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AGAWAM

ADVERTISER NEWS

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School committee receives safety report

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – The school committee received a report on school safety from Social Emotional Learning Director Marlene DeJesus.

DeJesus reported that Agawam Public Schools have been focusing on taking preventative and proactive measures to ensure school and student safety.

She and her staff have been working on identifying and improving the protective factors in schools.

“When we increase proactive

“When we increase proactive factors, we decrease risk factors.”

– Marlene DeJesus

factors, we decrease risk factors,” DeJesus said. “My part is building supportive school communities.”

The district has taken a multitude of steps to improve on these various proactive factors.

One key step is a partnership with Boston Children’s Hospital and with the Massachusetts Child Psychiatry Access Program.

DeJesus and her staff hope that through this connection they will be able to provide improved access to mental health resources for all students.

“The goal is to increase access and improve behavioral health outcomes for students,” DeJesus said. “It is going to create pathways for students to be able to connect with community resources and a wide range of support inside and outside

of school.”

This program is funded by the state, specifically through the Department of Mental Health.

MCPAP has partnered with Agawam and Somerville to build a mental health support model that can be replicated in other districts.

Another key aspect of the partnership is that BCH provides a funded partnership with Cartwheel.

Cartwheel is a mental health partner for schools that will provide APS with telehealth counseling and one on one therapy.

This group accepts all Massachusetts insurances and will work to provide support for all students at APS who need it.

Referrals to this program will be made for students struggling with depression, anxiety, school avoidance and other mental health struggles.

“They provide students with no waitlist, which is really incredible, it is a direct referral from the district... so we can make referrals,” DeJesus said.

Cartwheel also provides psychiatric consultations and medication management as well as family therapy. Their appointment times are from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays.

The district has also been working on their multi-tiered system of support. Currently they are working to reassess the different tiers and to do a tier fidelity assessment.

The hope is that through this work the schools will be able to support students before they reach a more severe level of need.

“The project is really focusing on tier two,” DeJesus said. “Building

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Construction is nearly complete on the new Agawam Police headquarters. It is scheduled to open in June.

TURLEY PHOTO BY QUINN SUOMALA

Police station nearing opening

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – Mayor Christopher Johnson recently provided a tour of the soon-to-be home of the Agawam Police Department.

The new headquarters has multiple improvements on their current building.

This new building has more space overall, and has also provided opportunities for the department to improve their working efficiency.

“A lot of the planning that went into this building was to...significantly improve the workflow compared to what the existing station is,” Johnson said. “The workflow here is much more condensed and it is much safer.”

One way they have improved

this is through creating a large records room where the PD can store all of their records in a single location.

“At the current station...the records are stored at multiple locations around the building,” Johnson said.

This way, if someone comes to the PD looking for a record it will be easy for the person working at the desk to retrieve it.

Another storage benefit of the new station is the larger area for the police to keep evidence.

“Right now at our existing station we have evidence stored in four different locations around the station.”

With the new evidence storage location, all the evidence can be carefully cataloged and kept in one place.

Furthermore, the designers worked hard to ensure that all the areas of the police station that would frequently need public access were kept in the main public access section of the building.

This includes the records room, a soft interrogation room and the fingerprinting machine.

“Now if you need to get fingerprints for your job or security clearance or whatever it may be, we can just bring you into the public area of the building and never get you behind into the public safety area of the building,” Johnson said. “The concept is to maintain the public safety that is necessary in a police station.”

In the current police station, people have to be brought back

POLICE | page 10

Band performs at School Committee meeting



The Percussion Ensemble performed at the School Committee on Tuesday, Feb. 11, sharing several groovy tunes they had prepared since the beginning of January.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

Story times have right ‘vibe’

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – Agawam Public Library held a pajama story time event for kids and their families.

During this event kids were encouraged to come to the library in their pajamas and with a stuffed animal while they got to enjoy songs, crafts and books at the story time.

Youth Associate Evan Delano ran the program and was excited to be bringing kids in the library for a fun and relaxing time.

“It is so fun to come to the library in your pajamas,” Delano said.

During the event Delano read two different stories, Sleepy Sheepy by Lucy Cummins and Thank You by Jarvis.

Delano thought these two stories would each be perfect for the event in different ways.

“Sleepy Sheepy was very one theme,” Delano said. “For Thank You I thought it would be sweet to

read a book about gratitude and I tried to frame it as saying thank you to things you are grateful for at the end of the day.”

They put a lot of thought into picking out these different books, as they wanted to find picture books that were not only enjoyable to read but also worked for a read aloud.

“I always want something that is at least a little bit interactive and with big enough pictures that people can see them,” Delano said.

The kids also got to have fun making a sheep craft, which matched the sheep theme that Delano had come up with for the event.

“I got excited about the sheep craft and sheep are a great bedtime animal as people count them to go to sleep,” Delano said. “Also there are a lot of good picture books about sheep, too, so it was a perfect theme for the event.”

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Town hosts regional conference



Recently the regional Best Buddies Leadership Conference was held at the Agawam Public Library. Samantha Dean and Ms. Moriarty participated and as always represented Agawam High School in a positive manner. SUBMITTED PHOTO

Mayoral breakfast set for March 6

AGAWAM – The West of the River Chamber of Commerce is hosting the VIP Mayor Breakfast on Thursday, March 6 from 7:30 to 9 a.m. The event will be held at Partners/Tansey's Catered Table on Springfield St. in Agawam.

Agawam Mayor Christopher Johnson and West Springfield Mayor Will Reichelt will be on hand to discuss happenings in each town and as well as collaborative efforts going on.

The mayors will also take questions from those in attendance. You can also submit questions to robin@westoftheriverchamber.com. The cost is \$40 for chamber members and \$50 for non-members. To register, go to the West of the River website.

Jon and Li Waterman to present historical music retrospective

AGAWAM – On Monday, March 3, Jon and Li Waterman will perform "A Journey through the Roots of American Popular Music" at the Agawam Public Library at 750 Cooper St. in Agawam at 6:30 p.m. The program consists of original songs and history, and explores some of the fascinating characters and events at the roots of the blues, country, rock and other genres of American popular music.

The show also touches on the darker side of American popular music as well

as how music helps shape our identity as a people. Songwriter and musician Jon Waterman has performed his music and history programs in venues throughout New England as part of a series called Live Music Making History Live. The series was designed to encourage the celebration and exploration of history through music. The program is supported in part by a grant from the Agawam Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Library now has free passes to Mark Twain Museum available

AGAWAM – The Agawam Public Library has passes to several area museums for its members to use. Among them, the Mark Twain House and Museum located on Farmington Ave. in Hartford, Conn.

To make a reservation to use the passes, call the information desk at 413-789-1550, ext. 4. Passes are available to CW MARS cardholders eighteen years or older with a valid library card in good standing (no lost items, no fees of \$10 or more). Passes may be reserved up to four weeks in advance. There is a limit of 1 museum per family per day, and 3 reservations per family per month – 1 reservation for each individual museum per month. Passes are due at the end of the following business day. Please return passes to

the Information Desk if the library is open. They may be returned in the outdoor book drop when the library is closed. Passes must be returned on time so they will be available for the next person. Late fees are \$5.00 per day with a maximum fine of \$50. Museum passes will not be renewed. Museum passes cannot be checked out to juvenile accounts. Passes are picked up and returned at the Information Desk. You must present your library card. Please make reservations on the card that you will use to pick up the pass. Passes may be returned in the outdoor book drop when the library is closed.

Passes are available to several area museums, including Holyoke Children's, and the Connecticut Trolley Museum.

Library to host featured artists

AGAWAM – The Agawam Public Library is pleased to host works from multiple artists during the month of February. On the main floor gallery walls, watercolor pieces by local artist Sandy Hayslett will be exhibited, courtesy of her family. Hayslett was an avid painter and outdoors woman. Her love of the outdoors carried through to her work, and she mostly painted landscapes.

Gourds by Ceil Rossi will also be exhibited in the cases on the main floor. Rossi learned the art form of gourds from her time living in Arizona, and has found gourds to be a way to nurture her artistic creativity. Beyond working on gourd sculptures, Rossi also teaches and exhibits in galleries in Massachusetts and Connecticut, having won awards in several fine art shows. Rossi is president of the Agawam Community Artists and Artisans and a member of the Agawam Cultural Council, and can be found on Facebook at CareFreeGourdGallery.

Visitors are welcomed to explore these art exhibits throughout February during the regular hours of the library. The Agawam Public Library is open 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays, and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays. The library will be closed Monday, Feb. 17 for Presidents Day. Any questions about the exhibits can be routed to the Information Desk at 413-789-1550 x4. Please contact Adult Services Library Associate, Erica LeFebvre at (413) 789-1550 x8858 or elefebvre@agawamlibrary.org if you are interested in displaying artwork at the library.



Black History Month recognized with musical jazz celebration

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College will continue its recognition of Black History Month on Wednesday, Feb. 12, with "Rhythms Through Time: A Celebration of Jazz" in the Campus Center cafeteria.

