

# Chicopee Register

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COMMUNITY

## Chicopee Comp Student Council welcomes families to

By Kristin Rivers  
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CHICOPEE – The Chicopee Comprehensive High School Student Council welcomed families from 5 to 7 p.m. on Dec. 15 for their “Deck the Halls” event.

The event had Christmas-themed games and arts and crafts including a coloring station, gift box bowling, snowman snowball toss, making paper snow globes or gingerbread men, face painting and more.

Additionally, it included a visit from Santa Claus and new, unwrapped toys collected to support Toys for Tots.

Student Council co-advisors and English teachers Elizabeth Bouyea and Alison Allegresso were excited to hold the event and explained the students created the event’s activities.

Bouyea and Allegresso also praised them for their eagerness to do the donation drives.

“We really encourage the

See **DECK THE HALLS** page 7



The Chicopee Comprehensive High School Student Council and teachers Liz Bouyea and Alison Allegresso take a fun group photo after completing a successful Deck the Halls event at the high school on Dec. 15.

TURLEY PHOTO BY KRISTIN RIVERS

COMMUNITY

## Robert Pajak Memorial Clothing Drive supports Lambert-Lavoie students



Lambert-Lavoie Elementary School students and staff applaud and express their excitement during the Robert Pajak Memorial Clothing Drive at Lambert-Lavoie Elementary School on Dec. 13.

TURLEY PHOTO BY KRISTIN RIVERS

By Kristin Rivers  
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CHICOPEE - Chicopee Electric Light visited Lambert-Lavoie Elementary School on Dec. 13 for the Robert Pajak Memorial Clothing Drive.

Addressing students and staff in the school gymnasium, Principal Daniel Phelan explained the donation was in memory of Robert “Bob” Pajak, the general foreman for Chicopee Electric Light and, later, a commissioner who was also the father of Vice Principal Kara Gauthier.

Phelan said he was lucky to meet Pajak before his passing in July 2022, calling him “one of

the nicest people I ever met.”

“This donation today is in memory of him,” Phelan said. “Every time you put those (clothes) on, think of him.”

Ray Gouley, a safety consultant for Chicopee Electric Light, was joined by James Lisowski, Daniel Faille and Dionisio Gerena for the presentation, sharing the clothing drive started at the school 31 years ago in collaboration between Chicopee Electric and his company, RF Gouley Co., and rotates every year.

“I just want to say that these clothes are for the children, and Mr. Pajak was always a very caring person,” Gouley said.

Gouley added what makes Chicopee different from other

communities he goes to “is their sense of caring.”

“The educators work hard, very hard, to keep you all on task and also with the light department to bring out these programs to help keep you safe and to help keep you warm,” Gouley said. “So, when you think about it, there’s somebody always trying to help you succeed in life.”

Barbara “Gammy” Pajak, Pajak’s wife, thanked Gouley and Chicopee Electric Light “for this wonderful honor for Bob.”

“He would be so happy because he loved to share things in his life, so thank you,” Pajak said.

See **CLOTHING DRIVE** page 8

COMMUNITY



TURLEY PHOTO BY TEDY MAKUCH, CHS SENIOR.

The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts officially opened on Dec. 14.

## Food Bank of Western Mass debuts new Chicopee facility

By Dalton Zbierski  
Editor  
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CHICOPEE – Dec. 14 was a banner day for the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, as its newly constructed, state-of-the-art food distribution facility on Carew Street officially opened.

Food Bank employees showcased the 62,000 square-foot building during an evening ceremony attended by elected officials, donors, partners and invested residents from Chicopee and neighboring communities.

Since 1982, the Food Bank has been feeding neighbors in need in Berkshire, Hampden, Hampshire and Franklin Counties, and the strategically locat-

ed warehouse and office space will allow the operation to further pursue its mission of ending hunger.

“It’s at the crossroads of the major interstates of Western Massachusetts, so we selected this location because it will really enable us to provide healthy food to anyone and everyone who needs it, when they need it, across all four counties in Western Massachusetts,” Food Bank Executive Director Andrew Morehouse said.

The new structure is far larger than the food bank’s previous home in Hatfield, enabling it to serve more people than ever. Last year, the Food Bank distributed the equivalent

See **FOOD BANK** page 8



# Chicopee marks Wreaths Across America Day at St. Stanislaus Cemetery

By Kristin Rivers  
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CHICOPEE - The community gathered at St. Stanislaus Cemetery on Dec. 16 to honor Wreaths Across America Day.

Wreaths Across America Day is a nationwide observance taking place every December with volunteers and supporters placing Veterans' Wreaths at local, national and military cemeteries, Veterans' Memorials and historic sites.

Wreaths Across America itself, meanwhile, is a nonprofit organization established in 2007 with the mission of distributing Veterans' wreaths to place on gravesites at military cemeteries to remember, honor and teach.

At St. Stanislaus Cemetery, the ceremony was presided over by Senior Master Sgt. Winnie Dion of the U.S. Air Force and her husband, Alan, a physics teacher at Chicopee Comprehensive High School who also advises the Veterans' Appreciation & Support Club, with an opening prayer led by Fr. Brad Milunski of St. Stanislaus Parish.

Additionally, wreaths were laid by Army/Air Force Veteran Sgt. - Retired Scott J. Gomes, U.S. Marine Corps Corporal Michael "Pappy" Boyington, U.S. Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Daniel Czuchra, Geoffrey Gleason, Chicopee Comp VASC secretary for the U.S. Space Force, Corryn Roth, Chicopee Comp VASC president for the U.S. Coast Guard, Tony Lazio, grandson of U.S. Merchant Marine Charles Sidel, for the U.S. Merchant Marines and Amy Quenneville, Chicopee Comp VASC



TURLEY PHOTOS BY KRISTIN RIVERS

A volunteer lays a wreath at the grave of a veteran during Wreaths Across America Day at St. Stanislaus Cemetery in Chicopee on Dec. 16.

vice-president for prisoners of war/missing in action.

Alan Dion also honored U.S. Air Force Sgt. Jacob Galliher, a Pittsfield native who died alongside seven other service members in a CV-22 Osprey crash off the coast of Japan on Nov. 29.

Winnie Dion explained the Wreaths Across America Day initiative began in Chicopee last year and she and her husband are co-location coordinators for St.

Stanislaus with support from Al and Terry Picard.

"Every year, we try to get people to sponsor wreaths and remember the veterans and teach," she said. "And honor as many as we can."

The Dions were happy to see many people at the ceremony, with Alan Dion adding that events like this build community support.

"It's such a positive thing for supporting veterans and supporting those who have served or have passed in support of their country," he said. "So, I think things like this are a great way for the community to come together and recognize that."

William Wisniewski and his wife, Jessica, and children, Mila and Wes, were first-time participants in Wreaths Across America Day and placed wreaths for his brother, Francis, and his father, Wieslaw.

Francis Wisniewski served in the Navy, while Wieslaw Wisniewski served in the U.S. Army.

"It's a little way to talk history with your family. Our son and daughter don't know too much about them because they were long gone before they came, so it's a little way to talk about their grandfather and uncle that since passed," he said. "It's a nice way to honor them and get the kids involved as well."

Jessica Wisniewski reflected on how powerful the ceremony was, including learning about other military branches, seeing Comp's VASC involved in the ceremony and Lazio stepping up to lay the wreath for the U.S. Merchant Marines.

"I think there's so much more opportunity for the young to learn and you really need to just - even if it's once in a lifetime - come to a Wreaths Across America (ceremony) to appreciate, to learn," she said.

The Wisniewskis encourage the community to get involved and learn about their families' histories.

"If you want to dig into your genealogy and learn about your ancestry, just go to one Wreaths Across America event in your lifetime and you can learn so much because we're all connected somehow," Jessica Wisniewski said.

"It helps the families that are here to appreciate their family members before them," William Wisniewski said.



Father Brad Milunski of St. Stanislaus Parish leads the audience in a prayer.



Alan Dion reflects as Petty Officer 3rd Class Daniel Czuchra, USN holds the wreath to honor the U.S. Navy during the Wreaths Across America Day ceremony at St. Stanislaus Cemetery in Chicopee.



The Wisniewski Family, from left, Wes (son), Bill (father) Mila (daughter) and Jessica (wife) at the grave of Francis Wisniewski, Bill's late brother and the children's late uncle, after placing a wreath in his honor during Wreaths Across America Day at St. Stanislaus Cemetery in Chicopee.

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## Chicopee Police Department is hiring

Important civil service dates are listed here

CHICOPEE - Are you interested in becoming a Chicopee Police Officer? If so, here are some important dates that you should be aware of. Civil Service will be holding its entry level Police Officer exam in March of 2024. The application period has begun

and will be ending on Jan. 16, 2024. The notice to appear is March 1, 2024, and exams go from March 16-30, 2024.

The Chicopee Police Department is a Civil Service Department. In order to be considered for employment you must take and pass the exam. Exam information can be obtained by going to Mass.gov and searching for Civil Service exams.





Planning Director Lee Pouliot provides remarks during the Arbor Day observance ceremony at Szot Park on Dec. 12.



Chris Scott, city arborist/tree warden for the Forestry Department, and Mayor John Vieau unveil the flag signifying the city's 30th consecutive year as a Tree City USA award recipient during the Arbor Day observance ceremony at Szot Park.



Mayor John Vieau presents a certificate of recognition to DPW Superintendent Elizabette Batista for the DPW's contributions to helping the city receive its 30th Tree City USA award.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY KRISTIN RIVERS

# Chicopee celebrates Arbor Day, 30 years as Tree City USA Award recipient

By Kristin Rivers  
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CHICOPEE - Community members, town departments and elected officials gathered at Szot Park Pavilion on Dec. 12 for an Arbor Day observance ceremony.

During the ceremony, the city recognized the planting of 146 trees in 2023 and its 30th consecutive year as a Tree City USA award recipient, with certificates of recognition presented to the Department of Public Works, the Forestry Department, the Engineering Department, the Water Pollution Control Department, Parks & Recreation, the Planning Department and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Additionally, City Arborist/Tree Warden Chris Scott and Mayor John Vieau unveiled the Tree City USA flag.

A proclamation read by Vieau marked Dec. 12 as the 151st anniversary of Arbor Day.

Tree City USA was launched by the Arbor Day Foundation in 1976, becoming a nationwide movement dedicated to urban forestry and community engagement, with over 3,600 communities participating.

Vieau said Chicopee's participation in the program "is not just an achievement, but a continuous journey towards sustainability and ecological harmony."

"So, as we have planted 146 trees this year, let us celebrate our role in this national movement and our commitment to making Chicopee a greener place for all," Vieau said.

Planning Director Lee Pouliot re-

flected on the Planning Department's relationship with the Forestry Department.

