent to this meeting tonight," Ferguson said. "He also indicated that we won't be able to move forward with any additional permitting or any start to any progress until the actual special permit is issued. So depending on what the parameters are for that action, that's kind of what I know at this point."

Fire Capt. Benjamin Turnberg said the fire department has also spoken with Klusman.

"If this goes through and she gets her permit that she seeks, we feel that the property it's possible to turn it into residential safely with proper alarm system and whatnot, but that would all be a condition on getting the permit first, and then she can proceed with wiring it the way it needs to be wired," Turnberg said.

After seeing no one for public input, the conversation transitioned to taxes.

When Ward 8 Councilor Gary Labrie asked Klusman if she went into a sale and purchase with the landlord, she confirmed yes.

Balakier said he's spent time with the city treasurer and city bill collector

about setting up a repayment plan, suggesting Klusman present a copy of the purchase and sale document.

"It's kind of interesting because what could probably happen is, in June, for example, could be a tax taking," Balakier said.

Klusman affirmed that, saying she knows that "the city actually can take the building and then I can go and try and purchase it from the city after you guys take the building."

"I spoke to them about all that too. But the thing is, right now, like I had told them, I was going to pull back giving them the \$1,000 a month and start paying because I have spoken, also, to Marie Laflamme, our treasurer, to start making a payment plan even though it's not my bill," Klusman said. "I don't own the building, but I've gone above and beyond to try and make everybody happy and try to purchase this building instead of it going and being a piece of land that just sits there in a building that just basically collapsed from our city."

When Labrie asked Ferguson and Turnberg if the plan submitted met their approval, they confirmed yes.

Councilor-at-Large Tim Wagner asked for clarification on the special permit process, given Klusman currently does not own the building.

"Can we issue the special permit if a payment plan is set up for somebody else?" Wagner said.

Attorney Tim Riley confirmed City Council can issue a special permit to someone who doesn't own a building, that is a possessory interest and who has a lease to use the property.

"However, the payment plan's got to be, with my understanding, I'm not the collector, but would have to be with the person who pays and that's the owner of the building," Riley said.

Balakier concluded the best way to move forward, pending a definitive payment plan set up with the city treasurer, would be to file a continuance on the application by another month.

"I think that would add some credibility to our quagmire at this point," Balakier said.

The motion of continuance until the March 27 Zoning Committee meeting at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall with the following condition of the applicant getting in touch with the city treasurer for a definitive payment plan passed 5-0.

Caregivers needed for Harmony House opening

CHICOPEE - Harmony House of Western Massachusetts (Harmony House) is in the final planning stages for a springtime reopening. After closing the original home to purchase and renovate a much larger home in the Aldenville section of Chicopee, the Harmony House Board and volunteers are excited about this reopening so they can resume caring for terminally ill people in need of loving care and a comfortable, safe home. To care for these neighbors in need, many more volunteer caregivers are needed by this spring.

If you are interested in this mission, please stop by at any time during an upcoming caregiver recruitment event to learn about the caregiver opportunities offered at Harmony House and to take a tour the new home. Harmony House is located at 66 View Street in Chicopee. Many of the current volunteers and members of the Board of Directors will be available to answer your questions.

March Caregiver Recruitment Events:
Wednesday, March 13th from 5 – 7 p.m.

Wednesday, March 20th from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Harmony House becomes a new home with 24/7 support for hospice patients who can no longer remain safely in their own home.

Therefore, caregivers should have a healthcare background and ideally be able to commit to at least 4 hours per week. Whether it's a few hours a week or a few hours a month, Harmony House is a welcoming place for people looking to help people.

Harmony House is a local, non-profit organization whose mission is to provide a loving home providing compassionate care for the terminally ill who have limited or no resources for special care in the final stage of life. Harmony House is primarily staffed by trained volunteers including nurses, CNAs/HHAs, caregivers, companions, and others.

If interested in learning more or becoming a volunteer, please contact Harmony House at 413-315-9784 or harmonyhousewma@gmail.com.

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Imperio Brazil Grocery open for business in Chicopee



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHICOPEE MAYOR'S OFFICE

CHICOPEE –Imperio Brazil Grocery opened for business on March 5 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by Mayor John Vieau, State Rep. Shirley Arriaga (D-Chicopee) and chiefs of staff from State Sen. John Velis (D-Westfield) and State Sen. Jacob Oliveira's (D-Ludlow). The business is located at 128 Exchange St. and offers Brazilian products including cookies, rice, hair care products and more. They are open seven days a week from 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. The owners are husband and wife team Jefferson Lima and Camilla Moulin.



Chicopee Parade Committee to host Irish Night

CHICOPEE - The St. Patrick's Parade Committee of Chicopee will host an Irish Night featuring food, fundraisers and entertainment. The menu will be corned beef, lazy pierogis, and a fish option. Entertainment to include a DJ, bagpipes, and Irish step dancing. There will be something for everyone!

Irish Night will take place at the Portuguese American Club at 149 Exchange Street on Friday, March 8, at 6 p.m.

The St. Patrick's Parade Committee of Chicopee and 2024 Chicopee Colleen and Court will host a night of family fun. The event is open to the public.

CORRECTION

In our March 1 story on the opening reception of the "Peace in Peril" art exhibition at the library, we learned upon further information that the exhibition is, in fact, running through March 28, not March 30. We apologize for the error.

