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AGAWAM

ADVERTISER NEWS

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Rivers celebrates 100th

AGAWAM – A hundred years of a life well lived was celebrated last Saturday, March 14, by Robert R. Rivers of Feeding Hills.

He was born in North Agawam, and as a lifelong resident had been educated in its public schools and worked in the paper mills as a boy. He fondly recalls swimming in the Agawam River with his friends and playing football near its banks off Walnut Street.

Bob is a veteran of WWII having volunteered with his twin brother, Earl, at age 17. He served in the US Navy in the Philippines. A welder by trade, his career took him from years at the Springfield Armory until its closure, to Westover AFB then to his retirement.

He has enjoyed a hobby of refinishing antique trunks and maintaining his home that he shares with his wife, Jessie, who will be 95 in May. They have just celebrated their 75th Wedding Anniversary this past January.

A large family celebration was held earlier this month.



NEED OUTLINE

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Sacred Heart's Parish Center starts new walking group

By Christina Gioscia
Correspondent

AGAWAM – On Wednesdays and Thursdays at 9 a.m. at Sacred Heart's Parish Center their walking group meets. The group is led by Gina Smus and Sue Scantlen, they are both members of St. Martha's Guild at Sacred Heart Parish. Their group is fairly new, but they hope to welcome more community members into the group and continue regular meetings. The group's activity is dependent on the weather, although Smus shared that a slight drizzle won't stop her and Scantlen from walking.

Smus shared how the group got started out.

"So, this is probably going to be a month now. I started with Sue, because I needed somebody, just in case, like I can't be here, she's here. So, we work together. And, about a month ago, I have to say, what we did, we started Wednesday and Thursday, just until we

can get it going. Some days we have like six of us and some days there's two of us. It varies. And what I'll try to do is I always put on the Sacred Heart Parish website, 'Hey, we're walking today.'

Smus shares why having a group to walk with is important and often more enjoyable than doing it alone.

"So, it supports them. We

talk. Especially when we're with Sue, and she'll stop at a gravesite and talk about the family member. So, it's very educational. We communicate as we go, so your kind of are that person they can bounce things off of, what's going on in their life. At the end of the walk, you

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TURLEY PHOTO BY CHRISTINA GIOSCIA
Sacred Heart Parish's Walking Group leaders, Gina Smus and Sue Scantlen.

Community rallies behind softball team, forced to forfeit potential finals spot

By Gregory A. Scibelli
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AGAWAM – Due to a small data entry error that took place in the Agawam High School Athletics office,

Agawam High School's varsity softball team had one less placeholder than needed on its schedule required to allow Agawam full participation

in the Western Massachusetts Class A Tournament.

While the Pioneer Valley Interscholastic Athletic Conference puts on the se-

ditional tournament now, the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Conference rules on such issue because they oversee a team's overall schedule.

As of

press time, the PVIAC had ruled that Agawam softball could participate in the quarterfinals and semifinals, but even if Agawam advances to the finals, they would have to forfeit their spot in the tournament to their semifinal opponent.

As of press time, Agawam had defeated Central in the quarterfinals and were scheduled for participation in the semifinals later in the week. Their opponent was not known as of press time.

Since the issue was made public late last week, there has been an outpouring of support from the community, including several officials who have written to the MIAA asking for their ruling to be reversed so Agawam can participate in the finals

if they are able to win their semifinal game.

Mayor Christopher Johnson, who also chairs the Agawam School Committee, and Agawam's legislative delegation, State Rep. Nicholas Boldyga, and State Sen. John Velis, all wrote letters to the MIAA seeking for them to allow Agawam's participation in the finals.

On social media late Monday, AHS Athletic Director Karen Gomez said she was meeting with the MIAA on Tuesday morning to discuss the situation.

"While the school has acknowledged and accepted responsibility for the scheduling oversight, I respectfully ask the Board to consider

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TURLEY PHOTO BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

The Agawam High School softball team competes in the Western Massachusetts Class A quarterfinals on Monday. See this week's editorial about the issue on page 4.

FY2027 operating budget submitted to city council

By Gregory A. Scibelli
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AGAWAM – In early June, the Agawam City Council is set to hold a public hearing for the fiscal 2027 operating budget.

The town's operating budget, which includes funding for the Agawam Public Schools, is proposed to increase by 3.3% overall, going from about \$119.3 to about \$123.3 million, according to the proposal submitted to the council by Mayor Christopher Johnson.

