



**LOCAL**  
Library fun  
PAGE 2



**YOUTH**  
Plant sale  
PAGE 3



**SPORTS**  
Lacrosse action  
PAGE 7

# AGAWAM

## ADVERTISER NEWS

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## Mario Bonavita shares autism story with community



John, Mario and Angela Bonavita all were proud of this opportunity to educate Agawam community members on autism. TURLEY PHOTOS BY QUINN SUOMALA

By Quinn Suomala  
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – The library hosted Mario Bonavita, a person with autism, to give a presentation on autism.

During this presentation, Bonavita helped walk attendees through the basics of how autism impacts him and can affect other people with autism.

According to his presentation, in 2023 one in 36 children and one in 45 adults were reported by Autism Speaks to have autism.

“ASD is found in all walks of life,” Bonavita said. “It has no prejudice.”

He described how autistic people can face challenges with physical dynamics, social skills and learning.

“Sometimes people with autism can be overly sensitive to what they taste, touch, smell, see and hear,” Bonavita said. “They can be overwhelmed by the sounds and sights around them.”

Bonavita also broke down on how autism can differ in males and females. Historically, autism has been predominantly diagnosed in males. Recent studies have discovered this may not be because females are less likely to have autism, but rather that they present differently.

AUTISM | page 12

## Updated CIP plan proposal released

By Quinn Suomala  
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – Mayor Christopher Johnson recently released Agawam’s five-year capital plan.

This plan breaks down the key projects in the town over the next five years. This includes building projects, vehicles and road paving.

The main project included within this plan is the new high school project. The estimated cost for this project is \$230,245,540. The city will receive a reimbursement of \$100 million from the state if they approve this project.

If this project is not approved then the city will have to invest about \$73 million to install a new roof and HVAC systems into the current high school building.

Also included in the capital improvement plan is the police

headquarters project (with a total approved bond authorization of \$13,629,000), the Stillbrook Park Project (with a bond authorization of \$3,280,500) and the replacement of the Agawam Public Library roof (a bond authorization of \$1,500,000).

There are also several stormwater projects, which includes the North Street Project, the North Westfield Street Project and some work on Meadow Street.

These projects and other waste and sewer ones are broken down in order of priority over the next five years.

“Year one it’s getting the plan done and then in year two it’s funding the construction for the actual work to happen,” Johnson said.

This plan also addresses the annual appropriations, or

PROPOSAL | page 11

## North St. re-opens



At last, North St. has re-opened to thru-traffic. A culvert was under repair since late last year. Materials delays caused the project completion to be pushed back several months. The repairs were finally completed at the end of April and the road was fully re-opened to all traffic last Friday afternoon. SUBMITTED PHOTO

## Students work at improving school spirit

By Quinn Suomala  
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – At the school committee meeting on Tuesday, Apr. 23 Agawam High School students Aiden Therrien and Dawood Atanane were highlighted on their work in improving attendance at sports games.

Both students had come together in order to create a group focused on improving turnout at sporting events. They were also helped by fellow student Serenity McMahan.

“I founded this group because I noticed our school lacked a strong presence at our home games and I knew something needed to change,” Therrien said.

Now the group has expanded to include 10 members, and they only hope to see numbers increase in the future.

Both Therrien and Dawood are athletes at AHS and they therefore know how important audience support can be for athlete morale.

“I think, for me, it drives the student athletes, not only to play better but to perform better within the school,” Dawood said. “As an athlete it feels great to receive recognition for being a student athlete as it is not an easy feat.”

Through this group they have created an AHS athletics Instagram page where they advertise home games for different sports teams, highlight different athletes, and post score updates after every home game.

“We also interview players after games, after they’ve done an amazing job,” Dawood said.

The page can be found at @agawamathletics. As of Apr. 26, they had 712 followers on this page,

something the group members take great pride in.

“People in the town recognize what we have and they want to see what we put out,” Therrien said.

Additionally, this group held a Media Day this past year. During this day they took different photos of student athletes, so they could each have a chance to shine.

“Our biggest project was the media day where we planned and successfully ran a professional level media day for our athletes,” Dawood said.

Moving forward with this project, they hope to make Media Day an annual, if not semesterly occurrence.

They also hope to expand their sources. Currently, their media posts focus on home games only.

SPIRIT | page 11



# Mental Health Month highlighted at library

AGAWAM – In May, the Agawam Library is pleased to offer programming that recognizes Mental Health Awareness Month. In addition to our regular monthly activities, the library will feature a few programs to help reduce stress, plan ahead and connect with others to provide support.

On Monday, May 6 at 7 p.m., Sandy Ward from the Funeral Consumers Alliance of Western Massachusetts will present Don't Get Caught Dead Without Us in the Judith Clini Community Room. Planning a funeral or memorial service can be a sad and stressful event. There are options, costs and emotions to consider when a loved one passes away. Join us for this informative program in which Sandy will provide information about making informed decisions about your own funeral or memorial arrangements. Please register online or by calling the Information Desk.

The library welcomes Recovery Coach Supervisor Tommy on Thursday, May 9 from 3 to 5 p.m. Tommy will be available

in the Judith Clini Community Room to answer questions and provide support. Join us for coffee and learn about the resources available for those in recovery. This is a drop-in event and no registration is needed.

Julia Nadolny returns to the Agawam Library for another session of Sound Healing on Monday, May 13 at 6:30 p.m. in the Judith Clini Community Room. Sound healing is an ancient practice that promotes balance and total bliss throughout the body. Please bring something to lay on such as a yoga mat or towel during the program and a blanket for warmth. Pillows are a personal preference but attendees are welcome to bring one. Chairs will also be available. This program is sponsored by the Agawam Center Library Association. Please register online or by calling the Information Desk.

Take a Journey into Ikebana - the centuries old art of Japanese flower arranging. Ahrayah Julian of Willow & Moss Flowers will be present a demonstration of the Ike-

bana style design. Learn about the basic principles of this contemplative art form and take home the skills to enjoy the beauty at home. This program is sponsored by the Agawam Center Library Association. Please register online or by calling the Information Desk.

Our monthly adult board game night will be held on Wednesday, May 1 at 6:30 p.m. in the Clini Community Room. Tea & Trivia continues on Wednesday, May 15 at 2:30 p.m. and also on Tuesday, May 21 at 6:30 p.m. Library Tech is offered twice again this month on Wednesday, May 15 at 6:30 p.m. and Tuesday, May 28 at 10:00 a.m. Erica will review Hoopla - a digital app much like Libby from which you can check out movies, music and eBooks and eAudiobooks. Attendees are asked to bring their devices as well as their library cards so that Erica can assist the class in getting started. Game Night and our Library Tech sessions are drop-in events. Please register for Tea & Trivia.

Our virtual author series features three

new author talks this month. Wednesday, May 1 at 3 p.m., we will connect with Douglas Brunt, author of The Mysterious Case of Rudolph Diesel: Genius, Power, and Deception on the Eve of World War I. On Wednesday, May 8, author Nina Simon will join us at 7:00 p.m. to present A Murder Mystery, Family Story, & Love Letter to Strong Women Everywhere. Nina is author of Mother-Daughter Murder Night. Last but not least, author R.F. Kuang will discuss Asian American Representation in Literature: An Author Talk on Tuesday, May 21 at 7:00 p.m. Please note that these are virtual programs. Please register at <https://library.org/agawamlibrary>.

The library welcomes visitors Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Friday and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Please note that the library will be closed on Monday, May 27 in observance of Memorial Day. Online registrations for Adult Tech programs opens May 1. Please visit our website for more information and to register [www.agawamlibrary.org](http://www.agawamlibrary.org).

## Next Feline Friends fundraiser this Saturday

AGAWAM – Feline Friends Inc. Cat Sanctuary of Feeding Hills, MA will be holding a food/supply drive at Smithland Pet & Garden Center on Saturday, May 4 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Volunteers will be accepting food, litter & monetary donations for our kitties. Opened bags/boxes will also be accepted. Gift cards from various pet stores or Costco would be appreciated.

Smithland, a valued sponsor, is stocked with Friskies Pate or Shreds canned food (single flavored cases preferred), many Fancy Feast varieties and unscented, clumping cat litter. All donations are gratefully accepted. Our donation bin is located near the cash registers.

Other Wish List items: Disinfecting wipes, paper towels, puppy pee pads, dry



cat or dog food for strays and colonies.

