



**REGION**  
New travel center  
PAGE 2



**LOCAL**  
Art workshop  
PAGE 3



**SPORTS**  
Basketball action  
PAGE 7

# AGAWAM

## ADVERTISER NEWS

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# Senior center hosts Snowflake Spectacular



Everyone was quite excited to begin their horse and carriage ride.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY QUINN SUOMALA

By Quinn Suomala  
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – The senior center put on a Snowflake Spectacular for all of the seniors and the staff to enjoy.

The day was full of fun with over 150 people attending. Mainely Drafts Horse and Carriage provided horse and carriage rides, there was a raffle and everyone got to enjoy a holiday meal.

“We’ll have hot cocoa, treats and the staff is providing appetizers for the seniors,” Senior Center Director Cindy Sullivan said. “Wagon rides are great and they don’t really happen a lot, so it is really a cool thing.”

For the wagon rides residents will be able to ride around the property of the senior center, including some of the property of

the Housing Authority, so they could enjoy their time without worrying about crossing the street.

Partners Restaurant provided the food and attendees were able to pay \$10 each for entrance.

Sullivan was excited to be holding this event for the seniors and the staff. This year was her first full year at the center and she felt this was the perfect way to finish it off.

“It’s my first holiday event and we wanted to bring some seniors into the senior center and just really show them a special time,” Sullivan said “It’s a way to celebrate the year.”

Due to this, Sullivan wanted this event to be big so she could show her gratitude for all who

SENIOR | page 12

## Johnson discusses pavement plan

By Quinn Suomala  
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – Mayor Christopher Johnson and Town Engineer Michelle Chase came before the city council at their meeting on Dec. 16 to discuss the town pavement plan for 2025.

For 2025, the town plans to mill and overlay Pineview Circle, Arrowwood Drive, Glendale Road, Hampden Lane, Sherwood Drive and Forest Ridge Lane. They are also going to mill, SAMI and overlay Begley Street.

Milling and overlaying is a process that helps roadways to last longer.

PLAN | page 10

## Snow fun: Kids create their own snowmen

By Quinn Suomala  
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – Agawam Public Library hosted a program for kids in kindergarten through second grade to come in and build fake snow snowmen.

Kids were welcomed into the library and able to use water and baking soda to create fake snow to build their snowmen with.

“I found a couple recipes online for fake snow and the one I am using today was the simplest,” Youth Services Associate Isabelle Malvezzi said. “They can add in glitter and food coloring as they want.”

They were also supplied with a large variety of buttons and pipe cleaners to add to their snowmen for decoration.

Each child had a work station with a tray that had the baking soda with a bowl of water next to it. This way the kids could add however much water they wanted until they got the right texture for their snow.

Malvezzi enjoyed getting to see the different ways the kids went at making the snowmen.

“I’m looking forward to seeing what they make,” Malvezzi said. “The goal is to build snowmen, but they can decide they want to build a house or anything else and that is totally fine.”

The kids had a lot of fun experimenting with the snow, seeing how much water they needed to add to get it the right texture and seeing what they could make out of it.

They also got creative with the buttons and pipe cleaners. Some kids cut up the pipe cleaners to make different decorations for the snowmen, others found different color buttons to add different features to the snowmen.

Malvezzi was also glad that the kids got to relax and have some fun in the snow even though there wasn’t real snow on the

SNOWMAN | page 6



Youth Services Associate Isabelle Malvezzi added glitter to Zoe Shanahan’s fake snow. Zoe Shanahan added a variety of buttons to her snowman.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY QUINN SUOMALA



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Community Newspapers



# ew travel center to be constructed at end of I-291

By Kristin Rivers  
krivers@turley.com

CHICOPEE – The City Council approved two licenses for the truck stop and travel center on Burnett Road on Dec. 17.

The controversial approval comes after two 10-3 decisions to for an amended fuel storage license from Chicopee Inn, Inc. and a service station license from Pilot Travel Centers LLC for 357 Burnett Road.

There was also an 8-5 vote to not send the items back to the License Committee for another public hearing. The night before, the License Committee voted 2-2, with one abstention, creating an unfavorable report.

## The Project

The truck stop and travel center proposed by Pilot Travel Centers LLC will be on 7.9 acres of land with an 11,421-square-foot building. It will have a 16-pump gas station, seven-position refueling area for tractor-trailer trucks, a Wendy's restaurant and a convenience store.

The applicants said there would not be showers for truckers at the location.

The project was originally approved by the Planning Board in May 2022, but the City Council rejected permits for fuel storage and gas station licenses in September 2022. This led to a court case requesting the council's decision be vacated and the licenses granted, as lawyers for Pilot Travel argued the council's decision was unlawful.

The City Council's decision was upheld by Hampden Superior Court in June.

The project came back to the table re-



This vacant lot at 357 Burnett Road in Chicopee, where a controversial truck stop and travel center will be located following city council approval on Dec. 17.

TURLEY PHOTO BY KRISTIN RIVERS

cently when the applicant applied again for the licenses after previously withdrawing.

## Councilors Decide

The council would ultimately would 10-3 to approve the service station license and amended fuel storage license.

During council discussion, Ward 6 Councilor Samuel Shumsky addressed several things, including his upbringing in the Burnett Road area, the ongoing problems with traffic and the threats and harassment that took place over the last two months.

"It's insane and I condemn all violence. I condemn all of it no matter who it's at. This is not right. This should not happen and, quite frankly, the fact that it did happen is pretty concerning and I'm going to spend the remainder of my term trying to figure out ways that we can reunify the city and bring civility and respectful dialogue back to a conversation because this should never happen again," Shumsky said. "Quite frankly, I'm disheartened and just utterly disgust-

ed at the way this was all brought about."

Shumsky said he'd vote against the development, citing how he heard from constituents in all forms of communication and when he went door to door to speak with them.

"It was a resounding no. I didn't have one person tell me, yes, they wanted this. So, this is why I'm voting no on this and this is why I'm not going to support this," Shumsky said. "I hope that my councilors will support me in that and the residents of Ward 6."

Councilor-at-Large Tim Wagner fielded hundreds of phone calls and emails from residents from all areas of Chicopee both in favor and against the truck stop.

After giving it a lot of thought, Wagner said he'd vote in favor "because what we've done here over the last several years is show that we're unfriendly to any business opportunity and we've discouraged further business development within the community."

"I think it's an important thing to show

that we're at least open to the possibility of new development in the city and I think that this council has made a good faith effort to try and share those residents' concerns and take in residents' concerns with the project that we have on the floor here today," Wagner said. "I really am just sad about this whole process though. I wish it could have been done in a more respectful and open manner. I'm going to vote for it, I think. I'm really just sad that this is what it's come to in Chicopee."

Ward 9 Councilor Mary Beth Costello called it a teachable moment, learning from the dialogue that "taxes are very, very important" and sometimes get taken for granted.

A lot of people not in Ward 6 and also in her ward, Costello added, wanted the development for the taxes.

"A lot of calls that I got was about how do you spend your money and can you do better," Costello said. "And we're going to have to come up with a way to figure that out."

## More plow operators needed

AGAWAM – The Town of Agawam, Chief Procurement Officer in consultation with the Department of Public Works Department hereby requests written applications and bids from qualified contractors and/or individuals that wish to be considered for hire for snow plowing services.