RiverMills Center Transportation Services available to seniors

CHICOPEE – The Chicopee Council on Aging's Transportation Department provides rides to the senior center, doctor's offices, supermarkets, pharmacies, etc. for Chicopee older adults.

Transportation service is available Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Reservations must be made at least five business days in advance by calling 413-536-5733.

A \$7,875.00 grant from WestMass ElderCare has allowed the senior center to expand its transportation offerings. Shopping Trips are funded in part by a Title III/Older Americans Act grant from WestMass ElderCare, with support from the Mass. Executive Office of Elder Affairs and the Federal Administration for Community Living. There is no charge for this service, but participants are welcome to make a voluntary, confidential donation for a shopping ride.

To learn more, contact Nicholas Wosko at 413-536-5733 or NWosko@Chicopeema.gov.

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Fatal Chicopee fire started with smoking materials

Home oxygen may have been a factor

CHICOPEE—The fire that claimed an older adult's life on Saturday started with smoking materials and home oxygen may have been a factor, said Chicopee Fire Chief Daniel P. Stamborski, Chicopee Police Chief Patrick J. Major, State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine, and Hampden County District Attorney Anthony D. Gulluni.

"On behalf of the Chicopee Fire Department, I again want to express our heartfelt condolences to this man's family and loved ones in their time of grief," said Chief Stamborski. "I also want to remind everyone in our community that smoking is the leading cause of fatal fires. Smoking is especially dangerous where medical oxygen is in use. If you or a loved one use home oxygen, we're urging you – please don't smoke, and use extra caution with any open flame."

The Chicopee Fire Department responded to the area of 89 Southwick St. at 9:39 Saturday morning after a passerby reported seeing smoke. Firefighters made entry to attack the fire and contained it to the first floor, where they located a 74-year-old man with limited

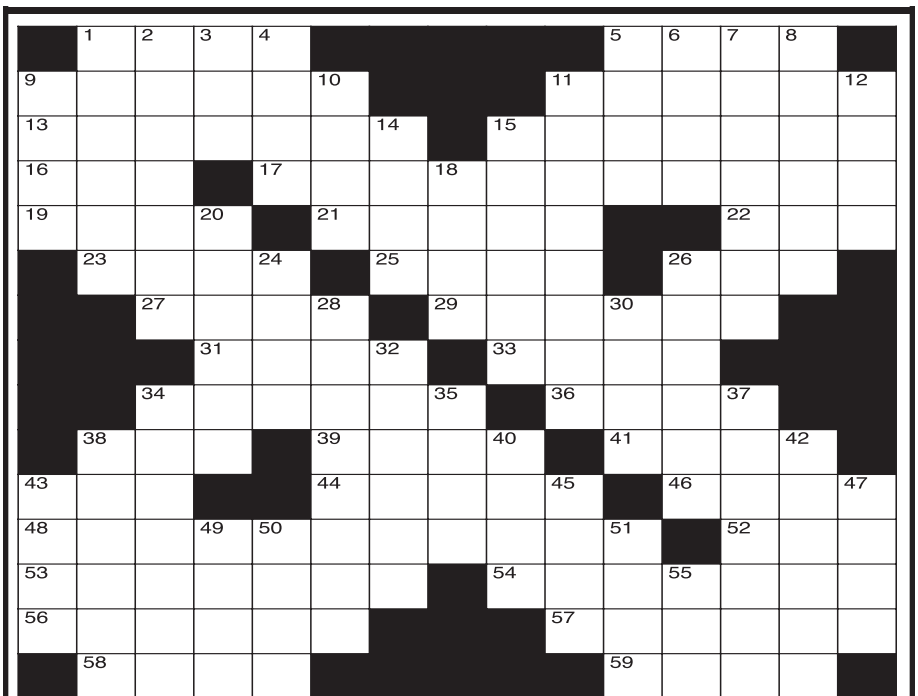
mobility deceased at the scene. The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner will determine the exact cause of his death.

The origin and cause of the fire were investigated by the Chicopee Fire Department, Chicopee Police Department, State Police assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office, and State Police assigned to the Hampden County District Attorney's office. They determined that the fire began in the first floor living room. They also located medical oxygen equipment at the scene. Fires will start more easily in an oxygen-rich environment, growing faster and burning hotter than they would otherwise. Smoking and home oxygen have contributed to at least seven fire deaths in Massachusetts over the past three years.

Investigators did not find working smoke alarms in the unit where the fire began.

"Please take a few minutes today to ensure that you have working smoke alarms on every level of your home," said State Fire Marshal Davine. "We recommend changing the batteries and checking the manufacturing date when you change your clocks, but there's no need to wait until the weekend. Test your alarms to be sure you're protected, and replace them if they're not working or more than 10 years old."

