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# AGAWAM

## ADVERTISER NEWS

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### AHS students receive congressional award

By Quinn Suomala  
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – Two students at Agawam High School were honored with a congressional award for their work in developing an app.

Seniors Aiden Jordan and Matilda Larochelle worked on creating an app, JournalNGo for the congressional app challenge.

They worked on this app for several months and, with the help of fellow student Justin Barbaneagra, were able to submit it to the competition.

Jordan and Larochelle were inspired to create JournalNGo as they wanted to encourage people to practice writing.

“We started by asking what app we use the most and we found that it was the notes app,” Larochelle said. “We felt there was a lack of incentive to continue us-



Agawam High School Students Justin Barbaneagra, Aiden Jordan and Matilda Larochelle were honored with a congressional award for the app they developed. TURLEY PHOTOS BY QUINN SUOMALA

ing the notes app so we wanted to integrate a point system.”

As people use the app they are able to create a private account and log their journals. They can also create as many journals as they want.

“Households that only have access to one device will be able to use it with multiple people,” Jordan said. “That way people will have their privacy.”

Everytime a person logs into an app they get points that they can use to buy stickers in the app's shop. However, if a person doesn't log on for multiple days they will lose points.

Larochelle and Jordan hope that people will be able to use this app for a variety of reasons, whether it is for making to-do lists or using it as an official journal.

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### Lego League makes it to states

By Quinn Suomala  
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – The Agawam Lego League, also called the Gear Heads, made it to the state competition this year after many months of hard work.

The Lego league is for children in grades four through eight and for the competition the team members are asked to build a robot that navigates set challenges and to come up with a solution for a current problem in the world.

LEGO | page 16

### Starting the new year off with loads of laughter at the library

By Quinn Suomala  
Staff Writer



Throughout his Laughter Program, Dr. Steve Sobel read out different jokes to get the audience laughing.

AGAWAM – Agawam Public Library held the Laughter Program with Dr. Steve Sobel as a way to help people start the new year off on a bright spot.

Sobel came in and gave a talk on the importance of laughter and living in the moment.

“When you can laugh at yourself and with other people...you

not only build a great team, you build yourself,” Sobel said.

Throughout the talk he made a variety of jokes, gave out advice and got people in the room to interact with and encourage one another.

“I'll be talking about laughing more in life, appreciating the little things and celebrating life,” Sobel said.

On top of those topics, he also mentioned enhancing relation-

ships and communicating positively with people.

He hoped that this talk would help inspire people as they kicked off the year.

“I will also inspire people in the audience to go after their dreams,” Sobel said. “I hope that

*“Life can knock you down but it doesn't have to knock you out.”*

– Dr. Steve Sobel

they can have the resilience and the energy to keep on keeping on”

He encouraged people to go out and try to achieve what they want. He

hopes they learned to not take themselves too seriously and also to keep pushing through whatever obstacles are in their paths.

“Life can knock you down but it doesn't have to knock you out,” Sobel said. “So I hope a few people leave here and say, ‘I'm getting back up.’”

Sobel has been to the APL before and he was glad that they decided to reach out again to invite him back.

He once wrote a column for the Agawam Advertiser and he has spent much of his time doing youth sports in the area, so he was happy to come back to the area for this talk.



Dr. Steve Sobel had his program attendees pair up to exchange different jokes and encouraging words.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY QUINN SUOMALA

LAUGHTER | page 5



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# Stanley Park's offers opportunity to create Whimsical Fairy Walk



Let imagination take flight. Build a fairy house to be featured along the Stanley Park's Fairy walk. SUBMITTED PHOTO

AGAWAM – Join in for a magical weekend at Stanley Park's Whimsical Fairy Walk, happening on Saturday, May 3, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday, May 4, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. This event is moving to the Spring and will kick off the park's opening weekend. Bring family and friends to experience the enchanting world of fairies with a self-guided walk through the fairy-inspired trails. Discover handcrafted fairy houses, participate in fun activities, and create unforgettable memories.

and support this whimsical community event; Volunteers: Help with event set-up, guiding visitors, or running activities; Fairy House Builders: Let imagination take flight. Build a fairy house to be featured along the walk.

For more information or to sign up as a sponsor, volunteer, or fairy house builder, visit the website at [www.stanleypark.org](http://www.stanleypark.org) or contact us by at [development@stanleypark.org](mailto:development@stanleypark.org) or phone at 413-568-9312 x 108 or x112.

The fairy walk is looking for business sponsors, volunteers, and fairy house builders to help make this event truly enchanting. Sponsors: Showcase a business

Don't miss this chance to be part of the magic. Mark the calendars and help bring the fairies to life at Stanley Park's Whimsical Fairy Walk.

## AWARD | from page 1

The journal entries themselves will be sorted by date, most recent to oldest.

"They will be able to see how their writing skills are progressing over time," Jordan said. "People using it for therapeutic reasons will be able to see if it is getting better, worse or even identify what is going on or causing them stress."

Throughout the process of creating the app, Larochelle and Jordan all worked together to brainstorm the app and different functions of it.

Jordan did the majority of the coding while Larochelle worked on the different submission details. Barbaneagra helped Jordan with debugging the code.

The coding work was done on javascript, code.org and app lab.

"I personally have spent over 250 hours coding it and just trying to debug it and get everything to work," Jordan said.

"I say I spent about 72 hours working on the essays and editing the video production," Larochelle said.

Principal Jim Blain was proud of his students' work for them to win this award.

"I was just blown away," Blain said. Congressman Richard Neal also gave his congratulations to the students.

"What you have done will set you on course for a career to embrace this talent that you all exude," Neal said.

Jordan and Larochelle are both grateful for the recognition they are receiving for this app.

"It feels very rewarding for the amount of time spent," Jordan said. "To get something this big...it really shocked me."

They are also grateful for their teacher Michael Stinson who supported them throughout this process.

"I would definitely like to thank Mr. Stinson," Jordan said.

Moving forward, Jordan, Larochelle and Barbaneagra hope to continue to develop the app so they can make it accessible to the general public.

"We are probably going to expand it during programming team meetings, brainstorm some things we can add and change," Larochelle said.

To learn more about this competition, people can go to <https://www.congressionalappchallenge.us/about/>.



Agawam High School staff, Congressman Richard Neal and the students' families all came together to congratulate Agawam High School Students Justin Barbaneagra, Aiden Jordan and Matilda Larochelle. TURLEY PHOTOS BY QUINN SUOMALA



Various community and school leaders congratulated Agawam High School Students Justin Barbaneagra, Aiden Jordan and Matilda Larochelle on their award.



Congressman Richard Neal personally congratulated and presented the Congressional App Award to Agawam High School Students Justin Barbaneagra, Aiden Jordan and Matilda Larochelle.



Agawam High School Students Matilda Larochelle, Aiden Jordan and Justin Barbaneagra showed off the app they developed.



Agawam High School Jim Blain congratulated his students on winning the Congressional App Award.

## Tickets available to for Colleen Coronation Ball

AGAWAM – The Agawam St. Patrick's Committee is excited to begin its Irish Season at St. Anne Country Club. This year's event will crown the 2025 Agawam Colleen and court. They will participate in the Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade as well as many other activities throughout the year.

This year's coronation will be held on Saturday, Feb. 8 beginning at 5:30 p.m. The ceremony will begin at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$55 for adults and \$30 for children under 12. To reserve tickets, please email Abbie at agawampatricks317@gmail.com.

## Irish night Feb. 22

HOLYOKE – The Hibernians of Hampden/Hampshire Counties invite the public to attend the Traditional Irish night in Holyoke, at the Log Cabin on Saturday Feb. 22. There will be valet parking.

Tickets are only \$50 per person. Call Joe O'Connor at 413-627-7148 or Fran Hennessey at 413-785-5687 by Feb. 18 or go online to Eventbrite.com. The event will feature the Keohane and Kenneally Irish American Band and a Corned Beef and Cabbage dinner with Ribs by Mick Corduff executive chef at the Log Cabin. The event was sold out the past 2 years so get tickets early. The Hibernians wish a Happy St. Patrick's Day to all.

# More city plow operators needed

AGAWAM – The Town of Agawam, Chief Procurement Officer in consultation with the Department of Public Works Department hereby requests written applications and bids from qualified contractors and/or individuals that wish to be considered for hire for snow plowing services.

Bids can still be made to the Town of Agawam to serve as a contract plow operator for the winter season, which has already begun.

The Town will make one or more awards for contracts sufficient to cover the Town's requirements. The Town of Agawam also reserves the right: (1) to reject any or all bids, or any part thereof; (2) to waive any informality in the bids; and (3) to accept the

bid that is in the best interest of the Town (4) to negotiate a price on Item 1, and (5) to add additional vendors after the deadline if necessary. Consideration will first be given to the contractor/individual who has successfully and responsibly provided snow removal services to the Town in the past, and whose primary place of residence or business is in the Town of Agawam.

Item 1: The contract will be awarded to the responsible, responsive and qualified bidder who offers the low price for each location meeting minimum equipment specification cited in Section II, with consideration given to the contractor/individual who has successfully and responsibly provided snow removal service to the

Town in the past and whose primary place of residence or business is in the Town of Agawam

Item 2: The contract shall be awarded within the categories specified in Section II, with consideration given to the contractor/individual who has successfully and responsibly provided snow removal service to the Town in the past and whose primary place of residence or business is in the Town of Agawam.