Bids can still be made to the Town of Agawam to serve as a contract plow operator for the winter season, which has already begun.

The Town will make one or more awards for contracts sufficient to cover the Town's requirements. The Town of Agawam also reserves the right: (1) to reject any or all bids, or any part thereof; (2) to waive any informality in the bids; and (3) to accept the bid that is in the best interest of the Town (4) to negotiate a price on Item 1, and (5) to add additional vendors after the deadline if necessary. Consideration will first be given to the contractor/individual who has successfully and responsibly provided snow removal services to the Town in the past, and whose primary place of residence or

business is in the Town of Agawam.

Item 1: The contract will be awarded to the responsible, responsive and qualified bidder who offers the low price for each location meeting minimum equipment specification cited in Section II, with consideration given to the contractor/individual who has successfully and responsibly provided snow removal service to the Town in the past and whose primary place of residence or business is in the Town of Agawam

Item 2: The contract shall be awarded within the categories specified in Section II, with consideration given to the contractor/individual who has successfully and responsibly provided snow removal service to the Town in the past and whose primary place of residence or business is in the Town of Agawam.

The snow and ice season shall commence on November 15, 2024 and expire on April 30, 2025. All successful contractors/individuals are expected to have their equipment ready at the beginning of each season.

## Hosley featured at AHA meeting

AGAWAM – Historian and scholar William Hosley will be the featured speaker at the Agawam Historical Association's Winter Meeting on Thursday, Jan. 16 2025 at 6:30 p.m. at the Captain Charles Leonard House, 663 Main St.

Hosley will present "Making History, Celebrating Massachusetts' Local Historical Museums." Hosley said "Massachusetts has 351 towns and as many community-based historical museums. Most are small. Many are run by volunteers. No two are alike. They preserve and present local artifacts and stories. They collect. They offer public programs. They advocate for preservation. They serve schools and greet tourists." Hosley considers them a civic miracle, and he will tell their story and why they matter.

Hosley is an independent scholar, historian, writer, and photographer who retired from a long career as a museum curator and director. He is passionate about art, local history and historic preservation. He was formerly Director of the New Haven Museum and Connecticut Landmarks, where he cared for a chain of historic attractions. Prior to that,

as a curator and exhibition developer at the Wadsworth Atheneum, Bill organized major exhibitions including The Great River: Art and Society of the Connecticut Valley, The Japan Idea: Art and Life in Victorian America, and Sam & Elizabeth: Legend and Legacy of Colt's Empire, an exhibition that that spanned the Coltsville National Historical Park in Hartford, Connecticut.

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., in Feeding Hills, and the Agawam Historical and Fire House Museum at 35 Elm Street in Agawam. The Smith House is preserved in largely original, unrestored condition. 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. For additional information regarding the Agawam Historical Association.

## St. David's announces church services

AGAWAM – Saint David's Episcopal Church, 699 Springfield St., announced its remaining schedule for holiday church services.

Dec. 29 Traditional Celebration of Holy Eucharist at 8 a.m.

This service will be similar to what we do every Sunday at 8 a.m., but with Christmas readings, hymns, and sermon.

Dec. 29 Service of Lessons and Carols at 10 a.m.

This service is a series of nine lessons (readings) interspersed with nine Christmas Carols. It's perfect for anyone interested in the sweep of the biblical story and/or singing Christmas music together.

Jan. 5, 2025 Services of Holy Eucharist at 8 a.m. and 10 a.m.

Join us in celebrating the 12th day of Christmas. We'll hear the story of the wise men and sing "We Three Kings" among other Christmas hymns.

## Town announces residential Christmas tree and bulk collection services

AGAWAM – The Department of Public Works is pleased to announce, in addition to weekly trash and recycling services, Republic Services will be providing Christmas Tree and Bulk Collection services during the month of January.

Christmas Tree collections will take place the week of Jan. 6 to 10.

\*Christmas trees will be collected on the same day as scheduled trash collection. Please be aware that the regular trash truck will not be collecting trees, a separate truck will be running for the collection of trees.

\*Christmas trees 7' or larger must be cut in half and placed on the tree belt no earlier than 7 a.m. of the collection day listed above.

\*Trees in plastic bags will NOT be collected.

\*It is not the responsibility of the hauler to dig out trees buried in the snow due to plowing or excessive snowfall prior to the scheduled collection days.

\*In the event of a snow delay during the scheduled collection week, residents

should make alternative arrangements to recycle their trees at the Bondi's Island Landfill. Collection routes for trees will not be re-scheduled.

\*Residents may dispose of trees prior to or after the scheduled collection days at the Bondi's Island Landfill.

January Bulk Collection – By appointment only.

Residents who receive curbside trash and recycling services from the town and are in need of a bulk pick up in January should contact Republic Services at 413-557-6700 to schedule a date for collection.

Bulk pick-ups will take place between Jan. 13 and 24, by appointment only. Any items left on the curb without an appointment will be the responsibility of the home owner to remove and dispose of. For more information on bulk collection services visit the DPW page of the town website at [www.agawam.ma.us](http://www.agawam.ma.us)

Should you have any questions regarding either service, please contact the DPW at 413-821-0600

## DPW collects used lights

AGAWAM – Frustrated with broken holiday lights, or just have a bunch that no longer suits the needs?

No matter what the reason, resist the urge to throw old holiday lights in the curbside trash or recycling collection cart. Holiday light strings are known as "tangles" in the recycling industry. Tangles are things like plastic bags, ropes, cords, hoses, wires, and light strings that jam sorting machinery by wrapping around the equipment, which is dangerous for workers.

Light strings may be delivered to the Department of Public Works front office through Jan. 31. This program is for light strings only: incandescent, LED and icicle light strings with wires and attached bulbs. Boxes, bags, and packaging must be removed before placing lights in the recycling container. A

Alternative options for recycling light strings would include mail back programs such as [HolidayLEDs.com](http://HolidayLEDs.com) or [Christmas-light-source.com](http://Christmas-light-source.com).



# Velis, Conference Committee reaches agreement on bill

BOSTON – Last week, Senator John C. Velis (D-Westfield) and other House and Senate members of the conference committee reached a final agreement on a compromise Substance Use Disorder bill that the Legislature will take up this week. An Act relative to treatments and coverage for substance use disorder and recovery coach licensure aims to reduce overdoses in the Commonwealth and expand access to substance use recovery programs in communities throughout the state.

“From the onset of my appointment as Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use, and Recovery, I made it explicitly clear that one of my top priorities was to send comprehensive pieces of legislation to the Governor that will help keep people alive and make quality recovery resources easily accessible,” shared Senator Velis, who was one of the six legislative negotiators for the final legislation. “The unfortunate truth is that most people in our Commonwealth know someone who is struggling or has struggled with addiction, and it is absolutely heartbreaking how many loved ones we continue to lose to this disease. Not only does this legislation bolster access to life saving overdose reversal tools but it also expands access to recovery coaches, vital providers who truly understand what it is like to navigate recovery because of their lived experiences. I am beyond grateful

to all my colleagues who have worked on this legislation and worked through this collaborative process to reach this important compromise.”

