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# AGAWAM

## ADVERTISER NEWS

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The Valentine's Day love song BINGO event drew a health crowd.  
 TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

## APL 'sets the tone' at V-Day event

By Quinn Suomala  
 Staff Writer

AGAWAM – The library celebrated Valentine's Day with a love song and anti-love song bingo for adults.

Adult Services Associate Kristen Frost came up with the idea and thought it would be a fun way to invite people into the library.

She selected a variety of different songs for people to hear for the bingo to try to have a piece of music for everyone in attendance.

"I wanted to have something for everyone so...it is all different genres, some of the songs are funny, some are more serious or sad or just old standards that might make someone smile," Frost said. "I look forward to the reactions of the people playing the bingo game as to what they think about the music."

Frost also made sure to include both love songs and anti-love songs, so even those who may not enjoy the romantic aspect of Valentine's Day could still come by and have fun.

"On Valentine's Day some-

times you feel the pressure that you have to be in a relationship with someone to celebrate and I didn't want anyone to feel like that was the focus of the event," Frost said.

She feels that people who are not in romantic relationships should still be able to enjoy the holiday, and she wanted to ensure that was portrayed in the event.

To come up with the list of songs for the evening, Frost surveyed her coworkers on different songs that could fit the theme.

She also searched up top love songs and top breakup songs across the ages so she could find additional songs she may have missed.

The bingo games were low stakes overall, as Frost wanted this event to be relaxed and enjoyable for all. However, people could win some small prizes for their bingo triumphs.

Prizes included Valentine's Day Candy, some little decorations, art supplies and even an umbrella with hearts on it.

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## Fleagle completes Eagle project raising funds to support Dakin

By Quinn Suomala  
 Staff Writer

AGAWAM – Scout Dean Fleagle has completed his Eagle Scout project where he worked to raise funds to support the Dakin Humane Society.

Fleagle worked over the course of several months to raise money for the Dakin Humane Society.

He ran several supply drives at Smithland Pet and Garden Center where people were invited to donate supplies Dakin needed or make donations.

During these supply drives Fleagle also ran a bake sale to help raise additional funds.

"We sold brownies, pumpkin bread, cookies and tried to raise as much money and get as many supplies as we could," Fleagle said.

Through these drives he was able to get over \$700 worth of supplies to Dakin and used remaining funds to buy fleece that he used to make blankets.

Fleagle and his team of volunteers were able to make over 150 blankets with the fleece Fleagle purchased that they then sent to Dakin Humane Society for them to give to their animals.

"We had some scouts sit in the basement, take the fleece, cut it up and tie it into over 150 blankets in total that were donated," Fleagle said.

It took a lot of hard work, and Fleagle was proud to have been able to gather as many supplies and donations as he did.

"It was important to me to get this done and I was so happy I was able to do it to such a high level by giving so many blankets and supplies," Fleagle said.

He also sends out his



Scout Dean Fleagle got to know Tilly at Dakin Humane Society with help from Community Engagement Manager Kaitlyn Holloway. Tilly is up for adoption.  
 SUBMITTED PHOTO

gratitude to the people and organizations that offered their support as he worked on this project.

"I am thankful to Agawam as a community for being so supportive and generous with their donations," Fleagle said. "Along with them, the Knights of Columbus significantly contributed to our project as they donated \$300."

Fleagle was inspired to begin this project when he heard about how after COVID many people were returning the "COVID pets" they had. He had always cared deeply for animals

and wanted to try to support shelters during this time.

Through doing this project, Fleagle was able to practice a variety of different skills. He worked hard to organize the different steps and communicate clearly with all the different groups involved in the work.

"Organizing with so many different people and getting a lot of people to work together with me was probably the most challenging part of it, but I found a lot of joy in learning how to do it," Fleagle said.

Moreover, he got a lot of

practice in documenting the different steps of his project so he could keep track of all of the moving parts.

Additionally, he feels that he has learned that he, and other people his age, are able to do projects that really can make an impact on the community.

"A lot of people my age do not recognize that they can have this kind of contribution to their community at such a young age and I am glad that I can hold that title to know that I did some-

EAGLE | page 6

## Champs again



The Agawam High School ice hockey team captured the Western Mass. Class B Championship last Saturday afternoon with a 6-1 win over Taconic High School. It was the first sectional title for Agawam in a decade. The Brownies moved into the state tournament earlier this week. More photos from the championship game are on page 7.  
 TURLEY PHOTO BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

## School district will not follow Frontier's approach

By Quinn Suomala  
 Staff Writer

AGAWAM – Agawam Public Schools are working to plan out how they will continue forward now that the MCAS is no longer a high school graduation requirement.

While Frontier Regional School District in South Deerfield has recently announced that they intend to keep the MCAS as a high school graduation requirement moving forward, Superintendent Sheila Martin has affirmed that APS will not be doing the same.

"The vote to eliminate MCAS as a competency determination was a yes vote in Agawam so we are not looking to include it in our competency determination

at this point in time," Martin said.

Martin and other faculty and staff at APS are looking into alternatives for a competency requirement.

"The competency determination is based on the standards that students were taking and being assessed on the MCAS," Martin said. "So the equivalence is English nine and ten, algebra one and geometry, those are what was included on the test and the competency determination should mirror that."

This will be a requirement added to the high school graduation requirements so APS can ensure that all of its students have the needed level of understanding in key subjects.

SCHOOL | page 10





# Library announces adult activities and programs

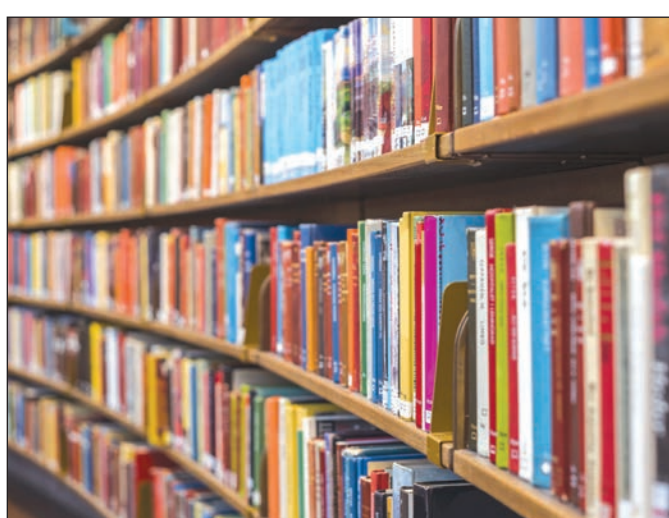
AGAWAM – Spring is almost here. And the Agawam Library is offering many exciting programs for adults this March. We start the month with a second chance! Journey through the Roots of American Popular Music with Jon Waterman was rescheduled to Monday, March 3 at 6:30 p.m. Come experience this entertaining, musical and historical offering that provides a panorama of American Music! Jon Waterman has been performing his original songs along with blues, rock and country standards throughout his life. His music is influenced by intriguing characters and stories from history, the roots of the music he loves, and the diversity of the human experience. He blends history, storytelling and music to bring his research to life in a compelling way. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Agawam Local Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency. Please register for this event.

Adult Board Game Night returns on Wednesday, March 5 at 6:30 p.m. in the Clini Community Room. We will have games on hand like Settlers of Catan, Ticket to Ride, Munchkin, and more - but feel free to bring your own. There will be multiple tables for multiple games, so bring a friend or meet some like-minded gamers at the event. Light refreshments like cookies, cupcakes, and

juices will be available. This is a drop-in event for ages 18+.

Now that the warmer weather is coming, it's time to start thinking about getting outside more often! Have you been wanting to increase your exercise goals? Are you looking for a way to stay motivated when it comes to your daily workout schedule? Sign up to try our Couch to 5K group this spring and start to build a healthy habit of movement. Join librarian Kristen Frost on Saturday, March 8 at 9 a.m. in the Clini Community Room for an introductory meeting and workout. Come learn about the plan to work toward the goal of being able to complete a 5K distance walk or run. Please note this group will meet once a week for six weeks. Please contact Kristen directly at kfrost@agawamlibrary.org with specific questions about weekly meet-ups. Registration is required for the introductory meeting on March 8. This program is for Adults 18+.

Who says coloring is just for kids? Join us on Monday, March 10 at 6:30 p.m. in the Clini Community Room for Creative Crayons workshop with Marie Tucker. Grown-ups can make beautiful art with crayons, too, and artist Marie Tucker will be here to show you how. Marie will lead the class in creating a version of Monet's Water Lilies in this instructional workshop. Sign up to create a fun piece of art using the



simplest of mediums. Registration is required, as space is limited.

Get ready to have your wits challenged! Join us for tasty tea and a couple rounds of Jeopardy and pub-style trivia! Our evening session will be Tuesday, March 18 at 6:30 p.m. and our afternoon session will be Wednesday, March 19 at 2:30 p.m. Both will be held in the Clini Community Room. Come by yourself or with a team; prizes will be awarded to the winning players. We will use the same questions for both sessions, so choose the time you prefer and join us for some fun! These programs are for patrons ages 18 and older and registration is required.

If you've absolutely fallen in love with our eBook/audiobook app Libby, stop by and learn how to use it like a pro. Our March Tech Classes will be on Wednesday, March 19 at 6:30 p.m. and Tuesday,

March 25 at 10 a.m. in the Clini Community Room. In this class, we will assume everyone is familiar with the basics of using Libby, and we will demonstrate advanced searching and sorting techniques. We'll show you how to create lists of your favorite books, and how to find books from other libraries. Bringing your favorite Libby device is recommended, and knowing your library log-in information is required. Please register for either session.

Sound Healing with Julia Nadolny is back for a return engagement on Monday, March 24 at 6:30 p.m. Looking to escape the noise of daily life? Embrace and relax to the soothing sounds created by the quartz crystal bowls, tuning forks, and chimes with Julia Nadolny. Come learn how to release stress and improve your mental focus with a peaceful, rejuvenating experience.

Be sure to bring a yoga mat to lay on along with a blanket. If you prefer, you can also bring along a pillow for extra comfort. Chairs will also be available for those who need them. Please register for this event.