"The Planning Department has a long-standing relationship that is very collaborative in nature with the city's Forestry Department and that has allowed us to not only increase but sustain new tree plantings across the city," Pouliot said.

Pouliot also announced a master park plan for Szot Park that will also address the Oak Grove area.

"The community will have an opportunity to see some initial concept plans that our design team has been working on in the next few weeks for what not only this area of the park but the whole park, in general, could look like in the future," Pouliot said.

On the current Bemis Pond Dam Removal Project, Pouliot said the lower dam is partially removed and restoration work is ongoing.

"Next year, I hope when we celebrate Arbor Day, we'll be celebrating the planting of over 200 new trees along that restored stream corridor in the park along with the opening of a new passive trail network surrounding the brook and the work that's been done there," Pouliot said.

Scott expressed excitement about the projects at Szot and was humbled by the Forestry Department being recognized for their efforts alongside the other town departments he works with.

"It means a lot to us because we put in an effort in all aspects of our job. As we plant trees, we grind stumps, we take trees down, we prune trees," Scott said. "So, we do a lot of stuff, and it's nice to be recognized once in a while for it."

Scott wants the community to know

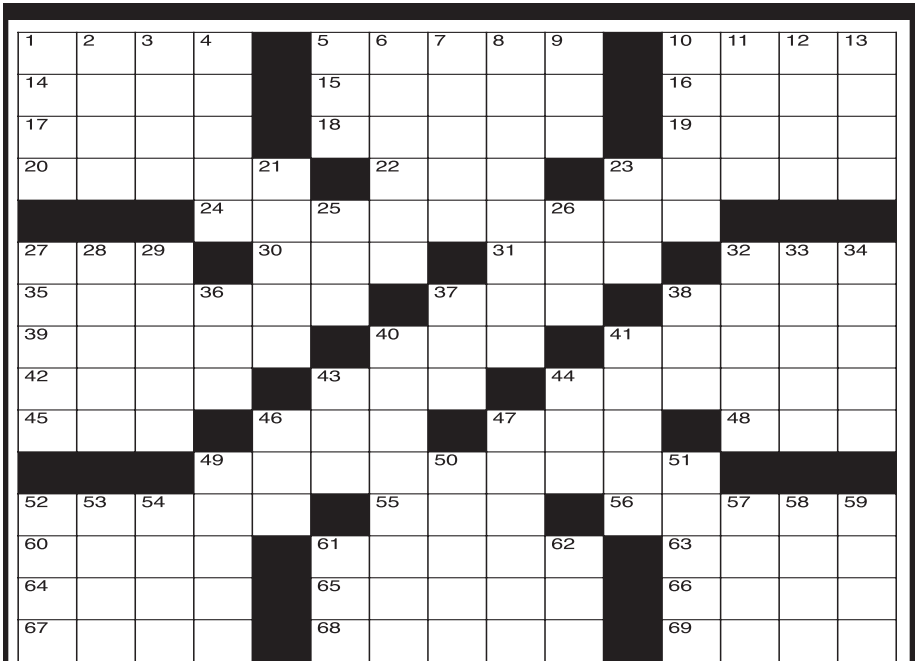
they can get involved through community tree plantings, where volunteers plant 100 trees in a neighborhood, and the department is trying to change the perception around trees.

"When there's a tree issue, say a tree failure on a street, everybody on the street remembers that and they develop a negative feeling towards the trees, so we're really trying to turn that around and having events like this and getting

the word out is the way we do it but also through the work we do," Scott said.

Pouliot also hopes to do community tree plantings again, encouraging residents to get involved once that program returns.

"We haven't done it because of COVID, but we're hopeful that we can plan for that next year and get the community involved in growing our urban forest," Pouliot said.



**CLUES ACROSS**

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

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

**CLUES DOWN**

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

ANSWERS ON PAGE 10

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# City Council approves \$501,000 of DPW items

By Dalton Zbierski  
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CHICOPEE – The City Council approved \$501,000 of Department of Public Works items during the Dec. 19 meeting, ranging from roadwork to safety improvements and settlement claims.

A total of \$286,000 was appropriated to the DPW Highway Special Account for Roads and Sidewalks from available stabilization funds, as the design and engineering for the Granby Road/Montgomery Street/McKinstry Avenue intersection improvements project is nearing 25%.

Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc., an engineering firm contracted by the city, submitted a proposed amendment to bring the design to 100% completion.

“VHB is getting closer and closer to completing design on the Granby Road/Montgomery Street/McKinstry Avenue intersection improvements, and I believe that this request is to pay for Phase 3 of that design. This project has been approved for Chapter 90 reimbursement, and the work has been submitted for reimbursement as well,” Mayor John Vieau said on Tuesday.

The proposed amendment is for \$854,700 broken into three phases. The project is on MassDOT’s scheduled project list.

“This is not the final phase of design. This is just the third phase of the budget,” DPW Superintendent Elizabeth Batista said. “So, this will also include all costs that they would incur as support during construction. It’s DOT; it’s approved on the TIP, but all submittals, any submittal support, any construction support that



TURLEY PHOTO BY TEDY MAKUCH, A CHS SENIOR

During its Tuesday meeting, the City Council approved a range of items pertaining to the Department of Public Works.

DOT needs during the project, VHB will be involved in that, and that is also included in this final phase.”

Ward 1 Councilor Joel McAuliffe asked the council to vote in favor, noting that the project needs to get done, even if it won’t happen for a while. McAuliffe acknowledged he won’t be on the council to see it come to fruition, but he anticipates its completion, nonetheless.

“I very much so look forward to a day where all the issues at that intersection are solved, particularly solved with roundabouts that I think will be extremely successful, so I’m excited to get a chance to

vote on this and encourage my colleagues to vote in favor,” McAuliffe said.

On Tuesday, the City Council approved an appropriation of \$150,000 in stabilization funds to the DPW Highway Special Account for Safety Improvements.

Vieau said the city will be performing traffic studies for three intersections: Chicopee Street at McKinstry Avenue and Jones Ferry Road, Prospect Street and Montcalm Street and Chicopee Street at Grattan Street and Ferry Street.

There will also be a design of improvements to signal timing and pedestrian safety upgrades at the intersections

of McKinstry Avenue at Dale Street and Grattan Street as well as St. James Avenue and Broadway Street.

“The estimate that we’ve received (is) separate proposals attached totaling \$131,250, and we’re asking for some contingency. That’s why the number’s \$150,000,” Vieau said.

An appropriation of \$40,000 to the DPW Wastewater Special Account for Settlement of Claims from available funds in the DPW Wastewater Salary Account for Wastewater Treatment Plant Repairman was also approved.

“The commission has voted unanimously in favor of this,” Vieau said. “What’s happened is they’ve expended all their funds in that wastewater line item that they use that helps to pay for claims against the sewer department for sewer backups and basement damage in some households due to blocked sewer mains and any future claims. They need to replenish that account.”

Lastly, an appropriation of \$25,000 to the DPW Water Special Account for Settlement of Claims from available funds in DPW Water salary Account for Water Systems Maintenance Man was also approved.

“There’s been two current claims with the sewer department for backups in basements, having damage in residential households due to blocked sewer mains,” Vieau said.

As a point of information, he said the city has unfilled positions. Instead of taking the money out of the stabilization account, the DPW can take it out of their current budget or out of any other account.

# Fuel assistance is available through Valley Opportunity Council

Staff at the RiverMills Center will help seniors apply

By Dalton Zbierski  
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CHICOPEE – If you are struggling to pay for heat as the cold season arrives, the Valley Opportunity Council’s Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program is there to help, and RiverMills Center employees can help you apply.

Each winter, fuel assistance helps eligible individuals challenged by the high costs of heating their homes by offering to pay a portion of their winter heating bills. The program covers fuel including, but not limited to, oil, electricity, natural gas, propane, kerosene, wood and coal.

The money allotment goes directly to the fuel provider and not to the individual.

The income guidelines for fuel assistance Chicopee residents are as follows. For a one-person household, the income limit is \$45,392. For a two-person household, the income limit is \$59,359.

For three-person households, the income limit is \$73,326, for a four-person household, the income limit is \$87,294 and for a five-person household, the income limit is \$101,261.

“It’s very important,” Diane Gay, RiverMills Center program assistant, said. “Our community of seniors, I know sometimes they’re hesitant to come in and apply because they’re too proud to, but when they come in, we try to make them feel comfortable, we help them fill out the application, copy the documentation that needs to be submitted with the

application and send it to the VOC.”

The VOC determines if an individual is eligible or not, but the staff at the RiverMills Center, Chicopee’s senior center, assists in the application process and helps answer any questions that they might have.

Recently, the RiverMills Center has held informational sessions, where seniors were invited to learn what the program is all about. Fuel assistance is available for all eligible residents, but the RiverMills Center mostly works with seniors.

Younger residents are encouraged to visit the VOC locations in Holyoke or Springfield for the same assistance.

To apply, residents must deliver personal information such as their Social Security number, a benefits letter and income amounts, but staff at the RiverMills Center stress that the process is confidential.

“We’re dealing with some very private, personal information,” Outreach Coordinator Anthony Pouliot said. “We ask these questions in the privacy of our office because some people are a little hesitant to divulge their financial information... We reassure them that everything is kept under lock and key and no other person besides the senior center staff, meaning Diane and I, has access to that. We’re the only two people who look at that information before it’s sent off to the VOC.”

It is important to note that the VOC will continue taking applications for heating assistance until April 30. If seniors have not applied yet, they have several months to do so.

“There’s no imminent deadline for

the fuel assistance,” Pouliot said. “If you apply for it in March, they’ll go back and look at your heating bills all winter long and will apply that aid to the previous bills you’ve had to pay, whether it’s oil or natural gas or electricity. We still have a lot of months left in the fuel assistance season, and we’re here to help any seniors that need help.”

Gay emphasized that one should not let pride get in the way of utilizing a resource. She comes from a blue-collar family of factory workers and said she knows how proud they can be.

“They don’t want anything handed to them, but I stress that they worked all their lives, paid taxes, and now it’s their time to take advantage of what’s available to them. And we do get thank you cards. People are very appreciative,” Gay said.

Pouliot recently arrived at the RiverMills Center after working in a similar capacity in Springfield, where he grew accustomed to assisting residents with fuel assistance.

When asked what the biggest difference between the two cities is, he said Springfield has a different demographic and the seniors in Chicopee are more self-sufficient, while seniors in Springfield are more in need.

“There’s a lot of seniors that live at or below the poverty level in a big city like Springfield,” Pouliot said. “The seniors were very desperate in some cases for the help. In fact, a lot of them had to decide between either food or heat in their house, and it was a little bit heartbreaking to hear some of the stories of seniors that had been struggling to make ends meet.”

