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AGAWAM

ADVERTISER NEWS

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Local scout plans to help animal shelter

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – Scout Dean Fleagle is about to start work on his Eagle Scout project, which is focused on gathering supplies for Dakin Humane Society.

Fleagle plans to organize a series of supply drives that will take place at Smithland Pet and Garden Center where community members can donate supplies Dakin needs.

“When people go into Smithland to do their own shopping, they can help by getting the things that we know the humane society needs,” Fleagle said.

These supply drives will take place from 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 12 and Friday, Oct. 11.

The needed supplies include: canned and dry kitten food, light

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Police, fire depts. honor Carol Taylor

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – The Agawam Fire and Police Departments held a photo-op of the new equipment they have thanks to generous donations made in honor of Carol Taylor.

In Taylor’s name, her sister,

Linda Edelman, made a donation of \$46,995 for the police department to get a new D.A.R.E vehicle and a donation of \$34,791.75 for the fire department to get a Physio Control Cardiac Monitor/Defibrillator and a Lucas Chest Compression (CPR) device.

These donations enabled the town to get the D.A.R.E vehicle

and prevented them from having to find a source of funding for the cardiac equipment.

Mayor Christopher Johnson was grateful for the donations.

“It goes without saying how grateful I am for Linda and Leo’s donation in honor of Carol,” Johnson said. “Carol was a very good friend to me, I

miss her dearly.”

He also hoped that these donations would help in keeping the memory of Taylor alive.

“She cared deeply about Agawam, she always had a special place for police and fire and public safety,” Johnson said. “If there

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Members of the police department, the city council, Mayor Christopher Johnson and Linda and Leo Edelman gathered around the new D.A.R.E vehicle.

TURLEY PHOTO BY QUINN SUOMALA



Children’s Librarian Pamela Weingart presents a library card to a stuffed animal.

TURLEY PHOTO BY QUINN SUOMALA

Toy exchange held for library card kick off

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – Agawam Public Library is giving out library cards for stuffed animals and toys for the month of September in honor of National Library Card Month.

Anyone is welcome to come to the children’s area of the library with a stuffed animal, toy or figurine and request a library card for them.

“We’re hoping that by doing this kids can see how it is to get library cards,” Children’s Librarian Pamela Weingart said.

The library cards have the

information of APL and have a picture of a cow on them.

This is the library’s second year doing library cards for stuffed animals. Last year they started the event to help promote National Library Card Month.

The event went well and now they plan to do it every September. Each year the library card will have a different design so people can collect all the different designs throughout their time at APL.

Weingart and the other staff at the children’s desk love seeing all the kids come in with their stuffed animals and toys. Weingart also hopes that getting a library card will inspire kids to enjoy the library.

“I think about Susan, who used to work here, used to play librarian when she was a kid, and then

ended up working in a library,” Weingart said.

People are also encouraged to come in and get a library card for themselves. To get a library card people can go up to the circulation desk.

For kids they need a parent or legal guardian with ID and proof of address. Adults just need to have a valid ID with their current address.

Weingart encourages anyone who does not have a library card to come in and get one.

“With library cards you get access to a plethora of information,” Weingart said. “You get access to all of the resources at your library.”

Getting a library card at APL doesn’t just allow you to access

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Pet of the Week
Meet Winslow

Winslow is such an active little ball of fur! Winslow is a mini Bernedoodle. It's a mix between a Bernese Mountain Dog and a doodle. He will chew anything he can find. He brightens our day!

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Upcoming activities available at the Agawam Senior Center

AGAWAM – The Agawam Senior Center announced new events and classes starting in September. The center also announced reduced fees for those classes.

If you participate in any of the several classes that we offer here at the Senior Center...well hold onto your hat do we have news for you. Due to grant funding that we have acquired starting, Tuesday, Sept. 2 all classes that are offered at the Agawam Senior Center will now be at the reduced fee of only \$3 per class. The Agawam Senior Center will honor this reduced class fee until June 30, 2025.

Seminar with Dr. Matt Costanza from Resilience Physical Therapy

Wednesday, Sept. 18 at 1 p.m.
My name is Dr. Matt Costanza. I am a Physical Therapist from Resilience Physical Therapy and Wellness. We have two locations, in Agawam and in Suffield where I am Clinic Director. I will be presenting on the importance of movement and exercise for the senior community and how physical therapy can help with that. I will also be discussing direct access, which allows patients to receive physical therapy without the need of a referral from a Doctor. This seminar will take place on Wednesday, Sept. 18 at 1 p.m. in the Seminar Hall. Call Kristina at 726-2836 to register.

The Four Things: Further Conversation On Grief

Wednesday, Sept. 18 at 1 p.m. in the conference room
It is only 4 things. 11 words total. And yet...they can be so difficult to say. Please forgive me. I forgive you. Thank you. I love you. These 4 things are what palliative care doctor Ira Byock learned were the words people most needed to say when they were coming to the end of their lives. This session offers nurturing space and

time to ponder the healing medicine of these words for in your life. Call Kristina at 726-2836 to register.

Free Screening Balance Clinic

Wednesday, Oct. 9, 1 p.m. in the Garden Room
Powerback Rehabilitation will be at the Agawam Senior Center offering free screenings that include Balance/Strength. These are 15-minute appointments. Call Kristina at 726-2836 to schedule one.

African drumming

10-week class beginning Sept. 6
We at the Agawam Senior Center are very excited to partner with the Community Music School of Springfield again, and bring the exciting class of African Drumming to our community. This class will run from Friday, September 6 – November 8. There will be a beginner and an advanced class. Beginner class will begin 10 to 11 a.m. and 11 a.m. to 12 noon for advanced.

Presented in partnership with Community Music School of Springfield, Jason Arnold offers African Drumming at Agawam Senior Center. Jason has been playing drums since he was 6 years old, having studied with his father Billy Arnold (drummer for Young at Heart Chorus, and also a CMSS faculty member). Jason performs with rhythm & blues and rock groups throughout the Northeast. In 2010 he was honored for his work with children as a recipient of a Key Player Ambassador Award, and directs many Community Partnership programs throughout Springfield. Call Kristina at 413.726.2836 to secure your spot. The classes will be limited to 20 people.

Beginner Class will be free of charge for participants. The Advanced Class fee will be a one-time payment of \$35 per participant, due on Friday, Sept. 6.

Crafters, vendors needed for upcoming holiday bazaar

AGAWAM – The Agawam Congregational Church is seeking crafters and vendors for our Christmas Holly Wreath bazaar to be held on Nov. 23 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

To register pick up an application at the church, Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. For more details call the church at (413) 786-7111 or email at office@agawamcong.com.

FHCC hosting antique appraisals

FEEDING HILLS – Wondering what a family heirloom is worth or have old jewelry have it appraised by expert Antique dealers.

Feeding Hills Congregational Church, 21 North Westfield St., is hosting an antique appraisal Saturday, Oct. 5 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The cost is \$5 an item or 3 for \$12 with a three item limit.

All appraisals are verbal intended to give the owner an idea of value and a sense of history. Items should be small enough to be hand carried. Please no firearms or weapons of any kind.

There will also be an outdoor tag sale held in conjunction with the antique appraisal event.

For more information call Kathy at 413-786-0195.