The return of our beloved Crafterpalooza allows craft-minded people to restock current craft items, or get some supplies to try something new at no charge. We will be collecting new and gently used craft supplies between March 10 and March 24. Please donate any craft materials that you no longer want or use that are in prime condition to our collection bin near the main circulation desk. Crafterpalooza shopping will take place on Friday, March 28 from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. and Saturday, March 29 from 10 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. To make the event fair to all shoppers will be given a bag to fill upon entering. They may take 1 larger, carry out item. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation!

Are you prepared to protect yourself against identity theft? There is no better time to educate yourself on this topic than right now. Join Lisa Pandolfi from Freedom Credit Union on Monday, March 31 at 6:30 p.m. as she presents the pitfalls of identity theft and synthetic identity. Learn practical action steps on how to protect your identity and what to do if you fall victim to this increasing threat. Please register for this event.

ter for this event.

Our March Virtual Author Series features three impressive authors. On Wednesday, March 12 at 2 p.m., author Dan Heath will discuss his latest book *Reset: How to Change What's Not Working*. Celebrate National Women's Month with a discussion with Author Clara Bingham, author of *The Movement: How Women's Liberation Transformed America* on March 20 at 2 p.m. And best-selling contemporary author Jennifer Weiner will present *The Dreams We Chase* exploring the emotional depth of her bestselling books. Attendees will get a sneak peek at her upcoming release, *The Griffin Sisters' Greatest Hits*. Jennifer's Author Talk will take place on March 26 at 7 p.m. Please note that these are virtual programs. Please register at [library.org/agawamlibrary](http://library.org/agawamlibrary).

Registration for adult programs is open now. Please visit our online calendar [www.agawamlibrary.org](http://www.agawamlibrary.org) to register, or call the Information Desk at (413) 789-1550 X4. Our programs are often supported by the Agawam Center Library Association. During the winter months, any closings, delays or late openings will be reported to local TV stations 22 & 40, as well as their websites. Inclement weather closings or delays will also be posted on our social media platforms. Please visit our website for more information [www.agawamlibrary.org](http://www.agawamlibrary.org).

## Habitat's Women Build kickoff is March 12

WEST SPRINGFIELD – In honor of Women's History Month, International Women's Day, and Habitat for Humanity International's Women Build Week, our local affiliate will kick off its own "Women Build" event.

Held Wednesday, March 12, at White Lion Brewing Company's Community Boom Room (1500 Main St) in Springfield, the event starts at 6pm and is free to the public. No registration is necessary.

Women Build provides an opportunity for women to take the proactive step in helping limited-income women and their families build stability through affordable homeownership. After all, more than 70% of Hab-

itat homeowners are women.

To participate, individuals and teams fundraise or obtain a sponsorship. Then, they build for a day (or two), together, contributing to make a home more affordable. It costs approximately \$255,000 to build a Habitat home, not including labor, in Hampden County.

There are a variety of sponsorship levels available. They include (1) individual opportunity; (2) team options; and (3) sponsor packages. Individual fundraisers and teams will have access to an easy-to-use, secure online donation platform that can be shared with family, friends, acquaintances, and colleagues.

No experience is necessary. All tools and materials

are supplied on a build site. All are welcome, even men, and expert instruction is provided. Every dollar raised will support local projects and affordable housing within Hampden County.

GSHFH is dedicated to strengthening communities by empowering low-income families to change their lives and the lives of future generations through homeownership and home preservation opportunities. Since 1987, Greater Springfield Habitat has built or repaired 129 homes in Hampden County.

For more information, contact Olga Callirgos, Homeowner Programs coordinator, at [callirgos@habitatsofspringfield.org](mailto:callirgos@habitatsofspringfield.org) or (413) 739-5503 x1003.



Habitat for Humanity will hold a Women Build kickoff event on March 12. SUBMITTED PHOTOS

## Grange to hold spring tag sale

AGAWAM – Community Grange #382 of Feeding Hills located at 47 North West Street will hold an indoor spring Tag Sale on Saturday, March 15 from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The tag sale will include furniture, household items, crafts, etc. Proceeds will benefit the building fund.

## 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.

A full description and application for each of these scholarships can be found at the Agawam Rotary Club's webpage at [agawamrotary.org](http://agawamrotary.org). Click on "Scholarships" at the top of the home page. Please note that applications must be received by April 1, 2025.

## Teacher's union to remove offensive material

Yesterday, leadership for the Massachusetts Teachers Association announced that they would be reviewing and removing offensive and antisemitic materials from the set of resources the Union provides to its member teachers. This announcement follows a week of backlash after Senator John C. Velis (D-Westfield) and other members of the Special Commission on Combating Antisemitism questioned MTA leaders during a public hearing about numerous antisemitic images and its unbalanced resources for teachers on the Israel-Palestine conflict.

"Yesterday's acknowledgement

by MTA leadership is long overdue. Both Jewish and non-Jewish teachers have been fighting courageously to have these blatantly antisemitic resources removed, and for far too long, their concerns have fallen on deaf ears," shared Senator John C. Velis, Co-Chair of the Special Commission. "That being said, taking the time to reflect is always a good thing, and I think that yesterday's statement and the feedback we continue to hear emphasizes why the Commission's meeting was so important."

"The images on the Massachusetts Teachers Association website were antisemitic, offensive and nev-

er should have been shared in the first place," shared Governor Maura Healey

Prior to the Commission's hearing on Feb. 10, the MTA board of directors rejected a motion by many rank-and-file union members to take some of the materials down. During the hearing Velis shared his concerns with not only the dozens of blatantly antisemitic visuals accessible through the union's website, but also the promotion of one-sided educational materials about the conflict.

"I believe that removing the antisemitic materials is only one step of correcting this grave injustice and

the education malpractice presented in these materials. Additionally, and as importantly, adding additional resources to reflect the nuance and balance of this incredibly complex subject is absolutely paramount," Velis said. "As I've said from the beginning, I believe that it is critically important that we listen to and engage with all perspectives, not just with words, but with actions. I've learned many things over this Commission's short life, first and foremost being how engrained antisemitism is in so much of our society and why the creation of this Commission was so vitally important."



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## 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.



# ACAA scholarship offered to students

AGAWAM – Agawam Community Artists and Artisans is now accepting applications for its 2025 Gloria McLellan Art Scholarship.

The scholarship is open to Western Massachusetts high school and college students pursuing art. The application form can be found at [www.agawamarts.com](http://www.agawamarts.com). Final date for submission is April 15.

The scholarships are presented in memory of Gloria McLellan, who was a founding member of Agawam Community Artists and Artisans. Creat-

ing visual art well into her nineties, Gloria considered herself a lifelong student and teacher, and believed that artists and artisans should be encouraged and supported by their communities.

Agawam Community Artists and Artisans has a mission to promote and encourage participation in art throughout Western Massachusetts. The public is welcome at our monthly meetings, held every second Wednesday at the Agawam Public Library, 750 Cooper St., Agawam, starting at 6 p.m.

# Cooper's Gifts hosting food drive

AGAWAM – Cooper's Gifts will collect non-perishable food donations for the Parish Cupboard. In exchange, Cooper's will swap entry tickets for various Celtic-themed raffle items. Raffle winners will be notified on St. Patrick's Day, March 17.

Cooper's has supported the Parish Cupboard for many years in the winter, through the stores charity Round Up Program. "People are really struggling under the weight of inflation. We worked with our closest vendors to curate Celtic-themed raffle prizes that would entice people to donate more non-per-

ishables that would benefit the good folks over at the Parish Cupboard," said Kate Gourde, Owner of Cooper's Gifts Apparel Home.

Each month Gourde chooses a local charity to receive the profits of the store's Round Up program, through which customers are invited to round up their purchase total to the next dollar amount. Gourde will then match 50% of the total collected. The program has donated over \$60,000 to local organizations since its inception in 2014. "Our customers have been so supportive of Cooper's through thick

and thin. We are so grateful and wanted to pay it forward; to help those less fortunate in our community. The Parish Cupboard provides meals and groceries to individuals and families in need throughout West Springfield, Agawam, and Feeding Hills. Their mission is neighbors helping neighbors, and we love that," Gourde said.

"We are planning a Celtic Celebration at the shop on Saturday and Sunday, March 1st and 2nd, and we invite the whole community to come out for some fun and good cheer. In addition to our great selection of Celtic products;

our favorite crochet artist, Laura, will be here to show her talent in hand crafting her very popular Celtic neck wraps. Also, Agawam author, Judy Cosby, will be meeting and greeting fans while signing copies of the second in her Eliza Grey mystery series, The Entrapment.

Cooper's is located at 161 Main St., Agawam, and is open Monday-Friday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday 12 to 4 p.m. More information on the Round Up program and how to nominate a charity, may be found on Cooper's website [www.coopersgifts.com/round-up/](http://www.coopersgifts.com/round-up/)

# VP Cecile Fragoso to speak at March 10 Women's Club meeting

AGAWAM – The Vice-President of The Catholic Women's Club of Agawam, Cecile Fragoso, will be the speaker at the club's March 10 meeting. She will be speaking about her experi-

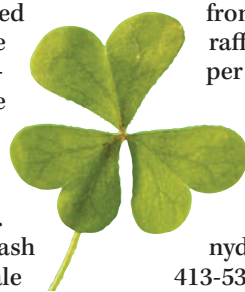
ence as a cast member of the television series "The Chosen." The evening will begin in the St. John the Evangelist Parish Center, located at 833 Main St., Agawam MA, with refreshments at 6:30 p.m.

The club's monthly business meeting will be held at 7 p.m. followed by Cecile's amazing performance. All area Catholic Women are invited to join the club members at their monthly meetings.

# Marshal Mania set for Saturday

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 in Holyoke, MA. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Eavesdrop, an Americana-pop/Folk-Soul band from the Pioneer Valley, will start at

8:00 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](mailto:jeffwalsh127@gmail.com) at 413-530-3944 or Johnny Driscoll at [johnnydriscoll@live.com](mailto:johnnydriscoll@live.com) at 413-530-3328.

# Senior Center announces upcoming activities offered to residents

AGAWAM – The Agawam Senior Center will be hosting a number of great activities in the next couple of months.