The bill includes provisions to expand access to life saving overdose reversal treatments, bolster non opioid pain medications, and strengthen treatment for residents in recovery including the following:

- Mandates that insurance providers cover opioid reversal drugs. This bill mandates that all health plans cover emergency opioid antagonists (EOAs)—opioid reversal drugs such as naloxone and Narcan—without cost-sharing or prior authorization.
- Updates insurance requirements for non-opioid pain treatment. The bill updates requirements for insurance providers to ensure adequate coverage and access to pain management services without prior authorization, including non-opioid alternatives to pain treatment.
- Mandates insurance coverage for recovery coaches. The bill mandates all health plans cover recovery coach services without cost-sharing or prior authorization at no less than MassHealth rates, regardless of the setting in which the services are provided.
- Establishes recovery coaching licen-



John Velis

sure. This legislation establishes recovery coach licensing and oversight within DPH and codifies the practice of recovery coaching to ensure qualifications, proper use of titles, and compliance with DPH regulations. It also directs BSAS to study and report on barriers to certification, credentialing, and other employment and practice requirements for recovery coaches, as well as

establish a peer support program for recovery coaches and their employers that includes mentorship, technical assistance, and other resources.

- Reporting on alcohol- and drug-free housing. The legislation directs DPH to study and report findings to the Legislature on alcohol- and drug-free housing, also known as sober homes, including the safety and recovery of sober home residents in the Commonwealth.

- Expands non-opioid pain treatment training. The legislation expands required prescriber training to include acute and chronic pain treatment, incorporating available and appropriate non-opioid alternatives. It also requires pharmacists dispensing opioids to distribute printed educational materials on non-opioid alternatives to pain treatment as issued by the Department of Public Health (DPH).

- Boosts anti-discrimination protections for people with substance use disorder. This legislation clarifies DPH authority to enforce anti-discrimination protections for people with SUD who are covered by public health insurance. It prohibits discrimination against those lawfully possessing or taking medication for opioid-related SUD treatment as prescribed. It also directs the Bureau of Substance Addiction Services (BSAS) to examine and then report to the Legislature—including any recommendations or necessary legislative or regulatory changes—on the disparate impacts of SUD, overdoses, overdose deaths, and clinical outcomes for members of historically marginalized communities.

- Supports Harm Reduction Organizations. This bill ensures that public health and harm reduction organizations are protected from civil or criminal liability and professional disciplinary actions if they are providing drug checking services in good faith, and prohibits medical malpractice insurers from discriminating against health care practitioners who provide harm reduction services.

Both the Senate and House planned to take up the final legislation on Dec. 19, and Senator Velis noted that he hopes that Governor Healey will promptly sign the bill into law before the end of the legislation on Dec. 31.

## Arillotta and Bradley kick off author visits

AGAWAM – Attention fans of the True Crime book genre! Join us for a book talk and signing for the book *South End Syndicate: How I Took Over the Genovese Springfield Crew* by Anthony Arillotta and Joe Bradley at 2 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 4, 2025. The book tells the story of Mr. Arillotta and his rise to power as a Mafia boss in Springfield, Massachusetts. Brimming with local landmarks, wealth, power, and seductive allure, the depiction of his rise and eventual fall from grace will keep you on the edge of your seat. Come hear from the authors and purchase a copy of the book. Register early for this program, as it will surely be well attended.

## Agawam Day to celebrated in St. Petersburg

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

## Art Workshop to aid preservation efforts

AGAWAM – The historic Captain Charles Leonard House at 663 Main St., will be the location of a “Winter Scene” art workshop by local artist Patti Besette on Friday evening, Jan. 17, 2025, from 6:15 to 9:30 p.m.

Cost per person is \$40 and includes all materials and step-by-step instruction needed to paint a winter scene on 18”x24” canvas. No experience is necessary. Registration is required as seating

is limited. Participants need only bring their creativity, snacks and a beverage. A raffle will also be held.

Please contact Charlotte at (978) 549-7820 for tickets and information.

A portion of the proceeds will aid the preservation efforts at the Captain Charles Leonard House, built in 1805 as a stage tavern and considered Agawam’s finest Federal-era building. The house was restored in the late 1930s by Mrs.

Minerva Davis, who established a Board of Trustees to oversee the operation of the house as Agawam’s Community House, the role it has served since 1939. The Captain Charles Leonard House was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1975.

The Captain Charles Leonard House is available to rent for business functions and social events. For rental information, please call 413-786-9421.

## Feline Friends hosting holiday drive

FEEDING HILLS – Feline Friends Inc will be holding two monthly donation drives at Smithland Pet & Garden Center on Saturday, Dec. 14 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. as well as Jan. 4. Volunteers will be collecting food, litter and monetary donations for the kitties. Opened bags/boxes will be accepted.

Smithland, a valued sponsor, is stocked with Friskies Pate or Shreds canned food (single flavor cases are preferred), many Fancy Feast varieties and unscented, clumping cat litter.

Feline Friends would also appreciate jars of baby food (meat/poultry varieties), paper towels, puppy peepads and gift cards to Smithland or Costco. Checks or cash are always

gratefully accepted at Feline Friends, P.O. Box 174, Feeding Hills, MA 01030.

Just a reminder that there is a donation bin at Smithland near the registers and at the Agawam Public Library. Please add contact information with donations if donors would like an acknowledgment.

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

More information about our sanctuary may be found on our website at [felinefriendsinc.org](http://felinefriendsinc.org) or our Facebook page at Feline Friends Cat Sanctuary. Contact us with questions at [info@felinefriendsinc.org](mailto:info@felinefriendsinc.org) or by phone at 413-786-5019.



## HCC to hold registration event Jan. 11

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College will hold a special “Registration Express” event for the spring 2025 semester on Saturday, Jan. 11, when prospective students can apply for admission, take the college placement test, meet with an academic adviser, register for classes, and set up financial aid – all in one day.

HCC’s Saturday Registration Express event will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and takes place on the first floor of the Campus Center on the main campus at 303 Homestead Ave. and virtually over Zoom.

The spring 2025 semester begins Tuesday, Jan 21. HCC also has

HCC | page 5

## Suffield Players present staged reading of Kimberly Akimbo

SUFFIELD, CT – The Suffield Players are thrilled to announce a special staged reading of the award-winning play *Kimberly Akimbo* on Sunday, Jan. 28, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. at the Kent Memorial Library in Suffield. Directed by the talented Lisa Parker, this one-night-only event promises an evening of humor, heart, and unforgettable performances.

Kimberly Akimbo, by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright David Lindsay-Abaire, is a darkly comedic tale centered on Kimberly Levaco, a teenager

whose rare aging condition forces her to confront life’s challenges at a breakneck pace. As she navigates her eccentric family, unexpected friendships, and the chaos around her, Kimberly’s story delivers equal parts laughter and poignancy.

The Suffield Players invite audiences to experience this intimate reading in the cozy atmosphere of the Kent Memorial Library. This performance is free and open to the public, providing an accessible opportunity to enjoy an engaging theatrical production.

## Notch Visitor Center announces 2024-2025 winter schedule

AMHERST – Winter at the Mount Holyoke Range is a magical experience, and a visit to the Notch Visitor Center, 1500 West St., Route 116, is the perfect way to enjoy it.

The Department of Conservation and Recreation’s Mount Holyoke Range State Park is ideal for hiking, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing. The Notch Visitor Center enhances your park experience with engaging exhibits that highlight the unique features of the Mount Holyoke Range.

