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# AGAWAM

## ADVERTISER NEWS

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### Funding announced for new flyover at rail crossing



Congressman Richard Neal announces funding to create a flyover for the rail crossing. SUBMITTED PHOTO

By Quinn Suomala  
 Staff Writer

AGAWAM – The towns of Agawam and West Springfield have announced a project to install a “flyover” rail crossing and new roadway configuration that will connect Bridge and Second Streets in West Springfield.

This new crossing will allow traffic to navigate around the train tracks that run through this area which often cause traffic backups due to frequent train crossings.

“There has been a longstanding issue at that traffic point because it is not uncommon to go there and there are freight trains

sitting on the track because they are unloading at the Memorial Ave. yard in West Springfield,” Mayor Christopher Johnson said. “Sometimes you can pull up to those train tracks and have a stopped train there for literally hours.”

FLYOVER | page 11



Motorists can have to wait for more than 30 minutes when trains come through the Bridge St. rail crossing located on the border of Agawam and West Springfield. TURLEY PHOTO BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

### Keychain decorating links students to art

By Quinn Suomala  
 Staff Writer

AGAWAM – The library held an event where kids in grades one through four got to come in and paint keychains of different animals.

The kids painted the keychains using paint markers and then they sealed them using modge-podge. They were also able to add sparkles to the animals as they so desired.

“I was very impressed how we all started with the same type of animals but by the end they all looked so different,” Children’s Librarian Pamela Weingart said. “That’s what I was hoping for.”

Weingart came up with the idea for this event as she had seen the keychains around and thought it would be an enjoyable event for the kids to come in and paint them as a craft.

Throughout this event Weingart quizzed them with trivia questions about different animals which they could answer to earn prizes.

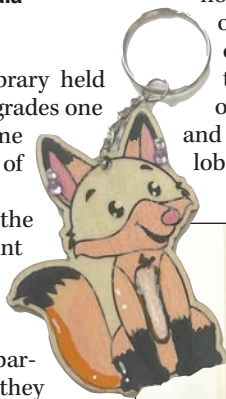
The trivia questions included:

“how many hearts does an octopus have?”, “why do otters hold hands while they sleep?”, “what type of bird can fly backwards?” and “how many legs does a lobster have?”

To answer the ques-

tions, an octopus has three hearts, otters hold hands so they do not float away from each other while they’re asleep, hummingbirds can fly backwards and lobsters have 10 legs.

KEYCHAIN | page 12



Kids and their families came in to decorate keychains at Agawam Public Library. TURLEY PHOTOS BY QUINN SUOMALA

### Fire Department warns about firework safety

By Quinn Suomala  
 Staff Writer

AGAWAM – Over the last month there have been three fires in Agawam involving misuse and inappropriate disposal of illegal fireworks.

This is an usually high number of incidents for the town, so Fire Chief Alan Sirois has issued a reminder to the Agawam community that Massachusetts law prohibits the possession, use and sale of fireworks without a permit and certification.

“I’m not sure why it is a new trend this year, but I felt it was necessary to put out information to the public so that they were aware of the hazards associated with the use and misuse of fireworks in the commonwealth,” Sirois said.

All three incidents were related to the disposal of fireworks.

Two of the fires were small dumpster fires that did not cause any significant damage to surrounding areas. The third,

however, was next to a single-family home.

The home’s garage caught on fire and Sirois estimates that the damage is about \$10,000.

The fire department dealt with all of these incidents quickly, and Sirois commended the workers for their swift action.

Sirois said it was not uncommon for there to be one or two fireworks related incidents a year, but to have three in a month was unusual.

“We’ve had a number of fires over the years, including fires that have heavily damaged homes and properties...we want to make sure that the public is aware that while these fireworks may seem innocuous, they can be very unsafe,” Sirois said.

Additionally, he said it was lucky that there had been no injuries as a result of these incidents.

“There are hundreds of injuries a year, thousands nationwide, in which people sustain

FIREWORK | page 11



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# City councilor files resolution to improve government transparency

AGAWAM – City Councilor Tom Hendrickson has filed legislation aimed at improving the City Council's transparency to the public. The resolution would require City Council subcommittee meetings to be recorded and made available for the public for viewing on the town website. Currently, only regular meetings of the full City Council are recorded, televised, and posted to the town website.

"We have an obligation to be as open and transparent to the public as possible," explained Hendrickson. "Important discussions and decisions are happening in subcommittee meetings, and the public has a right to know exactly what's happening."

"Subcommittee meetings are technically open to the public, but our current way of do-

ing them is not as transparent as it should be," Hendrickson continued. "Currently, the only way for the public to watch subcommittee meetings is to attend them in-person. This does not give the public an adequate ability to oversee our work and to stay informed. My hope is that by recording and posting subcommittee meetings, the public can be better informed and have a better understanding of the work that we do, and that we as City Councilors will be held to higher standards when it comes to the way these meetings are conducted."

Hendrickson also clarified that this resolution does not include provisions requiring



Thomas Hendrickson

subcommittee meetings to be televised live. "My initial hope was to have the subcommittee meetings televised just like we do with the regular meetings," he explained. "However, after having some discussions about it, it became evident that this wouldn't be feasible under our current circumstances due to some scheduling conflicts at our meeting venue. Nonetheless, I'm happy with the proposal I've set forth, and I'm confident that it will provide the public with adequate access to viewing the meetings."

The resolution will appear on the Aug. 5 meeting agenda and is expected to be acted upon at the Sept. 4 meeting.

# Garden Club meeting set for Aug. 13

AGAWAM – The next meeting of the Agawam Garden Club will be held Tuesday, Aug. 13, 6:30 p.m. at the Agawam Public Library, 750 Cooper St.

After a short business meeting Rebecca Sadlowski, "Plant Propagator and Posy Artisan" will present the program. Sadlowski is the owner of Rooted Flower Farm a family-run speciality cut flower farm in Agawam. She will discuss the origin story of the farm, where it is now, and demo how she designs her bouquets.

All meetings are open to the public and not restricted to Agawam residents.

## COLLEGE NOTES

# UMass Amherst graduates

AMHERST – Approximately 7,000 students received bachelor's degrees in over 100 majors at the University of Massachusetts Amherst's Undergraduate Commencement on May 18, at the McGuirk Alumni Stadium.

Below is a list of students from your area who earned a degree.

The following students are from Agawam and Feeding Hills  
Maxwell H Blanton, Jack Philip Frog-

ameni, Elizabeth Leigh Gonet, Peter Joon Jang, Abdulrahman Rajee, Daniel Donghyun Kang, Angelina Marie Shayda, and Kayleah Elizabeth Unglaub.

The following students are from Southwick.

Alina Andreevna Antropova, Anastasia A Antropova, Cameron John Brockbank, Jenna Nichole Petticoffer, Cameron James Porter, Devin B Sheehan and Nicholas Edward Spagnolo.

# Junior High Maze Days

AGAWAM – The Agawam Junior High School faculty and administration cordially invite you to attend our "Seventh Grade/New 8th Grade Student Orientation" on Monday, Aug. 26, in the AJHS Auditorium. Orientation is open to all seventh grade students, new 8th grade students, and their parents/guardians. We will have two orientation sessions for flexibility for families to attend. The first session will be at 4:30 p.m. and the second session will start at 5:30 p.m.

Prior to the orientation meeting, we will have the maze days journey from 4 to 6 p.m. in the cafeteria. These are flexible times and you are not required to attend the entire time. During the maze, you will receive and complete important paperwork, sign up for school activities and clubs and get more information regarding particular programs offered at the junior high school. In addition our PTO will also be on hand to provide information on upcoming events and activities being offered to the students, as well as get your

input and ideas you'd like shared with the school and student body.

After completing the maze days paperwork, students will be provided their Homeroom (first period)/TEAM assignments for the upcoming school year. The process should not take more than 30 minutes to complete and, you will be able to complete the google form packet that will be emailed and also available on the website ([www.agawamed.org](http://www.agawamed.org)), and submit it before going into the Student Orientation meeting at 4:30 or 5:30 p.m.. There will be chromebooks available for families to complete the form during maze days as well. Students will also pick up their chromebooks from Mrs. Bruno-Santaniello in the library during maze days.

Maze days for returning 8th grade students will be held Tuesday, Aug. 27, from 4 to 6 p.m. in the cafeteria, no parent orientation. Any 7th or new 8th grade family (not returning 8th grade students) that is not able to attend on their scheduled date is welcomed to attend on this date.

# Senior center announces events

AGAWAM – The Agawam Senior center, 954 Main St., has great events planned for the month of April. The Center is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, please call 413-821-0605

Please note Zumba Gold is on Summer Break. Class will resume Friday, Aug. 23 at 2 p.m.

## Treats and Trivia

Monday, Aug. 14, at 1:30 p.m.