**Office Hours with Elected Officials**  
Monday, March 3 at 10 a.m.

Office Hours with City Councilor Anthony Russo Monday, March 3 at 10 a.m. in the Coffee Shop. Representative for State Sen. John Velis at 11 a.m. in the Coffee Shop

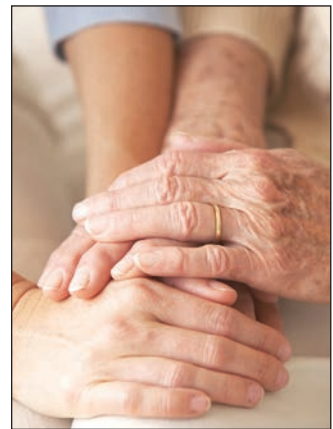
Legislative Contact Information Sen. John Velis 52 Court Street, Westfield 413-572-3920

**Office Hours with Rep. Mike Finn**  
Tuesday, March 4 from 10 to 11 a.m.

Representative Mike Finn is holding district office hours at the Agawam Senior Center on the first Tuesday of every month between 10 to 11 a.m.

**Caregivers Connect Dementia Caregiver Support Group**  
Tuesday, March 4 from 6 to 7 p.m. in the Garden Room

We will have a guest speaker for our March 4th



meeting. Anna Johnson is a Licensed Social Worker (LSW) with 38 years of experience working in area nursing homes. She is a graduate of Springfield College and Western New England University. The Covid pandemic, made her pivot from the nursing home to state home care. In the past four years, she has been a State Home Care Case Manager at Greater Springfield Senior Services. She progressed into the Community Transition Liaison Program when the State of Massachusetts began the initiative to assist all nursing home residents' return to the community. She has a passion for helping people determine the best options for community living and providing support, education and empathy to struggling consumers and families. It has been an honor and privilege to listen to people's stories and help them find a solution and provide hope. Anna and her husband Chris are lifelong residents of Agawam and the proud parents of two adult children, Emily and Christopher. She enjoys reading, cooking and spending time with her family on Sebago Lake in Windham, Maine. Join us to feel heard, supported, and uplifted as you navigate the complexities of caregiving and celebrate the moments of joy and connection with your loved ones. Caregivers Connect will meet the first Tuesday of the month from 6-7 p.m. We hope you will join us.

**Monthly Ballroom Dance**  
Wednesday, March 5 from 2 to 4 p.m.

Join Richie Mitnick for an afternoon of great tunes, dancing and snacks.

Our monthly ballroom dance takes place in the Veteran's Hall of the Senior Center from 2 to 4 p.m.

We look forward to you joining us.

**Facials**  
Thursday, March 6 from 11 a.m. to 12 noon

MA Licensed Esthetician, Diane Neill began her journey with skin care and cosmetics over 20 years ago. Graduating from the former Brio Academy in Northampton, MA. Diane has spent these past 8 years providing facial services to her Senior clients here in western MA. Diane will be providing facials at the Agawam Senior Center on a monthly basis beginning in April.

Services that will be available include: facials, microdermabrasion treatments, masks, make-up artistry and facial waxing such as eyebrow, lip, chin. To find out more, come to an introductory session.

Please register ahead of time (for a head count) 413.726.2836

**Coffee & Chats with Director Cindy Sullivan**  
Friday, March 7 at 10 a.m.

Do you have questions, suggestions, or just want some good company? Join Director Cindy Sullivan for a warm cup of coffee, tea, or hot coco as she answers any questions you have about the Senior Center and upcoming events.

**Agawam Cultural Council Father Daughter Duo ~Gary Jones & Natalie**  
Friday, March 7 at 7 p.m.

The Agawam Cultural Council is excited to bring entertaining programs and opportunities to you. These exciting events can also be delivered into your home through local cable channel 15. Join us at the Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main Street on Friday, March 7 from 7 to 8 p.m., doors open at 6:15 p.m. You can also watch along on your TV on Channel 15 or High Definition Channel 1074 if you have cable or stream online at [www.agawamvod.cablecast.tv](http://www.agawamvod.cablecast.tv) Reservations to attend are strongly suggested as seating is limited. This concert is free and open to the public.

**Craft Class with Sunshine Village**  
Monday, March 10 and Monday, March 24

Join us for an exciting craft with Sunshine Village. Please call Kristina at 726.2836 to register. Space limited to 10 participants.

**Michelle A. McCarthy, RMT – The Heart To Heart Healing Connection**  
Monday, March 10 in the Library

Reiki is a Japanese stress reduction and relaxation technique. It is based on the idea that a "Life Force Energy" flows through each of us. When your Life Force Energy is low, you are more likely to feel the effects of stress or to feel ill. Reiki is a "hands on" method of reducing stress, promoting relaxation and

creating balance in ourselves and our actions. Appointments on Monday, March 10 are available. Call Kristina at 726-2836 to book your appointment. Cost is \$20 per 20 minute session in the library. Please sign up ahead of time.

**Treats And Trivia**  
Tuesday, March 11 at 1 p.m. Join us in the auditorium of the Senior Center.

**Money Management**  
Thursday, March 13 at 2 p.m. at Seminar Hall

Managing personal finances can be challenging for individuals with failing eyesight, limited mobility, forgetfulness, or serious illness. Using trained volunteers, the Money Management Program helps low-income seniors who struggle to pay their bills, to budget, and to write checks. MM offers two types of services: the Bill Payer Program and the Representative Payee Program. Bill Payer volunteers come into the home and help clients create a budget, write checks, and balance their checkbooks, while still allowing clients to control their financial decisions and to physically sign checks written by volunteers. Representative Payee volunteers help those who are unable to manage their own finances and whose doctor has certified that inability in writing. Upon application, GSSSI is appointed by the Social Security Administration to manage only Social Security and/or SSI benefits. Money Management is always looking for new clients and volunteers. Currently, we have 53

clients and 35 volunteers who work with our clients. To learn more about becoming a Money Management client or volunteer, please attend the presentation by Steve Plummer, Money Management Supervisor, at the Agawam Senior Center on Thursday, March 13 at 2 p.m. in the Seminar Hall.

**Blood Pressure Checks**  
Thursday, March 13 and Thursday, March 27 at 11:30 a.m.

Town Nurse Pam Franco will be available to take your blood pressure here at the Agawam Senior Center. She will be available starting at 11:30 in Kristina's Office by the dining room.

**Foot Care Available**  
Thursday, March 13 and Thursday, April 10

The Agawam Senior Center is able to offer monthly foot care service with our Pedi-Nurse Deborah.

Foot care is available March 13 and April 10. The cost of foot care is \$40 per appointment. Please call the Senior Center at 413-821-0604 to book your appointment.

**Manicures with Jane**  
Monday, April 7 at Seminar Hall

Jane is a licensed nail specialist, who will give your fingernails that extra special attention and love they deserve. She is offering simple manicures that include clipping, filing, soak, massage of the hands and your choice of color. These appointments are 15 minutes each. The cost is \$15 per person. Call Kristina.

## Preschool Enrollment

Agawam Early Childhood Center

Are you an Agawam resident looking for a comprehensive, competitively priced preschool experience for your 3 or 4 year old child? The Agawam Early Childhood Center (ECC) will begin accepting applications for both morning and afternoon sessions for the 2025-2026 school year beginning March 24, 2025.



- The ECC provides all students with a standards-based education that builds the foundation for all future learning with the Agawam Public Schools.
- We meet the needs of children with and without disabilities and follow a developmentally appropriate curriculum where all children learn through play hands-on activities.
- We offer half-day sessions at both the Agawam Early Childhood Center (ECC) at 108 Perry Lane and at Sapelli School 65 Begley St.
- Applications are currently available at the Family Resource Center or you can download the application via the Agawam Public Schools website ([agawamed.org](http://agawamed.org)). Select "Schools" - Early Childhood Center, select "Menu" - select "ECC Enrollment Information."



Contact Us (413) 821-0597

## 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](mailto:apolley@agawamed.org)





## Opinion

## Guest Column



### Can I get extra Social Security for my military service?

**Dear Rusty:**

Please help, I served from 1964 to 1966 in the US Army.

I have been trying to contact Social Security in order to request extra benefits for veterans. The telephone is a recording and you never get to speak to anyone. The web site at [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov) is useless to me. I went to the SS office and there was a huge line outdoors in the freezing cold. I am disabled and cannot stand on a line in this cold. Please advise me about my options. Financially, is it worth the trouble?

**Signed: Disabled American Veteran**

Dear Disabled Veteran:

My profound thanks for your service to our country.

FYI, the "special extra credit for military service" you refer to does not provide an incremental Social Security benefit amount for military veterans. Rather, it adds an additional amount to your recording earnings for the years you served, which may or may not affect your Social Security benefit. FYI, I've written numerous articles on this topic, one of which you can read at this link: [www.socialsecurityreport.org/ask-rusty-older-veteran-asks-about-special-social-security-credit-for-military-service/](http://www.socialsecurityreport.org/ask-rusty-older-veteran-asks-about-special-social-security-credit-for-military-service/).

In your case, serving between 1964 and 1966, if you told Social Security of your military service when you applied for benefits or gave them a copy of your DD-214, they would have added up to \$1,200 per year to your recorded military pay record (FYI, those who served after 1967 were automatically given earnings credit for their military service years).

However, whether those special extra credits would affect your SS benefit depends on what your lifetime earnings record was when you later claimed SS. When you applied for benefits, Social Security reviewed your lifetime earnings record and used the highest earning 35 years of earnings over your lifetime (adjusted for inflation) to calculate your "Primary Insurance Amount" or "PIA," which is what you get if you claim benefits to start at your SS full retirement age.