Feline Friends announce next food, supply fundraiser

AGAWAM – Feline Friends Inc. Cat Sanctuary of Feeding Hills will be holding food/supply drives at Smithland Pet & Garden Center. Our next donation drive will be Oct. 5 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Volunteers will be accepting food, litter and 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.

We are excited to announce our October Fundraiser raffle entitled Catober

Fun. We will be selling chances to win gift cards or baskets on September 7th. Tickets are \$20 each and there are 31 chances to win. Checks or cash will be gratefully accepted (Feline Friends, P.O. Box 174, Feeding Hills 01030) or Pay Pal (Feline Friends Inc) or Venmo (@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 or our Facebook page at Feline Friends Cat Sanctuary. Contact us with questions at info@felinefriend-sinc.org or by phone at 413-786-5019.

AHS class of 1973 to hold reunion Oct. 4

AGAWAM – A Class of '73 gathering on Friday, Oct. 4 at the Italian Sporting Club in Agawam at 349 Cooper St.

This will be a casual event and a great way to reconnect with each other while enjoying some food, cocktails and conversation. The gathering will begin at 6 p.m. This is a free event.

No written letters will be going out, so if you know of any other classmates who don't use email, please let them know about this gathering. If you want to remain on our list for future events, please contact us with e mail/phone. It will remain confidential.

Please RSVP ASAP so we can have a number for food. We always had an amazing class.

Questions to Paul Henault or Sue Meunier at: pwh.ahs1973@gmail.com or Susan Borgatti Meunier smeutooz@comcast.net.

Registraton to now open for Bright Nights 5K

SPRINGFIELD – The starting pistol will be fired twice for the Bright Nights 5K Road Race. The first time will be when registration opens. The second time will be the night of the race when runners will take the jolly jaunt through more than 750,000 lights at Bright Nights at Forest Park.

The 500 coveted spots for the holiday fun run will become available on Monday, Sept. 9, at 12 a.m. at brightnights.org.

The 19th annual Bright Nights 5K Road Race will be held on Monday, Dec. 2, at 6:30 p.m. The rain date will be Tuesday, Dec. 3. The registration fee is \$75. This in-

cludes participation in the one-of-a-kind event that takes runners from the Seuss Land Arch to the Giant Poinsettia Candles, and back, a souvenir long-sleeved athletic shirt, a ticket to enjoy Bright Nights at Forest Park in the comfort of a car, and a post-race soup supper.

"The event has been a sell out since its inception," said Spirit of Springfield President Judy Matt. "It is a challenging course, but runners take in the sights as they run up the hills through leaping deer and the blizzard tunnel, and down through Toy Land. Personally, I love to see all the great costumes."

The Spirit of Springfield, which organizes the event, recommends runners be available for both dates, Dec. 2 and Dec. 3. Refunds and substitutions will not be offered. For safety reasons, runners must be at least 14 years old on race day. Headphones, baby strollers, pets, and bandit runners will not be allowed on the route.

The Bright Nights 5k Road Race is sponsored by Covestro, Health New England, Siemens, Freedom Credit Union, and M&T Bank. For more information about the Bright Night 5K Road Race and registration, visit brightnights.org or contact the Spirit of Springfield at 413-733-3800.



Library activities continue through September

AGAWAM – The Agawam Library wishes the Agawam Public Schools a hearty welcome back. This month features National Library Card Sign-Up Month, as well as some fun adult programming. During the month of September, anyone applying for a new or replacement library card will have the opportunity to choose a small prize or spin the wheel for a surprise. Patrons may apply for a new or replacement card at the Main Circulation Desk and the prize wheel will be available at the Information Desk.

Author Talk with Connecticut Author Albert Ruggiero on

Thursday, Sept. 12 at 6 p.m.
in the Clini Community Room

When his beloved wife Carol passed, Albert Ruggiero felt her writing deserved a bigger audience so he published a collection of her work in Pearls from Carol. As Albert explains it, Carol enjoyed taking a serious topic and turning it on its head with a surprising ending. Albert took his love for his wife and turned it into a passion project to share her stories with the world. Join us to hear about Carol's life and her short, funny, and thought-provoking stories, poems, and essays. Please register for this event.

Tea & Trivia

Tuesday, Sept. 17 at 6:30 p.m. and
Wednesday, Sept. 18 at 2:30 p.m.
in the Clini Community Room

Get ready to have your wits challenged with a few rounds of general knowledge trivia, and enjoy a cup of tea while you're playing! Come with a team or meet some

new friends! Prizes are awarded to the winning teams. Trivia is for adults ages 18 and older. Please register for this event.

September Tech Sessions

Wednesday, Sept. 18 at 6:30 p.m. and
Tuesday, Sept. 24 at 10 a.m.
in the Clini Community Room

Just got a brand new library card and hoping to learn all about the C/W MARS system? Our September Tech Sessions will introduce users to the C/W MARS online catalog and app. Learn how to find library items or place holds on the items you want. We'll cover regular searches for authors and titles, as well as how to put items on hold and add items to customized lists. We'll also look at how to navigate around the online catalog, and how to browse our collections that we've picked out just for you! Feel free to bring your own device so that you can follow along. We'll also provide a brief overview of the CW MARS app. There are two sessions scheduled: Wednesday, Sept. 18 at 6:30 p.m. and Tuesday, Sept. 24 at 10 a.m. Both will take place in the Clini Community Room. Please register for these events.

Adult Writer's Group

Thursday, Sept. 19 at 6 p.m.
in the Peirce Conference Room

The library is thrilled to welcome back the Adult Writer's Group. Our first meeting will be held on Thursday, Sept. 19 at 6 p.m. in the Peirce Conference Room. The Agawam Library Writers Group is hosted

by award-winning author Katherine Anderson. This in-person workshop is open to writers of all levels and genres. There will be opportunities for peer and host feedback, learning the basics of self-publishing, finding opportunities for submission to magazines, literary journals and presses, assembling a portfolio and the basics of a query package for submissions and publications. These workshops are sponsored by the Agawam Center Library Association. Please register for this event.

The Museum Heist Escape Room

Sept. 23 at 2 p.m., 5:30 p.m., and 7 p.m.

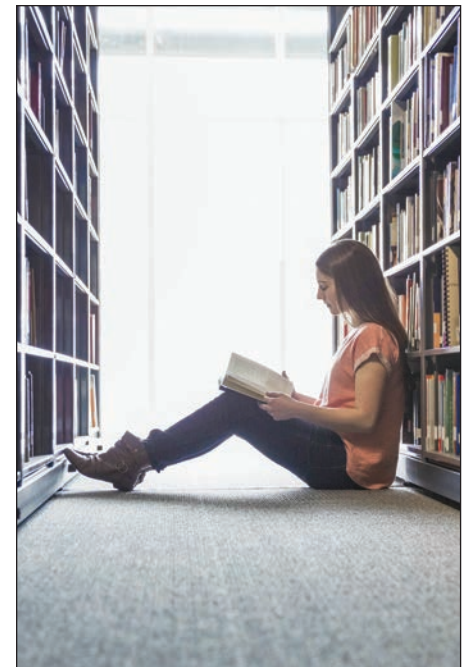
The Museum Heist Escape Room will return for three more sessions on Sept. 23 at 2 p.m., 5:30 p.m., and 7 p.m. Players will take on the roles of art thieves tasked with stealing a famous painting. Solve puzzles, break codes, and get the painting before time runs out. We will have three time slots that participants may register for. Sign up with a group during your preferred time slot or join on your own to make some new friends. This event is for patrons ages 18 and older. Please register for only one time slot. This is the same escape room that was done previously, so please do not register if you attended in July.