The budget for the Agawam Public Schools will increase by less than \$2 million, but does account for one of the largest chunks of the increase in the budget. Costs continue to

climb for various cost centers, including health insurance, energy, and contractual obligations. Both the police and fire department budgets will also have nominal increases in their budgets, according to the proposal.

Also being voted on are the three enterprise funds for the town. The water department, wastewater department, and municipal golf course are self-sustaining funds that have budgets provided by user fees, and business revenue in the case of the golf course.

Residents who want to be heard on the operating budget can attend the city council's public hearing on Monday, June 1. The council meeting takes place at 7 p.m. at the Agawam City Council

High school holds art show



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Students from advanced art classes showcased their many works of art in the rotunda at the Spring Art Festival held on Thursday, May 7 at Agawam High School.





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SPORTS

LACROSSE

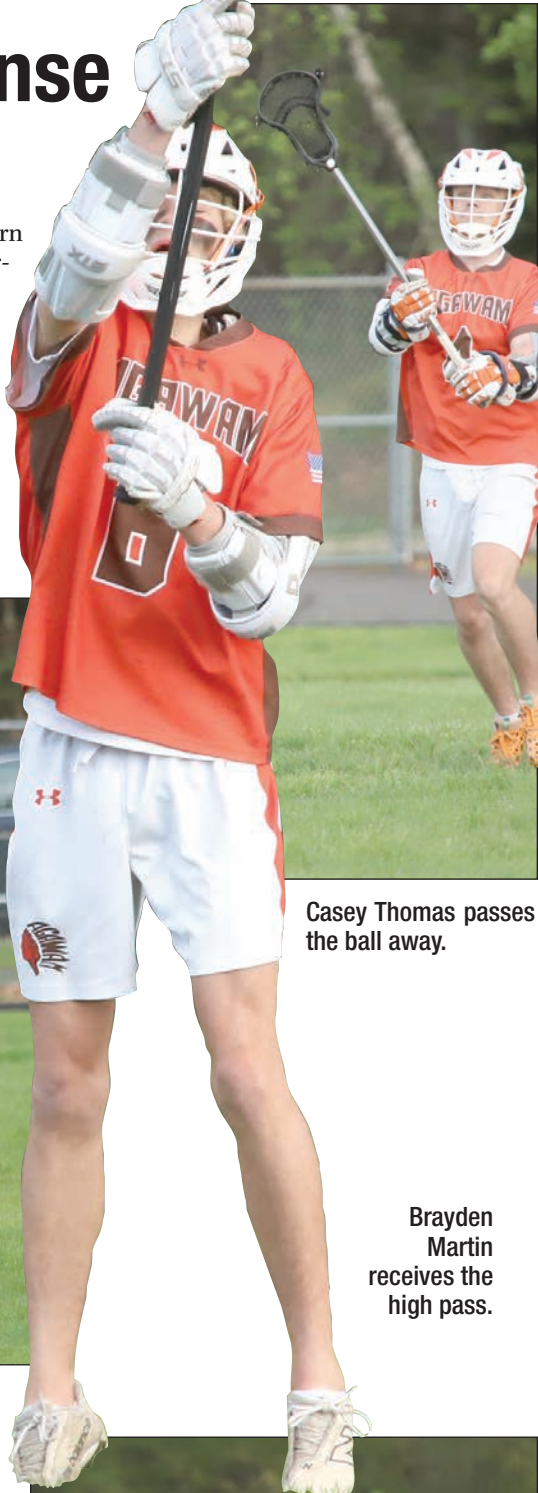
Brownies offense keeps shining

BELCHERTOWN – Last Friday evening, Agawam High School boys lacrosse continue its trend of high-scoring games as they defeated host Belchertown 16-6 to improve to 11-3 on the regular season. The Brownies had one game left in the regular season as they were scheduled to face Pope Francis. Agawam will then likely have a spot in

the Western Mass. tournament before participating in the Division 2 state tournament the following week.



Casey Thomas passes the ball away.



Brayden Martin receives the high pass.

Brayden Federico makes a centering pass.



Liam Grealis looks for the open teammate.



