

Chicopee Register

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COMMUNITY

Recovering officer Mark Wilkes receives \$13,000 raised by community

By Kristin Rivers
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CHICOPEE – The community continues to support Officer Mark Wilkes as he recovers from a massive heart attack after the Battle of the Badges Charity Hockey Game on March 12.

On Nov. 16, Wilkes was

presented with a \$13,000 check from Bill Stetson, owner of Rumbleseat Bar & Grille, raised through a charity golf tournament held at the Chicopee Country Club on Nov. 5 and umbrella sales at the restaurant.

After the heart attack, Wilkes was in the hospital

See **WILKES** page 13



A group photo of Stephen Wilkes, Joan Wilkes, Officer Mark Wilkes and Bill Stetson, owner of Rumbleseat Bar & Grille, smiling for the camera after Wilkes was presented with a \$13,000 check on Nov. 16, raised through a charity golf tournament and umbrella sales.

TURLEY PHOTO BY KRISTIN RIVERS

COMMUNITY

Chicopee natives achieve dream of joining fire department

By Dalton Zbierski
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CHICOPEE -- Dreams became reality when three young men joined the fire department earlier this month after graduating from the Western Massachusetts Fire Training Academy.

Hunter Davis, 20, Patrick McQueen, 24 and Michael Vos, 27, each grew up in Chicopee and have earned the privilege of serving their home city as firefighter, an opportunity they longed for.

While each new department member's journey took different twists and turns, all three are confident they are where they're supposed to be.

Hunter Davis

"This is where I grew up and this is my dream job," Davis said. "I want to progress in the Chicopee department, and this is the place I want to be. It's the best feeling in the world to work for the city I live in."

Davis is the son of Chicopee Police Capt. Holly Cote and Firefighter Todd Davis. He said he grew up around both depart-



Firefighters Patrick McQueen, Hunter Davis and Michael Vos recently joined the Chicopee Fire Department.

TURLEY PHOTO BY DALTON ZBIERSKI

ments, attending open houses and watching first responders climb ladders and use the jaws of life.

While others advised Davis to keep his options open, he's

See **FIRE** page 11

COMMUNITY

Twelve students attend SkillsUSA's leadership conference

National SkillsUSA champion Carter Janik, a Comp junior, is recognized

By Dalton Zbierski
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CHICOPEE – Twelve Chicopee Comprehensive High School students attended the SkillsUSA Massachusetts fall State Leadership Conference in Marlborough from Nov. 19-20.

SkillsUSA is a national nonprofit that champions the skilled trades and empowers students to become skilled professionals, career-ready leaders and responsible members of the community.

Carl Ingram, the CTE director at Comp, appeared before the School Committee on Nov. 15 to request permission for the students to take the trip. Ingram said that SkillsUSA has been a program at the school for nearly 20 years.

"SkillsUSA provides the kids with some durable skills," he said. "We talk about teamwork, community responsibility, leadership; those are some of the aka soft skills that we now call durable skills."

At the conference on Sun-

day and Monday, students were able to participate in team leading events and work together with other schools on community service projects.

In June, then-Comp sophomore Carter Janik traveled to Atlanta, GA and became a national SkillsUSA champion after winning the advertising design competition, which entailed making ads, flyers and branding for different companies.

"I was like, 'Am I actually first place in the entire nation for advertising design high school?' It's crazy," he said, holding up his medal in a July ChicopeeTV interview. "It's such a good feel-

ing. Nothing like that has ever happened like that in my life, and I still have two years of high school left."

Ingram said the school's SkillsUSA members participate in a district level competition in February or March and can then advance to the state and national competitions. Ingram said Janik's success "has quite a few students very interested in attending these various types of leadership conferences."

At the conference earlier this week, students were busy from the time they got there to the time they left, Ingram said.

Ingram credited retired Comp instructor David Wil-

liams, who taught automotive courses, for beginning the SkillsUSA program at the school. He also thanked Comp CTE Information Support Services and Networking teachers Todd Demers and James Wozniak for currently serving as advisors.

When asked by a School Committee member if there is an opportunity for Chicopee High School students to participate in the SkillsUSA competitions, Ingram said "definitely." "During the time that we have the state level competitions, sometimes some of us will go, and I'll always try to bring a

See **SKILLS** page 13



National SkillsUSA champion Carter Janik, a Comp junior, was recognized earlier this week at the SkillsUSA Massachusetts fall State Leadership Conference in Marlborough. Janik won the advertising design competition at the national SkillsUSA competition in June.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHICOPEE COMP SKILLSUSA FACEBOOK PAGE



Chicopee Comp students made a dozen bookshelves on Nov. 20 to hold all those donated books for the kids at MetroWest YMCA Family Outdoor Center in Hopkinton as part of the SkillsUSA Massachusetts fall State Leadership Conference.



Z and Gracelyn, diligently working on their service project, as part of the SkillsUSA Massachusetts fall State Leadership Conference.



Walking into the Fall State Leadership Conference in Marlborough.

City holds Puerto Rican Heritage Celebration

By Dalton Zbierski
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CHICOPEE – The City of Chicopee held its first ever Puerto Rican Heritage Celebration outside of City Hall on Nov. 10 from 4-8 p.m.

Funded by a grant of approximately \$3,000 from the Cultural Council, the event was organized by Chloe Soto, communications & special projects manager for Mayor John Vieau.

Soto, who is the first Puerto-Rican American to work in the Chicopee Mayor's Office, explained that the event was held to bring attention to the fact that Chicopee is a diverse community, and Puerto Ricans are a vital part of that community.

"Historically in Chicopee, we've always celebrated Polish holidays and military holidays, and I think this is just an extension of that. It's about bringing everyone to the table, which was really my goal," Soto said.

About 10 vendors presented outside of City Hall on Nov. 10. Brendalíz Cepeda from the organization Bomba de Aquil led a Bomba dance, and DJ Qremoso excited attendees by playing a variety of Latin tunes.

A Chicopee-based artist, Natasha Colón Ortíz, from the nonprofit Paper City Art Kids created a table that was well visited by both kids and adults.

"Her table was the busiest, and she literally carved out these stamps with different (cultural) symbols, and people came, and they could make little greeting cards. That was so much fun," Soto said.

By organizing the event, Soto hoped to bring light to the Puerto Rican community, which she said doesn't get mentioned or seen enough in Chicopee, despite its deep roots. She also knew it would bring people together.

"While it was about celebrating Puerto Rican heritage, it was also about creating bridges and community building," Soto said. "Everyone was welcome to come to this event and maybe learn a little salsa, buy some cute little trinkets, there were some great artisan tables and just have a good time."

For Soto, it was important to hold the event in Chicopee Center right outside of City Hall. She noted that one of her missions is to create more events on campus because City Hall is "in its essence the people's house."

Soto said she wants to make sure everyone feels welcome and that the city is creating and hosting events that everyone can enjoy. Soto noted that the United States is a country of immigrants, and it's more important now than ever to celebrate that, given the conflicts that are occurring throughout the world.

"I want to think of Chicopee as our own little piece of heaven where we can



About 10 vendors presented at the first ever Puerto Rican Heritage Celebration outside City Hall.



Artwork was on display outside of City Hall Nov. 10.



A range of trinkets were for sale outside of City Hall on Nov. 10.

come together, celebrate each other and elevate each other. That really is one of my passions or missions going forward; making sure I can bring everyone to the table," Soto said.

Moving forward, Soto has applied for funding from the Cultural Council to bring the event back next year. She also



A Puerto-Rican flag raising ceremony was held on Nov. 10.



Dancing and music were part of the fun during the Puerto Rican Heritage Celebration outside of City Hall on Nov. 10.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF JOHNNY MIRANDA

has applied for funding to bring back a popular dominos tournament that was launched this fall by a C3 police officer.

Additionally, Soto has applied for funding to create a Love Walk, where artists would paint positive messages such as "Believe in Yourself" and "You Matter" on the sidewalks.

Soto is confident Chicopee is moving in the right direction. She is happy to see so many people of color open new businesses in Chicopee Center.

"That speaks to the change in Chicopee and to the diversity here," she said. "Our downtown is just becoming revitalized, so I think moving forward these events are just important."

Lastly, Soto is working to establish a

committee so that the city can bring back the Downtown Get Down, which has been absent for several years. She said that one of the most frequent questions she receives is "When is the Get Down coming back?"

With Soto working on a variety of exciting initiatives, she feels the future of Chicopee Center is bright. She hopes more people will frequent downtown and experience what it has to offer.

"We want to utilize this downtown that's being revitalized to its fullest extent. We want to make sure that people come here, they have a good time here and they shop here; that they stay and take in all the new things that are happening in our downtown," Soto said.

Third suspect in Chicopee homicide that occurred in August

CHICOPEE – On Thursday, Nov. 16, 2023, members of U.S. Marshals Service located and arrested Prince Diaz, 20, of Springfield in the town of Añasco, Puerto Rico, according to a release from the Hampden District Attorney's Office.

Since learning of his fleeing from Massachusetts to Puerto Rico, members of the Chicopee Police Department, the Massachusetts State Police Detective Unit assigned to the Hampden District Attorney's Office and the Massachusetts State Police Violent Apprehension Section continued efforts to locate and arrest the suspect. He is currently awaiting extradition back to Massachusetts.

On Aug. 6, 2023, the Chicopee Police Department responded to the 90 block of



Alex Ramos



Danny Ramos



Prince Diaz

West Street at 3 p.m. for a reported stabbing.

On scene, officers discovered a male victim suffering from an apparent stab wound. The victim was quickly transported to Baystate Medical Center where he later succumbed to his injuries and passed away.

The victim has been previously iden-

tified as Mr. Maurice Crump, 24, of Springfield

Two other suspects have been arrested in connection with this homicide investigation.

Danny Ramos, 41, of Springfield, was arrested and charged with, murder accessory after the fact. He is currently held without the right to bail with his next scheduled court date on May 13, 2024, in Hampden Superior Court.

Alex Ramos, 21, of Chicopee, was arrested on a charge of misleading a police officer. He was arraigned on August 9, 2023, in Chicopee District Court. Bail was set at \$10,000; the Commonwealth requested \$50,000. His next scheduled court date is in Hampden Superior Court

on Dec. 11, 2023.

This investigation is ongoing by detectives from the Chicopee Police Department, Massachusetts State Police Detective Unit assigned to the Hampden District Attorney's Office, and the Hampden District Attorney's Murder Unit.

Correction

In the 11/10 edition of the Chicopee Register, the squash that will be provided during the Thanksgiving meal from the Knights of Columbus 4044 was not donated by McKinstry Farms. The squash was, in actuality, purchased from the farm. We apologize for the error.

Superintendent holding community meetings with residents

By Kristin Rivers
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CHICOPEE – Residents visited the library’s conference room on Nov. 16 for a community meeting with Superintendent Dr. Marcus Ware.