Virtual Author Talk Series

Pulitzer Prize Finalist Garrett Graff will discuss Capturing the Human Drama of 9/11 and D-Day Through Oral History on Tuesday, Sept. 10 at 2 p.m. New York Times Bestselling Author Nate Klemp will discuss

his book Open: Living with an Expansive Mind in a Distracted World on Wednesday, Sept. 18 at 2 p.m. Mega-Bestselling Author Liane Moriarty will discuss character development in her latest book, Here One Moment on Saturday, Sept. 21 at 7 p.m. Moriarty's books Big Little Lies and Nine Perfect Strangers have been adapted into successful television series.

The Agawam community is invited to visit our website for a complete listing of September events.



MA Women's Commission welcomes new leadership

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women has elected new leadership to their executive team for FY25. The MCSW is an independent stage agency comprised of 19 volunteer Commissioners whose mission is to provide a permanent and effective voice for women and girls across the Commonwealth. Their work includes legislative and public policy advocacy, gathering data, conducting public hearings on key issues and to gather data that advances the rights of all women and girls, and more.

The Commission welcomes: Mary-Dith Tuitt was elected as our incoming chairwoman. A Boston resident, Navy Veteran, and Community and Peer Veteran Specialist, Tuitt was first appointed to the Commission by the Massachusetts Caucus of Women Legislators in 2011. She also served as the chair of the MCSW's Legislative and Public Policy Committee, as well as the current president of the National Association for Commissions for Women.

Christine Monska, of Auburndale, was elected as the MCSW vice-chair, and first appointed to the MCSW by the Massachu-

setts Caucus of Women Legislators in 2020. She currently serves as the executive director of the Women's Fund SouthCoast in New Bedford where she increases opportunities for women and girls to become economically independent, access education, and advocate for issues in the region.

Tanisha Arena, a Springfield resident, was elected as the MCSW treasurer and chair of the Finance Committee. Arena was appointed to the Commission by the the Massachusetts Caucus of Women Legislators in November 2021 and is the current executive director of ARISE for Social Justice, an organization committed to community organizing, education, and advocacy.

Dr. Kimberly Shea, of Winchendon, was elected to serve as the MCSW secretary. Kimberly has serves for many years the in healthcare and education field. She is the current dean of Nursing at Mount Wachusett Community College, as well as an adjunct faculty member at several area Colleges. As a registered nurse and higher education professional, as well as her life experience raising a family in the area

and as an active community member, she brings a unique perspective to the Commission, proudly representing her rural community.

Dr. Aisha Miller was elected as the new chair of the MCSW Program and Planning Committee. Formerly the vice-chair, Dr. Miller is a resident of Mattapan who was first appointed by the MCWL in 2021. She is the vice president of Permitting, Community, and Corporate Engagement for Related Beal, which aims to enrich people's lives through high quality design and development.

Guimel DeCarvalho, of Natick, was elected as the next chair of MCSW's Legislative and Public Policy Committee. First appointed to the Commission by Senate President Karen E. Spilka in November 2021, she speaks fluent Portuguese and lives in Natick with her wife and son. She is Wayside Youth & Family Support Network's first Vice President of People and Culture and Chief Diversity Officer. Guimel cofounded Natick Is United, a community antiracist organization, and recently launched the Wayside Equity Training

Center to provide antiracist trainings and strategic planning support for non-profits and community organizations.

"This is an incredible cadre of community leaders with a diverse range of personal and professional experience. This dedicated and talented executive leadership team will enhance this Commissions' ability to focus on our ambitious legislative agenda on behalf of all across in the Commonwealth," said the immediate past MCSW Chairwoman Dr. Sarah Glenn-Smith.

"The Commission recently celebrated its 25-year anniversary, and all current state and regional Commissioners as well as staff are elated to see what these unique experiences and backgrounds will bring in the next 25 years," said MCSW Executive Director Shaitia Spruell.

The Commission exists to provide a permanent, effective voice for women across Massachusetts. The MCSW represents and recognizes all women, regardless of their age, race, color, creed, abilities, language, socio-economic status, immigration status, sexual orientation, or gender assigned at birth.

Heritage State Park part of annual girl scouts national event

HOLYOKE – The annual Girl Scouts Love State Parks Weekend will be hosted in state parks nationwide on Sept. 14 and 15. Locally, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) will provide exclusive opportunities for Girl Scouts and their families in eight state parks in central and western Massachusetts with nine different programs over the two days. Programs are specifically tailored to assist Girl Scouts with earning nature based badges.

Among the state parks included are Holyoke Heritage State Park, Holyoke, and Quabbin Reservoir, Belchertown

"Getting girls outdoors is a unique part of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience and an important part of our mission," said Theresa Lynn, Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts CEO. "With a partner like DCR and so many incredible spaces in our own back yard it's a great time to get outside."

"We're excited to partner with the Girl

"Getting girls outdoors is a unique part of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience and an important part of our mission."

– Theresa Lynn

Scouts again for this fun annual initiative that provides Girl Scouts with free programming opportunities in our parks to help them earn their nature-based badges," said Mass. DCR Commissioner Brian Arigo. "Our beautiful spaces are great spots for Girl Scouts to learn about and connect with our environment."

Girl Scout members, friends, and family are encouraged to also participate in self-guided tours, hikes, watersports, stargazing, and many more fun outdoor activities in parks during Girl Scouts Love State Parks Weekend.

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Opinion

Guest Column



Husband upset about his wife's survivor benefit

Dear Rusty

This is a matter that I find particularly irksome. My wife, a retired teacher, was told that, should I pre-decease her, she is not eligible to get survivor benefits from my Social Security payments. I'm sure there is some arcane, bureaucratic justification for this, but I think it unconscionable. Is this true and if so, what sort of major miracle would be required to alter that?

Signed Disgruntled in Texas

Dear Disgruntled

If your wife was a teacher in a school district, which includes all Texas school districts that exempted her from paying into Social Security, then any Social Security surviving spouse benefit she becomes entitled to from you will be affected by a provision called the Government Pension Offset. The GPO will reduce her Social Security survivor benefit by two-thirds, 67%, of the amount of her (non-covered) teacher's pension, which can and often does eliminate her surviving spouse benefit. The GPO affects teachers in about 15 states, who have opted not to participate in Social Security.

For information, this is similar to what happens to a spouse who has also earned a Social Security retirement benefit, their survivor benefit is offset by their Social Security retirement benefit and only the excess, if any, is paid.

The GPO is actually a bit more generous, in that your wife's survivor benefit is only offset by 2/3rds of her non-covered teacher's pension, whereas the offset is 100% for other surviving spouses who have earned SS retirement benefits as well. This is a provision that has been law since 1977, affecting all those who have a pension earned without contributing to Social Security. Its premise was to better equalize the way SS benefits are paid to everyone.