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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Chaps
- 5. Currently fashionable
- 9. Collision
- 11. More slim
- 13. European city
- 15. Implicitly
- 16. The side of something that is sheltered from the wind
- 17. The Mount Rushmore State
- 19. Gold or silver wire cord
- 21. Muscles along insects' diaphragm
- 22. Trent Reznor's band
- 23. Sweet juicy gritty-textured fruit
- 25. Broken branch
- 26. Indicates ten
- 27. Expression of annoyance
- 29. Brings together
- 31. Ancient city in Thrace
- 33. Sailors' spirit
- 34. Looked into
- 36. Muckraking woman
- 38. A type of cast
- 39. One's responsibility
- 41. Where golfers begin
- 43. Make a mistake
- 44. Semitic Sun god
- 46. Ancient Italian-Greek colony
- 48. Beheaded
- 52. A place to stay
- 53. Unwise
- 54. Most supernatural
- 56. "Dennis" is a famous one

- 57. Ointments
- 58. Exam
- 59. Leaked blood

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Baseball managers assemble it
- 2. Revised
- 3. Mountain is a popular kind
- 4. Takes to civil court
- 5. Pouches
- 6. A type of veil
- 7. Chants
- 8. Boston hoopster
- 9. Elongated appendage
- 10. Sailboat
- 11. 2017 Oscar-winning film
- 12. Actor Gosling
- 14. Monetary units
- 15. Assembly
- 18. Russian pop duo
- 20. Embellished with expressions
- 24. Infrequent
- 26. Temperature unit
- 28. Hydrophilic amino acid
- 30. Honk
- 32. Legislative body
- 34. Swinish
- 35. Russian assembly
- 37. Take over for
- 38. Put in advance
- 40. Satisfy
- 42. Felt
- 43. Dutch cheese
- 45. Witnesses
- 47. Strong insects
- 49. Gasteyer and de Armas are two
- 50. Ancient people of Scotland
- 51. Cheerless
- 55. Sick

ANSWERS ON PAGE 9

GUEST COLUMN



Blueberry pruning 101

My blueberry bushes came to me as full grown plants uprooted from an acquaintance's yard.

He needed the space for something else, so I happily agreed to take the eight bushes off of his hands. They struggled a lot the first few years of being in their new home, I think because the move was a stressful one.

Over the last couple of seasons we've seen more fruit production, thankfully, but I know there should be more. I think I may need to improve my pruning practices.

We are nearing the end of the dormant season, but if I get right to it, the job can still be accomplished this year.

There are many good reasons to prune in the dormant season. Because there are no leaves on the bushes, you can really take a good look at what you have to work with. You can notice off-colors, bent branches and the like when there is no leaf cover.

Late February into early March is perfect timing because theoretically the coldest part of the winter has passed. Sometimes pruning reduces cold hardiness, but like I mentioned, we should be OK since we are nearing winter's end.

Some rules transfer from pruning one type of plant to another; in other words, you'd make these same type of considerations for pruning roses or other woody plants. Let's call these the obvious cuts.

First concentrate on dead wood. Prune away any entirely dead branches all the way to the ground.

If parts of branches are dead, make a cut to the next living part of the branch. If you see anything that looks diseased or a little "off," cut that section or branch away too.

Sometimes branches get damaged from animals or ice storms. Likewise, cut damaged branches back to a section that shows no signs of damage.

Now it gets a little more tricky, but it still should be straightforward and it applies to mature blueberry plants, not new plantings or super old neglected bushes.

Look at the base of your plant. Is it wider than 18 inches in any direction from the center? If so, cut away these stems at ground level or try to dig them up, roots and all in the coming weeks, then move them to a new spot, preferably a nursery bed where they can grow up a bit. I'm into a whole new topic, so let's get back to the task at hand.

Once the plant has been cut back to within its limits, look for growth coming from the base that is on an angle or crossing over other branches. Cut that away too, so that we encourage upright growth instead.

Okay, with that behind us, let's dive into more difficult territory. Here is when you begin to rejuvenate the plant (listen carefully, self).

Old canes will be gray in appearance and thick. You probably don't want to cut away every one, but perhaps removing one-third of these stems would be a good plan.

Cut them back to ground level. Your next cuts will be what I can "fine tuning," or making cuts that thin out older twiggy growth in the upper part of the plant by cutting back stems to a younger, upright branch.

Go by color here. Younger growth is reddish in appearance. Hand pruners are your desired tool of choice, while bypass loppers or a hand saw is essential for the bigger cuts I mentioned first.

You'll be surprised by how great your blueberry bushes will look and just how

GUEST COLUMN



By Ellenor Downer

Brown creeper



A brown creeper regularly visits an oak tree in my yard. The other day I watched the creeper fly to the bottom of the tree and make his way up the tree. A few minutes later a white-breasted nuthatch made its way down the same tree. I think the creeper also grabs some mealworms, which I have out for the bluebirds and any other birds that wants them.

The brown creeper is a small brown bird about 5 1/2 inches long. It has brown streaking above and white underneath and a long, downward, curved bill. Noticeable behavior is creeping up a tree trunk, then dropping down to the base of the same tree or another tree to start the process all over again. It probs bark for insects and larvae. Sometimes it visits feeders for chopped nuts or suet.

The brown creeper blends in with the tree bark. When alarmed it will flatten itself against the tree and remain motionless. Its song is a series of high pitched whistles, "see wee see to wee." The call is a high "tsee."

The female lays five to six white eggs

with dark spots in a hammock style crescent shaped nest of bark, twigs, mosses and lined with feathers. It constructs the nest behind a loose piece of bark on a dead tree or in a natural cavity about five to 15 feet above the ground.

Brimfield resident

I received an email from a Brimfield resident, who keeps me up to date on his bird sightings.