If, after your military service, you had 35 or more years of earnings which were higher than what you earned while serving, Social Security would have used those later higher earnings to calculate your benefit, and your military earnings wouldn't affect your benefit. If, however, any of your military earnings including the "special extra credits" were among the highest over your lifetime, then those higher military earnings would be included when calculating

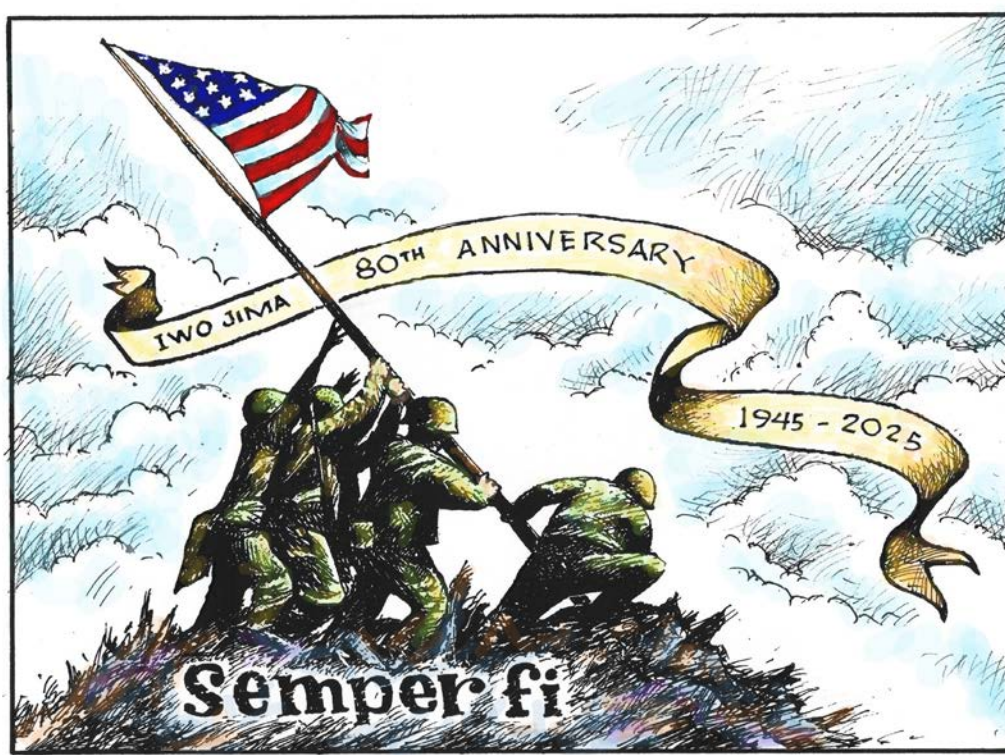
your benefit.

So, whether you will benefit from these "special extra credits for military service" depends largely on your post-service earnings history. If your military earnings were among the highest earning years over your lifetime, and you provided SSA with a copy of your DD-214 when you applied for Social Security, then your current SS benefit already includes consideration of your military service.

Social Security should have asked about your military service when you applied. If you didn't advise SS of your military service when you applied for Social Security, or if you aren't sure, you should contact the SSA at 1.800.772.1213 and ask if you were given those "special extra credits for military service" when you applied. However, if you had at least 35 years of higher earnings after you left military service, your current SS benefit is already based on those later higher earning years, and you will not get anything additional from those "special extra credits" for your military service years.

FYI, we know it is often difficult to contact the Social Security Administration by phone, as well as trying to visit SSA offices without an appointment, which is why our AMAC Foundation provides this free service). SSA is now allowing in-person visits "by appointment only" and you can call the above number to schedule an in-person appointment at your local SSA office. But before you do, please consider what I've said above. And remember that your SS benefit is based on the highest earning 35 years over your entire lifetime and each year represents only 1/35th of your benefit amount. So, is it worth the trouble? That depends on whether your military earnings, including the "special extra credits for military service," are among the highest over your entire lifetime. If the answer is "yes" then it is likely worth it; if "no" then perhaps not.

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



### Guest Column



By Ellenor Downer



Snow bunting

I received an email from an Oakham resident said he and a friend on Feb. 12 startled a flock of about eight snow buntings as they drove along Adams Road in New Braintree.

He said, "The buntings are seen here every winter." On Feb. 18, I drove over Adams Road and saw the same flock of snow buntings. Their white bellies will be visible as they flew up from the side of the road.

The snow bunting is seven inches long with a plumpish body. In winter, snow buntings are streaked with buff and black. The ear patch

and the back is streaked with buff as well as the flanks and breast. The belly is white and the bill yellow-orange. The male's crown is black and the female's buff.

The male in summer is a striking white and black. The head and breast are white and the back, tail and bill are black. The female in summer plumage is a more subdued version of the male with her head a gray color.

Snow buntings summer on the tundra and rocky shores, their breeding grounds. The female lays three to nine creamy blue or gray eggs in a nest of moss,

grasses and earth placed on rocky ground. Their song is a musical warble and calls include "tew" and soft, buzzy notes.

In winter, they inhabit open fields, roadsides and beaches in the southern Canada and the United States.

#### Brown creeper

Last week, I saw a brown creeper moving up a tree near one of my bird feeders and suet cakes. When they get near the top of the tree, they fly down to the base and

BACKYARD | page 5

### Backyard sugaring a fond memory to revisit

It has been a few years since we tapped our maple trees and boiled down the sap.

My husband and I agreed that with the upcoming forecast of cold nights and warm days it was time to get out our supplies and give it another go 'round.

Our backyard syringing days go back to the dating phase of our relationship. Enjoying homesteading activities together made me certain that he was a "keeper."

I'm pulling this column straight from the archives and rereading it to be sure we get off to a good start.

Maybe you too will give sugaring a try!

Although the sap from most native species of maple can be used to make syrup, sugar maple sap is most desirable because it has a high sugar content. Sugar maples also bud out later than other species, a good feature considering sap from trees that have begun to break bud will produce syrup with an off-taste.

The trees you tap should be at least 10-12 inches in diameter at 4.5 feet off the ground. One tap is sufficient for healthy maples that size, three for those over 25" in diameter and two for those that fall in between.

Tapholes are usually made 3-4 feet from the ground for ease of maintenance. You'll want to drill slightly upward 2.5-3 inches into healthy sapwood (not dark heartwood).

Space taps evenly around the tree. The metal spout or spile is inserted into the taphole and set in place with a gentle tap.

For small scale production, clean water or milk jugs with work great to collect the sap- simply cut a small hole to accommodate the spout. Over the years we have upgraded to plastic

spiles that attach to tubing inserted into a hole in a five gallon food-safe plastic container.

Whatever containers you use, be sure they are covered to prevent rain and debris from getting inside.

When the weather is perfect, i.e. warm days and below freezing nights, sap will flow. On really good days I remember dumping the gallon jug mid-afternoon to make room for more!

With our new set-up we usually collect 3-4 gallons per tree on a good day. When my kids were little they would graph just how much each tree produced!

Don't let too many days go by before you begin to boil down your sap, though, or it will spoil.

For our evaporator we rigged up a commercial stainless steel pan that fits over a stone outdoor barbecue that came with the property. It has worked out quite well for us.

Whatever you decide to

GARDEN | 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](mailto: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](mailto:aan@turley.com).



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## 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.

## Feline Friends announce next two fundraising drives

AGAWAM – Feline Friends will be holding our next two monthly donation drives at Smithland Pet & Garden Center on Saturday, March 1 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. as well as April 5. Volunteers will be collecting food, litter & monetary donations for our 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 pee-pads and

gift cards to Smithland or Costco. Checks or cash are always gratefully accepted at Feline Friends, PO Box 174, Feeding Hills, MA 01030.

We appreciate all of the wonderful donations received at the Feb. 1 donation drive including Joanne L, Alan, Karen, Carl and Cheryl K, Gloria, Crystal M, Katie H, Joan E and Ken K and Irene F. Congratulations to all who won daily prizes on the Valentine Raffle. Winners are announced nightly on our Feline Friends Cat Sanctuary on Facebook. Winners are also notified by email or phone.

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 Shirley H. dropped off some cat food at Smithland and an anonymous donor left cat food at the library. We are grateful for every donation.

Feline Friends Inc. is a community-based, non-profit 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](http://felinefriendsinc.org) or our Facebook page at Feline Friends Cat Sanctuary. Contact us with questions at [info@felinefriendsinc.org](mailto:info@felinefriendsinc.org) or by phone at 413-786-5019.

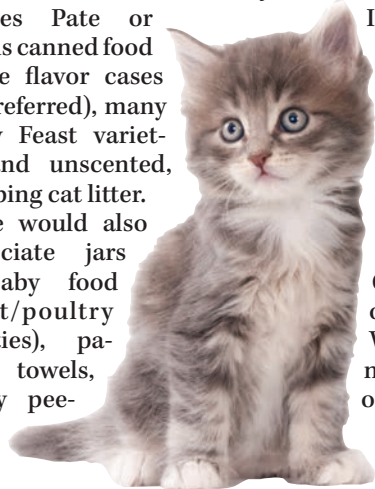


## Celebrate Youth Art Month at the library

AGAWAM – The Agawam Public Library is delighted to once again showcase the young artists of Agawam! March is Youth Art Month, and in honor of that, visitors to the library will be treated to the artwork of the talented students from Agawam schools. The artwork exhibited, called "The Artistic Creations of Agawam School Students Grades Kindergarten through 8th Grade," will consist of mixed media pieces from students across Agawam schools. Pieces will

be exhibited on both the upper and lower floors of the library; elementary school work will be displayed on the main floor, and Junior High School work will be exhibited downstairs.

Visitors are welcome to view the gallery at the Agawam Public Library during regular open hours. Please contact Adult Services Library Associate, Erica LeFebvre at (413) 789-1550 x8858 or [elefbvre@agawamlibrary.org](mailto:elefbvre@agawamlibrary.org) if you are interested in displaying artwork at the library.



## Library offers passes to local museums

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.

## Thunderbirds talent to visit MiraVista Center

HOLYOKE – MiraVista Behavioral Health Center is excited to announce that top talent from the Springfield Thunderbirds, the American Hockey League affiliate of the St. Louis Blues, will visit MiraVista (1233 Main Street, Holyoke) on Tuesday, Feb. 25, at 2 p.m. This special event will include a slapshot contest, autograph signing, and an opportunity for staff to meet the team's beloved mascot, Boomer.

The visit is part of MiraVista's ongoing efforts to celebrate its top talent -- the dedicated staff who work diligently to make a difference in the lives of those they serve. The event offers a fun and energizing break in the day, giving employees a chance to connect with the Thunderbirds players and enjoy a few light-hearted moments.

"The discussion around mental health is such an important conversation, and organizations like MiraVista are so integral in addressing it," said Springfield Thunderbirds Manager of Community Relations, Ryan Smith. "Mental health is every bit as vital as physical health, and we're honored to visit as a token of our appreciation for the hard work being done on site every day at MiraVista."

Kimberley Lee, MiraVista's Chief of Creative Strategy and Development, expressed the organization's gratitude: "We couldn't be more grateful to the Thunderbirds for bringing their energy and enthusiasm to MiraVista. This visit is a wonderful opportunity for our team to take a well-deserved break, have some



fun, and enjoy time with such a well-loved, local team."