The meeting was the first in a series of opportunities for Ware and his leadership team to meet with residents in each ward to hear questions, thoughts and ideas about the school district.

The Nov. 16 meetings, specifically for Ward 2 residents and comprised of parents, teachers and more, discussed transportation for before and after school programs, internship opportunities, support for transitions from elementary to middle and high school and many more topics.

Ware explained the meetings occurring twice a day help accommodate families, encouraging them to bring their children to the meetings too.

Additionally, he’s considering virtual options beginning in January to bring in more residents.

“Central office exists in the school districts to support schools. We have our jobs to support schools, so what I know to be true is that it’s really important to not only make the time, but actually model it,” Ware said. “So, I think just giving multiple ways to give access to me and my office and how we can listen and use their information to support the data we’re seeing, I think it’s a very, very great situation.”

The upcoming community meetings



Chicopee Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Marcus Ware talks with residents about their thoughts and ideas during the Nov. 16 CPS Community Meeting at Chicopee Public Library. The meeting took place in the conference room.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY KRISTIN RIVERS

are as follows:

Ward 4: Wednesday, Nov. 29: 9 - 10:30 a.m. in the Dupont Middle School Conference Room and 5:30 - 7 p.m. in the Dupont Auditorium

Ward 5: Monday, Dec. 4: 9 - 10:30 a.m. in the Chicopee High School Conference Room and 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. in the CHS Student Cafeteria

Ward 6: Thursday, Dec. 7: 9 - 10:30 a.m. and 5:30 - 7 p.m. in the Litwin Elementary School Cafeteria

Ward 7: Monday, Dec. 11: 9 - 10:30 a.m. and 5:30 - 7 p.m. at the Chicopee Boys & Girls Club

Ward 8: Monday, Jan. 8: 9 - 10:30 a.m. in the Chicopee Comprehensive High School Conference Room and 5:30 - 7 p.m. in the CCHS Student Cafeteria

Ward 9: Wednesday, Jan. 10: 9 - 10:30 a.m. and 5:30 - 7 p.m. in the Chicopee Public Schools Administration Building Dulong Training Room

Ward 3: Thursday, Jan. 18: 9 - 10:30 a.m. in the Stefanik Elementary School Cafeteria and 5:30 - 7 p.m. in Stefanik Library

Ward 1: Monday, Jan. 22: 9 - 10:30 a.m. in the Bellamy Middle School Cafeteria and 5:30 - 7 p.m. in Bellamy Classroom 116

Ware said his top three goals are going into the community, gathering information and having conversations. He appreciates the community engagement he’s experienced so far.

“It was a nice spread because I think even though as the conversation popped, a BOP back and forth, popcorn style, they all agreed. They were just like, ‘Yep, that’s a concern. Yep, that’s a concern,’” Ware said.

Ware stressed how important it is for him and his team to meet with residents, adding that his team takes notes so they have all the information discussed to put

his report together.

“I told them we’re still working on the vision and we’re going to get there as I compile all this information. They will have a piece in it. They’re contributing,” Ware said. “So, as I put my report together, I will glean back to these conversations and go pepper it with quotes and ideas and experiences. So, when I’m speaking about the data in February, I can say, ‘I know this to be true because the parents said X, Y or Z.’”

Ware encourages residents to attend and share their thoughts and questions or just come to listen.

“I want people to know that this is a listening and learning portion of my superintendency. So, I’m listening and I’m learning and, in the future, when I do this, I will still be listening and learning. But then I’ll be making more of an actionable plan with the information that I gathered,” Ware said. “Come on down!”

School Committee to consider forming subcommittee to evaluate superintendent

Ware addresses Chicopee student involved in pedestrian crash

By Dalton Zbierski
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CHICOPEE – During the Nov. 15 meeting of the School Committee, the potential formation of a superintendent evaluation subcommittee was discussed.

Ward 1 School Committee Member Timothy Wagner and Ward 5 School Committee Member Grace Schofield requested the item be placed on the agenda. The School Committee voted unanimously to pass the discussion down to the policies subcommittee.

“One of the roles of the School Committee in general is to not only hire the superintendent but to also evaluate the superintendent and to make sure that we’re in line with district goals, and so what I’d like to do is make a motion to put this into subcommittee so that we could form a committee in order to start the process of evaluating (Superintendent Dr. Marcus Ware),” Schofield said.

Wagner recently spoke with the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, which advised that the district create an independent subcommittee to formulate the process, make sure Ware is adhering to a district improvement plan and ensure that any budget reports or presentations given are in line with the plans that Ware puts forward.

“So, that subcommittee, if it’s formed, really they should be meeting quite often and it should be sort of an ongoing process to review what the superintendent is doing before doing a full review

every year,” Wagner said.

On Nov. 16, a Bellamy Middle School student was involved in a pedestrian crash after being grazed by the mirror of a vehicle while walking. During his superintendent’s report, Ware acknowledged the occurrence as the district enters Thanksgiving break.

“I just want to remind families to be safe during this holiday break, connected to the recent situation we had in front of our school last week when it comes to speeding in our communities,” Ware said. “I would just like to remind our community that we do take this seriously. We should slow down, and we always want to keep safety on our minds for our students and the people who work for our students.”

Leading up to the break, Ware has had a busy several weeks. He updated the School Committee on his travels during the Nov. 15 meeting.

“To date, I definitely have been in all the schools, but more specifically I have toured all the secondary schools; those are the middle schools and the high schools. We had formal walkthroughs,” Ware said.

Ware thanked Assistant Superintendent of Instruction and Accountability Jenn Bellville, Assistant Superintendent for Student Support Services Carol Kruser and Director of Special Education Dr. Andrea Stolar for participating with him on the visits.

“Today was Dupont, yesterday was Bellamy, and before that were both high schools and Chicopee Academy,” Ware said. “We are looking forward to getting around to the schools, seeing what’s going on in the classrooms so I can report back with confidence that we are doing and delivering our best for our young ones in the classrooms.”

Firefighters raise funds for MDA



On Nov. 11, Fire Chief Dan Stamborski and some of the members of the Chicopee Fire Department spent the morning volunteering outside of Walmart on Memorial Drive, donating their time to raise funds and create awareness for the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE CHICOPEE FIRE DEPARTMENT

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GUEST COLUMN



Thanksgiving thoughts

My dad has been gone a long time. I sometimes feel badly that he is not in my thoughts as much as he used to be. A lot has happened since his death - marriage and children, a new (old) house.

Sometimes it's easy to get caught up in the day to day, but today, as I write, I think of him. Holidays at my childhood home were always a lot of fun.

I reflect on that now, as we make plans for our Thanksgiving and Christmas gatherings. I can still picture him standing at the counter by the sink, carving the turkey and later in the day enjoying a whopping piece of apple pie (with American cheese?) from his recliner.

My mom still keeps some of the traditions alive as do other family members. Read on to learn about some of the favorite vegetables, fruits and even herbs that make an appearance at the table.

I am not exactly sure where my mom's stuffing recipe originally came from, but it is always a big hit. My Illinois based brother loves it so much that my sister-in-law asked for a copy and now makes it for him on Thanksgiving.

I guess if you can't be at home, having mom's stuffing is the next best thing! Her recipe wouldn't be the same without sage and I doubt yours would either.

Common garden sage (*Salvia officinalis*) is a shrubby perennial plant native to the Mediterranean.

Its leaves start out lime-green in color, but at maturity end up more grey than green. They are somewhat "pebbly" in texture and are very aromatic.

For the most pungency, sage leaves should be harvested just prior to flowering. Hang the leaves and stem tips in loose bunches upside down in an airy, dark place to dry.

Once completely dry (crispy to the touch), leaves can be stripped from their stems and stored in an airtight container.

Remember, as with any herb, drying concentrates the oils in the foliage. Use only half the amount of dried herbs if you have to substitute them for fresh in any recipe.

Because sage is nearly evergreen (actually, "evergrey") I rarely dry any, but harvest it for immediate use even through the winter months - it is freeze-dried but still tasty! Cut back the plant hard in early spring- you will sacrifice a few flowers, but will be rewarded with a lush bushy plant, rather than one that is woody and sparse.

Another one of mom's cherished con-

See **GARDEN** page 5

Letters to the Editor

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

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

GUEST COLUMN

Can I voluntarily suspend my Social Security payments?



Dear Rusty

My wife retired in 2015 and is receiving Social Security. I am past my full retirement age and I still work. I recently filed for Social Security benefits and received my first payment earlier this month and my benefits are around three times my wife's. I now find that, due to other income, I am having some regrets about filing for Social Security, as the taxes will be complicated. So, my questions are:

If I do a "Voluntary Suspension", can my wife still apply to get up to 50% of my benefits, or do I have to be "actively" receiving Social Security benefits? In other words, does the "Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015" prevent this?

If I do a "Voluntary Suspension", how soon could I "restart" my benefits?

Signed: **Having Second Thoughts**

Dear Second Thoughts

The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 closed a loophole which previously allowed someone to file for their Social Security retirement

benefit in order for their marital partner to claim a spousal benefit, after which the primary beneficiary could suspend their own benefit and allow it to grow to maximum at age 70. That "file and suspend" option went away in April of 2016; thus, your wife cannot claim her spousal benefit while your Social Security retirement benefits are suspended you must be "actively" receiving benefits for your wife to get benefits on your record.

Nevertheless, because you've already reached your full retirement age, you can voluntarily suspend your benefit payments at any time to allow it to continue growing by simply calling Social Security at your local office or at the national number 1-800-772-1213 and asking them to do so. Your wife will not receive her spousal benefits for any months your benefits are suspended, but she would continue to get her own SS retirement amount, only the spousal portion of her monthly amount would be suspended.

You will be able to restart your benefits at any time by calling Social Security again and asking that your benefits be resumed. You can suspend and restart your benefits as needed (no restriction on how many times), but they will only start/resume the suspension effective with the month following the month you call. And, as you likely already know, for

See **SECURITY** page 5



GUEST COLUMN



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

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

This sparrow's song is a few repeated notes followed by a rich and varied warble. Its call includes a "tsp" and "tchump." The female



Song Sparrow

lays three to five greenish, white eggs with dark marks in a cup like nest of grasses and occasionally leaves. She place the nest on the ground, in a shrub or weeds.

The male song sparrow defines his territory by singing from prominent perches in about 1/2 to 1 1/2 acres. The male chases the female away when she first arrives and reduces the

See **BACKYARD** page 5

WE CARE ABOUT YOUR NEWS!

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

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Reforms sorely needed at the Sex Offender Registry Board

By **Diana DiZoglio**
Massachusetts State Auditor

Serving as Massachusetts State Auditor doesn't just mean reviewing finances.

A big part of my role, as I often speak about with folks across the state, is reviewing the performance and efficacy of the Commonwealth's agencies and entities. A great example of the responsibility to look beyond number crunching is our office's recently released audit of the Sex Offender Registry Board.

