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Flag-raising celebrates Sri Lankan New Year

TURLEY PHOTO BY KRISTIN RIVERS

A group photo of residents, community members, local and state elected officials and more under the Sri Lanka flag.

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
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CHICOPEE - The Sri Lankan flag was unveiled inside City Hall Auditorium on April 17 to celebrate the Sri Lankan New Year.

It was later raised outside City Hall. The Sri Lankan New Year

is celebrated in mid-April, with the date determined by the auspicious alignment of planets in the solar system.

This year, the Sri Lankan New Year fell on April 14.

After the ceremony, the attendees headed over to Island Spice on Center Street to enjoy Sri Lankan delicacies to celebrate the occasion.

Mayor John Vieau ex-

plained Dee Fernando, the owner of Island Spice—who's originally from Sri Lanka—brought the holiday to the city's attention, which led to the flag-raising. This year marks the third year Chicopee has raised the Sri Lankan flag.

"That's really the rationale behind how we do these flag-raising. If some-

one wants to recognize their nationality with pride, we do that, so thank you for recognizing your New Year and we're happy to celebrate with you," Vieau said.

Vieau said with this ceremony, the community gathers "to celebrate the heritage of the Sri Lankan community and to mark an important cultural moment."

"A time of deep cultural and spiritual significance for Sri Lankans all around the world. This New Year is rooted in themes of renewal, reflection and gratitude. The values that resonate across all communities. It is a time when families come together, traditions are honored and gener-

See **SRI LANKAN NEW YEAR** page 5

Emergency response capabilities get upgrades

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
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CHICOPEE - The fire department announced emergency response capabilities upgrades through a new Emergency First Response (EFR) certification during a press conference in collaboration with the mayor's office on April 14.

Through this certification, all six of the fire department's engine companies, two aerial apparatuses and two reserve engines are now licensed at the Basic Life Support—or BLS—level.

The upgrade came together through a collaborative effort between the Chicopee Firefighters Local 1710 and the Mayor's Office, with the City Council having unanimously approved the equipment funding.

Mayor John Vieau explained how this is "one step to keeping this community safer."

"I couldn't be more impressed with the kit and I'm really grateful that we're able to get to the point today to have this on every ambulance, every fire apparatus," Vieau

See **UPGRADES** page 6

Courageous Chicopee Crossroads students present to School Committee

The crucial program is meant for students ages 18 to 22 with disabilities.

By Dalton Zbierski
Correspondent

CHICOPEE - A group of young adults from Chicopee Public Schools' Crossroads program made members of

the School Committee proud with a fantastic presentation in the City Hall Auditorium on April 15.

The Crossroads program is meant for non-diploma students with disabilities ages 18 to 22 who have completed their high school requirements and are still looking to learn real-world skills.

The program gives participants opportunities to volunteer and gain employment

while developing those life skills.

On April 15, Crossroads Transitional Specialist Erik Dahl introduced the group to the elected officials and audience members on-hand.

"This evening you will hear from some of our participants, who are excited to share a few words about their

See **SCHOOL COMMITTEE** page 8

St. Joan of Arc places first in math competition

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
krivers@turley.com

CHICOPEE - St. Joan of Arc School placed first in Massachusetts for the month of February in a Prodigy Math Competition that grades one through five participated in.

The students were recognized for their achievement in an assembly at the school on April 13.

In May, the school will enter the National Cup for the Heroic tier (Small Schools) and if they win, the school will win \$25,000 for first place, \$10,000 for second place or \$5,000 for third place.

The grants will help fund technology upgrades, STEM initiatives or student enrichment programs.

Vanessa Rose, one of the first-grade teachers, brought the program to the school and explained how they got involved.

"I have been using Prodigy in my classroom for the last four years. Last year, I trained to become the lead teacher for Prodigy Math at St. Joan of Arc School. In September, I introduced Prodigy to my first-grade students. My class did well in the com-



PHOTO COURTESY OF JANINE DUNLEA

Vanessa Rose, one of the first grade teachers at St. Joan of Arc School who brought the Prodigy program to the school, poses for a photo with two of the champs.

petition and I decided to see if I could get the other teachers involved with the support of our new principal, Mrs. Mahan," Rose said. "The students in grades one through five started using Prodigy in

class and for homework and in December and January, we finished second, and third respectively. We decided to work extra hard in February

See **ST. JOAN MATH** page 8



TURLEY PHOTOS BY BRENDAN ROONEY

A group photo with Boomer and all of the officers that stopped and helped at the first-ever Autism Resource Fair on April 11.

CPD hosts Autism Resource Fair

By Brendan Rooney
Correspondent

CHICOPEE — The police department hosted its first ever Autism Resource Fair at the Hub at Market Square on April 11.

The social gathering was, also, aimed to recognize Autism Acceptance Month and connect families with local resources for individuals with autism, while also providing an opportunity for all to learn more about various support services available in the community.

Reflecting on the overall atmosphere, while disclosing the origin of how things came together was Sgt. Melissa Lyman.

"I just put this together as a one-stop shop for multiple resources, for parents of individuals on the Au-

tism Spectrum, to see what's available and make it a little bit easier," Lyman said. "I also feel the turnout was incredible throughout the day, and our main goal is that we just want to continue with the awareness and education aspect, and continue to push inclusivity, because it's extremely important to remember that there are so many levels of neurodiversity, and as our world continues to evolve and adapt, it's important to remember we have to follow that as well, to create a future for all."

In addition to the variety of activities, the fair also featured several organizations, including Sunshine Village, The May School, Best Buddies, Autism Connections and more offering a variety of services to all. Speaking on behalf of Sunshine Vil-

lage was Susan Wegrzyn, who has been with the organization for more than 35 years.

"I feel this event is incredible, because it allows us to make new connections and offer a sample of the various programs Sunshine Village offers, while also passing along that we have been in the Chicopee community for close to 60 years," Wegrzyn said.

She also discussed the importance of the CPD being a supporter of the organization, adding that many stop by on a daily basis, creating a sense of family.

"It's great to see old friends, because all the officers here they have stopped by prior, and today has just

See **AUTISM FAIR** page 8

IN THE CITY

Clegg promoted to CFD captain

By Kristin Rivers
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CHICOPEE – Joshua Clegg has been promoted from lieutenant and temporary captain to permanent captain at the fire department.

The promotion was celebrated in a ceremony at City Hall Auditorium on April 15.

Mayor John Vieau noted how, the day before, Clegg was instrumental in getting information out about the fire department's upgrades to its emergency medical response capabilities through the new Emergency First Response (EFR) certification. This helped all six engine companies, two aerial apparatuses and two reserve engines at the fire department become licensed at the Basic Life Support (BLS) level.

"I wanted to just share that, Lt. Joshua Clegg, you put the work in and you earned it and we're proud of you. I know that you hold yourself to a high standard—I know that every single one of you do—one thing about the city of Chicopee is public safety is paramount to our success, to our community and it's all about leadership and I think leadership is also paramount and it's also a key component," Vieau said. "Because everyone under the leadership rises to the occasion and I know there's a lot of pride in this room for Chicopee Fire Department and for our city. I'm excited for this opportunity for you to serve as the newest captain of the Chicopee Fire Department."

Fire Chief Daniel Stamborski expressed excitement for Clegg's promotion.

"Knowing Josh for quite a few years now, I was fortunate enough to be able to promote him a few years ago to lieutenant and he did a fantastic job in that position. As the mayor just mentioned, some



Fire Capt. Joshua Clegg in a candid family photo after his promotion on April 15.

of the things he's shown as an example of leadership are the ideas that he had. He would always be in my office talking about what we need to do better and how we can do better to assist in Chicopee, and we appreciated that. We need leadership skills," Stamborski said. "His example that he sets for his fellow firefighters that he works with is amazing and we appreciate it."

Clegg was then sworn in by City Clerk Keith Rattell.

Clegg expressed gratitude for all the community support, sharing he's been in his career for a decade. Before coming to Chicopee, he did six years with South Hadley's fire department. There, he served as an on-call firefighter for three years, followed by becoming

a full-time firefighter there for three years.

"I helped train one of the Chicopee classes in 2012 and it kind of opened my eyes to what else was out there. Very thankful for my time with South Hadley and I still work there; I dive for their regional dive team," Clegg said. "But, they kind of laid the foundation for where I was as a firefighter before I came over, so I'm really grateful."

Reflecting on his promotion, Clegg was thankful and grateful for the opportunity.

"Thankful and grateful for my coworkers, my family. Just thankful for the process. Thankful for the chief in putting his faith in me to take this next step," Clegg said.

His advice for future fire-



City Clerk Keith Rattell swears in Joshua Clegg as captain of the Chicopee Fire Department.



Mayor John Vieau, Fire Capt. Joshua Clegg with his son and Fire Chief Daniel Stamborski in a group photo.

fighters was this.

"Do it. Take the leap, get your EMT license. It's the best job in the world. It doesn't feel like work. I don't feel like I've worked a single day in the 10 years I've been

here. It's truly very rewarding, and it's just a great job. You meet great people and you get to have a positive impact on people's lives," Clegg said.

The biggest lesson was

continuing to learn and grow throughout his career.

Clegg's message was this.

"I'm here to serve and continue to serve," Clegg said.

School Committee talks school choice, new hires and resignations

By Dalton Zbiarski
Correspondent

CHICOPEE – The School Committee delved into a variety of topics during its meeting on April 15; among them

were school choice, new hires and recent resignations.

Jennifer Belville, Chicopee Public Schools' deputy superintendent for academics, offered an update as to where the district stands with school

choice.

School choice is a policy enabling public education money to follow students to the schools whose programs that best fit their needs, instead of being limited to what is available in the facilities close by in their neighborhoods.

Belville began her presentation by noting that the spring is always the time of year where this conversation comes to the forefront.

"To let you know where we currently are as a district, in the 2024-25 school year, we had 84 students, which was a decrease from the prior year," Belville said. "Currently, we have enrolled 74 students. We had 31 slots that you voted on last year and have eight students who accepted."

Belville added that most Chicopee's school choice stu-

dents are in grades seven, 11 and 12.