The snow and ice season shall commence on November 15, 2024 and expire on April 30, 2025. All successful contractors/individuals are expected to have their equipment ready at the beginning of each season.

## Scholarship and fellowship funds available

AGAWAM – The Horace Smith Fund, located in Westfield, Massachusetts has scholarship and fellowship money available for graduates of Hampden County public and private high schools. Graduating high school seniors and students already in college may apply for Scholarships of up to \$12,000. Those in their final year of college and previous college graduates pursuing advanced degrees may apply for Fellowships of \$15,000. Applicants must maintain at least a B average in college and be enrolled as full-time students.

Awards are made based on both academic achievement and merit. Of great

importance is a personal written account of why the student feels deserving of financial assistance and their goals in pursuing higher education.

Last year, \$297,000 was awarded to 24 individuals. Scholarships were given to 16 graduating seniors from 13 Hampden County high schools. Five scholarships were also awarded to current college students to assist them in completing their undergraduate degrees. Three fellowships were given to college graduates pursuing advanced degrees, who had graduated from Hampden County high schools.

The Horace Smith Fund was established in 1899 by the successful and

generous philanthropist named Horace Smith, co-founder of Smith & Wesson, established in Springfield. The scholarships and fellowships are named for Walter S. Barr, a West Springfield businessman, whose widow left the bulk of the family estate to The Horace Smith Fund in 1950.

Completed applications must be received either electronically or by mail to The Horace Smith Fund at 16 Union Avenue, Suite 2K, Westfield, MA 01085 no later than March 15. Applications are available at local high school guidance offices, college financial aid offices, online at [www.HoraceSmithFund.org](http://www.HoraceSmithFund.org) or by phoning (413) 739-4222.

## Pyramid Management Group secures mall loan extension

SYRACUSE, N.Y. – Pyramid Management Group, one of the largest, most innovative, privately-held shopping center developers in the Northeast, has successfully worked with its lender to secure a three-year extension for the loan on Holyoke Mall at Ingleside in Holyoke. This extension will allow Pyramid to continue to reinvest in the property and ensure its continued health, vibrancy and success while serving a very large trade area that includes western Massachusetts, southern Vermont and New Hampshire, northern Connecticut and eastern New York State.

"The resilience and strength of our shopping centers, along with Pyramid's continued efforts to reimagine, redefine and enhance the guest experience, enabled us to successfully restructure and extend the loan," said Stephen J. Congel, chief

executive officer, Pyramid Management Group. "We look forward to continuing that success over the coming years and remain committed to ensuring the health, vibrancy and longevity of the center for decades to come."

Holyoke Mall has been Western Massachusetts' dominant enclosed shopping center for over 45 years. Anchored by Macy's, JCPenney, Target, Hobby Lobby and Best Buy, Holyoke Mall offers over 150 retail shops including restaurants like 110 Grill and Sumo Japanese Steakhouse and entertainment destinations Round 1, Billy Beez and Altitude Trampoline Park.

Holyoke Mall is a major employment driver in the area and an economic catalyst for the region. The property totals 1.6 million square feet, with more than 3,000 people employed by Pyramid and its tenants.

## National Alliance on Mental Illness to host zoom meeting

AGAWAM – The National Alliance on Mental Illness of Western Massachusetts annual meeting will be held on Sunday, Jan. 19, beginning at 1 p.m.

The special guest speaker will be Cris-tianna Borelli. Recently, she was invited to and competed at the National US/Woman of Achievement Pageant in Irvine, California this past November. She returned home with the national title of Ms US 2025, the first woman from New England to do so in the 10-year history of the pageant. She will present her dual platform of mental health advocacy, and suicide prevention to help, support, and empower people from all walks of life who have struggled with a mental health issue. Now, she is

using her crown as a symbol and a tool to help others who struggle in silence regarding their mental health. Hear her inspiring words of hope.

This event is open to the public. Absentee ballots will be mailed only to NAMI-WM members who are eligible to vote. If the ballot has not been received by Jan. 13 please call the office. The ballots must be received in the office by Friday, Jan. 17.

To register please go to [namiwm.org/events](http://namiwm.org/events) and click on the registration link or go directly to Eventbrite.com and search for NAMI Western Mass.

A Zoom link will be provided to those who are registered. For more information contact the office.



# Schools & Youth

### COLLEGE NOTES

#### Fall Dean's List at Cedarville University

CEDARVILLE, OH – Julia Jock of Agawam, was named to the Dean's List at Cedarville University for fall 2024. This recognition requires the student to obtain a 3.50 GPA or higher for the semester and carry a minimum of 12 credit hours.

#### Dean's List at Lebanon Valley College

ANNVILLE, PA – Cameron Croteau of Feeding Hills, is one of more than 900 Lebanon Valley College students named to the dean's list for the fall 2024 semester. Dean's List students must maintain a GPA of at least 3.4 out of 4.0.

Croteau is pursuing a bachelor of science in exercise science at The Valley and is a graduate of Tec Connections Academy.

#### STCC fall Dean's List

SPRINGFIELD – Springfield Technical Community College celebrates the accomplishment of the 922 students who were named to the fall 2024 Dean's List.

The following students are from Agawam and Feeding Hills:

Melissa Capponi, Mallo Lynn Charette, Allison F. Cohen, Kiera Erin Cooley, Zahide Cure, Ashley E. Duggan, Michelle Gagne, Carianne Haluch, Kaitlyn Rose Kelley, Taha Zafar Kiani, Sumeyye Kirca, Emily Kukharchuk, Grant Steven Lanier, Evelina Lapsova, Sindy R. Liquori, Yana Lukin, Karyna Makarova, Natassha Lyvonne Mitchell, Oksana Morgun, Emin Olgun, Laura Ostas, Magdalena Ostas, Samuel Ostas, Zuowanna Sadae Penant, Diana Polyova, Abdullah Atwan Rajee, Peter John Rochford, Sofia Emily Rudenko, Yolimar Sanchez, Sullivan Serafino-Marrin, Liliya Sereda, Nicholas Taylor Skorupski, Cherif C. Vilane, Gianna C. Yacovone, Sulamita Yukhimets, Mila Nikolaevna Zhupikov, Julian Shea Kozak, Carlson Caleb Jaden Rose, Jeffrey Thomas Atkins, Brittany Bailey, Meghan Carmela

Coogan, John Joseph Dougherty-Laberge, Jennifer Douglas, Kristin S. Holmes, Jessica Marie Huston, Gracie Michelle Lacombe, Jonathan David Mitchell, Cathryn M. Orszulak, Roger Michael Parent, Lindsey Rose Pattenaude, Isabella L. Recchia, Sana S. Rehman, Maria Riberdy, Joann Elizabeth Schmuck, Hai H. Tran, and Anthony D. Zielinski.

#### WNEU announces fall 2024 Dean's List

SPRINGFIELD – Western New England University takes immense pride in recognizing the outstanding academic achievements of over 750 students who have been named to the Dean's List for the fall 2024 semester. The following local students were named to the dean's list:

Alexandra Seibert of Agawam, Antonio Larocque of Agawam, Caleb Banaitis of Agawam, Connor Adamczyk of Agawam, Emily Livchin of Agawam, Jayden Montagna of Agawam, Kaan Alkan of Agawam, Kyle Ma of Agawam, Vincenzo Romeo of Agawam, Ahmed Elbakri of Feeding Hills,

Brooke Rising of Feeding Hills, Chris Johnson of Feeding Hills, Emma Gilroy of Feeding Hills, Frank Decaro of Feeding Hills, Katherine Gauthier of Feeding Hills, Lauren Plakias of Feeding Hills and Samantha Kelley of Feeding Hills.

#### WNEU announces fall 2024 President's List

SPRINGFIELD – Western New England University takes immense pride in recognizing the outstanding academic achievements of over 640 students who have been named to the President's List for the Fall 2024 semester. The following local students were named to the president's list:

Abel Barbaneagra of Agawam, Alexandra Shur of Agawam, Athena Trench of Agawam, Emmerson White of Agawam, Ertugrul Demirhan of Agawam, Hannah Richter of Agawam, Ilya Shlemanov of Feeding Hills, Lauren La of Agawam, Livia Gavelis of Agawam, Nolan Chamberland of Agawam, Ryan Stairs of Feeding Hills, Tessa Ebreo of Agawam and Vincent Martin of Feeding Hills.

# Opinion

## Guest Column



### Should Social Security money be invested in the Stock Market

Dear Rusty

For most folks collecting Social Security, you get back what you put in within 3-5 years, so for those that scream - "SS is not an entitlement, it is my money" - that is not entirely accurate beyond 3-5 years. For me personally 4.4 years is the number. But had I been able to invest that money over the 43 years I worked at a modest 6% interest, I expect the amount would have been a lot more. And of course, the stock market averaged 9.5% over that time. Perhaps Social Security should invest in the stock market instead of U.S. Government treasury bonds.

Signed Interested Observer

Dear Observer

You bring up a point we frequently hear that if, instead of paying into Social Security, I had invested the same money in the stock market I would have gotten more.

That, of course, might be the case if you had the unwavering discipline to religiously invest the equivalent amount in the market, avoiding the temptation to use that investment for any other reason. And life is full of good reasons, financial emergencies, for example or the simple temptation to buy something desperately needed, or just occasionally skipping a month to pay bills. Also, the stock market is notoriously volatile, which can create substantial angst for investors, who are faint of heart.