Thanks to all of our community members who generously donated at our April 6 event. We are so grateful to Joanne L, Cheryl & Carl K, Crystal M, Anna, Lucy the dog and her family, Sue Borgatti & Kristina Lynch, Ella, Eric, Ken K & Irene F.

Thanks for other donations in April from Barbara L, Val S, Kathleen T, and the Progressive Insurance Foundation.

We appreciate being chosen to benefit from the April Community Bag Program at the Stop & Shop store at 1282 Springfield St. in Feeding Hills. Our sanctuary will receive \$1 from the purchase of a \$2.50 reusable bag.

We are announcing an exciting new fundraiser on Sunday, May 19 at the Iron Duke Brewery in Ludlow. Caitlin of Antilogy Yoga will con-

duct a one hour yoga class from 11 a.m. to noon and donate proceeds to Feline Friends. The \$35 fee will include the yoga session, a draft beer and a raffle ticket. The Brewery itself will open at 12 noon. Raffle tickets will be sold from 12 noon to 1 p.m. by Feline Friends volunteers. All are welcome. More information will be posted on our website and Facebook pages as well as the Antilogy Yoga site. Pre-registration for yoga is required & limited to 25 guests. You may also call or email Feline Friends.

Just a reminder that we have collection bins at the Agawam Public Library as well as at Smithland in Agawam. Please add your contact information if you would like an acknowledgement.

Feline Friends Inc. is a community-based, nonprofit sanctuary that does not discriminate against any cat based on age, gender or disability.

More information about our sanctuary may be found on our website at [felinefriendsinc.org](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.

## ACAA announce May 8 meeting

AGAWAM – Bob LeClair will be the demonstrator for the Agawam Community Artist and Artisan meeting that will be held on May 8, at the Agawam Public Library, 750 Cooper St., beginning at 6 p.m.

LeClair will introduce attendees to the captivating world of gel plate printing, an exciting and versatile technique offering artists a unique approach to creating monotype prints.

Throughout the demonstration, attendees will discover how the gel plate serves as a dynamic painting surface, allowing for experimentation with texture, layering, and color to produce prints that are truly one-of-a-kind. Attendees will explore the basic steps of gel plate printing and showcase how this spontaneous technique can unleash creativity, inspiring attendees to continue their own artistic journey using this innovative process.

This demonstration is free and open to the public. For further information please contact Ceil Rossi (413) 207-1247 or email [tocarefree2@hotmail.com](mailto:tocarefree2@hotmail.com).

## AREA'S LARGEST JOB FAIR IS COMING!



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## Boy Scouts holding bottle and can drive

AGAWAM – Agawam's longest-running Boy Scout group, Troop 82, will host a bottle and can drive from 9 a.m. to 12 noon on Saturday May 18, at Agawam Congregational Church located at 745 Main Street, Agawam. Funds raised will support troop activities, training and gear. The troop runs programs year-round and accepts new members ages 11-17 at any time during the year. Scouts are also offering donation pick up before May 18; email [troop82agawam@gmail.com](mailto:troop82agawam@gmail.com) to make arrangements.

## NAMI hosting Yoga night

HOLYOKE – Heartsong Yoga and The National Alliance on Mental Illness of Western Massachusetts (NAMI-WM) would like to announce a Mindfulness Yoga class with Kateri to Benefit NAMI-WM, Wednesday, May 1, at 7:15 pm, by donation, at Heartsong Yoga, 264 N. Main St. E. Longmeadow, MA. Join Kateri Walsh, a long time Heartsong friend and a yoga teacher, for this special yoga class. NAMI is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness.

Kateri serves as Vice President of NAMI-WM and believes that prayer, yoga and meditation can heal the mind. Through her work, Mindfulness Yoga with Kateri, she advocates for mental illness and addiction. Kateri suffers from a mental illness and uses her story as hope and inspiration. Her yoga classes are focused on healing the mind through therapeutic, gentle, all levels yoga. Her style of yoga helps to manage mental health symptoms, anxiety, stress and PTSD. In this class, all are welcome to attend, to support NAMI and to learn more about mindful therapeutic yoga practices.

# Agawam Senior Center announces upcoming May activities

AGAWAM – The Agawam High School Senior Center will be hosting several activities in May.

### Friends Annual Plant Sale

Monday, May 6, 9:30 a.m. until sold out

Friends of the Agawam Senior Center will once again be holding their famous Annual Plant Sale. Hanging plants and some vegetable plants will be available for sale at the Agawam Senior Center located at 954 Main Street starting Monday, May 6. Sale will take place on the lower level in the dining room. First come first serve. The Friends group will be selling flowering plants all week or until sold out. We hope you will come out for this annual fundraising event. Thank you for your support.

### Hearing Checks Available

Thursday, May 16

The next New Ears affordable hearing care clinic will take place on Thursday, May 16. Gary Winn a licensed Hearing Instrument Specialist, and owner of New Ears, Affordable Hearing Care, will conduct a free hearing clinic. He will check ears for wax build-up, perform hearing screenings, and counsel people about hearing loss. Hearing aids will be cleaned and adjusted if possi-

ble. The Agawam COA invites residents of Agawam and surrounding town to benefit from this service. Call 821-0604 to make an appointment.

### Falls Prevention Seminar

Wednesday, May 8, 1 p.m.

Join Elizabeth DePaula from the Hampden County Sheriff's Office as she discusses "Learn about falls" how to get up from a fall and various ways to reduce fall risk and age safely at home. Please call Kristina at 413.726.2836 to register for this very informative seminar.

### Cardio Fusion with Donna

Thursdays, beginning May 9 from 9:45 to 10:30 a.m.

Cardio Fusion is a 45-minute dance based class; targeting balance, movement, strength and flexibility. Class begins with a warm-up segment moving into a cardio segment, cooling down into a strength segment and ending with stretching. Beginner to advanced levels are welcome. Modifications are offered to accommodate needs. Cost of the class is \$4. Classes will meet May 9, 23 and 30.

We cannot wait for you to join us. Call Kristina at 413.726.2836 to register.

### Diamond Art with Kathy

Thursday, May 9, 1 p.m.

Join Kathy as you creates this fabulous Diamond Art Tumbler. This is a four-week class and will give you plenty of time to work on your creation. Cost for the four-week class is a one-time payment of \$10 and includes the cup! Call Kristina at 413.726.2836 to register.

### Mother's Day Luncheon

Friday, May 10 at Noon

\$3 Donation per meal  
Music with Paul on the Accordion

### Meal Planning, Grocery Shopping, and Goal Setting

Wednesday, May 15, 1 to 2:30 p.m.

Join Abigail from the Western Mass Food Bank as we learn tips and tricks for successful meal planning. Grocery shopping tips to stretch your food dollars.

Tips to add more exercise into your day. Learn to make a budget-friendly meal! A food sample will be included!! The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, in partnership with SNAP-Ed, offers free nutrition education programs to our member agencies. Call Kristina at 413.726.2836

### Legacy

Pre-planning 101

Wednesday, May 22, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.

This presentation by Gary Szewczyk helps you start thinking about preparing for your future. Funeral pre-planning provides you the opportunity to continue your legacy for your family. This gift is a thoughtful step to provide you peace of mind, and your loved ones the comfort of knowing that these important decisions are taken care of for the future. Planning in advance: Makes your final wishes known

- Provides peace of mind
- Provides financial protection
- Protects your assets from long-term care

Call Kristina to register

### Jewelry Making with Sandy

Wednesday, May 29, 1 to 3 p.m.

We here at the Agawam Senior Center are so excited to offer Jewelry Making with Sandy. Sandy will bring all the materials you need and you bring your creativity! Cost for the class is \$3 per person plus the cost of your supplies. Call Kristina at 413.726.2836

## Historical Association presents Harry Houdini program May 16

AGAWAM – Harry Houdini, who was known worldwide for his sensational escape acts, once said: "The easiest way to attract a crowd is to let it be known that at a given time and a given place someone is going to attempt something that in the event of failure will mean sudden death."

While the Agawam Historical Association can't stand behind a statement of that bravado in hopes of filling the room at its annual meeting and buffet on Thursday, May 16 at 6 p.m. at the Captain Charles Leonard House, 663 Main Street, Agawam, it humbly offers the next best option: The Life & Magic of Harry Houdini, a presentation by featured speaker Mallory Howard, Assistant Curator at The Mark Twain House & Museum in Hartford, Connecticut.