Currently, district officials have recommended 11 school choice slots open at Barry Elementary School, four slots open at Bowe Elementary School, 13 slots open at Lambert-Lavoie Elementary School, and 11 slots open at Streiber Elementary School.

Belville explained why no recommendations have been made for the kindergarten, middle school and high school levels.

"Our recommendation this year is to not have school choice in kindergarten or at our middle schools or high school," Belville said. "Especially for kindergarten this year, our kindergarten enrollment is significantly high already, but we also don't recommend it for our middle or

our high schools, whether it's our class sizes, our programming or a variety of reasons."

Before the committee voted unanimously to allow the district to continue participating in school choice, Belville noted that enrollment played a key role in the recommendations.

"We really scrutinized our enrollment, looked where our class sizes were small, but where we couldn't consolidate," Belville said.

Also, during the April 15 meeting, Director of Human Resources Deborah Green provided a personnel update.

"Your personnel report covering March 27 through April 8, we had a total of seven new hires. Those were five to our substitute pool and two in the cafeteria or Food Services Department. [We also had] five resignations and three retirements," Green said.

She added that her team is in the process of posting for open positions for next school year.

"We currently have a number of long-term postings to get us through some leaves of absence for the rest of this year," Green said. "Among some of those postings are a custodian, two nurse openings, administrative support professional, food service openings, educational support professionals in the 18 to 22 program and at the elementary level and physics teachers, ELA teachers and an instructional coach."

When asked about the five recent resignations, Green was able to put it into context.

"The resignations are... relatively newer hires," Green said. "Some are not returning from a leave of absence, and it shows as a resignation. That's the five of them."



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USDA INSP. FRESH WHOLE CHICKEN TWIN PAK..... **\$159** lb

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Boys & Girls Club of Chicopee to hold Designer Bingo Event

CHICOPEE - The Boys & Girls Club of Chicopee will hold their Designer Bingo event, presented by PeoplesBank, on Saturday, May 9 at the Chicopee Elks Lodge #1849 431 Granby Rd, Chicopee, MA 01013.

Doors will open at Noon and games begin at 1:30 p.m. Admission is a donation of \$30 pp or \$25 pp if you have a table of eight and includes 10 games for a chance to win a designer bag.

Attendees can enjoy lunch for a fee from Noon

to 1:30 p.m, cash bar, raffle prizes and a special raffle featuring a Louis Vuitton, which you must be present at the event to win. For more information and to join in the fun, check out www.bgccicopee.org.

About the Boys & Girls Club of Chicopee

Our mission is to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens.

IN THE CITY

Celebrity Bartender Fundraiser supports Miracle League of W. Mass

By **Brendan Rooney**
Correspondent

CHICOPEE – Falls Pizza & Craft Bar hosted its first ever celebrity bartender fundraiser in support of the Miracle League of Western Mass (MLWM), which provides adaptive baseball and other activities to children of all abilities, and ages, on April 13.

The event ran from 5 to 8 p.m. and, in total, raised more than \$1,223 towards the non-profit.

Meet Your Lineup

The star-studded roster of celebrity bartenders consisted of Heather Shelton (Falls Pizza), Morgan Bennett (Adam Quenneville Roofing & Siding), Raj Sanghvi, Drew Gardner (New England Disc Golf Center), Lisa Mish (PeoplesBank) and Moyah Smith (Revitalize CDC).

Reflecting on the prestigious honor of creating history was Owner Mo Turan who explained the idea came internally through the heartfelt message of one of his key employees, Shelton. She has a son with Autism, who is set to make his Miracle League debut later this year, which led to an idea starting to form on how he could help, and create this new partnership.

“So, when Heather presented this idea, I felt it was a no-brainer, and I told my staff we need to make this happen,” Turan said. “The reason why I felt we needed to host was that this event brings a ton of light to a great cause, especially with it being Autism Awareness Month, and so here we are doing this fundraiser, and I feel it’s been a great event. Everyone is having a great time inside, and we couldn’t be happier with the turnout, and having grown up in Chicopee, it’s always a wonderful moment to see the community together, and support a terrific cause, and mission, such as the Miracle League, and all they do.”

Before the festivities kicked off, Brian Feeley, who is the president of the MLWM, shared his excitement that 2026 has been a huge year for the non-profit.

“We earned the Citizenship Award from the Holyoke



Brian Feeley of the MLWM calls out raffle winners.

St. Patrick’s Day Parade Committee. We also just filled out our registration with a record high number of 92 kids in one hour, with our previous record being four hours, and talk about full circle, Heather’s son will be playing with us,” Feeley said.

He explained how the League has grown and evolved heading into its 11th season.

“It’s surreal to admit this is our 11th season, and all of these little events and fundraisers, always matter because our board consists of six members in total,” Feeley said. “So when it comes to getting the word out it’s always grassroots, so when we do our little dine out nights, it’s not always about getting the funds, it’s more of getting the word out, and creating exposure, not only for players, but also parents who has kids with special needs, and then it evolves into finding new partnerships with sponsors.”

Feeley also shared that the big hurdle this year and the goal among all is seeking out volunteers to help a sense of growth and evolution take shape, citing that the program is only going to continue to grow from here.



Raj Sanghvi with Morgan Bennett.

“Our big thing this year is pushing volunteers, because the truth is volunteers are going to be the future in order for us to expand,” Feeley said. “Because, currently, we have 90 spots and that seems to be the sweet spot for how many kids we can handle on a seasonal basis. So, the more sport teams, local high school and college teams who can help us out by coming out for even one game is a tremendous help for us.”

Feeley noted that the atmosphere among the ballpark creates a sense of community that in that split second is quite infectious driving this moment of unity.

“So every Sunday morning we are putting up our sponsors, banners, sponsors who stop by at the games, and we have already talked to a bunch of companies who want



Raj Sanghvi with Brian Feeley.



Lisa Mish with Drew Gardner.

to do a volunteer day, which would see them come out with their group, and lend a hand to us, and when people stop by, we always hear, ‘I get it’, and it’s a wonderful conversation to be a part of,” Feeley said. “It’s just a full circle experience, and we couldn’t be happier to help where we can.”

Opening Day Right Around the Corner
As of this moment, the league continues to seek vol-

unteers for the upcoming season.

To find out more on how you can sign up, you can check out the league’s website at miracleleaguwestma.com for information on how to get involved.

The Miracle League’s season opener will take place on May 3 at the Aschermann Family Field at Springfield College.



Table of raffle prizes offered during the event.

Rotary Club of Chicopee Celebrity Bartender Event

CHICOPEE – The Rotary Club of Chicopee will be presenting a Celebrity Bartender Event on Wednesday, May 6, at 5:30 p.m. at the View Street Tavern.

Support your local celebrities

5:30 p.m. John Arthur (Personnel Recruiter), Lou Arasate (Entertainment Director), Joe Peters (Plastics Manufacturing, Retired), Gene LaPierre (Entrepreneur, Retired)

6:15 p.m. Kirk Burnham, Sr. (Vice President, Polish National Credit Union), Jason

Ouellette (Chicopee Concrete Service, Inc), Fred Borys (Real Estate Appraiser, Retired), Mike Vogel (VP Sales Manager, Westfield Bank)

7 p.m. Kat Lockridge (Entrepreneur, Retired), Scott Channell (General Manager, National Vinyl LLC), Karen Kirby (Broker/Owner, HB Real Estate), Robert McNamara (McNamara Services LLC)

7:45 p.m. Mayor John Vieau (City of Chicopee), Jeffrey Sattler (Senior Relationship Manager, Liberty Bank), Kate Riley (Vice President/ Realtor, Riley Home Real-

ty), Chelsea Parker (Director of Chicopee Outpatient Services, River Valley Counseling Services)

DJ Services provided by Cote Entertainment and Raffle Prizes

This is a great opportunity to network with fellow business leaders in the community. Many are either current Rotarians, past Rotarians or prospective new Rotarians! Thank you for your support.

To support your celebrity bartender ahead of the event, visit chicopeerotary.org/donations.

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OPINION

in the Garden

by Roberta McQuaid

In honor of Mother Earth

This week, we celebrate Earth Day. Lots of towns host bulk waste days or a town-wide clean up as ways to note the day.

While most of us garden with great intentions such as beautifying our yards or producing home grown vegetables, it is important to note that the gardening/greenhouse industry hasn't always been what you'd call "earth-friendly." From mountains of plastic pots not rotting away in our landfills to story after story of chemical misuse, we inadvertently hurt the very source of our pleasure.

So, in honor of Earth Day, read from the archives eight easy things we can do as gardeners to tread a bit more lightly on 'ole Mother.

Feed the soil, not the plant

Have your soil tested and ask for organic recommendations to correct nutrient deficiencies. Replenishing your garden with amendments like rock phosphate and greensand will help to create long-lasting nutrient storehouses.

Healthy soil will produce plants that are less prone to insect and disease problems.

Start a compost pile

Layer your vegetable and yard waste, keep it moist and give it a turn. After a short time it will decompose, leaving behind a great source of organic matter.

No matter how you garden, be it vegetables, flowers, herbs, fruits or even shrubs, each benefit from a yearly top dressing of "black gold."

Make compost tea

Are your transplants looking a little pale? Rather than sprinkling them with "blue water," perk them up with home-brewed compost tea.

Mix one part well-rotted compost or manure to five parts water and allow it to sit for a week or more. Strain before foliar feeding your plants.

Shop Mom and Pop

Buying local, directly from the grower usually means a knowledgeable sales team! Form relationships and learn from their expertise.

Ask them to carry organic seeds, potting soils and pest control options.

Reduce, reuse, recycle!

I first became familiar with this catch phrase back in 1990, when Earth Day celebrations went global. In the context of plastic pots and other containers used to grow or move plants, I'd like

to think that the local Mom and Pop shop would take back the pots you bought their plants in and use them to grow next years crop.

If not, maybe you could reuse them to start some homegrown seedlings and recycle the rest. An even better solution for earth conscious growers would be to replace plastic with fiber (stronger than peat and made from recycled materials to boot).

Use least toxic measures to control bugs and other garden thugs

Beer to trap slugs, and baking soda for black spot – the list of remedies to fight garden maladies is numerous and not always a stretch of the imagination. If you must choose a chemical option follow the manufacturer's recommendations. Assuming that more is better is outdated and dangerous thinking!