People are familiar with the concept

that Massachusetts registers convicted sex offenders, maintaining a database of where such people live and work in an effort to maintain public safety. This system of public safety is maintained by SORB, a seven-member board appointed by the Governor and staffed by more than 70 individuals.

Our recent audit looked at SORB's operations from July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2021. Covering that two-year period, my team honed in on whether SORB classified sex offenders at least 10 days before they were released from custody, thus ensuring they were assigned an appropri-

ate level.

Further, we looked at whether SORB used all the resources at their disposal to accurately identify sex offenders who were in violation of maintaining their registration.

I was disappointed to find that SORB underperformed in a way that could have a negative impact upon the public.

While incarcerated sex offenders are supposed to be assigned a classification at least 10 days prior to their release, per state law, SORB failed to do so with approximately 1/3 of those released during our two-year review window. More

concerning, 77 offenders didn't receive their classification until after they were released.

This lax approach to the law meant those sex offenders' names, addresses, offenses, and registration statuses were not appropriately posted to SORB's website for level 2 and 3 sex offenders and were not otherwise available to the public.

Our audit team also identified other vulnerabilities regarding how SORB tracked offenders who have been released

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BACKYARD from page 4

amount of his singing. Courtship includes male diving at the female and her making a trill like call.

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

Other Brimfield birds

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

Cedar waxwings

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

Pond birds

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

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

Feeders

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

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

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



Cedar waxwings

SECURITY from page 4

each month your benefits are suspended you will earn Delayed Retirement Credits resulting in a higher payment amount later.

Just for clarity, voluntary suspension of benefits is only available to those who have reached full retirement age but is an excellent way to increase your monthly Social Security payment. Your benefit will grow by .667% for each month suspended and, if your benefit is still suspended when you turn 70 years old, Social Security will automatically resume payments at that time, at your higher maximum monthly amount.

This article is intended for infor-

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

GARDEN from page 4

tributions to Thanksgiving dinner is her apple cranberry relish. This is a simple recipe in which fresh cranberries and peeled apples are chopped fine and mixed together with a little sugar.

So easy yet incredibly yummy! I tried growing cranberries only to be disappointed that voles chewed the roots and killed the plants.

Maybe I'll try again sometime in the future. They don't need a bog, but the water does help with harvesting.

My mom always bought a small turnip for my Dad to enjoy at Thanksgiving dinner. I have to say that I don't recall any other members of the family eagerly anticipating it, not the way he did anyway.

I remember mom carefully cutting away the hard outer skin and then cubing the flesh. It was then boiled and mashed as you would potatoes, with lots of butter.

Turnip must be one of those foods that you acquire a taste for, and as of yet I have not.

To produce the best-tasting, largest turnips time your plantings to grow and mature in cool weather. For Thanksgiving turnips sow seeds 90 days before the first fall frost is expected.

Simply make a shallow trench one-quarter to one-half inch deep and position seeds one to one and a half inches apart. Once germination occurs and plants have developed their first set of true leaves, thin seedlings to

three inches apart.

Deep, loose soil is best for root vegetables of any kind. Turnips benefit from extra water during droughty periods.

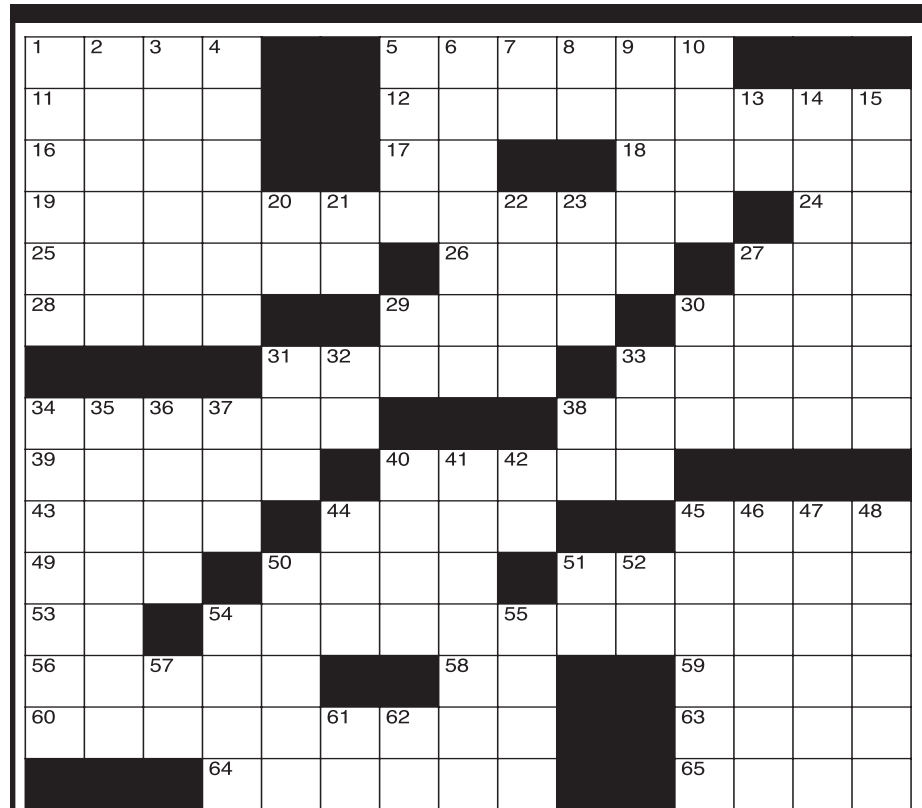
If an early frost threatens and your roots aren't yet mature you can cover turnip plants with a sheet or blanket on chilly nights to get through the cold spell and sneak out some additional growing time. Do watch out for frigid temps, however, since mercury that measures below the twenty-five degree mark can damage the crown of the plant.

This type of injury can make turnips more susceptible to rot and reduce storage capabilities. Turnips are best stored at temperatures around thirty-five degrees.

They can be packed in damp sand or leaves in a cold cellar and should keep for at least two or three months. Some books recommend wrapping individual roots in plastic wrap to hold in moisture as well as prevent the strong turnip odor from permeating other vegetables.

Commercial turnip growers use a food grade wax for this purpose, which makes cutting away the outer flesh all the more challenging.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 31 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Nocturnal S. American rodent
- 5. Requesting
- 11. Give temporarily
- 12. Happiness
- 16. Military branch
- 17. -, denotes past
- 18. Middle Eastern city
- 19. Air hostesses
- 24. Partner to Pa
- 25. Percussion instrument
- 26. Popular computers
- 27. Decrease light
- 28. Valley in the Osh Region
- 29. "To ___ his own"
- 30. Absence of difficulty
- 31. Notice announcing intended marriage read out in church
- 33. Trims by cutting
- 34. Impact
- 38. Military member
- 39. A French river
- 40. Member of prehistoric people in Mexico
- 43. Messenger ribonucleic acid
- 44. Musician Clapton
- 45. Greek sophist
- 49. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
- 50. Narrow valley
- 51. A way to disentangle
- 53. Indicates not an issue (abbr.)
- 54. Recommending
- 56. Genus of legumes
- 58. Friend to Larry and Curly
- 59. Off-Broadway theater award
- 60. Fencers
- 63. Small Eurasian deer
- 64. Denoting passerine birds
- 65. Separate by category
- 3. Photographic equipment
- 4. Confirms a point
- 5. Developed over time
- 6. Not the leader
- 7. ___ Lang (country singer)
- 8. Adults need one
- 9. Nests of pheasants
- 10. Antelopes
- 13. One quintillion bytes (abbr.)
- 14. Japanese three-stringed lute
- 15. Type of cat
- 20. Cools your home
- 21. The ancient Egyptian sun god
- 22. Pouches
- 23. Trigraph
- 27. Form of Persian spoken in Afghanistan
- 29. ___ route
- 30. Body part
- 31. Bridge building degree
- 32. Indicates position
- 33. Political action
- committee
- 34. Tasty snack
- 35. Part of a quadruped
- 36. Locate
- 37. Pitching statistic
- 38. Of I
- 40. City in Utah
- 41. Football players in the trenches
- 42. Hammer is one
- 44. A "nightmarish" street
- 45. Performers
- 46. Slang for cut or scrape
- 47. More breathable
- 48. Most slick
- 50. Provokes
- 51. Home to college's Flyers
- 52. Sodium
- 54. Large fish of mackerel family
- 55. Zero
- 57. ___ and behold
- 61. The Palmetto State
- 62. Popular Tom Cruise movie franchise (abbr.)

City Council approves no doxing order for public hearing

By Kristin Rivers
Staff Writer
krivers@turley.com

CHICOPEE – City Council approved on Nov. 9 a no doxing order be referred for a public hearing by the Ordinance Committee.

Doxing, according to Merriam-Webster, is defined as “the action or process of searching for and publishing private or identifying information about a particular individual on the internet, typically with malicious intent.”

Ward 9 Councilor Mary Beth Costello explained the order was requested by a resident.

“So, this particular resident wants in our ordinance, if at all possible, after review, if that no doxing can become part of our ordinance, which would be more accountable in regard to any type of personal information released,” Costello said.

Ward 2 Councilor Shane Brooks asked if the order would be protecting private citizens versus public figures, ex-

plaining he thinks “we all collectively understood that our addresses, phone numbers and some other personal information will be released at some point when we ran for public office.”

“I mean, I know all of our information with respect to our home addresses, our phone numbers and email addresses are available online,” Brooks said. “What is the intentionality behind this? Is it a way to protect information that’s already out there or is it more intended for the private citizen who may have information released in which they had not wanted it to be utilized in that way?”

Costello confirmed the order protects private citizens.

The motion passed 11-0.

Another highlight was a discussion on whether cameras should be on school buses.

Costello explained this was also requested by several residents.

“So, when you’re driving and you see a stop sign that a camera can be put on the stop sign at each school bus. So, show

who’s not in compliance with the stop sign,” Costello said.

Ward 3 Councilor Delmarina López said, “We cannot do enforcement of any traffic violations here in the state.”

“I can’t support this going to Ordinance because this is really a State Legislature issue,” López said.

Ward 7 Councilor William Courchesne explained there’s a bill pending at the State House on this item, but it’s unenforceable.

“The only thing you can use this information for is to collect data as to which bus stop has the most vehicles traveling through the sign, but you can’t use any photo evidence for any reason whatsoever because it’s illegal in the state of Massachusetts,” Courchesne said.

Courchesne said Worcester and Peabody have cameras installed for data collection and it goes through the School Committee, not the City Council.

“In our situation, we have a private bus company. So now that’s a contractual issue because it’s their buses, so we can’t

make them put something on their bus,” Courchesne said.

Courchesne added he reached out to the School Committee and will speak with Superintendent Dr. Marcus Ware for his thoughts but believes it will come down to a contractual issue.

“I don’t think they’re going to do it right now because it serves no purpose per se. I mean, you can collect data but unfortunately, our bus pick up and drop off times are a shift change for the (police department), so when you need them the most, unfortunately, they’re not going to be around those bus stops,” Courchesne said.