Special public programs provide a

broader perspective of the park, and staff are on hand to offer trail information and hiking suggestions. There’s something for everyone, from beginners to seasoned adventurers.

Free admission and parking. The center is open Tuesday through Sunday, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

For more information and upcoming programs, call 413-253-2883 or visit <https://www.mass.gov/locations/mount-holyoke-range-state-park>.



# Opinion

## Guest Column



### Have I saved Social Security money by claiming at 62?

Dear Rusty:

I had to start collecting Social Security at 62 and I am 75 now.

I believe that in the last 13 years I have saved Social Security money, so I do not know why I cannot draw my full benefits now.

If I had started drawing at 65 at \$1,200 per month, then I would have drawn \$16,400 per year. Instead, I got \$680 per month from 62 to 75 or \$8,160 per year or about \$106,000 over 13 years. Compare that to the age 65 amount of \$14,400 per year for 10 years, which is \$144,000. So, by claiming at 62, at age 75 I have saved the government over \$38,000. It would make seniors lives so much easier if they could draw full Social Security at 75 years old, after getting only part of their SS.

Signed: Second-guessing

Dear Second-guessing:

The difference between benefits claimed at various ages causes many to reflect, as you have done, about what might have been had you waited longer to claim. But there is an error in your calculations. If your age 62 monthly benefit is \$680, your age 65 monthly benefit would have been about \$845, not \$1,200. Thus, at 75 you would have collected about \$101,400 by claiming at 65, vs. the \$106,000 you have received by claiming at age 62. In other words, you still would not have broken even had you claimed at age 65.

Social Security says that it doesn't matter when you claim they say that if you claim early your payments will be less, but you'll get more of them. Where SSA's argument falls apart is when life expectancy is longer. Our experience is that if you wait until your Full Retirement Age to claim, which is age 66 in your case vs. claiming at age 62, you will collect the same amount of total money at about age 78.

In other words, the "breakeven age" for waiting until FRA to claim is about 78. So, you will reach your personal "breakeven age" in about 2 1/2 years, at age 78). And this is precisely why we encourage everyone to understand their life expectancy when deciding when to claim Social Security those who expect to live longer will, indeed, get more SS money if they delay claiming.

Your benefit is determined by your age when you claim and if you claim before your FRA your monthly amount is permanently reduced. If you claimed at age 62 and your monthly amount was \$680, then in the four years until you reached age 66, your FRA, you would have received about \$32,640. If you had, instead, waited until your FRA to claim,

SECURITY | page 5

### ABOUT THE DRONE ACTIVITY IN THE EVENING SKIES...



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## Guest Column

### Three Signs That You're a Difficult Patient



By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN  
Guest Column

Difficult patients come in all shapes and sizes, but they all have one thing in common: they make life harder for their healthcare providers, whether they know it or not.

Healthcare providers not only work in a frustrating, fast-paced healthcare system, they spend much of their time helping people who won't help themselves. Are you one of them? If so, it could be interfering with your healthcare and therefore your health!

Here are three signs that your providers might think you're a difficult patient:

#### You Don't Follow Doctors' Orders

Noncompliance is one of the most pressing issues in healthcare today. When patients don't follow their care plans or medication guidelines, problems arise.

Noncompliant patients have poorer health outcomes—and they waste everyone's time and money. Yet if a provider were to ask a patient, "Do you plan to be non-compliant?" most patients would exclaim "no!"

So, what's the disconnect? Noncompliance happens for many reasons: a lack of understanding, an inability to pay for prescriptions, or a myriad of behavioral health and social issues.

Unfortunately, it's unlikely your doctor will ask you, "What's your plan for following these instructions?" But if you tend to ignore your doctor's instructions, you need to create a plan to do just that.

#### You Come off as Being Angry or Entitled

Some patients have good reason to be unhap-

py with the quality of their healthcare. Some have been on the receiving end of medical error. Some feel they've been treated poorly or have skewed perceptions of the healthcare system.

Whatever the reason, angry, entitled patients are their own worst enemies. Alienating care providers rarely results in better health outcomes.

Doctors, nurses and social workers are human beings. As such, they gravitate to those who are pleasant to deal with. They may subconsciously steer clear of difficult patients and family members. Frankly, in these situations, all a provider can do is to listen to a patient's complaints and address whatever is in their power.

It's never okay to berate a care provider, yet it happens all the time. Often patients don't realize how badly they're behaving. Find a way to share your concerns or frustrations with civility, even on a bad day.

#### You Talk Too Much During Appointments

When patients talk nonstop, it makes it challenging for providers to discern the important information from everything else. It's rather like the boy who cried wolf; doctors may eventually tune out.

Doctors have limited time to see each patient. Excessive talkers unknowingly steal time from the next patient, while making it harder for providers to hone in on what's important.

Ask yourself: who does most of the talking during your doctor visits?

#### How to Be a Good Patient

If you want good healthcare—and who doesn't?—start by being a good patient. Follow your physician's instructions and medications as prescribed, even when you don't feel like it.

Share your healthcare concerns with your physician, but in a respectful manner. Ditto your frustrations. Don't create distractions from the main issue: your health!

Be mindful that in today's healthcare environment, ER doctors and hospitalists are generally allowed about five minutes per patient. Doctors' office visits are booked in 15-minute increments.

HEALTH | page 5



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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.



# Better Business Bureau offers tips on how to buy life insurance

**Paula Fleming, CMSO**  
 pfleming@boston.bbb.org

Life insurance is an important aspect of financial planning. However, finding a policy that fits your budget and financial goals can be a real challenge with so many options available. In fact, a 2022 study revealed that people who don't feel knowledgeable about life insurance are less likely to have coverage. BBB recommends the following tips to help you decide if you need life insurance, what kind of insurance is best for you, and how to purchase a policy.

Tips for purchasing a life insurance policy

Determine if you need life insurance coverage. Life insurance is practical for many, if not most, people, but there are situations where you might not need it. You should definitely consider purchasing a policy if:

You want your funeral and burial expenses to be paid without eating into your assets;

Loved ones depend on you financially and would need significant financial support if you passed away;

Your family would be left with a large debt in the event of your death;

You want to pay for a dependent's childcare, tuition, or retirement expenses, or if

You wish to leave a charitable legacy behind for a cause close to your heart.

If none of these situations apply to you, you may not need life insurance.

Think about how much life insurance you need. Consider the financial needs of your beneficiaries to determine how much insurance you should buy, recommends the Insurance Information Institute. Three questions can help you determine a number. Once you determine the answers, sub-

tract your survivors' resources from their needs to determine a specific coverage amount to purchase.

What financial resources, including social security benefits, group life insurance payouts, and any other assets or income, will your survivors have to rely on?

How quickly will the resources become available to them?

What are your survivors' financial needs when it comes to paying your final expenses, covering debts, and general income requirements?

Get to know different types of life insurance. Term life policies generally have lower premiums than permanent policies, as they only cover a specific term of your life. They typically last between one and 30 years. The longer the term, the higher your premium will be. Once the term ends, you stop paying and no longer have coverage. Generally, no cash value is given back to the insured when the term is complete. That said, some life insurance companies may allow you to extend the term of your policy or convert it to a permanent policy, and in a few cases, they may offer a return of premium (ROP). A term life policy is a good choice for someone on a tight budget or who only wants life insurance for a specific time. Worth noting, too, is that if you have a group life insurance plan from your employer, it's likely a term policy that ends when you leave the company.