Harry Houdini is without a doubt one of the most fascinating figures of the early

20th century. He was a star of the stage and screen, and one of the most entertaining performers in the world, yet most people are not as familiar with

his private life and the stories behind his astonishing magic. Whether he was debunking spiritualists, battling from

inside of a sea monster, or attempting to make it as an aviator, his story is anything but dull.

Members of the public and the association are invited to attend. Officers and directors for the coming year will be elected at a brief business meeting, followed by a buffet dinner provided by Partners Restaurant. Howard's presentation will follow the meal. The cost is \$20 per person, and payment and reservations must be received by May 13, as space is limited. For additional information please call Anne at 786-3031.

### COLLEGE NOTES

## DePergola inducted into Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society

BATON ROUGE, LA – Olivia DePergola of Feeding Hills, was recently initiated into The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, the nation's oldest and most selective

all-discipline collegiate honor society. DePergola was initiated at Duquesne University.

PLEASE RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

## Garden Club Plant Sale set for June 1

AGAWAM – The Agawam Garden Club is planning its annual plant sale for Saturday, June 1. This year's event will be held at the Historic Thomas Smith House, 251 North West Street, Feeding Hills and will run from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

The sale will include many perennials and shrubs all from members gardens and all a bargain. Because the plants are all grown locally in members gardens they are well acclimated to the area. Proceeds from the sale go towards funding the club's scholarship and providing educational programs for the year.

Please check the club's website for further information. [agawamgardenclub.com](http://agawamgardenclub.com).

## AGC May meeting

AGAWAM – The next meeting of the Agawam Garden Club will be held Tuesday, May 14, 6:30 p.m. at the Agawam Public Library, 750 Cooper St. An outdoor classroom which will serve as a learning space as well as a nature preserve, is in the works for the Agawam Junior High. After a short business meeting Laura Fal-



lon from the Junior High will speak on this new project, its purpose and resources for the community. All meetings of the Agawam Garden Club are open to the public and not restricted to Agawam residents.

## Parents, Grandparents & Friends SPECIAL 2024 Honor Your Graduate

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# Opinion

## Guest Column



### What to do when and how to do it

The last few gorgeous days got us all outside and into our home landscape. Maybe you looked at this or that and said “Now what do I do?” Here is a column straight from the archives to best guide you through the next oh so fun (and busy) weeks in the garden.

DO remove spent blooms from spring flowering bulbs. Once “deadheaded” the bulb won’t expend energy making seeds, instead, it will store it and delight you with an even healthier stand of flowers next year.

DO NOT cut, braid or otherwise alter bulb foliage. It may not be the prettiest, but as long as it is green, (and to some degree even when it is yellowish) it is photosynthesizing, making a storehouse for next spring’s blooms.

DO turn under your covercrop of winter rye now, a few weeks prior to planting your vegetable garden. Plant residues will have a chance to break down without stealing valuable nutrients from newly transplanted seedlings.

DO NOT add fresh manure to garden plots as it will burn plants. Be sure to compost it for at least six months prior to use. Make your compost pile “hot” by balancing the amount of green and brown ingredients and by turning it regularly. The result is a near neutral weed-free source of organic matter.

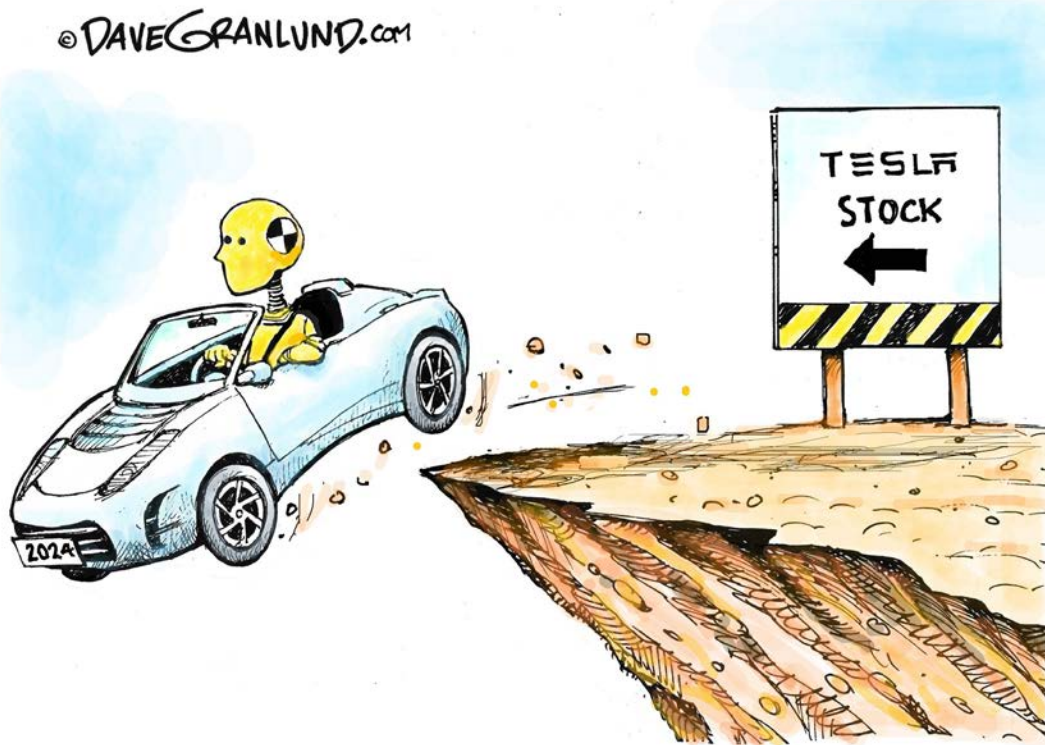
DO prune spring flowering shrubs soon after blooming. Forsythia and lilac for example, bloom on the previous season’s wood. By pruning once their blooming period is complete you will allow enough time for regrowth without sacrificing next year’s blooms.

DO NOT prune fruit trees now. Better to wait until the trees are dormant. You can, however, rid apple trees of pencil sized or smaller water sprouts in mid summer. Simply grab one with your hand and give it a quick jerk. Removing a small portion of the branch from which it grows will likely prevent future sprouts in this area.

DO begin to harden off homegrown seedlings and garden-bound indoor plants over the course of the next few weeks. By gradually acclimatizing plants to the outdoors you will likely prevent transplant shock and other maladies such as sunscald and windburn. Start off with a few hours outside each day, working up to all day and overnight. Then, as long as the threat of frost has passed the plants can successfully be planted in the ground.

DO NOT plant pepper seedlings until the soil has sufficiently warmed (usually by the first week in June). Research indicates that planting peppers in cold soil

GARDEN | page 5



## Guest Column

### Older husband and working wife seek guidance



#### Dear Rusty:

*I am 74 years old, retired and receiving Social Security.*

*My wife will be 65 in January of 2025. Our hope was to start paying off some credit card expense by her receiving SS when she turns 65, however it appears there would be a substantial reduction to her benefits. Her work income is \$37,500 a year and she wasn't planning on retiring from work at age 65. Because I am 11 years older, we felt it makes sense to use her Social Security as a means to lower our debt. We have \$27,000 in credit card debt and I don't really want to use my 401(k) funds due to taxes. We pretty much live on my Social Security and pension.*

**Signed: Seeking Suggestions**

#### Dear Seeking:

Your wife’s Full Retirement Age for Social Security purposes is age 67. Because she will not yet have reached her FRA in January 2025, when she is 65, if she claims SS to start at that time, not only will her monthly amount be reduced, but she will be subject to Social Security’s annual earnings test.

The earnings test sets a limit for how much can be earned by beneficiaries, who claim SS before FRA.

The earnings limit for 2024 is \$22,320. The limit for next year is not yet published (it’s based on changes to the national wage index), but will be a bit higher likely about \$23,500.

Thus, I can’t provide the exact impact, but if your wife’s 2025 earnings exceed next year’s limit, Social Security will take back \$1 in benefits for every \$2 over the limit (half of the amount over the limit). So, if your wife earns \$37,500 per year, that will likely be about \$14,000 over the limit and Social Security will take back half of that \$7,000.