How can that be altered? Well, the only way is by Congress changing Social Security law. There have been numerous attempts to change the GPO law over the years, none of which have been successful. Indeed, there is a proposed law, H.R. 82 The Social Security Fairness Act, which was introduced in Congress last year. That proposal, to eliminate the GPO and a sister provision called the Windfall Elimination Provision, has essentially made little Congressional progress, short of a few committee hearings and the outlook

SECURITY | page 5



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Guest Column

How to best store your produce for winter enjoyment



The question I answered last week on how to best cure onions spawned a number of follow up questions.

Gardeners are looking for advice on storing potatoes, apples, winter squash and more. Read on for some timely tips that will keep your produce in tip top shape for offseason eating and enjoyment.

Why don't we start with potatoes, since they are perhaps the most tricky vegetable to store. Curing them properly will help to prevent rot, premature sprouting, and toxic greening of the skin and flesh.

By waiting a week or more after the plant has died before digging up the tubers, the skins will thicken and be less prone to injury during harvest. Once they are dug, a week spent in a cool and totally dark space will further firm their skin and change sugars to starch, completing the ripening process.

Never wash potatoes prior to storage! Gently brush off dirt and store in a single layer in the darkness at 55-60 degrees.

Darkness will prevent greening, which renders potatoes inedible. Use any pitch-forked or shovel-marked spuds first, as damage to the skin will invite rot.

Harvest winter squash after vines have died back or prior to an impending frost. A pretty New England autumn scene is fields of pumpkins or colorful squash curing under sunny skies.

If you follow the farmers lead, just be sure to lift squash off the ground, and cover if rain or frost threatens. Two weeks in the field or a sunny, well-ventilated space is sufficient for curing, at which point the skin should be hard enough to resist the dent of a fingernail.

Gently washing squash in a 10% bleach solution will help to prevent rot prior to storing at temperatures between 50 and 60 degrees. The flavor of many of our favorite squashes only improves with age.

My garlic was harvested well over a month ago,

after the plant gave me a signal with one-third of its foliage withered and browned. It was dried stems and all in a shady, protected spot up off of the ground.

Soon I'll gently rub off dirt and cut back the stems to a couple of inches before storing for the winter in a cool and dry location, in mesh bags or on slatted trays etc. Soft neck types of garlic have pliable foliage that lends itself well to braiding.

In any case, allowing for good air circulation will ensure a long storage life.

I don't grow enough apples of my own to store just yet, because my orchard is still very young. To get the low-down on best storage practices I consulted a couple of great books on the subject and this is what I came up with: According to "The Apple Cookbook" by Olwen Woodier (Storey Publishing) the key to preserving the flavor and texture of apples is to put them in a cool place immediately after picking or purchasing.

But first, sort them, setting aside any with blemishes for immediate use- the old saying "one bad apple spoils the whole barrel" is true! Next, put them in perforated bags (you were right on, Mom!) and store them in the hydrator drawer of the refrigerator at temperatures between thirty-two and forty degrees.

No room in the fridge? Try storing them in the cellar at temperatures close to thirty-two degrees and eighty to eighty-five percent humidity.

Janet Chadwick, in her book "The Beginner's Guide to Preserving Food at Home" (Storey Publishing) recommends storing apples in sawdust inside a cardboard box lined with a plastic.

Although they will ripen more quickly at even slightly higher temperatures, don't let the lack of a super-cold spot dissuade you from storing your apples. Sure, they won't keep till spring, but you may get a month or two out of them.

Any that turn a little soft will still make great baked apples. Late season apples would lend themselves to winter storage better than those that are ripe now.

Enjoy the fruits (and vegetables!) of your labor by proper curing and storage!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 32 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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Election letters to the editor welcome

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

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

Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the news-

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

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

Opinion

Guest Column

SECURITY ■ from page 4

for passage at this point is about zero. I'm afraid I can't be optimistic that the GPO will be repealed, as Congress is more keenly focused on resolving Social Security's looming solvency issue, set to come to a head in less than a decade.

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 ssadviser@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

Help wanted; Volunteering is an essential component of Habitat for Humanity

Volunteering is not just an opportunity offered at Habitat for Humanity, it's the soul of the nonprofit organization. Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity (GSHFH) can't function without volunteers. In fact, there's just three paid construction positions and three administration staffers at the affiliate. Volunteers make up the remainder of the team.

On average, Greater Springfield Habitat builds one to three homes a year and takes on a half dozen home preservation projects for low-income seniors who want to age in place, limited-income families and veterans. The affiliate also attends several community events, hosts fundraisers and projects that support recycling and green building, workshops on financial stability, and many administrative tasks in the West Springfield office.

"I was aware of Jimmy Carter's role as a volunteer and I had long thought that I would like to try it. My wife, Anne, and I have done many do-it-yourself projects to-

gether as homeowners over the years so I thought it would be something I could do," said Tom Eisenman, a retiree who began volunteering at GSHFH approximately 13 years ago. "I did like it. I've done other things besides construction, including Christmas gift wrapping, event planning, and serving on the Family Services committee. I found that people who choose to volunteer or work for Habitat tend to be very nice folks."

Construction volunteer Christopher Daly agreed. He said he's been aware of Greater Springfield Habitat for years, but it wasn't until he visited a build site following a New England Public Media fundraising campaign held with GSHFH held in summer 2021 that he realized an opportunity to volunteer. Christopher is an on-air fund drive director for the nonprofit broadcasting station headquartered in Springfield.

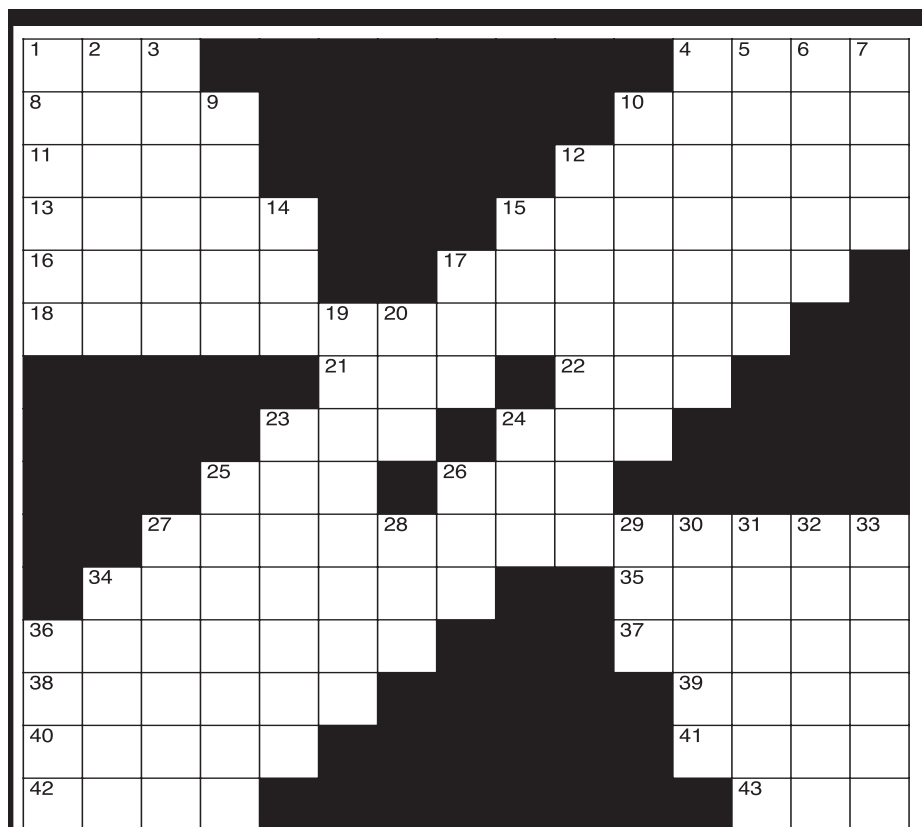
"I really enjoy working on the builds, seeing, and learning what it takes to complete a home. Also, the people at the job site are terrific," Christopher said. It's a good, pro-

ductive way to fill free time."