Treats and Trivia with Nicole Mat-

son from Home Helpers is back. Join us Wednesday, Aug. 14, at 1:30 p.m. at the Senior Center. Call Kristina at 413-726-2836 to reserve a spot.

## Jewelry Making with Sandy

Wednesday, Aug. 21, from 1 to 3 p.m.

The Agawam Senior Center is so excited to offer Jewelry Making with Sandy. Sandy will bring all the materials needed and participants bring their creativity. The cost for the class is \$3 per person plus the cost of supplies. Call Kristina at 413.726.2836.

## Foot Care available for August

New Foot Care Nurse is available here at the Agawam Senior Center. The cost is \$35. Call 413-821-0604 to book an appointment.

Foot Care will be available in August on Thursday, Aug. 8 and Aug. 22.



# Run Stanley 5K run/walk

AGAWAM – Come Run, Stroll and Roll. Stanley Park will be hosting the 12th Annual Run Stanley which has grown into a fun yearly tradition for the whole family, whether they like to run, walk, roll, or bark.

Join in for this all-inclusive event on Sunday, Oct. 6, at 10 a.m. at Stanley Park. This event includes the 5K trail run/walk, a 5K K9 trail run/walk, the Munchkin Run hosted by Dunkin' Donuts, and The Stroll & Roll. The Stroll & Roll is a wheel friendly 1-mile non-competitive walk through Stanley Park's accessible pathways.

There is also the Stanley Cup School Spirit trophy for the school with the most

participation in Run Stanley. Form a team and get friends and family involved. When you register, be sure to enter your school name.

Run Stanley 2024 continues the fundraising efforts to benefit the care of the Frank Stanley Beveridge Wildlife Sanctuary. Please join the community of runners, walkers, hikers, dog owners, and nature lovers of all ages who care about Stanley Park for a fun event that will help to improve the safety and accessibility of its wildlife trails.

Registration is now open! You can register by going to <https://runsignup.com/Race/MA/Westfield/RunStanley>.

# ACAA holds annual festival

AGAWAM – The Agawam Community Artists and Artisans will be holding their 4th annual pioneer valley art festival on Saturday, Aug. 24 and Sunday Aug. 25, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Festival will be held at the Agawam Polish American Club 139 Southwick St.

There will be over 70 artists and artisans. ACAA encourages visitors to enjoy the demonstrations of the various artists and artisans during their visit. ACAA will be featuring the Gloria McLellan Scholarship

silent auction, that will benefit area high school seniors seeking a career in visual arts.

ACAA are especially proud to introduce the New England Mosaic Project, a 24 ft wall of art created by 250 participants from the community. There will be "Art With A Heart" painting workshops and the "Agawam Rocks" group with free rock painting for all ages.

Please visit our website for further information: [www.agawamarts.com](http://www.agawamarts.com)

# Parish Cupboard seeks players

AGAWAM – The West Springfield Agawam Parish Cupboard, a food pantry and hot lunch center serving the needy in West Springfield, Agawam and Feeding Hills, is holding its second annual Pickleball Fundraiser Saturday, Sept. 7 at Mittineague Park in West Springfield.

They are seeking sponsors for the event, as well as players to raise funds to continue their mission of easing food insecurity in the communities they serve. Play is scheduled from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday. Rain date will be Sunday the 8 with a noon start.

The field will be limited to 32 participants in two player brackets. Recreational (beginner to intermediate) and Compet-

itive (intermediate to advanced). Entry fee is \$40 per person if paying by check mailed to The Cupboard and \$45 if paying by credit card via the Cupboard's website. Registrations can be mailed to: The Parish Cupboard, 738 Main Street, West Springfield, MA 01089. Online registrations can be made through [www.theparishcupboard.org](http://www.theparishcupboard.org) following the "Donate" option. Registrants should include their name, phone number, email address and preferred playing bracket. The event will include lunch, prizes and a raffle. For more information on playing or sponsorship opportunities call Bob Fastie at 413-734-7969 or Chip Arnold at 413-265-8446, or email [parishcupboard@aol.com](mailto:parishcupboard@aol.com).

# Hibernians holding summer picnic

HOLYOKE – The Hibernians of Hampden/Hampshire Counties invites the public to attend the Annual Traditional Summer Picnic featuring Jim O'Connor and the Boston Irish-American Blackthorne Band at Hamel's Summit View Pavilion 555 Northampton St Holyoke on Sunday, Aug. 25 from 1 to 5 p.m. The event will be held rain or shine

Tickets are \$35 per person for adults and children ages 16 and up; Kids ages 5-10 are \$10; Kids ages 5-16 are 15.

For reservations by Tuesday Aug. 20,

call Joe O'Connor at 413-627-7148 or Fran Hennessey at 413-785-5687 or [aoh-holyoke.com](http://aoh-holyoke.com)

The Maurice A. Donahue Memorial Scholarship will be presented to Kayla Williams of Chicopee.

There will be Irish-American music; dancing; hot dogs, hamburgers, barbecue chicken, baked beans, potato salad, tossed salad, dessert; coffee. There will also be a cash bar, kid's games, and a giant raffle.

The event will benefit the Maurice A. Donahue Memorial Scholarship.



# Tobacco presentation on Aug. 24

AGAWAM – In 1915, more than 200 tobacco sheds stood in Agawam; only a handful remain today. One is just a stone's throw from the historic Thomas Smith House, 251 North West St., the site of a presentation by Duane Adams on "Shade Tobacco in the Connecticut Valley" on Saturday, Aug. 24, at 2 p.m. Adams spent 46 years working on shade tobacco farms in the valley, and currently serves on the board of directors of the Connecticut Valley Tobacco Museum in Windsor, Connecticut.

The mission of the museum is to preserve the history of cigar tobacco agriculture in the Connecticut River Valley. In the 1920s, the region saw approximately 30,000 acres of tobacco under cultivation; the museum reports only 25 acres of shade tobacco was grown here in 2025. The re-

gion's shade tobacco, known for its light color and mild, creamy flavor, was, and still is, prized as wrappers of premium cigars.

Tobacco was widely grown on farms throughout Agawam and Feeding Hills from the mid 1800s through the 1970s; some shade, but mostly broadleaf; and it is still grown today on a smaller scale. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Hinsdale Smith / Cuba Connecticut Tobacco Company raised hundreds of acres of the "weed" at what is now the Agawam Regional Industrial Park and Tuckahoe Turf/Still Brook Park properties. Hinsdale Smith was the first company in the United States to have its tobacco crop insured against hail damage by Lloyd's of London.

The c. 1757 Thomas Smith House is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and is preserved in largely original,

unrestored condition, without central heat or central plumbing. The property's 1920s garage has also been preserved; both the house and garage will be open for tours from noon to 4 p.m.

The Agawam Historical Association is a private, non-profit organization working to preserve historic materials, documents, and landmarks pertaining to the Town of Agawam and to provide educational opportunities concerning Agawam's history. The association operates the c. 1757 Thomas Smith House at 251 North West St., and the Agawam Historical & Fire House Museum at 35 Elm St. The Smith House can be toured virtually. The museum occupies the former Elm Street Fire Station, and houses artifacts pertaining to the town and the Agawam Fire Department. New members are always welcome.

## Paint night to be held Aug. 11

HOLYOKE – NAMI will be hosting a paint night on Sunday, Aug. 11, at 3 p.m. at the NAMI-WM office, 1221 Main St.. The canvas painting is a benefit to NAMI-WM and is \$25. Space is limited so please reserve a spot now. Go to [namiwam.org](http://namiwam.org) to reserve a spot.

NAMI Family-to-Family is a free, 9-session educational program for family, significant others, and friends of people with mental health conditions. It is a designated evidenced-based program. This means that research shows that the program significantly improves the coping and problem-solving abilities of the people closest to a person with a mental health condition.

NAMI Family-to-Family is taught by NAMI-trained family members who have been there and includes presentations, discussions, and interactive exercises.

## Spots open for sports camps

HOLYOKE – Spots remain open for summer sports camps at Holyoke Community College.

Starting Monday, July 29, and running through Friday, Aug. 2, HCC is offering a comprehensive youth soccer clinic led by Rob Galazka, head coach of the HCC women's soccer team. The clinic, for youth aged 8 to 17, will focus on both basic and advanced soccer skills with plenty of one-on-one instruction from Galazka, with assistance from top players on the HCC women's team.

Starting Monday, Aug. 5, and running through Friday, Aug. 9, head HCC baseball coach Ryan Magni will lead a baseball clinic for youth aged 8 to 17. This fun-filled, challenging program will emphasize fundamental skills and baseball knowledge while building self-confidence and developing every player's ability to play more competitively.

Both programs run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day on the main HCC campus, 303 Homestead Ave., and cost \$299. To register, please go to: [hcc.edu/summer-youth](http://hcc.edu/summer-youth)

## Field hockey coaches needed

AGAWAM – The Agawam Parks and Recreation Department is looking for youth field hockey coaches for bantams (grade 3 and 4) and juniors (grade 5 and 6). Youth field hockey runs mid-August through early October.