The fact is that Social Security provides guaranteed financial growth from the age of eligibility normally 62, up to age 70 when the maximum benefit is attained. Benefits claimed at one's full retirement age are about 24% - 32% more than if taken at age 62 depending on Full Retirement Age and benefits taken at age 70 are about 75% more than benefits taken at age 62. And that is guaranteed growth for those with the patience to wait longer to claim.

You may recall that the idea of investing Social Security reserves in the stock market has been floated a few times in previous years, but accompanying risks made Congress essentially unwilling to even entertain the idea. It has always been a political "hot potato" and those who suggest it are usually castigated for wanting to "give SS money to Wall Street," so I expect it is unlikely to happen.

Guess we'll need to be satisfied with the interest on those Special Issue Government Bonds, which, by the way, returned about \$67 billion to the Social Security Trust Fund in 2023. FYI, average interest rate for new deposits to the Trust Fund in 2023 was 4.1%, and the overall effective rate of return on all Trust

SECURITY | page 5



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## Guest Column

### Supplemental heat and light aid seed starting efforts



Last week we looked at the supplies needed to start seeds indoors. This week we will dive deeper. If you have never tried indoor seed starting, it is a worthwhile endeavor for sure. You can grow exactly what you want instead of being defendant on what lines the shelves of local nurseries each May.

Furthermore, there is great satisfaction in having a part of the "miracle." No matter how many times I have witnessed the germination process, it still amazed me that a tiny seed has what it takes within to grow into a plant. All that is needed is heat, moisture and light.

Almost all bedding plants, as well as some vegetables and herbs need warmth to germinate. We provide bottom heat through the use of heating cables or mats set at temperatures between 70-75 degrees.

This poses the question of whether or not seeds will germinate at regular household temperatures of close to seventy degrees. Probably, but not to their fullest potential since ideal temperature is measured not by air temps but by the temperature of the growing medium.

A room set at 70 degrees is likely to have temperatures within the germinating flat five to 10 degrees cooler, due to evaporation at its surface. Invest in a heat mat - if used for a few weeks each season it will likely last a decade or two.

There are many types available to suit your own specific growing needs, even mini mats that are about the size of a standard flat. Perfect if all you are growing indoors are a pack or two of peppers and tomatoes!

Supplemental lighting comes into play at the

instant your seeds have sprouted. Bottom heat is not necessary henceforth (it is even discouraged!).

Seedlings are removed from heat and placed within 3-6 inches of the light source. For short-term use, a shop light affixed with two cool fluorescent bulbs has worked fine for me, although one cool and one warm bulb was recommended "back in the day" to better simulate the full spectrum of the sun's rays.

Now, LEDs are an energy conscious replacement; one I will make when my fluorescent bulbs give out. If you are using fluorescent bulbs, be sure to keep your seedlings away from the ends of the bulb where the lights wanes.

If you plan to use lights for long-term growth a "grow-light" may be a good, albeit more costly investment. Many duplicate the sun quite well, and some are tailored to meet the needs of specific plant types.

For example, some contain more orange and red hues to promote fruiting and budding. They are priced by life expectancy, output and light spectrum.

Installing the lights of your choice with reflectors or "mirrors" will maximize intensity, and suspending the whole system with chains from the ceiling will make for easy raising as your seedlings grow.

If you plan to grow just a few seedlings and don't want to invest in lights, try positioning them in front of an unshaded south window. Turn the seedling flats numerous times during the day to promote straight, stocky growth. Plants that are tall and spindly indicate light intensity is too low.

Please give heat mats and supplemental lights a try, especially if you haven't been successful with indoor seed sowing in the past. This could turn the page of a new chapter of growing for you!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 33 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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#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

must include a name, address, and daytime telephone number for author verification purposes. We do not publish anonymous letters. All letters are subject to editing for content and length. The deadline is Monday at noon. Please send letters to Agawam Advertiser News, care of Turley Publications Inc., 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, or e-mail aan@turley.com.

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## Election letters to the editor welcome

The Agawam Advertiser News welcomes readers to participate in this year's election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to The Agawam Advertiser News, care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to aan@turley.com. Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by noon Monday to be considered

for that Friday's newspaper. No attack letters will be printed. No letters written by candidates supporting their own candidacy will be printed. If the volume of letters received is larger than the space available in the newspaper, or if the letters become repetitive, the newspaper reserves the right to print a representative sample. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last edition before the election. For more information, call 413-283-8393.

#### Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the news-

paper plans to print stories about contested races for Congress, state Senate, state House, district attorney and Governor's Council during the weeks leading up to the election, as well as a question-and-answer voters guide. In order to ensure fairness to all candidates, no political press releases will be printed, nor will reporters cover political rallies or fundraisers.

Candidates who wish to further publicize their candidacy, beliefs and events may contact advertising, 413-283-8393 about paid advertising in The Agawam Advertiser News.

# Opinion

## Guest Column



**A** Brimfield resident sent me a list of birds on Jan. 2 he saw in his yard. On the list was a Carolina wren. He said in the email, “[The Carolina wren was] foraging in the leaves under shrubs and has been seen at the feeders more frequently recently.”

The Carolina wren is six inches long and has brown feathers above with buff below. It has a distinct white eyebrow and white barring in the tail area. It often holds its tail in an upward position.

The female lays four to eight creamy or pink white eggs with brown marks in a nest of mosses, twigs, rootlets, bark and sometimes snakeskins lined with finer materials. They nest in tree holes and many other locations; they will use birdhouses.

The Carolina wren expanded its range into the northeast especially with the milder winters. There song is a loud, repeated “tea kettle, tea kettle, tea kettle.” They inhabit forest understorey, vines and woodlands in rural or suburban areas.

### Other Brimfield birds

Other birds seen by the Brimfield resident beside the Carolina wren were four mourning doves, 20 American robins, 12



Carolina wren

dark eyed juncos, one white-throated sparrow and two Northern cardinals. He said of the robins, “I first noticed one bird on the ground in the yard and 3 in a crab apple tree eating fruit. More flew into the tree then four on the ground foraging. More perched in a nearby tree.” He also said, “We have ten crab apple trees in the yard and several of them have small fruit that is held on the tree into the winter.”

### Flocks of robins

In my travels last week, I saw flocks of robins on three occasions, twice in Barre and once in Oakham. The Oakham flock flew across the road and landed on the ground and in trees on the opposite side. The Brimfield resident reported his wife saw a flock of robins in the center of Brimfield eating crab apples near the post office twice in recent days.

### Christmas Bird Count

The Brimfield couple participated in the annual Christmas Bird Count in Lud-



Robin

low. He said, “We had 31 species in Ludlow, lots fewer birds at the reservoir because there was about 90% ice coverage [Saturday] compared to 10% Friday.”

### Suet cakes

I put out my suet feeder last month. I waited long enough because I did not have a bear either break or run off with the feeder. The birds are busy eating suet especially during this cold weather.

### New Hampshire

#### Loon Preservation Committee

The New Hampshire Loon Preservation Committee reported in 2024 they surveyed 498 occupied or potential loon territories on 327 lakes to assess presence/absence and breeding success of loons and the success of LPC’s management to help them. They documented the presence of 359 loon



Loon

pairs and 126 unpaired adult loons. They also floated a record 156 nest rafts to help loon pairs displaced from their traditional nest sites by shoreline development, recreational lake use and water level fluctuations. They also installed signs and rope lines at 135 nesting loon pair locations.

They banded 57 loons and rescued 38 loons in distress and a result of illness or injury. The Loon Preservation Committee continued to expand their lead tackle buy-back program. Ingestion of lost lead tackle by fisherman remained the cause of lead poisoning in the loon population. There were six documented deaths due to lead poisoning, two loon deaths from trauma due to boat strikes and two loon deaths due to entanglement in fishing gear in 2024.

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

### SECURITY ■ from page 5

Fund assets was 2.4%.

Social Security has some issues and will face some financial difficulty in less than a decade unless Congress enacts program reform soon. But it is a program, which most seniors rely on for a major part of their retirement income and one which keeps over 22 million Americans out of poverty. Here at the AMAC Foundation, we strongly advocate for sensible Social Security reform and we’re very optimistic about the program’s future. But Congress needs to act soon to avoid a cut to everyone’s Social Security

amount in about 2033.

*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 or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.*



Dr. Steve Sobel welcomed everyone to his Laughter Program.

TURLEY PHOTO BY QUINN SUOMALA

### LAUGHTER ■ from page 1

Sobel has been a motivational speaker for over 45 years and he has traveled around the country giving talks.

He has also spent his time teaching at various levels and working as an athletics coach.

“I’ve been an award winning school principal and a special education director,” Sobel said. “I work with a lot of athletic teams like the Harvard men’s hockey team and I also coach a very high level pro men’s summer basketball team.”

Motivational speaking, coaching and teaching have been a particular callings for him as he enjoys helping others and making an impact on their lives.

“It allows me to continue to touch people’s lives, which is my mission in life,” Sobel said.