They “take back” by withholding future benefits or you can repay them in a lump sum. So, you will have a choice repay Social Security from your other assets, or they will withhold your wife’s SS

benefits for the number of months needed to offset her penalty for exceeding the earnings limit.

The number of months they will withhold depends on how much is owed and what your wife’s monthly SS benefit is. For example, if your wife’s age-65 SS benefit is about average (\$1,900) and her penalty for exceeding the limit is \$7,000, Social Security would withhold your wife’s benefit for four months to recover the penalty, but she would receive her full benefit for the remaining eight months of the year.

Unless your wife tells them in advance that she will exceed the limit, Social Security will find out the following year after you file your income taxes. But, in any case, your wife cannot avoid the annual earnings test for working before reaching her Full Retirement Age.

The earnings test goes away when your wife reaches her FRA of 67. Until that time, if she continues working she will have a choice to have her benefits withheld for a portion of the year or simply repay Social Security in a lump sum in which case her benefits would continue uninterrupted.

FYI, there is a silver lining in this, because if your wife has benefits withheld because she exceeds the earnings limit before her FRA, after she reaches her full retirement age Social Security will give her time credit for the months when benefits were withheld, which will result in her monthly Social Security payment amount increasing somewhat at her full retirement age. Thus, over time, your wife may recover the benefits which were withheld for exceeding the annual earnings limit. But to get 100% of the benefit she’s earned from a lifetime of working and be exempt from Social Security’s earnings limit, she would need to wait until she reaches her FRA to claim.

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



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#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

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## Election letters to the editor welcome

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

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

#### Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the news-

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

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

# Opinion



Great blue heron

The great blue heron returned to its nest last week. Last week, I finally saw a great blue heron on a nest located in a dead tree on the beaver pond, which abuts my hayfield. It built the nest two years ago and this year will be its third season on the well built stick nest. At first, I saw it perched on a branch near the nest. For the last few days, it has been in the nest.

The great blue heron is 50 inches tall and is the largest and most widespread heron. The body is grayish-blue, has a white head and a black stripe over the eye. The immature heron is similar to the adult except its head has a solid black cap, which turns to white after two years. There is also a rare white morph of this heron, but it is limited to Southern Florida. Its legs and bill are orange yellow rather than dark like the more common dark morph.

Fortunately, I can see the bird in the nest from the road so I do not disturb it when I watch it. I hope it is successful in rearing its young. It takes 28 days to incubate the eggs and 55 days for them to fledge. The female lays three to seven eggs in a large, platform nest of sticks lined with finer twigs and vegetation. The nest is placed in a tree 30 to 70 feet above ground. Herons raise their young in either small colonies in isolated areas or singly like this pair.

Great blue herons feed in shallow water by standing or walking slowly, then grabbing mall fish, frogs, birds and aquatic insect with its bill. They can feed in deeper water by plunging or swimming. They also hunt on land for small animals.

They inhabit marshes, swamps, river and lake edges, tidal flats, mangroves and other water areas. They make a guttural "frahnk" or short "rok, rok" given during aggression. Both sexes do bill clacking.

### Mass. Audubon sightings

Berkshire County sightings included a sandhill crane in New Marlborough, nine long-tailed ducks at Lake Pontoosuc in Pittsfield and 11 at Stockbridge Bowl in Stockbridge, a northern goshawk at Bridges Pond in Williamstown and 20 American pipits at Ashley Falls.

Franklin County hosted small flocks of red crossbills including 24 at the Montague Sandplains Wildlife Management Area in Montague, nine at gate 29 at Quabbin Reservoir in New Salem and eight at Satan's Kingdom WMA in Northfield.

Hampshire County had a Say's phoebe at the Quabbin Reservoir Visitor's Center in Belchertown, four common goldeneyes at the Windsor Dam in Belchertown, 22 glossy ibises on Old Ferry Road in Northampton, an American bittern on Moody Bridge Road in Hadley, 21 red

crossbills at the Podick and Cole Conservation Area in Amherst, a Lapland longspur in the Northampton East Meadows and an American coot at Great Pond in Hatfield.

Hampden County spotting were five upland sandpipers at Westover Air Base in Ludlow, nine red-necked Grebes at the Congamond Lakes in Southwick, 15 chimney swifts at the Stebbins Wildlife Refuge in Longmeadow and a green heron in Holyoke.

Worcester County included a black-headed gull, two glossy ibises, a solitary sandpiper and 20 red crossbills at the Bolton Flats WMA in Bolton, two sandhill cranes at the Winimuset Meadows WMA in New Braintree, two black vultures at Adams Farm in Athol and an orchard oriole at Crane Swamp Conservation Area in Northboro.

The most unusual sighting on Friday, April 19 was a black-capped petrel in Cape Cod Bay spotted from a whale research vessel. This species is everywhere quite rare and in relatively inshore waters it is even more unusual.

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

### SECURITY ■ from page 4

will stunt plants and reduce yields. You can warm the soil where peppers (and other heat lovers) are to grow by laying down sheets of IRT mulch a couple of weeks prior to planting. Then simply cut holes in the plastic and plant as normal.

DO cut asparagus with a knife just under the surface of the soil. In established plantings you can harvest spears for about six weeks. Leave those that are thinner than a

pencil. Although we wish the season could go on forever, allowing foliage to form will only return energy to the roots, making for tasty shoots next spring!

DO NOT allow weeds to take over the strawberry patch! Applying a mulch of shredded leaves, composted sawdust or pine needles will not only keep the weeds at bay, but it will feed the plants and keep developing berries clean at the same time!

DO sow grass seed soon, before crabgrass has a chance to take hold. Or better

yet, sow seed in late August, or early September, when this dreaded weed is near done its life cycle. Water sown areas daily to promote timely germination.

DO NOT rototill patches of perennial weeds; you are merely spreading them about the garden! Better to hand weed, digging out the roots completely. After planting is complete mulch around plants to cut down on future weeds, conserve moisture, and add organic matter to the soil. When applying mulch around trees

and shrubs remember to pull it back, away from the trunk to prevent girdling.

DO have fun in the garden this spring!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 31 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.

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48						49			50	51	52
55						56			57		58
59						60			61		
62						63				64	

**CLUES ACROSS**

1. Lions do it
5. In favor of
8. Rest here please (abbr.)
11. Pulpits
13. Leisure activity
14. Fertility god
15. Financial obligations
16. When you anticipate getting somewhere
17. Spanish river
18. Sporting events
20. Type of tree
21. Ceased to be
22. Persons
25. Synthetic resin
30. Relates to photochemical reactions
31. Father
32. Former Cowboys coach
33. City in Finland
38. Run batted in

41. Got through
43. They darken skin
45. In a harmful way
48. Form of weaving
49. City of Angels hoopster
50. Caucasian language
55. Syngman \_\_, Korean president
56. Sun up in New York
57. Paddled
59. Fishes
60. Affirmative
61. Nimble
62. Doctor of Education
63. Soviet Socialist Republic
64. A small island

**CLUES DOWN**

1. Cool!
2. Hebrew unit of measure
3. Swedish rock group
4. College army
5. Favor over another
6. Called it a career
7. Egg-shaped wind instrument
8. Israeli statesman
9. Hurries
10. Slog
12. Midway between south and southeast
14. Benedictine monk
19. Self-immolation by fire ritual
23. Family of regulator genes
24. Surrendering
25. Political action committee
26. S. American plant
27. Long-term memory
28. Bark
29. Breathes in
34. Take hold of
35. Everyone has one

36. Valentine's Day color
37. Drivers' licenses and passports
39. Outer walls of castles
40. Enters with force
41. One thousandth of an inch
42. Deceased Chinese politician
44. Sugary secretion of plants
45. Expressed pleasure
46. Shelter
47. Utilizes
48. Forest resident
51. Fashion accessory
52. A sharply directional antenna
53. \_\_ Kristofferson, actor
54. A bad place to end up
58. MLBer Gordon

**CROSSWORD SOLUTION ON PAGE 11**

# Town accepting applications for Veterans Tax Work-off program

AGAWAM – The Town of Agawam is pleased to announce the commencement of the application period for the Senior Citizen/Veteran's Tax Work-Off Program. This initiative aims to provide opportunities for eligible seniors and veterans to contribute to their community while receiving assistance with property taxes.

Beginning on May 1 and running through May 15, interested individuals are encouraged to submit their applications for consideration. The program offers eligible participants the chance to work in various capacities within municipal departments, earning credit towards their property tax bills.