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## IN THE CITY

# School Committee addresses playground safety

Bowie Memorial School playground specifically discussed

By Dalton Zbierski  
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CHICOPEE – The School Committee held a long discussion about playground safety and ADA compliance at the end of its Dec. 20 meeting.

The playground at Bowie Memorial School was specifically addressed by Superintendent Dr. Marcus Ware and Director of Maintenance Scott Chapdelaine, as nearly \$60,000 was recently invested to bring it up to code.

“The ADA matting is \$49,636, and the slide and installation is around seven grand, which is going to be done when the parts come in,” Chapdelaine said, as Ware added that over \$2,900 was spent on an inspection beforehand.

Ware said many constituents have inquired about the safety and quality of the playscape at Bowie, which was installed around 1998, making it the district’s oldest. Chapdelaine pointed out that although ADA has been around since the early 1990s, it didn’t branch out to playgrounds until after the Bowie playscape was built.

Ware reported that the old slide at Bowie had a hole in it; the new one will soon be installed and was delayed by this week’s storm. The rubber mat, which is now in place, is necessary to meet ADA compliance.

After hearing concerns, the district worked with a vendor named C&J Construction, which visited the city to inspect all the school playgrounds. The district received a report from the vendor not long before Wednesday’s meeting.

“In that report, there is nothing concerning as far as unsafe or need to be shutting down our playgrounds,” Ware said. “There are clear recommendations that they make so some of their purview was checking to make sure the bolts are tight, minor fixes that can be completed at the time of a tune up, checking for safety concerns.”

Examples of the upkeep the report calls for include addressing damaged or worn pieces, safety zone infringement, maintaining appropriate safety surfaces and replacing worn chains.

“I just want to assure the public I read the report, and not that there’s not work we can do, but there’s nothing in disrepair except for the slide (at Bowie),” Ware said.

Communication has been shared with the state, and the city’s new compliance officer, Stephen Zajchowski, was also made aware.

Chapdelaine, who has 15 schools and 17 total buildings under his purview, confirmed that he is examining all the playgrounds in the district. He explained why the project at Bowie cost so much.

“Looking at all of our playgrounds that were installed, a lot of them are set up with a transition area, where Bowie doesn’t have that,” he said. “Mainly, you have rubber matting that goes to a transition area where the handicapped person can be placed on the playground at that transition area. The reason Bowie (cost) so much is there is no transition area. Every device had to have a rubber mat that goes to it.”

Chapdelaine noted that ADA laws regarding playgrounds changed in 2004 and 2010. Noting how the laws have changed, he made a recommendation to the board.

“I think we should hire a landscape architect who specializes in ADA compliance for playgrounds to go around to our other eight playgrounds at the schools and do a study on what it will take to make them all ADA compliant,” Chapdelaine said.

Ward 4 School Committee Member Sandra Peret asked for the playground discussion to be placed on the Dec. 20 agenda. She noted that there are a lot of playgrounds in the district and identified that the School Committee’s job is education.

Peret inquired if the playgrounds should be monitored by Parks and Recreation Superintendent Benjamin Streпка or Department of Public Works Superintendent Elizabeth Batista.

“We do want the children of the city to be able to access our parks and playgrounds and school playgrounds,” Peret said. “These are mini-parks, and you have so much in terms of the custodial aspect and maintaining our buildings that, because of all the regulations that are out there in regard to playground accessibility, should this not be something we consider moving to Parks and Rec because of the expertise those individuals have in regard to that.”

See **SCHOOL COMMITTEE** page 11



## Baby's First Christmas 2023



**Raelynn Brown**

July 20, 2023

Parents: Ryan & Ashley Brown, Hampden  
Grandparents: Art & Lynn Anderson, Wilbraham  
Rick & Joanne Brown, Monson



**Hannah Jean Labrie**

September 24, 2023

Parents: Kenneth & Stephanie Labrie, Chicopee  
Grandparents: Taryn Dunaj, Wilbraham  
Gary & Donna Labrie, Chicopee



**Gia Elizabeth Goncalves**

June 20, 2023

Parents: Jillian Veautour & Derek Goncalves, Ludlow  
Grandparents: Dawn Veautour, Palmer & Gerry Veautour, Chicopee  
Isabel & Steve Malle, Ludlow  
Joe Goncalves, Ludlow



**Delaney Sabourin**

May 14, 2023

Parents: Matthew & Amanda Sabourin, Belchertown  
Grandparents: Allan & Joanne Beauregard, Belchertown  
Diane Sabourin, Chicopee  
Dave & Trish Sabourin, Holyoke



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## GUEST COLUMN



### Cookies made with a familiar herb

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Coriander seed is also well known in various ethnic cuisines and is a favorite in spice blends, curry being the most popular. It is also used in the making of a number of distilled spirits, herbal liqueurs and Christmas

See **GARDEN** page 10

## GUEST COLUMN



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

Dear Rusty

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

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

Signed **Working Divorcee**

Dear Working Divorcee

Although you are eligible to claim Social Security at age 65, because you are working full time you may wish to wait a bit longer to do so. That's because Social Security has an "earnings test" which applies to anyone who collects benefits before Full Retirement Age and you have not yet reached yours.

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

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

Regarding benefits from your ex-husband, you cannot collect his instead of yours. What you may be able to do, when you claim your

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

You are not currently married.

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

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

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

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

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

*The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. This article is intended for information purposes and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit [amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at [ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org). Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.*

### Air traffic controller shortage & holiday travel...



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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](mailto:chicopeeregister@turley.com) or send it to: Chicopee Register, c/o Turley Publications, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069.

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Members of the Chicopee Comprehensive High School Varsity Girls Basketball team pose for a group photo with Santa Claus after his arrival to the Deck the Halls event at Chicopee Comprehensive High School.



Garrett smiles while taking a photo with Santa Claus.

## 'Deck the Halls'



Julian Ruiz Torres, Charlotte Santos and Gianna Sleeper smile at the coloring craft table during the Deck the Halls event at Chicopee Comprehensive High School.



Noah Johnson and Daniel Gauthier get festive with a snow globe craft during the Deck the Halls event.



Lily and Julia smile for a photo as they enjoy the fun activities.

### DECK THE HALLS from page 1

idea of giving back to the community and they just really run with it, because we asked them, 'Do you want to do a toy drive this year? We don't have to, we have a lot going on' and they were like, 'No, we have to do it,' Bouyea said.

"It was very sweet because when we had that meeting and Ms. Bouyea here asked the students, you know, 'We did just do the Gobbles and Good Thanksgiving Drive, we're doing this event. If you don't want to do the toy drive, if you think we might not get a lot,' and the kids were like, 'Honestly, anything is better than nothing,'" Allegretto said. "It was really them that wanted to do it, took the initiative, and they felt, 'Even a handful of gifts going to those in need is better

than us not even trying.' So, it was really sweet of them to think that way."

Student Council members Carilyn Ramos and Juan Feliciano oversaw the snowman snowball toss and were happy to see many families in attendance.

"It's really fun. It's really fun to interact with all the kids. They're all super joyful and super happy, and I'm just so glad to see them super happy," Feliciano said.

"I'm very glad that the turnout came out this way. I'm so happy that everyone's active, and everyone's having fun," Ramos said.

Ramos said, "It's so important to have free events for anyone and everyone."

"The fact that there's so many people that either, their childhoods they ar-

en't able to do as much because of anything and just having the opportunity of everyone just participating and having fun, especially during the holidays, it makes it overall something very good," Ramos said.

Cory Thompson graduated from Comp in 2021 and was a prior secretary for Student Council, stopping by to visit his former teachers.

For Thompson, he was thrilled with the current council and was happy to see events return after the pandemic.

"Seeing these come back after the pandemic makes a world of difference because we're able to have these. Yes, COVID is still around, but we're able to do it in a safer way and still be able to have these impactful moments with the community," Thompson said.

He also enjoyed seeing teachers with their children and families outside the classroom at the event.

"You get to see them as people instead of authority figures, and it makes you appreciate their work that they put in a lot more," Thompson said.

Feliciano encourages the community to check out all the events the Student Council holds at the high school.

"I'd like for them to come check it out, see what it's about and experience the fun," Feliciano said.

Bouyea thanked everyone for attending.

"We'd love to keep seeing them come to our events in the future because it makes our members very happy to see them come," Bouyea said.



Santa Claus checks out the slime-making table as Charlotte Fields and Arberesha Ibrahimi make slime.



A crowd shot of families checking out activities during the Deck the Halls event at Chicopee Comprehensive High School.



# IN THE CITY



TURLEY PHOTOS BY KRISTIN RIVERS

Lambert-Lavoie Elementary School Principal Daniel Phelan provides remarks during the Robert Pajak Memorial Clothing Drive on Dec. 13. The school received donations of clothing including jackets, hoodies, sweatshirts, socks and more from Chicopee Electric in memory of Robert Pajak.

## CLOTHING DRIVE from page 1

Gouley said the clothing drive helps keep the children warm, show they care and show positive news to the community.

He added, "It means a lot" to him and Chicopee Electric Light to do this drive.

"We used to say, 'Bob was a townie,' so he was always invested in the city of Chicopee, and he had a special place in his heart for children. He always wanted them to be treated with dignity. A lot of these children that come to school today, you know, they have (a) difficult upbringing. They're in a shelter, they could be homeless, their clothes could be soiled," Gouley said. "If you're coming to school with soiled clothes, wet clothes, you're not going to want to learn. They have food for the kids but what about staying warm and dry?"

James Lisowski, who is retiring from Chicopee Electric Light after 34 and a half years, said the drive is extremely important.

"You have to remember the folks that kind of paved the way and were in-

volved from the beginning. This doesn't go 31 years without the support of folks like Mr. Pajak, so it's important that you recognize the people that were there at the ground floor and helped build the program to what it is right now," Lisowski said.

Lisowski misses Pajak's mentorship, sharing he took him under his wing when he started as an engineer in 1989.

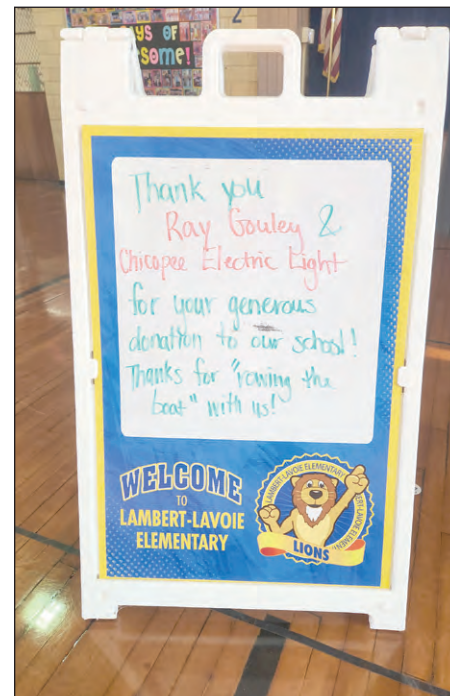
"He was very supportive when I was a young engineer coming into the utility, introduced me to the operational folks and, you know, gave me validity, so to speak, with the linemen," Lisowski said. "So, it was important as a young person to come in and get the respect of the linemen and Bob was there to kind of pave that way for me."