He said in a recent email, "I did a walk yesterday at Quabbin gate 43. A small group walked to the area where people can rent or launch boats. No much about." He said some folks heard pine siskins and saw a few white-throated sparrows. On the water, there were a few hooded mergansers and black ducks and in the distance some gulls flying about. On the way home he stopped by the ponds in Warren and the water was not open, so no birds.

He also took part in the Great Backyard Bird Count on Feb. 16 and 17. Here are his results: one red-tailed hawk, four mourning doves, two red-bellied woodpeckers, two downy woodpeckers, one hairy woodpecker, three blue jays, two black-capped chickadees, three tufted titmice, two European starlings, two American robins, three house finches, 97 dark-eyed juncos, four white-throated sparrows, one common grackle and three northern cardinals.

He reported his first sighting on Feb. 16 at 1:40 p.m. and watched for 25 minutes and his second sighting on Feb. 16 at 3:30 p.m. was for one hour. On Feb. 17 his sightings were 8:30 a.m. and 10:15 a.m., both for 45 minutes at a time. Missed species, ones he has seen before, included pileated woodpecker, white-breasted nuthatch, brown creeper, American crow and American goldfinch.

Bluebirds

The bluebirds continue to come to my feeder for the mealworms. I am purchasing more mealworms or the bluebirds than when I had chickens. I used to purchase the mealworms as a daily treat to my small flock. One hen would jump up and eat them out of my hand before I could put them in their feeder.

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

Local fishing holes...



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productive they will be with this type of maintenance pruning accomplished annually. I think there is just enough daylight for me to get to my own pruning.

I can almost taste the blueberry pie come July. Yum.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the

Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 33 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.

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.

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39th Annual Shining Stars Awards Gala

SHINING STARS from page 1

you don't have to be a CEO, you don't have to be famous. You could have any job, any position, anywhere in your life and you could make a positive impact," Kohl said.

Grabowski was still in disbelief over his award, calling it "a true honor."

He was recognized for his work with the chamber's Golf Committee, having served nine years on the board of directors.

"It's a great, great feeling and Chicopee is definitely a very special place with special people," Grabowski said.

Grabowski said the word "teamwork" comes to mind when he thinks of Volunteer of the Year, praising his fellow volunteers for their work.

"I started reflecting back, there were so many things that we all have done as a team, and you forget about a lot of them. So it gave me an opportunity to reflect back on quite a few things over the years that we've been able to give back to the community," Grabowski said.

Michelle Wirth is a co-owner of Mercedes-Benz of Springfield alongside her husband, Peter, saying "there were no words" about their recognition as Business of the Year.

Wirth said they came to Chicopee in 2017 and "we've just been welcomed with open arms" by the city.

"We were pleasantly surprised and just incredibly humbled and grateful for the award. Just to even be thought of by the committee," Wirth said.

For Wirth, recognizing excellence and achievements is important and deserves to be celebrated.

"I think it's really important that we take the time to honor our achievements on our paths to success and really celebrate the moments," Wirth said. "I think we're just really appreciative that there are people in our community who care so much to pay attention to the good that's happening around us and celebrate it."

Amie Miarecki, president of Junior Achievement of Western Massachusetts, said events like this showcase the power of unity and there's more than meets the eye.

"Events like this bring the community together. They celebrate what is good about our



Daryl Grabowski, Hayley Procon and Jeremy Procon at the 39th Annual Shining Stars Awards Gala. Grabowski was honored as Volunteer of the Year.



Hayley Procon, Ashley Kohl and Jeremy Procon as Kohl accepts her award for Citizen of the Year at the 39th Annual Shining Stars Awards Gala on March 1.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY KRISTIN RIVERS

community and people need to realize that their messages might be showing us a different picture, but when it really comes down to it, so many people that are involved in nonprofit work, that are involved in the business community, are united," Miarecki said. "And this type of event unites us all."

When Miarecki thinks of Nonprofit of the Year, the word "access" comes to mind, providing an opportunity to support and help others in need, especially young people.

"Access to the information, access to education, access to resources," Miarecki said.

The recipients each shared this message with the community and chamber.

"I'm thrilled that they honored us with this and I wanted to say thank you for putting us among a great group of past honorees and the current honorees and giving us this type of forum to really highlight what we do and how we're impacting the community," Miarecki said. "And thank you for all the work that you're doing to move missions forward, missions that are important to building a thriving community."

"Mercedes-Benz of Springfield is for the people of Chicopee. Everyone's welcome. Come stop and say hi," Wirth said. "To Melissa Breor, to Marie Laflamme, to Carol Campbell, Jeff Sattler and all the folks that were on the committee. Thank you, thank you, thank you for all your time,



Hayley Procon, Amie Miarecki, president of Junior Achievement of Western Massachusetts, Tracey Alves-Lear, board president for Junior Achievement of Western Massachusetts, and Jeremy Procon during the 39th Annual Shining Stars Awards Gala. Junior Achievement of Western Massachusetts was recognized as Nonprofit of the Year.

effort, dedication and love that you spread in the city of Chicopee. Without you, it wouldn't be the place that it is."

"I'm incredibly grateful. I'm so proud to be a part of this community. I love this community. The support, the connection, the way that people show up for each other, the friends I've made, my family is here. It's an honor and I'm so blessed to be

surrounded by so much good," Kohl said. "Thank you for this honor."