Volunteers come to Habitat for many reasons. Some are students looking to fulfill a community service graduation requirement. Others work for corporations and want to participate as a team. Some are individuals like Tom and Christopher, or part of a church group. This year, at least a dozen corporations, vocational high school groups, and families have volunteered at Habitat.

Some, like Sue Zielenski, enjoy making a difference in the financial lives of the Greater Springfield community. Sue manages the day-to-day operations at the Bank of America Holyoke Lincoln Financial Center and frequently teaches 90-minute financial literacy seminars that started this year.

Signing up to volunteer at Greater Springfield Habitat is simple. Visit habitatspringfield.org/volunteer, and click the "volunteer calendar" button. Select a preferred day and opportunity. Click the "register" button and follow the prompts to create a volunteer profile account.



CLUES ACROSS

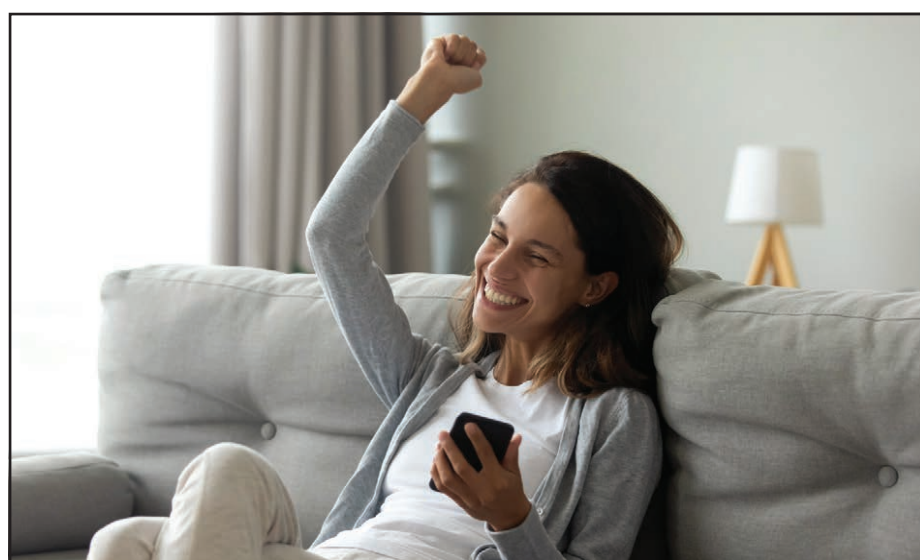
- 1. Engine additive
- 4. A type of test
- 8. Curtail
- 10. Irish surname
- 11. The opposite of good
- 12. Got rid of
- 13. Central parts of a church building
- 15. Stylistically
- 16. Intestinal
- 17. Negative potential outcomes
- 18. Lived up to a standard
- 21. Snag
- 22. Time units (abbr.)
- 23. Ad ___
- 24. "Partridge"

- actress Susan
- 25. For each
- 26. ___ Paulo, city
- 27. League titles
- 34. More intensely black
- 35. Slang for lovely
- 36. Petrarch is known for them
- 37. Old Eurasian wheat
- 38. Body part
- 39. Swedish rock group
- 40. They're worth avoiding
- 41. Rising and falling of the voice
- 42. Wings
- 43. Enzyme import for respiration

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Idyllic
- 2. South Pacific island nations
- 3. Shrub of the olive family
- 4. Boundaries
- 5. Encircle
- 6. Weights
- 7. Samberg is one
- 9. Sheep sound
- 10. European country
- 12. Respected group of people
- 14. Trigraph
- 15. Prosecutors
- 17. Assign a nickname
- 19. Huge size
- 20. Partner to cheese
- 23. Fastballs
- 24. Principle underlying the universe
- 25. Distinct units of sound
- 26. Title of respect
- 27. Against
- 28. Foot (Latin)
- 29. One point east of due south
- 30. Concerning the blood
- 31. Type of pentameter
- 32. North American peoples
- 33. Layers of rock
- 34. Georges ___, French philosopher
- 36. Lengthy tale

CROSSWORD SOLUTION ON PAGE 11



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Mayor Christopher Johnson and Linda Edelman admired the D.A.R.E. vehicle created in honor of Edelman's sister, Carol Taylor.



Linda and Leo Edelman and Mayor Christopher Johnson pose in front of the new D.A.R.E. vehicle.



The Agawam Police Department presented their new D.A.R.E. vehicle, which was able to be created thanks to donations made in honor of Carol Taylor.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY QUINN SUOMALA



City council members and Linda and Leo Edelman gathered around to see the new cardiac equipment the fire department was able to purchase thanks to the Edelmans' donation in honor of Linda's sister, Carol Taylor.



Linda and Leo Edelman and Mayor Christopher Johnson got to go on a ride in the new D.A.R.E. vehicle that honors Linda's sister, Carol Taylor.

TAYLOR ■ from page 1

was a fundraiser, she was always the first one there to help."

Taylor was the city auditor for Agawam for over 40 years and dedicated much of her life to helping the town. Edelman thinks that these donations are a perfect way to honor her.

"Carol always felt good about everything in the town and I just felt that it was time for me to do something to honor her," Edelman said. "She really thought

a lot of Agawam."

The police department and the town put a lot of care into designing the D.A.R.E. vehicle in Taylor's honor.

They worked with Sarat Ford to design the Bronco car, with the help of Sales Manager Brian Foley.

They wanted to ensure that the car would stand out on the streets and would act as a clear reminder of Taylor.

Police Chief Eric Gillis had sent over some ideas for the design and Foley and others at Sarat worked to refine the design.

"Our goal was to honor Carol Taylor and the family that was the investment for this project and really just make it a vehicle that caught everyone's attention and brought more attention to D.A.R.E...and I think this vehicle does that," Foley said.

They worked over the course of about three months in order to come up with the design and create it.

Sarat even helped to fund some portions of the project, according to Johnson.

"Sarat was very generous with what they charged and they paid for the wrap, this is

all a wrap that is on the vehicle, and there were other upgrades that have happened that they're funding as well," Johnson said.

Johnson hopes that this D.A.R.E. vehicle will encourage more youth in Agawam to come up to Agawam Police officers and have conversations with them.

"If it sparks one young person to come up and have a conversation with a police officer...to make that connection that police are your friend, then it's done its job," Johnson said.

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SPORTS



Lucas Ritson connects successfully on a penalty kick.
TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

Ritson PK holds up for Brownies

AGAWAM – A foul in the box led to a penalty kick for the Brownies late in the first half. Lucas Ritson sent the shot home and Agawam had a 1-0 lead.

It was all the Brownies would need as they defeated Monument Mountain

in their season opener last Tuesday afternoon at home. Two days later, Ritson, Adam Ross, and Dawood Atanane scored goals for Agawam in a 3-3 tie against Pittsfield. Agawam is 1-0-1 to start the season.