Additionally, Sobel hopes that his speak-

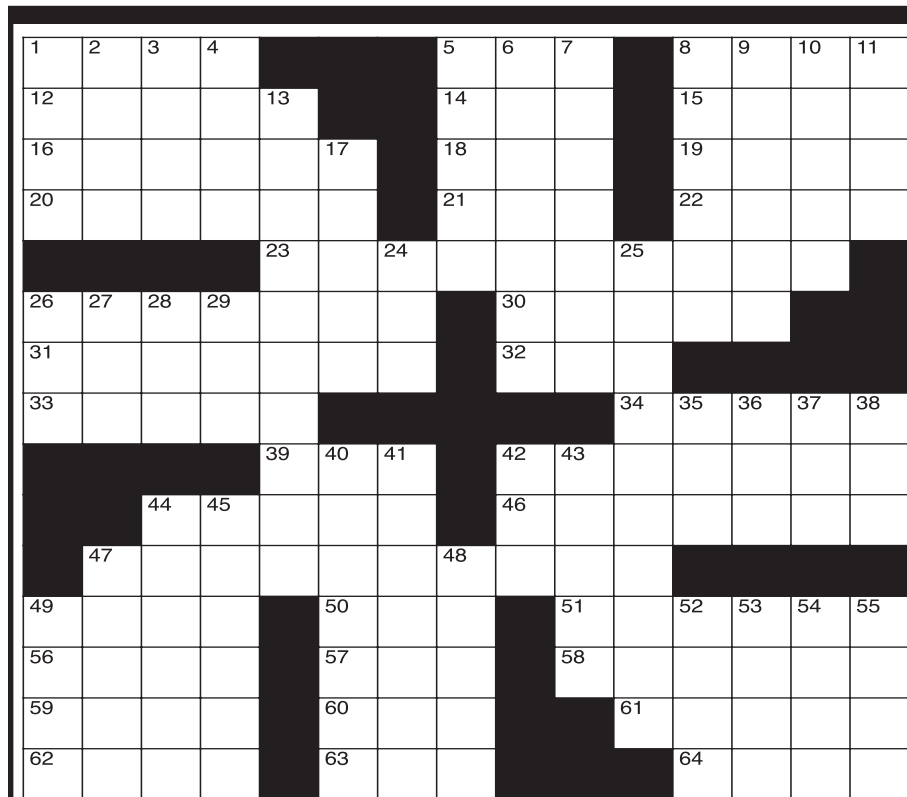
ing can help out someone who may be struggling.

“You never know who is having a life challenge, a bad day, a bad week, a bad month,” Sobel said. “Just because people are dressed nice doesn’t mean it is always rosy.”

He shared that he will often run into people he has taught, coached or given a talk to while out in public and loves getting to see them once more.

“The highlight is really when I see people in other locations, like a supermarket or a school, and they go ‘coach’ or ‘Dr. Steve, thank you,’” Sobel said. “Then I’ll give them a big hug and I just feel that we’re connected.”

Sobel also does some one on one motivational coaching. If people are interested in learning more about his work or having him come give a talk they can email him at info@DrSteveSobel.com.



#### CLUES ACROSS

- 1. This regulates cortisol production (abbr.)
- 5. People of northern Vietnam
- 8. Employee stock ownership plan
- 12. Regions
- 14. The center of a city
- 15. Hindu serpentine deity
- 16. Roared
- 18. Sun up in New York
- 19. “Sir” in Malaysian
- 20. Shrimp dish
- 21. Muckraker Tarbell
- 22. Apex
- 23. Harmonic effects
- 26. One of Babe Ruth’s nicknames
- 30. Groups in organic chemistry
- 31. More pleasant-tasting
- 32. Spring forward

#### CLUES DOWN

- 3. Noted writer
- 34. Building occupied by monks
- 39. “The world’s most famous arena”
- 42. Colorless liquid hydrocarbon
- 44. Long or fast speech
- 46. Things you can eat
- 47. Substance in which magnetic moments are not aligned
- 49. Actor Idris
- 50. I (German)
- 51. Taxes
- 56. Indonesian island
- 57. Nuisance (slang)
- 58. Shawl
- 59. Digits
- 60. Moved on foot quickly
- 61. “For goodness \_\_\_”
- 62. Facial body part
- 63. Russian river
- 64. Urinates

#### CLUES DOWN

- 1. Partner to “oohs”
- 2. Scaly water dweller
- 3. Pueblo people of New Mexico
- 4. Music producer Teo
- 5. Greek mythological goddess
- 6. Got together to discuss
- 7. Acquires
- 8. Involve
- 9. Some are tomato-based
- 10. Old Irish alphabets
- 11. A sheet of glass in a window or door
- 13. Blood poisoning
- 17. A moon of Saturn
- 24. Neither
- 25. Sums
- 26. They follow “A”
- 27. Satisfaction
- 28. People of southeastern Burma
- 29. Small amount
- 35. Guy (slang)
- 36. Sound unit
- 37. Midway between northeast and east
- 38. Affirmative
- 40. Almost at the top
- 41. Extremely slow
- 42. Pearl Jam’s debut album
- 43. Influential mid-century playwright
- 44. Martens
- 45. Approval
- 47. Dallas-adjacent Texas city
- 48. African nation
- 49. Dark brown or black
- 52. A place to get caught
- 53. Large-headed, elongated fish
- 54. Type of sword
- 55. Scottish tax or levy

# Obituary

## Teresa Vedany Kozloski

Teresa Vedany Kozloski, of Agawam, Massachusetts, a lifelong educator and devoted wife, mother and grandmother, died on January 9, 2025. She was 91.



Teresa was born October 11, 1933, in Agawam, the only child of Renzo Vedany and Chiara Ernestina Moroni. Her father emigrated from Stradella, a town in the Province of Pavia in the northern Italian region of Lombardy. He left Italy after growing alarmed by the rise of fascism there in the years after World War I, settling in western Massachusetts in the early 1920s. Chiara joined him after they met and were married during a trip Renzo made back to Italy in 1930.

Teresa's passion for education and learning spanned more than six decades and took her on travels that included Germany, Hungary and the former Yugoslavia. Her own education began in 1939, when, still primarily speaking the Stradella/Portabrez Italian dialect she learned from her parents, she began first grade at Phelps Elementary School in Agawam. She would go on to become valedictorian of Agawam High School's Class of 1951.

In 1955, Teresa graduated from American International College in Springfield with a bachelor's degree in education. In 1956, she earned a master's degree in education from New York University. Almost 40 years later, in 1994, she earned a second master's, this time in modern European history, from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

In 1956, Teresa began her career teaching business subjects, shorthand and typewriting at Longmeadow High School in Longmeadow, Mass. In 1958, she was

hired by the U.S. Army to teach high school students at the U.S. Army Dependents School in Mannheim, Germany. While living abroad she took every opportunity to travel. Included among her fascinating stories was an occasion strolling from West Berlin into East Berlin before the Wall was built and visiting the USSR at a time when few Americans did so. She began teaching at East Longmeadow High in 1960, where for several years she taught civics, U.S. history and world history.

In 1976, Teresa began more than two decades as a faculty member at Bay Path Junior College (now Bay Path University), where she became a Professor Emerita in 1999. In 1989, Teresa received a prestigious Fulbright-Hays Grant from the U.S. Department of Education to study in Yugoslavia and, again in 1993, received the same honor, this time for study in Hungary.

Teresa's greatest joy was spending time with her husband and family. She married Henry A. Kozloski on April 20, 1963, at St. John the Evangelist Church, Agawam. She met Henry while he was practice teaching at East Longmeadow High School. Teresa and Henry raised three children, Maria, Lena and Henry, in the single-story, post-war ranch they built at 102 Meadow Street in Agawam. With a generous backyard, patio and garden, for six decades their home has remained the hub of their family life. In an essay this year, their granddaughter Isabelle said that thinking of the house conjured up the warm smell of Teresa's homemade risotto mingling with the sound of Vera Lynn's "Auf Wiederseh'n" through rooms full of decades-old family photos. Isabelle called her grandparent's home

a "place where time stopped" -- where a grandchild would be enveloped in "a magical forcefield of love, history, and comfort."

Teresa took immense interest in her grandchildren's pursuits and was a large presence in their lives, from summers spent together on Cape Cod to attending piano recitals, soccer and hockey games, swim meets, and a host of school events. Her grandchildren loved sharing stories with her and adored her cooking and baking. Teresa would prepare large batches of homemade ravioli and tortellini and platters of cookies for holidays and became a finalist at the Historic Deerfield King Arthur Baking Contest in 2013 for her mother's Italian cookie recipe.

Throughout her life, Teresa was very active in her hometown of Agawam. She served 14 years on the Agawam School Committee where she was a strong advocate for professional development for teachers, honors curriculum, and Title IX. During this time, she also served on the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MSC) Legislative Committee and Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) Sports Medicine Committee.

Teresa was dedicated to serving and contributing to her community. She volunteered on Agawam's Sesquicentennial Celebration Committee in 2005 and was a member of the Agawam Historic Commission from 2017 to 2024. In 2010, she was awarded Agawam Democrat of the year, and she received a lifetime achievement award in 2017.

In 2006, Teresa published the family history "The Loyalty of Two Brothers." The book, which began as a nine-page summary but kept growing as Teresa kept pulling at interesting historical threads, centered

### DEATH NOTICE

**Kozloski, Teresa Vedany**  
Died Jan. 9  
Calling hours Jan. 15  
Funeral Jan. 16  
Colonial Forastiere Funeral & Cremation

on the decision by Renzo and her uncle Ferruccio to emigrate from northern Italy in 1921, during a tumultuous period in which the Stradella Fascists threatened Ferruccio's life. A key source for the material was "many Sunday afternoon conversations with my mother while drinking Italian espresso coffee," Teresa wrote in her author's note.

Characteristically, the book had an educational mission at its heart: Teresa said that "her close ties with Italian relatives and roots convinced her that an appreciation of history, including her own family's history, was invaluable in helping present and future generations to understand themselves."