"I would just like to thank everyone for coming together. This is like a reunion for me. There are people I haven't seen in many years. It's great to bring everyone together, in one room. It's just outstanding," Grabowski said. "For those people who have contributed, volunteered or pro-

vided any type of financial support to our organization, I thank them, and to those folks that are not, don't be shy. Come out and join the smallest committee. Find your passion and take that passion and run with it. It may not even be the Chicopee chamber. It may be a church, it may be just something in Chicopee. You'd be surprised what little bit of help can provide."

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St. Joan of Arc School collects 1,960 food items for Lorraine's



SUBMITTED PHOTOS JANINE DUNLEA

CHICOPEE – Students at St. Joan of Arc School have done it again! For this year's Souper Bowl of Caring during Catholic Schools Week and ahead of this year's Super Bowl last month, the school collected 1,960 food items that will support Lorraine's Soup Kitchen & Pantry. Souper Bowl of Caring is a national movement tackling hunger through fundraising efforts to support food charities.



Chicopee Police Department holds resident meet and greet



PHOTOS AND CAPTION COURTESY OF CHICOPEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

CHICOPEE - Thank you to the new property managers of Dom Narodowny Polski Apartments for inviting us out to their resident meet and greet today. Capt. Lambert along with our C3 Center Unit were on hand to answer questions from the residents and address any concerns they may have.



State Rep. Shirley Arriaga (D-Chicopee), Emma Rodriguez, assistant registrar at the City of Chicopee's Registrar of Voters, City Treasurer Marie Laflamme, City Councilor-at-Large Gerry Roy and State Sen. Adam Gomez (D-Springfield) applaud as Mayor John Vieau presents Charina Rosado, manager at Key Food Marketplace, with the mayor's proclamation declaring February 27, 2024 as Dominican Republic Independence Day in Chicopee.

FLAG RAISING from page 1

translating them to English, explaining half of his family has Dominican roots and he grew up in the culture.

"So on this historic occasion of commemorating 180 years of Dominican independence, let us celebrate the resilience, strength, and spirit of (the) Dominican people. From the struggle of the past to the triumphs of the present, may we honor the sacrifices and achievements that have shaped the nation into what it is today," Gomez said. "Let us come together to unite and solidify and pay tribute to the rich history and cultural history that defines the Dominican Republic. As we look towards the future, may we continue to strive for progress, justice and prosperity for all."

Gomez also highlighted how Dominican businesses have thrived "within Western Massachusetts for many, many years", including in Chicopee.

"We have business owners that have invested in the fabric of what makes Chicopee great and brings that great diversity," Gomez said.

State Rep. Shirley Arriaga (D-Chicopee) stressed how Chicopee welcomes and embraces "all different backgrounds and cultures" and "this is just one of those examples that we do that."

"We understand that everyone comes from different backgrounds, different creeds and we're just excited that you are here, you're part of our community and today, we're taking the time to just celebrate the independence of this great island. With great culture, great community, great food if you

BARRY ELEMENTARY from page 1

and districts are also in need of repairing and replacing some of these old, existing buildings, but we would definitely appreciate your support and, at least, consideration in moving forward in this process," Arriaga said. "I know that the children and teachers would be immensely grateful."

After reviewing the other districts for project considerations, the MSBA carried the motion 6-0 to approve all five projects-0.

Superintendent Dr. Marcus Ware shared his excitement at the project moving forward, calling it "a significant and exciting milestone for the Chicop-

ee Public Schools community."

"I believe this reflects a culmination of thorough deliberation of various factors, including the educational needs of our community, infrastructure requirements, and financial feasibility. Considering the school's age, having been built in 1963, we truly believe this is the best option for students and staff of the school. This project's completion will even provide us the opportunity to expand and add a Pre-K program to Barry, which has not been a possibility with current space limitations," Ware said.

Ware shared what comes next.

"We will be in collaboration (with MSBA) to document

our educational programs, generate an initial space summary, document existing conditions, establish design parameters, develop and evaluate alternatives and recommend the most cost effective and educationally appropriate preferred solution to the MSBA Board of Directors for their consideration," Ware said. "During this phase, the owner's project manager will submit on behalf of the district and its designer a Preliminary Design Program and a Preferred Schematic Report. Approval by the MSBA Board of Directors is required for all projects to proceed into schematic design."

We will continue to follow this story as it develops.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY KRISTIN RIVERS

Charina Rosado, manager at Key Food Marketplace, cranks the lever to raise the Dominican Flag during the Dominican Republic Independence Day Flag-Raising ceremony in Chicopee.

another country like the United States," Rosado said.

Receiving the mayor's proclamation was a surprise for Rosado.

"I didn't expect that, but I feel so happy and proud of representing all the Dominicans here in the city of Chicopee," Rosado said.

Karrla B, a cashier at Key Food Marketplace, was grateful for the city recognizing this day.

"It's so important because they raised the flag here. That means that they're thinking about us," she said. "We're not forgotten."

Rosado encourages residents to attend the ceremony next year.

"We're going to continue celebrating our independence every year," Rosado said.



From the left, Emma Rodriguez, assistant registrar at the City of Chicopee's Registrar of Voters, Charina Rosado, manager at Key Food Marketplace, City Treasurer Marie Laflamme, City Councilor-at-Large Gerry Roy and State Sen. Adam Gomez listen as State Rep. Shirley Arriaga provides remarks at the Feb. 27 Dominican Republic Independence Day Flag-Raising ceremony.

Sports

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Comp falls in state tournament opener



Ava DeBettencourt makes a pass under pressure.