If you are looking for coverage that will span several decades until your death, you'll want a permanent life insurance policy, sometimes called a "whole" or "universal" policy. Permanent policies cost more, but they have extra benefits, such as receiving the policy's cash value if you terminate it early and borrowing the amount of the cur-

rent cash value from the insurance company as a loan. There are a few different kinds you can choose from:

Whole or ordinary life insurance. The most common kind of permanent life insurance, this kind of policy is straightforward. It offers a death benefit and works as a savings account. You agree to pay premiums for a specific death benefit, and the company agrees to pay you dividends periodically. Usually, this kind of policy includes a guaranteed interest rate and predictable premium rates over the course of the policy's life.

Adjustable or universal life insurance. This kind of policy gives the policyholder more flexibility than whole policies. Sometimes, you can increase your death benefit by passing a medical exam. In addition, you can choose to pay more than your premium up to a limit, and the extra money goes into your cash account. Or you can pay less than the premium and draw from the cash account to cover the difference. These options make this kind of plan appealing to workers with fluctuating incomes. With universal life insurance, the cash value account (the savings aspect of this kind of policy) usually earns interest based on current market rates, which can change over time. All these factors mean this kind of policy needs to be monitored regularly by the policyholder. Keeping an eye on your policy's cash value will help you avoid a lapse in coverage, especially if you pay less than the minimum premium on occasion.

Variable life insurance. With this policy, policyholders receive death benefits, and they can also use their cash value account to invest in stocks, bonds, and money market mutual funds. This means there is a potential for growing the value of your policy quicker, but there is quite a bit more risk

involved. One example of variable life insurance is indexed universal life (IUL), which is best for someone with a good understanding of the stock market, fees, and forecasts. IUL is gaining popularity, but without at least some investment experience, it can be easy to allow coverage to lapse. Plus, market crashes could mean you must pay higher premiums to keep your policy in force.

Variable-universal life insurance. This kind of insurance lets you invest your cash account in the stock market while at the same time offering you the ability to adjust your death benefit and premiums.

Decide if you need any life insurance policy riders. Policy riders are extra benefits used to customize policy coverage. Adding riders usually means paying a higher premium, but they are worth it in many circumstances. For example, you may want to include a children's term rider, which allows parents to cover their children and receive a death benefit if the child dies before a specified age.

Compare life insurance companies. There are many providers to choose from, so you'll want to do comparison shopping. You can contact an insurance agent, a broker, or an insurance company directly to get help comparing policies and pricing, or, in many cases, you can comparison shop online. Once you've narrowed down your selection, ensure the companies you are interested in are licensed and have a good business reputation. Read reviews, look up the company on BBB.org, and ask your friends and family if they have any experience with it. Take the customer service level into account, along with the company's financial rating. Remember that the financial

INSURANCE | page 10

## HCC | from page 3

Flex Start dates on Feb. 3 (Spring Start II) and March 24 (Spring Start III). Full-term spring classes run for 14 weeks. Spring Start II classes run for 12 weeks. Spring Start III classes run for seven.

Registration Express will also be an opportunity for prospective students to learn about the state's new program for free community college, MassEducate.

"Registration Express at Holyoke Community College provides an opportunity for students to complete the admissions and registration process all in one day and all in one place," said Mark Hudgik, dean of strategic recruitment initiatives, admissions, and financial aid. "Admissions, Financial Aid, and

Advising counselors will be available to help students get ready for the spring semester."

Those who can't make it in person on Jan. 11 can still participate on those days virtually over Zoom.

The Registration Express Zoom link can be accessed through a link on the Registration Express page on the HCC website: [hcc.edu/regexpress](http://hcc.edu/regexpress)

Also, HCC offices will be open for extended hours, according to the following schedule: Jan. 6-9, 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Jan. 10, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Jan. 13-14, 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.; (College offices closed Jan. 15 for Professional Day); Jan. 16, 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Jan. 17, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Jan. 21-23, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Friday, Jan. 24, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

## HEALTH | from page 4

So be prepared: create a list of issues you want to discuss and keep the conversation on point.

Remember, it's never in your best interest to be a difficult patient. Partner with your providers to give them what they need, so they can best attend to your health.

Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, a registered

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

## SECURITY | from page 4

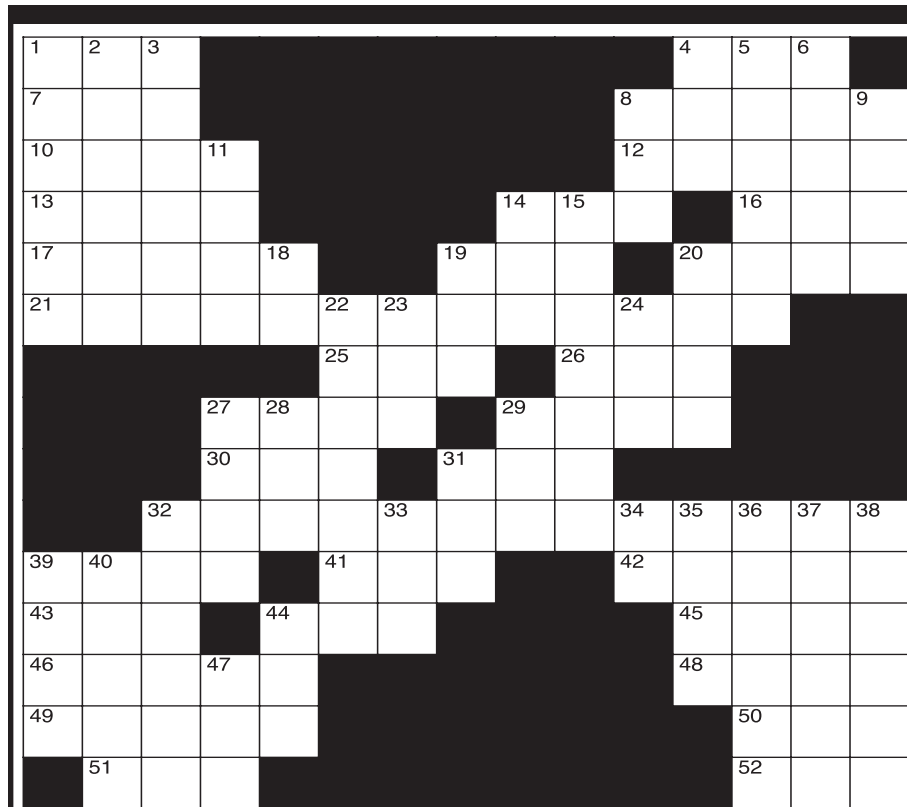
your benefit at age 66 would have been about \$906/month. Collecting \$906/month (at 66) vs. \$680/month (at 62) would make your breakeven age about 78. If you claimed at age 65 instead of 62, your breakeven age would have been about a year earlier (77).

So, have you saved Social Security money? Up to this point, you have not. Since you claimed at age 62, you have collected about \$680/month for 13 years until you were 75 (or about \$106,000). If you had waited until age 65 to claim you would have, instead, collected about \$101,400 - in other words you have received more, so far, by claiming at age 62. But that will change when you reach 77, your breakeven age, had you claimed at 65). Starting at age 77, you will have received less in cumulative lifetime benefits because you claimed at age 62.