Starting at 11 a.m., HCC jazz professor and guitarist Robert Ferrier will lead a discussion about the history of jazz and a performance by the HCC All Stars band, featuring HCC music students.

The HCC event is part of a month-long series of events at HCC highlighting this year's national Black History Month theme: "African Americans and Labor."

On Tuesday, Feb. 18, at 12:30 p.m., HCC will host a watch party for a Zoom presentation by UMass graduate student Tiamba M. Wilkerson: "Voices of Solidarity: on Black Union Participation." Wilkerson is a PhD student in sociology at the University of Massachusetts Amherst whose research focuses

on the intersections of race and gender in the labor market, racial capitalism, neoliberal urban redevelopment and gentrification, as well as race and place in the South

On Wednesday, Feb. 26, HCC will host a Harambee Celebration at 11 a.m. in the HCC Campus Center. Harambee is a Swahili word that means "pull together" or "unite." It's a celebratory event that honors the contri-

butions and achievements of Black people. HCC's event will feature food, music, as well as an open mic session.

"At a time when conversations about equity, inclusion, and justice are more important than ever, celebrating Black History Month allows us to uplift voices that have historically been marginalized," HCC's Black Leadership Council and Black History Month Committee, said in a campus-wide email. "Recognizing and honoring these histories is not just about the past, it's about shaping a future that embraces diversity, fosters understanding, and empowers all members of our community."

In addition, HCC's Marieb Adult Learner Success Center is hosting weekly book readings, accompanied by milk and cookies in the Parent Learning Center (Frost 269) for student parents and their children: Feb. 12, 2 p.m. (All Because You Matter by Tami Charles); Feb. 20, 12:30 p.m. (Black is a Rainbow Color by Angela Joy); Feb. 26, 2 p.m. (Sulwe by Lupita Nyong'o).

Also, on Friday, Feb. 21, at 12:30 p.m., HCC will host a Black History Month-themed trivia contest in the HCC Campus Center.

To learn more about Black History Month months at HCC or to participate remotely, please go to: hcc.edu/bhm.

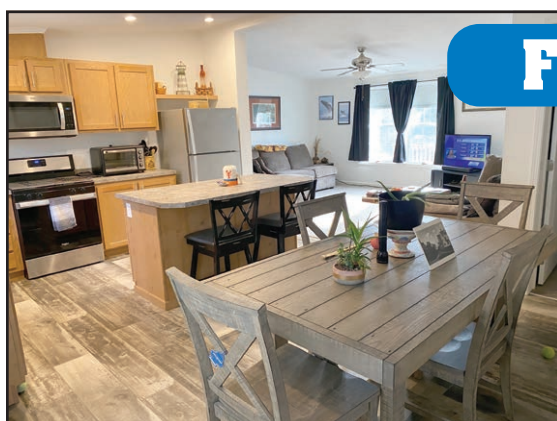


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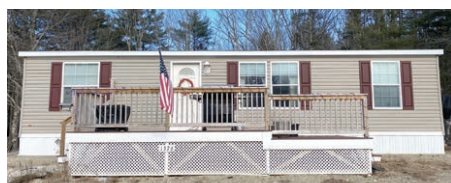
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VOC offering free tax preparation

CHICOPEE – Valley Opportunity Council, which manages the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program that provides free tax preparation to those of low and moderate-income, began offering tax preparation and filing appointments on Tuesday, Jan. 21.

VITA tax preparation appointments are available through April 30, at three VOC locations: 20 Lathrop St., West Springfield, 516 Chicopee St., Chicopee; and 300 High St., Holyoke.

To schedule an appointment, call (413) 612-0206. Those eligible for the VITA program must live in Massachusetts or Connecticut with an income of up to \$67,000. Appointments are available on weekdays, evenings and weekends.

Certified volunteer tax professionals help qualified individuals prepare and file basic state and federal tax returns and prior year returns. VOC also offers free electronic filing of tax returns, allowing for individuals to receive their refunds much quicker than paper filings and save up to hundreds of dollars in filing fees.

The core mission and goal of VITA is to assist low- to moderate-income taxpayers in satisfying their tax responsibilities and minimize financial hardships, in turn saving taxpayers thousands of dollars in filing fees. The VITA program is sponsored by VOC and the Internal Revenue Service.

In 2024, VOC helped 861 individuals file their state and federal tax returns through the VITA program. VOC has been providing the VITA program for 25 years in the communities of Chicopee, Holyoke, and as of last year, Westfield.

The Valley Opportunity Council is the largest and most diverse Community Action Agency in Western Massachusetts with an annual budget of \$45 million. With this Federal designation, the VOC has established a powerful network of support and collaborative services intended to encourage community members to actively achieve self-sufficiency for themselves and their families. VOC employs over 250 staff members and has 150 local vendors, providing a significant economic investment in the community.

Agawam Day to be held in St. Petersburg

AGAWAM – The 44th annual “Agawam Day in Florida” will be held on Wednesday, March 5, 2025 from 10 a.m. to p.m. Former Agawam residents, old friends, classmates and relatives will meet at Fort DeSoto National Park, St. Petersburg, FL. for a reunion, picnic, raffles, hugs and to share old memories. For more information, contact: Hank Drewnowski call/text at 860-462-7273 or email -hdrew2452@gmail.com.

Feline Friends holding donation drive

AGAWAM – Feline Friends be holding our next two monthly donation drives at Smithland Pet & Garden Center on Saturday, Feb. 1, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. as well as March 1. Volunteers will be collecting food, litter & monetary donations for the kitties. Opened bags/boxes will be accepted. Smithland, a valued sponsor, is stocked with Friskies Pate or Shreds canned food (single flavor cases are preferred), many Fancy Feast varieties and unscented, clumping cat litter. We would also appreciate jars of baby food (meat/poultry varieties), paper towels, puppy peepads and gift cards to Smithland or Costco. Checks or cash are always

gratefully accepted at Feline Friends, P.O. Box 174, Feeding Hills. Congratulations to Cheryl and Carl K who won the big screen TV in our November promotion. We appreciate all of the wonderful donations received at the January 4th donation drive including Joanne L & Joan W, Ann H, Carl and Cheryl K, Linda B, Crystal M, Ken K & Irene F, Joe and Shirly as well as everyone who stopped by to chat & show us pictures. Just a reminder that we have donation bins at Smithland near the registers and at the Agawam Public Library. Please include contact information with donations if you would like an acknowledgement.

This month Maria B dropped off some cozy blankets at the library and we received cases of cat food, bags of dry food, treats and more at Smithland. Check out our Feline Friends Cat Sanctuary page for photos. We are so grateful for each & every donation. Feline Friends Inc. is a community-based, nonprofit sanctuary that does not discriminate against any cat based on age, gender or disability. More information about our sanctuary may be found on our website at felinefriendsinc.org or our Facebook page at Feline Friends Cat Sanctuary. Contact us with questions at info@felinefriendsinc.org or by phone at 413-786-5019.

Help available for natural gas customers in need this winter

SPRINGFIELD – With brutally cold temperatures persisting across New England over the last two months, many customers in Massachusetts have been using considerably more natural gas to heat their homes and businesses to stay warm. As that sharp increase in usage is now being reflected in natural gas bills, Eversource is encouraging customers to take advantage of the many assistance programs and payment plans that are available to help manage their bill. The company is hosting two free virtual information sessions next week where customers can learn more about the various options, as well as energy efficiency programs that can help lower their monthly usage and lead to overall savings. “We understand how challenging increased energy costs are for our customers who are already facing higher prices for other basic necessities, and we want them to know we’re here to help and can connect them with the programs that fit their needs,” said Eversource Senior Vice President and Chief Customer Officer Penni Conner. “We work one-on-one with our customers every day to help

them with their bills and provide resources and insights for savings, and these webinars are another opportunity to learn more about the valuable assistance programs and flexible payment plans available. We also encourage customers to take advantage of the numerous energy efficiency solutions offered, which can lower bills by reducing energy usage.” Higher natural gas usage, resulting from the colder temperatures, has been the primary driver for the increase customers have seen in their recent bills. The typical residential Eversource Gas Company of Massachusetts (EGMA/former Columbia Gas) customer used 56 therms in November 2024, 110 therms in December 2024, and 168 therms in January 2025. The dramatic increase in usage is coupled with recent rate adjustments that took effect on November 1, which are also impacting customers’ current bills. These adjustments reflected a variety of factors including the cost of natural gas on the supply side of the bill and – on the delivery side – Eversource’s significant investments in safety and reliabil-

ity projects to strengthen and improve service for customers, as well as growth in energy efficiency programs and services available to help customers better manage their energy use and advance decarbonization goals. In particular, the former Columbia Gas system has required significant upgrades to bring the system up to standards and ensure safe, reliable service for customers, and these investments were made as part of the Safety Assessment required through the transaction agreement previously approved by the state. How much energy a customer uses impacts both the supply and delivery portions of the bill. Even if customers do not raise their thermostats, more energy is used to maintain the same temperature setting in colder weather. Help is available for customers who need it. Eversource encourages customers to enroll in one of its payment plans or assistance programs if they need help with their energy bill by calling 800-688-6160, or by visiting Eversource.com/BillHelp. • The New Start Program can help income-eligible customers reduce or eliminate

their outstanding balance in as little as 12 months when they make on-time monthly payments. Eversource will make up the difference by eliminating or forgiving a portion of the total balance enrolled in the program – reducing the amount owed each month. • Flexible Payment Plans are available to all customers, regardless of income, to pay their past-due balance over a period of time. • Budget Billing Plans are also available and can help customers avoid seasonal spikes on their energy bill by paying a fixed amount each month based on their average annual usage. • A Discount Rate is available to customers receiving public assistance benefits and have a household income at or below 60% of the state median income. These customers may be eligible for a 25% discount on their monthly natural gas bill. • The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) is a free resource offered by the state to help eligible homeowners and renters pay a portion of their winter heating bills. Customers can apply online at masscap.org/heatinghelpma.