Teresa is survived by her husband Henry; her three children, Maria (Lance Crist), of Bethesda, Md., Lena (Kyle Larabee), of Cambridge, Mass., and Henry (Christine Reynolds) of Otis, Mass.; and five grandchildren, Alexa Crist of Somerville, Mass.; Ray Crist of San Francisco; Tyler Crist of Bethesda; and Isabelle Larabee and Foster Larabee of Cambridge, Mass.

Calling hours for Teresa were held on Wednesday, Jan. 15 from 4 to 7 p.m. at Colonial Forastiere Funeral & Cremation, 985 Main St., Agawam, MA. A funeral service will be held on Thursday, Jan. 16 beginning at 8:45 a.m. from the funeral home, with a Liturgy of Christian Burial, to be celebrated at 10 a.m., at St. John the Evangelist Church, Agawam, MA. Interment will follow in the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Agawam, MA. In lieu of flowers, donations in Teresa's memory may be made to the Salvation Army of Massachusetts, <https://easternusa.salvationarmy.org/massachusetts/ways-to-give/>. For online condolences please visit [www.forastiere.com](http://www.forastiere.com).

# Job Connection Public Notices

HELPING YOU FIND HELP

## Conservation Agent

### TOWN OF BLANDFORD

The Town of Blandford is seeking candidates for a part-time Conservation Agent. Candidates must have at least one year of experience in a similar role. The compensation for this 5-10 hour-a-week position is \$23.00-25.00 an hour.

A full job description with application guidelines can be found at [www.townofblandford.com/job-openings/](http://www.townofblandford.com/job-openings/)

**Closing date for all applications is Friday, January 31, 2025 by 12 noon. Open until filled.**

EEO/AEE

Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampden Probate and Family Court  
50 State Street  
Springfield MA, 01103  
Docket No. HD21P2119PM  
In the matter of:  
Janice Amelia Fortunato  
Of: Agawam, 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 **Second and Final account(s) of Gilbert Fortunato of Feeding Hills, 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 **02/20/2025**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to object to the account(s). If you fail to file the written appearance and objection by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you, including the allowance of the account(s).

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

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

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

Witness, Hon. **Barbara M. Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.  
Date: January 09, 2025x  
**Rosemary A. Saccomani**  
Register of Probate  
01/16/2025

## OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: [obits@turley.com](mailto:obits@turley.com).

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

## PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

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

Public notice deadlines are Mondays at noon, Fridays noon for Monday holidays.

visit [www.publicnotices.turley.com](http://www.publicnotices.turley.com)

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# SPORTS

## Agawam downs Pittsfield for fourth straight

AGAWAM – Last week, Agawam continued its great pace in 2025 with three more wins, good for a four-game win streak overall. Last Friday night on the road, Agawam defeated Pittsfield High School 67-49. Agawam jumped out to a 15-5 lead early and never looked back. The win was also significant for Elijah Maldonado, who surpassed 1,000 points with his game-high 27 points in the win. Maldonado had two treys during his leading effort.

Agawam is nearing a state tournament berth with an 8-2 record. Coming up, the Brownies will face tough challenges with Sci-Tech and Chicopee on consecutive nights.



Melih Tomak goes for the three-pointer.



Elijah Maldonado holds the ball and looks to make a move into the arc.



Caeden Roeder sends a pass away. TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Brody Sheehan takes a free throw.



Matthew Latellier goes for the put-back.



Gavin Cruz keeps the ball moving around the perimeter.



Emma LaCresse takes in a pass.



Carlina Calabrese sends a pass into the paint.



Isabella Laprise looks to shoot.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM



Sophia Laprise dribbles near the arc, looking for a path to the basket during recent action.



Katelyn Cleavall goes for a layup under pressure.

## Brownies notch state tournament berth

AGAWAM – Very quietly, the Agawam High School girls basketball team is putting together an outstanding season. Last Friday night, the Brownies increased their winning streak to three straight, defeating Drury High School 46-36. The Brownies also defeated Pope Francis and Monument Mountain during the past week. The wins

have raised Agawam to a stellar 9-1 record. Agawam has already qualified for the state tournament and are a likely contender for the Western Mass. Tournament as they continue to mow through the competition in the regular season. The Brownies face Belchertown on Jan. 16 then host Southwick on Saturday, Jan. 18.

## Swim teams fall against Westfield

AGAWAM – Last week, Agawam girls swimming was defeated by rival Westfield 113-67.

Among event winners was Hannah Newsome for Agawam, who took the 100 freestyle. Also winning her event was Vincy Cheung, who took the 100 breaststroke. Agawam's 400 freestyle relay team also captured a win. Agawam is 2-1 so far this year.

The boys swim team lost 86-62. In the win, Vrijenhoek Ayden won the 50 freestyle for Agawam while Ryan Haglund took the 500 freestyle.

Agawam's 400 freestyle team was also victorious with a win in that event. Agawam swims at Minnechaug on Jan. 17 at 5 p.m.

# Sports

## Bonsignore will participate in Xfinity Series races in 2025

Joe Gibbs Racing announced today that four-time NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour Champion Justin Bonsignore will drive the team's No. 19 Toyota GR Supra in five NASCAR Xfinity Series races in 2025.

Bonsignore made his Xfinity Series debut for JGR last June at New Hampshire Motor Speedway. Despite having no practice or qualifying laps, the Holtsville, New York, native found his way into the top five before contact on a late-race restart relegated him to a 22nd-place finish.

The 36-year-old driver is no stranger to success on the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour. He has racked up 45 victories, 130 top-five finishes, 169 top-10s, 33 pole awards, and 5,442 laps led in 226 career starts. In 2024, Bonsignore posted five victories on the way to his fourth career championship. He has not finished lower than

fourth in the final rankings in the past nine seasons.

"When we had the opportunity to work with the Joe Gibbs Racing team at New Hampshire last year, it was a perfect pairing," Bonsignore said. "As soon as that weekend was over, we started looking at options to run a larger schedule in 2025 and it all came together. When you work with a team like JGR, you know you're going to have a car in contention to win every race you run. We're looking forward to having some fun and chasing trophies."

Bonsignore is looking to add his name to an impressive list of drivers who have won for the JGR Xfinity Series program. In the team's history, JGR owns 214 wins, including 10 in 2024. Since the team's inception, 23 different drivers have taken JGR to victory lane in the Xfinity Series, including 14 drivers who claimed their first career victory in the series driving for JGR. The organization has won four Xfinity Series driver championships and six owner's championships.

"We're excited to have Justin back in our car in 2025," said Steve de Souza, Executive Vice President of Xfinity Series and Development for JGR. "He has proven himself over and over again in the modifieds and he did a great job for us at New Hampshire with no track time before the race started. We're looking forward to seeing what he can do with more opportunities to adapt to the Xfinity cars and working with the same team multiple times this season."

The No. 19 team's full driver schedule will be announced at a later date.

## Railers scored win over Wheeling Nailers

WORCESTER – The Worcester Railers HC (14-17-1-4 33pts) took down the Wheeling Nailers (25-7-2-0, 52pts), on Sunday afternoon by the final score of 2-1 in front of a crowd of 1,875 at WesBanco Arena. The Railers are back on the ice next at the DCU Center taking on the Adirondack Thunder on Friday, January 17th at 7:05 p.m. EST.

It was the Railers who struck first tonight as Justin Gill (1-1-2) scored 10:18 into the first period giving Worcester the 1-0 lead. The Railers extended their lead to 2-0 in the second period with a goal from Anthony Callin (1-0-1). Wheeling notched their first goal of the night 40 seconds into the third period as Logan Pietila (1-0-1) cut the Wheeling deficit to one. The Railers held off Wheeling for the remainder of the third period, leading to a 2-1 final score.

Worcester logged the first goal of the night as Justin Gill (3rd) scored on a wraparound goal 10:18 into the first period giving Worcester the 1-0 lead. Gill would be the only

goal scorer through the first 20 minutes. Shots favored Wichita 13-9 in the first period.

Worcester extended their lead in the second period when Anthony Callin (9th) tapped Justin Gill's pass into the back of the net extended the Worcester lead to 2-0. Wheeling got the first power play opportunity of the game following a slashing call on Worcester's Anthony Repaci, but the Railers penalty kill successfully killed the penalty off and kept the score at 2-0 heading into the third period. Shots favored Worcester in the second 17-10.

It didn't take long in the third period for Wheeling to cut into the Worcester lead, as Logan Pietila (4th) scored just 40 seconds into the third period. The Railers held Wheeling off the scoreboard for the remainder of the third period, including a late barrage of shots in which Michael Bullion made a flurry of saves to give Worcester the 2-1 win in regulation. Shots favored Wheeling in the third 11-3 and 34-29 in the game.

## T-Birds reach .500 with road win

HARTFORD – The Springfield Thunderbirds (15-15-2-1) rode spectacular performances by Simon Robertsson and Colten Ellis to a 3-1 win over the Hartford Wolf Pack (16-16-2-1) on Sunday inside the XL Center.

The opening period yielded a scarce amount of chances for the two squads, as Ellis and Dylan Garand were each a perfect 8-for-8 in save opportunities. Dalibor Dvorsky came the closest of the two teams to breaking the scoreless tie when he wristed a forehand off the post on the stick side.

The Wolf Pack, which scored only once in their last three games on home ice, broke the ice at 3:37 of the second as Ryder Korczak cashed a 3-on-2 rush with his third of the season to give the visitors a 1-0 advantage. That Hartford lead lasted less than three minutes as Robertsson evened the slate at 6:20 with a backhand rebound after Garand denied an initial shot from Corey Schueneman.

