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# AGAWAM

## ADVERTISER NEWS

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## E-bike ordinance now in full effect

Bikes should remain off sidewalks

By Quinn Suomala  
Correspondent

AGAWAM – The Agawam Police Department is enforcing the recent e-bike ordinance to ensure pedestrian safety.

The ordinance was passed during the July 5, 2025 city council meeting. City Councilor Dino Mercadante proposed and sponsored the ordinance.

The Agawam Police Department recently reminded Agawam residents of the ordinance, as this is the first full summer it will be enforced.

Mercadante felt it was needed to protect Agawam residents.

“It’s necessary because the influx of e-bikes now in town... has become a real problem and before we get somebody killed and say we should have done something, let’s be proactive,” he said.

Mercadante especially was concerned about children riding the e-bikes or getting harmed by other e-bike riders. “It has become a necessity to add some teeth to what the state already has,” Mercadante said. “It gives our law enforcement another tool to work with.”

The council unanimously supported the resolution in the hopes that it would be preventative of e-bike accidents.

“I’m glad we’re taking some action now before there is any major issue with electric bicycles,” Councilor Gerald Smith said.

The police are reminding Agawam citizens of this ordinance as summer kicks off and students are out of school, leading to increased e-bike traffic.

Already the police department has seen an increase in e-bike use, even from last year, and they want to take preventative action to avoid accidents and injuries.

The police department hopes the ordinance will help with e-bike education.

“The ordinance is just about safety,” Lt. Dan Bonafilia said. “It helps to clear up any confusion about the rules.”

Bonafilia mentioned the ordinance is only clarifying for Agawam residents, but also for the police department, so everyone can be aware of proper e-bike safety.

The ordinance reminded residents of requirements for e-bike riders. The first requires all riders to wear a helmet, no matter their age.

Mercadante was concerned about the amount of young teens riding e-bikes without helmets, and believed that this ordinance would allow additional prevention of this dangerous occurrence.

E-bikes are also not allowed on sidewalks in Agawam. All e-bike riders are required to remain on the road or the bike lanes.

Additionally, the police would like to remind people that passengers are only allowed on e-bikes if the bike is designed for them. Individuals are still welcome to attach child seats or trailers to the bikes if needed.

Furthermore, they ask all e-bikers in Agawam to avoid speed-modifying alterations to their bikes and to not ride more than two abreast.

The goal of these update ordinances is to prevent e-bike related accidents and injuries. With e-bikes on the rise, especially with school out, the police department wanted to ensure that everyone would remain safe.

“We don’t want to take e-bikes away from anyone, it’s about making the rules clear and preventing injuries,” Bonafilia said.

Any bike that has working pedals, has a motor under 750 watts and has a top speed under 20 mph qualifies as an e-bike.

Violations of the ordinance can result in a fine of up to \$50.



TURLEY PHOTOS BY CHRISTINA GIOSCIA

Dr. Randi Lebar and Adult Services Library Associate Kristen Frost at Dr. Lebar’s talk, “Music and Memory”.

## Agawam Public Library hosts ‘Music and Memory’ program

By Christina Gioscia  
Correspondent

AGAWAM – On Monday June 22, Agawam Public Library hosted Dr. Randi Lebar’s presentation, “Music and Memory”. This talk dove into her personal story of how the piano became so much more than an instrument for Lebar’s mother Eliane when she was diagnosed with dementia. This presentation touches the hearts of those who have known someone with dementia and those who are open to learning new things about community members we interact with every day. The “Music and Memory” presentation tells the story of how Elaine



“Music and Memory” information display at the presentation on June 22 at Agawam Public Library.

Lebar went viral playing piano on TikTok and became a representation for those with dementia on social media.

Lebar shared how her idea of posting her mother playing piano on TikTok began.