Patrick Keating gets the header.



Thomas Poulin attempts to trap a pass.



Eric Nazarets looks to pass.



Adam Ross chases down a ball on defense.



Connor Glynn tries to fake around an opponent.

Agawam girls fall in opener

AGAWAM – Last Wednesday night, Agawam girls soccer fell 2-0 against league rival South Hadley. Agawam would rebound last Saturday afternoon with a victory on the road at Wahconah Regional 1-0. The Brownies are 1-1 to start the season.



Talia Oliveria sends a kick away ahead of pressure.



Mia Oliver takes the goal kick.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

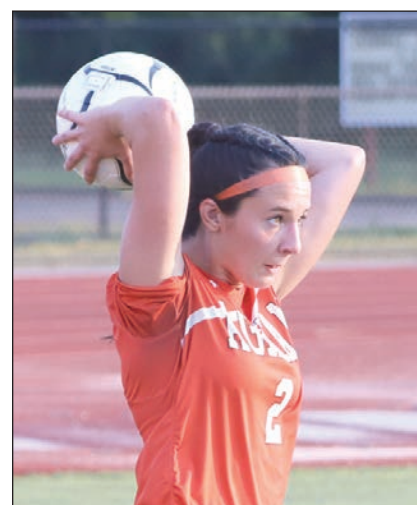


Katelyn Cleavell tries to beat her opponent to the ball.



Isabella Spaulding looks for a score.

TURLEY PHOTO BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM



Gabriela Cosentini goes for the throw-in.



Makayla Rosario looks to pick up the slanting pass

Brownies outlasted by Lions' team in opener

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW – The Ludlow girls varsity volleyball team didn't win a home match until the beginning of October a year ago. It didn't take them as long to celebrate a victory in front of their faithful supporters this season.

The Lady Lions kicked off the 2024 regular season by defeating Western Division rival Agawam by the final score 3-2 (25-21, 19-25, 18-25, 25-12, 15-9) at Mullins Gymnasium, last Wednesday night.

"Last year was a rebuilding season for us," said Ludlow senior cap-

Sports

Worcester Railers trainer moves into AHL position

WORCESTER - The Worcester Railers Hockey Club (@RailersHC), proud ECHL (@ECHL) affiliate of the New York Islanders (@NYIslanders) announced today that Alex Maring has been hired by the Tampa Bay Lightning to be the next Head Athletic Trainer of the American Hockey League's Syracuse Crunch.

Maring, 24, goes to Syracuse after serving as the head athletic trainer for the Railers for the 2022-23 & 2023-24 seasons. He first joined the Railers after serving as an athletic training intern with the Springfield Thunderbirds of the American Hockey

League during the 2021-22 season, joining them on their way to an AHL Eastern Conference championship and Calder Cup Finals appearance. He shadowed with the Utica Comets of the AHL during the 2015-16 season, working under current St. Louis Blues assistant trainer Dustin Flynn.

"We're excited to see Alex take the next step in his career," Chief Operating Officer Michael G. Myers said. "This is something that's well deserved, and we look forward to following his success in the coming years. The Railers are extremely proud of our track record and commitment to de-

veloping employees to get to the next level both on and off the ice."

The New Hartford, NY native graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Athletic Training from Springfield College in May of 2021. Maring graduated from Springfield College's Master of Education in Sport and Exercise Psychology program in May of 2023.

"I'd like to thank the Railers organization and the city of Worcester for the past two years," Maring said. "The Railers gave me the opportunity to provide the best possible care to every athlete that came

through the door. I was able to foster great relationships with all of our amazing partners and staff in Worcester. I look forward to maintaining the connections I made in Worcester for a lifetime."

The Worcester Railers HC 2024-25 Opening Weekend at the DCU Center is Sat., Oct. 19th and Sun., Oct. 20th vs. the Reading Royals. The new 508 Club is now on sale for the 2024-25 season! Get access to games this season, exclusive events and additional benefits by calling the Railers front office at 508-365-1750 or by visiting RailersHC.com.

MIAA looks to honor officials

The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association is looking to collectively recognize the efforts of our Game Officials. The fall National Officials Appreciation Week will be held Oct. 6 to 12. Once again, MIAA staff members will travel around the state to personally thank officials and support their efforts on the local level. We hope that you will consider recognizing them in some manner. The Winter Officials Appreciation Week will be Jan. 13-18, 2025 and the Spring Officials Appreciation Week will be April 6-12, 2025.

T-Birds announce another season of promotions

SPRINGFIELD - The Springfield Thunderbirds are cranking up the volume on their impending ninth season of play in the American Hockey League with a loaded promotional schedule that features brand-new giveaways, returning staple events, and some never-before-seen elements at the Thunderdome.

It all starts on Saturday, Oct. 12 with Opening Night presented by MGM



Springfield. Before puck drop, fans can flock to the Plaza at MGM Springfield for the Community Bank N.A. season-opening Block Party, with support from the Springfield BID, from 4 to 6 p.m., featuring live music, food & drink to drop the puck on another magnificent season. The team anticipates a ninth consecutive Opening Night sellout and a 15th consecutive sellout dating back to last season.

Fans can expect to see five specialty jerseys corresponding to the team's traditional theme nights: Teddy Bear Toss, Throwback Night, Ice-O-Topes Night, Military Appreciation Night, and Pink in the Rink. Should we do six specialty jerseys? Stay tuned for more info. The fan-favorite blue third jerseys will return this season on the following game nights: Friday, Oct. 25; Friday, Nov. 22; Tuesday, Dec. 31; Monday, Jan. 20; Friday, March 28; and Friday, April 18.

The full promotional schedule can be found at www.springfieldthunderbirds.com.

VOLLEYBALL ■ from page 7

tain Peyton Brennan, who's a second-year member of the varsity volleyball team. "Agawam beat us twice last year and it feels good to come out on top against them in tonight's match. We're really hoping to qualify for the Western Mass. tournament this season."

The season opening victory was the first time that the Lady Lions defeated the Brownies on the volleyball court since a 3-1 home win on October 15, 2021.

Brennan led the Lady Lions with six kills, six aces, and seven digs in last Wednesday's contest.

The other three Ludlow senior captains are Delores Calvao, Michele Winslow, and Kylie Roach.

"The four captains are our leaders," said Ludlow head coach Steve Jarvis. "I voted for two of the captains and the players voted for the other two. They keep everything in order."

Calvao contributed with six digs, four assists, and four aces. Roach finished with three kill and three blocks, while Winslow chipped in with a team-high 17 digs and

four aces.

Overall, the Lady Lions had a total of 14 kills, 42 digs, and 22 aces in the five set match.

The Brownies senior co-captains are Elizabeth St. Jean and Isabella Spaulding.

During the offseason, Spaulding and Brennan played on the same club team.

"I played on the same club team with Bella throughout the winter and spring in the Pioneer Valley Juniors," Brennan said. "It was a lot of fun playing against her tonight."

Spaulding helped her team with nine kills and St. Jean had six digs.

Both teams held the lead at the start of the opening set.

The Lady Lions took a 9-8 lead following a kill and back-to-back aces by Brennan.

After Agawam tied the score, Ludlow won the next three points.

The Brownies, who lost three starters to graduation, managed to get within one point a couple of times, but the Lady Lions were able to hold onto the lead the rest of the way in the opening set.