With the 1-1 score carrying into the period's final minute, Springfield got a tie-breaking goal from a rookie for the second straight evening. Robertsson was nearing the end of a shift but gutted it out with an incredible individual effort to split between two Wolf Pack defenseman before drubbing a forehand shot through Garand's legs at 19:08. The rookie's first career multi-goal game in the AHL gave the T-Birds the 2-1 lead heading into the third.

Ellis was the star of the show in a final period that saw the Wolf Pack relentlessly attack the Springfield goal. Time after time, the young backstop had an answer, racking up 19 third period saves, with a little help from his post along the way on a near-tying goal from Jaroslav Chmelar.

With Garand at the bench with just under two minutes remaining, Hugh McGing darted up the ice to cancel an icing and pound a loose puck into an empty net to end a 29-game goal-scoring drought.

With four points in their pockets out of the weekend, the T-Birds look to build on their momentum on Wednesday night as they make their first visit to Bridgeport to take on the Islanders at 7 p.m. at Total Mortgage Arena.

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HCSS stands out as a premier choice for families because of its unique combination of academic rigor, personalized attention, and community spirit. Our two campuses—the Middle School in West Springfield (Grades 6-8) and the High School in Chicopee (Grades 9-12)—offer students a seamless transition from middle school to high school and beyond. Here's what makes HCSS truly exceptional:

**Academic Excellence:** Our rigorous curriculum is guided by College Board AP standards and Common Core. With honors courses beginning in 7th grade, 14 AP offerings in high school, and innovative programs like Project Lead The Way

(PLTW), students are challenged to reach their full potential.

**Comprehensive College and Career Preparation:** HCSS begins college and career readiness as early as 6th grade, including early SAT/PSAT prep, dual enrollment opportunities, and experiential college campus visits. With a 100% college acceptance rate and over \$51M in scholarships awarded since 2013, our graduates are set for success.

**State-of-the-Art Technology:** Students benefit from one-to-one Chromebook access, SMART Interactive Displays, and hands-on science labs, preparing them for a tech-driven world.

**Award-Winning Extracurriculars:** From robotics and science clubs to competitive athletics and social activities, students thrive outside the classroom as well.

### Join Us for an Open House!

Explore what HCSS has to offer during our upcoming Welcome Saturday Open House events! Meet our dedicated staff, tour our campuses, and learn how HCSS can help your child achieve their dreams. Interested families can also join

a Virtual Information Session for an in-depth look at our programs from the comfort of home.

### What Parents and Students Love About HCSS

Parents and students consistently praise HCSS for its nurturing environment, where every student feels valued and supported. The school's commitment to diversity and inclusion fosters a vibrant community that celebrates different perspectives and cultures. Families also appreciate the convenience of free transportation and extensive tutoring services, ensuring all students have the tools they need to succeed.

### Student Success Stories

HCSS alumni have gone on to attend prestigious universities, including Ivy League institutions like Harvard, Columbia, and Dartmouth. Our students' achievements are a testament to the school's dedication to academic and personal growth. With a consistent college matriculation rate of over 95%, HCSS prepares students not just to attend col-

lege but to excel once they get there.

### How to Apply

Applications for the 2025-2026 school year are now open! Rising 6th-10th graders should apply no later than March 2, 2025, to secure a spot in our admission lottery. Visit [www.hampdencharter.org](http://www.hampdencharter.org) to apply and take the first step toward a brighter future.

At Hampden Charter School of Science, we believe every student deserves a world-class education. Join our community of learners, achievers, and leaders today—because your child's future begins here!

Agawam, Holyoke, Westfield, West Springfield Chicopee, Ludlow, Springfield

### HCSS High School

20 Johnson Rd. Chicopee, MA 01022  
Tel. 413-593-9090, Fax. 413-294-2648

### HCSS Middle School

511 Main Street West Springfield, MA 01089, Tel.413-278-5450



# HAMPDEN CHARTER SCHOOL OF SCIENCE

ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR GRADE 6-10



### Why Hampden Charter School of Science?

- NO COST
- FREE TRANSPORTATION
- COLLEGE-PREP EDUCATION
- TECHNOLOGY IN CLASSROOM
- EXCELLENCE IN ACADEMICS
- ATHLETICS
- ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES and CLUBS
- 100% COLLEGE ACCEPTANCE

## WELCOME SATURDAYS

11:00 AM - 1:00PM

January 4th  
January 11th  
February 1st  
February 8th  
March 1st

VISIT:  
[WWW.HAMPDENCHARTER.ORG](http://WWW.HAMPDENCHARTER.ORG)

APPLY NOW / DEADLINE

▶

MARCH 2, 2025










# CAREER Education



## WELDING

- Real hands-on experience
- Includes on site and off site internship
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Gateway's Welding program is a Chapter 74 vocational education program that prepares students for a career in Metal Fabrication and Welding!



[www.grsd.org](http://www.grsd.org)



**JOIN US!**  
**Apply today!**



## EARLY EDUCATION & CARE

At Gateway you can join our Early Education and Care program (EEC) in 9th grade!

**By the time you graduate, you will be ready, certified, and prepared to work with young learners!**



**You will also be on track to:**

- Know how to plan engaging activities and lessons
- Have CPR & First Aid certification
- Experience awesome internship opportunities



Visit:  
[www.grsd.org](http://www.grsd.org)  
for more information!



## GATEWAY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT INVITES YOU TO JOIN US!

[WWW.GRSD.ORG](http://WWW.GRSD.ORG)



Nestled in the foothills of the Berkshires, Gateway Regional School District offers a caring and supportive small school environment. With support from the Barr Foundation, Gateway is engaging in transformative work to reinvent the school experience to make learning joyful for every student. Each GRSD school has a focus that aligns with the district's vision of emphasizing real-world learning, collaboration, and innovation.



**Littleville Elementary School** incorporates engaging, hands-on projects and events:

- Hartford Wolf Pack School Learning Day
- Springfield Symphony Orchestra string instrument workshop
- Holiday Craft fair
- Interactive "Author's Experience" with writer Daryl Cobb.

Gateway Regional School's (grades 6-12) pilot program will equip student for success after high school through:

- Fun team-building activities
- College tours
- Career exploration with experts
- Life-skills workshops
- Community projects



**Chester Elementary School** focuses on sustainability, creativity, and environmental awareness:

- Teaching with Trout (raising brook trout from eggs to adulthood)
- School-wide composting initiative
- Student Media Club
- School-wide production of Willy Wonka Jr.
- Visit from the Whalemobile

**WE ARE EXCITED TO MEET YOU!**



# CAREER Education

## Gateway Raises the Bar(r) for Students

The Gateway Regional School District is making significant advancements in student engagement and staff development, thanks to funding from the Barr Foundation and enthusiastic commitment from students and staff. These funds are being used to support a variety of initiatives that align with the district's instructional vision, emphasizing real-world learning, collaboration, and innovation.

At Gateway Regional, a comprehensive plan has been developed for grades 6-12 to help students prepare for life beyond high school. This plan includes tailored learning experiences for each grade level, such as team-building activities for sixth graders, community exploration in seventh grade, and visits to community colleges for eighth graders. Ninth-grade students will engage in career exploration workshops led by industry experts, while tenth graders will visit four-year colleges. Eleventh-grade students will attend a local college fair and participate in life skills workshops, and seniors will celebrate their achievements with a banquet and lead activities for younger students. While some of these initiatives will be piloted this year, others will launch in the next school year, ensuring students are equipped with knowledge and skills for future success. The high school offers two Chapter 74 programs for students interested in welding and early childhood education. Graduates of these programs will complete a full comprehensive internship and be equipped to enter the workforce with the skills obtained.

Littleville Elementary is incorporating the Barr Foundation funds into engaging, hands-on projects and school-wide events. For example, students in grades three through five recently attended the Hartford Wolf Pack School Learning Day, where they applied physical science concepts like force and motion to a live hockey game. Kindergarten students participated in a String Instrument Workshop led by members of the Springfield Orchestra, while all grade levels are eagerly anticipating an interactive "Author's Experience" with writer Daryl Cobb in March.

Plans are in the works to create a Schoolyard Habitat for Monarch butterflies and other pollinators. Littleville is also planning a mentoring program that will pair high school students with elementary students for long-term support. The school recently hosted a successful Holiday Craft Fair, showcasing student-made goods and fostering creativity.

At Chester Elementary, the focus is on sustainability, creativity, and environmental awareness. For the third year in a row, students are engaged with hydroponic agriculture, growing healthy food for their own school lunches and community. Students are participating in the Teaching with Trout program, where they raise brook trout from eggs to adulthood while learning about ecology and conservation. A composting initiative led by fifth graders is teaching students how to sort waste and reduce their environmental impact. The Student Media Club provides third graders with opportunities to develop and produce their own videos, promoting teamwork and innovation. Chester is also preparing for a school-wide production of Willy Wonka Jr., with fifth graders in lead roles and younger students in supporting roles. Additionally, an in-school field trip featured the Whalemobile, a life-sized inflatable whale that taught students about marine biology and conservation.

District-wide, the Barr Foundation funds are also being used to enhance staff development and collaboration. Teachers are participating in study tours to locations such as Kentucky, Maine, Providence, Boston, and New York City to explore innovative educational practices. An internal instructional vision board encourages staff members to share ideas for projects that utilize the funds to further educational transformation.