Which, again, is why - at the AMAC Foundation's Social Security Advisory Service - we encourage everyone to consider

life expectancy when deciding when to take Social Security. Of course there are other factors too, not the least of which is financial need, but life expectancy is key. And since the benefit you get when you claim is permanent except for annual Cost of Living Adjustments, deciding when to claim Social Security is a decision which affects a lifetime.

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.



### CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Central processing unit
- 4. Taxi
- 7. Body part
- 8. Papal court
- 10. Young women making their public debuts
- 12. Metal shackles
- 13. Joseph's wife
- 14. Licensed professional
- 16. Partner to cheese
- 17. Mild fruits
- 19. File format
- 20. Province of Indonesia
- 21. Beloved grilled foods
- 25. Bar bill
- 26. Don't know when yet
- 27. Whale ship captain
- 29. Touches softly
- 30. Mock
- 31. Red-brown Pacific sea bream
- 32. Summer entertainment options
- 39. Protective crust
- 41. Cool!
- 42. Behave in a way that belittles
- 43. Denial
- 44. A place to sleep
- 45. Electronic counter-measures
- 46. Intestinal pouches
- 48. SE Asia family of languages
- 49. Sound
- 50. Select
- 51. Give the impression of dishonesty

### CLUES DOWN

- 1. Of cadmium
- 2. Deliver a sermon
- 3. Inner regions of a shadow
- 4. Aggressive dog
- 5. Smells
- 6. Twofold
- 8. Former OSS
- 9. Computer language
- 11. Indian groom
- 14. Automobile
- 15. Hairstyle
- 18. Atomic #76
- 19. Guy (slang)
- 20. Ladies' undergarments
- 22. Furniture with open shelves
- 23. Back-arc basin
- 24. Partner to flow
- 27. A type of horse
- 28. Possesses
- 29. Split pulses
- 31. Small amount
- 32. Flat-bottomed riverboat
- 33. Not good
- 34. Atomic #31
- 35. Assist in committing a crime
- 36. Chauvinists
- 37. Get away
- 38. One of a people who speaks a Semitic language
- 39. Civil rights college organization
- 40. Combustible dark rocks
- 44. Grocery container
- 47. Central nervous system

CROSSWORD SOLUTION ON PAGE 9



# Snow Fun



Anthony and Daisy Manzi began to work on creating their fake snow. TURLEY PHOTOS BY QUINN SUOMALA



Zoe, Abbie and Gabe Shanahan all enjoyed their time building the fake snow snowmen.



Logan Kimsey arranged his snowman's arms so they could both make the same pose.



Kids got to look through the buttons and pipe cleaners to decide on how they wanted to decorate their snowmen.



Youth Services Associate Isabelle Malvezzi gave the gathered attendees the instructions for creating their fake snow.



Kids and their families gather at Agawam Public Library to build fake snow snowmen.

## SNOWMAN | from page 1

ground. "It's just a fun, tactile experience, especially as it is winter and we are nearing the holidays," Malvezzi said. She was inspired to do this program as at her old job they would often do a similar activity. "We used to do snowmen competitions on the campus I worked at every year and it was so much fun, so I was trying to find some type of way to bring that into the library," Malvezzi said. (0:30) The library has a few other enjoyable events planned out for the rest of December and into January. Over the week of the Christmas holiday

the library will have a week-long hunt and riddle as well as a trivia game. Going into January there will be a Super Smash Brothers tournament for teens to participate in. The library will also be continuing their monthly lego building and crafternoon programs. For adults on Saturday, Jan. 4 at 2 p.m. there will be an author visit with Anthony Arillotta and Joe Bradley, the authors of South End Syndicate: How I Took Over the Genovese Springfield Crew. They will be doing a book talk as well as book signings for everyone in attendance. To keep updated on the various activities the library has in store, go to their website at <https://www.agawamlibrary.org/>.

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USDA INSP. FROZEN PORK BREAKFAST SAUSAGE LINKS FULLY COOKED ..... <b>\$2<sup>49</sup></b> lb	USDA INSP. GROUND FRESH DAILY 80% LEAN GROUND BEEF 7 LB BOX <b>\$3<sup>99</sup></b> lb	USDA INSP. FROZEN ARMOUR COOKED MEATBALLS 4 LB BAG <b>\$9<sup>99</sup></b> lb
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USDA INSP. FROZEN TURTLE CREAM PIE 25.1 OZ. <b>\$5<sup>99</sup></b> ea		USDA INSP. FROZEN 5 LB BLOCK JUMBO RAW SHRIMP 6-10 FOR STUFFING ..... <b>\$39<sup>99</sup></b> ea

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# SPORTS



Sophia Laprise heads down the court.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Mia Canavan goes for the layup.



Above, Katelyn Cleavall goes for the layup. Left, Isabella Laprise passes on the run.



Hannah Soliatrion looks to make a pressure with pressure coming on.

## Girls out to 3-0 start

AGAWAM – The Agawam High School girls basketball team is off to a great start with three straight wins to begin the year. The Brownies opened the year with a 38-32 win over Pope Francis, then got to participate in the showcase event

at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst on Dec. 14. The Brownies also beat Drury on Dec. 18 47-37. Agawam had two games prior to the Christmas holiday and are back in action on Monday, Dec. 30 against Belchertown at 7 p.m.

## Falcons hand Agawam first loss

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

AGAWAM – The basketball fans who attended last Monday night’s boys’ varsity game between the Minnechaug Falcons and the Agawam Brownies saw a very entertaining affair from the opening tip-off to the final buzzer.

Led by junior guard Miles Fergus, who scored a career-high and game-high 30 points, the Falcons improved their record to 2-0 by overcoming a 13-point deficit in the middle of the third quarter to defeat the Brownies, 60-56, at Agawam’s Clifford P. Kibbe Gymnasium.

“When we were trailing in the third quarter, coach (Mike) Orzech kept telling us to keep chipping away. We executed very well down the stretch,” Fergus said. “This is a very big win for us against a pretty good Agawam

team.”

Prior to the 2023-24 season, the two basketball teams were members of the Suburban North Division. They would battle each other twice during the regular season. The Falcons moved to the Suburban South Division a year ago and they only play each other one time.

A year ago, Agawam snapped a three game losing streak against the Falcons by celebrating a 66-55 road win.

Last Monday’s contest was the Brownies (2-1) first home game of the regular season.

Fergus also scored 20 points in the Falcons 63-51 season opening victory at Wahconah Regional

“Miles is probably one of the best basketball players in Western Mass.,” Orzech said. “He does a lot of different things for us.”



Elijah Maldonado makes his way down the court.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI

BASKETBALL | page 8

## Brownies wrestling team falls to Central

AGAWAM – Despite an early advantage, Agawam High School wrestling fell to Central 45-29 last Wednesday evening at home. The Brownies picked up a couple of wins early in the meet, but Central controlled the upper weights and ultimately took the dual meet, the first of the season for Agawam. On an adjacent mat, the first girls dual meet took place as wrestlers from Agawam and Central took part in a separate competition featuring only female wrestlers. Agawam, which sports one of the largest programs in the region, has several female wrestlers. Central sports a deep fe-

male roster as well. It was the first time for Agawam having a girls dual meet. Agawam hosts the Phil

Tomkiel Holiday Tournament on Friday, Dec. 27 beginning around 9:30 a.m.