When Courchesne suggested drafting a letter to send to the State Delegation, Costello agreed to withdraw her current motion and present a different motion for the next meeting regarding the letter.

“If we can’t do anything on this level and now the public knows that, maybe we can as a body request that the state take further action,” Costello said.

The motion to withdraw passed 11-0.

Random Acts of Kindness

By Barb Turcotte

As a father of two sons, his love of coaching sports didn’t stop when they got older. Walter Jackson, “Skip” or “Coach” as many kids refer to him, has devoted much of his spare time volunteering as a coach and mentoring young kids so they can experience the joy of sports, learn what good sportsmanship is plus know the feeling of belonging and being be part of a team.

Jackson, who now lives in Chicopee, coaches kids from the ages of five to 14 through the Martin Luther King Community Center. He coaches basketball, the Springfield Longhorns football, Springfield Rebels baseball; he coached girls’ basketball for two years at Pope Francis and has volunteered in Chicopee and Holyoke coaching both the boys’ JV football and the girls’ JV basketball. He’s not just coaching but instilling in them how to be a good human being. He was actually named the Springfield Sports Ambassador.

When I asked him who had inspired him, he credits his family and his coach Jim Long. Because of Jim, he’s been coaching since he was in Junior High School and in fact was the president of his football team. He said if he didn’t show up

for a practice, Jim would call him to find out why and was always there encouraging him to be the best he could be.

Jackson, as he’s simply known by many, has a charismatic nature, which explains the admiration and respect others have for him. After serving seven years as an Army medic, he worked 23 years as a correctional officer in Connecticut prisons between Somers, Enfield and Willard Cybulski. For the past 18 years, since his retirement, he’s remained in this field by working in the security department at Baystate Medical Center. While working at the prison, he captured the inmates’ respect by treating them with respect. If his unit won a contest, one way he showed them he appreciated their efforts was to treat them with “real pizza” instead of one made in the prison commissary.

He received the state of Connecticut’s Governor’s Award for his dedicated service representing Connecticut prisons. He was the Recreational Director of Athletics, which had the prisoners intermingling with the general public and competing with other prisons.

Jackson also created and coordinated the Prison Outreach Program. Not only did he speak at schools himself, he’d bring members of this program explaining the

pitfalls of gangs and drugs, enlightening and introducing them to other alternatives. They’d try to encourage the students to make better choices so they wouldn’t travel the same paths they’d taken.

Jackson received his Associates Degree from Holyoke Community College and was the President of the African American Society there for two years. He grew up in Holyoke and was a substitute teacher in Holyoke as well. His love for music has brought him another joy, becoming a DJ!

Jackson truly believes in giving back and in the past with his DJ talents has been a volunteer entertainer for the Rays of Hope event which took place on Oct. 22 this year. He not only himself donates to the United Way but has served as the secretary for the Security Department for this cause.

I told him I’d really like to reach kids when they are young and teach them the value of doing Random Acts of Kindness. With that idea, he’s taking the premade flyers I have and is giving them to his teams, challenging them to go do a Random Act of Kindness, then talk about what they’ve done with their teammates. What a positive influence he is having on our next generation! Any child would be lucky to have this incredible coach!

While leaving the restaurant, I wit-

nessed a former athlete who recognized him and gave him a big hug. Jackson was almost in tears as they parted because it meant so much to him what that young man told him of how he’d made a positive difference in his life.

Though Jackson is soft spoken, even mumbles at times, he’s a jokester with a contagious humor. A serious expression doesn’t generally last long and instead is replaced with his glowing smile and a chuckle. He is a man of faith who silently says his thanks before each meal regardless of who he shares his table with. I find that an admirable quality.

A fellow employee said, “I have personally been the recipient of a free coffee and/or lunch from him; he’s just an all-around good hearted man who will do anything for anyone.”

If you would like to tell me a story about a Random Act of Kindness please contact me at bdt514@aol.com or 413-788-7514. You don’t need one, but if you’d like to have a predesigned flyer to include with your next gesture, let me know. It’s a way to keep the memory alive long after the gesture is done. Who knows, you might see your story in this column, ‘Just ‘Cause’ you witnessed, did or received something nice being done. See you next month with another Random Act of Kindness.

Events and announcements

Knights of Columbus to host ‘Father Misgivings’ on Dec. 2

CHICOPEE – The Knights of Columbus, Fr. Lucjan Krolkowski Council, invite everyone to a night of food and laughter on Saturday, Dec. 2, at the St. Stanislaus School / Parish Center, 534 Front St. Join Father Patrick Aloysius Misgivings for this divine presentation of stories and one liners about growing up Catholic.

From miracles and marriage counseling to bazaars and birth control, nothing escapes the good father’s razor-sharp Irish wit. This hilarious, interactive comedy includes a collection, a raffle and even an actual Bingo game.

The cost is \$20 per person and includes the show and dinner - spaghetti with meatballs, salad, dessert and coffee/tea. Wine and beer will be available for purchase. Doors open at 5 p.m. with dinner at 6 p.m., followed by the show. Tickets can be purchased at the Parish Office, 40 Cyman Drive, Chicopee until Monday, Nov. 27. For more information, call 413-594-6669.

Senior center needs driver

CHICOPEE –The Council on Aging

at the RiverMills Center is looking for licensed drivers who are willing to volunteer a few hours a week and provide rides to Chicopee’s older adults. The City of Chicopee provides the vehicles that the drivers will be using, and these cars are fully insured and maintained by the city’s maintenance department.

The COA’s Transportation Department provides rides for any Chicopee resident who is 55 years old or older. This service is for medical, dental, legal and hairdresser appointments, pharmacy pickups, banking and shopping. The service is available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Any licensed driver who is interested in becoming a volunteer driver should contact the Council on Aging Volunteer and Activity Coordinator at 413-534-3698 Ext: 130 for additional information or stop by the reception desk to pick up an application.

Elms to hold distinguished lecture in culture Dec. 7

CHICOPEE – On Thursday, Dec. 7, Elms College and the St. Augustine Center for Ethics, Religion, and Culture at

Elms will hold its Distinguished Lecture in Culture on the topic of spirituality and secularism at 4:30 p.m. in the college’s Alumnae Library Theater.

The guest speaker, Dean Emerita Carolyn Jacobs, Ph.D., MSW, will examine the role spirituality plays in an increasingly secular society. Jacobs has written extensively on spirituality and spent 35 years on the faculty at the Smith College School for Social Work, including several as dean.

The lecture will explore how society can tap into the richness of the Catholic intellectual tradition and the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth in order to re-ignite our shared purpose and sense of community and rebuff the secularism in today’s culture.

“I am deeply grateful to Dr. Jacobs for her willingness to leverage her expertise to foster a robust conversation that promises to engage people of all spiritualities and faith traditions,” said Professor Peter A. DePergola II, ‘07, Ph.D., ThDc, MTS, HEC-C, executive director of the CERC, Shaughnessy Family Chair for the Study of the Humanities and associate professor of Bioethics and Medical Humanities at Elms.

During her tenure at Smith, Jacobs also directed Smith’s certificate program in contemplative clinical practice. In her retirement, she has served as a past and current member of the Elms College Board of Trustees.

The CERC was launched three years ago thanks to an anonymous naming gift and several significant contributions and is one of the most visible manifestations of the college’s Catholic mission. The center aims to increase engagement and discourse on the most pressing and complex questions related to ethics, religion and culture in today’s society and to lead the regional community in thoughtful, engaging dialogue.

In June, the CERC launched its own international, open-access, peer-reviewed journal, *Charity in Truth: A Journal of Ethics, Religion, and Culture*, which publishes original research and scholarship at the intersection of ethics, religion, and culture. DePergola serves as the journal’s founding editor-in-chief.

The lecture is free and open to the public. To register for the lecture, visit <https://www.elms.edu/events/catholic-spirituality-in-dialogue-with-secular-culture/>.

Jones Karate Jujitsu Warriors Inc. opens its doors

By Kristin Rivers
Staff Writer
krivers@turley.com

CHICOPEE – Residents, community members and elected state and local officials gathered on Exchange Street on Nov. 17 to celebrate the grand opening of Jones Karate Jujitsu Warriors Inc.

Opening in the former Bob’s Bakery, the studio offers classes in self-defense, physical training, weapons training, cardio club and personnel training while promoting wellness, discipline, respect, courage, honor and integrity to kids, teens and adults.

The studio is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Saturday from 10 a.m. to noon and closed on Sundays.

Adult classes will be offered every Thursday from 6-7:30 p.m.

The studio is run by Vernon Tahloue Jones Jr., a Massachusetts Army National Guard Veteran and Chicopee resident since 2007.

During the ribbon-cutting ceremony, Mayor John Vieau congratulated Jones and said he looked forward to partnering with him.

“People talk about your health, and you talk about it’s more than just your physical health. It’s your financial health, it’s your mental health,” Vieau said. “If you don’t have that trifecta then you’re still off-balance, so I want to thank you because I think you touch on all three of those with all of the people who come here.”

State Rep. Shirley Arriaga (D-Chicopee) explained how Jones “took his dream, his passion and decided to pursue it.”

“Not only did he do that, but he chose Chicopee as his home for it, so I’m so happy that you chose Chicopee. We’re excited, my daughter’s excited to come and try one of these classes with you and so am I,” Arriaga said.

State Sen. Jacob Oliveira (D-Ludlow) noted the economic growth in downtown Chicopee.

“It’s an important part to have each one of these storefronts filled and something that’s family friendly. Something where, you know, your family’s here, families can come in and have a safe environment and exercise,” Oliveira said. “Be a part of the community but also to learn



A close-up of the equipment inside Jones Karate Jujitsu Warriors on Exchange Street in Chicopee.



Residents socialize and celebrate the grand opening of Jones Karate Jujitsu Warriors on Exchange Street in Chicopee on Nov. 17.

the respect that goes with it as well.”

Ward 6 School Committee member and incoming Ward 6 City Councilor Samuel Shumsky said small businesses like Jones Karate Jujitsu Warriors “are very vital to our community” and the local economy.

“So having another storefront filled is very important and is vital to our community,” Shumsky said.

Jones expressed excitement at the grand opening, calling it a dream come true, and looks forward to working with the youth in the community, expressing gratitude for the support.

“I’m flabbergasted. I don’t even know what to say,” Jones said. “I’m just super excited to be in this position.”

Jones said the studio has a lot to offer, including providing an outlet for youth and an environment that feels like a family.