Through these initiatives, the Gateway Regional School District is fostering creativity, collaboration, and real-world learning for students while empowering educators with new ideas and strategies. These efforts are preparing students for success both in school and beyond while creating a culture of innovation and engagement throughout the district.

## A New Year a New Career

A new year is upon us and as we declare resolutions, a new job might be in order. The first 5 years of a child's life are so important and since 1965, HCS Head Start has helped thousands of children and families prepare for school and life. We know that it takes a big heart to help shape growing minds and if you want to work with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in your community, Head Start might be the place for you.

The Head Start approach offers both families and their children, birth to five, an extraordinary school readiness experience. Educators who decide to teach in a comprehensive early learning setting have the opportunity to work collaboratively with other specialty areas like health, nutrition, mental health, and family and community engagement, that are designed to prepare vulnerable children for future educational success.

Data shows that when children are enrolled in a high-quality Head Start

program they are better prepared for kindergarten and beyond. Staff and parents work together, learning from one another, to create the best early educational experience both at home and at preschool. This is possible because when parents are involved and engaged in their child's education, children have better outcomes.

In addition to teaching, Head Start also has various career opportunities in the areas of health, nutrition, human services, administration, mental health, and special education. Professional development opportunities and career ladders are built within the Head Start model to promote growth and advancement.

Holyoke Chicopee Springfield Head Start, Inc. offers programs in several cities and towns in Western Massachusetts working with over 1,000 children each year. If you are interested in a rewarding Head Start career please visit [www.hcs-headstart.org/employment/](http://www.hcs-headstart.org/employment/) or call 413-788-6522.

## HCS Head Start is Hiring

Help give a child a *Head Start* in school and in life

**BUILD**  
a WINDOW of  
OPPORTUNITY  
with HCS  
**HEAD  
START!**



Check out job postings at  
<https://hcsheadstart.org/employment/>



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- Most services available in English or Spanish

Call us at 413-532-4900 to schedule a career center seminar!

[masshireholyoke.org](http://masshireholyoke.org)

[www.turley.com](http://www.turley.com)



### Teaching the Next Generation

Are you passionate about making a positive impact on young minds within a dynamic public school environment? Springfield Public Schools is seeking knowledgeable, highly effective, diverse educators, to join our K-12 district!

Be part of a school system that is thriving in *A Culture of Equity and Proficiency* serving over 26,000 students.

#### TO APPLY

Visit our website or scan the QR Code!



# Join Our Team!

# WE'RE HIRING!

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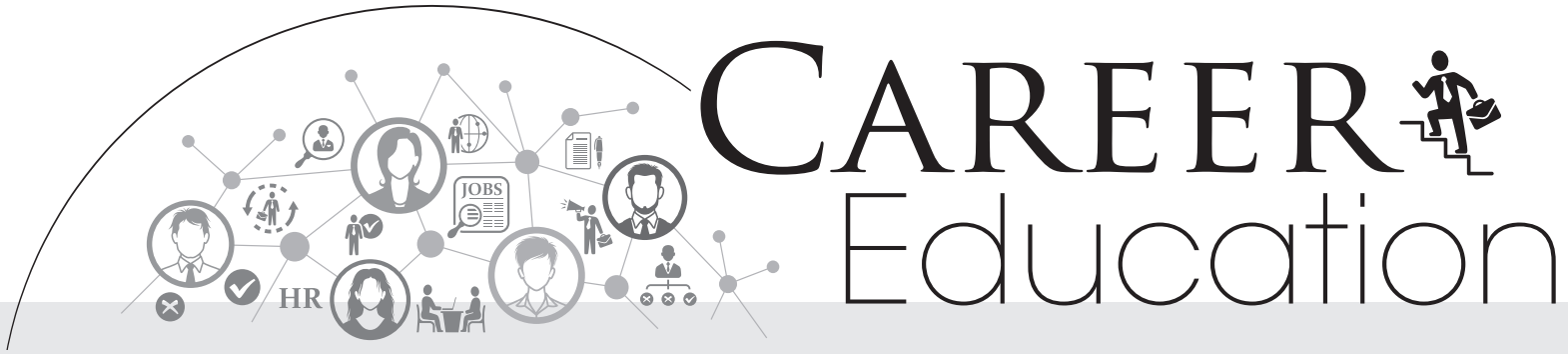
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No matter your age or income, community college is now free to eligible Massachusetts residents without a bachelor's degree.

REGISTER FOR SPRING!

[hcc.edu/freeCC](http://hcc.edu/freeCC)



# CAREER Education

## HCC gearing up for spring semester

Registration is open for spring 2025 semester classes at Holyoke Community College.

The HCC spring 2025 semester begins Tuesday, Jan. 21, for full 15-week spring semester classes begin. HCC will also be running three accelerated spring flex start sessions: Flex Start I classes begin Jan. 21 and run for seven weeks. Flex Start II classes begin Monday, Feb. 3, and run for 12 weeks; Flex Start III classes begin Monday, March 24, and run for seven weeks.

Thanks to the state-funded MassEducate program, a community college education is now free for all Massachusetts residents who have yet to earn a bachelor's degree.

"MassEducate provides an exciting opportunity for eligible students to attend college without the concern or weight of how to pay for it," said Mark Hudgik, HCC dean of strategic recruitment initiatives, admissions, and financial aid. "There has never been a better time to enroll.

Eligible students who want to earn a certificate or degree need only to complete the standard HCC application, complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) for the 2024-2025 school year, and register for at least six credits (typically two classes).

"Our admissions counselors, academic advisers, and financial aid staff are available to make sure prospective students get all the assistance they need," said Hudgik.

Class schedules and information about MassEducate can be found on the HCC website: [hcc.edu](http://hcc.edu).

Enroll today [hcc.edu/admissions](http://hcc.edu/admissions).

## The MacDuffie School more than just a school, a community

At The MacDuffie School, we believe education is more than academics—it's the foundation for a lifetime of achievement. Our vibrant community fosters creativity, leadership, and excellence while instilling respect and integrity in everything we do.

At MacDuffie, you're not just a student—you're part of a community that celebrates your individuality and supports your growth. Our small class sizes and dedicated teachers ensure you're seen, heard, and challenged to reach your full potential. Here, students don't just prepare for college—they prepare for life.

Choosing the right school is a big decision. That's why we invite you to learn more about MacDuffie and how it can shape your future. Visit our website, schedule a tour, or attend our April 5th open house to see for yourself what makes us different.

Your journey starts here. Define your future at MacDuffie—apply today! [admissions@macduffie.org](mailto:admissions@macduffie.org)

## Come and see what's new at St. Joan of Arc School

Physical Education Teacher Larry Moore and SJA students are enjoying a new basketball hoop funded by generous donations from our Annual Campaign.

A schoolyard basketball hoop is so important in creating not only a healthy environment, but helps with critical thinking, resilience, perseverance & teamwork.

The Dollar General Literacy Foundation recently awarded St. Joan of Arc School a \$500 grant to support its youth literacy program. A Book Club was formed for third and fourth grade students to encourage reading and literacy at a young age. This Book Club helps our students gain a deeper understanding of their reading, of other people through conversations, and provides an opportunity to safely fail and celebrate success. The club meets monthly to discuss the book, work on a fun activity, and share their findings.

The school will be holding

an Open House on Saturday, Jan. 25 from 9 a.m. to noon (no appointment needed). Appointment only tours for families will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 28 and Thursday, Jan. 30 from 3 to 7 p.m. Please call Chris or Janine in the Business Office at 413- 276-4608 for registration information or to make an appointment.

St. Joan of Arc School is a welcoming, safe & secure school community providing social, physical, spiritual & intellectual wellness for students in Pre-K 3 to Grade 8. SJA has innovative offerings that include affordable tuition and extended care, free breakfast and lunch, extracurricular programs, technology, music, library, and Duolingo language classes. Easy access to I391 & I90. Financial Aid and tuition assistance is available. To learn more visit [www.sjachicopee.org](http://www.sjachicopee.org).

We look forward to meeting you!

### Explore Your Passions. Be a Leader. Choose MacDuffie.






## OPEN HOUSE

**Saturday, April 5, 2025 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**



The MacDuffie School is a special place, and it all begins with our mission:  
*To foster in all students the intellectual habits of mind, high ethical standards, and respect for diversity required for becoming effective individuals in their personal and work lives, and moral and responsible participants in the world beyond.*

*There's no better way to get a feel for The MacDuffie School than spending time with us!*

Please register for our Open House at [www.macduffie.org](http://www.macduffie.org) or contact the Admissions Office at (413) 255-0000 to reserve your spot.

**Come Be A Part Of Our Community!**

66 School Street  
Granby, Massachusetts

[www.MacDuffie.org](http://www.MacDuffie.org)

For Students  
in Grades 6 through 12

### St. Joan of Arc School ~ Pre-K to Grade 8

587 Grattan Street, Chicopee ~ 533-1475 ~ [sjachicopee.org](http://sjachicopee.org)  
*Learning Rooted in Christian Values*

## OPEN HOUSE

**Saturday, Jan 25th 9am-12 noon ~ No Appointment Needed**  
**Jan 28th & Jan 30th 3pm-7pm ~ By Appointment Only**



**Affordable Tuition & Extended Care**  
**Free Breakfast & Lunch**  
**Extracurricular Programs~ Technology**  
**Phys. E ~ Music ~ Library ~ Duolingo**  
**Welcoming, Safe & Secure School Community**  
**Social, Physical, Spiritual & Intellectual Wellness**  
**Easy Access to I391 & I90 ~ Tuition Assistance Available**



# CAREER Education

## Come and see what great things are happening at St. Stanislaus School in Chicopee

This year the school's theme is "Many Gifts, One Spirit", which is our belief that every student has gifts to share with others towards the goal of making our world a better place. Our school encourages our students to focus on a different Corporal Work of Mercy to help our greater community. Some of the outreach programs we have participated in this year were: collection of canned goods for Lorraine's Soup Kitchen, for which our students collected 3,800 canned goods; and recently we collected toiletries, diapers, and other personal items to support the wish lists of both The Gray House and Christina's House in Springfield. The Works of Mercy which have been covered are - Feeding the Hungry and Working for Peace.