Conserve water

We all know that watering during the heat of the day results in lots of moisture lost to evaporation while watering in the evening can make plants more prone to disease. What to do?

For happy, hydrated plants water in the early morning hours instead. Hand watering at the base of each plant or using soaker hoses or drip irrigation is far better than overhead sprinklers when it comes to conservation and disease prevention.

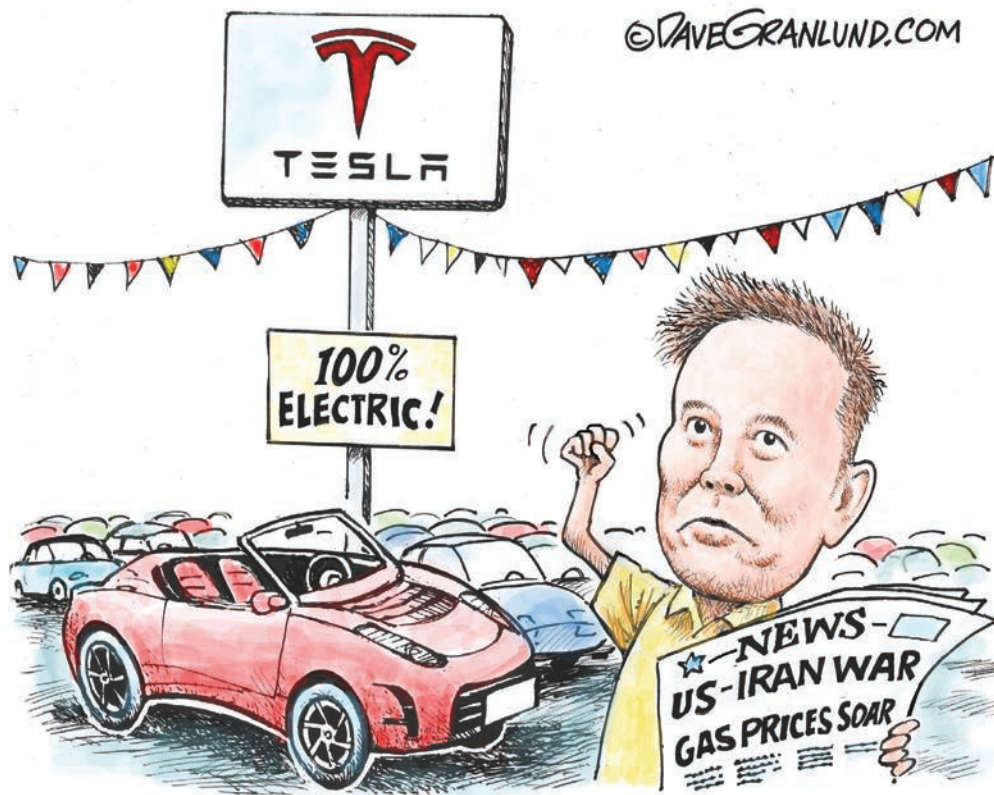
Extend the harvest

Do you know how far most fruits and vegetables have to travel to reach the local supermarket? Probably far more than the average American travels in a year's time. Frustrated? Then read up on various methods of extending the use of your own garden bounty past the growing season.

This could mean growing a few veggies like winter squash, onions or garlic – all of which store well. It could also mean trying your hand at freezing or drying some of your produce for use in the off-season.

Few of us can feed ourselves entirely, but whatever we can grow offsets the rest.

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



By Ellenor Downer



Red-breasted nuthatch

Last Wednesday, April 8 while waiting at the bus stop for my grandson, I saw two red-breasted nuthatches in a small grove of pine trees near the road.

They were going up and down several pine trees most likely in search of insects. The red-breasted nuthatch is about 4.3 to 4.7 inches long and exhibits the typical head-down nuthatch behavior of its larger cousin, the white-breasted nuthatch. Male and females are similar with a black eye stripe, white eyebrow and buff orange underparts. It has a blue-gray back.

They inhabit conifer forests and in winter may be found in other trees. They nest mostly in conifers such as spruce, fir, hemlock.

Both sexes excavate a nest cavity in a rotten stub or snag, usually five to 40 feet about the ground. Sticky pitch is smeared around the entrance of the nest hole possibly to prevent other creatures from entering. Adults avoid

getting stuck in the pitch by flying straight into the hole. Sometimes they are seen with pitch on their feathers.

The female lays five to six white, spotted eggs. The female incubates the eggs and the male brings food to her. Both parents feed the nestlings. Young nuthatches leave the nest about two to three weeks after hatching.

They have a soft, musical song used especially in courtship by the male. These nuthatches eat insects, spiders and seeds in summer. In winter they eat many seeds especially those of conifers.

Nesting bluebirds

On Saturday, April 11 I received an email from a Hampden resident. She said, "Our bluebirds are back and have completed their nest. We are awaiting the first egg. I'm surprised they use mostly pine needles constructing the nest."

Brimfield birds

A Brimfield resident said he saw a female brown-headed cowbird in his yard. He said it was unusual as he usually sees the male before the female.

He said, "On Sunday I did a tour of local ponds. There was a pair of ring-necked ducks on Sherman Pond in Brimfield and several on a pond in Warren. Also in Warren I saw an osprey at the

pond where they have nested for several years. I've been checking the pond since early March and this is the first sighting of an osprey this year. I hope its partner shows up soon."

He also said, in Warren, there was a bald eagle at a pond on New Reed Street. There has been one or two there frequently during March. A pair of eastern bluebirds was seen perched on two different trees with holes possibly suitable for a nest. I often see bluebirds using nesting boxes, but have never seen them using a natural cavity. I'll keep checking to see if they nest in either tree."

Non-bird sighting

The Brimfield resident reported a non-bird sighting. He said "while driving out of the driveway yesterday I saw a small frog hopping off of the driveway. Probably a spring peeper. I'll have to check a nearby small pond in the woods nearby to see if there are peepers there. The frog could have been a pickerel frog, we see those every year in three sizes; small, medium and large. I try to be careful when I mow or weed whack to avoid them."

Raven

My granddaughter while walking her dogs on Saturday, April 11 heard the croaking sound of a raven. It startled both the dogs and her.

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by emailing mybackyard88@aol.com or edowner@turley.com or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005. The Palmer office has a new phone system and I will be getting an extension where messages may be left. I will publish the number as soon as it is set up.

When a spouse dies will the other get a Social Security Survivor Benefit?

Dear Rusty: I am 79.

My husband is also 79 and we both receive Social Security benefits.

We were both married before and we married each other at the age of 58. Am I to understand correctly that when either of us dies, the surviving spouse is not eligible to collect the deceased spouse's Social Security benefits? Please correct me if I am wrong.

Signed: Curious Spouse

Dear Curious Spouse:

A surviving spouse only gets one benefit - either their own SS retirement amount, or their deceased spouse's amount, whichever is more. So, the Social Security benefit that the deceased was receiving at death will be paid to the surviving spouse, replacing any smaller SS payment the survivor was already

collecting. To be sure you are aware, the surviving spouse will also be eligible for a one-time lump sum death benefit of \$255 (I know it isn't much, but it should be claimed anyway).

Also, unless the surviving spouse was already receiving a spousal benefit while both partners were living, the surviving spouse will need to contact Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 or at the local SS field office to make an appointment to apply for their survivor benefit.

One other thing to be aware of since you were both married before: if either of you die, and your first marriage lasted at least 10 years and your ex-spouse has also

died, the surviving spouse will have a choice to collect a survivor benefit from either the ex-spouse or the most recently deceased spouse, whichever amount is more. But, again, you can only collect one benefit payment as a surviving spouse either from your ex-spouse or from your recently deceased spouse, whichever benefit is higher.

FYI, survivor benefits are a confusing area of Social Security, so you might also find informative this article I recently published, as it goes more deeply into surviving spouse benefits including benefits for surviving minor children and surviving adult disabled children. Read the article titled "Demystifying Social Security Survivor

See **SOCIAL SECURITY** page 10

Chicopee Register

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Send letters to:

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24 Water Street,
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or email
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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 journalregister@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.

NEWS & FEATURES

As a paper of record, we attempt to cover all general news, personality profiles, and community features that we know about. This includes all selectmen and school committee meetings as well as spot planning board, board of health, finance, and other town meetings determined by the issue's relevance to our readers. There are the annual major community event features that we should always cover, but we are more than open to suggestions of other features to celebrate the fabric of our communities and their many interesting occupants. Our loyal advertisers provide funding for this paid staff coverage.

For more information on news or community features for The Chicopee Register, please email chicopeeregister@turley.com.

IN THE CITY

Residents volunteer at TJO

By **Brendan Rooney**
Correspondent

SPRINGFIELD/CHICOPEE — On March 28, Chicopee residents had the opportunity to volunteer at Thomas J. O'Connor Animal Control & Adoption Center in Springfield.

One of those residents was City Council Vice President/Ward 6 Councilor Sam Shumsky, who made a pit stop to volunteer and hang out with some fellow Chicopee residents.

“The TJO really means a lot to Western Mass; it’s not just an animal shelter, it’s a cornerstone of the community,” Shumsky said. “For pet owners, it’s obvious that they help reunite lost pets, provide adoptions, and support families. But even for people who don’t have pets, TJO plays a huge role. They help keep our communities safe by getting animals off the streets, mak-

ing sure they’re healthy, and giving them a second chance instead of letting them suffer.”

Joining Shumsky for the act of service was native Chicopee resident Oksana Kagan, who shared that when she was offered the opportunity to attend with Shumsky, she felt it was a no-brainer.

“I want to be honest, some of my earliest memories with the TJO include my time as a Girl Scout and a group outing to visit the TJO, and so from those experiences, and the animals I met I learned about their mission, and that stuck with me for this long, likely not because of what I did as an individual, but because it brought my attention to the resources that the community needs yet often go unrecognized,” Kagan said.

Kagan then elaborated on some of the services she saw with Shumsky at the shelter.