Lee added that the Springfield Thunderbirds are known not only for their success on the ice but also for their commitment to engaging with and supporting the local community. "MiraVista is proud to welcome them to the behavioral health center and looks forward to an afternoon filled with appreciation and team spirit."

For more information

about MiraVista Behavioral Health Center and the work we do, please visit [www.miravistabhccare.com](http://www.miravistabhccare.com).

MiraVista cares for thousands of individuals from across New England and is a leading provider of mental health and addiction treatment services, dedicated to empowering individuals to overcome challenges and achieve their full potential.

With a commitment to excellence and compassion, MiraVista offers a comprehensive range of evidence-based treatment programs tailored to meet the unique needs of each patient. Through personalized care and support, MiraVista inspires hope and healing, helping individuals reclaim their lives and embrace a brighter future.

### GARDEN ■ from page 4

use, be wary of boiling indoors – I have heard horror stories of the sticky steam doing a great job of lifting kitchen wallpaper!

As I recall, my urban sister-in-law once boiled sap down on a gas camp stove out on her deck. We weren't talking hundreds of gallons here, but just enough to show my nephew how it's done!

I kept notes from the last time we tapped our trees. Once we had collected 21 gallons of sap to boil down. My husband started with about 15 gallons of sap in the pan and as the water evaporated he added more – there

is a careful balance between scorching and adding too much, not easily explained unless you've had the experience and monitored the candy thermometer.

Finish your syrup by no longer adding sap and waiting until the syrup is 7.1 degrees higher than boiling water. Then, syrup can be filtered and stored in sterile containers at 185 degrees or higher for proper seal.

Forty-three gallons of sap are needed to make 1 gallon of syrup. It takes about 7 hours of boiling to get that precious gallon if you use a rectangular pan 2 foot wide by 1 foot deep.

Let these statistics be your guide so that you won't

get in over your head the first time you try it. Nothing is worse than having sap go to waste because you are too darn tired to boil into the late hours of the night.

Nothing is better, however, than the first bite of maple syrup drenched blueberry pancakes the following morning!

*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](mailto:pouimette@turley.com) with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.*

### BACKYARD ■ from page 4

climb up the tree in a different spot on the tree.

#### Birds and more at my feeder

Sunday during the storm, I spotted an opossum under my feeder digging in the snow for seeds. At this point, it switched to rain and the opossum had wet fur. Besides the opossum, I had squirrels and the usual black-capped chickadees, white-breasted nuthatches, tufted titmice, downy woodpeckers, dark eyed juncos, bluejays and mourning doves.

#### Bald eagle

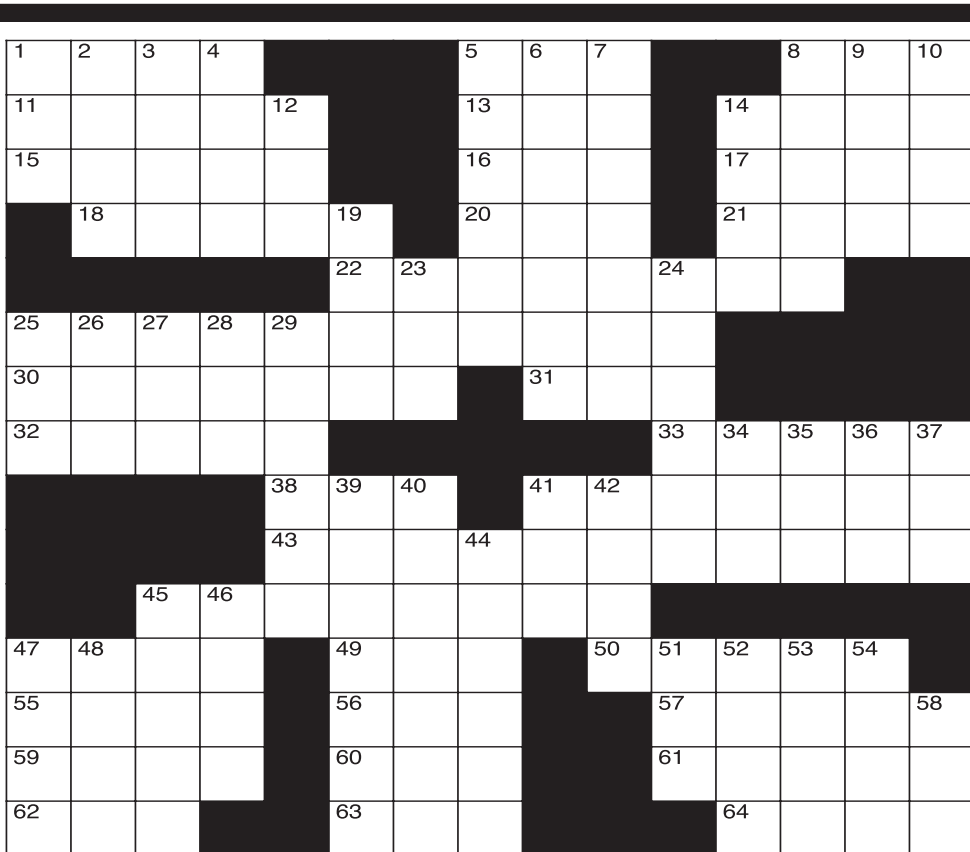
An Oakham resident saw a bald eagle land on the ice on Lake Dean. Late last month, fishing derby participants saw an eagle at Lake Dean.

#### Loon facts

The Loon Preservation Committee newsletter mentioned facts about the first migration and acquiring breeding territory. Each fall, juvenile loons undertake their first migration to their wintering grounds. The article said, "First, they have to manage the energetic costs of migration—sadly, not all survive the trip from their lakes to their wintering grounds. Those that make it to the ocean encounter a new and unfamiliar world, filled with prey species that they have no experience catching and predator species like sharks and seals that they have no experience evading. Without their parents to show them the ropes, they have to quickly learn where to forage and how to evade these new

predators. And carry-over effects resulting from the environmental conditions they experienced on their lakes during development can also influence their survival – those juvenile loons that were raised on lower quality territories may start off in worse shape than others, which can reduce their chance of survival. All of these factors combine to mean that there is a 53% chance that a loon will survive from hatch to adulthood (age three)."

*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](mailto:mybackyard88@aol.com) or [edowner@turley.com](mailto:edowner@turley.com) or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005.*



#### CLUES ACROSS

- |  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| 1. Greek mythological figure             | 33. Comedienne Tyler                          | 2. Soul and calypso song                | 36. The world of the dead                |
| 5. Small amount                          | 38. Standing operating procedure              | 3. Fruit of the service tree            | 37. Sign language                        |
| 8. Play a role                           | 41. Locks                                     | 4. Continent                            | 39. Coincide                             |
| 11. River in Georgia and Alabama         | 43. Old                                       | 5. Albania's capital                    | 40. Religious observance                 |
| 13. Water in the solid state             | 45. Song sung to one's lover                  | 6. Poisonous plant                      | 41. Confined condition (abbr.)           |
| 14. Ancient Greek sophist                | 47. Whale ship captain                        | 7. Argues                               | 42. Polite interruption sound            |
| 15. Having a strong sharp smell or taste | 49. Moved quickly on foot                     | 8. Assists                              | 44. Texas ballplayer                     |
| 16. Fleece                               | 50. Volcanic craters                          | 9. Town in Galilee                      | 45. Type of sword                        |
| 17. Writer/actress Dunham                | 55. Large musical instrument                  | 10. Russian leader                      | 46. Abba __ Israeli politician           |
| 18. Behave in a way that belittles       | 56. Liquefied natural gas                     | 12. Promotional materials               | 47. Basic unit of a chemical element     |
| 20. Comedienne Gasteyer                  | 57. Ethiopian town                            | 14. Wings                               | 48. Native American people in California |
| 21. Zoroastrian concept of holy fire     | 59. Not closed                                | 19. Not odd                             | 51. Swiss river                          |
| 22. Conceits                             | 60. A team's best pitcher                     | 23. Expression of creativity            | 52. Hebrew calendar month                |
| 25. Slowed down                          | 61. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation | 24. Conceptualize                       | 53. Easily swindled person               |
| 30. Nourishment                          | 62. Disfigure                                 | 25. A digital tape recording of sound   | 54. One point south of southwest         |
| 31. Midway between east and southeast    | 63. Prefix denoting "in a"                    | 26. Peyton's little brother             | 58. Small island (British)               |
| 32. Fights                               | 64. Sleep                                     | 27. Cost, insurance and freight (abbr.) |  |
|  |   | 28. Difference in potential             |  |
|  |   | 29. Owner                               |  |
|  |   | 34. I (German)                          |  |
|  |   | 35. Chinese conception of poetry        |  |



# Eversource hosting in-person assistance events to help customers

SPRINGFIELD – As a result of colder temperatures this winter that have caused customers to use more natural gas to heat homes and businesses, Eversource is reminding customers of the many options available to help them manage their energy bills with financial assistance, flexible payment plans, and energy efficiency programs. The company is hosting additional in-person assistance events in several Massachusetts communities in the coming weeks, where customer care representatives will provide details on programs to help make monthly payments more affordable, protection from service disconnection, and energy efficiency solutions that can lower bills by reducing energy usage.

“We know how challenging increased natural gas costs have been for our customers this winter, and we’re here to help anyone who is struggling to pay their energy bill,” said Eversource Senior Vice President of Customer Operations, Digital Strategy and Chief Customer Officer Jared Lawrence. “Over the next month, our customer care representatives will be fanning out in communities across Massachusetts, meeting with customers in-person to explain the variety of programs we offer that can help them manage their energy bill and reduce energy usage. They’ll also work one-on-one with customers to find the assistance programs that best fit their needs and help them enroll on site. Energy affordability is always a top priority for us, and we will continue working with our state partners to ensure that it is a key focus as we pursue Massachusetts’ unprecedented clean energy transition in a cost-effective manner.”

In-person events are currently scheduled for the following communities and more will be scheduled in the coming days:

- Tuesday, Mar. 18, Raymond A. Jordan Senior Center, Springfield, 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Following a rate adjustment that took place on November 1, the increases customers have seen in their recent bills have been driven by higher natural gas usage resulting from this winter’s frigid temperatures. For example, usage increased by approxi-

mately 19% in January 2025 compared to January 2024 for both of Eversource’s gas service territories – NSTAR and the Eversource Gas Company of Massachusetts (EGMA/former Columbia Gas).