WILBRAHAM – The Minnechaug Regional High School girls basketball team picked up their 17th win of the season overall as they beat Chicopee Comprehensive in the Round of 32 of the Division 2 State Tournament 49-36. In the win, Chaug jumped out to a 14-4 lead and did not look back. Comp's season ends with a 13-8 overall record. The Colts got 19 points from Taryn Carriveau and six points from Eliza Burger.

TURLEY PHOTOS
BY SOFIA DIGRANDE

Natalie Fournier takes a three-point shot.



Colts season ends in playoff opener

SCITUATE – Despite a phenomenal regular season, the Chicopee Comprehensive High School boys basketball was defeated for the second straight time in a playoff opener. Holyoke defeated Comp in the Western Mass. tourney, and Scituate, an Eastern Mass. team, defeated the Colts in the Round of 32 last Friday evening 63-60. The Colts season finishes out at 14-7.

Modesto Galindrez looks to under the offensive side of the court.



Katie Gilhooly drives into the arc



Taryn Carriveau takes a long jump shot.



Eliza Burger holds back before making a pass.



Tineus McCluster looks for an opening to shoot.



Xavier Kleps hustles down the court.

Lawsuit changes brackets in basketball tournament

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

FRANKLIN – Over the years, there have been issues with ineligible player use or other rule-breaking that has led to high school teams being left out of sectional or state tournaments.

This year, however, a school took action and it ended up halting the state tournament and changed opponents for several teams involved.

Oliver Ames High School, which competes in Division 2 in many sports, appealed it being left out of the State Division 2 Boys Basketball tournament due to a paperwork.

According to a representative from the MIAA, schools are required to submit certain paperwork for entrance into the tournament, and Oliver Ames failed to meet the requirement. They were

thusly removed from the tournament and did not have a spot when seeds were released on Saturday, Feb. 24.

Some preliminary games in the tournament, of which Oliver Ames would have been a part of due to their projected lower seed, were scheduled to start on Monday, Feb. 26, but the tournament had to be halted due to an injunction being filed by Oliver Ames in a court. The injunction went through and the MIAA was ordered by a judge to include the ousted school in this year's tournament.

"One team from Eastern Mass. was headed for Amherst and had to be turned around because of this," Eric Castonguay, athletic director at South Hadley High School said. "It stopped the whole thing."

While it only affected a handful of teams in Western Mass. Division 2, Amherst and Agawam were among the

teams that were locally affected.

Karen Gomez, athletic director at Agawam High School, had to wait until a new opponent was announced in order to schedule her game.

She was originally scheduled to play Tuesday, Feb. 27 and host Bay Path Vocational Technical. That opponent changed when Oliver Ames was inserted into the tournament. Masaconomet ended up visiting Agawam, and luckily, at short notice, agreed to come to Agawam and played at the same time the Bay Path-Agawam game was scheduled for.

Amherst was forced to postpone its game from Monday. One team unaffected was Chicopee Comprehensive, which did not see an opponent change and traveled to Scituate in the Round of 32.

The rest of the tournament went on as scheduled and was in the quarterfinals as of press time.

Pioneers 2024 schedule released

LUDLOW – Earlier this week, the Western Mass. Pioneers have released their 2024 schedule. It includes potential participation in the U.S. Open Cup, which begins on March 19.

The Pioneers have won an Open Cup match in the past. Later, the Pioneers have their "friendly" exhibition game scheduled for May 10. They will face 3rd Eye FC prior to the start of their USL-2 League schedule. Their opener for the regular season is against the Boston Bolts on the road May 14.

Their home opener is scheduled for May 18 against Pathfinder FC of New York. The schedule continues through July 13 and includes a total of 14 games.



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Events and announcements

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CHICOPEE – Drop in for a free family program “Dads and Kids” on March 9 at Sztela Early Childhood Center at 66 Macek Drive, as dads, grandfathers, uncles and male caregivers and children ages two to five spend time together playing and learning with Learn in Motion.

Learn in Motion gets kids active, socializing and practicing important life skills such as listening, following directions, sharing, taking turns, teamwork and overcoming challenges.

Learn in Motion gets kids moving, learning and having a ball!

The program will occur on Saturdays March 9, 23 and 30 and April 6 and 20 from 1 – 2 p.m. at the Sztela Early Childhood Center.

Join for one or more Saturdays. For more information, contact Christine at 413-536-0363 x 4536 or email zaskeyc@headstart.org. All are welcome! Children may attend with any adult.

The program is sponsored by the Holyoke Chicopee Coordinated Family & Community Engagement grant from the state’s Department of Early Education and Care.

Books, stories & art

CHICOPEE – Through the Holyoke-Chicopee Family & Community Program, which coordinates services and engages families, join “Books, stories & art: Visual art inspired by books with Enchanted Circle”.

Enchanted Circle will lead these hands-on sessions with fun art and literacy projects for families with children ages three to five years old.

Tuesdays through April 2 from 10:30 a.m. to Noon

Informal playtime at 10:30 a.m.

At the RiverMills Assisted Living at 7 River Mills Drive, Chicopee

Register with Christine at zaskeyc@headstart.org or 413-536-0363 x 4536.

Open Swim in Chicopee!

CHICOPEE – Open Swim in Chicopee occurs on Sundays from Noon to 2 p.m. at Chicopee Compressive High School at 617 Montgomery St.