Lisowski wants the community to know they're here to support them.

"That's our entire objective is to do what's in the best interests of the city as a whole," Lisowski said.

Gouley had this message for the school.

"Keep up the good work," Gouley said.



A white board with a message from Lambert-Lavoie Elementary School thanking Chicopee Electric for their donations.

## FOOD BANK from page 1

of 11 million meals to about 107,000 people monthly, and Morehouse expects the number to rise, as residents battle inflation and the end of federal pandemic benefits.

"So, they turn to the Food Bank and our 175 partners, the local, frontline food pantries, meal sites and shelters, to seek food assistance so they can carry on with their lives and get ahead in life," Morehouse said.

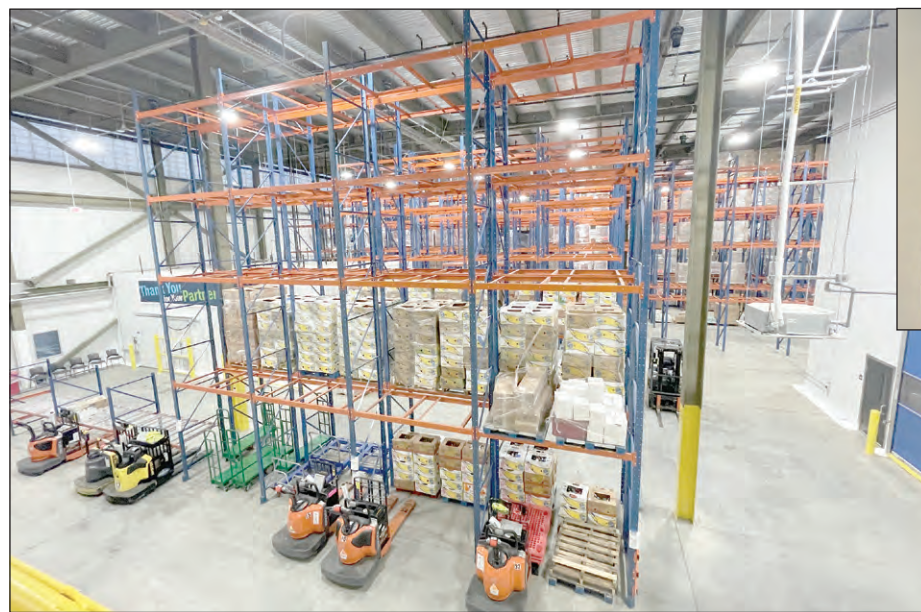
The Food Bank employs 64 people, but that number could rise as management capitalizes on the facility's "incredible" capacity. Morehouse said the staff is currently in a "learning mode," getting accustomed to the space and repeatedly rearranging inventory to maximize efficiencies and food flow.

Statistics are already proving the larger warehouse to be more effective than the previous site.

"In the last three months, we've provided 25% more healthy food than the same period last year, and we're confident we'll be able to sustain that growth moving forward," Morehouse said.

Being able to serve the community better than before is fantastic, said Director of Programs Christine Maxwell. She described the building's teaching kitchen.

"We'll be using that for community programming, for food demonstrations and for cooking classes and nutrition workshops. We weren't able to do that in



TURLEY PHOTOS BY DALTON ZBIERSKI

The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts' new 62,000 square foot facility includes this state-of-the-art warehouse

our old building, so we're excited about that," Maxwell said.

Director of Development Jillian Morgan said moving into a facility that allows the Food Bank to serve its communities at a higher clip is significant. She said the staff is dedicated to making sure food is delivered to as many people as possible who are facing food insecurity, and the larger warehouse pays dividends.

"This was a really important move

for the food bank to be able to increase our capacity and efficiency," she said. "We already have distributed more food in this building, so we know that it's going to serve us for decades to come until we end hunger."

Farm Manager Lee Gadway estimated that the new warehouse can store twice as much food as the old one. He said even the parking lot is twice the size.

"This is amazing," Gadway said. "Just being able to warehouse this much food and being able to think of it as a hub and spoke system on a bicycle. Everything's brought in on the spokes to the hub, and then we deliver it back out."

Gadway said the larger space makes the operation more efficient, as the Food Bank delivers food to places that smaller farms are unable to reach.

Morehouse said people are blown away when they enter the building and see its size and magnitude. He said the Food Bank looks to leverage the power of com-



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MAYOR'S OFFICE

Mayor John Vieau, left, speaks with Tom Bernard on Dec. 14.

munity to create a hunger-free Western Massachusetts.

"The way we're going to do that is by talking to one another and cooking up new ideas, so this new facility and food distribution center has a lot of space for us to invite community groups in, whether they want to volunteer or just collaborate and plan how we can work better together to get more done," Morehouse said.

Morehouse pointed out that the dream could not have become a reality without the assistance of state and federal legislators. The Food Bank raised \$30 million to build its new home, and about half of the money came from state and federal government.

He also expressed gratitude for private donors, as 246 businesses and individuals invested in the food distribution center.

"We couldn't have done it without them, large and small," he said.

Morgan said she is humbled by the amount that was raised, noting that it displays the community's investment in addressing the underlying causes of hunger and making sure that the operation can help alleviate hunger in the community or get rid of it entirely.

"(The \$30 million raised) is a real testament to how much people in this area care about addressing the needs of people who are facing hunger," she said.



A variety of activities and programs will be held out of the Food Bank's teaching kitchen.

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Tours of the Food Bank were offered on Dec. 14. Photo courtesy of the Mayor's Office.



# Sports

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## Pacers prevail over Knights in low-scoring opener

CHICOPEE – Last Tuesday night, Chicopee girls basketball hosted in Holyoke in its season opener, and came away with a 35-31 victory. Both teams had a tough time putting points on the board for the first three quarter. But Chicopee went on a 17-10

run in that final frame in order to overtake the Knights for the win. Aubrie Jodoin had 14 points to lead the team while Giana Garcia had eight points. Holyoke was led by Amilyan Treadwell-Mercedes with 16 points and Kiara Perez with 10 points.



Cassidy Pytel takes the free throw.



Jaylanie Nieves gets the shot under the hoop.



Sophia Guzman tries to overcome an opponent to get the shot off.



Giana Garcia gets the shot off with an opponent attempts to block.



Aubrie Jodoin passes on the run.

## Pacers co-op suffers shutout



Brennan Corcoran looks to clear the puck.

HOLYOKE – Last Saturday, Easthampton defeated Chicopee 5-0 at Fitzpatrick Rink. The Pacers, which now co-op with Chicopee Comprehensive, South Hadley, Granby, and PVCIC, were not able to get on the scoreboard and have just one goal in three games this season, all defeats.



Connor McDonnell heads up the ice after taking possession.



Tyler Denison heads into the offensive zone.



Caleb Lundgren sends a pass up the ice.



Nathan Robitaille reaches out to grab the puck.

## Colts an impressive 4-0 to start season

CHICOPEE – Chicopee Comprehensive boys basketball is out to a 4-0 start on the regular season. They have defeated Pittsfield, West Springfield, Chicopee, and Wahconah in four contests so far this year.

Last Saturday evening at UMass-Amherst, Chicopee Comp defeated rival Chicopee 59-37. The Colts got 19 points from Tineus McCluster. Brody Fay contributed 11 points and Kayden Miller had eight points.

## Follow Turley Sports on Instagram

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# T-Birds suffer 1-0 shutout against Bears

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

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

The biggest fireworks of the period came in the form of mitts dropping between former T-Bird

Dylan McIlrath and Sam Bitten less than four minutes into the action. The early scrap between two of the toughest customers in the AHL added a big boost to both benches but ultimately did not lead to either team cracking into the scoresheet in the first 20 minutes.

As difficult as it was for the teams to establish in the first, it became even more difficult in a second period that saw only seven combined shots between the two teams, with Subban stopping four Hershey attempts and Shepard blocking three Springfield offerings, forcing the scoreless draw into a final period.

The game gave every indication that the first goal would be pivotal, and at 5:31 of the third, Pierrick Dube finally got on the board for the Bears, blasting a slap-

per that glanced off Subban's left shoulder and squeaked across the line just moments before a T-Birds defender could get to the goal line to save it.

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

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

# Shenette declares for modifieds tour

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

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

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

"We're excited for 2024," John-Michael Shenette said. "Last year was about putting a car on the track. We struggled with a mechanical issue that plagued us at all three events and prevented us from logging laps. All-in-all, it was a good year - we were able to build a great group, add a second car and square away all the bits and pieces that it takes to run. The NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour is the best of the best in modified racing, if not NASCAR as a whole. Our team is ready for the challenge. Chasing the prestigious Rookie of the Year award is on our bucket list, but we're also looking for consistency and to chase our first career win in Modified in 2024."

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

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

# Railers fall short to Thunder

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

The Thunder scored the first three goals of the game as Patrick Grasso (10th) and Nico Blachman (2nd, 3rd) put Adirondack ahead 3-0 after two. Joey Cipollone tallied his first professional goal on a tip-in out in front before Ryan Smith (11th) gave the Thunder back their three goal lead, and delivered the game's final score of 4-1.

The first period saw a lot of physicality which led to a total of 24 minutes in penalties. It all started with a Rock 'Em Sock 'Em

fight toward center ice with Railers forward Jake Schultz (0-0-0) and Adirondack defenseman Darian Skeoch (0-1-1). Adirondack let the teddy bears fly early in the period after an odd-man rush goal by Patrick Grasso (1-0-1). Grasso received a pass by Grant Jozefek (0-1-1) from across the slot, moving left to right, to beat Henrik Tikkanen on his high glove side. The next goal didn't come until the 16th minute when the Thunder Forward Ryan Smith (1-2-3) placed a low shot on net from in-between the dots on the rush to give a rebound opportunity to Forward Nico Blachman (2-0-2) and beat the outstretched blocker of Henrik Tikkanen. The Thunder lead the period in shots on goal 13-5.

The second period was a lot quieter compared to the first. Henrik Tikkanen made a lot of high-quality saves throughout the period. Blachman and the Thunder would break through, however. After a failed offensive zone entry by the Railers, Adirondack's Forward Erik Mid-

dendorf (0-1-1) entered the right half of the Railers' defensive zone slowly and stopped at the top of the circle. He found Blachman crashing towards the net late and blasted it past Henrik Tikkanen's low blocker side from the high slot to make it a 3-0 game with 4:37 left in the period. The Thunder led the period with shots on goal 9-8.