The November 1 rate 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 reliability 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. For NSTAR gas customers, energy efficiency represented about 60% of the total increase relative to these adjustments. For EGMA customers, about 40% of the total increase was a result of the significant system investments to improve safety and reliability of the former Columbia Gas system that were required as part of the transaction agreement approved by the state, and energy efficiency accounted for about a quarter of the November 1 increase.

Additionally, an adjustment to the cost of natural gas recently took effect on February 1. Twice per year, in May and November, the natural gas supply rate is adjusted based on market costs of buying gas for customers, which is passed on with no profit to Eversource. The company is also required by the state to adjust that gas supply rate between scheduled adjustments if supply costs increase or decrease by more than 5%, which is why the rate was adjusted again on February 1. The cost of gas increased significantly in January, driven primarily by the extreme cold temperatures in the supply regions as well as increased usage.

Yesterday, the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) directed the local gas distribution companies in Massachusetts to reduce delivery costs by 5% through the local distribution adjustment charge, which includes energy efficiency and other programs, among other investments the company makes. Details are still being finalized and will be available in the company’s filing that is due to the DPU

on February 24.

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 866-861-6225 (NSTAR) or 800-688-6160 (EGMA), or by visiting [Eversource.com/BillHelp](http://Eversource.com/BillHelp).

- 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 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 eliminate or forgive 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.

- 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/heat-inghelpma](http://masscap.org/heat-inghelpma).

- The Massachusetts Good Neighbor Energy Fund provides energy assistance to residents in temporary crisis who do not qualify for state and federal assistance programs. Visit [magoodneighbor.org](http://magoodneighbor.org) to find your local Salvation Army Corps Community Center to apply.

Eversource will be notifying customers directly about the company’s upcoming in-person bill assistance events, which will also be posted on [Eversource.com](http://Eversource.com). The company is working to schedule additional in-person and virtual assistance events across the commonwealth in the coming weeks and more details will be available online.



Scout Dean Fleagle handed over the check of over \$700 to Community Engagement Manager Kaitlyn Holloway from Dakin Humane Society. SUBMITTED PHOTOS



Scout Dean Fleagle is proud to have completed his Eagle Scout project where he raised funds to support the Dakin Humane Society.

EAGLE ■ from page 1

thing,” Fleagle said.

He hopes that maybe other people his age will see this project and realize that they, too, can make a differ-



Scout Dean Fleagle ran a project where he and some volunteers made 150 blankets to send to Dakin Humane Society.

ence in their communities.

Fleagle also sends a message to everyone in the community to consider adopting a pet or donating to shelters.

Dakin Humane Society

in particular works hard to support pets from all over the area and if they find themselves with extra funds, they always send them out to other shelters in the area that are in need.

# Holyoke Mall announces exciting new tenants and transformative remodels

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Mall, Western Mass’s premier shopping, dining, and entertainment destination, is preparing for an eventful year of transformation in 2025. We’re excited to share some updates on the center, including new store openings, remodels, and investments in the center.

Holyoke Mall is thrilled to announce several additions and renovations that will en-

hance our offerings:

Pickleball Kingdom: Pickleball has become one of the fastest growing sports and we’re pleased to meet this growing demand with a new indoor pickleball club. Pickleball Kingdom will feature 15 individually fenced courts, a pro shop, snack bar, and outdoor playing surfaces with all the benefits of being inside. Construction is expected to start soon with an opening

of late 2025 on the lower level near JCPenney.

Footlocker: Recently reopened after a \$1.1M remodel of their store. The refresh features their latest prototype with a new storefront, open ceiling concept, more space, and new lighting.

JD Sports: Known for its innovative athletic footwear and apparel, JD Sports is set to open in April of 2025 on the lower level near Hobby

Lobby.

Altitude Trampoline Park: Altitude added 4 brand new attractions in February:

- Arena: A fast-paced hunt-the-lights arena challenge where players test their speed and agility, competing individually, or in teams, to find and hit their colored pods.
- AeroTower: Interactive target attraction for single or multiplayer games, with the

added challenge of rotating targets that test hand-eye coordination and reaction time.

- FreeStyle Duo: Dual interactive reaction walls that challenge speed and reaction, with flashing lightpods that test players reaction time and jump accuracy.

- PowrPlay: In this exciting interactive soccer target game, players score points by hitting the opposite team’s target, with the option to

score more points when hitting flashing targets.

Uncle Cho’s Fish & Chips: This fish and chips concept will be the latest addition to our food court and is expected to open soon.

These exciting new tenants and updates will be a great complement to our unique mix of retail and experiential offerings at Holyoke Mall and we are very optimistic about what 2025 will bring.

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USDA INSP. FRESH PORK SIRLOIN CUTLETS..... <b>\$2.19</b> lb	USDA INSP. FRESH BONE-IN BEEF SHORT RIBS ..... <b>\$8.88</b> lb	USDA INSP. FRESH CHICKEN WINGS 10 LB BAG ..... <b>\$2.39</b> lb
USDA INSP. KAYEM SKINLESS HOT DOGS 2 LB BOX ..... <b>\$8.88</b> lb	USDA INSP. FROZEN WHOLE CHICKEN ..... <b>88¢</b> lb	USDA INSP. BEST YET COOKED SHRIMP 31/40 COUNT 1 LB BAG..... <b>\$6.67</b> ea
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USDA INSP. SLICED IN OUR DELI SWISS CHEESE ..... <b>\$4.97</b> lb	USDA INSP. GROUND FRESH DAILY 80% LEAN GROUND BEEF ..... <b>\$3.99</b> lb	
USDA INSP. FROZEN WHOLE RABBITS ..... <b>\$5.99</b> lb		
USDA INSP. FROZEN PIG FEET ..... <b>\$1.99</b> lb		

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# SPORTS

## Brownies take home Western Mass. hockey title

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

WEST SPRINGFIELD— There are a total of 21 players listed on the Agawam hockey roster.

None of them had ever played in a Western Mass. tournament game before last week.

It turned out to be a couple of memorable days for the second-seeded Brownies.

They advanced into the Western Mass. Class B finals following a 4-1 semifinal victory over the third-seeded Easthampton Eagles at the Olympia Ice Center in West Springfield, last Thursday night.

Two days later, the Brownies made a return visit to Olympia where they defeated the fourth-seeded Taconic Thunder, 6-1, in the Class B finals.

“We’ve qualified for the

Division 2 state tournament in the past, but we haven’t played in a Western Mass. tournament game since 2015,” said Todd Rowley, who’s wrapping up his fifth season as the Agawam hockey coach. “It would be very special for the players, our school, and our town if we’re able to bring home the championship title on Saturday.”

Ten years ago, the Brownies defeated top-seeded Westfield, 2-1, in the Western Mass. Division 3 championship game, which was also held at Olympia. They then beat Central Mass. champion North Middlesex, 5-2, in the Division 3 state semifinals at the MassMutual Center before losing to Eastern Mass. champion Watertown, 2-1, in the state finals which were held at the TD Garden in Boston.

The seniors listed on this year’s Brownies hockey ros-

ter are Landon Ashford, Vinny Montagna, AJ Robbins, Cole Buffum, Evan Connery, Anthony DePalma, Trevor Del Barba, Aiden Pisano, Kyle Douglas, and Frank DiSanti.

“I’ve been playing hockey with these guys my whole life,” said Buffum, who’s an assistant captain. “It would mean a lot to us if we could win the Western Mass. title.”

Buffum finished the semifinal victory with a goal and two assists.

Del Barba didn’t score any goals, but he was credited with a pair of assists.

Agawam entered the Division 2 state tournament with a 12-8 overall record.

The Brownies have posted a 1-2 record in the state tournament since the MIAA changed the postseason tournament format several years ago.



Trevor Del Barba fights for the puck.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

HOCKEY | page 8



Evan Connery maintains the puck.



Angelo Robbins sends a wrist shot at the goal.



Landon Ashford tries to win the faceoff.



Camden Saltmarsh clears the puck up the ice.



Sophia Laprise crosses midcourt on offense.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Hannah Solitario crosses the arc.

## Slow start hurts girls in quarterfinals

AGAWAM – Last Monday night, Agawam High School girls basketball entered the Western Mass. Class A Tournament. The Brownies faced

off with Longmeadow and fell 55-45 in the quarterfinals.

Agawam found itself down 20-4 after just one

frame, and was despite a better second quarter, the Brownies were not able to make up the ground. Mia Canavan had 21 points for

the Brownies while Isabella Laprise scored 10. Agawam, which is 16-4, entered the state tournament earlier this week.



Mia Canavan takes the free throw.



Isabella Laprise eyes a teammate to make a pass.

## Brownies put up great effort in quarterfinal loss

AGAWAM – Any team having to go up against Central High School in boys basketball always has a tough challenge ahead of it. Agawam, which has not regularly played Central in recent years, found itself in a matchup with the Golden Eagles in the Western Mass. Class A Tournament this year.

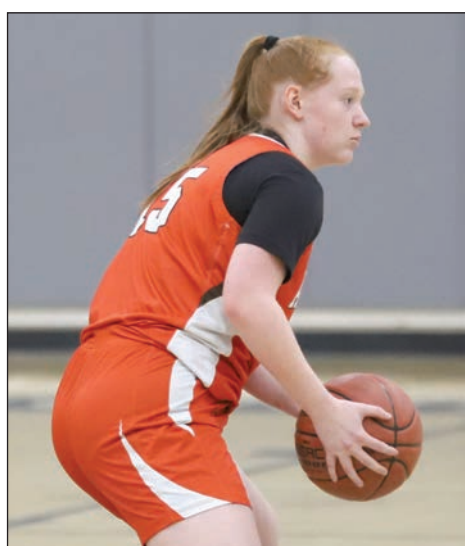
The Brownies hung with the Golden Eagles throughout the first half and only trailed by three at halftime. But the Golden Eagles held

down the Brownies offense in the second half for an 80-62 win.

Elijah Maldonado had 20 points for Agawam in the defeat. Meliah Tomak would score 14 and Brody Sheehan had 12 points. Agawam would face Minnechaug in a nonplayoff game and finished the season 15-5. Agawam was matched up with Leominster in the Division 2 State Tournament. They were scheduled for a matchup on Thursday, Feb. 27 at 6 p.m.