St. Patrick’s battle of the bars getting ready to rumble Feb. 28

HOLYOKE – The St. Patrick’s Committee of Holyoke will hold the fifth annual Battle of the Bars bartending event at the Holyoke Knight of Columbus Council 90 to fundraise for the Committee to offset the costs of the bands and entertainment on Parade Weekend. The event will be held Friday, Feb. 28, from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. The event will feature one bartender from each of the Bars listed below. They will battle each other to see who can raise the most tips for donations to the Parade. In addition to one final winner, each round will have a cash prize winner. Event Chair Kelly McGivern says, “We are so excited to have these six amazing bartenders and establishments back again for another fun-filled year. With Holyoke and South Hadley a part of the Holyoke Regional Committee, we are beyond lucky for all of the support of everyone who comes out each here to kick off our green season and support us.” The event is open to the public and encourages them to support their favorite bar, bartender, and the Holyoke St. Patrick’s Day



Parade. The 2024 winner was Trista Kasperowski with Donovan’s Irish Pub. The media is invited to attend. More information on the event can be found on the Committee website here: holyokestpatricksparade.com/events/2025-battle-of-the-bars. The 72nd Holyoke St. Patrick’s Parade will be held on Sunday, March 23, and the 48th Holyoke St. Patrick’s Road Race will be held on Saturday, March 22.

6 - 7 p.m.	Donovan’s Irish Pub - with Trista Kasperowski Pic’s Pub & Pizzeria - with Matt Dulude
7 - 8 p.m.	JP’s Restaurant - with Mary Kate Glasheen Halfway House Lounge - with Colleen Flanagan
8 - 9 p.m.	Griffin’s Cafe - with Ashleigh McNulty Francie’s Tavern - with Chy Clemens

Dobbin Tartin party set for March 1

HOLYOKE – Kick off the start of March and Parade Season by getting decked out in your favorite Holyoke tartan. This seventh-annual event celebrates the retirement of Dobbin, the horse from the Yankee Pedlar to the Holyoke Merry-Go-Round. All funds raised at the event go to support the St. Patrick’s Committee of Holyoke and their annual Parade Weekend. Come pick up new and favorite tartan items at this exclusive event. Tickets for this event will only be sold at the door. They are \$5 per person or \$10 per family, cash or check only. Admission includes unlimited rides on the merry-go-round, face painting, hair braiding, glitter designs, crafts, and a photo booth. There will also be a raffle, the White Hut food truck, and beer and wine will be available for purchase. For more information, please visit our website at www.holyokestpatricksparade.com. The 72nd Holyoke St. Patrick’s Parade will be held on Sunday, March 23, and the 48th Holyoke St. Patrick’s Road Race on Saturday, March 22.

Marshal Mania

HOLYOKE – The St. Patrick’s Committee of Holyoke will host the 2025 Marshal Mania Kick-Off Party on Saturday, March 1, at the Log Cabin. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Eavesdrop, an Americana-pop/Folk-Soul band will start at 8 p.m., followed by Unforgettable Fire, the #1 Premier U2 Tribute Band. Liberty Bank generously sponsors this year’s event. There will be a cash bar, food for sale from the Log Cabin, and raffles. Tickets are \$20 per person. Contact Jeff Walsh at jeffwalsh127@gmail.com at 413-530-3944 or Johnny Driscoll at johnnydriscoll@live.com at 413-530-3328.

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Kindergarten Information Night

Agawam Public Schools

March 6, 2025, 6 p.m. - 7 p.m.
Sapelli Elementary School, 65 Begley St.

Learn about the screening process
Receive enrollment information
Learn how to prepare your child for K
Meet educators and principals

Snow Date:
March 12

Questions?
Contact Andrea Polley:
apolley@agawamed.org

Opinion

Guest Column



Reader asks about claiming Social Security when I have a Health Savings Account

Dear Rusty

I have reached my full retirement age (66 plus 8 months) and plan to apply for Social Security this month, but I've seen articles, which say that when I apply, I must also take Medicare Part A.

This, even though I am continuing to work and am covered by my employer's health insurance (a high deductible plan). I contribute bi-weekly into an Health Savings Account. I've read that Medicare back dates Part A coverage by six months, which suggests I would have had to stop contributing to my HSA six months ago.

If this is true, will I need to pay penalties and such to the IRS? I'm not able to find anything else about this topic and I'm wondering what you might have to say. I have my wife and two children on my employer's HDHP. We contribute \$6,000 annually to our HSA and my employer contributes \$1,250 on Jan. 1 each year. We can live without the HSA, but the taxes and IRS penalties concern me.

Signed: Wanting to Claim SS (but concerned)

Dear Wanting to Claim

I'm afraid that what you've read is correct - it is mandatory for you to take Medicare Part A (inpatient hospitalization coverage) when receiving Social Security benefits after age 65. Medicare Part A is free to you and even though you are still covered under your employer's creditable high deductible healthcare plan and can delay taking Medicare Part B, you must take Medicare Part A to collect Social Security after 65. Medicare and your employer's plan will coordinate healthcare benefit payments.

That does, however, also mean your Health Savings Account will be affected because, as you have found, Medicare will backdate your Part A coverage by six months. And because Part A is not a high deductible plan (a requirement for HSA), any contributions you make after the effective date of Part A will be subject to an IRS penalty, and your HSA contributions won't be considered tax-exempt. This will mean the IRS will likely assess a 6% excise tax on any contributions made after your Part A effective date and you'll need to pay income tax on those contributions.

What you may wish to consider is stopping your HSA contributions now and waiting an additional six months or so to claim your Social Security benefits (to get beyond the HSA penalty phase). This would have the advantage of avoiding the IRS penalty on your HSA contributions and would also increase your Social Security benefit due to Delayed Retirement Credits. You earn DRCs at the rate of .677% for each month beyond your FRA that you wait to claim, which means an SS benefit about 4% higher if you wait six months longer to claim SS.

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.



DAVE GRANLUND © www.davegranlund.com

Guest Column

Leave it to fate



I never thought I would say this, but I am out of ideas for this week's column. Every topic I come up with has been covered at one time or another. So, as the snow falls every so furiously outside, I am going to resort to the "stick your finger in the gardening encyclopedia, and see where it lands" trick.

I'll leave the topics of the week to fate.

Here goes: For the first topic, my finger landed on a funny picture of geranium plants with their rootballs wrapped in newspaper hanging from the beams in someone's basement. I have written before about my success in bringing my geranium plants inside for the winter and placing them in a south facing window.

Just yesterday I was looking at the plants more closely, knowing that soon enough, I will be snipping the tips to take some cuttings. But I digress, the

picture I saw is just another way to overwinter your geranium plants, especially if you don't have a sunny window or a lot of indoor gardening space.

Many old timers used to talk of this method a lot and had great success with it. You could either try and pot the plants up ahead of time or go right from the basement to the outdoors after the threat of frost has passed and after a thorough hardening off process, of course.

Second topic: My finger landed on the herb Lovage (*Levisticum officinale*). I have started lovage from seed nearly every year for the last 30 years.

This celery substitute is always on the list of transplants needed for the herb garden at Old Sturbridge Village. Lovage seed is not viable for long, so new seed is needed each year, or germination will be sparse.

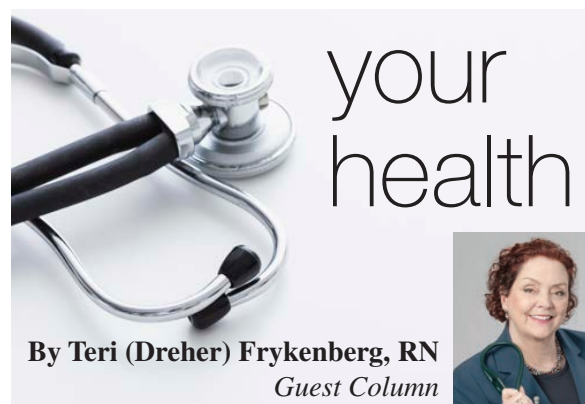
The plant is considered a perennial, meaning it will return year after year, but in my experience, the best foliage production will be in the first year. The flowers are "umbells" like dill and fennel but flowers only take away from foliage production, so they are best snipped off.