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

## GARDEN from page 6

cookies as I have come to find out and favor!

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

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

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

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

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

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**HOLIDAY HAMS**

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USDA INSP. FROZEN 1/2 SPIRAL HAM..... **\$1<sup>29</sup> lb**

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USDA INSP. FROZEN CODINO'S MANICOTTI W/ RICOTTA 4 OZ PAK..... **\$4<sup>99</sup> ea**

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## Chicopee Public Library announces January programming for adults

CHICOPEE – The Chicopee Public Library on Front Street has announced the following January programs geared towards adults.

### Writers' Group

**Thursday, Jan. 4 at 6:30 p.m.**

We invite all those who love to write to join us for a friendly, supportive place to work on your writing. This group shares writing goals, discusses writing processes and strategies, and sets the direction of future meetings. Stacie Klinowski, a local writing teacher, leads the group. This group is for adults.

### Planning for Medicare

**Wednesday, Jan. 17 at 6 p.m.**

Planning for Medicare is a presentation and discussion led by a Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts representative. It's geared towards individuals approaching Medicare Eligibility. Topics covered include health insurance information outside of employer sponsored coverage, such as an explanation of Medicare, the Medicare enrollment timeline, Medigap and Medicare Advantage plans and programs available to early retirees, and COBRA. This is a great presentation to offer to seniors in your community who may still be working and looking to transition. No registration is required.

### Nonfiction Book Group

**Wednesday, Jan. 17 at 6:30 p.m.**

Join us for nonfiction book group on Wednesday, Jan. 17 at 6:30 p.m. This group meets quarterly and will be discussing Stanley Tucci's memoir "Taste: My Life Through Food". This book is available for check out at the Circulation desk.

\*If we are unable to meet on this date due to weather, the book group will meet next Wednesday, Jan. 24 at 6:30 p.m.

### Needlecraft Group

**Thursday, Jan. 18 at 6 p.m.**

Do you want a place to work on your needlecraft projects while you chat with



TURLEY PHOTO BY TEDY MUKUCH, A CHS SENIOR

other crafters? Join us in the Conference Room on the third Thursday of each month to work on your projects.

### How to Host a Zoom Meeting

**Monday, Jan. 22 at 6 p.m.**

In this hands-on-workshop, Charlie Duquette will cover the most commonly used Zoom meeting controls. We'll review how to mute and unmute participants, request that participants turn on their video, rename participants, transfer files and share screens. Whether you've hosted Zoom meetings, or you are brand new to it, come practice and build your confidence and skills!

Requirements: You must be 55 or older to register. You must already have a Zoom account. Please bring your Zoom username and password to sign into your account. You must register in advance. Drop by the Reference Desk at the library or call 413-594-1800x3.

## Chicopee Public Library hosts programs for kids and families

CHICOPEE – Every month, the Chicopee Public Library hosts a variety of programs for children and families. The Youth Services Department seeks to provide opportunities for entertainment and enrichment that explore literacy and promote creativity. Here is the slate of events for January 2024.

LEGO Zone will be held in the community room on Thursday, Jan. 4 at 4 p.m. It is an hour of open building time with a big pile of LEGO bricks for ages six and up.

Little Movers will be held in the children's program room on Fridays, Jan. 5 and 19 at 11 a.m. Babies crawling to 24 months and their caregivers are invited to join us for free play followed by circle time exploring songs, fingerplays and movement!

The Library's All Ages Playgroup will be held in the children's room on Saturday, Jan. 6 from 1-2 p.m. While the children's room play space is always available to kids and families visiting the library, during playgroup there are extra toys to explore. It is a great time for families to meet up and play.

On Tuesdays, Jan. 9 and 23 at 10:30 a.m. in the community room, the library will have a Little Kid Dance Party geared for kids five and under and their caregivers. Older kids are welcome, as well. There will be songs, dancing and big movement.

Storytime will be held in the chil-

dren's program room on Wednesday, Jan. 17 and 31 at 10:30 a.m. Storytime is based loosely around the early childhood literacy skills: sing, talk, read, write and play. It is a great way for preschool aged kids to practice skills they will need for school. Library staff lead a circle time where they read picture books and lead the children in song and movement, afterwards they do a craft or activity.

Kids ages six to nine are invited to come to the Maker Zone for projects, crafts, and experiments focused on Science Technology Engineering and Math. Maker Zone will be held on Thursday, Jan. 18 at 4 p.m. in the children's program room.

This month, the library will be holding a new program called Story Arts. This program is for kids ages five and up to explore picture books. Story Arts will meet on Tuesdays at 4 p.m. for four weeks, Jan. 23 – Feb. 13. Each week will focus on a different artist- Eric Carle, Oge Mora, Dan Santat and Phoebe Wahl. The group will read books and look closely at the artwork, then make a project inspired by that artist's work.

The Anime Club, for middle and high school students, will meet on Thursday, Jan. 25 at 3 p.m. They will be discussing the Crunchyroll Anime Awards.

For more information about the Chicopee Public Library, go to [www.chicopeepubliclibrary.org](http://www.chicopeepubliclibrary.org).

## Chicopee Chamber announces 2024 Shining Stars Awards

CHICOPEE – The Greater Chicopee Chamber of Commerce is proud to announce the four recipients of its prestigious Shining Stars Awards to be recognized on Friday, March 1, 2024, at its annual gala event presented by Westfield Bank at the Castle of Knights.

Ashley Kohl will be recognized as the Greater Chicopee Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year. Kohl is the Creative Director and owner of Ohana School of Performing Arts located on Sherridan Street in Chicopee. She grew up in South Hadley, studying dance, teaching, choreographing & finding inspiration in every moment of her journey. Believing that every person deserves the chance to dance, Kohl founded a nonprofit, One Ohana, Inc., after noticing how many people want to take dance class but do not have the financial means to do so. In December of 2023, Kohl will close on the purchase of Ohana's location. She has served on the board of directors for Center Nursery School, volunteered extensively on behalf of Square One, Make A Wish of MA & RI, and Unify Against Bullying, and organized annual charity dance concerts for local and national non-profit organizations.

Mercedes-Benz of Springfield will be recognized as the Greater Chicopee Chamber of Commerce Business of the Year. From its growing workforce and customer base to the number of organizations it supports, Mercedes-Benz of Springfield has shown tremendous growth and community impact since it opened at 295 Burnett Road in 2017. The dealership is owned and operated by Michelle and Peter Wirth who both have extensive careers with Mercedes-Benz, are involved in multiple community organizations, and have received numerous recognitions, including most recently two Super 60 Awards in the Revenue & Give Back categories by the Springfield Regional Chamber.

Junior Achievement of Western Massachusetts will be recognized as the Greater Chicopee Chamber Non-profit Organization of the Year. As a member of Junior Achievement USA, Junior Achievement of Western Massachusetts is a part of the world's largest organization dedicated to educating

students about workforce readiness, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy through experiential, hands-on programs. Annually Junior Achievement of Western Massachusetts serves over 10,000 students across 48 schools, including Chicopee High School, Chicopee Comprehensive High School, Bellamy Middle School, and Westover Job Corps.

Daryl Grabowski will be recognized as the Greater Chicopee Chamber Volunteer of the Year. Grabowski has been an active part of the Chamber community since The Gaudreau Group (now USI) became a member in 2012. After just a few years of Chamber engagement, he was nominated to the Board of Directors in 2014 and has since served the maximum of three three-year terms. Grabowski has been an essential member of the Chamber's Annual Golf Tournament committee, making it one of the Chamber's most successful events every year.

The Chicopee Chamber Shining Stars Awards began in 1985 when Ernest Laflamme Jr. was recognized as the first Citizen of the Year. Since then, the Chamber has paid tribute to an extraordinary Citizen, Business (since 1989), Volunteer (since 1993), and Nonprofit (since 2014) at its annual Shining Stars event. Recipients are selected by a Nominating Committee chaired by Ernest Laflamme, Jr. and comprised of Carol Campbell of Chicopee Industrial Contractors, Theodore Hebert of Teddy Bear Pools, City Treasurer Marie Laflamme, Michael Siddall of Siddall & Siddall, P.C., and Jeffrey Sattler of Liberty Bank. The Chicopee Chamber believes it is important to honor the people and the organizations who provide vital services to our community.

Next year's Shining Stars event takes place Friday, March 1, 2024, from 6 – 10:30 p.m. at the Castle of Knights on Memorial Drive. The Chamber invites its membership and the public to come celebrate this year's Shining Stars and their impact in the community. Tickets are \$65/person and are on sale starting December 21.

To purchase tickets or inquire about sponsorships, visit [www.chicopeechamber.org](http://www.chicopeechamber.org) or call the office at 413-594-2101.

### SCHOOL COMMITTEE from page 7

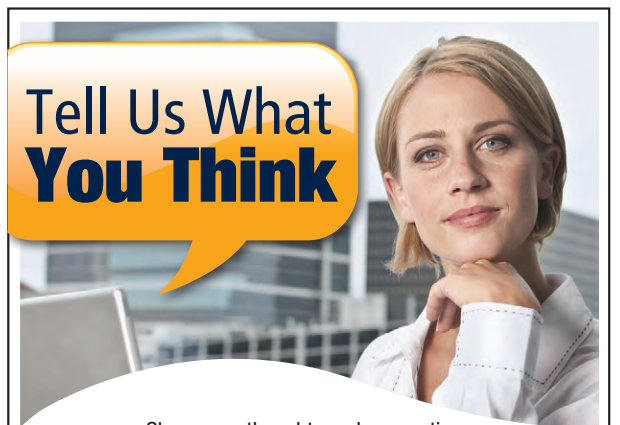
Mayor John Vieau, chair of the School Committee, responded positively to the idea, noting that the city just redid Rivers Park and is working on a master plan to revive Szot Park. He said the city has 30 parks and it is important that they are all ADA compliant.

"I think it's a great idea to collaborate and work together," Vieau said. "I think we have to look at also the legality of city and municipal property on the municipal side and our municipal parks versus the actual school grounds and see if we can work out something where I think we can collaborate and work together."

Before the conversation concluded, Vieau looked back to his days as a Chicopee student

attending Stefanik School; he is proud of the progress the city has made.

"Reminiscing, we've come a far way from the spider at Stefanik School in the '70s when I went there. It was five feet off the ground over asphalt," he said.



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RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS

By Barb Turcotte

This story actually began while on the search for some hay and greens to enhance my nativity set. That's when I met Sarah, a younger sister of Susan (Szetela) Lopes who is the owner of Paul Bunyan's Farm and Nursery in Chicopee.