Katelyn Cleavall gets around a Longmeadow guard.



Emma LaCresse brings in a pass.

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# Obituary

## Alfred "Fred" Stoddard

It is with great sadness to share that Alfred W. "Fred" Stoddard passed away after a brief illness at Holyoke Hospital on Tuesday, February 11, 2025. Fred was a life-long resident of Agawam and Feeding Hills, and the son of the late Inez (Squazza) and Ernest Stoddard.



He worked for the Town of Agawam Water Department dedicating twenty years, retiring as a Foreman in 2019. Fred continued staying busy at ACE Auto Body, his home away from home, where he was a faithful volunteer and family member. He was a good friend to many who looked forward to coming to the shop to find Freddy there, ready to answer questions about on-going projects. He was a man of many interests, from farming with his Uncle Eddie Squazza where he was instilled with Eddie's mindset of "doing something for the boys," to becoming a welder and repo man just to learn new skills. Fred served in the military for six years as a Sergeant, a Green Beret, in the 82th Airborne and the United States Army. He was a brilliant man and could solve any problem. Freddy helped his uncle Eddie with the details of donating his 65-acre farm on Main

Street in Agawam to the state for the now Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery, where Eddie's wish of "doing something for the boys" was fulfilled of somehow helping all those who served during war time and in the military. Freddy will also be remembered for the hours he spent and joy he found tending to his vast plantings in his yard that needed his daily care. He will truly be missed.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Judy (Gregitis) Stoddard, Steven Melanson who was like his brother, good friends who were family: Steven's wife Lisa and their daughter Payten, Dale Melanson, and his neighbor Eddie Cecchi; and many extended family and friends.

To honor Fred, visiting hours was held on Wednesday, Feb. 26 from 4 to 7 p.m. at Colonial Forastiere Funeral & Cremation, 985 Main Street in Agawam. Burial will be in the spring in Agawam Center Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Fred's honor to Friends of the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Agawam (FOAVC), PO Box 3, Feeding Hills MA 01030. For more information or to share a memory, please visit [www.forastiere.com](http://www.forastiere.com)

### DEATH NOTICE

**Stoddard, Alfred "Fred"**

Died Feb. 11, 2025  
Visiting hours Feb. 26  
Colonial Forastiere  
Funeral & Cremation

*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.*

# Sports

## HOCKEY ■ from page 7

Last year, the Brownies defeated Minnechaug Regional, 3-2, in a Division 2 preliminary round game before losing to Tewksbury High School, 7-0, in the round of 32. They also lost to Medford in a preliminary round game in 2023.

Easthampton just missed qualifying for the Division 3 state tournament, as they finished their season with an 8-11-1 overall record.

Easthampton and Agawam, who are both members of the Fay Division, split



Trevor Del Barba gets ready to send the puck up the ice.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

a pair of games during the regular season.

The Brownies won the first meeting, 3-1, on December 21. The Eagles posted a 2-0 shutout in the second meeting at the beginning of January.

Agawam took a quick 1-0 lead in the semifinal match at 2:39 of the opening period following a goal by Pisano, who's also an assistant captain.

"Scoring the first goal early in the first period was huge for us," Rowley said. "We also scored early goals in the second and third periods, which was our game plan."

AJ Robbins, who's a defenseman, is the Brownies captain this winter.

Less than two minutes later, Easthampton junior Parker Christy scored the tying goal on a low shot from the blue line that snuck into the net past sophomore goalie Dmitri Huey (23 saves).

Huey and senior goalie Frankie DiSanti split the starting duties during the regular season.

"Both of them are very good goalies," said Rowley, who's also a former goalie. "Dmitri had the slight advantage in both record and in stats, so we'll be riding him in the playoffs. It was one of the hardest decisions that I had ever made as a

head coach."

Following a scramble in front of the net, Connery poked home the go-ahead goal 41 seconds into the second period.

The Brownies entered the final period holding a 2-1 advantage.

Just like they did during the first two periods, Agawam scored a goal at the start of the third period.

A pass by Connery was tipped into the net by Bufum 27 seconds into the period.

Agawam's final goal of the semifinal match was scored by Montagna with 4:33 remaining in regulation.

Montagna began the Class B championship game by scoring a first period goal.

The Thunder scored the tying goal less than a minute later.

Agawam then scored five unanswered goals, and they took home the championship trophy for the first time in 10 years.

The Brownies entered the Division 2 state tournament as the 33rd seed. They were scheduled to play a preliminary round road match against 32nd-seeded Newton South on Monday night. The winner of that contest will be facing Billerica High School, who's the number one seed in the Division 2 tournament, in the round of 32.

# Public Notices

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampden Probate and Family Court  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
(413)748-7758  
Docket No. HD25P0231EA  
Estate of:  
Frances Jean Kennedy  
Also known as:  
Frances J Kennedy  
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION**

To all interested persons:  
A Petition for Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Elaine G Davis of Agawam, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: Elaine G Davis of Agawam, MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in unsupervised administration.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 03/24/2025. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

**UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)**

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara M Hyland, First Justice of this Court.

Date: February 24, 2025  
Rosemary A Saccomani, Register of Probate  
02/27/2025

**AGAWAM ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS LEGAL NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given that the Agawam Zoning Board of Appeals 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  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampden Probate and

**Family Court  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
(413)748-7758  
Docket No.  
HD25C0030CA**

**In the matter of:  
Joseph Mendes Bonci  
CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME**

A Petition to Change Name of Adult has been filed by Joseph Mendes Bonci of Feeding Hills, MA requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to:

**Joseph Luis Mendes  
IMPORTANT NOTICE**

Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Hampden Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 03/18/2025.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara M Hyland, First Justice of this Court.

Date: February 18, 2025  
Rosemary A Saccomani, Register of Probate  
02/27/2025

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampden Division  
Docket No.  
HD25P0331EA  
Estate of:**

**Timothy E. Duclos  
Date of Death: 11/15/2024  
INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE**

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner Marilyn J Duclos of Agawam, MA a Will has been admitted to informal probate.  
Marilyn J Duclos of Agawam, MA

wam, MA has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve without surety on the bond.

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.  
02/27/2025

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampden Division  
Docket No.  
HD22P0013EA  
Estate of:**

**Greta Greenburg  
Date of Death:  
November 9, 2021  
INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE**

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner Elizabeth Ely of New York, NY

a Will has been admitted to informal probate.  
Elizabeth Ely of New York, NY

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.  
02/27/2025

**Town of Agawam  
Moore Street and Valley Street  
Engineering Design**

The Town of Agawam wishes to receive responses for engineering services for water main replacement, road reconstruction and drainage improvements on Moore Street and Valley Street, approximately 1,200 linear feet. The fee for services sought will be negotiated and shall not exceed \$58,800. A more detailed Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is available at the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, 60 Congress Street, Springfield, MA 01104, (413) 781-6045, between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM. To request an electronic copy of the RFQ, please contact Sue Ortiz at [sortiz@pvpc.org](mailto:sortiz@pvpc.org) or Joe Hagopian at [jhagopian@pvpc.org](mailto:jhagopian@pvpc.org). The RFQ will be available from the time of this notice until the due date specified below. The Town

of Agawam reserves the right to reject any and all responses if it is deemed in the best interests of the Town to do so. The Agawam Mayor will be the awarding and contracting authority.

Completed proposals are to be submitted no later than 2:00 PM, Tuesday, March 18, 2025 at the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, 60 Congress Street, 1st Floor, Springfield, MA 01104.  
02/27/2025

### 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 hearings 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](http://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](mailto:vgioscia@agawam.ma.us)

By Order Of:  
Violet Baldwin, Chair  
Agawam Planning Board

Rosemary Sandlin, President  
Agawam City Council

02/20, 02/27/2025

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**Classified Advertising DEADLINE FRIDAY AT 2PM**

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## HELP WANTED

**LOCAL TREE SERVICE** looking for climber and ground person. Must have driver's license in good standing. Call **413-507-1949**.

### SCHOCHET IS CURRENTLY HIRING!

We are currently accepting resumes for an **Experienced Property Manager or Asst Property Manager** at Weldon House in Greenfield, MA. Weldon House is a 105-unit elderly/disabled apartment community with a Section 8 project based subsidy program. 3+ years of prior multifamily property management experience, strong knowledge of Section 8 program. COS designation required and ARM designation preferred. Able to motivate and manage property management staff and have excellent organizational, interpersonal and communication skills. Excellent benefits package and competitive salary. Interested and qualified candidates, please submit resume to: **careers@schochet.com**. Pre-employment background check & drug test required. EOE  
For more information on this position please contact **Robin @ 617-398-5144 schochet.com**

The **Town of Russell Sewer/Water Department** is accepting resumes for the full time position of **SEWER/ WATER OPERATOR** at **Town of Russell WWT, 200 Main Street, Russell, MA 01071-0131** or email **russellwandw@townofrussell.us**. Applicants will need a Grade 4 Wastewater, 1T Water, and a 1D Water licenses or the ability to acquire them.  
Inquire at office or thru email.

### Worthington Police Department Full-time Police Officer

The Worthington Police Department is seeking qualified candidates for **Full-time Police Officer**. Applicants must be a minimum of 21 years of age or older, a U.S. Citizen and possess a valid driver's license. They should also have a high school diploma/GED, license to carry and be certified by Massachusetts Municipal Police Training Committee and be POST certified.

This is a benefited position with a salary range of: \$52,000.00 - \$75,733.00. The successful candidate shall be highly motivated, self-disciplined, possess a community policing philosophy and live in or near Worthington. This position has the potential to be elevated to Police Chief.

Send letter of interest, resume and three references with relevant contact information to:  
**Worthington Police Department P.O. Box 247 Worthington, MA 01098**  
Or via email to: **sboard@worthington-ma.us**  
Subject line: Employment

Responses will be accepted and reviewed until the position is filled.  
*The Town of Worthington is an Equal Opportunity Employer*

## REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

**EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY**

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

## FOR RENT

All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status (number of children and or pregnancy), national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, or any intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination.  
This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain about discrimination call The Department of Housing and Urban Development "HUD" toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. For the N.E. area, call HUD at 617-565-5308. The toll free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

**2025 TAX TIME**

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Call For An Appointment  
The IRS does not endorse any particular individual tax return preparer. For more information on tax preparers go to irs.gov.