The hollow stems are used in place of celery in soups and stews. My mom always enjoyed drying the leaves for use during the winter months.

Topic three: Hostas! I was never a big fan of Hostas until I had a yard that had substantial amounts

GARDEN | page 5

Are you a "complex patient"?



By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN
Guest Column

With more people living longer, it's becoming likelier than an individual will be dealing with more than one chronic health condition, such as heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, cancer, any number of autoimmune disorders (such as lupus) - the list is practically endless.

Your doctors - you probably have more than one - may not tell you to your face that you are "complex" or "complicated," so how do you know if you are? What are the possible implications of complexity, and what can you do about it?

Here are some typical characteristics of complex patients, in addition to having multiple health conditions:

- You take multiple medications.
- You have a lot of health-care providers, including specialists.
- You are in the hospital frequently.
- You struggle to manage your own health care because of its complexity.
- You lack the family or social network you need to

manage your health care.

Health-care providers are seeing more patients with complex conditions than ever, but there's little consensus among doctors about how to deal with them. Aside from the characteristics I listed above, patient complexity is aggravated by a number of other factors.

- Our health care and social care systems are fragmented, and the gaps are continuously growing.
- The scope of individuals' needs are constantly growing.
- More patients are living alone, as family and community connections weaken.
- There is a global shortage of caregivers in the workforce.

Researchers have also noted the impact of socioeconomic factors, such as lack of nutrition, poverty and access to care.

"All of this poses great challenges and the need for a paradigm change in proposing possible solutions and interventions," three European researchers wrote in 2023. "We have to invest, mobilize and implement harm reduction interventions in the care of complex patients."

Easier said than done, obviously.

One positive I'm seeing is the emergence of patient-centered care as a pathway to better health outcomes. Using a patient-centered assessment lets providers understand not only a patient's physical health, but also their mental health, lifestyle, behaviors, social factors (education, employment) and ability to understand their symptoms and treatments.

As a patient advocate, I have to take all of these factors into consideration when working with a client and communicating with their care team. Even

HEALTH | page 5

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 Mon-

day 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 newspa-

per 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.



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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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Schools & Youth

Foundation encourages students to apply for scholarships

SPRINGFIELD – The Jewish Federation of Western Massachusetts's Jewish Endowment Foundation is inviting undergraduate and college-bound students to apply to its annual Common Fund and Springfield Council of Jewish Women (SCJW) scholarships through March 28, 2025. Qualified students regardless of race, religion, and gender are encouraged to apply. Scholarships are awarded based on a combination of academic, financial need and community involvement.

"The value of education is strongly embedded in our Jewish culture, which is why we are proud to award Common Fund and Springfield Council of Jewish Women scholarships to support students on their educational journey," said Nora Gorenstein, CEO of the Jewish Federation of Western Massachusetts. "These scholarships are an example of one of the many ways Federation supports

families in Western Massachusetts, and we look forward to receiving scholarship applications from our future leaders and professionals."

Federation's Jewish Endowment Foundation Common Fund grants college scholarships to all qualified high school students who are residents of Hampden, Hampshire, and Franklin counties. Since 2015, Federation's Jewish Endowment Foundation Common Fund has awarded more than \$260,000 in scholarships to more than 240 college bound students. Approximately thirty students are selected each year to receive this scholarship.

Federation's SCJW Scholarships are available to qualified high school students and undergraduate students residing in Chicopee, Springfield, East Longmeadow, Longmeadow, Wilbraham, Hampden, Agawam,

or West Springfield. The SCJW established its first scholarship fund in 1943. Since then, the scholarship fund has grown substantially. In 1992, the SCJW transferred their funds to Federation's Jewish Endowment Foundation. Since 1992, it has awarded more than \$2.5 million dollars to financially assist thousands of local students in their pursuit of higher education.

Recipients for both scholarship types are chosen based on academic performance, financial need, and community involvement. Once chosen, undergraduate students are eligible to renew their awards for their full four years of college. The application deadline for Federation's Jewish Endowment Foundation Common Fund scholarships and SCJW scholarships is March 28, 2025. To apply, visit <https://jewishwesternmass.org/grants-scholarships>.

Rotary Club to award scholarships

AGAWAM – The Agawam Rotary Club is now accepting applications for 4 scholarships the club offers annually. The awards cover a diverse range of interests and include vocational/technical training, cultural arts, the legal profession, and assistance with attending college.

With the exception of the Ray and Reita McCarroll Memorial scholarship which is awarded to graduating seniors from both Agawam and West Springfield, the awards are limited to residents of Agawam. A full description and application for each of these scholarships can be found at the Agawam Rotary Club's webpage at agawamrotary.org. Click on "Scholarships" at the top of the home page. Please note that applications must be received by April 1, 2025.

Application deadline approaching for Horace Smith Fund scholarships

WESTFIELD – The Horace Smith Fund, celebrating its 125th anniversary, will be awarding \$310,000 in scholarships and fellowships to residents of Hampden County, who have also graduated from an eligible high school or private school. This year 20 scholarships, three fellowships and one William R. Rooney Award for students with special needs will be presented to recipients at the June 19 Awards Night ceremony at Storowton Carriage House in West Springfield.

Scholarships are offered not only to graduating high school seniors but also to students already in college or those wishing to return to college. Scholarships of \$12,000 are distributed as \$3,000 annually and renewable each year until graduation. Fellowship awards of \$15,000 are distributed as \$7,500 annually and renewable for one additional year to students pursuing a full-time

graduate degree. Students must maintain at least a B average to renew.

Recipients are selected on a variety of criteria, including academic records, merit, and financial need. Of great importance is a personal written account of why the student feels deserving of financial assistance. Applicants must submit their transcripts and, if applicable, college entrance exam scores or graduate degree specific tests, and three letters of recommendation.

Completed applications must be received either electronically or be mailed 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, and on-line at www.HoraceSmithFund.org or by phoning (413) 739-4222.

HCC accepting scholarship applications

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Community College Foundation will begin accepting scholarship applications for the 2025-2026 academic year on Tuesday, Jan. 21. The application deadline is Friday, March 14.

Last year, the HCC Foundation awarded 388 scholarships worth about \$350,000 to 323 incoming, current, and transferring HCC students. Some students received multiple scholarship awards. The average scholarship award is typically around \$900.

"Awarding scholarships to deserving students has been a cornerstone of the work of the HCC Foundation since its founding," said Amanda Sbriscia, vice president of Institutional Advancement and executive director of the HCC Foundation. "Scholarships established by donors celebrate academic achievement, community service, and civic engagement, and, most importantly, these funds ensure hundreds of students have the resources they need to complete their college degrees."

Students must be currently enrolled at HCC or have been accepted for the upcoming academic year to be eligible for scholarships.

"While the recent launch of MassEducate, the state's free-community-college-for-all program, has made HCC accessible to more individuals, that only means we have a greater responsibility to ensure students make it to the finish line," Sbriscia said. "Tuition and fees represent only a portion of the cost of being a college student today, and, oftentimes, a donor scholarship can truly change a

student's life."

Applicants need only to fill out a single online form to be automatically matched with the scholarships they are most qualified to receive. There are scholarships for new students, current students and students transferring to other institutions, scholarships based on financial need, scholarships for students in specific majors, scholarships for residents of certain communities, and scholarships that recognize academic achievement.

To view scholarship opportunities and begin the application process, please go to www.hcc.edu/scholarships.

Last January, HCC opened a dedicated Scholarship Resource Center to help current and incoming students navigate the process of applying for scholarships and filling out the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). The office, located on the first floor of the Donahue Building (Room 158) is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The HCC Foundation is a 501(c)(3) that works to advance the college's mission, vision, and values. Founded in 1968 as the Friends of Holyoke Community College, in response to a devastating fire that forced the college to rebuild on a new campus, the Foundation now manages assets of more than \$20 million, the largest community college foundation endowment in Massachusetts.

Questions should be directed to the HCC Foundation office at 413-552-2182, or by email to scholarships@hcc.edu.

GARDEN ■ from page 4

of shade. These versatile plants are a perfect companion for many shade loving perennials, especially if they are planted in fertile soil with ample moisture.

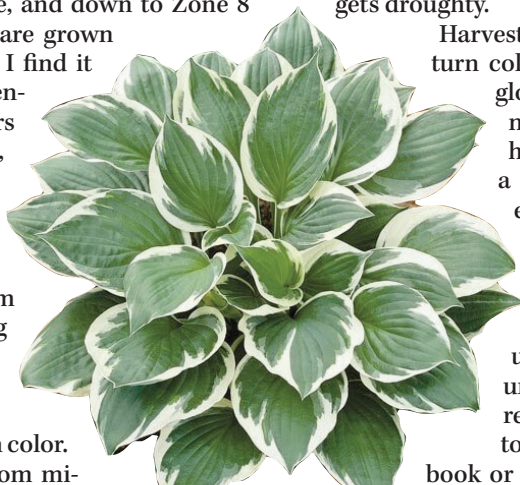
Like other perennials, Hostas need a period of dormancy to succeed, so they will do well in our climate, and down to Zone 8 or so. Most varieties are grown for their foliage only; I find it funny that some gardeners snip off the flowers as they begin to form, saying that it actually takes away from the look of the plant.