“We discovered this well-

thought-out approach to reuniting pets and their owners, even in cases involving multiple lost animals, as the staff on site explained that they offer resources such as spaying and neutering to prevent animal overpopulation and keep the community safe,” Kagan said. Shumsky provided a similar thought.

“When Oksana(Kagan) and I were volunteering there, it really hit me how much work goes into caring for these animals and how many lives they impact every single day,” Shumsky said. “It’s truly heartwarming, when you’re actually there, seeing those animals, whether it was the playful puppies or the cats just looking for a quiet home, you realize these are animals that a lot of the animals and families they serve are from Chicopee.”

Kagan added she was amazed by the level of professionalism and care exempli-



PHOTOS COURTESY OF SAM SHUMSKY

From left to right, City Council Vice President/Ward 6 Councilor Sam Shumsky and Oksana Kagan holding some furbabies.

fied by the shelter’s staff.

“I want to add that during the visit, I was also surprised to encounter a pair of very young kittens that TJO was rehabilitating before reuniting them with their owner, who currently cannot care for her pets, and to witness this level of professionalism from the staff, as they told us, ‘we will

do whatever we can to help all,’ was absolutely amazing, and heartwarming, to hear, which is why this event at TJO catalyzed my future participation with the organization,” Kagan said.

In the end, both Shumsky and Kagan shared that from their short time at the shelter, they both walked away feeling

that the TJO truly matters to all and is a cause worth supporting.

“The TJO is truly a regional resource that serves all,” Shumsky said. “And talking with staff and observing the intake process made it clear that our residents rely on it more than many might realize. Adding to the strength and credibility the TJO is known for, being a testament to Western Mass instead of just one city, and that sense of network was an incredible achievement to see in person.”

“The TJO is predicated upon the highest level of care, attention, and professionalism, from the staff taking the time to discuss avenues such as fostering, and volunteering, while citing the critical need for donations, in an all-inclusive effort to provide additional support for all, adds to the validity of why I believe we are very fortunate as a community to have such a reliable organization such as the TJO that truly cares about the welfare of people and pets alike,” Kagan said.



State Sen. Jake Oliveira (D-Ludlow) reflects on the impact of Sri Lankan culture, cuisine and its democracy.



Dee Fernando, owner of Island Spice, invites the community to the restaurant for Sri Lankan cuisine after the ceremony.

SRI LANKAN NEW YEAR from page 1

osity and goodwill is shared with everybody,” Vieau said. “Here in Massachusetts—especially in Chicopee—Sri Lankan-Americans have made meaningful contributions to the city’s cultural diversity, economic vitality and community life. Our strength as a city comes from many cultures and traditions like I mentioned, that our residents bring in, and today we proudly recognize one of those traditions.”

He added that raising the Sri Lankan flag “is a symbol of respect, unity and recognition of a vibrant and valued community” and encouraged everyone “to take the opportunity to learn more about Sri Lankan culture” and come together for the festivities.

After Fernando thanked the city for holding the flag raising and inviting attendees to her restaurant, State Sen. Jake Oliveira (D-Ludlow) reflected on the city’s efforts to celebrate all cultures and heritages and the upcoming 250th birthday of America and the 251st anniversary of “The Shot Heard ‘Round the World” in Lexington and Concord that made way for democracy.

“What I didn’t know, that the oldest democracy in Asia is, actually, Sri Lanka and our nations, both of them, have a long history of democracy. We’ve had some bumps along the way in both of our nations,” Oliveira said. “Howev-

er, I think it’s important to celebrate the culture of Sri Lanka and celebrate all of the spices that go along with it.”

Oliveira said Island Spice’s food “brings that island spice right here to the city of Chicopee,” emphasizing the impact of the country around the world.

“I’m half-Portuguese. The Portuguese came to Sri Lanka in the 1600s and brought back many spices that are served in Portuguese cuisine today and that teaching of spices on that island had really had a ripple effect across our world,” Oliveira said. “So, on behalf of the Massachusetts legislature and the State Senate and the House of Representatives, congratulations to the Sri Lankan community here in the city of Chicopee and to you, Dee, for being a great ambassador to your home nation, but also, your adopted nation.”

After Vieau read the mayor’s proclamation, the flag was unveiled by Oliveira, Fernando and Haroon Haleemdeen, who is originally from Sri Lanka and currently interning in the City Treasurer’s Office.

Haleemdeen, who later received the mayor’s proclamation from Vieau, expressed his gratitude to the city for hosting the flag-raising and recognizing the holiday. He came to Chicopee while looking for internships two years ago and a program through the Valley Opportunity Council—which was overseen by some-



TURLEY PHOTOS BY KRISTIN RIVERS

State Sen. Jake Oliveira (D-Ludlow), Dee Fernando, owner of Island Spice, and Haroon Haleemdeen, an intern with the City Treasurer’s Office, unveil the Sri Lankan flag.

one he knew—helped him get his internship.

“There’s a lot of cultures out there and people are always like, stuck in their own bubble. They don’t know much that’s going on outside in this world. It’s always beautiful learning new cultures, languages, things like that. I definitely recommend people to look into things like that,” Haleemdeen said.

He said receiving the mayor’s proclamation “was something special.”

“I have to say I did not expect it, but I’m very grateful for this. It’s amazing, to be honest,” Haleemdeen said. “It means a lot.”

He was thrilled to see the community gather for the flag-raising as well.

“It means a lot to see people show that they actually care because, growing up in the U.S. and Sri Lankans are very rare, especially where I grew up, which is in Westfield,” Haleemdeen said. “So, it’s nice to see that people actually care and they come to learn new things. Just to be here means a lot for the people who are here.”

Haleemdeen’s message was this: to stay positive, be a good person and help others in need.

“We should always be open to learn new things, see new things, meet new people of course. It’s a beautiful world out there, so have to go explore and I recommend everyone to do that,” Haleemdeen said.



Haroon Haleemdeen, an intern with the City Treasurer’s Office who is originally from Sri Lanka, received the mayor’s proclamation from Mayor John Vieau at the ceremony.

The Jack Rome Memorial 5K & Fun Walk

May 2, 2026 • 11 a.m.-3 p.m.
Fountain Park, 883 Tinkham Road, Wilbraham



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Fun family activities and goodies for the pups.
Their Second Chance Begins With You!

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To Benefit The Foundation for TJO Animals



Not all superheroes wear capes. Some wear sneakers. Some have paws.

IN THE CITY

National Prescription Drug Take Back Day in Chicopee April 25

CHICOPEE - The Hampden District Attorney's Office, in partnership with the Hampden County Sheriff's Office, will participate in the upcoming National Prescription Drug Take Back Day on Saturday, April 25, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Price Rite Supermarket parking lot, 1600 Memorial Dr. in Chicopee.

National Prescription Drug Take Back Day provides a safe, convenient, and responsible way for commu-

nity members to dispose of unused or expired prescription medications, while also helping to educate the public about the risks of medication misuse and abuse. The initiative aims to prevent prescription drugs from being misused and to keep potentially dangerous medications out of the wrong hands.

Community members are encouraged to bring unused or expired prescription medications for safe disposal. No appointment is neces-

sary, and the service is free and anonymous.

The Hampden District Attorney's Office will once again partner with the Hampden County Sheriff's Office, whose staff will assist with the collection and proper disposal of the medications.

District Attorney Anthony D. Gulluni said events like Drug Take Back Day play an important role in preventing substance misuse before it starts.

"Many people don't re-

alize how often prescription medications that are misused come from medicine cabinets at home," Gulluni said. "This event gives people a safe way to dispose of medications they no longer need and helps prevent them from being misused or falling into the wrong hands."

Sheriff Nick Cocchi echoed these sentiments. "Too often, unused or expired prescription medications sit in our homes and quietly become a risk to our

families, to our kids, and to our communities. Drug Take Back Day is a simple but powerful way to remove that risk. I encourage everyone to take a few minutes, clean out your medicine cabinets, and safely dispose of those medications. It's a small step that can make a big difference in preventing misuse and saving lives," he said.

For more information about National Prescription Drug Take Back Day, visit www.dea.gov/takebackday.

St. Joan of Arc Open House

CHICOPEE - The Pre-K, Three and Four and Kindergarten St. Joan of Arc School Open House will take place on Wednesday, June 10, by appointment only.

The times are 9 to 11 a.m. and 1 to 5 p.m.

St. Joan of Arc School is located at 587 Grattan Street, Chicopee, MA.

To learn more, call 413-533-1475 or visit sjachicopee.org.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY KRISTIN RIVERS

A shot of the new equipment that will be on fire trucks for the Chicopee Fire Department.



Lt./EMS Coordinator John Jebb explains the new equipment as Lt. Joshua Clegg, Mayor John Vieau and Fire Chief Daniel Stamborski look on.

UPGRADES from page 1

said. Vieau noted some of the items include Glucose monitoring and sugar for diabetic emergencies, EpiPens and albuterol, which treats asthma-related bronchospasms.

The other items are Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) for severe respiratory distress, Benadryl for severe allergic reactions, pain management through Ibuprofen and Acetaminophen and manual suction during CPR.

"Bringing, literally, hospital-level care closer to the scene of an emergency, which is really special. So, I want to thank the fire department for bringing it forward. I want to thank the chief under his leadership just moving in the right

direction," Vieau said. "As our population gets older, the older adults that live here, more and more calls come in for those who are in need and I'm just so proud of the Chicopee Fire Department and the services that they provide."

Fire Chief Daniel Stamborski shared the apparatus—including the two spare reserve pieces—can now do what the ambulance crews do, with the exception of transporting patients.

"The reality of our profession is that we rely upon a lot of different vendors. We outsource paramedic services, but when we get too busy and all of our ambulances are out on the streets, we have to rely upon mutual aid and private ambulance services, and the reality is that

even with those contracts in place, they're busy as well," Stamborski said. "There comes times where first responder level—is what we used to have—at that licensing level, we couldn't do breathing treatments and so forth."

Stamborski said in management meetings, talks in the office and with the unions, they're always talking about improvements.