Anyone interested in coaching or assisting should contact the Parks & Recreation Department at 821-0513.

## Co-ed softball tournament to be held Saturday

LUDLOW – On Saturday, Aug. 10, our third annual co-ed softball tournament will be held at the Ludlow Fish and Game club, 200 Sportsman Road, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The tournament is to benefit Forever Young Veterans, a 501c (3) organization out of Tennessee. Forever Young Vets provide trips and wishes for veterans to mili-

tary sights and locales including Washington and Hawaii. They sent several veterans to Normandy's 80th celebration this year where they met President Biden and several other dignitaries from all over the globe. Four teams representing branches of the service: Air Force, Army, Navy and the Marines will play a total of five games and the

cost to enter is \$20 per person.

Free refreshments, a 50/50 raffle will be available and military members of the community will be on hand for any questions participants may have about the organization. Any questions about team participation or Forever Young Veterans please call 413-209-259

## Springfield St. restoration underway

AGAWAM – Earlier this week, the Department of Public Works announced pavement and milling work would begin on Springfield St. between the Mill St. intersection near Sacred Heart Church through O'Brien's corner.

Eversource has been working on the section of the street nearly all summer to do repair and other work on natural gas lines on the street.

On Monday and Tuesday, milling work began, taking the top layer of pavement off the street. The work was to continue with the adjustment of utility structures.

That was to be followed by a SAMI stone layer and finally the installation of a new asphalt pavement surface.

The work was scheduled to result in

some temporary closures on the street scheduled Monday through Wednesday, but with rain in the forecast, those dates and times were subject to change. The milling and pavement work is scheduled to continue throughout the month with the full re-pavement of the road scheduled to take place by the end of the month, putting the road in order prior to the start of school as well as prior to the start of the Big E.

Motorists and residents should pay attention to the town website for changes in the schedule, or you can always call the DPW at (413) 821-0600 for more updated information. During this time, the town asks you please use detours such as North St. or Mill St. to adjust your travels whenever possible.

## Agawam High School to hold freshmen orientation Aug. 28

AGAWAM – Agawam High School's Grade 9 and new student orientation will take place on Wednesday, Aug. 28 from 9 to 10:30 a.m. All students new to AHS are encouraged to attend.

This is a student-only event, and is an opportunity for students to meet new friends, school administrators, current AHS student leaders, and school staff. Chromebooks will be distributed and students will tour the building, and access their schedule through the Power-school App.

Our Student Leaders are called

"Chiefs", and will bring them on a tour around the building where they will have time to learn and meet with students who participate in a wide variety of extracurricular clubs and sports.

Transportation will be available for students. There will be a bus picking up and returning students from the Feeding Hills section and another from the Agawam section. The bus schedules are posted on the Agawam High School website.

We look forward to seeing freshmen on Wednesday, Aug. 28.

## BBB Scam Alert: Don't Get Played During the Olympic Games

Paula Fleming  
[pfleming@boston.bbb.org](mailto:pfleming@boston.bbb.org)

BBB Eastern MA, ME, RI & VT - The Olympics are upon us, and many eyes are on Paris and the athletes representing their countries. Amidst all the distractions, BBB warns consumers and businesses to be alert for potential scams, some of which were reported to BBB Scam Tracker in previous Games, as well as laws surrounding fair use of logos, trademarks and copyrights.

Ads for merchandise, text alerts for watching events, and even job opportunities are all potential sources that scammers may use to prey upon unsuspecting consumers. Businesses also need to be aware of bad actors and copyright violators who may try to use the excitement to pitch ripped-off gear.

Types of scams to expect

- Phishing texts and emails: You may get a text with a great offer for gear that sounds like it's from a legitimate seller, or

a link to view a certain event. Spot the red flags of fake text messages and never click on a link without first determining who it is from. Visit the company site directly or go to the official Olympics website to learn the event schedule.

- Job scams: Prior to the Olympics in 2022, college students saw emails for jobs sent to their school email, asking them to drive around with Olympics ads wrapped on their vehicles. BBB Scam Tracker received a report that said, "I got an email saying that NBC was looking for people to drive 100 miles or more weekly (basically any normal route you would take) with the decal of the '2022 Winter Olympics' on their vehicles." Naturally, it was a scam. More on avoiding job scams.

- Counterfeit merchandise: You will likely see merchandise ads during the Games with logos on them; resist the temptation to buy fake gear or collectors' items that could be knockoffs, and only purchase from offi-

cial sellers. Check out BBB's advice for buying sports merchandise.

- Fake sports streaming links: Similar to the way in which scammers post fake streaming links for other sports contests, like high school football, you may see links to stream the games in the comments on social media posts. Only use the official links, and do not fall for those fraudsters who are out to get your personal information.

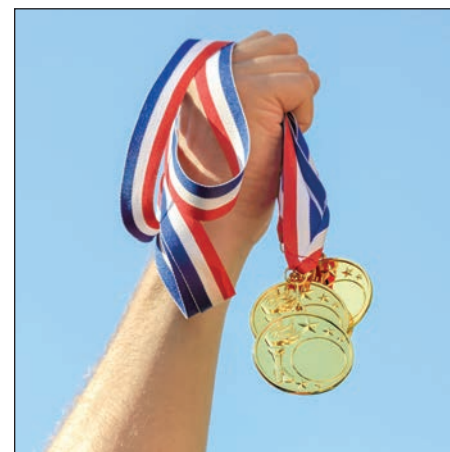
A word of caution for business owners

In addition, businesses need to be aware of the copyright and trademark laws that surround the Olympics.

- Educate yourself. Be aware of the ways in which the words "Olympics" and logos are protected trademarks. Educate yourself on the ways in which hashtags and social media posts can and can't be used, and avoid sales and promotions that misuse the protected logos and terms.

- Follow proper procedures. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) out-

lines the Olympic Properties owned by the IOC and how they can and cannot be used. You must make a formal request in order to use them via this form to request the use of Olympic properties or the National Olympic Committee.



# Opinion

## Guest Column



### Does Congress pay into Social Security?

Dear Rusty:

I've been told that members of Congress do not have Social Security deducted from their pay. Additionally, their retirement dollars come from the Social Security Administration purse even if they only serve as a member of Congress for a short number of terms. Also, if this is true, are there other individuals that enjoy these advantages?

Thank you in advance for your service as a Social Security Advisor.

Signed: Concerned Senior

Dear Concerned Senior:

I'm afraid this is one of those "urban legend" kind of rumors that just seems to keep popping up, especially when the issues surrounding Social Security's financial problems come up. In addition to being untrue, it often is used to display the public's animosity toward elected officials and the feeling that Congress and other elected officials are above the fray, so to speak, and therefore not affected by the implications of Social Security's looming insolvency problem.

Here's the reality. Since Jan. 1, 1984, all members of Congress, the President and Vice President, Federal judges, and most political appointees, are covered under the Social Security program. The rumor that these elected officials do not pay Social Security tax most likely is attributable to the fact that from 1920 to 1983, they were participants in the Civil Service Retirement System, the federal retirement plan federal workers used even before the Social Security Act was passed. CSRS provided a pension for federal employees, so they were exempted from contributing to or collecting from the new Social Security program.

In 1987, then, the federal government officially changed over to the Fed-

SECURITY | page 5

## 2024 Paris OLYMPICS...



DAVE GRANLUND © www.davegranlund.com

## Guest Column



My daughter, Paula and family along with their dog JoJo experienced an unusual bird sighting. Last week my daughter, Paula and family were running on the rail trail from the covered bridge to the Gilbertville mill. She said, "A hawk dropped a dead pigeon into the woods about ten feet away from us. JoJo thought it was a food delivery for him. I couldn't tell what kind of hawk it was, but it didn't seem big enough for a red-tailed."

It was rusty/brown color on wings and back and barred feathers on underside. They didn't see it come back for the poor pigeon.

BACKYARD | page 5



Sharp-shinned hawk

## Letter to the Editor

### Agawam Beautification Committee grateful for donations

Dear Editor:

The Agawam Beautification Committee would like to thank all the individuals and businesses who have supported our "Adopt a Barrel Program" over the past years. Again this year's program was a huge success, thanks to you, the donors. Your generous support reflects a wonderful community spirit!