There are so many types to choose from and in colors ranging from grass-green to yellow and even blue-gray! Some are variegated or splashed with color.

Leaf sizes range from minuscule to huge! One pest that loves Hosta leaves is the slug. To lessen their interest in the plant, be sure to remove decomposing foliage.

Use any number of traps, homemade or otherwise to keep your plants damage free.

And the last fate-filled topic is: Chile peppers! There are all kinds of hot peppers out there for the gardener to experiment with.



You might think that growing instructions may differ for fire-hot peppers, but they are grown in the same manner as regular bell peppers.

Start the seeds inside, or purchase transplants. Warm the soil ahead of installing the plants, and don't overdue it fertility-wise.

Provide supplemental water if the summer gets droughty.

Harvest when the peppers turn color, and do so wearing gloves being ever mindful not to touch your eyes. I had always heard that a milk bath should help ease the sting of an accidental burn; others say ingesting starchy food does the trick.

Well, I hope this unconventional column was an enjoyable read. It's never too late to pull out a reference book or two for some interesting factoids.

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@turlley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.

HEALTH ■ from page 4

the smallest problem in any of these dimensions can dramatically worsen a patient's health outcome.

But patient advocates and health-care providers cannot do the job by themselves. If you fall within the definition of "a complex patient," it's important for you to take the bull by the horns and participate in your own health care to the best of your ability. The same goes for your loved ones, your primary care provider and caregivers.

This is not easy in our fragmented health-care world. Still, there are actions a complex patient can take to help themselves and (one hopes) improve their health outcomes.

1. Coordinating care. Each health-care provider has to know what the others are diagnosing, treating and prescribing. It's likely that one or more of your providers is accessible through a patient portal that also contains test results, notes and electronic health records.

Will they have time to read everything? Maybe not, but you should, so you can convey your understanding of what other doctors are saying. This is where medically-trained patient advocates provide a valuable service, by reviewing the records and then conveying that information to doctors in medical terminology.

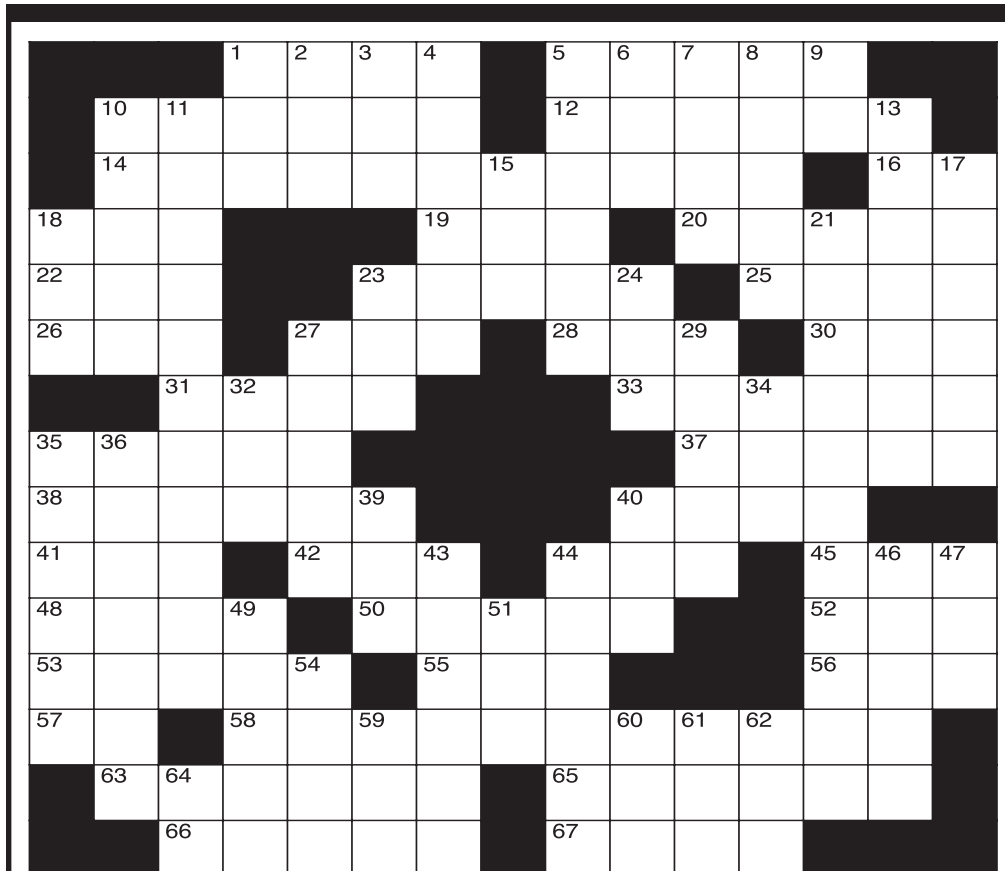
2. Being honest. As humans who want to

appear competent and in charge of our lives, we sometimes hesitate to tell our providers everything that's going on. Maybe there's an emerging mental health issue. Maybe you're taking a drug that hasn't been prescribed. Maybe there's been a breakup in a marriage. Maybe you're drinking more. All of these things can impact your well-being, and your doctor needs to know about them.

3. Taking notes. I've said it before and I'll say it again. Take someone with you to medical appointments and have them take notes, or even keep a journal yourself. You can keep track not only of doctor discussions, but also note your mental, emotional and physical symptoms on a daily basis to share with your provider.

If you are a "complex patient," or you know someone who is, recognize that fact and take a stronger hand in your care. You may be helping yourself or a loved one live their best life.

Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, a registered nurse and board-certified patient advocate, is the founder of Northshore Patient Advocates LLC (NSHore). She is also founder and CEO of Nurse Advocate Entrepreneur, which trains medical professionals to become successful private patient advocates. Teri offers a free phone consultation to newspaper readers as well as to nurses interested in becoming advocates. Reach her at Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Tropical Asian plant
5. Yankees' slugger
10. Helps to preserve food
12. Plant disease
14. One who predicts
16. Equally
18. Burundian franc
19. Pouch
20. Arizona city
22. Surround
23. Hard, heavy timber
25. Witnessed
26. They ___
27. French river
28. A way to drink
30. Small constellation
31. Peruse a written work
33. Type of hound
35. Plant of the goosefoot family

CLUES DOWN

1. Body art
2. Boxing's GOAT
3. Film for posterity (abbr.)
4. Prayer
5. Calculating machine
6. Keyboard key
7. Outburst
8. Man-eating giants
9. New Hampshire
10. Type of sword
11. Counting
13. Pants style
15. Political action committee
17. U.S. government legislative branch
18. Civil Rights Act component
21. Contractors take one
23. Spanish soldier
24. A person's brother or sister

CLUES DOWN

27. Expressed pleasure
29. Song of praise
32. Shock treatment
34. Patti Hearst's captors
35. Counteract
36. Goes over again
39. Popular Dodge truck
40. Male adult
43. A part of a river where the current is very fast
44. Rope used to lasso
46. Become less intense
47. Subway rodent
49. Lead alloy
51. Japanese honorific title
54. Advise someone
59. Famous NYC museum
60. Ocean
61. Cathode-ray tube
62. Cologne
64. It starts with these two

Better Business Bureau Scam Alert: Watch out for third parties claiming to help with your government grant registration

Paula Fleming, CMSO
pfleming@boston.bbb.org

Government impostor scams take on new twists, seeking to trick unsuspecting consumers and businesses. In the newest version, third-party companies offer businesses help with managing their registrations for the US System for Award Management, SAM.gov, for a fee.

SAM.gov is a free US government registry for vendors doing business with the government. According to the SAM.gov official website, users can register to do business with the US government, update business entity registrations, search for records, assistance, contract opportunities, data reports, and access publicly available award data.

How the scam works

You receive an email from what appears to be a SAM.gov representative stating that your registration is set to expire sometime soon. You are threatened with delaying or losing business funding or even at risk of having your registration deleted within the system. You are instructed to update your information immediately using a link and a unique case code provided in the correspondence. If you follow the link, you'll be taken to a third-party registration center website claiming to help businesses that do business with the federal government and you'll be prompted to pay the third-party for your renewal.

BBB files indicate that the services listed in this BBB Business Profile have a pattern of complaints concerning non-service provided after payment is made. Consumer complaints state that they signed up for

the SAM Program and, after paying, are not able to reach the business, and services for the program have not been completed as advised. BBB contacted the business in September 2021 about the pattern of complaints but has not received a response at this time.

Tips to avoid this scam

- Never pay for SAM.gov registration. SAM.gov is a free US government registry that does not require a fee to register, renew or update your registration. If you receive an email from a company offering to help with your registration or renewal for a fee, it's best to ignore it.
- Verify directly with the agency. If someone claims to be from a government agency, contact the agency using its official website or phone number. Never use the contact information provided by the caller or emailer.