"We are excited to continue our commitment to supporting our senior citizens and veterans through this meaningful program," stated Mayor Christopher Johnson. "This initiative not only assists our residents in managing their property taxes but also fosters a strong sense of com-

munity involvement and civic engagement."

To qualify for the program, applicants must be either senior citizens aged 60 or older, or veterans of the United States Armed Forces. Eligible tasks may include administrative duties, maintenance work, or other assignments within town departments.

A lottery will be conducted on June 3, 2024, to select participants for the program. Only 40 slots are available for both seniors and veterans. Selected applicants will be notified promptly following the lottery drawing.

"We encourage all eligible individuals to take advantage of this opportunity to serve their community while receiving valuable property tax relief," remarked John Fitzgerald, Director of Personnel. "The Senior Citizen/Veteran's Tax Work-Off Program exemplifies Agawam's dedication to supporting those who have served our country and our older residents."

For more information on eligibility requirements and how to apply, please visit the Town of Agawam website or contact the Chief of Staff, Jennifer Gannett.

## CWC annual banquet to be held on May 14

AGAWAM – The annual banquet of The Catholic Women's Club of Agawam will take place at Casa Di Lisa, 801 Springfield St., on Tuesday, May 14.

The evening will begin with appetizers from 6 to 6:45 p.m., consisting of bruschetta, fresh fruit, cheese and crackers. At 7 p.m., the buffet of grilled pork chops with applesauce, chicken francese, baked cod, vegetables, roasted potatoes, green beans almondine, salad and bread will be served. Coffee, tea and soda will be served, and dessert will be mini canolies and petit fours. A cash bar will be available.

Price is \$35 and includes tax and tip. Checks made out to CWC or cash must be sent to Katie Heald, chairperson of the event, at 66 Beekman Drive, Agawam, MA.01001 or left in her mailbox, by May 6, no refunds after this date, as the count is due May 7. Please write with whom you wish to sit.

There is 1 table of 8 ladies available and the rest are tables of 6. Any larger tables will be placed close to each other.

For questions, or more information call Katie at (413) 786-1287. The club's monthly and annual meetings will follow the dinner.

Any Catholic Woman residing in Agawam/Feeding Hills or member of either of the towns Catholic Parishes is welcome to attend this event.

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National Multiple Sclerosis Society

# SPORTS

## Brownies hold off Tigers



Trevor Del Barba picks up a loose ball on the grounds.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

**SOUTH HADLEY** – A boys varsity lacrosse match is 48 minutes long.

Agawam held a 9-1 lead entering the final 12 minutes of last Friday afternoon's Valley League match at South Hadley. The Tigers came storming back in the fourth quarter by scoring five goals, but the Brownies managed to hang on down the stretch for a 10-6 victory.

"I thought we played very well during the first three quarters," said Agawam boys' varsity lacrosse coach Joe Heney. "Obviously, things went a little bit differently for us in the fourth quarter. South Hadley gained the momentum and they just kept firing away. I'm very glad that we're walking out of here with

LACROSSE | page 8

## Offense struggles in loss for girls lacrosse

**AGAWAM** – Last Thursday afternoon, Agawam high School girls lacrosse suffered a defeat against West Springfield 18-2. It was one of the first lopsided

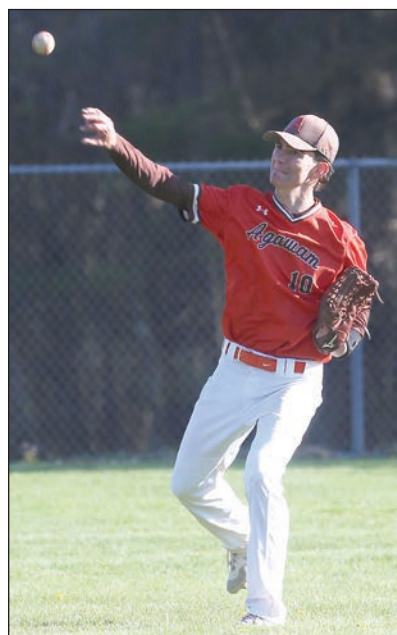
losses for Agawam against their neighboring rival in several years. Agawam's only goals came from Sarah Kriebel. The Brownies are just 3-6 on the season.



Kyra Benard makes run for the net, going around an opponent.



Kaylin Barna sends a pass away after making a save.



Vincent Catelotti sends a throw back to the infield.



Aiden Lavelle pitches in relief for Agawam.

## Tough fielding hurts Agawam

**BELCHERTOWN** – Last Thursday, Belchertown baseball took advantage of seven Agawam errors for an 18-8 win. Belchertown scored six times in the first and six times in the third to put the game out of reach. Agawam had one push early in the game, scoring five times in the top of the first. For Agawam, Joe Szemela went 3-for-4 with an RBI. Aiden Lavelle went 2-for-3 with a home run and three RBI. Belchertown got two hits each from Canyon Charron and Evan Ferguson. Ferguson had four RBI and Kamden Houle added three RBI. Agawam is 3-6 on the season.



Thomas Plakias readies for a throw to second.



Gavin Cruz smothers a throw to first for an out.



Drew Scherban slides safely back to first.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM



Emma Murray is pressured as she looks to shoot. TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Lucia LaRocque makes her way across the center of the field.



Isabella Spaulding sends a pass to Lucia LaRocque.

# Sports

## Boys volleyball gets sweep of Falcons

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

WILBRAHAM – The Agawam boys' varsity volleyball team won both regular season meetings against North Division rival Minnechaug Regional for the second consecutive year.

After defeating the Falcons, 3-1, at Clifford P. Kibbe Gymnasium on April 17, the Brownies traveled to Wilbraham and completed the sweep with a 3-0 (25-22, 25-16, 25-18) victory, last Thursday night.

"Minnechaug is a quality volleyball team and we also beat them at home a week ago," said Agawam head coach Kevin Pender. "I'm nervous every time that we play a match in this gym. We usually struggle here for some reason. We executed our game-plan very well tonight."

When the initial Division 2 state power rankings were released last Friday, Agawam (10-2, 4-1) was the second ranked team behind first place Westfield. The Brownies are scheduled to host the Bombers at 6:30 pm on May 7.

The Falcons (7-5, 1-3), who won their only state title twenty years ago, were the ninth ranked team in the Division 2 power rankings. They entered last Thursday's home match having won three straight non-league matches against Putnam, Belchertown, and Dracut by 3-0 scores.

Two years ago, the Falcons defeated the Brownies, 3-1 and 3-2, in a span

of eight days during the regular season. The third meeting of the 2022 season took place in the Western Mass. Class B semifinals, which was held at Agawam High School. The Brownies pulled out a 3-2 win in that contest. They then defeated the Falcons twice during the 2023 regular season and again in the Western Mass. Class B finals.

One of the nine seniors listed on this year's Minnechaug volleyball roster is Jonah Rost, who's a tri-captain, along with classmates David Duah, and Andrew Szpakowski.

During the offseason Rost played for a club volleyball team which was coached by Pender.

"I've coached Jonah during the past couple of years and he's a great young man," Pender said. "I

have a tremendous amount of respect for him. He'll do anything to help his team win a game. I'm really going to miss coaching him during the club season."

Agawam built a 15-8 advantage in the opening set following a combined block from junior David Dzmaidziak and senior Emil Dzmaidziak.

The Falcons answered back by winning the next three points with Rost handling the serving duties.

The Brownies largest lead of the first set was 21-12, but the home team battled back.

A combined block from senior Michael Bigda, and Rost closed the gap to 23-18.

After Agawam won the next point, the Falcons reeled off the next four points.

Another combined block from freshman Darren Duah and senior Hunter LaDouceur cut the Brownies lead to 24-22. Then a kill by Agawam junior Dennis Nesen gave his team a 1-0 lead in the overall match.

"Minnechaug made a couple of key plays at the end of the first set," Pender said. "They put us on our heels, but my guys responded very well."

A kill by David Duah gave Minnechaug a 1-0 lead for the first time in the match at the start of the second set.

With Nesen handling the serving duties, the Brownies won the next seven points.

The Falcons cut the deficit down to 12-9 following a LaDouceur ace.