“So, you learn discipline, you learn how to build your self-confidence, personal courage and it just kind of helps you overall in everything that you want to accomplish in life,” Jones said. “It’s not like a regular sport where you just play foot-



Vernon Tahloue Jones Jr., owner of Jones Karate Jujitsu Warriors, takes a group photo with his family members, Vernon III (son), Jaleeze (wife) and Janyah (daughter), as well as Mayor John Vieau during the grand opening of Jones Karate Jujitsu Warriors on Nov. 17.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY KRISTIN RIVERS



An exterior shot of Jones Karate Jujitsu Warriors on Exchange Street in Chicopee. The studio offers kids, teens and adults classes in self-defense, physical fitness, weapons training, cardio club and personnel training.

ball then you do that. This is something you live with forever and you could train until you’re 80, 90 years old.”

The most fulfilling part of Jones’ work is getting results and instilling values in the youth.

“I have kids that come back after they graduate from college or they graduate from high school and even come out and be part of this,” Jones said. “It means a

lot to me.”

Jones encourages the community to come check the studio out.

“Just come see what I have to offer. If you have any questions, concerns, feel free to come in and talk,” Jones said.

To learn more, email joneskaratejujitsu@gmail.com, call 413-419-6488 or check them out on Facebook and Instagram.

Holiday Wreath Sale Thanksgiving Weekend

BELCHERTOWN – The Belchertown 4-H and Boy Scout Troop 507 Annual Wreath Sale will be held on the Belchertown Common, Thanksgiving weekend Saturday, Nov. 25 and Sunday, Nov. 26 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The price of wreaths starts at \$20. Deluxe wreaths, which include ornaments, are pre-order only and supplies are limited, please text 413-210-0990.

Polish Junior League welcomes students

REGION – The Polish Junior League of Massachusetts welcomes area college students of Polish heritage to apply for one of our annual academic scholarships. Students must have a permanent address in one of the four Western Massachusetts counties: Hampshire, Hampden, Franklin or Berkshire. Application forms with related information are available at www.polishjuniorleague.org/applications. The deadline for ALL applications and related materials is May 1, 2024.

Friends of RiverMills Senior Center hold Bingo Fundraiser



Last week the Friends of RiverMills Senior Center had their annual Bingo Fundraising event. Participants had the opportunity to win designer bags, power tools and wide range of raffle prizes. The projected funds raised is \$4,000!

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

IN THE CITY

Eleven Chicopee Comp CTE students attend The Girls in Trades Conference



On Nov. 16, 11 Chicopee Comp CTE students representing Automotive, Carpentry, Culinary, Metal Fabrication, and Horticulture attended The Girls in Trades Conference at Dean Tech Vocational School in Holyoke. This field trip provided students an excellent opportunity to network with others in their industry. Female speakers from the trade areas lead discussions with our students on what unions are, how to begin the application process, the different levels (apprentice, journeyman, foreman), and the advantages of being in a union. The day was split into two sections: Workshops: Becoming a Union Tradeswoman with Moderators: Brandie Benoit, Contina Brooks, Sam Brown and Chelsea Fenton. Career Fair - Scavenger Hunt with specific questions for each table to initiate conversation. Prizes were raffled for those who completed the entire sheet.

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Hatha Yoga Classes offered to residents

CHICOPEE – The Chicopee Parks & Recreation Department is offering a Hatha yoga class. The class is being offered on Wednesday evenings 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. It will run from Dec. 6 – Jan. 10, 2024. This class series is open to all levels of experience from those wanting to start, restart or maintain an ongoing yoga practice. It is designed to increase strength and flexibility in an accessible way. Focusing on providing a movement-based practice that can be used for stress management, can help boost circulation and will promote overall health and wellbeing.

All classes will be held at Chicopee River Mills Senior Center. Exercise Studio #17 room located on the 2nd floor of the building at 5 W. Main Street Chicopee. This Class is open to ages 15 years, and older.

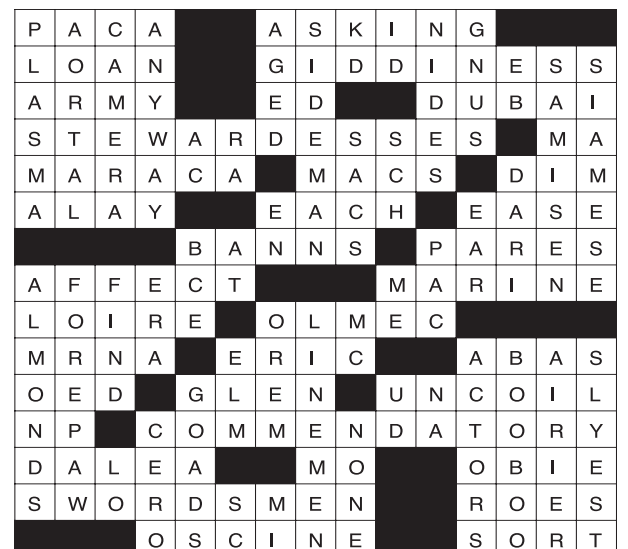
Instructor Caitlin Lavin has over 10 years of teaching Hatha Yoga and over 15 years experiencing other various forms of yoga.

The cost for a 6-week session is \$80/Resident \$90/ Non-Resident or a drop-in fee of \$15/Residents \$17/ Non-Residents per class. Space is limited so register now! To register go to www.chicopeerec.com.

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Sports

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Yenear Perez represented Comp at this year's jamboree.



Jayden Santiago passes to a teammate.

Colts, Pacers end Unified season at jamboree

CHICOPEE – Both the Chicopee and Chicopee Comprehensive Unified basketball teams participated in a jamboree run by the Special Olympics held

on Nov. 9. The jamboree event, held at Chicopee Comprehensive, also featured Palmer and Monson .



Julia Fettes takes a shot.



Nathan Chouinard passes the ball.



Chicopee Unified basketball celebrates their 2023 season. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

Comp girls soccer falls

CHICOPEE – Earlier this month, Chicopee Comprehensive High School girls soccer was not only able to take part in the Western Mass. Class A Tournament, but the Division 2 State Tournament as well. The Colts were able to win

their first game of the state tournament, defeating Northampton 3-2, but then headed on the road in the Round of 32, losing at Nashoba High School 2-1 on Nov. 5. The Colts had an excellent season with 10 wins. They were 10-8-2 overall.



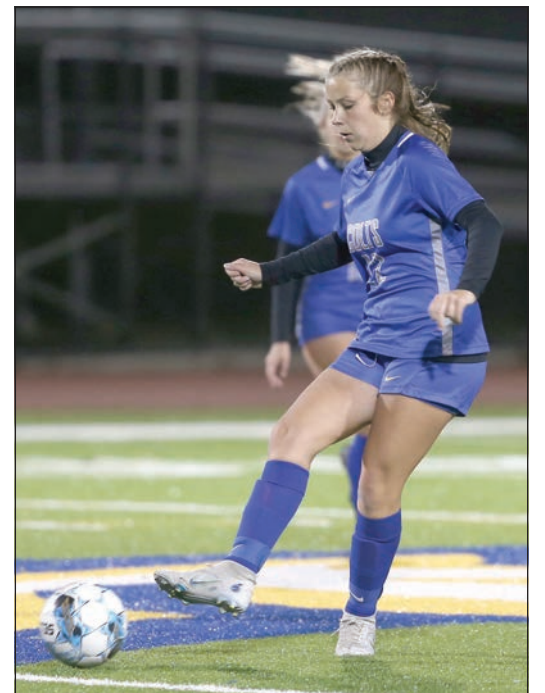
Taryn Carriveau blocks a pass from the opposition.



Taryn Carriveau traps the ball before making a pass.



Kaylin Chagnon sends a pass forward.



Molly Girouard heads down the left side. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

Owls win conference title

WESTFIELD – Westfield State junior Delaney Parker (Orange, Mass.) delivered the game-winning goal with 24 minutes left in regulation to lift the Owls to a 2-1, come from behind win over top-seeded Bridgewater State in the 2023 Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference championship game at Mazzaferro Field in Bridgewater earlier this month.

Westfield earns the league's automatic bid to the NCAA Division III Tournament with the win.

For Westfield, it's the Owls third straight, and 10th overall MASCAC tournament title, all coming in the last 16 years under current Owls head coach

Todd Ditmar. "It shows how old I am," joked Ditmar. "I think we have talented players, they all have good attitudes and it makes it easy to coach them. Players just want the opportunity to get on the field and show how good they are."

Westfield fell behind on a fluky first goal from the Bears just 6:38 into the match. Granted a free kick from near midfield, Bridgewater's Sydney Dewhurst launched a long ball into the penalty area which appeared to be misjudged by Owls GK Julia Robak (Chicopee, Mass./

See OWLS page 8

Basketball Hall of Fame creates new award with rapper

SPRINGFIELD – The Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame and ground-breaking rap star, renowned blockbuster film producer and actor, entrepreneur, and co-founder of the BIG3 basketball league, Ice Cube, are thrilled to announce a pioneering partnership culminating in the creation of the inaugural Ice Cube Impact Award.

This unique collaboration is set to honor Ice Cube's extraordinary contributions to the world of basketball, his unparalleled passion for the game, and his unwavering commitment to encouraging crucial dialogues surrounding inclusivity, equal opportunity, and racial and social justice while contributing to initiatives focused on education and community development.

"The Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame Award named in my honor is truly remarkable, and words alone can't express my gratitude for this recognition

from such a prestigious organization," said Ice Cube, a lifelong Lakers fan who grew up playing basketball at the Inglewood YMCA. "Having an award bearing my name only intensifies my commitment to advancing inclusivity and equal opportunity in sports, alongside my unwavering dedication to community activism."

The Naismith Hall of Fame will permanently house and amplify the Ice Cube Impact Award in its museum and honor subsequent award winners each year through a dedicated exhibit and in-depth storytelling about honorees who use basketball as a platform for good works in their own communities.

"Ice Cube's unquestionable passion



for the game and his desire to see it utilized as a catalyst for positive impact on communities are unwavering," said John L. Doleva, President and CEO of the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame. "His sphere of influence in both the entertainment industry and in the professional sports arena brings remarkable authenticity and value to this award. We are delighted to join hands with Ice Cube as he leverages his love of the game to inspire others. The Ice Cube Impact Award will stand as a testament to the power of basketball and the profound impact it can have on communities worldwide."

Ice Cube's remarkable journey through the world of basketball has had

a profoundly transforming effect. As the visionary founder of the BIG3, he created a professional league built on the game's proven bests--Hall of Famers, World Champions, and All-Stars. The BIG3 has launched and revitalized careers and opened doors for all players and coaches who wish to continue to positively contribute to the game in a format that captures the hearts and imagination of fans nationwide. His unique and innovative approach to the game, which incorporates elements of streetball and professional basketball, also showcases the immense power of sports in uniting communities, as exemplified by the Young3 program focusing on youth in underserved areas.

The Ice Cube Impact Award will be presented to Ice Cube at the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame on Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Monday, January 15, 2024) in Springfield, Massachusetts.

Worcester Railers pick up win over Newfoundland Growlers

ST JOHNS, NL – The Worcester Railers HC (4-5-1-1, 10pts) toppled the Newfoundland Growlers (5-5-2-0, 12pts) on Nov. 12 in overtime by the final score of 2-1 in front of a crowd of 4,284 at the Mary Brown's Centre.