Much of this content was conveyed to me by Sarah and although Susan was humbled, she has allowed us to share Sarah's thoughts about her. Though much of Susan's generosity is entwined with her business, this truly is about the beautiful soul she is. One example is, she has a brother-in-law from Guatemala and Susan has given back in wonderful ways to the Guatemalan people through humanitarian aid.

Sarah explained, with seven siblings they had to learn to be independent yet were taught to watch out and care for one another. Their dad worked at Sunshine Village as well as being a teacher in Chicopee for over 50 years. At age 86, he remains very active, still maintaining a position on the Chicopee School Committee along with his daughter Susan. Mom did an incredible job of keeping the household organized as you can well imagine what's involved with that size family!

Susan always claims she has the best job in the world as she loves being outdoors; what would be work to many, for her is her blissful place. She's apt to enjoy the simplicity of watching a flock of birds while enjoying the elements of her surroundings. Susan doesn't feel she just has a Christmas tree business; she truly believes she's in the "Business of Happiness." All her staff have the same belief as do the owners of the property, Kaz and Kathy Machowski. It's a simple one, "The customer is their priority and it's always a priority to make the customer happy."

The Machowski's have been like second parents and incredible mentors to Susan over the years. The farm once had dairy cows and vegetables but with the dream of one day growing Christmas trees. Susan started working for Kaz 37 years ago and took over the business 16 years ago. Though the trees sell seasonally, this is a year-round commitment and one that Susan is very respected for since there are so few female farmers. She does all the replanting of the trees herself, the pruning, watering, etc., and continues to maintain a high standard of quality. That certainly explains why she has three generations of families who come back each year to buy these beautiful trees. And many don't come emp-

ty handed but instead bring her gifts of pierogies, cookies and handmade items as a token of their love for her and all she does.

One previous employee said when she was younger, she absolutely loved working for Susan and what an amazing worker she was. She taught kids at an early age about work ethics by example and truly loved each one of them. She laughed as she joked saying when they got paid, they'd go to the store to stock up on Band-Aids for the next week of work. Her mom never worried because she knew Susan would take good care of not only her child, but everyone's. Mom laughed sharing that if she stopped to say hi, Susan was disappointed if she didn't have her kids with her.

In the past, many family members have contributed to the success of the business by working in some capacity, but all love to come and support Susan. With this family consisting of 18 grandchildren, when you enter "the farm" the atmosphere is filled with a warmth making you almost feel like part of their big family.

Sarah, who by the way served five years in the Peace Corp, comes down from New Hampshire some weekends to help, said it's so amazing to see 25 cars lined up on opening day to come and tag their trees. Some of these people have been coming for 30 years to get their perfect Christmas tree. Just a tidbit of information, it takes approximately 10 years to grow a seven to eight-foot tree. That involves a who lot of nurturing!

Susan is supportive of veterans and incredibly kind to her customers. She is grateful for those people who helped her build her business and could talk about Christmas trees all day long!

I love what Sarah quoted from her dad's advice, "If you want a friend, you need to be a friend."

Random Acts of Kindness don't always mean doing something for strangers; it can include an unexpected kind gesture for family and friends.

Sarah said, "Susan is someone who contributes to bettering our world and remembers that Random Acts of Kindness make a difference in someone's life." Make someone's day joyous by doing your own Random Act of Kindness.

*If you'd like to tell me a story about a Random Act of Kindness please contact me at bdt514@aol.com or 413-788-7514. 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! ~ Barb

BUSINESS

Freedom Credit Union raises more than \$1,000 for Unify Against Bullying

SPRINGFIELD – Throughout the month of October, Freedom Credit Union and its members raised more than \$1,000 for Unify Against Bullying.

"Unify Against Bullying is an organization we are very proud to support," said Debra Mainolfi, Freedom Credit Union West Springfield branch officer and member of the Unify Against Bullying executive board. "Every year in the U.S., over 3.2 million students are victims of bullying, and Western Massachusetts is no exception. Most children who experience bullying don't report it. Unify Against Bullying makes a positive impact in our schools and commu-

nities to bring people together to speak out against bullying in a unified voice."

Unify Against Bullying pledges to bring an end to bullying through the celebration of true diversity.

Their motto is: "When we stand together, we stand as one."

The organization works hard to make sure that victims of bullying know that they are not alone—that they are, in fact, supported by a loving, caring community of fellow students, teachers, parents, siblings, business leaders and many others.

Freedom Credit Union is located in Chicopee at 1976 Memorial Drive.

Chicopee resident Ahmed Faisal earns #1 amateur tennis ranking in U.S.

CHICOPEE – The city is bursting with pride for one of its own, Ahmed Faisal, who has remarkably ascended to the #1 amateur ranking in the United States Tennis Association.

Journey of Dedication

Ahmed's journey, beginning just six years ago without ever holding a racket, is nothing short of inspiring. From Chicopee High School's doubles team to dominating national tournaments, his rise has been meteoric. In 2019, he was New England Men's 3.0's top player, and despite the challenges of the pandemic, he continued to shine, winning the Silver Bracket finals in Arizona.

The Power of Mentorship

A pivotal moment came in 2021, when Ahmed met Judy Dixon, UMass tennis coach and USTA New England Hall of Famer. Her guidance transformed Ahmed's game, elevating him from a 3.0/3.5 NTRP rating to a staggering 4.5.

More Than a Player

Ahmed's passion extends beyond playing; he's also Coach Ahmed, inspiring young minds through Springfield's NJTL chapter. His commitment to tennis and his community is unparalleled.

Looking Forward

Ending 2022 as New England's No. 2 in the Men's 4.5 standings was just a start. This year, he's not only conquered New England but also the entire country, claiming the national top spot.

As he continues his studies in industrial engineering at Western New England University, Ahmed's aspirations soar high. With dreams of playing professionally and representing Team USA, his journey is a testament to hard work, dedication, and the transformative power of mentorship.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE CHICOPEE MAYOR'S OFFICE

Chicopee resident Ahmed Faisal has risen to the rank of #1 amateur in the United States Tennis Association.



Congratulations, Ahmed!

Your story is a beacon of inspiration to us all. Here's to your future successes, both on and off the court!

Candle with Care! Dec. 11 marked Candle Safety Day

Candle fires are most common in the winter holiday season

STOW – As Massachusetts enters the time of year when candle fires are most common, Gov. Maura T. Healey proclaimed Dec. 11 to be Candle Safety Day, and State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine is reminding residents to follow safety guidelines.

"There have been more than 1,000 candle fires in Massachusetts over the past 10 years," State Fire Marshal Davine said. "These fires caused 11 deaths, 191 injuries, and over \$35 million in losses. More of these fires started in December than in any other month, and especially on the days leading up to Christmas. If candles are part of your celebration or decoration, please use them carefully."

Candles are part of many holiday traditions this time of year, including Hanukkah, Christmas, and Kwanzaa. As a result, candle fires tend to peak on Dec. 25, and December and January accounted for nearly 25% of all such incidents in the period from 2018 to 2022. State Fire Marshal Davine offered the following safety tips to reduce the risk of fire:

No matter the season, have working smoke alarms on every level of your home. Check the manufacturing date printed on the back, replace alarms that are more than 10 years old, and test alarms every month to be sure you're protected.

Place lit candles on sturdy, non-com-

bustible saucers or candleholders. Keep anything that can burn at least one foot away on all sides.

Always extinguish candles when you leave the room or go to sleep. Never leave a lit candle unattended.

Keep candles out of reach of children and pets. Store matches and lighters up high where kids can't access them.

Consider switching to battery-operated flameless candles.

Flashlights are much safer than candles during a power outage. Keep batteries on hand for emergency use.

There were 115 candle fires in Massachusetts last year, and 92 took place in residential settings. The most common location was the bedroom, followed by the living room, bathroom, and kitchen. One of these fires claimed the life of a 93-year-old Kingston woman with limited mobility, and another claimed the life of a 61-year-old Springfield resident whose home had no working smoke alarms.

Candle fires peaked in Massachusetts in 1999, with local fire departments reporting more than 340 of them. Candle Safety Day was established the following year, designating the second Monday of December to promote awareness of the problem.

"Since that time, we've reduced candle fires by more than 65%," Davine said. "Let's continue to practice safe candle use, especially around the holidays."

For more candle safety resources, including Spanish-language information, visit the DFS website.

REMEMBER TO RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER



# PUBLIC NOTICES

**(SEAL)  
COMMONWEALTH OF  
MASSACHUSETTS  
LAND COURT  
DEPARTMENT OF THE  
TRIAL COURT  
CITATION**

Case No. 18 REG 43509

Plaintiff: Julian M. Bazalar

To: the Honorable Mayor for the City of Chicopee; Town Clerk for the City of Chicopee, a municipal corporation, located in the County of Hampden; Dorothy B. Swidrak, and Patrick A. Chamberlain, both of Chicopee; Joanne D. Musiak of Ludlow; Brian P. Pedersen of Westfield, all in the County of Hampden, all in said Commonwealth of Massachusetts; John P. Swidrak, Jr. of Millsboro, in the State of Delaware; Westfield Bank, a duly existing savings bank, having a usual place of business in Westfield, in the County of Hampden, and said Commonwealth of Massachusetts; John P. Swidrak, deceased, formerly of Chicopee, or his heirs, devisees and legal representatives; Joseph Steck, also known as Joseph L. Stec, deceased, formerly of Chicopee, or his heirs, devisees and legal representatives, and to all whom it may concern:

Whereas, a complaint has been presented to said Court by Julian M. Bazalar, of Chicopee, County of Hampden, and said Commonwealth, to register and confirm title in the following described land:

A certain parcel of land with the buildings thereon, situate in said Chicopee, bounded and described as follows:

**SOUTHEASTERLY**  
by Marion Street, a total distance of Seventy-Nine and 55/100 (79.55) feet as shown on said plan;

**SOUTHWESTERLY**  
by Highland Avenue, One Hundred Thirty-Seven and 07/100 (137.07) feet as shown on said plan;

**NORTHWESTERLY**  
by Land as shown as land of The Maher Family Trust, a total distance of Ninety-Six and 99/100 (96.99) feet as shown on said plan;

**NORTHEASTERLY**  
by Land as shown as land of Karen Langome, Susan Hambley and Alan Janulevicz, now owned by Patrick C. Chamberlain, a total distance of One Hundred Thirty-Three and 50/100 (133.50) feet as shown on said plan.

The above-described land is shown on a plan filed with said complaint and all boundary lines are claimed to be located on the ground as shown on said plan.