"This is one project that I want to give proper praise to, Lt. Clegg for bringing it to me and explaining to me that we could change our licensing and get to the point where we are today. That started with a talk in our office and that bloomed into a discussion with the union, discussion

with the city and the Mayor's Office and eventually, we needed funding from the council, and I can tell you from every step that the mayor was on right on board, the union was on board, the council immediately approved the funding and, now, we're at this pinnacle right now," Stamborski said. "And from that, our new EMS Coordinator, Lt. Jebb, jumped on board and between all of us, they went out and researched the equipment that we needed, purchased all that equipment, put this all together so that we can stand in front of you today and launch this program. So, we're very proud of it, proud of the program and, quite frankly, my hat is off to every male and female firefighter in this department for what they accomplish on a yearly basis."

He added how the fire department responded to over 15,000 calls last year, with two-thirds of those medical response calls.

"So, I think this is going to be a great enhancement to

our city and to what we provide for the city," Stamborski said.

Fire Lt. Joshua Clegg and Lt./EMS Coordinator John Jebb expressed excitement for the upgrade and new equipment.

"So, no matter where you are, if you're having one of those emergencies, whatever truck shows up first is going to have the same equipment to treat you that an ambulance would," Clegg said.

"This is great for our city. Now we have the ability to quickly get help to anybody who needs it with the same capabilities that we already provide with our BLS ambulances," Jebb said.

Clegg shared the fire department ran into issues "with relying heavily on mutual aid ambulances," and Stamborski tasked him, while he was in the EMS Office, to find ways to be more efficient and increase level of care. Through research, he discovered how other fire departments used this program.

"We got the wheels in

motion to get this program started and up off the ground running," Clegg said.

Jebb said this will further support the community.

"As someone who was on the ambulance for many years, we had all these capabilities and all this equipment already at our disposal when we're riding our ambulances. I know a lot of us wished that we had this capability as well, riding the fire truck as well. It just serves the city and the residents of Chicopee to have all these medications and equipment handy on all of our apparatus, so we can quickly give care to anybody who needs it," Jebb said.

Jebb's message was this.

"Now, we'll be able to quickly get them the help and care that they need on all of our fire apparatus and that instead of sometimes, in the past, waiting for a mutual aid ambulance to come along with one of our fire engines, now we all have the same capabilities as a BLS ambulance," Jebb said.

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CLUES ACROSS

- Egyptian bull-god
- Romanian monetary unit
- Will Ferrell holiday film
- "It Ain't Half Hot Mum" actor
- Error-related negativity
- Volcanic crater
- Boston Herald columnist Margery
- True market value
- Italian term for exchange rate
- Informal loan clubs
- Men's fashion accessory
- Children's craft supply
- Extra benefits
- In an early way
- A judge has one
- Soviet Socialist Republic
- Tractor unit
- Defunct supercomputer developer
- Promotional materials
- A forgetful state
- One who beheads
- Photographers
- Small, rich sponge cake
- Clergy's vestment
- Expressed pleasure
- Abba __, Israeli politician
- Zero
- Ancient Greek word for "earless"
- Nigerian governmental area
- Mild expression of surprise
- Places to hang things
- Keyboard key
- Make a mistake
- One-time president of Republic of Korea

CLUES DOWN

- Bridge building degree
- Expression of sorrow or pity
- Large, stocky lizard
- Romanian river
- Communication
- Stoats
- Showcases
- Bird of prey
- King of Thebes
- Cleaving tool
- Large African antelope
- Three are particularly notable
- Meet one's needs
- C. European river
- Dictator
- Indicates how much out of 100 (abbr.)
- The 17th letter of the Greek alphabet
- Consume food
- Woman (French)
- Scrape a surface
- Green vegetable
- Pacific Standard Time
- Capital of Brazilian city
- Paddle
- Cause to become insane
- Drier and flakier
- Mimic
- ESPN personality
- Kimes
- One who moves slowly
- Secret political clique
- Behind the stern of a ship
- Supernatural force
- Sanctuary
- Swiss river
- Grayish white
- Engrave by coating
- North Carolina university
- Midway between south and southeast

JUNE 2026

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Moreira, Price combine for 10 goals in Pacers loss



Mara Garncarz tries to pass the ball out of pressure.

GRANBY – Last Monday afternoon it was all offense between Granby and Chicopee girls lacrosse. Host Granby was a little better, defeating the Pacers 18-12. Brenna Moreno and Mylin Laliberte had four goals each while Kaelynn Slapski and Carly Zobka had three goals each.

Chicopee was led with five goals each from Sophia Moreira and Kiyah Price.

The Pacers fell to 3-2 on the season while Granby improved to 5-2 on the year.



Emelyn Hoar passes the ball out of goal.



Melanie Sobieraj keeps the ball high and away from her opponent.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Brooke Oldenburg heads up the field.



Kilah Kuglar scoops up the ball.



Kiyah Price tries to collect the loose ball.



Alex Garcia sends a spike away.

Pacers fall in four sets against B-Town



BELCHERTOWN – Last Monday evening, Belchertown High School boys volleyball picked up its fourth win of the year, defeating Chicopee High 3-1. The Orioles were outlasted 26-24 in the first set before sweeping the next three for the win. Gavin Couchon had a big match with 21 kills.

Arda Cayan had 35 assists in the win. The Pacers fell to 2-5 on the season and Belchertown is now an even 4-4.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

Maxwell McCormick goes high to reach the ball.



Christian Reyes starts a play off with a bump.



Krisztian Reyes gets low to make a hit.



Lyndrei Balingasa sets the ball for the Pacers.

Comp beats Monson for second win

CHICOPEE – Last Friday afternoon, the Chicopee Comprehensive High School girls lacrosse broke a 5-5 tie and went on to defeat host Monson 12-8. The Colts also defeated Hoosac 16-11 during the past week. The Colts are now 2-5 on the regular season with a matchup coming up on Tuesday, Apr. 28 against Chicopee High at home at 6:15 p.m.



Julia Chagnon gets ready to pass.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Anna Buchanan sends the ball up the field.



Addison Foley attacks from behind the net.



Under a lot of pressure, Olivia Warren looks to turn and shoot.



Isabella Galindrez makes a recovery on defense and heads up the field.

IN THE CITY



The students at St. Joan of Arc School hold up their certificates at the recognition assembly on April 13.

ST. JOAN MATH from page 1

and took an early lead, ending with a first-place award. Schools are rewarded for having the most correct math problems. Within the game, students earn special pets for correctly answering math problems and we were sent a celebration box full of plushies, stickers, bracelets, a banner and posters.”

Rose said the school—especially the students—were excited about the achievement.

“It’s very exciting for us to achieve the first-place award. We were competing in the Heroic tier against other schools in Massachusetts with less than 200 students,” Rose said. “Our school had

just over 100 students participating. Now we have the opportunity to compete across the US for grant money for our school. This would allow our small Catholic school to upgrade our STEM programs.”

In September, the school had placed 33rd in the competition, but with having placed first in February, it’s quite an improvement.

“Students were encouraged to use Prodigy as an incentive after they completed work and for homework in some of the classrooms. Prodigy just launched a math facts tool within the game that became a morning warm-up in my classroom. They also offer the opportunity to teachers to create assignments and quick quizzes so students can

practice skills that they need practice in or skills they are working on in the classroom. This ability to create assignments is a fun way to get kids to practice skills within a game,” Rose said.

Rose shared that if the school wins any of the three placements for grant funding, it will be used “to enhance student learning and strengthen our school’s academic programs.”

“The grant could support technology upgrades such as new devices, updated software and improved classroom resources to better integrate digital learning across grade levels. It could also be used to expand STEM initiatives by providing hands-on materials, math programs and enrichment opportunities that

foster critical thinking and problem-solving skills,” Rose said. “Additionally, the funding could support student enrichment programs, allowing us to offer engaging activities, incentives and resources that motivate students and promote a love of learning. Overall, the grant would directly benefit our students by creating a more innovative, supportive and enriching educational environment.”

Rose added how the community can continue to support the school all year round.

“The community can continue to support St. Joan of Arc School throughout the year by staying actively involved in school events, volunteering time and fostering a positive learning environment



PHOTOS COURTESY OF JANINE DUNLEA

The third grade students at St. Joan of Arc School express excitement for their achievement. From the left, we have Brantley Page-Gorman, Stella Recor and Sam Swanson with their certificates.

for students. Families can encourage regular practice with educational tools like Prodigy at home, reinforcing the skills students are building in the classroom. Community members can also support fundraising efforts, donate resources and partner with the school to enhance programs and opportunities for students,” Rose said. “Most importantly, ongoing encouragement and engagement from families and the broader community help motivate

students and strengthen the connection between home and school, contributing to student success year-round.”

Her message to the students was this.

“Congratulations to all the students who participated in this competition! This was truly a team effort, where every correct answer helped lead us to victory. Your teamwork, dedication, perseverance and incredible brain power made this achievement possible. You did it!” Rose said.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE from page 1

experiences,” Dahl said. “Following that, we will have a presentation to highlight the positive impact that accessing and traveling surrounding districts has had on everyone’s growth, independence and ability to generalize skills across real-world settings.”

The first student to take to the podium was Aiden, who is in his third year in the Crossroads program.

“Over the last three years, I learned how to bake, cook and shop independently. I also work at Lupa [Zoo] twice a week, where I clean and fill the animal food holes,” he said. “My other job is working with elementary school students and special education [students] and helping them with their work.”

In the future, Aiden hopes to work with special education students at the elementary school level to help them learn and grow.

The second student speaker, Emily, is no stranger to the microphone; she had previously spoken in front of the School Committee on behalf of the program last year.

As one of the program’s shining stars, Emily has ac-

complished quite a bit. She takes great pride working with special education students.

“This experience has helped me grow not only in my skills but also in my patience, communication and understanding of others. I’ve really enjoyed being part of their learning and development,” she said.

Emily is also proud to be growing more independent in her daily life. She said a big personal step and milestone occurred several days before the meeting, when she got her first official ID.

“In addition, I recently took a step forward with my future career goals by completing and signing a resume to apply for a paraprofessional position at Fairview Elementary School. I’m especially interested in working with the 18 to 22 program, where I can continue supporting students and gaining hands-on experience,” Emily said.

Currently, Emily is involved in a program working with students several days a week. This experience has reaffirmed to her the path she hopes to continue along.