“At the time it really was about Covid; that was my focus. So, that was the initial thing,” Lebar said. “But,

over time I realized that to another degree, it was just the dementia concept, that you can have dementia and still be a person and interact and be a contributing member of society, even from behind the locked doors of a memory care unit. So, I think it sort of morphed into that kind

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## Senior Center, library to be designated as cooling centers

By Gregory A. Scibelli  
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AGAWAM – Excessively oppressive weather was expected for late this week and is expected to last into next week. Thursday, July 2 and Friday, July 3 were expected to be among the worst heat and humidity with Thursday, July 2 forecasted to have an air temperature of 100 degrees or more, resulting in a heat index of feeling like near 110 degrees.

Town officials are advising residents to take caution and stay indoors or in another cool location when the heat is oppressive as it can be very dangerous if exposed for a lengthy period of time.

For those who have an issue finding access to air condition, the town will utilize two of its buildings as a cooling center. However, both locations will not be open on Friday, July 3 due to the observance of the Fourth of July holiday. Cooling centers in the community are also not available on the weekends.

According to a press release earlier this week from Mayor Christopher Johnson, Agawam Senior Center will be open for anyone who needs to stay cool on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tuesdays, the hours are 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

The second location is Agawam Public Library. It will be open as a cooling center Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Look to the town’s website and other advertisements local for hours for next week, as well as future heatwaves this summer.

For those looking for some

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## Summer concert series, KidsFest are underway

By Gregory A. Scibelli  
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AGAWAM – Weather permitting, the 2026 SummerFest, sponsored by the Agawam Parks and Recreation, Agawam Rotary Club, and Agawam Cultural Council, got underway at School Street Park.

For many years, the SummerFest has featured weekly concerts held at the park for residents to enjoy. The events were previously held at the old Veterans Green in front of School Street Park. Now, both the concerts and Veterans Green are now located at School Street Park. The park has a beautiful band shell for performances and has been hosting the events for more than a few years now. The pavilion also serves as a great backstop for people looking

to watch the concerts under cover.

This year, there are 10 events scheduled. There are nine concerts scheduled from Wednesday, July 1 to Wednesday, Aug. 19. There is also this year’s National Night Out, which has become a major tradition in town where all of the town’s public safety officials are featured and celebrated. The town turns out with several of the town’s fleet of police, fire, and other emergency vehicles for families to see and explore. Agawam Night Out is scheduled for Friday, July 24 this year and will include an outdoor movie night for local children. Hoppers is the scheduled movie for the event.

The concerts include: Cobblestone Road, Ultimatum, Project 267, Jukebox Hero’z, Bennie & the Jets, Retro Floyd,

Lindsey LaBella from Kix 100.9, Jason Hackworth from Kix 100.9, and General Gist. Concerts usually begins at 7 p.m., though the Aug. 19 performance by General Gist will begin at 6 p.m.

Another huge part of the summer events is the annual KidsFest. These events are held at 10 a.m. also at School Street Park and are geared specifically for local children. This year, there will be four events instead of the three that have been traditionally held for many years.

Events will be held Wednesday, July 1, Friday, July 17, Wednesday, July 29, and Wednesday, Aug. 12. Robert Clark, the Toe Jam Puppet Band, Airborne Comedians, and Professor Paddy-Whack are the scheduled performers

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Matthew and Daniela Balsamo at the School Street Park Concert last year.

FILE PHOTO



# SPORTS

## Brownies pick up first win of summer

AGAWAM – Last Wednesday evening, Agawam girls summer soccer defeated Ludlow 5-1 at Agawam High School's turf field for their first win this summer. Agawam was scoring early and often in

the game, jumping out to a 3-0 lead in the first half. Agawam improved to 1-4-1, but still has a long way to climb in the standings. The Brownies are off for the holiday week and return to action early next week.