Ludlow held an 18-12 advantage in the second set before Agawam came storming back.

With junior setter Toni Vassallo handling the serving duties, the Brownies reeled off eleven unanswered points which gave them a 23-18 advantage.

"Toni is one of our most consistent servers and she's also a setter," said second-year Agawam head coach Jess Colson. "She set the tone for us in the second set. She did a fabulous job."

The Lady Lions finally stopped the run before the visitors evened the match with a kill by junior Emily Scott.

The Brownies held the lead for almost the entire third set.

The only time that the Lady Lions led in that set was at 9-8 following an ace by Calvao, which capped off a 5-0 spurt.

Agawam responded with a 6-0 run with Scott doing the serving.

The Brownies was leading, 21-13, in the third set before the Lady Lions made one final comeback attempt.

The home team closed the gap to 21-18 before Agawam took a 2-1 lead in the overall match by winning the final four points.

Ludlow never trailed in the fourth set, as they built a double digit lead forcing a fifth and deciding set.

"We changed to a different offense in the third set," said Jarvis, who has been coaching the Ludlow girls' varsity volleyball team since 2016. "We just didn't let down during the final two sets. We also served very well."

With junior Ashlyn Mortimer handling the serving duties, the Lady Lions won the first two points of the final set.

Agawam tied the score a couple of times in the fifth set before Ludlow put together a 9-1 run giving them a commanding 13-6 lead. Calvao and Brennan did the serving during that stretch.

"You always need to take a quick lead in the fifth set because it's only 15 points," Jarvis said. "Once we took the lead in the fifth set, we managed to keep it. It has been a couple of years since we've beaten Agawam, but we just need to keep improving."

The Lady Lions sealed the deal following a kill by Roach.

The two teams are slated to meet again at Agawam High School at 6:30 pm on September 25.



Emily Scott looks for a spike.



Hannah Jack squares up a bump.



Mia Atkins sends a pass to the front line.



Toni Vassallo goes straight up with a set.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY

Eversource modernization plan approved

BOSTON – Affirming the commonwealth's leadership on a strategic approach to the clean energy transition, the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities' recently approved Electric Sector Modernization Plans proposed by Eversource and other utilities to develop the clean energy infrastructure needed to meet decarbonization goals while ensuring safe, reliable service for customers. The DPU's order builds on Massachusetts' proactive, equity-focused work to advance a sustainable energy future, reflecting a strong commitment to responsibly investing in more resilient, flexible infrastructure to combat the impacts of climate change, enable electrification, increase renewable energy production and meet the future energy needs of customers.

"We appreciate the department's constructive consideration and the thoughtful collaboration with stakeholders across Massachusetts on our Electric Sector Modernization Plan, which is a transformative roadmap that paves the way for a modernized electric distribution system that

strengthens the grid's resiliency and reliability for our customers while helping meet the commonwealth's decarbonization goals with enhanced community and stakeholder engagement," said Eversource Senior Vice President of Engineering and System Planning Digaunto Chatterjee.

The department's order and Eversource's ESMP demonstrate a strong commitment to a clean energy future that spurs economic development, creates jobs, and encourages more investment in Massachusetts. Importantly, it also affords all customers effective and equitable opportunities to access and participate in the process to develop clean energy infrastructure projects through multiple forums including the Grid Mod Advisory Council, Equity Working Group, and the establishment of a Community Engagement Stakeholder Advisory Group. The newly established CESAG will bring together members from community-based organizations across the state to collaboratively create a statewide stakeholder engagement framework that will be implemented before the

development of clean energy projects.

"We are eager to move forward with our ESMP to maintain safe and reliable service as we transition to a clean energy future that ensures meaningful opportunities for all customers to participate in the development of clean energy projects and share in their benefits," Chatterjee said "By investing in innovative technologies and more resilient infrastructure while engaging with our communities, we are committed to supporting the commonwealth's decarbonization goals and ensuring all customers share in our collective progress - reinforcing Massachusetts' leadership in responsibly advancing a sustainable energy future."

Among other highlights, Eversource's ESMP will significantly increase electrification hosting capacity to accommodate 2.5 million electric vehicles, 1 million residential heat pumps, and an additional 2.2 GW of new solar power, which are essential for achieving the commonwealth's ambitious electrification and decarbonization targets. It also focuses on enhancing grid resiliency

in environmental justice communities by prioritizing these areas for proactive grid upgrades to mitigate potential future climate impacts. Working collaboratively with the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center and other stakeholders, Eversource will increase the use of local clean energy resources as virtual power plant alternatives to address grid needs, defer system upgrades when possible, and help lower costs for customers.

"As the commonwealth continues to pursue this transformative energy transition, investments in clean energy infrastructure must achieve both equity and decarbonization objectives while focusing on affordability for customers," said Eversource Vice President for Grid Modernization Jen Schilling. "Collaboration and stakeholder input is at the heart of our ESMP, and we look forward to working with MassCEC on a study to quantify the local reliability value of virtual power plan alternatives."

More information on Eversource's ESMP can be found on the company's website.

Tech High to hold class reunion

SPRINGFIELD – The spirit and camaraderie of Springfield's Tech High School is alive and well as they gear up for another exciting reunion on Saturday, September 28 at the Elks Lodge #61 at 440 Tiffany Street from noon to 6 p.m. The reunion is open to all Tech classes and friends.

An outside barbecue will be held rain or shine under the lodge's pavilion and a special tent. The BBQ will include hot dogs, hamburgers, sausage and peppers, salads, dessert and more. Cash bar. Free parking and handicap accessible.

A fun-filled afternoon will include a live band and dancing, cornhole and bocce games, raffles and time to reminisce with friends over the years and make new friends as well. Donations will be accepted

for raffle prizes.

According to committee chair Mike Borecki, "Last year we had a terrific turnout of over 300 people and we anticipate a larger group this year. We're thrilled that the Tech Spirit is alive and well and look forward to many years to come".

Seating is limited and tickets are \$25 each. All are on a first come, first served basis. Open seating. For tickets call Mike Borecki '72 at 413-351-6572, Dawn Duncan '71 at 413-896-3930, Paul Montefusco '69 at 413-596-6607, or Matt Villamaino '67 at 413-896-2206. We're always looking for volunteers. If interested, contact Mike Borecki. Located on Elliot Street in Springfield, MA Technical High School was founded in 1906 and closed in 1986.

Hibernians announce activities

HOLYOKE – Hibernians of Hampden/Hampshire Counties have announced the following events:

Halfway to St. Patrick's Day – The public is invited to an evening of celebration and fun featuring Dee Reilly at the Glendale Ridge Vineyard, 155 Glendale Rd Southampton, Mass.; Admission is free of charge and the event will be held Tuesday Sept. 17 from 5 to 7 p.m. There will be food and wine for purchase at a cash bar. The event will be held rain or shine. Everyone is encouraged to bring a non-perishable food item to help Kate's Kitchen.

The Annual Par-3 Golf Tournament sponsored by the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians will be held on Saturday, Sept. 21. The public is invited to participate in the tournament, which will be held at Holyoke Country Club, 2 Country Club Rd., Holyoke. Golf registration begins at 9 a.m.

with tee-off scheduled for 10 a.m. Lunch will be held at 12 noon. The cost for golf and lunch is \$60. The cost for lunch only is \$25. Please call Nora McMahon at (413) 218-2092 for more information. At the tournament, a collection needed items will be taken for residents of the Holyoke Veterans Home. Please go to aoh-holyoke.com for a list of needed items.