“This opportunity has helped me build confidence and confirmed that this is the path I want to pursue,” she

said. After the presentation, Mayor John Vieau – the School Committee chair – commended all those who made their way to the meeting on behalf of the Crossroads program.

He was left inspired by their effort, progress and dedication and shared a light-hearted moment with the students.

“I want to say thank you so much for sharing, and it’s really wonderful to see our Crossroads program out there collaborating with other programs in Western Massachusetts,” Vieau said. “And the wonderful recreational things you’re doing, going to the mall and going bowling, I don’t understand why I’m not invited, but just keep me in mind when you’re out there.”

School Committee Vice Chair Jason Dout, the Ward 3 representative who works in the special education field, captured the sentiment of the room when he gave the Crossroads group his highest praise.

“I hope you guys know how many smiles you put on faces every day. Looking at the people up here, looking at the people out there, you guys make people happy, and we truly appreciate you guys,” Dout said.

AUTISM FAIR from page 1

been a warm experience when they come around, so it honestly feels like family being here, because they know all of our staff, and our individuals, and we couldn’t be happier to meet new faces, while seeing some familiar ones as well,” Wegryzn said.

Echoing similar values was Best Buddies International, who was represented by Makayla Waldman, who is the Western Mass, Manager of Mission Advancement Rep.

“I’m here representing Best Buddies. We provide different opportunities for folks with and without disabilities to form friendships, find jobs, create leadership development and inclusive living opportunities, and it’s just really exciting to be able to share these resources and connect with families,” Waldman said.

She then closed her thoughts by noting a message for all: “Inclusion rocks, and Autism Acceptance should be everywhere.”



Boomer from the Springfield Thunderbirds with a couple of kids having some fun.

As the event continued, Brian Rogers, a Chicopee resident and parent of a child with Autism, explained how the fair opened to his horizons to a plethora of new things he

never knew, while sharing the importance of Autism Awareness.

“Today meant a lot, because you know some are aware of Autism, and others aren’t, and I like to stay involved because my son is autistic,” Rogers said.

Rogers said that his son has been having some issues in regards to school, and felt the resource fair was a great way to help find solutions, and understand the wealth and range of accessibility present for all.

“I felt I got a lot of great information from all of the vendors here today, on how to help my son move forward, and I appreciate all the help and information that I was able to get from here, and I would definitely return here, if they continue to host this event, because it’s a wonderful time, and I couldn’t be happier,” Rogers said.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY BRENDAN ROONEY

A family poses with matching shirts.



Sgt. Melissa Lyman at the forefront with her son Michael and all of her colleagues.

NOTICE

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Email: jamie@turley.com

PUBLIC NOTICES

**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. HD26P0816EA
Estate of:
Robert Joseph Hopkins**
Also known as:
**Robert Hopkins,
Robert J Hopkins**
Date of Death: 01/13/2026
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Brian D Mullen of Chicopee, MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that **Brian D Mullen of Chicopee, MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 05/14/2026. 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 CODE (MUPC)

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

WITNESS, Hon. **Claudine T. Stoudemire**, First Justice of this Court.

Date: April 15, 2026
Rosemary A Saccamoni,
Register of Probate
04/24/2026

CHICOPEE CITY COUNCIL LICENSE COMMITTEE LEGAL NOTICE

The License Committee of the Chicopee City Council will hold a public hearing **Tuesday, April 28, 2026 at 6:00 PM** in the Auditorium, 3rd floor, City Hall, 274 Front Street., Chicopee, MA 01013 to discuss the following:

Application for a Home Occupation License at 27 Hilton Street for the purpose of doing photo shoots for **Obscura Noir Photography Studio**. Applicant – **Daniel Lafond**, 27 Hilton Street, Chicopee, MA 01020.

The April 28, 2026 License Committee hearing shall be available to the public via zoom and in person. Zoom credentials are available upon request by calling (413) 594-1435 M-F 8:30 AM – 5 PM or by email at aczarniecki@chicopeema.gov.

The petition and materials related to this proposal are on file in the Office of the City Council, Chicopee City Hall, 274 Front Street, Chicopee, MA 01013. You may also call (413) 594-1435 or email aczarniecki@chicopeema.gov.
04/17, 04/24/2026

CHICOPEE CITY COUNCIL LICENSE COMMITTEE LEGAL NOTICES

The License Committee of the Chicopee City Council will hold a public hearing **Tuesday, April 28, 2026 at 6:00 PM** in the Auditorium, 3rd floor, City Hall, 274 Front Street., Chicopee, MA 01013 to discuss the following:

Application for a Home Occupation License at 65 Plymouth St. for the purpose of doing a small-scale mushroom cultivation business. Focusing on providing fresh, specialty culinary mushrooms. Applicant - **Jacob Prince**, 65 Plymouth St., Chicopee, MA 01020.

The April 28, 2026 License Committee hearing shall be available to the public via zoom and in person. Zoom credentials are available upon request by calling (413) 594-1435 M-F 8:30 AM – 5 PM or by email at aczarniecki@chicopeema.gov.

The petition and materials related to this proposal are on file in the Office of the City Council, Chicopee City Hall, 274 Front Street, Chicopee, MA 01013. You may also call (413) 594-1435 or email aczarniecki@chicopeema.gov.
04/17, 04/24/2026

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS THE TRIAL COURT HAMPDEN, Div. Probate & Family Court Dept. HD26E0015PP

To Fernando Goncalves of Chicopee, as individual and as Trustee of Fernando Goncalves Living Trust, Hampden County; Manuel Silva, of Ludlow, as individual and as Co-Trustee of Manuel Silva Living Trust; Sergio Goncalves of Chicopee; Steven Silva of Ludlow; all from Hampden County; Jennifer Patton, of Gastonia, Gaston County; and all other persons interested.

A petition has been presented to said Court by **Deanna R. Albert**, of Chicopee, representing that they hold as tenants in common in an undivided part or share of land lying in Chicopee, in the County of Hampden, setting forth that they desire that all of said land may be sold at private sale or public auction for not less than Seven Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$700,000.00), and praying that partition may be made of all the land aforesaid according to law, and to that end that a commissioner be appointed to make such partition and be ordered to make sale and conveyance of all, or any part of said land which the Court finds cannot be advantageously divided either at private sale or public auction, and be ordered to distribute the net proceeds thereof after full adjudication of the equitable claims contained in said petition and supplemental memorandum filed with the Court.

If you desire to object thereto, you or your attorney, should file a written appearance in said Court at **Springfield** before ten o'clock in the forenoon on the **fifteenth day of June 2026**, the return day of this citation.

Witness, **Claudine T. Stoudemire**, Esquire, First Justice of said Court, this 15th day of April
Rosemary A. Saccamoni,
Register
04/24, 05/01, 05/08/2026

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court**

Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 Docket No. HD14P0213PM In the matter of: Francis Guzik Of: Chicopee, MA Protected Person/ Disabled Person/Conservator CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF CONSERVATOR'S ACCOUNT

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, you are hereby notified pursuant to Rule 72 of the Supplemental Rules of the Probate & Family Court, that the **Twelfth** account(s) of **Hyman G Darling of Springfield, MA** as Conservator of the property of said Respondent has or have been presented to the Court for allowance.

You have the right to object to the account(s). If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of **05/19/2026**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to object to the account(s). If you fail to file the written appearance and objection by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you, including the allowance of the account(s).

Additionally, within thirty days after said return day (or within such other time as the Court upon motion may order), you must file a written affidavit of objections stating the specific facts and grounds upon which each objection is based and a copy shall be served upon the Conservator pursuant to Rule 3 of the Supplemental Rules of the Probate & Family Court.

You have the right to send to the Conservator, by registered or certified mail, a written request to receive a copy of the Petition and account(s) at no cost to you.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense.

Witness, Hon. **Claudine T. Stoudemire**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: April 14, 2026

Rosemary A. Saccamoni
Register of Probate
04/24/2026

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 May 1st, 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.