• Know how government agencies operate. Legitimate agencies like the IRS, Social Security Administration, or Service Canada will not demand immediate payment, threaten arrest, or ask for sensitive information over the phone, email, or text.

• Check email extensions. Official government correspondence usually comes from ".gov" or ".mil" addresses. Messages from Gmail, Yahoo, or similar domains claiming to be government-related are scams.

• Protect your personal information. Avoid sharing sensitive details like Social Security or Social Insurance numbers, bank account details, or passwords unless you initiate contact with a verified agency.

• Report scams immediately. Report any suspicious contact to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at reportfraud.ftc.gov or through BBB Scam Tracker.

REPORT ■ from page 1

that capacity to identify students with behavioral needs sooner so that tier three isn't something a student needs," DeJesus said.

On top of this work, the district wide emergency response team has also been updating their training.

"We really looked at being more targeted in response to threat assessments because that is a proactive strategy to help assist students who might be at risk of any kind of violent behavior," DeJesus said. "The behavioral threat assessment really works on identifying a threat, determining the seriousness of the threat, implementing interventions to reduce risk from the threat and monitoring the effectiveness of the interventions."

Last year the team received training from the FBI and they created threat assessment teams. This year they are going to work on re-

vising and clarifying their threat assessment process.

They also defined procedures so they are more consistent district-wide, establish documentation practices and established monitoring practices.

"Our hope for next year is more training for the threat assessment teams and expanding some risk management options," DeJesus said.

DeJesus and the rest of her team are hopeful that these actions will make a significant positive impact on the APS community.

The school committee was grateful for the efforts of DeJesus and her team and they look forward to seeing their next steps.

"I appreciate this presentation very much, I think focusing on mental health is something that has been devoid in recent years and so it is good to see that," School Committee Member Michael Perry said.

STORY TIMES ■ from page 1

A highlight of the story time for Delano and many of the kids was the pajama dance party parade.

"Seeing kids having so much fun and interacting with other kids and enjoying the books, it just makes me excited," Delano said.

Delano has done a pajama story time at the library they used to work at and they thought it would be perfect to bring to APL.

"I enjoy pj story time a lot, it has a nice vibe," Delano said.

They also thought it would be a good fit as it is an evening event, which would allow working parents to bring their kids in.

Delano hopes to bring this event back again in the future, as everyone seemed

to enjoy themselves.

The library has a variety of other events planned for the rest of the month.

There will be a family movie afternoon on Feb. 21 at 2 p.m. The library will be showing the new movie The Wild Robot. Kids in their families are welcome to come in and enjoy some snacks as they watch the film.

For kids in grades five and six, the library is holding a Minute to Win It challenge on Feb. 26 at 6 p.m. Kids will get to compete for a chance to win a prize.

For the adults, Rom-com author Liz Alden is coming to the library on Feb. 20 at 6:30 p.m. There will be Valentine's Mocktails served and people can learn more about Alden's work in romance novels.

To keep updated on all of the events at the library, go to their website at <https://www.agawamlibrary.org/>

Public Notices

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Division
Docket No. HD21P0161EA
Estate of:
Paula Miriam Tanzer-Gushue
Date of Death: June 2, 2020
INFORMAL PROBATE
PUBLICATION NOTICE**

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Robert L. Lankford, Sr. of Wichita, KS**

Robert L. Lankford, Sr. of Wichita, KS has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve **with surety** on the bond.

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.
02/20/2025

**AGAWAM ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
LEGAL NOTICE**
Notice is hereby given that the Agawam Zoning Board of Ap-

peals will hold a public hearing at the Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main St., Agawam, MA., on **Monday, March 10, 2025 at 6:30 PM** for all parties interested in the request of Matthew D. Preye who is seeking a Special Permit in accordance with the Town of Agawam's Zoning Ordinances, Ch.180-37(B) and Ch 180-8.1 to allow for the keeping of hens at the premises identified as 347 Poplar Street.
02/20, 02/27/2025

**AGAWAM CONSERVATION COMMISSION
LEGAL AD**
The Agawam Conservation Commission will meet on Thursday, February 27, 2025 at 6:00PM at the Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main St, Agawam, MA. The purpose of this meeting will be to hear the Request for Determination of Applicability of Muller Realty, LLC for property located at 1163 Suffield Street.
By Order of
Henry A. Kozloski, Chairman
Agawam Conservation Commission
02/20/2025

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Division
Docket No. HD25P0263EA
Estate of:
Kevin Douglas Freeman
Also Known As:
Kevin D. Freeman
Date of Death: 12/01/2024
INFORMAL PROBATE
PUBLICATION NOTICE**
To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of

Petitioner **Carol Freeman of Sugarland, TX**
Petitioner **Robin Garcia of Sugarland, TX**
has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve **without surety** on the bond.
The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.
02/20/2025

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
Docket No. HD24P1198PM
In the Interests of:
Joanne Gallerani
Of: Agawam, MA
RESPONDENT
Incapacitated Person/
Protected Person
CITATION GIVING NOTICE
OF PETITION TO EXPAND
THE POWERS OF A**

CONSERVATOR
To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by **Alan M Gallerani of Granby, CT** in the above captioned matter requesting that the court:

Expand the powers of a Conservator of the Respondent.

The petition asks the court to make a determination that the powers of the Guardian and/or Conservator should be expanded, modified, or limited since the time of the appointment. The original petition is on file with the court.

You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 a.m. on the return date of **03/12/2025**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

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

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M. Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: February 12, 2025
Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
02/20/2025

**TOWN OF AGAWAM
LEGAL NOTICE
PUBLIC HEARING**
The Agawam City Council Administrative Committee will conduct a Public Hearing on **MONDAY, MARCH 3, 2025 at 6:30PM**, at the Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main Street, Agawam, MA, on a Verizon petition for permission to lay and maintain underground conduits, with the wires and cables to be placed therein, along and across 582 South Westfield Street, Feeding Hills, MA. with permission to lay and maintain underground conduits, manholes, cables, and wires in the above way for the purpose of making connections with such poles and buildings as it may desire for distributing purposes. This petition is available by contacting the City Council Office, 36 Main Street, Agawam, MA or by emailing bbard@agawam.ma.us.

Robert E. Rossi, Chair
Administrative Committee
02/13, 02/20/2025

**Legal Notice
Town of Agawam**
The **Agawam Planning Board** will hold a public hearing on **Thursday, March 6, 2025 at 6:00pm** and the **Agawam City Council** will hold a public hearing on **Monday, March 17, 2025 at 7:00pm**, both in the Veterans Hall at the Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main Street, Agawam, MA. The purpose of these hear-

ings will be to hear the petition of Calabrese Construction, LLC for a zone change request for **Old River Street, 27 Walnut Street & 17 High Street** from Business A and Industrial A to Residence B. City Council's public hearing will be livestreamed on the Town of Agawam's website at www.agawam.ma.us and will also be televised on Cable Access Channel 15 or Channel 1074. Copies of the proposed zone change can be obtained from the Office of Planning and Community Development between the hours of 8:30am and 4:30pm at the Agawam Town Hall, 36 Main Street, Agawam, MA or by emailing the Office of the City Clerk for an electronic copy at vgioscia@agawam.ma.us

By Order Of:
Violet Baldwin, Chair
Agawam Planning Board
Rosemary Sandlin, President
Agawam City Council
02/20, 02/27/2025

LEGAL NOTICE
Notice is hereby given by Languet Towing pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c.255, Section 39A, that on February 24, 2025 at 63 Ramah Cir S, Agawam the following Motor Vehicles will be sold at private sale to satisfy the garagekeeper's lien thereon for storage, towing charges, and expenses of notices and sale of said vehicle.
2008 Mercury Mountaineer
VIN: 4M2EU47E48UJ04928
Corey Caride
52 Alhambra Circle North
Agawam, MA 01001
02/06, 02/13, 02/20/2025

Agawam Advertiser News
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.

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

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SPORTS

Defense shines late in Agawam win

AGAWAM - The Agawam High School boys basketball team closed out its regular season with a win over Wahconah last Tuesday night 51-42. Elijah Maldonado had 15 points while Gavin Cruz scored 11.

The Brownies drew a tough opponent in the Western Mass. playoffs, heading to Central High School to open the Class A Tournament. The Brownies have also made the state tournament with a 14-4 record.



Brody Sheehan shoots over an opponent.



Caeden Roeder looks to pass.



Dylan Jorgensen takes the three-point shot.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Gavin Cruz makes a blind pass to his right.



Melih Tomak fights to keep the ball under the hoop.



Elijah Maldonado sends a pass away.



Isabella Laprise takes the three-point shot.



Mia Canavan fights for the rebound.



Katelyn Cleavall passes on the run. TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Carlina Calabrese makes an inbound pass



Emma LaCresse gets ready to shoot.



Sophia Laprise hustles down the court.