If you desire to make any objection or defense to said complaint you or your attorney must file a written appearance and an answer under oath, setting forth clearly and specifically your objections or defense to each part of said complaint, in the office of the Recorder of said Court in Boston (at 3 Pemberton Square, Room 507, Boston, MA 02108), or in the office of the Assistant Recorder of said Court at the Registry of Deeds at Springfield, in the County of Hampden, where a copy of the plan filed with said complaint is deposited, on or before the **Twenty Ninth** day of **January** next.

Unless an appearance is so filed by or for you, your default will be recorded, the said complaint will be taken as confessed and you will be forever barred from contesting said complaint or any judgment entered thereon.

WITNESS, GORDON H. PIPER, Chief Justice of said Court, this **Seventeenth** day of **November**, in the year two thousand twenty-three.

A True Copy Attest:  
DEBORAH J. PATTERSON  
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From the office of:  
Nyles L. Courchesne, Esq., 12  
School Street,  
Agawam, MA 01001.  
**18 REG 43509**  
12/08, 12/15, 12/22/2023

**Commonwealth of  
Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampden Division  
413-748-7760  
Docket No. HD23P2528EA  
Estate of:**

**James M. Crowfoot  
Date of Death:  
September 17, 2023  
INFORMAL PROBATE  
PUBLICATION NOTICE**

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Lynn Quinlan of Chicopee, MA.**

**Lynn Quinlan of Chicopee, MA** has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve **without** surety on the bond.

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.  
12/22/2023

**Commonwealth of  
Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Hampden Probate and  
Family Court  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
(413)748-7758  
Docket No. HD23P2593EA  
Estate of:**

**Jane C. Bergeron  
Date of Death: 10/26/2023  
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 **Gregory LaFountain of 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: **Gregory LaFountain of Springfield, MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsu-**

**pervised 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 01/16/2024.**

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

**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: December 19, 2023  
**Rosemary A. Saccomani**  
Register of Probate  
12/22/2023

**SALE OF  
MOTOR VEHICLES  
Under G.L. c.255 Sec. 39A**

Notice is hereby given by Interstate Towing, Inc. pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 255, section 39A, that on 12/29/2023, at Interstate Towing, Inc the following Motor Vehicles will be sold at private sale to satisfy our garage keeper's lien thereon for storage, towing charges, care and expenses of notices and sale of said vehicles.

1999 Dodge Dakota  
VIN: 1B7GG22Y3XS187032  
Steven Morales Vidal  
212 Main St.  
Wilbraham, MA 01095

2002 TOYOTA CAMRY  
VIN: 4T1BF32K62U529631  
Rodrigo Dos Santos  
148 S Quinsigamond Ave.  
Shrewsbury, MA 01545

2002 Toyota Tundra  
VIN: 5TBBT441X2S247948  
D Buckingham  
21 Westhill Rd.  
North Falmouth, MA 02556

2003 Toyota Highlander  
VIN: JTEHF21A230132052  
Yolangeles Pabon Serrano  
42 W Glen St.  
Holyoke, MA 01040

2004 Honda Pilot  
VIN: 2HKYF18564H585988  
Melanie Rodriguez  
16 Juniper Ct.  
Greenfield, MA 01301

2005 Chevrolet Venture  
VIN: 1GNDV03EX5D129784  
Eduardo Hernandez  
81 Division St.  
Waterbury, CT 06704

2005 Ford Explorer  
VIN: 1FMZU77K75UB46337  
Tyves Rocco Rovito-Duprey  
682 Enfield St.  
Enfield, CT 06082

2005 Freightliner X line

Motorhome  
VIN: 4UZABFDC05CN82091  
El Shaddi Dental Associates  
PC  
Po Box 486  
Randolph, MA 02368

2006 Yamaha Yzfr1  
VIN: JYARN15E16A002292  
Rafael Ortiz  
97 Washburn St.  
Springfield, MA 01107

2009 Ford Taurus Sel  
VIN: 1FAHP27W49G109527  
Omar Rivera  
PO Box 6482  
Holyoke, MA 01040

2010 Ford Focus Se  
VIN: 1FAHP3FN7AW214684  
Mark Antonellis  
28 Eddy St.  
Waltham, MA 02453

2014 Toyota Camry  
VIN: 4T4BF1FKXER426902  
Yasandra Feliberty  
6 Cycle St.  
Westfield, MA 01085  
12/15, 12/22, 12/29/2023

**Commonwealth of  
Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Hampden Probate and  
Family Court  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
(413)748-7758  
Docket No. HD23P2475EA  
Estate of:**

**Eugene E Lavigne, Jr.  
Date of Death: 10/20/2023  
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 **Garrett Lavigne of Monson 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: **Garrett Lavigne of Monson 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 01/05/2024.**

**This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objec-**

**tion 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: December 06, 2023  
**Rosemary A. Saccomani**  
Register of Probate  
12/22/2023

**Commonwealth of  
Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Hampden Probate and  
Family Court  
50 State Street  
Springfield MA, 01103  
Docket No.  
HD03P157671TP1  
In the matter of:  
Edward Los  
of Chicopee, MA  
Protected Person/Disabled  
Person/Respondent  
CITATION GIVING  
NOTICE OF  
CONSERVATOR'S  
ACCOUNT**

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, you are hereby notified pursuant to Rule 72 of the Supplemental Rules of the Probate & Family Court, that the **First and Final Account Permanent Conservator** account(s) of Beverly Los of Chicopee, MA as Conservator of the property of said Respondent has or have been presented to the Court for allowance.

**You have the right to object to the account(s).** If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this court on or before 10:00 a.m. on the return date of **01/19/2024.** This day is NOT a hearing

date, but a deadline date by which you have to object to the account(s). If you fail to file the written appearance and objection by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you, including the allowance of the account(s).

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

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

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

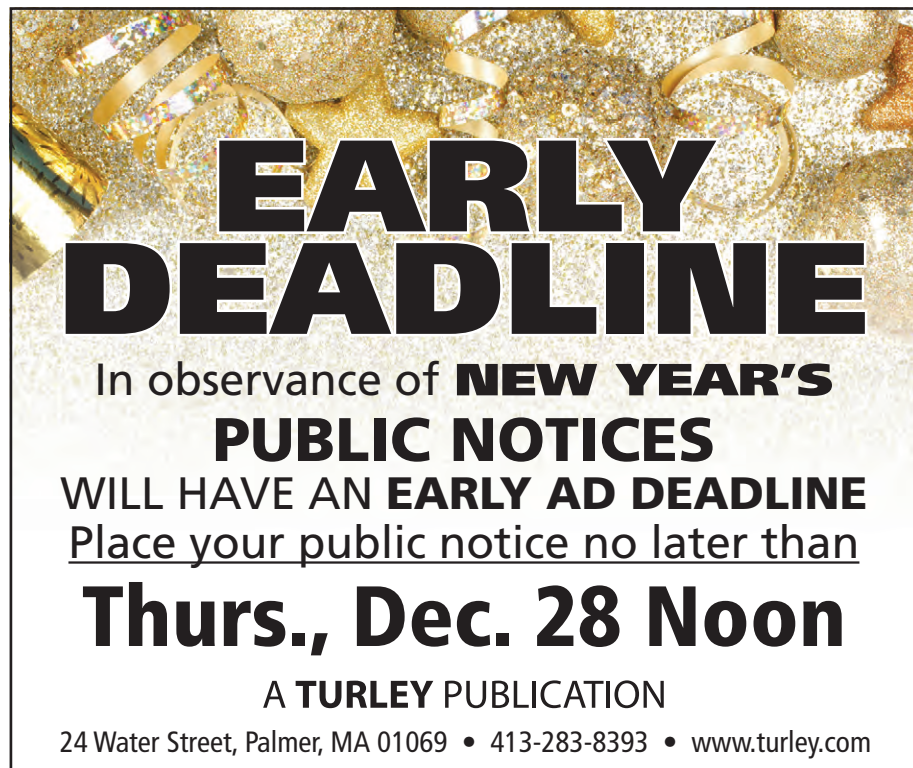
**The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named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

Witness, Hon. **Barbara M. Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.

Date: December 08, 2023  
**Rosemary A. Saccomani**  
Register of Probate  
12/22/2023

See more Legals  
on page 14

**Please check  
the accuracy of  
your legal notice  
prior to submission  
(i.e., date,  
time, spelling).  
Also, be sure  
the requested  
publication date  
coincides with  
the purpose of the  
notice, or as the  
law demands.  
Thank you.**



**EARLY  
DEADLINE**

In observance of **NEW YEAR'S  
PUBLIC NOTICES**  
**WILL HAVE AN EARLY AD DEADLINE**  
Place your public notice no later than  
**Thurs., Dec. 28 Noon**  
A **TURLEY PUBLICATION**  
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Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampden Division  
Docket No. HD23P2514EA  
Estate of:

Casimira Helen Matthews  
Also Known As:  
Kay Matthews  
Date of Death: 10/1/2023  
INFORMAL PROBATE  
PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner Louise Cosentini of Chicopee, MA

a Will has been admitted to informal probate. Louise Cosentini of Chicopee, MA has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve without surety on the bond.

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.  
12/22/2023

Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampden Probate and Family Court  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
Docket No. HD23P2506GD  
In the matter of:  
Krystyna Pilat  
Of: Chicopee, MA  
RESPONDENT  
Alleged Incapacitated Person

CITATION GIVING  
NOTICE OF PETITION  
FOR APPOINTMENT OF  
GUARDIAN FOR  
INCAPACITATED  
PERSON PURSUANT TO  
G.L. c. 190B, §5-304

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been

filed by Wladyslaw Pilat of Chicopee, MA

in the above captioned matter alleging that Krystyna Pilat is in need of a Guardian and requesting that

Wladyslaw Pilat of Chicopee, MA  
Irena Kubel of Palmer, MA

(or some other suitable person) be appointed as Guardian to serve Without Surety on the bond.

The petition asks the court to determine that the Respondent is incapacitated, that the appointment of a Guardian is necessary, and that the proposed Guardian is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court and may contain a request for certain specific authority.

**You have the right to object to this proceeding.** If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of 01/05/2024. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

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

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara M. Hyland, First Justice of this Court.  
Date: December 08, 2023  
Rosemary A. Saccomani  
Register of Probate  
12/22/2023

Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Hampden Probate and Family Court  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
(413)748-7758  
Docket No. HD23P2543EA

Estate of:  
Angela Rodriguez  
Date of Death: 11/27/2023  
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 Isander Robles 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: Isander Robles 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 01/10/2024.**

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

**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: December 13, 2023  
Rosemary A. Saccomani  
Register of Probate  
12/22/2023

## Surviving your first holiday without a loved one

SPRINGFIELD -- There may be no "joy" in the holidays when facing them alone for the first time after the death of a loved one.