2007 Chrysler 300
VIN: 2C3KA53G97H601123
Felix Pagan De Jesus
11 Webster St., Unit A
Hartford, CT 06114

2020 Ford Ecosport
VIN: MAJ6S3KL3LC327465
Melvina Jones
80 Manhattan St.
Springfield, MA 01109

2010 Honda Accord
VIN: 1HGCP2F37AA173968
Jose Carrasquillo Rodriguez

87 Howard Ave.
New Bedford, MA 02745

2015 Subaru XV Crosstrek
VIN: JF2GPACC7F8246710
Anne Huyler
21 Stefaniak Ave Apt D
Webster, MA 01570

2006 Chevrolet Trailblazer
VIN: 1GNDDT13S062280339
Michael Delmonico
434 Church St., Apt. 16
Whitinsville, MA 01588

2013 Toyota Camry
VIN: 4T1BF1FK5DU659434
Lisa Blaszczak
434 Church St., Apt. 4
Whitinsville, MA 010588

2015 Dodge Journey
VIN: 3C4PDCBG4FT669169
Ann Simard
7 Elizabeth St.
Chicopee, MA 01020

1996 Honda Civic
VIN: 2HGEJ6674TH551561
Jorge Albelo
27 Clinton Ave.
Holyoke, MA 01040

2009 Ford F150
VIN: 1F1TPX04596KB61895
Marisol Gomez
34 Dawes St.
Springfield, MA 01109

2008 Hyundai Elantra
VIN: KMHDU46D98U507602
Robyn Malloy
15 Girard Ave., Apt. 211
Springfield, MA 01109

2006 Nissan Altima
VIN: 1N4AL11D96N326111
Carrie Ann Baer
30 Saint Jerome Ave., Apt. 11
Holyoke, MA 01040

2007 Toyota Camry
VIN: 4T1BK46K77U036074
Lihah Mark
51 Oakwood St.
Enfield, CT 06082

2009 Nissan Altima
VIN: 1N4AL21EX9N432148
Kayla Allen
230 Fort Pleasant Ave., Apt. 11
Springfield, MA 01108

2008 Toyota Corolla
VIN: 2T1BR32E18C902506
Calvin Flaherty
21 Northampton St.
Easthampton, MA 01027

2008 Ford Escape
VIN: 1FMCU93148KD76464
Venessa Hidenfelter
217 Sturbridge Rd., Unit 11
Charlton, MA 001057

2013 Toyota Sienna
VIN: 5TDKK3DC2DS370250
Yajaira Montano
34 W School St.
Westfield, MA 01085

2005 Gmc Savanna G3500
VIN: 1GTHG35U951165221
Er Exteriors Contractor Inc.
60 Franklin St., Apt. 3
Stoneham, MA 02180

2009 Honda Accord
VIN: 1HGCP263X9A006029
Janah Llang
138 Center St.
Ludlow, MA 01056

2010 Mercedes Benz E350
VIN: WDDHF5GB3AA051807
Courtney Scott
PO Box 166
Chicopee, MA 01021

2012 Mazda Mazda 3
VIN: JM1BL1V80C1677519
Ciarra Moquin
333 River Rd.
Agawam, MA 01001

2003 Honda Element
VIN: 5J6YH28523L045185
Rn Burgosdejesus
15 Huntington Hill S #10
Rochester, NY 14622

2013 Honda Pilot
VIN: 5FN9YF4H70DB014806

Becca Menard
11 Hartford Ave.
Enfield, CT 06082

2013 Hyundai Sonata
VIN: 5NPEB4AC1DH699471
Brittany Mccarthy
19 Charbonneau Ter. #2
Chicopee, MA 01013

1994 Ford Ranger
VIN: 1FTCR10U8RTA12856
Dwayne Bailey
21 Grape St., Apt. 2
Chicopee, MA 01013

2015 BMW X1
VIN: WBAVM5C52FV94095
Alyssa Levine
90 Walnut St., Apt. 2R
Chicopee, MA 01020

2006 Dodge Charger
VIN: 2B3LA43H76H502495
Meshach J Gerena
103 N 9th St.
Newark, NJ 07107

04/17, 04/24, 05/01/2026

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 April 24th, 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.

2004 Honda Accord
VIN: 1HGCM56824A091253
Marcos Alvarado
99 High St., Fl. 2
Holyoke, MA 01040

2005 Ford F150
VIN: 1FTPW145X5KE61131
Jack Fernandes
133 Worcester St.
New Bedford, MA 02745

2009 Nissan Maxima
VIN: 1N4AA51E19C843053
Neshby Nieves
263 Elm St., Apt. 4R
Holyoke, MA 01040

2002 Toyota Camry
VIN: 4T1BF32K02U522478
Kathleen Bertolasio
77 Bell St.
Chicopee, MA 01013

2001 Toyota Tundra
VIN: 5TBBT44161S179176
Angelo Wolfe
197 Farrington Ave.
Waterbury, CT 06706

2006 Volkswagen Jetta
VIN: 3VWRF71K16M698796
Dunia Vasquez
4697 Southwood Pkwy, Apt. F
Richmond, VA 23224

2009 Audi A4
VIN: Wausf78k19n028117
Eric J Benson
4 Ericsson St., Apt. 2
Worcester, MA 01606

2010 Toyota Corolla
VIN: 2T1BU4EE2AC497892
Chenelle Way
645 Main St.
Coventry, RI 02816

2009 Nissan Altima
VIN: 1N4AL21E59N456843
Ira Caple
48 Vail St.
Springfield, MA 01118

2015 Chevrolet Equinox
VIN: 2GNFLFEK3F6254663
Zuleyka Hernandez
435 Doric Ave.
Cranston, RI 02910

2008 Nissan Altima
VIN: 1N4AL21E18N423935
Angel Matos
9 Litchfield Street
Springfield, MA 01108

2006 Acura TL

VIN: 19UUA66216A018215
William Cintron Melendez
92 School St., Apt. 913
Springfield MA 01105

2017 Subaru Outback
VIN: 4S4BSANC0H3266913
Paula Dembinske
1 Hadley Village Rd.
South Hadley, MA 01075

1999 Jeep Wrangler
VIN: 1J4FY29P9XP456315
Michaela Bonfiglio
267 South St., Apt. 5
Pittsfield, MA 01201

2005 Hyundai Elantra
VIN: KMHDN46DX5U150729
Lori Schlichting
36 Sabrina Brook Lane
Westfield, MA 01085
04/10, 04/17, 04/24/2026

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 May 8TH, 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.

2013 Mini Cooper
VIN: WMWSU3C52DT691507
Joshua Rodriguez
74 Honeyuckle Dr.
Chicopee, MA 01020

2017 Honda Crv
VIN: 2HKRW6H39HH211672
Marcia Brigham-Bull
35 Shaffner St., Apt. 1
Worcester, MA 01605

2005 Honda Civic
VIN: 2HGES16595H572178
Madison Nieves
60 Bernard St.
Springfield, MA 01109

2015 Acura TLX
VIN: 19UUB1F37FA014548
Jennifer Kelley And
David Kelley
124 N Main St.
East Longmeadow, MA 01028

2006 Mazda Mazda 3
VIN: JM1BK12G061486282
Kathy Gacek
178 Lucerne Rd.
Springfield, MA 01119

2007 Cadillac Cts
VIN: 1G6DP577770139052
Jose Garcia Mendez
124 Buckingham St.
Springfield, MA 01109

2009 Nissan Murano
VIN: JN8AZ18W99W210913
David Daron
185 Northwest Rd.
Spencer, MA 01562

2007 Saturn Ion Level 3
VIN: 1G8AL58B57Z189842
Alice Doris Ramirez Babilonia
923 Liberty St.
Springfield, MA 01104

2011 Hyundai Sonata
VIN: 5NPEB4AC4BH158623
Rahizza Correa
50 Cameron St.
Springfield, MA 01104

2007 Suzuki SX4
VIN: JS2YB417975102335
Jared Pezzuto
2 Camp Rd.
Northfield, MA 01354

2010 Jeep Liberty
VIN: 1J4PN2GK5AW127581
Lynda Petroski
60 Hillside Vlg.
Ware, MA 01082

04/24, 05/01, 05/08/2026

See more legals on page 10

Chicopee Register
OBITUARY POLICY

**Cemetery Memorials + Markers
Granite Benches
Religious Statuary + Outdoor Display**

RAY HALUCH INC.
1014 Center St | Ludlow, MA | 583-6508

PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

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- 2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.
- 3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts' public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

Public notice deadlines are Friday at 3 p.m.

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

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C	L	E	G	G		E	R	N		M	A	A	R			
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P	R	E	M	A	T	U	R	E	L	Y						
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						A	D	S		A	M	N	E	S	I	A
						D	E	C	A	P	I	T	A	T	O	R
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B	A	B	A			A	L	B		A	A	H	E	D		
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Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries. One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place. The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice (with a word limit of up to 500 words) and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

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

PUBLIC NOTICES

INVITATION FOR BID CHICOPEE

**ELECTRIC LIGHT
725 FRONT STREET,
CHICOPEE, MA 01020
BID NO. CEL 26-0527**

ISSUE DATE: April 15, 2026

Sealed proposals are being accepted for: **15 KV ALUMINUM & COPPER URD PRIMARY CABLE (2026 ANNUAL BID)**

BID OPENING DATE, TIME AND LOCATION: May 8, 2026 at 10:00 A.M. at Chicopee Electric Light, 725 Front Street, Chicopee, MA 01020-1778.

BIDS WILL ONLY BE ACCEPTED IN DUPLICATE. PLEASE READ AND COMPLY WITH THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS ENTITLED 1.0 PREPARATION OF BIDS.

Bid documents are available at the business office located at 725 Front Street, Chicopee, MA 01020-1778.

The Vendor/Contractor shall comply with the provisions of Executive Order No. 11246, as amended by Executive Order No. 11375, entitled "Equal Employment Opportunity" and of Chapter 164 Sec. 56D as amended, of the Massachusetts General Laws, both of which are herein incorporated by reference and made a part of this contract.

The Department reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, or to accept any proposal that in the opinion of the Municipal Light Board, is in the best interest of the Municipal Lighting Plant.

Is your firm a: **MBE/WBE** (please circle) MBE/WBE firms must be currently certified by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Please submit Bids in **duplicate** clearly marked with the Bid Number and Title:

**BID NUMBER: CEL 26-0527
TITLE: 15 KV ALUMINUM & COPPER URD PRIMARY CABLE (2026 ANNUAL BID)**

Natalie Colberg
Purchasing

04/24/2026

**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.
HD25P2600EA
Estate of:
Franklin F LaPlante**

**Also known as:
Franklin Francis LaPlante
Date of Death: 10/05/1989
CITATION ON PETITION
FOR SALE OF REAL
ESTATE BY A PERSONAL
REPRESENTATIVE**

To all interested persons:
A Petition for Sale of Real Estate has been filed by: **Patti Standen of Lakewood Ranch, FL** requesting that the

court authorize the Personal Representative to sell the decedent's real estate at a private sale.

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 05/12/2026.

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.

Witness, **Claudine T. Stoudemire**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: April 09, 2026

Rosemary A Saccomani,
Register of Probate
04/24/2026

**Commonwealth of
Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Division
Docket No.
HD26P0822EA
Estate of:
Lorraine D. Taylor
Date of Death:
January 6, 2026**

INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Mary C. Taylor of Chicopee, MA**

a Will has been admitted to informal probate.

Mary C. Taylor of Chicopee, 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 Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.

04/24/2026

CPL 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 provides opportunities for entertainment and enrichment that promote literacy and explore creativity. Here is the slate of events for April 2026.

Storytime will be held on Thursdays, April 30 at 10:30 a.m. Storytime is for children ages 3-5. This program features about 30 minutes of structured circle time, followed by 15-30 minutes of a craft or activity. Circle time will include 2-3 read aloud books, rhymes, songs, and felt boards. Children will be encouraged to ask and answer simple questions and recognize things like shapes, colors, letters, and numbers. No registration required.

The Holyoke Chicopee CFCE will facilitate a School Readiness Playgroup on Thursdays from 4 to 5 p.m., April 2 - May 7. Children ages 3-5 are invited to meet new friends and practice school readiness skills with a kit from the Boston Children's Museum.