A sincere thank you to the following donors: ABLE Machine Tool Sales Inc., ACE Auto Body, Affordable Duct Cleaning, Agawam Dental Care, Agawam Garden Club, Agawam's Java Stop, Allied Flooring & Paint, Bank ESB, Beekman Place Estates Association, Budget Cabinet Sales, Inc., Cambridge Credit Counseling Corp, Canary

Blomstrom Insurance Agency, Elaine Carlson, Cascio Company, Inc., CDA Roofing & Siding, LLC., Chris Auto South, Clinical Research Management, Community Grange, Cooper's Commons, CRW Landscapes, Inc., Dan Thibault Construction, Dunkin' Donuts, Elmwood D & J Auto Sales, Feeding Hills Dental Care, GB Hastie Fence, Co., Giovanni's Pastry Shop, Barbara Girouard, Jennifer Goulet, the Grimaldi Family, Independent Fence, Joe's Truck Repair, Joey's Deli & Market, Gloria King, the Kushin Family, Next Fitness, Nicky's Pizza, Longo Carpet Cleaning, Louis Pallotta Paving Co. Inc., Magnum Services, Moran Sheet Metal, Inc., McLeod & Dewey, Murphy's Pub, New Day Church, Northup Electric

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Hopefully we can look forward to your support in the future.

The Agawam Beautification Committee

## 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 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.

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# Health & Wellness

## Holistic nursing becoming a way of life for nurses

SPRINGFIELD – Holistic nursing is becoming a way of life for many nurses providing care at Baystate Health, where some patients have been benefiting from a holistic approach to nursing practice.

“The nurses of Baystate Health are dedicated to the co-creation of a caring and healing environment for the health and well-being, care, and comfort of our patients, team members, families, and community,” said Cidalia Vital, RN, program director, Nursing Research and Holistic Nursing at Baystate Health.

“With the challenging and difficult times healthcare has seen over the past three years, nurses are looking to get back to the basics of nursing that includes healing the whole person,” she added.

Yet it is not everyone who is familiar with the term “holistic nursing.”

Holistic nursing is defined as “all nursing practice that has healing the whole person as its goal,” according to the American Holistic Nurses’ Association. Florence Nightingale, who is considered to be the founder of holistic nursing, taught nurses to focus on the principles of holism: unity, wellness and the interrelationship of human beings and their environment.

“Holistic nursing is not merely something we do. It is also an attitude, a philosophy and a way of being that requires nurses to integrate self-care, self-responsibility, spirituality, and reflection in their lives. This often leads the nurse to greater awareness of the interconnectedness of self, others, nature, spirit and relationship with the global community,” said Vital.

“Baystate Health has spent the last six

years on a holistic journey to improve holistic care at the bedside as well as improve staff resilience and promote self-care,” she added.

And their efforts are being recognized. Baystate Medical Center holistic nurses attending the recent American Holistic Nurses Conference in Orlando, Florida, accepted the Institution Excellence in Holistic Nursing Practice Award. The award recognizes an organization for incorporating holistic nursing practice and demonstrating the core values of holistic nursing.

“Holistic nursing is the artful blend of the art and science of nursing. Thanks to the extraordinary support from the Baystate Health Foundation and our generous donors, Baystate Health now has a total of 1,170 team members trained in holistic modalities. I am proud of our extraordinary nurses and caregivers for their commitment to lifelong learning, nursing excellence and for creating a healing environment for themselves, each other, and for our patients and their loved ones,” said Joanne Miller, DNP, RN, NEA-BC, Chief Nurse Executive, Baystate Health and Chief Nursing Officer, Baystate Medical Center.

The Baystate Medical Center Nursing Model of Care, founded on Swanson’s Caring Theory, utilizes a holistic approach to promote quality care to nurture the body, mind, and spirit. The journey to incorporating holistic nursing into practice started in 2017 with the training of staff on M technique. M technique is a form of gentle touch performed on the hands and feet of recipients using a set sequence of varying pressure and completed in three to five minutes. The “M”

in M technique” stands for “mindful” and is appropriate for the most fragile patients, including terminally ill cancer patients, the elderly, critically ill, and surgical patients.

“One of our nurses, Magdalena “Leny” Barranda, RN, has performed M technique on many of her coworkers. The nurses who received M technique from Leny reported feeling relaxed, a release of tension, and overall reduction in stress. Additionally, Leny kept a log of patients with whom she provided M technique, and overwhelmingly, patients reported a decrease in anxiety, a sense of relaxation, and the ability to sleep. Both our patients and our caregivers, nurses, patient care technicians and operations associates, receive the therapeutic benefits of M technique,” said Vital.

She noted as one organization, Baystate is striving for all nurses to understand how holistic nursing is a foundational element of their profession. The holistic approach draws on nursing practice, knowledge, and expertise to facilitate healing. Baystate has trained nurses in its holistic model of care, including training on M technique, aromatherapy, and foundational elements of holistic nursing through the Integrative Healing Arts Academy by the BirchTree Center, and Reiki.

“Holistic nursing is a way of being and many nurses at Baystate may be practicing holistic nursing without even realizing it. We have a dedicated committee of holistic nurses who have further defined for Baystate what it means to be a holistic nurse,” said Vital.

Examples of what defines a holistic nurse include in their words:

- “Compassionate presence including authentic presence that describes a staff member who is consciously being in the moment while creating a trusting relationship. Through listening and viewing the patient as a human being instead of an object, we honor the patient’s belief system and enable them to expand their own sense of faith/hope.”

- “From authentic presence, one can provide a caring presence which is caring for another person and it is the essence of our clinical practice. It begins with being fully present in compassion, gentleness and kindness with ourselves, our colleagues and the patients we serve. This method potentiates states of wholeness and aligns mind, body and spirit to promote a healing environment.”

For those interested in learning more about holistic nursing, Baystate Health holistic nurse Caitlyn Waddell, RN, BSN, HN-BC developed a podcast called Elemental Healing (Baystate) on Spotify. The podcast focuses on holistic and self-care practices and ways to incorporate them into work and personal life. Listeners will learn about the many initiatives Baystate is making toward the shift to holistic practice and opportunities to get involved and learn from the holistic community.

Baystate Medical Center’s high quality nursing care has earned it prestigious status for an unprecedented fourth consecutive time achieving Magnet® recognition from the American Nurses Credentialing Center, a distinction that places the hospital’s nursing staff among the finest in the nation.

For more information on Baystate Health, visit baystatehealth.org.

### BACKYARD ■ from page 4

Since it was smaller than a red-tailed hawk, I think it might be a sharp-shinned hawk. The sharp-shinned hawk is 11 inches long and has rounded wings with a long narrow tail. It has heaving streaking on the breast and belly. It has reddish brown barring. The adult is blue gray above. The immature is dark brown above, lighter brown below and keeps that plumage for one year. Sharp-shinned hawks feed by catching small birds in midair and carrying them off to eat. They also may hunt around bird feeders. A plump pigeon would be quite heavy for this smaller hawk and probably that is why it dropped it.

The female lays three to eight whitish eggs with dark marks in a platform nest of sticks lined with bark, placed in a tree. They inhabit mixed deciduous and coniferous woods in summer and winters in woods and near bird feeders.

They make a rapid series of high “kek kek kek kek” notes given during alarm. The largest number of sharp-shinned hawks are seen on spring and fall migrations as it flies alone the coasts or mountain ridges.

#### Hummingbirds

I saw at least two ruby throated hum-

mingbirds feeding on the flowers on my hostas and on the tall phlox in my yard. I knew it was two different birds because I saw them at the same time and the flowers are located about 15 feet away from each other. Usually, hummingbird moths come for nectar at the tall phlox, but I have not seen one yet.

#### Wild turkeys

Wild turkeys are a common site and I often seen them when driving. Usually, there are several turkeys and sometimes I see poults with the adults.

#### Foxes

Tuesday night I saw two foxes and in different towns. The first fox was smaller than the second one. I saw its eyes reflect in my headlights near Deacon Allen Drive on Barre Road. The second fox was a bit larger and I saw it on Depot Road in Barre near the Oakham line. Both looked healthy and had good coats of fur.

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.