Trevor Cosgrove (1-1-2) broke open the scoring for Worcester in the first, putting Worcester ahead 1-0 after one. Zach O'Brien (1-0-1) scored for Newfoundland in his return to the Growlers lineup for the first time this season. Ashton Calder scored his second game-winner in three games for Worcester in overtime as the Railers came out on top to wrap up the weekend, 2-1.

The Railers scored the game's first goal for the third time this season, as Trevor Cosgrove (1st) danced through the defense to beat Luke Cavallin in net for Newfoundland glove side. Zach White would drop the gloves with former Railer Josh Victor twenty seconds later. Worcester was outshot in the first period 13-10, but led at the end of twenty minutes, 1-0.

Zach O'Brien (1st) returned to the Growlers lineup for the first time this season after playing in Slovakia to start the season and potted his first goal since returning in the second. He grabbed the rebound off the post on the power play and patted it past Lennox to tie the game heading into the third at 1-1.

Worcester suffocated Newfoundland in the third, taking the period's first fifteen shots while preventing the growlers from getting their first until there was just seven minutes left in regulation. Zach White was awarded a penalty shot in the third but failed to capitalize as the game remained 1-1. Grant Cruikshank committed a tripping penalty late in the third period which sent Worcester to the power play to end regulation.

Ashton Calder (6th) found the puck along the near side just 13 seconds into overtime and ended up slapping the puck top-shelf past Cavallin to give Worcester their second win on the weekend, and four out of a possible six points against Newfoundland.

T-Birds fall in 'School Day' game

HARTFORD, Conn. – The Springfield Thunderbirds (7-6-1-0) the Hartford Wolf Pack (7-3-2-0) on Wednesday morning inside the XL Center.

The Wolf Pack took a page out of Springfield's school day playbook and came out with an offensive flourish in the opening 20 minutes.

Just 5:05 into the festivities, and just under 15 seconds after beginning their first power play, the Pack man-advantage took a 1-0 lead on a tap-in goal on the near post by Hartford captain Jonny Brodzinski.

Just under six minutes later, Brodzinski became the passer, as he filtered a perfect pass to the slot area from the trapezoid, and Alex Belzile cashed in to make it 2-0 at 10:59.

Hartford's offensive blitz did not end there, and Adam Sykora got his first goal of the season, cruising down the slot to beat Vadim Zherenko over the shoulder at 18:53 to give the Wolf Pack a 3-0 lead at intermission.

The T-Birds could not find any puck

luck in the second period, as a Hugh McGing chance on a 2-on-1 caught the crossbar early in the period. Later on, Nikolas Brouillard found his way to the crease area to jam a rebound through Zherenko on the backhand at 12:58 of the period, extending the lead to 4-0.

At the other end, Louis Domingue had been perfect until an innocent-looking wrist shot from the right circle off the stick of Mathias Laferriere slipped through the veteran's legs at 15:20 of the period, finally getting Springfield on the board and narrowing the lead to 4-1 heading into the third. It was Laferriere's first goal of the season, with Zach Dean and MacKenzie MacEachern picking up the helpers.

Unfortunately for the T-Birds, the goal would only be a footnote, as Hartford extended back to a four-goal lead on a deflection tally from Adam Edstrom at 5:44 of the third to round out the scoring. Zherenko battled throughout and finished with 32 saves. Domingue needed to make just 23 saves for Hartford.



OWLS from page 7

Comp), who slipped a bit while changing direction to come off her line, and the ball skipped into the right side of the goal on one hop.

"We wanted to start strong and play good possession, and I was worried we could take a step back after the early goal," said Ditmar. "Bridgewater is an intimidating team, Dewhurst is a force, and we were like 'oh no!'"

Westfield had several good chances to level the match before the half, but a long shot from Parker was saved by Bears' keeper Logan Levesque in the 22nd minute, then in the 24th minute Emily Ottomaniello's (Agawam, Mass.) header off of a free kick was saved.

Dewhurst had another good attack up middle of the Owls' defense before the break, but her shot from top of box was saved by Robak to keep the deficit at one.

"We put some good pressure on, but

were attacking straight on, needed to attack from the wings and try to move their goalkeeper," said Ditmar. "At the half we talked about changing formation, but the players wanted to keep with it and said it was working."

Tournament MVP Kiana Maratsuka (Mililani, Hawaii) got the Owls on the board, and leveled the game at 1-1 with a free kick blast from 31 yards out, well-placed over the wall and into top left corner of the goal off the hands of goalkeeper Levesque, 7:18 into the second half.

"After Kiana got the goal, you could see that they were more anxious and we were more relaxed, that was huge momentum change," said Ditmar. "I think it really helped to see we could get one past their goalie, who is really good, and our players stepped up and believed in themselves, and our bench was supportive and positive throughout."

Parker's game winner came with 24:19 left to play, as Muratsuka deflect-

ed a Bears' attempt to clear the ball, and the high arching deflection wound up on the right side of the penalty area. Muratsuka beat a Bears defender to the ball and slipped it left to Parker, who dribbled through traffic from the right side across the top of the goalkeeper's box and whistled it to the left upper 90 for the goal and the 2-1 Owls' lead.

Westfield's best chance for an insurance goal came when Tia Tollis (East Longmeadow, Mass.) juke a defender but fired a shot just over the top of the crossbar with just under 14 minutes left. Westfield kept the offensive pressure on the Bears for the entirety of the second half.

Bridgewater's best chance to level the game late came when Dewhurst ripped a shot from the top of the penalty area, but her blast was blocked point blank by Owls' defender Jaida Cochran (Middleboro, Mass.) with 3.5 minutes left in the game.

Westfield outshot the Bears 13-3 overall in the second half, and the Owls didn't allow any shots on goal in the half.

Westfield is now 13-6-1. The Owls will learn their destination and opponent in the NCAA tournament on Monday, when the selection show is streamed at NCAA.com at 1:30 p.m.

Bridgewater's season comes to an end at 11-6-1.

Westfield entered the game as the number two seed. The Owls' lone loss of the conference season came two weeks ago at the feet of the Bears, by a 2-1 final in a game where Westfield had out-shot Bridgewater 23-11.

Today, Westfield out-shot the Bears 23-8 overall and 11-3 in shots on goal. The Owls also recorded four corner kicks to none for Bridgewater.

Levesque finished with nine saves for the Bears, while Robak made three saves for Westfield.



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FIRE from page 1

always known he was destined to join the fire department. Watching his parents inspired him; he noted that being a member of a fire or police department or military “is kind of the closest you can get to superhero.”

Davis’ path to the fire department began with the “fire test,” which consisted of a written component and the physical ability test. Then, after several months of waiting, he was interviewed by the Chicopee department and experienced his first taste of life in the department.

“We had about a month or a month and a half of orientation (in Chicopee) before we went to the academy and then completed the 10-week academy and now here we are, starting our 24-hour shifts starting (this week),” Davis said.

Davis described the fire academy as difficult but explained that camaraderie existed between the recruits. He stressed that no one completes the academy alone.

“We’re side by side,” Davis said. “It’s not just difficult for me or for him, we all kind of know what we’re going through together. Seeing all my brothers and sisters also struggling through kind of helps you push and know we’re all working together to get the same thing done.”

Davis described the fire department as family oriented and said that everyone looks out for each other. From his first day to the present day, he said members of the department have consistently helped him out by telling him what to expect, how to do things better and what they expect from him.

Like McQueen and Vos, Davis was an EMT before entering the fire academy, which all three believe was beneficial in the process of joining the department. For young people aspiring to become fire-

fighters, Davis encourages them to attend as many career fairs and open houses as possible.

All the while, Davis will strive to be a role model like the ones he looked up to growing up.

“I think in Chicopee, the people who have grown up here and lived here know, it’s a special place,” Davis said. “Even just starting out, we can see that everyone has everyone’s back no matter who you are or how long you’ve been on.”

Patrick McQueen

“It’s a great feeling. Growing up in Chicopee since I was born, just being able to serve and help out people in my own community, nothing beats it honestly,” McQueen said.

McQueen was also inspired by a family member; he is the son of Chicopee Fire Capt. Robert McQueen.

As a child, McQueen considers himself fortunate enough to have witnessed his father respond to a call in his neighborhood. Not long after his family moved into a new home, a house down the street had an emergency.

“It was really eye-opening for me,” McQueen said. “I wasn’t just looking at it like ‘Oh my gosh, it’s such a cool job,’ but it was also like, ‘Wow, that’s my dad actually doing this job,’ and I get to see it from my perspective across the street, what was happening, and it just clicked with me.”

McQueen said that joining the department has been a challenging process but one that is well worth it. He noted that he is focused on the fundamental basics, as the job is forever expanding and rarely stays the same.

McQueen said firefighting is a job that evolves constantly. At the fire academy, he said he learned something new

every day.

“Things are always going to be different depending on the situation that’s playing out in front of you. (The academy) really teaches you how to listen to orders,” McQueen said, noting that he was never a military member or volunteer firefighter. “The academy was my first introduction to anything in first response other than being an EMT, so it really does change the aspect of how you think, how you process things, how you listen to people when they tell you how to do something.”

Now that he has completed the academy, McQueen is settling into the fire department, which he considers a “family-type environment.”

He said that members of the department are together all the time and have similar goals in mind.

“We want to protect the safety of others. We also want to look out for each other as well. It’s one of the most dangerous jobs in the world, but in all aspects, it really is a big family overall. We have to look out for one another,” McQueen said.

McQueen takes great pride in his performance, acknowledging that the need to respond and enter someone else’s home during a crisis could mean it is that resident’s worst day. For McQueen, it means everything to be the person that’s there for them, making a difference.

Michael Vos

Unlike Davis and McQueen, Vos never had a family member involved in public safety. In high school, he wasn’t sure what he wanted to do professionally, but as he entered his 20s, he knew he wanted to do something different.

“I wasn’t really up for the 9 to 5 job so I think when I chose fire, I wanted to challenge myself and prove to myself that

I can fulfill or try to perform the tasks as a firefighter and try to protect my community and protect the citizens,” Vos said.

Vos described the academy as “10 weeks of fire-based training,” where he learned how to “pack on, (work with) ladders, learn how to maneuver a hose through a burning building and just work as a team to try to fulfill a task.”

Entering the academy, Vos was confident he knew what to expect, but after the first week, he knew it would be rough. However, he stuck with it, leaned on teamwork and eventually conquered his goal.

“As the weeks go on, you get used to the grind. It’s a group effort, and you work together. If the group can embrace this type of work, it makes it a whole lot better and easier for everyone else too,” Vos said.

As a new member of the fire department, Vos is getting to know his colleagues. He noted that they are together for up to 24 hours at a time, so it is important to get to know more about them, their families and their interests.