The swim season goes through March 10. Please bring ID or Proof of Residence. The cost for Chicopee residents is \$3 and the cost for non-residents is \$5.

Questions? Email Jamey Mercer at jmercer@chicopeema.gov.

VOC kicks off 2024 Tax Assistance Program

CHICOPEE – Valley Opportunity Council, which manages the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program providing free tax preparation to those of low- and moderate-income, began its 2024 tax preparations on Monday, Jan. 29.

VITA in-person tax preparation appointments are available from Jan. 29 through May 15 at 35 Mt. Carmel Avenue, Chicopee, 300 High St., Holyoke and

new this year, 20 Lathrop St. in West Springfield.

To schedule an appointment, call 413-612-0206. Those eligible for the VITA program must live in Massachusetts with an income of up to \$60,000. Appointments are available on weekdays, evenings and Sundays.

Certified volunteer tax professionals help qualified individuals prepare and file basic state and federal tax returns and prior year returns. VOC also offers free electronic filing (e-filing) of tax returns, allowing for individuals to receive their refunds much quicker than paper filings.

The core mission and goal of VITA is to assist low- to moderate-income taxpayers in satisfying their tax responsibilities and minimize financial hardships, in turn saving taxpayers thousands of dollars in filing fees.

In 2023, VOC helped 743 individuals file their state and federal tax returns through the VITA program. VOC has been providing the VITA program for 25 years in the communities of Chicopee, Holyoke, and more recently, Westfield.

VOC is the largest and most diverse Community Action Agency in Western Massachusetts with an annual budget of \$45 million. With this Federal designation, VOC has established a powerful network of support and collaborative services intended to encourage community members to actively achieve self-sufficiency for themselves and their families. VOC employs over 250 staff members and has 150 local vendors, providing a significant economic investment in the community.

College News

Chicopee students named to Springfield College's Dean's List

SPRINGFIELD – Springfield College recognizes the following Dean’s List students from Chicopee for academic excellence for the 2023 Fall Semester.

Gabrielle Aube was named to the Dean’s List. Aube has a primary major of Health Sci / Pre-PA.

Mackenzie Feeley was named to the Dean’s List. Feeley has a primary major of Health Sci / Pre-OT.

Israel Gonzalez was named to the Dean’s List. Gonzalez has a primary major of Psychology.

Nathan Machnac was named to the Dean’s List. Machnac has a primary major of Health Sci / Pre-PT.

Corey Raftery was named to the Dean’s List. Raftery has a primary major of Communication/Sport Jour.

James Rego was named to the Dean’s List. Rego has a primary major of Accounting.

Samantha Robak was named to the Dean’s List. Robak has a primary major of Health Sci / Pre-PT.

Andrea Samson was named to the Dean’s List. Samson has a primary major of Exer Sci / Pre-AT.

Elizabeth Santos was named to the Dean’s List. Santos has a primary major of Social Work.

Trevor Seidell-Poirier was named to the Dean’s List. Se-

idell-Poirier has a primary major of Physical Education.

Trinity Sperry was named to the Dean’s List. Sperry has a primary major of Public Health.

Garret Theberge was named to the Dean’s List. Theberge has a primary major of Exer Sci / Applied ES.

Jayleen Wilder was named to the Dean’s List. Wilder has a primary major of Art Therapy.

Samantha Breton named to Bryant University Deans' List

SMITHFIELD, R.I. - Samantha Breton has been named to Bryant University’s Deans’ List for Fall 2023 in recognition of academic excellence.

To earn a place on the Deans’ List, students must have a GPA of 3.4 or better for at least 12 semester hours of work.

Congratulations on this outstanding achievement!

Jemar Mack named to Dean's List at Tufts University

MEDFORD - Jemar Mack, Class of 2025, of Chicopee, was named to the Dean’s List at Tufts University for the Fall 2023 semester. Dean’s List honors at Tufts University require a semester grade point average of 3.4 or greater.

Classifieds

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All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status (number of children and or pregnancy), national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, or any intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination.

This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain about discrimination call The Department of Housing and Urban Development "HUD" toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. For the N.E. area, call HUD at 617-565-5308. The toll free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.



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Julie Spa and Nails officially opens its doors in Chicopee

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com

CHICOPEE - Julie Spa and Nails officially opened its doors in Chicopee on Feb. 29 with a grand opening celebration.

The salon, located at 347 Chicopee St., offers numerous pampering services including manicures, UV gel, pedicures, full spa, massages, eyebrows, acrylic and more.

Julie Spa and Nails is open Mondays through Fridays from 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m., Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and closed on Sundays.

During the grand opening, Julia Naranjo, certified specialist and co-owner alongside her daughter Domenica Chavez, was presented with citations from the Massachusetts State House and Senate to celebrate the occasion and cut the ribbon during the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Mayor John Vieau congratulated Naranjo, wishing her many years of success.

"We're excited for this opportunity for you," Vieau said. "We really do live in the land of opportunity and this is just a testament of that. You were able to open your own business and, hopefully, fill a market here where people need to get their nails done."

Naranjo explained this is her first business and she appreciated the community support, crediting the mayor's office and Community & Constituent Lia-



An exterior shot of Julie Spa and Nails on Chicopee Street in Chicopee with a grand opening banner.

sion Monica Torres for helping her get the grand opening organized.