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MAIL TO: Classifieds, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069 DEADLINES: **FRIDAY AT NOON**  
or call: 413-283-8393

CATEGORY:			
1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20
21	Base Price \$26.50	Base Price \$27.00	Base Price \$27.50
22	Base Price \$27.50	Base Price \$28.00	Base Price \$28.50
23	Base Price \$29.00	Base Price \$29.50	Base Price \$30.00
24	Base Price \$29.50	Base Price \$30.00	Base Price \$30.50
25	Base Price \$30.50	Base Price \$31.00	Base Price \$31.50
26	Base Price \$31.00	Base Price \$31.50	Base Price \$32.00
27	Base Price \$32.00	Base Price \$32.50	Base Price \$33.00
28	Base Price \$32.50	Base Price \$33.00	Base Price \$33.50
29	Base Price \$33.50	Base Price \$34.00	Base Price \$34.50
30	Base Price \$34.00	Base Price \$34.50	Base Price \$35.00
31	Base Price \$34.50	Base Price \$35.00	Base Price \$35.50
32	Base Price \$35.00	Base Price \$35.50	Base Price \$36.00
33	Base Price \$35.50	Base Price \$36.00	Base Price \$36.50
34	Base Price \$36.00	Base Price \$36.50	Base Price \$37.00
35	Base Price \$36.50	Base Price \$37.00	Base Price \$37.50
36	Base Price \$37.00	Base Price \$37.50	Base Price \$38.00
37	Base Price \$37.50	Base Price \$38.00	Base Price \$38.50
38	Base Price \$38.00	Base Price \$38.50	Base Price \$39.00
39	Base Price \$38.50	Base Price \$39.00	Base Price \$39.50
40	Base Price \$39.00	Base Price \$39.50	Base Price \$40.00

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of Weeks: \_\_\_\_\_ X per week rate = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Credit Card:  MasterCard  VISA  Discover  Cash  Check# \_\_\_\_\_  
Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ CVV \_\_\_\_\_  
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**OUR CLASSIFIEDS REACH 50 COMMUNITIES EVERY WEEK!**



**EVENT** ■ from page 1

Frost was inspired to do this event when she put together a holiday music bingo for the winter holidays.

"People enjoyed that and I wanted to do it again," Frost said.

She thought Valentine's Day would be the perfect opportunity to bring the event back.

Additionally, she felt that bingo was a great game for people to play and relax with.

"Everybody can play bingo, it's not hard," Frost said. "You don't have to have a lot of skill, so it is something everyone can do and enjoy."

As people had fun playing bingo, they could also enjoy

some Valentine's Day themed snacks, including candy and cookies. Frost also provided a variety of juices and sodas so people could make red and pink drinks.

This event is not the last Valentine's Day-related program the library has this month. On Thursday, Feb. 20 at 6:30 p.m. rom-com author Liz Alden is coming to the library to give a talk on her work.

"She has written a bunch of romance novels so we're inviting people to learn more about the romance genre," Frost said.

Alden has written novels based on her own experience traveling all over the world in a sailboat with her husband, so people can

learn more about her own experiences as well as her craft.

There will be snacks and Valentine's Day mocktails served throughout the event.

Another fun upcoming event at the library is the Journey Through the Roots of American Popular Music.

Musician Jon Waterman is going to come in and perform some of his original songs and some blue, rock and country classics.

He will also be discussing some of the history behind these different kinds of music.

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



Deana Daggett looks to fill out her musical BINGO card.



Kristen Frost checks off songs played during the BINGO event.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Participants attempt to figure out which song is being played.

**SCHOOL** ■ from page 1

APS is hoping to get some guidance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education on how they should move forward.

"We are trying to get some guidance from DESE and to look at what the new law says as to what the competency determination should be," Martin said. "We are just trying to make sure that we're coming up with something that is fair, reasonable and able to be executed."

Based on this, Martin and the faculty and staff at APS are

looking into the possibility of the competency determination being a requirement of passing English nine, English ten, algebra, geometry and passing a science, whether it be biology, chemistry or a physical science.

A large portion of the work in discovering how APS will move forward without the MCAS requirement will be focused on standardizing the materials students learn across different classes in the same subject.

"If the competency is to pass English nine and English 10, then we have to make sure

that all sections of English nine and ten share the same experience," Martin said.

Already Martin and others at APS have done work over the past few years towards such standardization, but Martin believes that additional work will need to be done before this can be implemented as a standard.

"We want to make sure that we do it in the right way," Martin said.

Martin anticipates that this work will take Agawam High School the next few years. She does not anticipate that many, if any, students

will be caught in the transition period.

"We have very few, if any, who haven't passed the MCAS but still need to do a competency determination before graduation," Martin said.

As AHS moves forward, Martin will be working with a variety of staff at the school and district level, including guidance counselors, high school administration, teachers and curriculum people at the district level, to ensure that their new practice works well for everyone.

# SUMMER CAMP GUIDE



## MacDuffie offers fun summer camp

Camp MacDuffie is an exciting summer day camp for rising 1st to 8th graders.

Participants spend the morning engaged in a program area of their choosing, enjoy lunch by Sage Dining Services (included), and then stay active with various outdoor/indoor activities and field trips throughout the week.

Their program leaders are passionate and experienced, and they all look forward to creating a fun and supportive environment for your child to thrive in this summer.

Come along and join Camp MacDuffie this summer.

**MacDuffie Hoops Basketball Camp**  
MacDuffie Hoops Summer Camp available with Coach Steiner.

Are you ready to take your game to the next level? This summer, join Coach Steiner and the MacDuffie coaching staff for an elite basketball experience at MacDuffie Hoops Summer Camp!

- What to Expect:
- Skill development & fundamentals
  - Game strategy & IQ training
  - Conditioning & foot-work drills
  - Competitive games & scrimmages

- Hands-on coaching from Coach Steiner & MacDuffie's top coaches
- This camp is for players who are serious about improving and want to sharpen their skills, build confidence, and grow their game.

The MacDuffie School is located in Granby, MA. Limited spots are available – Register today!

Don't miss your chance to train with Coach Steiner! Sign up now and get ready to work hard, compete, and have fun!

#MacDuffieHoops  
#TrainWithCoachSteiner  
#SummerBasketball  
#GetBetter

## Day and overnight camp for girls

It's in our DNA. Our founder, Juliette Gordon Low, was a famous lover of nature. Today, Girl Scouts honors her legacy by promoting respect and love of the great outdoors far and wide.

Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts (GSCWM) summer camps offer a wide variety of programs for all different interests.

Summer camp is a great way for girls to explore leadership, build skills, and develop a deep appreciation for nature. In a girl-led environment, all campers are able to challenge themselves and take healthy risks while

surrounded by supportive friends and camp staff. No prior Girl Scout experience needed to attend Girl Scout camp!

Camping has been a cornerstone of the Girl Scout experience for more than a century. While girls are swimming, hiking, and honing their skills on the archery range, they're also achieving valuable life skills whether at Day Camp at Lewis Perkins in South Hadley or Overnight Camp at Bonnie Brae in Otis. Girl Scouts' dedication to progression in outdoor programming means campers practice age-appropriate skills and gain experience

they need to feel confident taking the next step in their outdoor journey.

No matter which camp you choose or whether the stay is a few days, a week, or longer, your camper will have a ton of fun making new friends, trying new things, practicing new-found skills, and creating memories that will last a lifetime. Financial assistance is available.

Camp Lewis Perkins and Camp Bonnie Brae are American Camp Association Accredited. More information and sign up here: <https://www.gscwm.org/en/members/for-girl-scouts/camp-and-outdoors/summer-camp.html>.

**The Hartsbrook School SUMMER CAMPS**

FARM CAMP	WILDERNESS CAMP	CREATIVITY CAMP
CODING CAMP	COUNSELOR IN TRAINING (CIT)	JUNE 23 TO AUGUST 1

**REGISTRATION NOW OPEN**  
Fun all summer long for ages 4-14!  
[hartsbrook.org/summer-programs](https://hartsbrook.org/summer-programs)

**PACKARD MOUNTAIN Learning Center**

**We have summer enrollment options for school age children.**

Hours 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., \$350/wk. Accepting vouchers.

Structured daily schedule to include curricular content, free play, and arts and crafts.

Lots of outdoor and weather permitting water play.

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

**Girl Scout Camp For All Girls!**  
DAY & OVERNIGHT  
[www.gscwm.org](http://www.gscwm.org)

**SIGN UP NOW**  
for a Summer of Fun

**Greene Acres Equestrian Center L.L.C.**  
**April Vacation Riding Camp - April 22-24**  
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53 Ware Road, Belchertown  
Email: [Amanda.greeneacres@gmail.com](mailto:Amanda.greeneacres@gmail.com)

**Belchertown Kidz Club**

**TODDLER • PRESCHOOL • SCHOOL AGE**  
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Open 7:00 a.m.-5:30\* p.m. / MONDAY - FRIDAY  
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**Now Enrolling for Spring/Summer/Fall Programs**

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Ages 5 - 12 yrs. • JUNE 23RD-AUGUST 22ND  
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Swimming • Field Trips • Close walk to Playgrounds & CHCS Pool  
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[belchertownkidzclub@gmail.com](mailto:belchertownkidzclub@gmail.com)

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**THE MACDUFFIE SCHOOL**  
VERITAS  
1890

**Race Into Summer at Camp MacDuffie!**

Co-ed • Grades 1-8  
June 30 - August 15

Be part of this year's camps and discover the true meaning of summer...having fun and making friends!

**Camp MacDuffie offers seven weeks of exciting camp experiences:**

Week 1: June 30 - July 3	Week 4: July 21 - 25	Week 6: August 4-8
Week 2: July 7 - 11	Week 5: July 28 - August 1	Week 7: August 11-15
Week 3: July 14 - 18	• Arts • Athletics • Coding • Science • Dance • Lego's • Creative Writing • Theater • Science • And More!	

Monday-Friday 9am-3pm • Area fields trips and lunch included  
Extended care available if needed 7:30am-5pm

Register now for summertime fun at [MacDuffie.org/summer-camp](http://MacDuffie.org/summer-camp)

**The MacDuffie School • 66 School Street • Granby, MA 01033 • 413.255.0000 Ext.103**