Vos puts a lot of value into being an EMT; it’s how he grew his love of helping people and the community. Vos explained how being an EMT has been beneficial to him as a new firefighter.

“Not everybody can be an EMT. It’s not the easiest job so I take pride in that. In a department like Chicopee, a ton of the calls are medical, so you have to always be on point and ready for anything, regardless of the environment,” Vos said.

Vos said he attended Chicopee schools from preschool through high school. To describe serving that community every shift, he said, “It means everything; you can’t beat it... Just knowing that I’m pretty much protecting (residents is very meaningful).”

PUBLIC NOTICES

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No. HD23P2371 EA
Estate of:
Steven David Bourque
Also known as:
Steven D Bourque
Date of Death: 12/26/2010
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:
A Petition for Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Joan I Bourque Archambault of West Springfield, 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: **Joan I Bourque Archambault of West Springfield, 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 12/13/2023.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by

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

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

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

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

Date: November 17, 2023
Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
11/24/2023

CITATION
G.L.c. 119, § 23(a)(3)
Docket Number:
HD23A0089CW
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
The Trial Court,
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street,
Springfield, MA 01103,

413-748-7758
In the matter of:
Arianna E. Brisson-Garcia
To: Tania Garcia Caraballo

A petition has been presented to said court by: DCF Western Regional Office/Springfield, 140 High Street, 5th Floor, Springfield, MA 01105, requesting that said court finds that said child is under the age of eighteen (18) and is without proper guardianship due to the death, unavailability, incapacity or unfitness of the parent or guardian.

Any decree under the provision of the General Laws of Massachusetts, Chapter 119, Section 23(a) (3), gives custody of the child to the Department of Children and Families and authorized the Department of Children and Families or an agency commissioned by the Department to determine the child’s place of abode, medical care, and education; to control the visits to the child; and to give consents to enlistments, marriages and other contracts requiring parental consent.

IF YOU DESIRE TO OBJECT THERETO, YOU OR YOUR ATTORNEY MUST FILE A WRITTEN APPEARANCE IN SAID COURT AT Springfield ON OR BEFORE TEN O’CLOCK IN THE MORNING (10:00 AM) ON 12/07/2023.

YOU ARE ENTITLED TO THE APPOINTMENT OF AN ATTORNEY IF YOU ARE AN INDIGENT PERSON. An indigent person is defined by SJC Rule 3:10. The definition

includes but is not limited to persons receiving AFCD, EAEDC, poverty related veteran’s benefits, food stamps, refugee resettlement benefits, Medicaid, and SSL. The Court will determine if you are indigent. Contact an Assistant Judicial Case Manager/Adoptions Clerk of the said Court on or before the date listed above to obtain the necessary forms.

WITNESS: Hon. Barbara M. Highland, First Justice of this Court, Date: November 7, 2023

Rosemary A. Saccomani,
Register of Probate
11/24/2023

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No. HD23P2349EA
Estate of:

Harry John Rodriguez, Sr.
Also known as:
Harry J Rodriguez Lopez de Ortiz
Date of Death: 10/14/2023
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:
A Petition for Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Yaitza Figueroa Vasquez 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: **Yaitza Figueroa**

Vasquez 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 12/13/2023.

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

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

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

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara M Hyland, First Justice of this Court.
Date: November 15, 2023

Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
11/24/2023

PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

- 1 Email all notices to notices@turley.com
- 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 Mondays at noon, Fridays noon for Monday holidays.

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com



Rev. William Tourigny, 2024 Chicopee Parade Marshal; Mary O'Brien Rodowicz, Woods Award Recipient, and Fernando Goncalves, Sergio Goncalves, Manny Silva and Steve Silva of Bernardino's Bakery, Atkinson Award Recipients.

Parade Committee announces marshal and awards for 2024

CHICOPEE – The Chicopee Parade Committee's 70th anniversary celebration was held on Friday, Nov. 17, at the Portuguese American Club in Chicopee, during which Committee President Meghan Balakier announced the following VIPs for the 2024 season:

Rev. William Tourigny, Pastor of St. Rose de Lima Parish, Chicopee, will serve as Parade Marshal. He will lead the Chicopee contingent in the Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Parade on March 17, 2024.

Woods Award, which recognizes a committee member for exemplary service, will be given to Mary O'Brien Rodowicz.

Atkinson Award, which recognizes a person or organization in the community who lends support to the committee, will be given to Bernardino's Bakery.

The evening also brought together past committee members, parade mar-

shals, colleens and court members, award recipients and sponsors. Memorabilia, photos and displays of the committee's rich history were available for viewing. Entertainment was provided by Irish Thunder of Springfield and The Black Rose Academy of Irish Dancers.

Applications for the 2024 Colleen Contest will be available soon. Other events being planned for early 2024 include the President's Dinner, Colleen Contest and Coronation Ball, and Irish Night. Watch the committee's website and Facebook page for further details and ticket information.

The committee meets throughout the year, and new members are always welcome. Anyone interested may contact the committee through its Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/chicopeesp/>, or website at www.chicopeesp.com.

State's Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program's winter heating season has begun

Applications are open for eligible Massachusetts households to apply for financial assistance

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities is pleased to announce the start of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program 2023-2024 winter heating season.

LIHEAP is a free, statewide service funded by the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program that helps eligible households stay warm during the winter months by paying a portion of winter heating bills.

Applications for home energy assistance are currently being accepted online at toapply.org/massliheap, and income-eligible households may receive financial help to offset heating bills from Nov. 1, 2023, through April 30, 2024.

Both homeowners and renters can apply online or through local administering agencies for LIHEAP assistance. Households must meet specific eligibility requirements to qualify for

aid, which will be paid directly to their heating vendor.

Eligibility is based on several factors, including household size and combined gross annual income of residents 18 and older. Qualifying households - including those with the cost of heat included in the rent - can receive assistance for all sources of heat, including oil, electricity, natural gas, propane, kerosene, wood and coal.

"The Massachusetts home energy assistance program is free, because no resident should have to worry about heating their home during the winter-time," said Ed Augustus Jr., secretary of Housing and Livable Communities. "High fuel costs can have a devastating effect on household budgets and can even endanger Massachusetts' most vulnerable residents. We encourage anyone who needs heating assistance to explore their eligibility by applying online or visiting the nearest administering agency. And to please share the information with loved ones or neighbors who could benefit from this free resource."

For more information, or to find your local LIHEAP agency, visit www.toapply.org/MassLIHEAP.

Immaculate Heart of Mary offers 'win a trip to a Patriots game'

GRANBY – The Immaculate Heart of Mary Church is doing a "win a trip to a Patriots game with Father Michael" raffle for the Monday, Dec. 18, night game against the Super Bowl Champions Kansas City Chiefs.

The winner will receive two 50-yard line seats, free access to the brand-new

GP Atrium with free food and non-alcoholic beverages and a free ride to and from the game (free ride leaves at 4 p.m. from the church parking lot). Raffle tickets are \$20 and are available at the Parish Office at 413-467-9821 or Wally P. at 413-348-7219, or after all weekend masses. The drawing is Dec. 11.

MiraVista introduces 'Top Talent Tuesdays' for healthcare professionals

HOLYOKE – Mira Vista Behavioral Health Center, a leading community-based provider committed to providing exceptional inpatient behavioral health care and outpatient substance use treatment is announcing the organization's launch of "Top Talent Tuesdays," an exclusive recruitment initiative designed to connect with top-tier nursing and mental health professionals.

"Top Talent Tuesdays" is a groundbreaking recruitment event hosted every Tuesday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at Mira Vista's 1233 Main St. location now through Jan. 30, 2024. The event offers a platform for talented Registered Nurses (RNs), Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) and Mental Health Technicians to engage directly with hiring managers, facilitating on-the-spot interviews and

potentially receiving job offers right away. Attendees will have the chance to engage in meaningful conversations with our experienced hiring managers. This unique interaction will allow candidates to learn more about MiraVista and discuss how their skills align with the organization's mission.

According to Alicia Morel, Talent Acquisition Specialist for MiraVista Behavioral Health Center, "Direct interaction with hospital leadership, touring our state-of-the-art facility and meeting face-to-face with our experienced hiring managers provides candidates with an unprecedented day-long, weekly opportunity to showcase skills, experience and a passion for mental health care. We are committed to expediting the hiring process. Exceptional candidates may

receive on-the-spot job offers, securing their place in our dedicated team of healthcare professionals."

Morel added that with MiraVista's planned expansion of new adult inpatient beds, "The timing career-wise is right for candidates to enhance their professional development and be rewarded for their dedication. Sign on bonuses of \$35,000 for RNs and \$10,000 for LPNs will be available for the right top talent. This is a tangible expression of our commitment to investing in our team."

Joel Doolin, Executive Vice President of MiraVista and its sister facility, TaraVista added, "At MiraVista Behavioral Health Center, we believe that our success is driven by the exceptional individuals who make up our team. Top

Talent Tuesdays is our way of connecting with the best and brightest in the healthcare industry and inviting them to be a part of our mission to provide unparalleled patient care. With a focus on innovation and excellence, Mira Vista is committed to attracting and retaining top healthcare professionals to ensure best possible patient outcomes."

To participate in Top Talent Tuesdays, interested candidates can RSVP by visiting <https://jobs.miravistabhcare.com/miravista-0216-miravistagiringevent?icid=internal:careersite:miravistagiringevent:rnlpnmht:popup:0216>

Don't miss this opportunity to take the next step in your career journey. Candidates are encouraged to bring multiple copies of their resume.

REFORM from page 5

from incarceration. Namely, SORB's database was not kept up to date in all situations, with approximately one out of five offenders showing incorrect addresses when compared against records maintained by other state departments (such as the addresses the Department of Transitional Assistance records).

Part of the benefit of SORB is that it tracks the location of high level offenders. By not ensuring that it has the current addresses of sex offenders considered in violation, SORB is not able to

consistently communicate information about sex offenders' whereabouts, their offenses, and their classifications to local law enforcement agencies and the general public.

What's disturbing is that some of these issues were identified the last time my predecessor audited SORB. These issues must be immediately addressed.

Our office has recommended that SORB increase their collaboration with correctional facilities to establish more reliable procedures for providing anticipated release dates for incarcerated offenders. We've also recommended the

implementation of a tracking process that identifies any delays or issues that may arise, to ensure that all sex offenders are assigned final classifications prior to each offender's release.

For ensuring residential address accuracy, SORB needs to not only work more closely with other state agencies to verify addresses – SORB must also make a point of updating those addresses in their system when they are found.

We will continue to work with SORB and encourage their adoption of practices that maximize public safety.

As always, please feel free to con-

tact my office at any time for more information at auditor@sao.state.ma.us and 617-727-2075.

The Office of State Auditor Diana DiZoglio conducts audits, investigations, and studies to promote accountability and transparency, improve performance, and make government work better. DiZoglio is the 26th Auditor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, sworn into her first term on Jan. 18, 2023. She is committed to help move Massachusetts forward by working to increase transparency and accountability in state government.