Regular season concludes with defeat for Brownies

WEST SPRINGFIELD - Last Friday night, West Springfield defeated Agawam 2-1.

Aiden Pisano scored the Brownies only goal. Agawam hockey finished the regular sea-

son with an overall record of 10-8. The Brownies will make the Division 2 state tournament, but as of press time, the seeds had not been announced for the Western Mass. Tournaments.

Agawam girls basketball defeats Mt. Greylock

AGAWAM - The Agawam High School girls basketball team closed out the regular season with a win over Mt. Greylock High School.

Agawam would finish the regular season with an impressive 15-3 mark for the season.

But due to strength of schedule, Agawam actually found itself in a road matchup in the Western Mass. Class A Tournament against Longmeadow earlier this week.

In last week's win over Mt. Greylock, Mia Canavan had 20 points while Isabella Laprise notched 14 points. Sophia Laprise had 11 points for the Brownies.

Sports

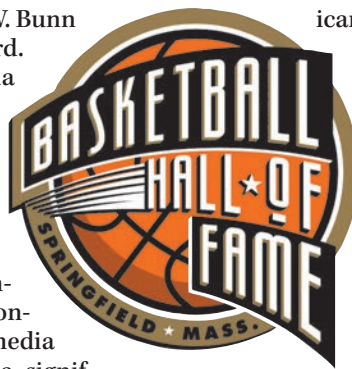
Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame announces award winners

SPRINGFIELD – The Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame announced the recipients of the 2025 Curt Gowdy Media Award and John Bunn Lifetime Achievement Award at NBA All-Star Weekend.

Legendary Detroit Pistons play-by-play announcer George Blaha, renowned CBS analyst Clark Kellogg, veteran women's basketball writer Michelle Smith, and influential NBA journalist Adrian Wojnarowski are the 2025 Curt Gowdy Media Award recipients. Boston Celtics long-time Vice President of Media and Alumni Relations Jeff Twiss is the

recipient of the 2025 John W. Bunn Lifetime Achievement Award.

The Curt Gowdy Media Award is named in honor of the late Curt Gowdy, a legendary sports broadcaster and former Hall of Fame Board member and President. This prestigious award is presented to members of the print, electronic, and transformative media whose efforts have made a signif-



icant contribution to the game of basketball.

The Bunn Lifetime Achievement Award was instituted by the Basketball Hall of Fame's Board of Trustees in 1973 and is the most prestigious award presented by the Hall of Fame outside of Enshrinement. Named in honor of Hall of Famer John W. Bunn (Class of 1964), the first chairman of the Basketball Hall of Fame Com-

mittee who served from 1949-64, the award honors coaches, players, and contributors whose outstanding accomplishments have impacted the high school, college, professional, and/or the international game.

Blaha, Kellogg, Smith, Wojnarowski, and Twiss will be recognized for their contributions to basketball during the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame Enshrinement Weekend on September 5-6.

For further details, including ticket information, visit hoophall.com/events/enshrinement-2025.

Thunderbirds suffer one-goal loss to Rockford

ROCKFORD, Ill. — The Springfield Thunderbirds (23-19-2-3) suffered a second straight gut-wrenching loss in the closing moments, falling 4-3 to the Rockford IceHogs (19-22-5-1) on Saturday night inside the BMO Center.

Things got off to a rocky start for the T-Birds, who fell behind 1-0 just 64 seconds into the game after a misplayed puck wound up on the tape of Joey Anderson inside the right-wing circle. Anderson made no mistake in snapping it through Colten Ellis on the stick side, giving Rockford the 1-0 advantage.

Ellis solidified things over the next 15 minutes, turning away the next nine IceHogs attempts while the T-Birds struggled to find offense.

Finally, a pair of Rockford penalties afforded Springfield a 4-on-3 power play, and Matt Luff unleashed a perfect wrist shot that squeaked past Ben Gaudreau's

blocker to tie the game, 1-1, at 18:17.

Springfield's momentum would not last long, though, and just 32 seconds later, Brett Seney picked off a loose puck in the high slot and quickly wristed a try under the crossbar to restore the IceHogs lead, 2-1, heading into the intermission.

Anderson's hot hand carried over into the early stages of the second, as he found a gap through the five-hole of Ellis to make it a 3-1 score at 5:19 of the middle stanza.

Through the opening 30 minutes of play, the T-Birds had managed just six shots on goal. However, the visitors clawed their way back, beginning with Illinois native Hugh McGing tucking home a rebound outside the blue paint at 12:55 to cut the Rockford lead to 3-2.

Dylan Peterson thought he had brought the T-Birds back even when he shuffled a loose puck across the goal line just over

a minute later, but the call was changed to no-goal after the referees congregated. Nevertheless, Springfield pressed on, and on the next shift, Matthew Peca punched home a rebound off an Alek Kaskimaki shot, and the game was deadlocked at the 14:56 mark of the second.

Ellis and Gaudreau did their part to lock things down from that point, as the two netminders kept the score locked in the 3-3 stalemate into the game's final minutes. Unfortunately for Springfield, they succumbed to a late game-winner for a second straight game when Andreas Athanasiou broke up the ice in a 2-on-1 with Anderson and tucked a backhand around Ellis to win it for Rockford with just 1:59 left in the third. Ellis suffered only his second loss in his last 11 starts, and the Springfield goalie also saw his five-game win streak get snapped in the process.

Bonsignore scores third-place finish in opener

Four-time NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour champion Justin Bonsignore opened his 2025 NASCAR season with a third-place finish in the Whelen Modified Tour opener at New Smyrna Speedway last Saturday night. Now, his eyes will turn to the World Center of Racing.

Bonsignore will make his second career NASCAR Xfinity Series start for Joe Gibbs Racing in Saturday's United Rentals 300 at Daytona International Speedway.

The New York native made his Xfinity Series debut in 2024 with Joe Gibbs Racing at New Hampshire Motor Speedway and ran inside the top-five for a long portion of the race. He also competed in the ARCA Menards Series event at Daytona in 2024, his only Superspeedway experience leading into this weekend.

"Running the ARCA race at Daytona certainly helps a bit with the learning curve of a Superspeedway and the drafting," Bonsignore said. "The Joe Gibbs Racing team and Toyota have proven over the years they have incredibly fast cars. I'm excited to get out there in practice and learn as much as possible in our No. 19 M3 Technology, USNE Power, Toyota GR Supra. I know our goal will be to get to the end of the race with a shot... that's about all you can ask for at a place like Daytona."

Worcester Railers take care of Allen Americans

ALLEN, TX – The Worcester Railers HC (23-20-2-4 52pts) beat the Allen Americans (13-27-7-2, 35pts), on Sunday afternoon by a final score of 3-1 in front of a crowd of 3,144 at the Credit Union of Texas Event Center. The Railers are back on the ice next at the North Charleston Coliseum taking on the South Carolina Stingrays on Wednesday, February 16th at 10:30 a.m. EST.

Worcester got the scoring started as they tacked on the first three goals of the game in the first period. The first came from Jordan Kaplan (1-0-1), followed by Tyler Kobryn (1-0-1) and it was Lincoln Hatten (1-0-1) who finished off the first period trifecta. Brayden

Watts (1-0-1) scored the first goal for Allen on the power play 11:35 into the second period making it 3-1. Neither team would net one in the third period leading us to the 3-1 Worcester win.

For the second time in the weekend series the Railers jumped out to a 3-0 first period lead. Jordan Kaplan (16th) started the scoring party 11:21 into the first period. Tyler Kobryn (4th) followed up Kaplan 15:06 into the first, and it was Lincoln Hatten (5th) who scored the third Worcester goal in the period giving them a commanding 3-0 lead heading into the second. Shots favored Worcester 16-4 in the first period.

Allen had three power play opportuni-

ties in the second period, it was not until the third power play that they grabbed their first goal of the night. It was Brayden Watts (17th) who cut the Railers lead to two. Watts had the only goal of the period, giving Worcester a 3-1 lead heading into the third period. Shots favored Allen 17-10 in the second period.

Despite a 5-on-3 power play chance for Worcester as well as an Allen power play chance neither team was able to cash in on their respective opportunities. The scoreless period led to a 3-1 final, with Worcester walking away with the series sweep over the Allen Americans. Allen outshot Worcester 16-8 in the third, and 37-34 in the game.

Schools & Youth

STCC offers free dental treatment

SPRINGFIELD – Springfield Technical Community College's Dental Hygiene Clinic is pleased to announce that it will be offering free preventative dental treatments, including cleanings and X-rays, for children and adults throughout February and March 2025.

The clinic, located on the STCC campus, operates under the supervision of licensed dentists and hygienists, providing students with hands-on training while delivering quality comprehensive oral health care to the community.

Students enrolled in the Dental Hygiene and Dental Assistant programs at STCC gain valuable experience through their clinical work. Upon graduation, they are employed at dental offices across the state. The Dental Assistant program is enrolling students through April 11 for the fall semester.

STCC usually charges a nominal fee for services, but as part of its commitment to community outreach, the School of Health and Patient Simulation has decided to waive fees for certain treatments during February and March.