Cam Icing keeps control of the match at 138 pounds.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



Cooper Hermans locks up at 144 pounds.



Keymani Rivera avoids a takedown during his 165-pound match.



Cole Ingham gets the early advantage at 175 pounds.



Ryan Sexton looks for the takedown at 150 pounds.



# Sports

## Springfield Thunderbirds fall to Charlotte Checkers on the road

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds (12-10-2-1) fell victim to a two-goal comeback by the Charlotte Checkers (15-6-1-2) last Wednesday night at Bojangles Coliseum in a 4-3 defeat.

The T-Birds did themselves no favors by taking back-to-back penalties just four seconds apart, resulting in 1:57 of two-man advantage time for the league's top power play. Steve Konowalchuk's team dug in, though, as Vadim Zherenko and the penalty killers did the job to survive the lengthy threat.

Charlotte still rode the momentum from the power play to the game's opening tally by Oliver Okuliar at 4:45 of the first period, giving the Checkers a 1-0 advantage.

After the burst from Charlotte, the

T-Birds quickly chipped away on the shot board. At 15:00 of the frame, Dalibor Dvorsky brought Springfield even with his team-leading 11th of the season, cashing in on a rebound at the edge of the crease and driving it past former T-Bird Chris Driedger.

The 1-1 score continued for nearly a whole period of game action until the T-Birds' third and fourth units capitalized on back-to-back shifts. Tanner Dickinson started the scoring blitz with a wrister from the left circle that glanced off traffic and eluded Driedger at 14:02 of the second period, making it a 2-1 lead for Springfield.

34 seconds later, Mathias Laferriere and Drew Callin entered the offensive zone on a 2-on-1 and took advantage of the situation. Driedger made an initial pad save off

a Laferriere shot from the left circle. However, the rebound kicked right to Callin, who quickly deked to the forehand and put it behind Driedger to give the T-Birds a 3-1 advantage.

Penalties, though, continued to throw a wrench in the T-Birds' plans, and the Charlotte power play finally connected in the final minute of the second as Rasmus Asplund redirected a Trevor Carrick wrist shot behind Zherenko, chopping the lead to 3-2 at 19:21 of the middle frame.

For a second straight night, rookie Ben Steeves provided a clutch tying marker for Charlotte, taking a feed from Okuliar in the right circle and snapping a shot past Zherenko's stick hand at 3:55 of the third, bringing the game to a stalemate, 3-3.

The two teams did not generate much after the Steeves goal, with the two clubs combining for only eight shots in the entire third period, and the tie score carried into the final three minutes of the game.

Again, discipline proved pivotal, as Tobias Bjornfot drew a high-sticking double minor and a four-minute power play for the Checkers with 2:39 remaining.

The league's top man advantage lived up to their billing in the final minute, as Wilmer Skoog unloaded a blistering one-time slapper that found twine with 54 seconds left to give Charlotte the 4-3 lead. Springfield's last-ditch efforts to tie came up empty in the closing moments, and Charlotte completed the two-game sweep of the T-Birds.



Owen Lavelle reaches up for a rebound.



Brody Sheehan looks for an open teammate to make a pass.



Gavin Cruz makes a quick pass.

### BASKETBALL | from page 7

Fergus scored ten or more points in 13 games last season. He scored 20 and 23 points in the Falcons final two games of the 2023-24 regular season, which were very close losses.

"We did lose a lot of close games last year, which wound up hurting us because we didn't qualify for the postseason tournament," Orzech added. "We have a lot of returning players this year and we were able to grind out a win in tonight's game."

Minnechaug had two other double-digit scorers against Agawam. Junior guard Andrew Grasso finished with 15 points with the help of four 3-pointers. Senior forward Nathan Pace scored 11 points. Senior guard Gus Przybyl rounded out the scoring column for the visitors from Wilbraham with four points. He scored a game-high 29 points in the season opening victory.

The Brownie's leading scorer was senior point guard Elijah Maldonado who scored 18 of his 29 points during the first half. No other Agawam player reached double digits.

"Elijah is a terrific basketball player," said Agawam head coach Tim Sheehan, who was previously the boys' varsity basketball coach at Granby High School. "He always wants to win more than anything else."

Maldonado has scored more than 800 points during his varsity basketball career. He's hoping to join his former teammate, Colin Smith, as a member of the elite 1,000 point club. Smith accomplished the feat last year as a senior.

Fergus, who joined the varsity team as a freshman, scored nine of his points during the first quarter, as the Falcons entered the second quarter with a slim 13-11 advantage.

The Brownies outscored the Falcons 17-7 in the second quarter, and they headed into the locker room with a 28-20 halftime lead. Maldonado scored 12 of his team's 17 points during that quarter.

With 4:35 remaining in the third quarter, a Maldonado driving lay-up down the middle of the lane gave Agawam a 38-25 lead.

The Falcons then responded with a 10-0 run.

"We got into foul trouble in the third quarter and that's when they went on a run," Sheehan said. "We played well offensively in tonight's game, but we didn't play very well defensively."

Fergus began the Falcons' run by sinking a jumper from the left side of the key. He capped it off with a steal and a lay-up. In between, Grasso buried a 3-pointer from the top of the key and he also made an old fashion three point play.

Agawam responded with back-to-back field goals from junior Josiah Wyner, which were his only points, and an inside hoop from sophomore center Matt Letellier (2 points). The Brownies entered the final eight minutes of the contest holding a 44-38 lead.

Fergus made a free throw before hitting a 3-pointer from the left side which closed the gap to 44-42 less than a minute into the fourth quarter.

A Przybyl lay-up with 5:17 left in regula-

tion gave Minnechaug the lead at 47-46 for the first time since the second quarter.

Agawam quickly retook the lead when freshman guard Brody Sheehan buried a 3-pointer from the right corner. Sheehan, whose two older brothers (Tim Jr. & Ryan) played basketball at Granby High School, is one of the three freshmen listed on the Brownies varsity roster. He was also a start-



Caeden Roeder is off-balance, but is able to make a shot.

er in the home opener.

"It's very special to have now coached all three of my sons at the varsity level," coach Sheehan said. "Whenever we're on the basketball court, Brody is just another player and I'm his coach."

The other two Agawam freshmen are Dylan Jorgensen, and Caeden Roeder (5 points)

A putback hoop from sophomore forward Gavin Cruz (6points) gave the Brownies a 51-48 advantage with four minutes remaining on the scoreboard clock.

Then Fergus made a lay-up, and a 3-pointer from the right side, which gave the Falcons the lead back at 53-51. Pace added a jumper, and the visiting team would continue to pull away.

They held a 60-54 lead following a Fergus free throw before Maldonado made a lay-up at the buzzer.

The Brownies players and coaching staff would probably like to play the Falcons again in either the Western Mass. tournament or the Division 2 state tournament.



Melih Tomak recovers a loose ball near midcourt.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY GREGORY A. SCIBELLI



# Sports

## High school coaching classes available

Coaches hired after Aug. 1, 1998 are required to take a coaching course to be eligible to coach high school sports in Massachusetts.

According to the Pioneer Valley Interscholastic Athletic Association, all coaches hired prior to Aug. 1, 1998 are exempt from taking the Fundamentals of Coaching Course. Coaches hired after that and before July 1, 2005 must have completed the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching Course with the exception of Certified MA teachers.