Clockwise from above: Bella Santaniello dribbles up the field after making a play on defense; Gabriella Ramos controls play near midfield; Cecelia Litz plays the ball off her body; Samantha Izzo chases after the ball; Kaylen Paquette sends a pass away; Kaylen Paquette sends a pass away; Goalie Kayleen Sullivan picks up the ball ahead of a shot.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



## Ron Silk picks up win in modifieds event at Thompson Speedway

THOMPSON, CT — A beautiful afternoon greeted the new and returning fans, teams and supporters at Thompson Speedway Wednesday night. Rookie Charles Beal led the start of the Street Stock main event with outside polesitter Mike Viens going around on lap one. Back under green, Jarrod Soucy stole the lead as Al Stone III and Ryan Lineham joined the picture up front. Veterans Stone and Lineham motored under Soucy by lap six with Ryan Lineham taking the win over Al Stone III and Soucy holding on for third. Rookies Mikey Flynn and Andrew Brousseau brought the Thompson Sunoco Modifieds to green before Rob Schultz made contact with the backstretch wall to call

out the early caution on lap two. Brousseau battled hard with Keith Rocco from then on with the rookie facing the multi-time track championship veteran. Rocco and defending champion Todd Owen made the move under Brousseau before the halfway point and that is how they ran under the twin checkered flags at the end of 35-laps. The Late Models were next to take the track with Jared Meteras and Travis Hydar putting on a show out front. The two went toe-to-toe as defending champ Jake Johnson and Icebreaker winner Matt Lowinski-Loh joined in for a four-way battle. Hydar and Johnson were next to scuffle with Johnson powering under the rookie but the Stafford champion

was far from finished. Hydar kept glued to his tail, making a move to the inside as he tried to lead lap twenty until losing it in turn three. Hydar held on and kept going but left Jake Johnson to take the Wednesday night win over sophomore Late Model racer Jared Roy and veteran Jared Materas. The Pro Truck Challenge returned to Wednesday Night Racing action at Thompson Speedway with Randy Burr quickly taking control at the front of the field. Through a pair of quick-spin cautions, Burr proved to be the better restarter in the field, launching away each restart all the way to the 35-lap win over Adrien Paradis and Tyler Chapman. The SK Light Modifieds

got off to a shaky start before Todd Douillard and Daltin McCarthy kept things under green out front. Before too long, John O'Sullivan and Kevin Davis entered the picture under Douillard and began to chase down McCarthy. While the chase continued, Douillard's day ended off turn two with a spin into Danny Gamache to end their nights on lap 10. In the final restart O'Sullivan pulled away but Davis came back with a vengeance to take the win ahead of O'Sullivan and RJ Marcotte at the line. The Monaco Modified Tri-Track Series rounded out Wednesday's racing program at Thompson Speedway with Noah Korner and Mike Christopher Jr. fighting hard for the lead in the opening laps.

Content to ride it out, veterans Ronnie Williams and Ron Silk followed the leaders before slowly picking them off with the turn three slingshot underneath. After blowing the engine in his primary car in practice, Jon McKennedy ran home to Chelmsford to grab the back-up car and just made the tail of the starting field. By the lap 19 caution for a single-car spin in turn two, McKennedy sat tenth on the grid. It continued to be the Ronnie and Ron show out front with Williams leading Silk around the 5/8-mile oval until the lap 39 caution sent the field pit-side for fresh Hoozier rubber. Patrick Emerling would use the superior pit stop to take the restart lead but Williams, McKennedy

and Silk stayed nose-to-tail behind him. One final restart with 14 laps remaining left this talented gaggle of cars to fight it out to the end. Ultimately it was Ron Silk who took down the \$10,000 win with Patrick Emerling across the line in second followed by Ronnie Williams, Austin Beers and Jon McKennedy to round out the top-five. Thompson Speedway is back in action in just two weeks on Wednesday, July 8 with Twisted Tea Winged Wednesday! The lightning fast New England Supermodified Series (NESS) visits the Thompson highbanks alongside the Thompson Sunoco Modifieds, Late Models, SK Light Modifieds, Street Stocks and Thunderstock Crown Vics with a 6 p.m.