Looking at an empty chair at the table can bring a rush of emotions and it doesn't matter how long it has been, whether this year or in the past, since a family member or friend died. Grief never takes a holiday, noted Dr. Stuart Anfang, vice chair for Clinical Services, Psychiatry at Baystate Health.

"It's only natural to experience a range of emotions such as sadness, loneliness, and a feeling of helplessness and hopelessness as you navigate the hustle and bustle of the holidays alone. Those feelings of grief, especially during Thanksgiving and the December holidays, often become more intense for those preparing to spend these joyous occasions for the first time without a spouse, child or other beloved family member or friend by their side," said Anfang.

But, you don't have to suffer alone. "Recognize that you are not alone, and that mixed or sad feelings during the holidays are not uncommon. Do not suffer in silence and watch for the tendency to isolate or withdraw from others. Denying or bottling up your feelings--or self-medicating with alcohol or drugs--are worrisome signs," said Anfang.

Anticipation of the holidays can cause more stress than the holidays themselves.

Anfang noted that planning for the approaching holidays is the first step in developing your coping strategy, and there is no wrong or right way to deal with the holidays. Begin by making decisions that are comfortable for you and your family. Use your awareness that things are different to help you plan what makes sense. Holiday preparations, traditions, and family time may all feel less than normal. It is also important to remember that your emotions and energy level are strongly connected. Good self-care routines are important as you prepare and deal with the holiday season. Get plenty of rest and pay attention to healthy eating. Use alcohol in moderation. Plan self-care activities that will feed your mind, body and spirit. Give yourself permission to take care of yourself.

Additional tips from the American Psychological Association for making a plan that works for you include:

Are there some traditions you would rather not do because they are just too painful to relive? Why not introduce something new into your routine?

Do you want to celebrate in the same place and be reminded of your loved one? Maybe you might want to

consider traveling this season instead of staying home.

Who are the people you want to be around? Enjoy their company when they invite you for a visit.

Can you handle an all-day celebration? Be flexible with yourself and let the host know you may only stay for a short while.

The APA also reminds those grieving that once the holiday finally arrives, "just like any other day it only lasts 24 hours."

Anfang stressed that it's okay and not a sign of weakness to ask for help, whether it's help preparing some holiday treats, decorating the home, shopping, or just a shoulder to lean on.

"If you wish, you can find a way of formally remembering your loved one who is not physically present with you. For example, serving their favorite dessert and reflecting on the joy that it brought to your loved one in the past. It is stressful to experience the holiday without your loved one, but you can find ways to honor and include them," he said.

Together you can share a holiday that is different but still meaningful and hopeful. As a family, you can add a memory ritual into your holiday by including a special activity such as looking at old photo albums, making or displaying a special holiday decoration with significant ties to the deceased.

Many people also find solace in giving as it is the "season of giving," noted Anfang.

According to the American Association of Retired Persons, "it's amazing how in times of grief, sometimes the biggest comfort is to give to others," whether it's a physical present or doing something nice for others in need or who are also hurting.

Many people volunteer during the holidays, such as serving meals at a local shelter or distributing toys to needy children.

Still, for some the holidays may offer a reprieve from sad feelings and you may find yourself caught up in the moment as you experience the joy of family and friends around you.

"If you are noticing more significant symptoms causing impairment at work, school or home---problems with sleep, low energy, dramatic change in appetite or weight, inability to concentrate, frequent crying, easy irritability, thoughts of hurting yourself or wanting to die---that may be time to seek some professional evaluation. A good place to start can be your primary care provider or a trusted clergy. Bottom line---help is available and do not suffer in silence," said Anfang.

## 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](http://www.publicnotices.turley.com)

## Visiting Angels approved to provide free in-home care to eligible veterans

REGIONAL -- Visiting Angels West Springfield has recently been approved by the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide non-medical home care for eligible veterans of the United States Armed Forces.

VA benefits offer financial assistance for home care to veterans through several programs.

The VA Aid and Attendance program helps to provide access to homecare for veterans and their spouses who need help with daily tasks or who suffer from a disability or illness. Through Visiting

Angels West Springfield, veterans who require help with daily living from another individual can receive help with everyday tasks in their home such as bathing, eating, cleaning, and memory care.

The Homemaker and Home Health Care Aid program helps veterans to receive assistance with everyday tasks with the help of a homemaker or home health aid. Visiting Angels West Springfield helps eligible veterans with in-home tasks which allows those who prefer to stay in their homes

rather than live in a separate facility.

Visiting Angels West Springfield is offering in-home care for veterans who meet specific service, disability, income, and asset criteria in order to be eligible for these VA programs. To figure out if a veteran is eligible to receive assistance from these programs, they can contact the Visiting Angels West Springfield office at (413) 733-6900 for more information and assistance with the application process.



# Classifieds

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## CLASSIFIED DEADLINES

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FRIDAY AT NOON  
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## JUNK REMOVAL

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We load it & take it.  
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CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED

## SERVICES



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REMOVAL SERVICE\*\*\*\*\***  
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**A DUMP TRUCK**  
Cleaning out attics, cellars, garages, estate cleanouts, scrap metal removal. **413-569-1611 or 413-374-5377**.

**BILODEAU AND SON ROOFING.**  
Established 1976. New re-roofs and repairs. Gutter cleanings and repairs. Licensed/ insured. Call **(413)967-6679**

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## SERVICES

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Find archives of this local newspaper at [www.newspapers.turley.com](http://www.newspapers.turley.com)

## SERVICES

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## SERVICES

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### TOWN OF PALMER: CLERK BOARD OF HEATH

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## REAL ESTATE

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**ALL REAL ESTATE** advertised herein is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act, which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation, or discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, or intention to make any such preference, limitation, or discrimination." We will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. All persons are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised are available on an equal opportunity basis.

**WEST WARREN:** 1 BR., off street parking, first and last required. **774-922-0529**.

## FOR RENT



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

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

Advertise your **HOME IMPROVEMENT SERVICES** in our classifieds.  
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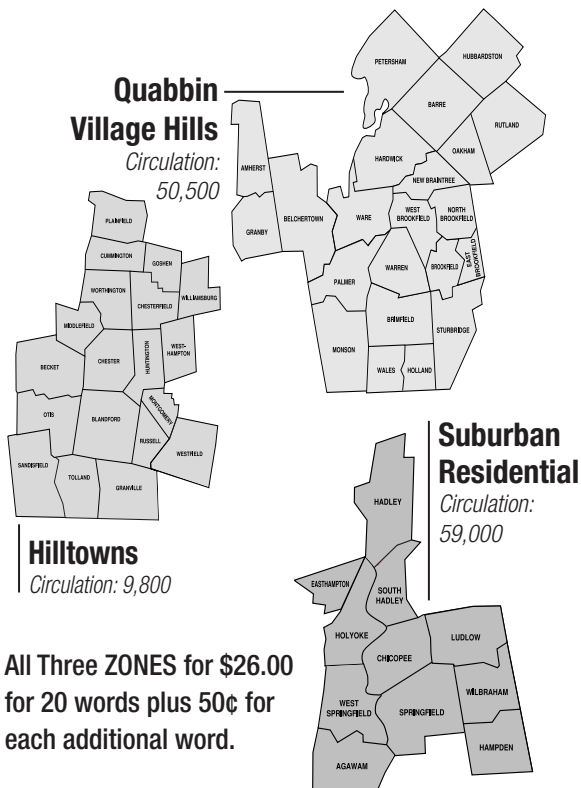
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# Friends of the Library present \$18,000 check to library

The annual meeting capped off successful fundraising year

By Kristin Rivers  
Staff Writer  
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CHICOPEE - The library was presented with a \$18,000 check on Dec. 6 during the Friends of the Chicopee Public Library's Annual Meeting.

Friends President Lisa Pasternak explained the check is "a culmination of funds that we have raised throughout the year" and is presented to the library at their annual meeting.

Pasternak said 80% to 85% of fundraising is comprised of events held by the Friends, including the Annual Golf Tournament, dessert sales, spaghetti suppers, the Sneaker Drive, concerts and more.

Additionally, 100% of memorial or in-kind donations received throughout the year are given to library.

"This year, because we had such a successful fundraising year, \$18,000 went to the library, which is the largest donation the Friends have ever made to the library," Pasternak said. "I'm just so proud of the board for their creativity and their hard work and effort, and that's how we were able to raise so much money."

Pasternak appreciated how the board thought of new events, had great energy and included more of the community. On her favorite fundraising events in 2023, she said they were the Golf Tournament, which raised over \$11,000, and the Sneaker Drive, with 589 pairs of sneakers donated, raising \$340.

"Whether we raise \$100 or whether



A group photo of the members of the Friends of the Chicopee Public Library with Trustee Norm Girouard and Director Laura Bovee during the Friends of the Chicopee Public Library Annual Meeting on Dec. 6.

Turley photo by Kristin Rivers

we raise \$11,000, we want everybody to feel involved and that they could be part of the Friends or participate in events that the Friends are running," Pasternak said.

Also, during the Annual Meeting on Dec. 6, two board members were recognized by the Friends for their contributions: Carole Harms and Marge Zybala.

Harms, the Friends' first treasurer, and Zybala, who served for three years and was a member of planning the Golf Tournament, resigned from the board to enjoy their retirements.

"So, we just wanted to say a quick thank you for all their service that they do," Pasternak said.

Pasternak added that the Annual Meeting also recognizes a Friends board member who goes above and beyond every year, with this year's Friend of the Year announced as Carrie McDonough.

"She was just there for every single event and helping out," Pasternak said. "She just had surgery to replace a hip, so she was really not in good shape this summer but was always there to support, and we just wanted to recognize her and say a thank you."

Pasternak expressed excitement for what 2024 has in store for the Friends, including two new fundraisers.

"We're hoping to run a 5K Walk, Run and Roll. We're trying to finalize the date now but we're looking at the end of April (or the) beginning of May," Pasternak said. "And then we're also hoping to run somewhere, probably next October, so October 2024, a Community Tag Sale and Craft Fair. So, bringing in those kinds of things and just you know, again, trying to engage other members of the community."

Pasternak wants the community to

know the Friends is open to any ideas they may have for future events and fundraisers.

"If they have a fundraising idea, if they think something, 'Oh I'd be really excited to participate in this. I wish the Friends did this.' Please tell them that they can reach out, and we will explore any ideas that come our way," Pasternak said.

Additionally, the Friends' mission is to fundraise to provide support to the library for extra programming and events.

Pasternak encourages residents to support the Friends in any way that they can, whether by becoming a member, joining, supporting or participating in an event or stopping by to say hello.

"Anything that the community can do to help support us absolutely supports the library," Pasternak said.



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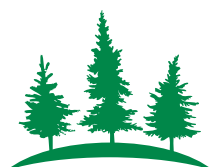
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