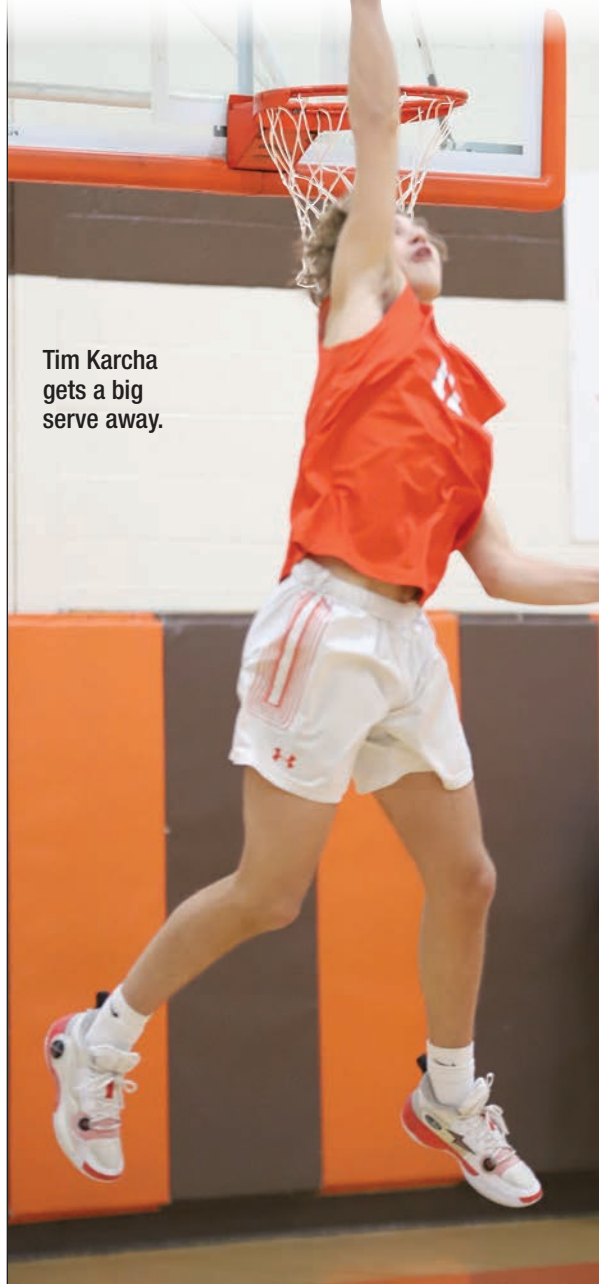
Jason LaRocque makes a pick-up on defense.



Justin Lareau fights for a loose ball.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

VOLLEYBALL



Tim Karcha gets a big serve away.



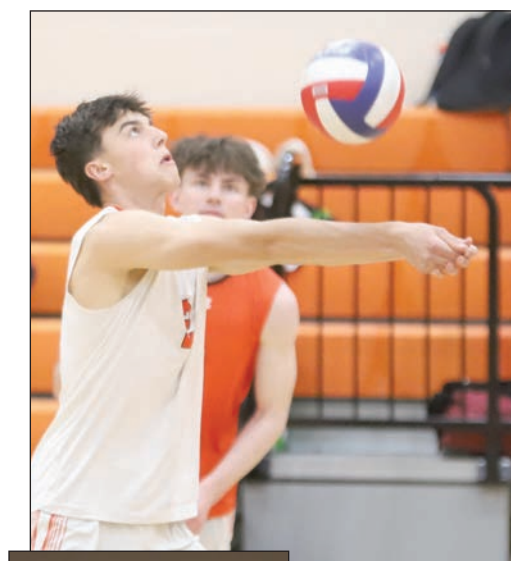
Michael Lumkoski sets near the net.

Volleyball completes regular season

AGAWAM – Last Friday evening, Agawam High School boys volleyball completed the regular season with a 3-0 win over Milford High School. Chase Gerani and Tim Karcha had 10 kills each while Elijah Ramos had 17 assists. Agawam finishes the regular season at 13-5 and entered the Western Mass. tournament earlier this week, drawing a semifinal matchup with Chicopee Comprehensive.



David Zhmaidziak gets a set from the back line.



Above, Jacob Nesen gets an easy bump. Right, Jason Mihalicenco goes for the block.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

BASEBALL

Brownies baseball team draws first round playoff matchup

AGAWAM – Last Monday afternoon, the Agawam High School baseball team closed out the regular season with a tough loss against Belchertown High School.

The Orioles defeated Agawam 8-4 thanks to five runs in the middle innings to break a 3-3 tie.

Agawam was led by Cole Ingham with two hits. Aiden Lavelle had a hit and two RBI. Agawam baseball finishes the regular season with a 5-11 record. While they made the Western Mass. tournament, the Brownies are too far out of the top 32 in Division 2 to make the state tournament.



Elijah Ramos sends a hit over the net.