The clinic is located in the Health Science Building (Building 20, Room 238) on the STCC campus and is open Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. The clinic is closed on Wednesdays.

Loadholt emphasized that the clinic serves a dual purpose: to educate students while providing treatment to community members seeking affordable dental care. Under expert supervision, students work with state-of-the-art equipment to provide high-quality care. Loadholt noted that the free clinic could be particularly beneficial for patients who have been denied insurance coverage for a deep cleaning.

To schedule an appointment, call (413) 755-4900. For more information, including a full list of services offered at the clinic, visit stcc.edu/dental

STCC to offer free hands-on CNC training class

SPRINGFIELD – In response to the growing demand for skilled workers in the manufacturing sector, Springfield Technical Community College's Workforce Development Division will offer a hands-on Computer Numerical Control operator training class.

The class, which is free to those who qualify, starts this spring and runs for 10 weeks (200 hours). The program aims to equip individuals who are unemployed or underemployed, 18 or older, and have a high school diploma or equivalent with the necessary skills to thrive in the modern manufacturing industry, addressing both the workforce shortage and providing career opportunities for the community.

This training program is funded by the Mass Technology Collaborative in collaboration with the MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board. MassHire Program & Services are funded in part by the U.S. Depart-

ment of Labor Employment and Training Administration grants, as well as non-federal grants.

Gladys Franco, assistant vice president of Workforce Development at STCC, said students who complete the program will be prepared to enter the workforce. Manufacturers are struggling to find workers with the expertise needed to operate CNC machines.

The manufacturing industry has experienced a resurgence in recent years, driven by advancements in technology and automation. CNC machinery, which is essential for precise and efficient production processes, is at the heart of this transformation. However, the rapid pace of technological change has created a significant skills gap.

STCC's Workforce Development Division and MassHire recognize this gap and are proactively addressing it by offering comprehensive CNC training. This initiative is part of a

broader effort to support local industries and enhance the employability of the workforce.

The curriculum covers a range of topics essential for becoming proficient in CNC operations, including but not limited to: Machine Tool Safety; Blueprint Reading; Introduction to CNC Machinery; CNC Mill and Lathe Operations; Basic Measurement; Cutting Processes; Safety for Metal Cutting.

Participants in the CNC training program will acquire skills that provide a pathway to well-paying, stable jobs. Enrollment for the free CNC training class is now open. Interested individuals are encouraged to apply early, as spaces are limited. The program is expected to fill quickly due to high demand.

For more information and to find out how to enroll, visit stcc.io/cnc. For questions, call Workforce Development at STCC at (413) 755-4225 or email workforcetraining@stcc.edu.

STCC Workforce Development to offer free training

SPRINGFIELD – Workforce Development at Springfield Technical Community College will offer English as a Second Language Hospitality and Customer Service courses.

This program, funded by the Community Mitigation Fund, will be free for those who enroll, providing a valuable opportunity for individuals looking to improve their English proficiency and customer service skills in the hospitality industry.

The 16-week courses, totaling 128 hours, will be available at different skill levels:

Beginner: Monday through Thursday, 2 - 4 p.m. (March 3 - June 25)

Intermediate: Fridays, 9 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. (March 7 - June 20)

Advanced: Saturdays, 9 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. (March 15 - June 28)

Designed to support individuals working in customer-facing roles, this program focuses on enhancing language skills, communica-

tion abilities and cultural awareness necessary for delivering exceptional service in English-speaking environments.

Participants will benefit from:

Language Proficiency Development: Focus on hospitality-related speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.

Cultural Sensitivity and Awareness: Training on cultural norms, etiquette and inclusive interactions.

Customer Service Techniques: Practical instruction in communication, problem-solving and conflict resolution.

Role-Play and Simulation Exercises: Hands-on scenarios to practice real-world hospitality interactions.

Certificate of Completion: Participants will receive a certificate demonstrating their proficiency in hospitality-related English and customer service skills.

In addition, participants will be taught

industry-specific communication skills and how to adapt to different service settings. The courses will feature guest interaction scenarios and industry-specific documentation and procedures.

"We are thrilled to offer this program, which will help individuals build the language and customer service skills necessary to succeed in the hospitality industry," said Gladys Franco, Assistant Vice President of Workforce Development at STCC. "This initiative not only supports personal growth but also strengthens the local workforce by preparing individuals for meaningful career opportunities."

This free program is a unique opportunity for those seeking to advance their careers in the hospitality industry by improving their language and service skills. For more information or to register, visit stcc.edu/wdc, email workforcetraining@stcc.edu or call (413) 755-4225.

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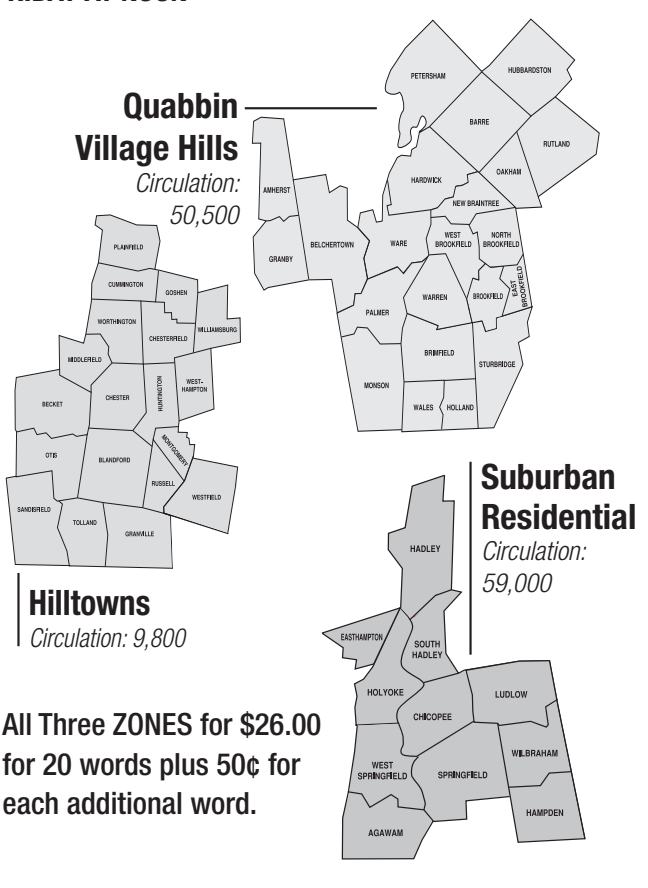
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Right as people enter the new police department, they will see the records window to their right should they need to request something.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY QUINN SUOMALA



Significant progress has been made on the construction of the new police department headquarters.



The evidence room at the new police department headquarters is much larger than the old building's was, which will allow the police to store their evidence in one location.



The sally port at the new police department headquarters is located to create more safety and ease when the police have to bring someone into the station.



The new police chief's office is in good shape as the police department construction continues.



There are now designated report writing rooms for the police officers to take advantage of.

POLICE ■ from page 1

into the public safety area of the building to get fingerprinted. This new upgrade will be more convenient for police and the public, and it will also be safer.

All non-public areas of the police station will have to be accessed by a fob, so only those with a fob will be able to get in.

Another advantage of the new building is that the sally port is going to be completely enclosed and the officers will be able to bring a prisoner right into the sally port and into a cell.

"Our existing sally port does not work as well as it should," Johnson said. "Now they'll be able to come into the sally port and bring a prisoner directly from the sally port to the booking area to do whatever they need and get them directly into a cell."

The new building also provides the police with new lockers.

"Currently at our police station we are using old school lockers for the officers," Johnson said. "These lockers have an area where they can secure items and a ventilated storage for boots and other pieces."

The new lockers are also larger than the old ones and have an electrical outlet so the officers can charge their radios and other equipment.

"Right now they scurry around the station looking for places to charge their gear and a lot of them frankly bring stuff home," Johnson said.

These new lockers will be greatly beneficial for the police.

Additionally, this new building has pro-

vided the department with new report writing rooms. In the current building there are no designated areas for officers to write their reports.

This new building ensures they no longer have to find a random place in the building to sit down and work on their report.

The new building also has a self-contained dispatch station. This means there will be a bathroom and a kitchen area all within the dispatch area.

"This is a self-contained area so if someone comes in after hours, the dispatcher is not going to be running somewhere to go to the bathroom or do something else and not be able to attend to someone at the window," Johnson said.

The police department, according to Johnson, should be having its ribbon cutting sometime in June. This is dependent partially on weather and on the arrival of a generator and the electric switchgear.

The department cannot open safely until it has the capability of backup electricity should there be a power outage.

"We cannot occupy this as a public safety facility without backup power," Johnson said.

This process has been under construction since the fall of 2023 and has cost the town \$13.6 million.

The total cost of the project was much cheaper than it could have been if the town had built a new station from the ground up, rather than using an existing building.

Johnson stated that using an existing building cut the cost of the project in half of what it could have been.



Mayor Christopher Johnson showed off the lockers in the new police department building

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