Saturday Playgroup will be held on **Saturdays at 1 p.m.** in April. 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, no registration required. No playgroup on April 25. Come to a Mini Circus Show instead!

Monday Crafts will be held on April 27 at 4 p.m. Different projects each week. April 27 will be a rock painting project, outside weather permitting.

Terrific Twos will be held on Tuesdays, April 28 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 one 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. No registration required.

The library will host a Mini Circus Show for all

ages by Small But Mighty on Saturday, April 25 at 1 p.m. The show includes aerial silks, hula hoop acrobatics, aerial hoop, and a fun interactive segment to teach the audience hula hoop tricks and other ground skills. The show will be outside, weather permitting. No registration required.

This program is funded in part by a grant from the Chicopee Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Celebrate Poetry Month on Wednesday, April 29 at 4 p.m., Read Poetry to a Dog! Pediatric therapy dog Lena will be all ears while kids practice reading poems aloud. Bring a poem, or pick one when you arrive. No registration required.

Programs for Teens

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!

Join us for **Anime Club** on Wednesday, April 29 at 3 p.m. to celebrate the premier of the highly anticipated anime adaptation of **Witch Hat Atelier!** Whether you're already a fan of the series, or have yet to check it out, we'll be showing off what makes this fantasy series unique and even getting to practice some of the magic showcased in the series!

Girls Who Code Workshop Series every other Saturday, beginning April 11. April 25, May 9 and 23, June 6 and 20, 1 to 3 p.m. in the Computer Lab.

Girls Who Code is dedicated to increasing gender equality in the tech field. In this workshop series taught by local cybersecurity analyst Alexandria Rosado, girls in grades 9-12 will learn about AI, Coding and Cybersecurity in a fun environment with peers.

Sign up by going to clubs-hq.girlswhocode.com/login and sign up for an account on the Girls Who Code website and then join our club with this code: **MA67606**

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

May Programs

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

Sing With Your Baby with Julie on Friday, May 1 at 11 a.m. Sing and rhyme with your little ones! For kids 0-2, no registration required.

Sensory Play Saturday will be held on Saturday, May 2 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, no registration required.

Saturday Playgroup will be held on Saturdays at 1 p.m. in May. 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, no registration required.

The library will host a visit with author and illustrator **Sarah Brannen** Tuesday, May 5 at 4 p.m. Sarah will share her new book **Monarch and Mourning Cloak: A Butterfly Journal** and lead kids and families in a nature journaling activity. This event is a part of Massachusetts Center for the Book's **Mass Kid Lit Fest**, a weeklong celebration of Children's Literature across the state. Learn more at <https://www.makidslitfest.org/>

Little Kid Dance Party will be on Wednesdays, May 6 and 20 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.

Build with LEGO on Thursday, May 7 at 4 p.m. We bring the LEGOs, you bring the ideas! Unstructured building time for kids ages 6 and up, no registration required.

The Holyoke Chicopee CFCE will facilitate a **School Readiness Playgroup** on Thursdays

from 4 to 5 p.m., April 2 - May 7. Children ages 3-5 are invited to meet new friends and practice school readiness skills with a kit from the Boston Children's Museum.

The **Kids Room Sewing Club** will meet on Wednesday, May 13, from 3:30 to 5 p.m. Learn basic stitches and practice skills by making fun projects. Recommended for ages 6 and up. Kids who are not familiar with using a needle and thread should attend with an adult. Teens are welcome, no registration required.

Storytime will be held on Thursdays, May 14 and 28 at 10:30 a.m. Storytime is for children ages 3-5. This program features about 30 minutes of structured circle time, followed by 15-30 minutes of a craft or activity. Circle time will include 2-3 read aloud books, rhymes, songs, and felt boards. Children will be encouraged to ask and answer simple questions and recognize things like shapes, colors, letters, and numbers. No registration required.

Terrific Twos will be held on Tuesdays, May 12 and 26 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. No registration required.

The library will have **Bingo for Books** on Wednesday, May 13 at 6 p.m. Play a few rounds of bingo and win the best prize: books! For kids and families of all ages, no registration required.

Make a **Frog Craft** in the Kids Room on Tuesday, May 19 at 4 p.m.

The library **Homeschool Meetup** will be on Friday, May 29 at 11 a.m. This group meets once a month September - June for homeschooling families with kids of all ages to hang out, do activities and learn together. This month we're learning about comics and sequential art.

Author Talk at The Arbors April 28

CHICOPEE - Join us for an inspiring talk at the Arbors of Chicopee on April 28 at 6 p.m. with Sean Terwilliger.

This event is free and open to the public. Sean Terwilliger, a former technology leader and teacher, will share his own inspiring story about how being diagnosed with Alzheimer's led to writing, advocacy and a sense of purpose.

Learn about how his

experiences with clinical trials, newly approved medications and lifestyle change led to his belief that he could outpace the progression of the disease, and how he is now an advocate through foundations like the Walk to End Alzheimer's.

This event is free and open to the public, but space is limited. Please RSVP by calling or texting 413-530-5916 to reserve your spot.

Scholarships available for Class of 2026 High School graduates

CHICOPEE - St. Stanislaus School has two scholarships available for High School Seniors that will be attending college. One scholarship is for

students that graduated from and attended, St. Stanislaus School for at least six years.

The other scholarship is for students that belonged

to the Junior Youth Ministry

for a minimum of one year. Applications are available at the School Office (Mon-Fri 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.) and at the Parish

Office (Mon-Fri 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.).

Applications can also be emailed out by contacting: cconklin@saintstansschool.org.

SOCIAL SECURITY from page 4

Benefits" at www.amacfoundation.org/demystifying-social-security-survivor-benefits/. Of course, if you have any further questions, please contact us at 1-888-750-2622

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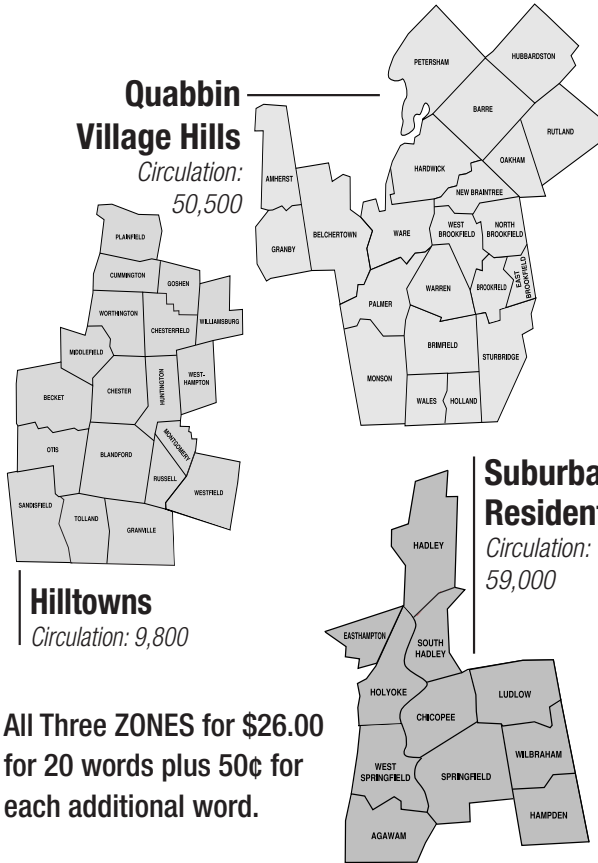
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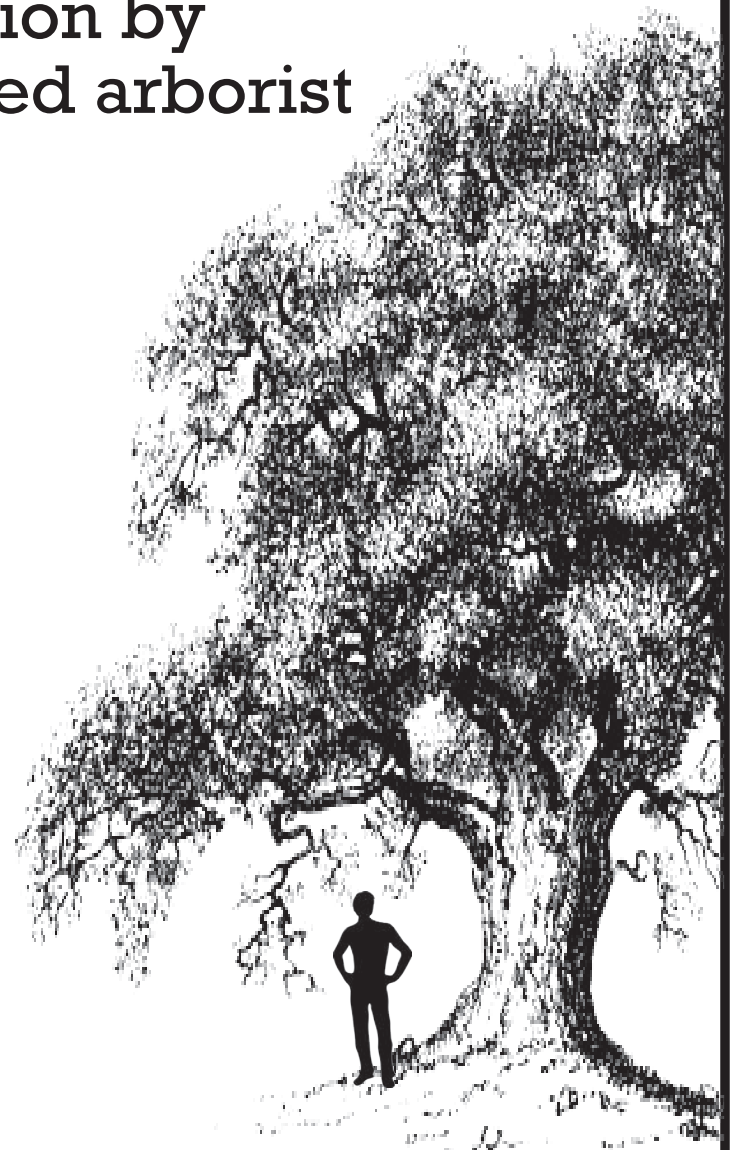
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