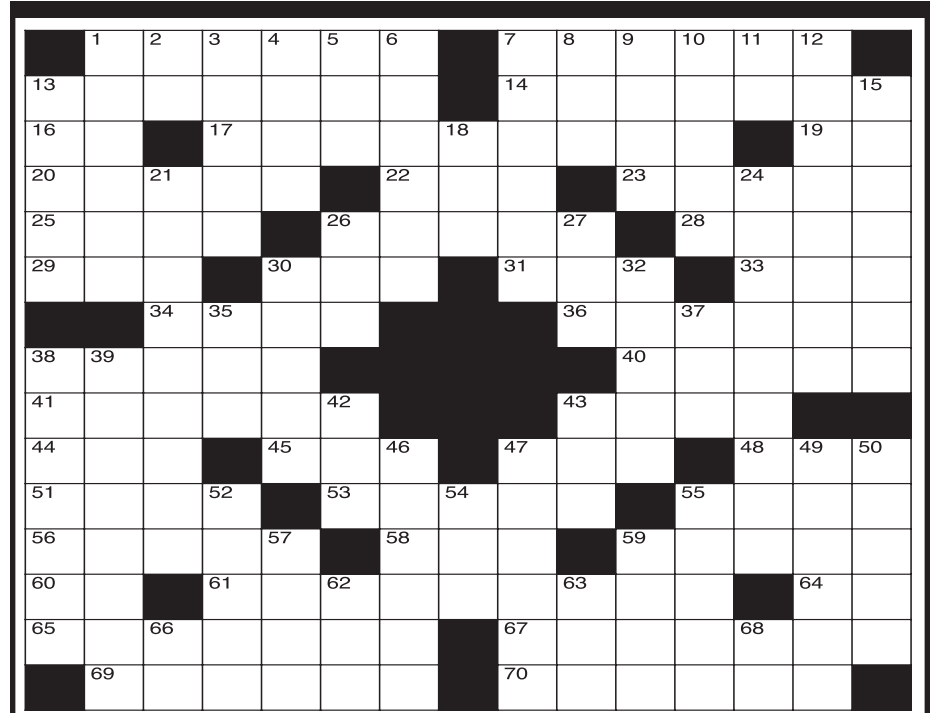
fact. And the federal employee retirement plans (both the prior CSRS plan and the current FERS plan) are totally independent of Social Security and do not negatively affect program solvency.

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 [ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org). Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

### SECURITY ■ from page 4

eral Employee Retirement System and all employees hired from that point forward are now covered under FERS. There are multiple parts to FERS, and one of them is mandatory FICA contributions. So, all federal employees including members of Congress are subject to the 6.2% FICA tax, are eligible for Social Security retirement benefits and are governed by the multitude of rules and regulations associated with Social Security.

But other than standard SS benefits which they may normally be entitled, no Social Security funds are used to supplement Congressional retirement. In other words, the rumor that Congress didn’t pay into Social Security was actually true prior to 1984, but today it is a misstatement of



#### CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Spiritual leaders
- 7. A solution
- 13. Fortified wine
- 14. Edible mollusk
- 16. Blood group
- 17. A way to compare
- 19. Gov’t lawyer
- 20. Actor Ciaran
- 22. Calendar month
- 23. Very willing
- 25. \_\_\_ ex Machina
- 26. Satisfies
- 28. Type of berry
- 29. Distinctive practice
- 30. Popular pickup truck model
- 31. Dekagram
- 33. Naturally occurring solid material
- 34. Company officer
- 36. Villains
- 38. Cricket frogs
- 40. German founder of psychology
- 41. Endured
- 43. A female domestic
- 44. A situation you can be in
- 45. Cigarette (slang)
- 47. Fiber optic network (abbr.)
- 48. Belgian composer Walter
- 51. Employee stock ownership plan
- 53. Belonging to the bottom layer
- 55. Musical or vocal sound
- 56. Yankees’ great Judge
- 58. Dickens character
- 59. Beloved late sportscaster Craig
- 60. South Dakota
- 61. Exposing human vice or folly to ridicule
- 64. Atomic #79
- 65. Former Braves pitcher Julio
- 67. Humor
- 69. Shawl
- 70. Hospital unit

#### CLUES DOWN

- 1. Animal disease
- 2. Commercial
- 3. Arts and crafts supplies
- 4. Containers
- 5. Investment vehicle
- 6. A way to greet in a friendly way
- 7. Bulged downward
- 8. “A Day Without” singer
- 9. Lay about
- 10. Intestinal
- 11. Negative
- 12. Caused to be loved
- 13. Prominent in Islamic eschatology
- 15. Sincere
- 18. Not in
- 21. Number above the line in a fraction
- 24. Bill Murray chased one
- 26. Pouch
- 27. Swedish krona
- 30. Start over
- 32. Wild white or yellow flower
- 35. Fourteen
- 37. Visual way of interacting with a computer (abbr.)
- 38. Up-to-date
- 39. Campaigns
- 42. Touch lightly
- 43. “Boardwalk Empire” actress Gretchen
- 46. Violent seizure of property
- 47. One who supports the Pope
- 49. Malaise
- 50. Body fluid
- 52. Inauthentic person
- 54. Title of respect
- 55. Chilean city
- 57. Central Japanese city
- 59. Garment
- 62. Draw from
- 63. Automobile
- 66. The man
- 68. Top government lawyer

# Buddy Walk of Western Mass takes place Oct. 5

WESTFIELD – 25 years ago, two local mothers, Laurie Isham of Hampden and Sue Devillier of Agawam, bonded over a common experience: both had young daughters with Down syndrome. Their friendship blossomed as they navigated the new unknowns of raising their daughters. As they supported one another, they recognized the need for a local support group for individuals with Down syndrome and their families. This gave birth to the Down Syndrome Resource Group of Western Massachusetts. Initially serving about twenty families, the group is now more than 200 strong, but the mission still remains the same: to discover and embrace the potential of individuals with Down syndrome.

The Down Syndrome Resource Group of

Western Mass. (DSRG) is run entirely by volunteers with a passion for supporting and creating community for individuals with Down syndrome and their families. From birth to adulthood, the DSRG have offerings for everyone:

- the First Call program for newborns
- playgroups for toddlers and school age children
- social groups for teens/adults
- social events for families
- Scholarships for recreation and education
- presentations on cutting edge research, and more..

This community is vital to our members as attested to by Teresa (parent): "I have attended Picnics, Buddy Walks, informational

seminars and playdates.... But what I love most about the DSRG is the network of parents who support each other...with advice, referrals and words of encouragement."

As we celebrate our 25 years of community, connection and support, we invite you to join us at the Buddy Walk of Western MA on Saturday, October 5, 2024 at Stanley Park in Westfield, MA. The Buddy Walk is a wonderful family-friendly community awareness event. Hundreds of family and friends come together to celebrate our loved ones with Down syndrome, enjoy some food and dancing, and take a stroll through the community. The Buddy Walk is also our major fundraiser for the year.

We are excited to share some of the ways that you can join our Buddy Walk family to

create a better tomorrow:

- Become a Buddy Walk Sponsor – We offer many ways to recognize your contribution to the Buddy Walk.
- Become an in-kind Donor-
- Donate a raffle item-
- Create a Team- round up your family, friends and coworkers, create a team and join us for the walk.
- Volunteer- your help is always appreciated.

To learn more, please visit our website: <https://www.downsyndromewm>

We look forward to your participation and support in making this year's Buddy Walk a memorable and impactful event. Together, we can make a difference in our community. #BestBuddyWalkYet!

# Velis lauds HERO Act: Measure headed for governor's desk

BOSTON – Last Thursday morning, a final compromise version of An Act Honoring, Empowering and Recognizing Our Service Members and Veterans (HERO Act) officially passed the Massachusetts Legislature following weeks of negotiations led by Senator John C. Velis. The final compromise legislation is designed to boost support for hundreds of thousands of individuals across the state who have served or are currently serving in the United States military.

Among other pieces, the final legislation increases benefits for disabled veterans and Gold Star family members, bolsters new and existing initiatives for municipalities and businesses to support veterans, creates comprehensive services for active-duty service members and military families, updates the Chapter 115 definition of a veteran to expand eligibility, and codifies medical, behavioral health, and dental benefits under state veterans benefits program..

"Massachusetts has a long history of prioritizing the needs of our veterans and service members and I am thrilled that the HERO Act is on its way to the Governor's desk to continue this tradition. The final legislation is a product of collaboration—taking the strongest elements from the Governor's original bill, the House's bill, and the Senate's own diligent work—to create a comprehensive package that will expand services and resources for veterans, active duty service members, and military families throughout the Commonwealth," stated

Senator John C. Velis (D-Westfield), Chair of the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs and lead Senate negotiator on the final bill. "Less than one half of one percent of our nation bravely raises their right hand and pledges to defend our nation no matter the costs. We must always remember, recognize, and honor these sacrifices however we can, and passage of this legislation is an important step towards fulfilling that mission."