"I'm very happy and thrilled to be here," Naranjo said. "I'm very grateful and hope that (people) will continue coming and helping support small businesses."

Naranjo has dreams of expanding her services and adding another location.

"I am starting with manicures and pedicures, waxing, massaging. I'm looking to expand in the near future for eyelashes and I hope that I will give quality service to my clients. That is number one for me," Naranjo said.

Naranjo originally did not

have plans to open in Chicopee, as she's a resident of Westfield and expected to open there. However, the business location won her over.

"I saw it advertised on Facebook and when I came here, the lady said she's leaving and I said, 'This is a sign from God that this is the time and this is the place' and that's when I proceeded and that's why I'm here," Naranjo said.

Naranjo stressed the importance of supporting local small businesses.

"I just hope that people don't look at certain things as gender and race and just think of the business as the quality of service that we would be providing here," Naranjo said.



From the left, Lamari Jackson, legislative director for State Sen. Adam Gomez (D-Springfield), Mayor John Vieau, State Rep. Shirley Arriaga (D-Chicopee), Julia Naranjo, co-owner of Julie Spa and Nails, Emely Acentules, Edwin Arcentules, Domenica Chavez, co-owner of Julia Spa and Nails, and Kevin Chambers, chief of staff for State Sen. John Velis (D-Westfield) during the grand opening celebration for Julie Spa and Nails on Feb. 29.

Reflecting on the grand opening and community support, Naranjo was very emotional.

"I didn't expect such a great turnout and support. I had no idea they were supporting me on this big day. I'm very thrilled and thank God. I'm almost speechless," Naranjo said. "I just really didn't think anybody would be here, never mind all of them, so I'm very, very grateful."

Naranjo wants the community to know she's here to serve them.

"I just want to make sure that they know I'm all about their service and I want to make sure they feel comfortable and they are treated with dignity

and respect and they feel pretty with their nails or their toes and they feel taken care of when they come here. That's my goal," Naranjo said. "I'm just happy to serve and I welcome all."

Her message was this: pamper yourself.

"I think regardless of the background, folks need to take care of themselves and pamper themselves and that's what I hope to have here for folks. An opportunity to do just that and inspired to take care of oneself," Naranjo said. "I'm so full that I can provide my services here."

To learn more, call 413-475-5818 or check them out on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok.

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Senior center programming for March

CHICOPEE – The RiverMills Senior Center has these programs coming up throughout the month of March.

Organic's Book Club Information Session at RiverMills

The Chicopee Council on Aging will hold an Organic's Book Club Information Session on Monday, March 11 at 1 p.m. at Chicopee Council on Aging's RiverMills Center, located at 5 W. Main St.

Join healthy living enthusiast Darryl Therrian for an information session about a potential book club that focuses on healthy living through organics. You must register in advance by stopping by RiverMills center or by calling 534-3698.

Diabetes Management Series

The Chicopee Council on Aging will offer the series "Diabetes Management" Wednesday, March 13, 20, and 27 at Noon at Chicopee Council on Aging's RiverMills Center, located at 5 W. Main St.

Holyoke Medical Center will be at RiverMills for this three-part series on Diabetes Management. This is a great series for those living with Diabetes, those caring for someone with the disease, or for those who want to learn more and offer support. Each class will be led by a nurse, registered dietician and pharmacist and allow for open discussion on defining diabetes, how to eat to control blood sugar and how to manage medications and lifestyle to be able to lead a healthy, happy life. You must register by stopping by RiverMills center or by calling 534-3698.

National Puppy Day Photo Shoot

The Chicopee Council on Aging will have a Puppy Photo Shoot on Friday, March 22 at 10 a.m. at Chicopee Council on Aging's RiverMills Center, located at 5 W. Main St.

In honor of National Puppy Day, RiverMills will be holding their second annual National Puppy Day Photo Shoot. Bring

your furry friend to RiverMills for a photo. All dogs must be leashed. No registration is required, but you will be asked to take a number when you arrive.

Judicial Outreach Workshop

The Chicopee Council on Aging will host the Associate Justice, the Honorable John P. McKenna of the Westfield District Court on Monday, March 25 at 10 a.m. at Chicopee Council on Aging's RiverMills Center, located at 5 W. Main St.

Associate Justice, the Honorable John P. McKenna of the Westfield District Court, will be at RiverMills in recognition of Judicial Outreach Month. You will learn about the importance of a judge's work and the importance of impartial and independent judiciary, and the challenging matters the courts see every day. You must register by stopping by RiverMills center or by calling 534-3698.

Chronic Medical Conditions Workshop

The Chicopee Council on Aging will host the workshop "Living with Chronic Medical Conditions" on Thursday, March 28 at 10 a.m. at Chicopee Council on Aging's RiverMills Center, located at 5 W. Main St.

Ascentria Care Alliance's Snap-ED department will be at RiverMills for a nutrition education workshop for those living with chronic medical conditions. Participants will learn about healthy eating and physical activity tips, along with resources for leading a healthy lifestyle. There will also be a cooking demonstration to teach participants how to prepare and cook a nourishing meal with simple and tasty ingredients. You must register in advance at RiverMills or by calling 534-3698.

To learn more about these and other events, check out the RiverMills newsletter or contact Program Coordinator Casey Conroy at 413-534-3698 ext. 118 or cconroy@chicopeema.gov.