IN THE CITY

WILKES from page 1

for 175 days, experiencing additional health struggles, including a stroke, septic shock, complete kidney failure that came back, having his gall bladder removed and experiencing another heart attack.

Additionally, he was revived twice.

Wilkes was released from the hospital on Sept. 2.

Since his heart attack, the community has lent its support through other charity events at Leadfoot Brewing, the Portuguese American Club, window decals with the main character Shrek, for Wilkes' nickname Shrek, at the police station and more.

Reflecting on his ordeal, Wilkes said he feels like a miracle happened.

"There's a reason why I'm still here, you know. The doctors were saying that

87% of people that went through what you went through don't make it, so I feel like I'm blessed, and I'm honored that I'm still here," Wilkes said.

Wilkes continues to be overwhelmed by the community support.

"There's so many places that sponsored me and gave me donations," Wilkes said. "A lot of people don't even know me. I got a letter from someone in Florida who I didn't even know that said 'I hope you're doing good.'"

Wilkes, who's been with the police department for 23 years, shared that he hopes to retire in the next couple of months and become a motivational speaker.

"I'd like to try that," Wilkes said. "When I get a lot better, then maybe I can talk to the class of new recruits who are coming in maybe for a half-hour block to say, 'You know, times are tough.

Well, guess what? Look at this and I persevered, so if you're on the street, and there's stuff going on or you have a bad day, you can make it because I made it."

Stetson said the community support is heartwarming and necessary, stressing it shows how people like inspirational, heartwarming stories.

"I love how many hundreds, if not thousands, of people have contributed, and whether you spent \$10 on an umbrella or you spent \$500 on a paid sign at the golf course, you are doing your part," Stetson said. "Even if you have no money and all you did was share the story on your Facebook page and then someone else saw that and was able to give 10 bucks, you've done your part."

Stetson added that giving back to the community is important to him, explaining how Rumbleseat has helped feed veterans at the Elks, held a supplies

drive to support teachers and will participate in Toys for Tots.

"So, it is as important to running a business in a small community like Chicopee as you can imagine," Stetson said.

Stetson hopes Wilkes' story inspires others to jump on more good stories, share them and participate. He called Wilkes an inspiration.

"Now, he's out there in the community inspiring other people. I can't think of a better story," Stetson said.

Wilkes shared this message: thank you.

"I want to just thank all the supporters, the Chicopee Police Department, I want to thank the community," Wilkes said. "Everybody that's, you know, sent me a text, Facebook feed, made a donation, sponsored me. Everybody, there's so many people I could mention, but to say thank you and I love you all."

SKILLS from page 1

teacher with me to showcase what goes on in some of the competitions. We've been talking about doing it. This is the year we're actually going to do it," Ingram said.

Ingram thanked the committee and Superintendent Dr. Marcus Ware for their support of the program. He said the support "makes those dynamic experiences (happen) at a much better level."

Several School Committee members

praised the fact students can partake in the SkillsUSA program.

"It's wonderful that the students are able to participate in this and they always do so well. Just participating is a big bonus for them," Ward 4 Committee Member Sandra Peret said.

Ward 1 Committee Member Timothy Wagner noted the importance of career technical education. He said students aren't just taught a trade; they are taught how to be successful in their professional lives.

"What they teach and what (the students) learn at this conference and at the regional competitions is just invaluable information," Wagner said.

Wagner also attributed some of his personal success to Demers and Wozniak, his former instructors.

"(They) taught me most of what I know at this point and helped me get the job I currently have today at Big Y. They really do a great job and so do all our other career and technical ed teachers, many of whom are sitting in the audience

today," Wagner said.

Ward 8 School Committee Member Doug Girouard also considers the program to be a "wonderful opportunity" for students. He was pleased the students were able to attend the conference.

"Each and every day being involved in the trades and the career tech, it's all about gaining valuable experience," Girouard. "So, there's no better way, in my opinion, than being out in the field and seeing what is actually happening day in and day out."

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Simple ways communities can combat bullying

Stand for the Silent, an organization helping to stop school bullying, helps communities address the issue

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK – It has been known that bullying around the country is a big problem. The statistics point to the fact that something needs to be done. People mostly look to the schools to handle the issue of bullying, but perhaps it is time for the whole community to take the issue on. With the community on board, addressing the issue to dismantle it, the schools and all areas will benefit. Tapping into how to get the community on board to combat bullying is a powerful method for creating a kinder world.

“We work with schools and communities around the country. We know how important it is to get the whole community on board with stomping out bullying,” said Kirk Smalley, co-founder of Stand for the Silent. “It’s really a team effort to address the issue, and we are happy to be at the forefront of helping people to make a difference.”

Bullying is a common issue at school, with one in five high school students reporting being bullied on school property, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. But it doesn’t stop once kids leave the school campus. The CDC reports that one in six high school students are cyberbullied, which takes place online, through texting, etc.

While we tend to think that bullying is a problem only for our youth, one look at the statistics surrounding workplace bullying proves otherwise. The CDC reports that up to 59% of workers in America say that they have felt bullied in the workplace, while up to 15% globally have felt bullied, and 12% have witnessed others being bullied.

With youth and adults having bullying issues around the nation, it’s time for communities to address the issue as a whole. Here are ways for communities to combat bullying:

- **Guest speaker.** Stand for the Silent has a mission of traveling the country to speak with schools and communities about bullying. Inviting them to the community or school to talk is a significant first step toward making a change and setting a new tone.

- **Make the commitment.** The community needs to commit to the idea of addressing bullying. Coming together to share in the mission of tackling the issue will be more successful if those involved are 100% on board with making it a consistent part of the community discussion.

- **Raise awareness.** The more people talk about bullying in the community, including what it looks like, the damage that it does, and what to do to address it, the more it takes the power away. When people are aware of the issue in their community, they will become more active in helping not to tolerate it.

- **Partner up.** Community groups working to eradicate bullying can partner with other local resources, including groups, organizations, sporting teams, etc. That way, the message is being reinforced at every corner.

- **Get people involved.** To get more community members engaged in addressing the issue, hold community events, have guest speakers, forums, question and answer sessions, etc. People need the facts and how to handle it, and they can get the answers at these events.

“Your community will feel the difference it makes once you get started ad-

ressing the issue together,” adds Smalley. “Our youth doesn’t live in a bubble, they are part of the community, so it’s time for us to all stand together on this issue.”

Some signs may signal a child is being bullied, such as having sudden changes in school attendance, having difficulty concentrating, lacking the ability to be self-assertive, having injuries without an explanation of where they came from, a loss of appetite before going to school, etc. If a parent or teacher suspects a child is being bullied, the issue should be investigated and remedied immediately.

Smalley and his wife, Laura, started the organization following their 11-year-old son ending his own life due to bullying. They turned their pain and loss into a mission of helping others. He travels the country giving presentations about bullying to schools, providing bullying prevention, giving out scholarships, offering intervention strategies, and more. Those interested in getting involved can start a chapter of the group in their area, obtain a free K-2 bullying prevention curriculum, host a presentation at their school, and donate to help support the cause. To get more information, visit the site at: <https://standforthesilent.org/>.

NAMI joins in Giving Tuesday

CHICOPEE – GivingTuesday is a global generosity movement, unleashing the power of people and organizations to transform their communities and their world. GivingTuesday will kick off the generosity season this year by inspiring people to give back on Nov. 28, and throughout the year.

This year GivingTuesday is more important to your Western Mass community than ever before as there’s been an ever-increasing demand for NAMI-WM’s services. Therefore, we are asking the community to support us on this special

day of global generosity.

Fundraising for small non-profits is difficult, so we joined GivingTuesday to add additional fundraising to our cause and to be part of this important global movement.

Those who are interested in donating to NAMI Western Massachusetts’ GivingTuesday initiative can visit www.namiwm.org.

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

SCHOOLS

A tour of community colleges

By Eric Goodhart

There are many questions that need to be answered by a teenager, who has college aspirations.

But for now, here is just one. Whenever I asked a teenager why they want to go to college I often get one of two answers. "To get a good job" or "It is the expected thing to do."

I have yet to hear a student reply like this. "The career I am interested is something in the medical profession. Not sure

if I want to pursue a Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine or a Doctor of Medicine degree. Both cost a ton. My kid sister wants to be lawyer specializing in Health Care Law. She says she is going to keep an eye on me."

"I started in the summer between sophomore and junior year, taking college level classes at our local community college. I continued dual enrollment through junior year. The Salutatorian at my high school did that. He was accepted to Rhodes College as a sophomore plus

a \$12,000/year scholarship. He saved his parents over \$102,000. In fact, each of the three years he will be there will cost about \$10,000 less than UMass, Amherst."

Such an outcome is possible. But it takes research coupled with practical planning including factoring in financial considerations.

For the students who are ready for a challenge, dual enrollment is a very good option. Mount Wachusett, Greenfield, Holyoke Berkshire Community Colleges and Springfield Tech all are focused on expanding their Dual Enrollment programs. Right now, summer is when many are offering on campus Dual Enrollment introductory talks or on Zoom. Greenfield, MWCC, Springfield and Berkshire CC have very easy to navigate websites with that information. Here is the website to visit for all the CCs in the state <https://masscc.org/colleges/>

In addition, each one, including Holyoke CC, has a Phi Theta Kappa honor society chapter. It is not easy to become a member, nor should it be. PTK, founded in 1918, is an international honor society for community college students mirroring the principles of the much older Phi Beta Kappa honor society at four-year colleges. founded in 1776 at the College of William & Mary.

Membership in PTK comes with many perks. More about that next week. Be sure to ask admissions on your tour as to how many students received the honor in the last five years and where are they are now?

Whatever the reason for going to college may be, the first and most important first step of a teenager is to do some

self-reflection and selected self-assessments. They are not tests.

Every community college has an academic and career advising department. Part of that advising includes some form of assessment and/or interest survey.

MWCC has a free 60 question interest questionnaire anyone can take resembling the John Holland SDS survey. That is a good start.

The college's overall explanation of its Academic and Career Advising process is very good. However, positive individual results ultimately depend on the student's initiative in taking advantage of that guidance.

Greenfield CC has several self-assessments anyone can take on its website. For a modest cost of \$39 a student even just thinking about attending Greenfield CC can take advantage of that. It illustrates the value and importance the college has in its advising philosophy.

The college recently completed a true Nation-wide search for a new President. Michelle Schutt, Ph.D. has a BS, two MS degrees along with her Doctorate in Education and Human Studies. A Midwesterner at heart she has brought that to Greenfield and adjusted seamlessly into her new role in Franklin County.

The college is fortunate to have her as the 11th President. Because of her past many leadership accomplishments in both the classroom and as a keynote speaker on leadership in many different stages it is no surprise that she is now in Greenfield. She has the academic and charismatic personality that, by all reports, foretells good things for the college's future and the wider community at the beginning of the Mohawk Trail.

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