The final compromise legislation includes the following policy measures among others:

- Veteran Benefits, Opportunities, and Protections
- Increases annuity for 100% disabled veterans and Gold Star Spouses/Parents to \$2,500
- Increases tax credit for businesses hiring a veteran to \$2,500 to support veteran employment
- Increases access to Active-Duty Buy-back program for veterans in public service
- Expands eligibility for Chapter 115 state veterans' benefits program
- Streamlines Chapter 115 benefits appeals process and allows municipalities to disburse veterans' benefits through direct deposit instead of mail
- Ensures that outpatient behavioral health treatment is reimbursable under



Senator John C. Velis

- Provides municipalities with path to double current veteran property tax exemptions and/or tie annual property tax exemption increases to inflation
- Requires veterans' benefits notice to be provided to employers to ensure awareness of benefits
- Protects Massachusetts veterans from predatory "claim sharks" that charge hefty fees and target veterans seeking assistance filing claims for federal veteran benefits

Services and Resources for Service-Members and Military Families

- Establishes a state military spouse liaison to conduct outreach and support military spouses in Massachusetts
- Requires school districts to provide specific supports to military-connected students
- Increases access to childcare on military installations by accepted US Department of Defense Childcare provider licenses
- Allows for a military medic equivalency waiver for veterans seeking state EMT certification
- Requires DCF to enter into memorandums of understanding with the military to improve reporting for child abuse incidents
- Expanded Recognitions of Military Service

- Requires annual proclamation and lighting of bridges across the Commonwealth on Memorial Day in recognition of Gold Star families

- Requires state flags to be flown at half-staff for military service events, including when a Massachusetts service-member is killed in active duty

- Ensures awareness and accessibility for Medal of Liberty for next of kin of Massachusetts service-members

- Ensures US Space Force, including unit at Hanscom Air Base in Massachusetts, is appropriately recognized and defined in state law

"We have a responsibility to support and empower every person who has served and sacrificed for our nation once they return home—as well as their families," said Senate President Karen E. Spilka (D-Ashland). "We are a Commonwealth that has the deepest respect and gratitude to our veterans, and the HERO Act doubles down on that commitment to our service members by delivering the support that they and their families deserve. I'm deeply grateful to Senator John Velis for his work and sustained leadership on this issue, all of the conferees, and to Speaker Mariano and our partners in the House for their efforts to get this important legislation over the finish line."

A compromise having passed the Legislature, the bill now goes to the Governor's desk for her signature.



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# SPORTS

## Girls fall in summer soccer quarterfinals



Emma Pellegrino fights to keep the ball. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

WILBRAHAM – Last Tuesday evening, the Pioneer Valley Summer Soccer League playoffs got underway with Agawam facing off against Wilbraham in the B Division playoffs. Wilbraham would come away with a 6-1 win in the matchup. The game was tied 1-1 early on before

Wilbraham broke away. Wilbraham would be defeated in the semifinals. Both teams featured players who are incoming freshmen and junior varsity players from the previous season. The players now turn their attention to the upcoming fall season.



Samantha Izzo sends a shot up the field.



Marissa Fusco looks for a long throw-in.



Olivia Polevoy makes a quick touch to her left.



Bella Santaniello sends the pass forward.

## Heat falls in semifinals



Emily Ottomaniello, of Agawam, makes her way up the field for the Heat.

CHICOPEE – Last Wednesday evening, the Heat, which features players from throughout the region, fell in the semifinals to Luistano Women in the Women's Division playoffs of the PVSSL 3-1.



Gwen Duggan, of Palmer, looks to get around a Monson player. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM



Kelly Callahan, of Monson, punts the ball away.

## Here for Beer scores playoff upset

MONSON – Facing the higher-seeded Monson Mustangs last Monday in the PVSSL Women's Division quarterfinals, Here for Beer scored a 4-3 upset at Rogers Field. They would make it all the way to the finals before falling to the Luistano Women last Friday night.

Highlights from that matchup will be in next week's edition.



Kassandra Liquori sends a pass away. TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY



Samara Robles looks to make a save in goal.



Mackenzie Shean, of Agawam, fights to keep the ball.



Joanna Mull, of Belchertown, makes her way up the field.



Paige Marjanski, of South Hadley goes for the header.

# Sports

## Barnett leads way at Thompson Speedway

THOMPSON, CT – Although early rains made for a shortened practice schedule on Thursday, Thompson Speedway lit-up the night for the final round of Thursday Night Thunder this season. Dominance was the word to describe Thursday's racing action at Thompson Speedway with the night starting off under the command of the fan-favorite Street Stock class. Former multi-time track champion 'Leadfoot' Larry Barnett led the 20-lap main event for the Street Stocks from the drop of the green flag to the twin checkered flags for his first win of the season. While 'Leadfoot' dominated up front, all eyes were on Ryan Waterman as he charged from eighth-place to third in the fast-paced feature event.

The dominance continued in the AZ Roofing SK Light Modified ranks. While Nick Hovey led from the point, point leader Tyler Chapman came to the front for a side-by-side battle with plenty of sparks. Chapman would pull up bumper to bumper before getting loose on the outside groove again and again, finally getting just the right push off to claim his fourth win

of the year over Hovey and Meghan Fuller.

The Mini Stock showcase saw one of the fiercest battles of the night between defending champion and point leader Jarred Roy and Ryan Pomposelli. The two fought tooth and nail across the 0.625-mile Thompson Speedway with Roy making his final pass with just two laps remaining to claim his fourth win of the year with Pomposelli taking second and Kevin Moore turning around a tough-luck season for third.

The growing Thompson Sunoco Modified division was once again under the control of young Jon Puleo. The Mr. Rooter Plumbing machine was on rails for the Twisted Tea Midsummer 50-lap main event on Thursday with the young-gun never leaving the lead position. Puleo took down his third win of the season followed by Keith Rocco and leading rookie Isaiiah Newcomb at the line.

The Late Models rounded out Thursday's showcase. A final show of dominance saw former Late Model track champion Brian Tagg lead all 25-laps on the field for

his first win at Thompson Speedway this season with defending track champion Nick Johnson coming home second followed by Kulwicki Driver Development Program (KDDP) finalist Derek Gluchacki in third.

Thompson Speedway returns to Wednesday night racing action in less than two weeks on Wednesday, August 7 for the Tripoint Showdown 50-lap main event for the Thompson Sunoco Modifieds. The Late Models, AZ Roofing SK Light Modifieds, Street Stocks and Mini Stocks make it a five division card with a 6:00pm Post Time on Wednesday, August 7.

For more information about the American-Canadian Tour, contact the ACT offices at (802) 244-6963, [media@acttour.com](mailto:media@acttour.com), or visit [www.acttour.com](http://www.acttour.com). You can also get updates on Facebook and Twitter at @ACTTour.

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## Springfield Thunderbirds sign three for upcoming season

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds announced today that they have signed goaltender Cam Johnson, as well as forwards Tarun Fizer and Reece Newkirk, to one-year AHL contracts.

Johnson, 30, has been the backstop for each of the Florida Everblades' three consecutive Kelly Cup championships. In 63 career playoff games in the ECHL, Johnson has a sparkling 47-13-3 record, 11 shutouts, a 1.97 goals-against average, and a .928 save percentage. He was the June M. Kelly Award winner as ECHL playoff MVP in 2022 and 2023. The former University of North Dakota National Champion also has 53 games of AHL experience with the Binghamton Devils and Cleveland Monsters.

Fizer, 23, is entering his third full professional season. As a rookie with the ECHL's Utah Grizzlies in 2022-23, the

Chestermere, AB native scored 50 points (27g, 23a) in 62 games. Last season, he skated in 30 games for the Belleville Senators, posting two goals and three assists. He also chipped in 10 points (4g, 6a) in 10 games for the ECHL's Allen Americans. Before turning pro, Fizer skated in five WHL seasons for the Victoria Royals. In 2021-22, he captained the Royals and put up 51 points (17g, 34a) in just 35 games.

Newkirk, 23, is set to begin his fourth professional season. Originally a fifth-round pick by the New York Islanders in the 2019 NHL Draft, Newkirk has skated in 45 AHL games with Bridgeport, putting up 10 points (2g, 8a). In 102 ECHL games with the Worcester Railers, the Moose Jaw, SK native has 78 points (37g, 41). Before turning pro, Newkirk starred with the WHL's Portland Winterhawks, where he accumulated 162 points (69g, 93a) in 205 games.

## Don't Miss Out!



The August 22 & 29 issues of the *Agawam Advertiser* will be **DIRECT MAILED** to all residents! This is a great opportunity to reach many potential customers!

CALL: WENDY AT 413-283-8393  
EMAIL: [WDEL CAMP@TURLEY.COM](mailto:WDEL CAMP@TURLEY.COM)

### NOTE EARLY DEADLINES:

August 22 issue deadline is **Monday, August 19.**  
August 29 issue deadline is **Monday, August 26.**

## Public Notices

Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampden Division  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
(413) 748-8600  
Docket No. HD24P157EA

Estate of:  
Patricia Ann Dickinson  
Also Known As:  
Patricia A. Dickinson  
Date of Death:  
May 26, 2024  
**INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE**

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner

Susan L. Scantlen of Agawam, MA.

Susan L. Scantlen 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 admin-

istration 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.

08/08/2024



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BBB SCAM ALERT

# Phishing scam claims a process server is looking for you

Paula Fleming

[pfleming@boston.bbb.org](mailto:pfleming@boston.bbb.org)

Many scams start with an intimidating phone call. A “debt collector” needs you to pay immediately. Or a “police officer” claims to have a warrant for your arrest. The latest variation involves a phony “process server” and a non-existent court case against you. BBB Scam Tracker continues to receive reports of this phishing scam. Here’s how to spot it.