The Annual Food and Clothing Drive for Providence Ministries will go on from Sept. 1 through Dec. 1. The Hibernians and the Polish National Credit Union are sponsoring the drive. The drop off location is at the Polish National Credit Union, 270 Westfield Rd., Holyoke. Please consider bringing non-perishable food items and gently used clothing; sleeping bags and blankets needed. Or make a donation and ask to sign up to enter a raffle for \$100 and/or a raffle basket.

HCC art gallery debuts "Human Erratics" installation

HOLYOKE – The campus of Holyoke Community College and the woods around it, like many places in western Massachusetts, are marked by occasional, enormous boulders called "erratics," giant rocks left in seemingly random locations by glaciers as they receded at the end of the last Ice Age.

"Human Erratics" is the title of a new installation at HCC's Taber Art Gallery that takes its name from a short film by artist Marie Lynn Haas. The film, composed entirely of still images, explores what she calls "wastescapes" - deserted buildings and dumpsites, in her hometown of Worthington.

"Like glacial erratics, left behind by the movement of ice across long distances, wastescape structures mark the path of human movement," she

explains in a note that accompanies the exhibition, which opened Sept. 3 with the start of the fall semester and runs through Friday, Oct. 18. "They are, in a sense, human erratics, deposits of human abandonment and remnants of neglect."

"Human Erratics," the show, includes four short film projects created by Haas and her artistic collaborator Tori Lawrence, residency director and founder of Atland, an artists' retreat in West Chesterfield, where Haas is also a curator.

The gallery, located inside the HCC Library on the second floor of the Donahue Building, will host an opening reception for "Human Erratics" on Thursday, Sept. 12, from 5-7 p.m. that includes an informal meet-and-greet with the artists.

According to Rachel Rushing, Taber

Art Gallery director, the films and the exhibition itself are really a collaboration of the many artists who comprise the Tori Lawrence and Co. group, which is made up of dancers, musicians, builders, and other artists.

"They all work together on each other's projects," said Rushing, "such as these short films and the installations."

Each film in the show runs on a continuous loop and is meant to be experienced in a different way.

Also part of the installation is a book of Haas's photographs titled "Wastescapes," along with two empty journals that invite visitors to contribute their own thoughts and drawings.

"These works explore personal and collective turmoil and reveal how chronic illness

and the cycles of life and death are woven into the fabric of ecological change," reads a note that accompanies the exhibit.

The films run from five to 15 minutes. None have narration or a typical storyline, so they don't have to be watched from beginning to end to be appreciated in the context of the show.

"It depends on what people want to do," she said. "You can sit and watch the whole thing if you want. But as with any kind of art viewing, it's not dependent on that. It's not like going to see a movie."

The Taber Art Gallery, located off the lobby of the HCC Library on the second floor of the HCC Donahue Building, is free and open to the public Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. during regular school sessions.

"These works explore personal and collective turmoil and reveal how chronic illness and the cycles of life and death are woven into the fabric of ecological change."

Holyoke Community adding eSports team to athletics roster

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College is adding another athletics team to its roster of intercollegiate sports.

Along with men's and women's soccer, cross country, golf, volleyball, men's and women's basketball, track and field, and baseball, HCC will soon begin recruiting students to play eSports.

In eSports - short for electronic sports - participants play online video games against individuals or other teams. Some of the more common collegiate-level eSports are Overwatch (a multiplayer, first-person shooter game), League of Legends (an arena-style battle game), and Rocket League (a vehicular soccer game).

"They are strategy games," said HCC Athletics Director Tom Stewart, "thinking person's games. Every athletic event is a thinking person's game, but these are more strictly thinking person's games, but they also require a measure of physical coordination and stamina."

According to Stewart, HCC will be just the fourth community college in Massachusetts to create an eSports team, joining Mass Bay, Northern Essex, and Bunker Hill community colleges. The HCC team will be co-ed.

"We're the only community college west of Worcester that's going to have eSports," he said.

Although HCC belongs to the National Junior College Athletic Association, the NJCAA, its eSports team will compete in the Eastern College Athletic Conference, which has an eSports division.

Last month, HCC posted an employment notice soliciting applicants for a head coach to lead the eSports team.

Over the summer, a former classroom on the second floor of HCC's Bartley Center for Athletics and Recreation was converted into an eSports center and outfitted with 10 eSports stations that will allow two teams of five to play simultaneously. Each station includes a high-performance computer, monitor, keyboard, headset, mouse, and gaming controller. There's a large screen monitor on the wall, where the coach can plan strategy and watch gameplay, and a small lounge area in the middle of the room for downtime. Only members of the eSports team and their coaches will have access to the room for practices and competitions.

With this new offering, Stewart said the college is hoping to capitalize on the increasing popularity of professional Sports, a market expected to exceed \$1 billion in revenue in the United States in 2024 and growing about 15 percent annually, according to Statista, an online industry database.

"It's the biggest growth sport in the county," Stewart said. "I think it's going to attract a different kind of kid. When local high schools find out we have an eSports team here, I think it's going to help enrollment."

Like all of HCC's athletic teams, eSports will have academic eligibility requirements, as well as nutrition and fitness components.

"It's not a gaming club," said Stewart. "Team members are not going to be able to kick it in here all day long instead of going to class. They'll have to maintain their grades. It's just another athletic offering to complement their overall educational experience."

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Even rubber ducks are able to get library cards during National Library Card Month.



Agawam Public Library is giving out library cards to any person who brings in a stuffed animal or toy.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY QUINN SUOMALA



Children's Librarian Pamela Weingart and Adult Services Librarian Cher Collins had fun demonstrating how stuffed animals can get library cards.



Children's Librarian Pamela Weingart and Youth Associate Evan Delano demonstrated how people can get prizes on joke days and library cards for their stuffed animals.



Using their library cards, stuffed animals (and people) are able to check out books to read.



The toy Bigfoot was able to get a library card at Agawam Public Library.

Happy Retirement, Donna!

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Youth Associate Evan Delano presented a library card to a stuffed sloth.

TOY ■ from page 1

information at that library, but also all libraries that are a part of the CWMARS partnership, which includes West Springfield, Southwick, Wilbraham, Westfield and many more.

"It opens up over 150 different libraries to you," Weingart said.

The library has many more events planned throughout the month of September.

There are joke days every Wednesday and Friday where anyone can come to the children's desk, tell a joke and get a prize.

Those prizes can also be awarded a library card, so if a person does not have a stuffed animal or toy in mind to receive a card, they are welcome to come pick out a rubber duck or other prize at the library that can receive one.

Additionally, Youth Associate Izzy Malvezzi is putting on a Stuffy Show, which will be like a dog show but with stuffed animals.

This event goes perfectly with the stuffed animal library cards.

"The stuffy show is going to be awesome," Weingart said. "After you have a good time at the stuffy show you can get your stuffed animal a library card, since they're here anyway. Or people can come in and get their stuffies a library card and then get their own library card and then read up about different games and competitions and be extra ready for the Stuffy Show."

To learn more about the event at APL, go to their website at <https://www.agawamlibrary.org/>.