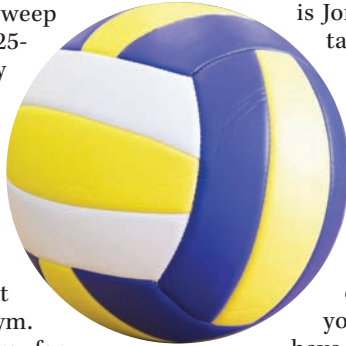
The Brownies managed to hold onto the lead, and they locked up the second set with the help of a 7-2 run.

"I thought we served very well in the second set, which really helped us a lot," Pender said. "We also had a couple of runs, which were key. If we want to be a competitive volleyball team, we'll need to continue stringing points together."

Minnechaug also took a 1-0 lead in the third set before the Brownies took the lead with the help of a 9-3 run.

The Falcons stayed within striking distance, but they could never retake the lead.

Just like during the past two seasons, the North Division rivals could possibly meet for the third time this spring during the Western Mass. Class B tournament. They could also face each other in the Division 2 state tournament.



## Olympics lead to change in HoopHall induction

SPRINGFIELD – The Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame has announced it will move its Enshrinement Ceremonies from Aug. 16-17 to Oct. 12-13 to accommodate requests of the vast global basketball community amid an extensive and expanding summer schedule, highlighted by the 2024 Summer Olympics. The date change will continue to position the Hall of Fame event as a successful, well-produced standalone event not compromised by potential production conflicts.

Enshrinement Weekend will begin at Mohegan Sun on Saturday, Oct. 12, with the Tip-Off Celebration and Awards Gala. The Class of 2024 and returning Hall of Famers will then assemble in Springfield, for the annual events taking place at the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame and Springfield's Symphony Hall on Sunday, Oct. 13.

The updated schedule of events for Enshrinement 2024:

Saturday, Oct. 12, at Mohegan Sun (Uncasville, Conn.)

Enshrinement 2024 Autograph Session

Enshrinement 2024 Press Conference  
Enshrinement Tip-Off Celebration and Awards Gala

Sunday, Oct. 13, in Springfield  
Enshrinement Ceremony VIP Reception at Springfield Marriott

Enshrinement Ceremony Red Carpet Show at Symphony Hall

Enshrinement Ceremony at Symphony Hall



Liam Grealis holds his stick away from an opponent.



Brayden Federico gets ready to sling a shot on goal.



Jaden Holloway stutter-steps, then makes a run for the goal.



Nicholas Ugolini sends a pass away.

### LACROSSE ■ from page 7

the win."

The Tigers (4-5, 1-3), who were previously members of the Valley Wheel, moved into the Valley League before the start of the regular season.

"I think we can be competitive in this league," said South Hadley head coach Jeff Marion. "We made a great fourth quarter comeback, but we haven't played well for the entire game yet."

The Brownies (5-3, 3-1) are looking to capture the league title for the first time in ten years.

They're currently in a three-way battle for first place in the Valley league standings with West Springfield and Wahconah Regional.

"Every league game is very important to us," Heney said. "One of our goals is to win a league title, which is something that we haven't been able to do in ten years. We beat a very good South Hadley team today."

The Brownies only league loss so far this season was at Wahconah, 8-7, last Monday.

They did post a 12-4 victory at West Side in the second game of the regular season.

During the past two seasons, Agawam and South Hadley split a pair of non-league match-ups.

The Tigers celebrated a 13-6 victory in 2022, while the Brownies posted an 8-4 win last May.

Six different Agawam players scored at least one goal in last Friday's contest.

"We always want to have several different guys score goals for us," Heney added. "We also want to be patient whenever we do have possession of the ball."

The duo of sophomore Brayden Federico and senior Nicholas Ugolini led the way offensively for the Brownies with two goals apiece.

The contest was scoreless until the visitors scored three goals during the final five minutes of the opening period.

With 4:27 remaining on the scoreboard clock, Agawam junior Landon Ashford was credited with the first goal of the match.

Less than a minute later, Federico added his name to the scoring column with an assisted goal. Then Ugolini fired a bounced

shot into the cage past South Hadley senior goalie Bennett Allen (13 saves) making the score 3-0.

The Tigers broke the ice less than a minute into the second stanza when senior Sly Curto blasted a hard low shot past Agawam sophomore goalie Jordin Agosto (9 saves).

The Brownies would build a 7-1 lead following goals from junior Riley Jorgenson, sophomore Casey Thomas, Ugolini, and Federico, who capped off the first half scoring with an incredible behind the back shot.

"The behind the back shot is becoming a lot more popular in lacrosse," Heney said. "The guys are using it in the right way and they're not showboating."

Agawam added two more goals in the third quarter, which were scored by sophomore Liam Grealis and Jorgenson.

Allen, who's planning to attend Springfield College next fall, made a key save three minutes into the fourth quarter, which gave his team the momentum.

The Tigers comeback began with back-to-back goals from senior Ethan Roy, which sliced their deficit to 9-3 with seven min-

utes remaining in regulation.

With 5:49 showing on the scoreboard clock, Roy delivered a pass to Curto, who netted his second goal of the match.

"Ethan is a key player for us," Marion said. "He's one of our leading goal scorers and has a bunch of assists. He does everything on the field."

South Hadley senior Noah Marion won the ensuing face-off before a goal by senior Owen Dawson closed the gap to 9-5 with 4:48 left.

Marion won another faceoff before Dawson, who'll be playing football at Springfield College, scored his second goal.

Any hopes that Dawson, who also recently scored his 200th career goal, and his teammates had of continuing the comeback ended abruptly when Federico netted his second goal on a low shot with 2:14 remaining in the fourth quarter.

The Brownies managed to keep possession of the ball for almost the entire last two minutes of the match.

The Tigers will be looking to split the season series with the Brownies when they visit Harmon A. Smith Field on May 14.



# Public Notices

## 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, May 13, 2024 at 6:30PM for all parties interested in the request of Pavel Kuzmenko, who is seeking a Variance in accordance with the Town of Agawam Zoning Ordinances Ch. 180, Section 33 to allow for a front setback with less than the required footage at the premises identified as 61 Valley Street.

Doreen A. Prouty  
Chairperson, ZBA  
04/25, 05/02/2024

**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. HD24P0886EA  
Estate of:**

**Richard Eugene Aldrich  
Date of Death: 01/05/2024  
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 Frances Laveck of Southwick, 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: **Frances Laveck of Southwick, 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 05/20/2024**. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely 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: April 22, 2024  
**Rosemary A Saccomani**, Register of Probate  
05/02/2024

**Town of Agawam  
Request for Sealed Bids**  
The Town of Agawam is requesting sealed bids from qualified contractors for Agawam Junior High School Cafeteria Flooring Replacement. A full bid package with specifications will be available on 5/1/24 via email to [bids@agawam.ma.us](mailto:bids@agawam.ma.us). Bids shall be rcvd until 2:30 PM, 5/16/24 at 36 Main St, Procurement office.  
05/02/2024

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampden Division  
Docket No. HD24P0792EA  
Estate of:  
Katherine Regina Glaessner  
Also Known As:  
Katherine Glaessner  
Date of Death:  
March 29, 2023**

**INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE**  
To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Robert A. Glaessner of Agawam, MA** a Will has been admitted to informal probate.  
**Robert A. Glaessner of Agawam, 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.  
05/02/2024

**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. HD24C0136CA  
In the matter of:  
Maksim Ibrahim Kurbanov  
CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME**  
A Petition to Change Name of Minor has been filed by **Maksim Ibrahim Kurbanov of Agawam, MA** requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to:  
**Maksim Mikhail Dmitruk**  
**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 05/24/2024**.

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: April 19, 2024  
**Rosemary A Saccomani**, Register of Probate  
05/02/2024

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampden Division  
Docket No. HD24P0800EA  
Estate of:  
Gail C. McDonald  
Date of Death:  
November 5, 2023**

**NOTICE OF INFORMAL PROBATE G.L.c. 190B, § 3-306**  
To all persons who have or may have some interest in the above-captioned estate and, if interested, to the Office of the Attorney General and the Department of Veterans Affairs, notice is hereby given on **4/11/2024** that the Petitioner **Sherrrie L Habrat of Feeding Hills, MA** intends to file with the

above-named Probate and Family Court, not sooner than seven (7) days after this notice, a

Petition for Informal Probate of a Will  
Petition for Informal Appointment of Personal Representative, to serve without surety on the bond  
**Sherrrie L Habrat of Feeding Hills, MA**

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.  
05/02/2024

## AGAWAM CONSERVATION COMMISSION LEGAL AD

The Agawam Conservation Commission will meet on **Thursday, May 9, 2024 at 6:00PM** at the Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main St, Agawam, MA. The purpose of this meeting will be to hear the Request for Determination of Applicability of Pine Crossing Construction on property located at Nolan Ln (Parcel ID F13 4/31).