Service projects are done throughout the year to help teach students the value of giving back.

The school will be holding an Open House on Sunday, Feb. 2 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. (no appointment needed). If you would like to schedule a private tour for

another time, please call the school to schedule an appointment at (413) 592-5135.

St. Stanislaus School is a Roman Catholic, Franciscan, co-educational Pre-K through 8th grade school. Students are assisted in developing their potential spiritually, physically, and socially within a safe and diverse community. A foundation of academic excellence is created to prepare students to become contributing members of a global society. The school has a welcoming Franciscan environment, modern air-conditioned facility, strong core curriculum, enrichment classes, certified faculty, full-day preschool (PreK3 & 4) and Kindergarten, free breakfast and hot lunch, before & after school program, and one to one use and integration of iPads & Chromebooks into curriculum. Financial Aid is available. Interested students are invited to "spend a day with us". To learn more please visit [www.saintstansschool.org](http://www.saintstansschool.org).

We can't wait to meet you!

## Join us at PVPA for an open house to see what we can offer your child

Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School (PVPA) has a 25+ year history of providing an excellent, arts-focused, college-prep education to students in Grades 7-12.

PVPA students thrive in a creative, challenging learning environment that offers them a broad exposure to the performing arts. Our students consistently show that incorporating the arts into education creates, not just better artists, but better students who are equipped to be active participants in their future.


With an extensive Course Catalog of over 65 Arts Classes across Music, Dance, Theatre, Visual Arts and Technical Theater, students have access to both introductory courses and audition level courses, with multiple performance opportunities, offered alongside their core academics.

Join PVPA for an Open House and see why we are consistently voted one of the Best Charter Schools in the



Valley!

Now accepting applications for the 2025/2026 school year for Grades 7-12 at [pvpa.org/admissions](http://pvpa.org/admissions).




**pvpa**  
Charter Public School

Free, Arts-focused, College-prep  
Grades 7-12  
Application Deadline Feb 23, 2025

65+ courses in Theater, Dance,  
Instrumental and Vocal Music,  
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Visit us to learn more!  
To register for Open House,  
and TO APPLY:  
[www.pvpa.org/admissions](http://www.pvpa.org/admissions) or  
QR Code below



**OPEN HOUSE**  
Weds, Jan 15 4-6pm  
Sat, Jan 25 & Feb 1  
10am-12pm  
Tues, Feb 18 10am-12pm

**Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School**  
[www.pvpa.org/admissions](http://www.pvpa.org/admissions)




photo credit: Julian Parker-Burns

15 Mulligan Drive, South Hadley, MA [www.pvpa.org/admissions](http://www.pvpa.org/admissions) 413.552.1580

**OPEN HOUSE**  
SUNDAY, FEB. 2, 2025  
11AM-1PM





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- Certified faculty
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- One to one use and integration of iPads & Chromebooks into curriculum
- Modern facility - full gym, full cafeteria, air conditioned, carpeted classrooms.

Call us for more information and to schedule a tour. We welcome the opportunity for you to experience St. Stanislaus School! Interested students are invited to "spend a day with us."



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 The Town of Blandford is seeking a qualified individual for the position of Highway Superintendent. Salary range starting at \$75,000-\$80,000+ negotiable based on experience/skills. Please visit our website **TownOfBlandford.com** or email **Administrator@TownofBlandford.com** for more information.

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**TOWN OF WILBRAHAM**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT BUILDING & CONSERVATION P/T EMERGENCY DISPATCHER**  
 The Town of Wilbraham is looking to fill multiple vacancies. Application deadline 1/27/25. For application and more information please visit **www.wilbraham-ma.gov.** EOE


**TOWN OF WILBRAHAM**  
**POLICE OFFICER**  
 For application and more information please visit **www.wilbraham-ma.gov.** Review of applications begins immediately. Open until filled. EOE

**WILBRAHAM UNITED CHURCH** is hiring a sexton three evenings, 7-10 hours per week, \$16 per hour. Additional compensation for hours needed for weddings and funerals. Please send resume to **admin@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org**  
 More information found at **www.wilbrahamunitedchurch.org/about-us-2/**

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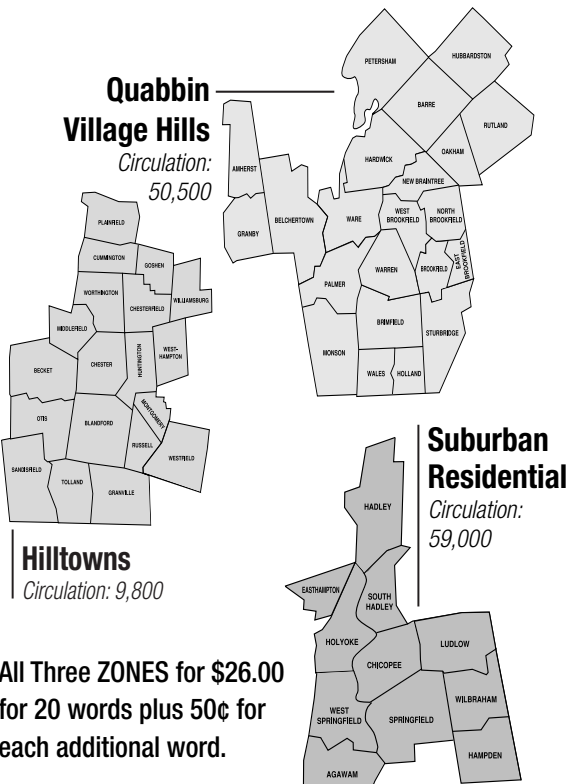
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### Father-daughter dance to have two dates

AGAWAM – Due to popular demand, there will be two dates to choose: Feb. 25 or 27 at Oak Ridge Golf Club from 6 to 8:30 p.m. Registration begins online and in person through Feb. 4. Please visit the Parks & Recreation page at [www.agawam.ma.us](http://www.agawam.ma.us) or call 821-0514.

### Parks dept. hosting mother-son dance

AGAWAM – Moms and their sons will create memories on Thursday, March 6 at Oak Ridge Golf Club from 6 to 8:30 p.m. Registration begins online and in person through Feb. 4. For more information, please visit the Parks & Recreation page at [www.agawam.ma.us](http://www.agawam.ma.us) or call 821-0514.

#### LEGO ■ from page 1

The team this year is made up of Jake Terramagra, Liam Gleason, Fatih Cogal and Calvin Johnson.

This year, the Lego league was challenged to focus on a problem related to deep sea exploration. The Gear Heads decided to focus on deep sea mining and how it can be made safer and less disturbing for the ecosystem and sealife.

“There are these manganese nodules... and they’re all over the ocean floor, but in some parts of the ocean it is more concentrated than others, like the abyssal zone,” Assistant Coach Crystal Garner said. “The team came up with the solution to mine these modules and to have the least effect that they could come up with on the ecosystem and the animals.”

The team worked hard to develop this idea and have it all come together. They went to the library to research the abyssal zone and to gain a better understanding of mining and the ecosystem.

With all of this research they put together their proposal to present to the judges at their different competitions.

They proposed a robot that would go to the floor of the abyssal zone and suck up the nodules like a vacuum.

“They had to draw a diagram of it,” Garner said. “In front of the section tubes there was a ball that produced sound to scare the animals away. Then on each of the tubes there was a sensor and a camera, so if an animal got put into the tube, then the tube would stop working to let the animal escape.”

For the robot, the Gear Heads had to make the robot out of Legos and it had to be able to pick up items off of the floor.

The robot had four motors and the team had to code the motors to work together to power the robot. Then they built the attach-

ment out of Legos to complete the tasks.

The robot was tasked to complete different missions that the team had to navigate it through. They had two and a half minutes to complete each mission in order to earn points.

“At our meetings we generally spent an hour working on the robot and the coding and then another hour on the research project and then we would split the team into two groups, two boys would work on the project and two on the robot and the coding,” Garner explained.

Garner is proud of how well the team worked together throughout the building process and during the competitions themselves.

“I really like how the boys...have worked together,” Garner said. “I’ve been a coach for two out of the three years [they’ve been a team] and I’ve loved seeing how they have matured, grown and learned more.”

The team went to the qualifier rounds on Dec. 7 and scored high enough that they made it to the state competition. They were one of only four teams selected from their qualifying round.

There were many qualifying rounds held throughout the state, totaling over 420 teams competing. Of those 420, only 72 made it to states.

Garner credits the teams progression to states to their teamwork throughout the season.

“They work well together as a team and they already know each other’s strengths and weaknesses,” Garner said. “I think that’s great and they all get along, they have fun, they do their best and they can bring each other back into being focused.”

Garner feels that each child has learned a lot about teamwork and engineering through their time in the Lego League and she is excited to see how they continue to grow.

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INSPECTIONS: Saturday, January 25<sup>TH</sup> - 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.,  
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