**How the scam works**

You receive a call, or several calls, from an unknown or blocked number from a person claiming to be a process server. They might say there is a lien on your home or someone is taking you to court over unpaid medical bills or another matter. The caller may also claim you or a family member are a “person of interest in an important matter that requires immediate attention,” and federal law prohibits the caller from sharing any additional information. Similarly, in other cases, the scammer may be secretive, saying they can’t reveal details until your papers are served.

Next, they’ll ask you to “confirm” sensitive personal information about yourself, such as your date of birth, address, or Social Security number. When you’re hesitant to give out this information, they stress the urgency of the matter - after all, this is a court matter! If you ask too many questions about who is making a complaint or what company the process server works for, the scammer will get angry and sometimes threaten more action against you. The caller may also try to scare you further by asking if you will be home or at work within the next hour since they will be arriving soon to serve you papers, get your signature on legal documents, and demand to see your forms of identification.

Sometimes, the “process server” may be phishing for information about your family members. According to a report on BBB



Scam Tracker, one consumer shared, “Previously left me a voicemail about a lawsuit against my grandmother using her full government name a few weeks ago. Today they called again and asked if I knew the person, to which I said no, and then asked if I was (my full government name), to which I also said no. The person continued to be very pushy until they finally decided to end the call.”

The people behind this scam don’t have any legal papers to deliver, they want to get their hands on your personal information to commit identity theft.

BBB Scam Tracker sees many reports about process server phishing scams. One consumer recently shared their experience, “I received a call from a private number, claiming to be a “process server” stating they had papers regarding a lien on my home...I checked with my police department, and town, i have no liens on my home.” Another person shared, “A fake process server called my mom and she called them back. They used my maiden

name which I have not had in over 20 years about a county matter from a county not local to me saying they had papers to serve [and] they wanted to validate my information. My mom hung up but it scared her.”

**How to avoid phishing scams**

- Be wary of scare tactics and unsolicited phone calls. Scammers love to threaten people with legal action or hefty fines, scaring them into giving up their personal information and money. They hope fear will make you act without thinking. Always remember that representatives of a reputable business or legal office will be polite and civil, even in a serious situation. They won’t pressure you to act immediately “or else.”

- Search your local court website. If you think there’s a chance someone has filed a lawsuit against you, check your local court’s website. Search your name to see if any lawsuit has been filed. If nothing comes up, you’re in the clear.

- The scammer may have some personal

information. Don’t give them more. Scammers may have some of your personal information already from a previous phishing scam, a data breach, or some other source. If you’re speaking with the scammer, you may even notice that the information is out of date. For example, they may use your maiden name or a previous address or workplace. Even if the information is out of date, they may use these stolen details to get even more information from you. For example, they might read your Social Security number and then ask you to “confirm” your date of birth. If they read off out-of-date information, they may trick you into providing current information. Even if someone already has a few details, don’t give them any further information unless you are sure you’re dealing with someone you trust. Be careful when responding to questions that require a simple “yes” or “no” response, since the “Can you hear me?” scam is still around, too.

- Don’t give out personal information about family members, either. BBB Scam Tracker reports also share that these scammers are calling people to inquire about family members. If someone is asking you to validate information about another individual, hang up the phone. Afterwards, it’s a good idea to notify the family member about the call you received. That way, they can be on the lookout for other scams and take action to protect their personal and financial information if it’s at risk or has been stolen.

Reading up on phishing and impostor scams can help you spot a con before it’s too late. Watch out for jury duty scams, too, which also use imposter tactics and threatening phone calls to scam people into paying up.

You may also visit BBB’s Spot a Scam page for tips on recognizing scam tactics.

If a scammer contacts you, report your experience to [BBB.org/ScamTracker](http://BBB.org/ScamTracker). Your report can help us boost consumer awareness and make scammers’ tactics less effective.

# Fake events & phony tickets take festival goers by surprise

Paula Fleming

[pfleming@boston.bbb.org](mailto:pfleming@boston.bbb.org)

Many people are looking forward to fun festivals this summer. As usual, scammers are taking advantage of the building excitement. This time, they are cashing in with phony tickets-and even fake events.

**How the scam works**

You see a fantastic deal on tickets to a summer festival in your area, usually through a link on social media. The event promises live music, all-you-can-eat meals, craft beer or wine, or other fun activities.

When you click the social media link, it takes you to a professional website with fantastic pictures. You enter your credit card information to buy tickets and think you are all set. But before you buy, do a little research. Whether the event is non-existent, merely disappointing, or you just bought phony tickets, the result is the same: some-

one pockets your hard-earned money!

BBB Scam Tracker has received numerous reports from people who purchased fake tickets to actual events or events that have yet to materialize.

A customer in Memphis reported buying tickets for \$220 for a concert: “I saw an offer for presale tickets for the group Khruangbin for a concert in May. I clicked on the links and it lead me to what looked like a legit site until I realized that they are a resellers site and had marked up the ticket prices tremendously. The prices were also in USD and the service charge was astounding. I contacted the company right away but they just dismiss and ignore. They are SCAMMERS and need to be off the market. They have scammed lots of people and it is very humiliating and stressful.”

One consumer who purchased tickets to a fake beer crawl reported: “Reviews across multiple platforms make it clear that these events are at best extremely

misleading or at worst canceled. No refunds are given, even when their inconsistent and mostly-unreachable customer service email address responds to confirm a refund will be provided.”

**How to spot a fake festival**

Research before you buy. Search online for the festival’s name and ensure the name advertised matches the website. Scammers often use names that sound similar to those of real festivals.

Check for (working) contact information. The festival website should have a real phone number and email address.

Watch out for prices that sound too good to be true. There is no way a festival can offer tickets at extremely low prices without losing money. If the prices are much lower than elsewhere, it’s likely a scam.

**What can you do?**

Pay with a credit card. You can dispute

the charges if the business doesn’t come through. Be wary of online sellers that don’t accept credit cards.

Look for secure sites. The website should begin with HTTPS (the extra “s” is for security) and have a lock symbol on the address bar.

Avoid tickets sold on Craigslist, Facebook Marketplace, and other free online listings. Scammers are skilled at providing realistic tickets and fake receipts. Check out third-party ticket sites at [BBB.org](http://BBB.org) before making purchases.

**For more information**

Read BBB’s tips for buying tickets to an event. For general information on how to avoid scams, visit [BBB.org/AvoidScams](http://BBB.org/AvoidScams).

For more advice, read BBB’s tips on online shopping. If you’ve spotted an event scam, report it to BBB ScamTracker. Subscribe to BBB Scam Alerts for weekly updates about new scams.

**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.

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

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.*

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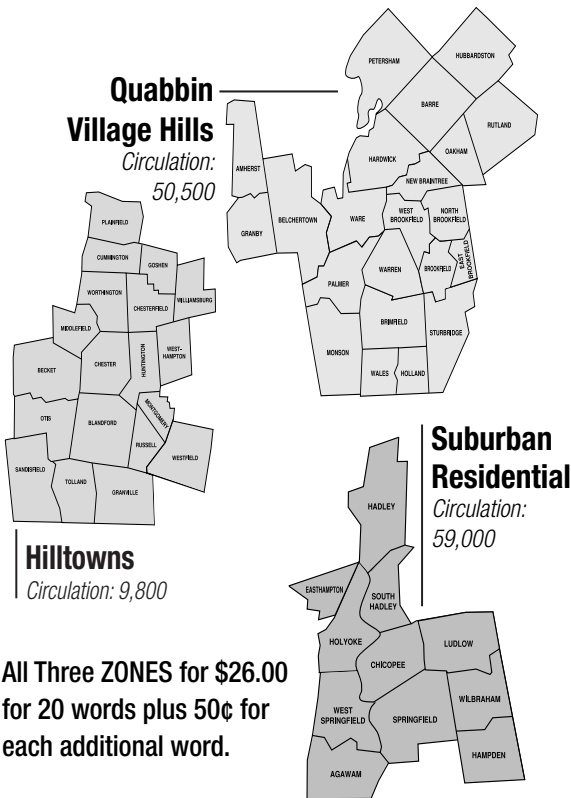


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## HELP WANTED

### PIONEER VALLEY TRANSIT AUTHORITY SENIOR ACCOUNTANT

PVTA is seeking a full-time Senior Accountant to manage the general accounting and trial balance functions. This position will assist with the implementing all accounting systems following accounting control procedures, and ensure that all related supporting documentation is processed accordingly. Must have at least 5 years of hands-on accounting experience in a General Accountant or Controller role and be proficient with Excel and various accounting software applications. Normal schedule is M-F, 9 a.m. -5 p.m., with occasional evenings. Salary is \$1,538-\$1,730/week depending on experience with excellent benefits package including health, dental, 457b, and defined pension. Please review qualification and job requirements under Careers at [www.pvta.com](http://www.pvta.com). Please upload cover letter and resume via our website or email to [humanresources@pvtransit.com](mailto:humanresources@pvtransit.com). EEO/DF.