By Order of  
**Henry A. Kozloski**,  
Chairman  
AGAWAM CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
05/02/2024

**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. HD24C0142CA  
In the matter of:  
Sofiya Rotina  
CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME**  
A Petition to Change Name of Minor has been filed by **Sofiya Rotina of Agawam, MA** requesting that the court

enter a Decree changing their name to:

**Sofiya Rotin**  
**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 05/27/2024**.

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: April 25, 2024  
**Rosemary A Saccomani**, Register of Probate  
05/02/2024

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampden Probate and Family Court  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
(413)748-7758**

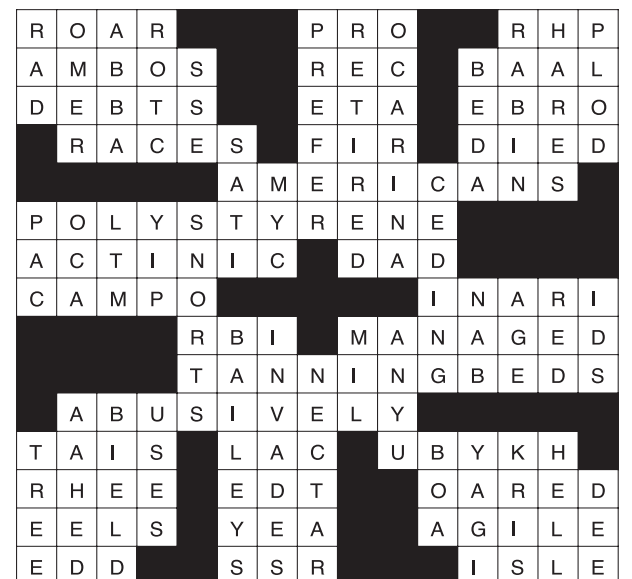
**Docket No. HD24C0141CA  
In the matter of:  
Taisiya Mirra Rotina  
CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME**

A Petition to Change Name of Minor has been filed by **Taisiya Mirra Rotina of Agawam, MA** requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to:

**Taisiya Mirra Rotin**  
**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 05/27/2024**.

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: April 25, 2024  
**Rosemary A Saccomani**, Register of Probate  
05/02/2024



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## Agawam Advertiser News OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

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

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$225, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: [obits@turley.com](mailto:obits@turley.com).

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

## PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

- 1 Email all notices to [notices@turley.com](mailto:notices@turley.com)
- 2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.
- 3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts' public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

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

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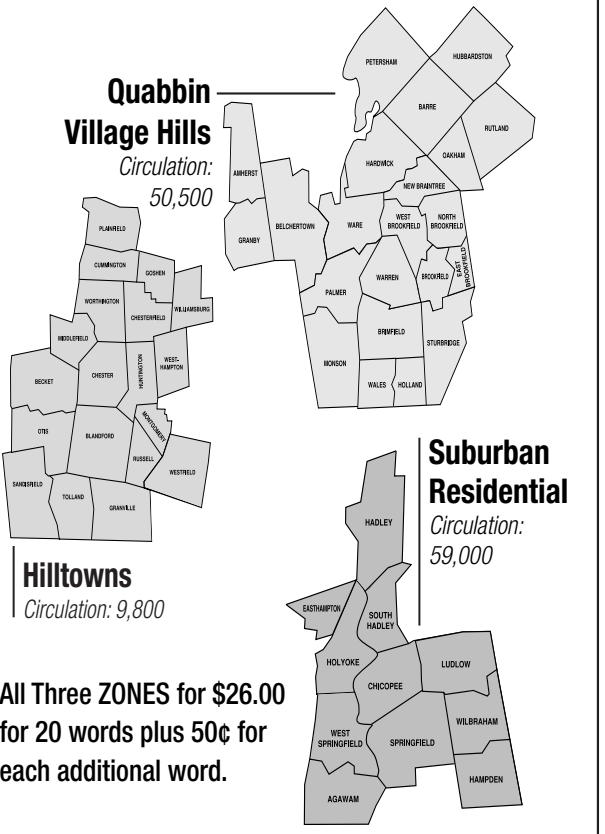
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**PROPOSAL** ■ from page 1

the recurring capital needs. This includes items such as street paving and sidewalk improvements.

"One of the main ones going forward is the succession of replacing the roofs on all four elementary schools," Johnson said. "They're all nearing the end of their useful lives so we've put them in there as an annual appropriation starting in the following fiscal year."

The roofs are also broken down in order of priority throughout the capital plan.

The costs of the roofs total to \$3,864,800. With Sapelli costing \$1,098,000, Phelps \$840,000, Granger \$848,000 and Clark \$1,078,000.

In altering this capital plan from the one Former Mayor William Sapelli had created, Johnson focused on streamlining the process.

"I made it more straightforward than the prior plan was," Johnson said. "The prior plan had far too many spreadsheets that had duplicate information and it was confusing at best to follow."

In the old plan, Johnson said there were around 14 different spreadsheets, most of which had the same information presented in a multitude of ways.

"I said we don't need to do it that way, we can simplify it," Johnson said.

Johnson went through each spreadsheet and narrowed down the duplicate information so the plan now contains only five spreadsheets. He wanted to ensure the information was more palatable for all who looked at it.

"One shows what the annual appropriations are for capital projects, the next shows what our existing bond payments are for both the general fund and water and sewer, and then one showing general fund and then water and sewer with the existing bonds and what the new bonds would do to our principal and interest payments," Johnson said.

According to Johnson, the city council was greatly appreciative of this simplification.

The capital plan can be found on the town website for any interested in looking it over.

**SPIRIT** ■ from page 1

They hope to be able to highlight away games in the future.

"We would like to expand and take on more members," Therrien said. "We would also like funding to increase the size and quality of the events we bring."

Additionally, they hope to gather a dedicated group of fans to go to home games and away games.

"They would help to increase school spirit and may positively impact game results," Therrien said.

Already people have noticed a difference as a result of this group.

"I think it's phenomenal, I'm so impressed," School Committee Member Wendy Rua said. "I just came from the track meet at the high school and I'm pretty sure one of the crew that you mentioned was out there taking pictures be-

cause somebody was running around and all the students...they certainly know and they're aware of what you're doing and I already see the excitement."

The school committee was impressed with the work of these students. Many of them mentioned they had noticed a decline in sports attendance prior to this group and they are delighted a group of students have taken initiative.

"It is great to see you taking the initiative when you noticed a deficit in the energy," School Committee Member AJ Christopher said. "When your peers are out there doing it and driving it, I think it's a huge accomplishment."

"This has been something that I've heard talked about, getting more school spirit involved in sports, and so I think what you guys are doing is awesome," School Committee Member Michael Perry said.

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**HELP WANTED**

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## Dakin welcomes new delivery of dogs from South Carolina

SPRINGFIELD – On Thursday, April 25, Dakin Humane Society welcomed a transport delivery of five dogs from Friends of the Animal Shelter (FOTAS) in South Carolina. The dogs include four eight-month-old siblings and a two-year-old female hound who will become available after a mandatory 48-hour quarantine period and after passing a subsequent medical evaluation for adoption.

Pet overpopulation has become a significant nationwide problem in animal shelters. According to Shelter Animals Count, an animal advocacy group based in Atlanta, shelter and rescue populations in the United States have spiked by 900,000 overall since January 2021, resulting in an increase in the number of dogs and cats being euthanized.

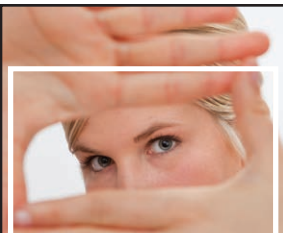
"We are fortunate to be able to help FOTAS by bringing these dogs here to western Massachusetts," stated Meg Talbert, executive director at Dakin. "Shelters around the country are experiencing overcrowding due to slowed adoption rates and increasing animal intake. It's because of our wonderful community of adopters, foster homes and donors that Dakin can step up and help."

Talbert continued, "These five young dogs will make great additions to families in our community. We encourage people who are interested in adopting a dog now or in the coming months to look at our website frequently, or visit Dakin during our open hours to find a good match. When you adopt a pet from a shelter, you're helping two animals, the one joining your family, and the one who will then be able to enter our shelter to await their new person or family."

"We live in a large county, roughly the size of Rhode Island," stated Kathy Cagle, programs coordinator at FOTAS. "So many people are kind and good, they take in strays and do what they can. However their ability to get their pets spayed and neutered, and receive proper veterinary care, is limited. Some days there are lines to the parking lot with people who found dogs and cats on the road. We see people leaving dogs at gas stations, tying them to our fence, or leaving them with bags of food on the road. These are pets that come to us through no fault of their own. You are getting homes for our neglected and unwanted."

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**CORRESPONDENT OPPORTUNITIES**

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- **Must be dependable, professional and able to meet strict deadlines**
- **Salary based on a flat rate by story and photo**

Send writing samples with resume to

Deanna Sloat  
 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069  
 or email directly to [dsloat@turley.com](mailto:dsloat@turley.com)



**TOWN OF WORTHINGTON Building Commissioner / Zoning Enforcement Officer**

The Town of Worthington (population 1,200) is seeking to fill the position of Building Commissioner / Zoning Enforcement Officer.

**Qualifications include:**

- A minimum of five years' experience in the supervision of building construction/design or, in the alternative a four-year undergraduate degree in a field related to building construction/design or a combination of education and experience which would confer equivalent knowledge and ability, as determined by the BBRS.
- Shall have general knowledge of the accepted requirements for building construction, fire prevention, light, ventilation and safe egress, as well as a general knowledge of other equipment and materials essential for safety, comfort and convenience of the occupant of a building or structure.
- Must be certified as Building Commissioner/Inspector of Buildings by the BBRS or have a prior approval letter from the BOCC or BBRS to obtain certification, as defined in 780 CMR 110.R7.
- Must have a valid Class D Driver's license.

This is a part-time position - 12 hours a week. Pay range: \$33 - \$39 per hour.

Detailed job description can be found here:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1DURzlpX\\_U-E1a1ddsuXZQsHiWWoCw\\_1G/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=111270427003763858270&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1DURzlpX_U-E1a1ddsuXZQsHiWWoCw_1G/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=111270427003763858270&rtpof=true&sd=true) and on the Town's website: [www.worthington-ma.us](http://www.worthington-ma.us).

Please mail your letter of interest, resume and references for all related positions held in the past five years to: Worthington Selectboard, PO Box 247, Worthington, MA 01098

Or send via email to: [selectboard@worthington-ma.us](mailto:selectboard@worthington-ma.us)

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. No phone calls please. *The Town of Worthington is an equal opportunity employer*

**AUTISM** | from page 1

“They [girls] appear to have less severe symptoms than boys and are better able to mask their social challenges,” Bonavita said.

Due to these differently appearing symptoms, many times females will have a delayed diagnosis or go undiagnosed. This can lead to increased levels of anxiety and depression in comparison to allistic (non-autistic) females or autistic males.

Bonavita also pointed out that autism can be a strength, not just a disability.

“I am very attentive to details when I am interested in a task,” Bonavita said. “I notice small changes and enjoy doing tasks perfectly.”

Many autistic people have increased levels of pattern recognition and can have excellent memories.

Throughout his presentation, Bonavita also gave some of the history of autism. He mentioned how in 1944 Dr. Leo Kanner identified children in his practice who behaved differently from others.

It was from there that Kanner came up with the first definition of autism, initially called infantile autism. In the 1960s, autism was first recognized as a developmental disorder.

From there, Hans Aspergers diagnosed Asperger’s Syndrome, which was what is now known as low-support needs autism.

Hans Aspergers was affiliated with the Nazi Party in Germany and he participated in the child “euthenasia” program. Therefore, those in the autistic community did want to continue to be associated with his name.

Asperger’s is no longer a diagnosis autistic people can receive, as it has been combined under the umbrella of autism in the DSM-5.

Bonavita first began presenting on autism when he was in the eighth grade. He wanted to give his peers a better understanding of him.

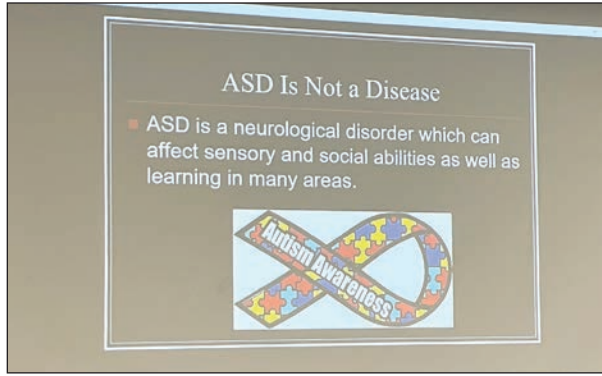
He also hoped that educating his peers on autism would decrease the teasing he received from his classmates due to some of his behaviors.

“It helped,” Bonavita said.

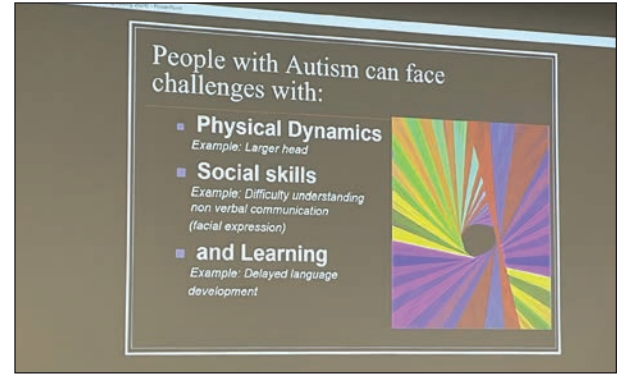
Since then, Bonavita has continued to educate. He has received the Matthew Dandurand Award in 2008 for his efforts in supporting autism awareness. In 2009, he also received the Association for Community Living Achievement Award.

Additionally, he has even been invited to speak at the Massachusetts State House.

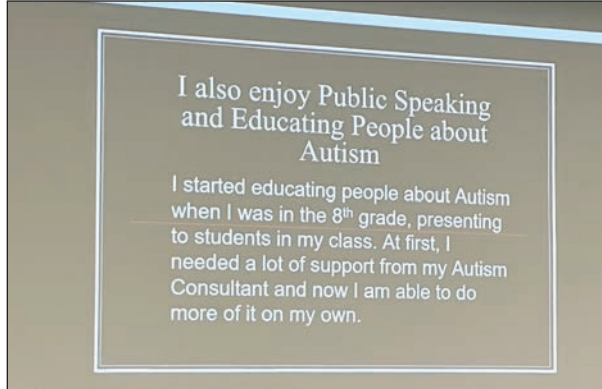
He has also had the opportunity to meet Temple Grandin, who is a famous autistic person who advocates for autistic people.



Mario Bonavita came to Agawam Public Library to educate people on autism.



Mario Bonavita walked through some of the challenges people with autism can face.



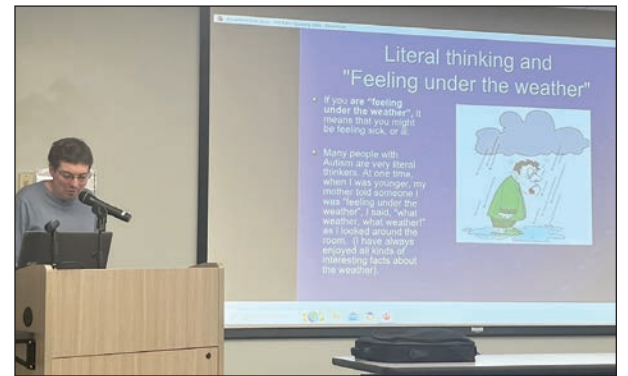
Mario Bonavita enjoys the opportunity to get to speak to people on autism.



During his presentation, Mario Bonavita broke down some of the differences between girls and boys with autism.



Many Agawam community members came out to Mario Bonavita’s presentation on autism.



Mario Bonavita broke down how literal thinking can appear in autistic people.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY QUINN SUOMALA

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11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

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