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### FOR RENT



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## FOR RENT



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Post your job openings in our classifieds. **WE GET RESULTS!** Call **1-413-283-8393**

## FLYOVER ■ from page 1

This issue also caused problems if West Springfield and Agawam were attempting to offer each other mutual emergency aid.

"If you're driving the ambulance, you can't take the chance that that path is blocked by a train, so you end up taking one of the other routes into Agawam or West Springfield, which could be considerably longer," Johnson said. "If there was a flyover there, then they would know they could always make it over that area."

The area is also particularly inconvenient when the Big E is happening, as traffic is often backed up along other routes through West Springfield and Agawam. Therefore, a lot of traffic will take the route along the trains, which can cause significant backups.

This has been a long running issue that has caused frustration for both towns, especially as the federal government controls railroads, meaning the towns had no control in when the trains traveled and the rails and caused these traffic jams.

Johnson stated that it was at least a decade ago that he was on the city council and they set up a joint meeting with the West Springfield city council to discuss the issue.

"We had representatives of the railroad there and they pretty much said their hands were tied because they had to make sure the trains ran on time," Johnson said.

West Springfield installed warning lights by the tracks that would flash if there was a train going through, but unfortunately those lights are motion-sensored.

Therefore, if a train was stopped on the tracks the lights would not flash and drivers would be unaware that there was a train present.

Due to this, the towns still wanted to work on a way to mitigate the issue. Congressman Richard Neal stepped up to assist the towns and pushed for state assistance with the problem.

Johnson is incredibly grateful for Ne-

al's support in getting this project started.

"It is thanks to Congressman Neal's efforts and his leadership that the project got to the point where it is," Johnson said. "It took a lot of work on his part to make it happen."

Now the process has begun for building the flyover, thanks to Neal and the state.

"Once that flyover is completed you'll be able to drive over the train tracks and not have to worry if there are trains stopped or what the train traffic is doing," Johnson said.

CSX, the railroad company in charge of the tracks, has also agreed to financially support the project as needed, though the majority of the money will come from federal highway and transportation funds and some state funds.

The project is estimated to cost about \$20 million. Johnson anticipates that if Agawam provides any financial support for the project it will be minimal, as the construction for the project is entirely in West Springfield.

"Since it benefits both communities if asked we will consider participating," Johnson said. "It will likely be relative to some contribution toward design services, but that is completely up in the air at this point."

Currently the state is in the process of awarding the 25% design contract, where they will hire a consulting firm to prepare the 25% design plans. They expect that to happen shortly.

Following this there will be the 75% design contract and then the project will go out to bid. Johnson stated that construction on the project will likely begin in 2026 or 2027, with a completion of approximately 2029.

"It is not imminent because it is a lengthy process to get not only through the design but then to get into the construction, the bidding and the funding," Johnson said.

Even with the long process ahead, Johnson is glad that this project is finally in the works, as it will be greatly beneficial for both West Springfield and Agawam.

## FIREWORK ■ from page 1

pretty severe injuries as a result of fireworks use and misuse," Sirois said. "We want to make sure that that trend [of no injuries] continues, as they can be severe and life-changing."

Therefore, he wanted to send out the reminder to the public in the hopes that

it would prevent any future incidents this year.

"People should not have these fireworks in the commonwealth...and that is for reasons just like the ones we experienced in Agawam these last couple weeks," Sirois said. "We want to make sure we keep our residents safe and I felt it was necessary to notify people that they should do their

very best to keep their community safe and avoid use of illegal fireworks."

Sirois recommended that anyone who sees someone using fireworks in a way that may be hazardous or illegal call 911 so that the authorities can take care of the incident.

Additionally, if people are cleaning out their homes and they come across fireworks, they can surrender them at any lo-

cal police or fire station. The fireworks will then be turned over to state police who will dispose of them.

If people want to see fireworks, they can go to a fireworks display that is conducted by a licensed professional. There is a list online of upcoming displays, which can be found at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/leave-fireworks-to-the-professionals>.

## Send Us Your Autumn Event Information

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**Deadline for Calendar submissions is August 12.**

### Community Autumn Events

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Event Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Time \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Description \_\_\_\_\_

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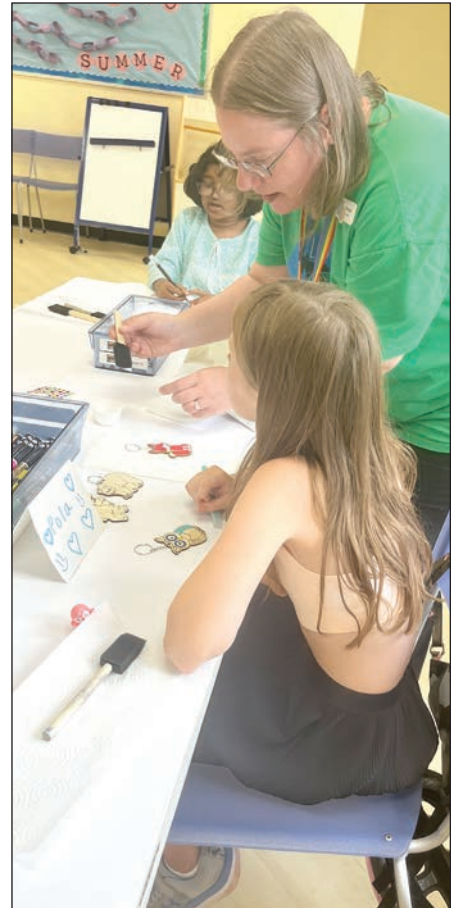
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Kids and their families had fun getting creative while decorating keychains at Agawam Public Library.



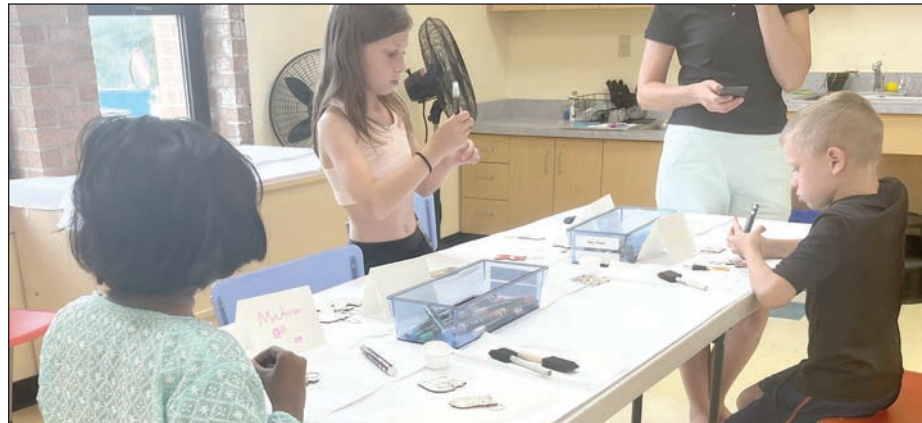
All of the kids' keychains came out unique at the keychain painting event.



Children's Librarian Pamela Weingart helped kids to apply the modge-podge to their keychains.



The kids' keychains came out beautiful at the keychain painting event at Agawam Public Library.



Kids focused on decorating their keychains at Agawam Public Library.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY QUINN SUOMALA

**KEYCHAIN** ■ from page 1

Weingart added this trivia as she thought it would be an enjoyable way for kids to learn more about animals.

"I thought it would be fun to learn little facts about animals because they're fascinating and I thought it would go well with painting the keychains because...it would be neat if we were painting a moose and had a trivia question about the moose," Weingart said.

Weingart was impressed with how well the kids did on answering the trivia questions.

"I really did not expect people to know the answers to the trivia questions and was surprised and delighted when they did," Weingart said.

The event was enjoyable for the kids, all of whom left with their beautifully decorated keychains and some prizes for answering the trivia questions.

Weingart would also like to remind people that there is still time to sign up for the summer reading program. The program website is <https://agawamlibrary.beanstack.com/reader365>.

The program officially closes on Aug. 9 and people are welcome to sign up

anytime before then and they will still have the chance to earn prizes for reading.

"When you log days of reading you can back-date," Weingart said. "So if people happen to sign up Aug. 8 and they know the dates they read, they can go back and log those days."

After kids read for 25 days they are eligible to be entered into a raffle to win a \$50 visa gift card. There is one gift card for ages zero to four, one for kids in kindergarten through fourth grade, one for fifth through eighth grade and one for kids in ninth through twelfth grade.

If anyone does not have a computer at home to access the library website, they can come into the library anytime and use their computers.

Additionally, even with summer reading coming to an end, the fun at the library continues year round. One such example is the famous library joke days.

On Wednesdays and Fridays anyone can come to the children's desk at the library and tell a joke to one of the librarians to earn a prize.

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

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