All coaches (stipend or volunteer) first serving as an interscholastic coach after July 1, 2005 must complete the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching Course, and an approved Sports First Aid course.

- The NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching

Course requirement must be met through attending an MIAA sponsored Fundamentals of Coaching Class with MIAA Certified Instructors. Must be completed and passed prior to coaching a second year.

- The NFHS Sports First Aid may be met by completing on-line courses with the NFHS [www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com). Must be passed prior to coaching a third year.

Additional requirements for all coaches:
 

- Massachusetts requires coaches to be certified in CPR per Section 1. Section 47A of chapter 71 of the General Laws. Additionally, AED training is required and will most likely be done in conjunction with the existing mandated CPR training.

- All MIAA member school coaches (stipend or volunteer) are required to take

annually the on-line National Federation Concussion Course, or other MA Department of Public Health recognized education program, prior to the start of their season. Rugby Coaches must see Rule 76.2 for additional coaches' education information.

Any questions, please call Donna Harrington at 508-541-9804 or email [dharrington@miaa.net](mailto:dharrington@miaa.net).

Fundamentals of coaching classes are being offered on Wednesday, Jan. 29, 2025 from 4 to 8 p.m. and Saturday, Feb. 8, 2025 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Classes are open until capacity is reached and then a waiting list is established. There are online components to the course once the classroom portion is completed.

## Next HoopHall ceremony announced

SPRINGFIELD – The Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame announced that the Class of 2025 Enshrinement Ceremony will take place on Saturday, Sept. 6, in Springfield – the Birthplace of Basketball.

The nominees for the upcoming class were set to be revealed on Thursday, Dec. 19, at 3 p.m. during "NBA Today" on ESPN. The Class of 2025 Finalist Announcement will be Friday, Feb. 14, as part of the NBA All-Star Weekend in San Francisco, and the Class of 2025 will be announced on Saturday, April 5, during the NCAA Final Four Weekend in San Antonio.

Enshrinement Weekend will begin at the Mohegan Sun on Friday, September 5, with the Tip-Off Celebration and Awards Gala, inclusive of the Class of 2025 jacket and ring presentation and the annual Hall of Fame Awards. The Enshrinement Ceremony will take place the following day in Springfield's historic Symphony Hall and will be available to a global audience.

A full schedule of events will be announced at a later date.



## Worcester Railers announce major coaching change

WORCESTER – The Worcester Railers Hockey Club (@RailersHC), proud ECHL (@ECHL) affiliate of the New York Islanders (@NYIslanders) and Chief Operating Officer Michael G. Myers have announced that Bob Deraney has taken on a new role within the organization, Head of Scouting, effective immediately. Nick Tuzzolino has been named Head Coach & General Manager of the Worcester Railers.

"Bob has been a part of the Railers family for a number of years," Myers said. "We can't thank him enough for his dedication

and commitment to this organization over the past several seasons. We look forward to him continuing to work with the team in this new role."

Tuzzolino becomes the fifth head coach in Worcester Railers history after serving as General Manager & Associate Head Coach to begin the season. He first came to Worcester in June after he spent the 2023-24 season as assistant coach and director of player development with the Savannah Ghost Pirates. As a defenseman, he played over 500 games professionally between

the UHL, IHL, ECHL & American Hockey League from 2007-2023. During his initial retirement, he coached the Buffalo Jr. Sabres of the Ontario Junior Hockey League from 2016-20.

"In his time here, Nick has demonstrated his readiness to lead the team both on and off the ice," Myers said. "He has a wealth of experience in dissecting professional systems and working in pro player development. We're excited for him to take the reins and continue his work on bringing a winning culture to Worcester."

## Public Notices

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampden Probate and Family Court  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
Docket No. HD19P2229PM**  
In the matter of:  
**Alice A MacDonald  
of Agawam, MA  
Protected Person/  
Disabled Person/  
Respondent**  
CITATION GIVING  
NOTICE OF  
CONSERVATOR'S  
ACCOUNT

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, you are hereby notified pursuant to Rule 72 of the Supplemental Rules of the Probate & Family Court, that the **Fourth** account(s) of Jewish Family Service of Western MA of Springfield, MA as Conservator of the property of said Respondent has or have been presented to the Court for allowance.

**You have the right to object to the account(s).** If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and

objection at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of **01/17/2025**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to object to the account(s). If you fail to file the written appearance and objection by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you, including the allowance of the account(s).

Additionally, within thirty days after said return day (or within such other time as the Court upon motion may order), you must file a written affidavit of objections stating the specific facts and grounds upon which each objection is based and a copy shall be served upon the Conservator pursuant to Rule 3 of the Supplemental Rules of the Probate & Family Court.

You have the right to send to the Conservator, by registered or certified mail, a written request to receive a copy of the Petition and account(s) at no cost to you.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the

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

Witness, Hon. **Barbara M. Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.  
Date: December 13, 2024  
**Rosemary A. Saccamoni**  
Register of Probate  
12/26/2024

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampden Division  
Docket No. HD24P2583EA**  
Estate of:  
**PATRICIA M. MAYNARD**  
Date of Death:  
**October 25, 2024**  
**INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE**  
To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **CLARK P. MAYNARD** of **FEEDING HILLS, MA**

a Will has been admitted to informal probate.

**CLARK P. MAYNARD** of **FEEDING HILLS, MA** has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve **without surety** on the bond.

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and

to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.  
12/26/2024

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*Agawam Advertiser News*  
**OBITUARY POLICY**

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.  
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## New Learner Success Center opens



Marieb Adult Learner Success Center staffers, from left, Momina Sims (career planning and placement coordinator); Amy Woody (program coordinator); Anne Morales Medina (associate director of recruitment and enrollment); Danielle Clough (academic counselor); and HCC alum Elizabeth Busker '21, in the Marieb Adult Learner Success Center, holding a ceremonial check from HCC benefactor Elaine Marieb. SUBMITTED PHOTO

### PLAN | from page 1

Overlay is when a company comes in and adds an inch and a half to two inches of asphalt to the street. This helps make the roads more sturdy, but does not remove underlying problems, so it is only used when there is a good base on the road.

"Milling...is where a company will come in and they will mill one and a half to two inches of deteriorated pavement off the top," Johnson said.

Milling is used when the top layer of the pavement has a lot of cracking and a "low amount of distortions." It can help prevent the road from becoming too high from consistent overlaying.

There are also several roads that are on the list to get some preventative maintenance, such as fog sealing.

"Fog-seal is a thin oil-like liquid spray made of asphalt and it is kind of like sealing your driveway" Chase explained.

The major projects will be the reclamation of Anthony Street, Valentine Street and Terrace, Cottonwood Lane

and Moore Street.

"A full depth reclamation is essentially where a company comes in, they pulverize the existing pavement and put it right back down so it becomes part of the base of the new roadway," Johnson said "Then on top of that there are another three to four inches of top course put on top of that."

While Chase and Johnson wish that they could do more work on the roads throughout Agawam, they are limited due to the budget.

The state has not increased the chapter 90 funds they are providing Agawam over the last decade.

The town has consistently received about \$800,000 in funding from chapter 90 since about 2012, and this lack of increase has prevented the town from being able to do additional work on the roads.

"The difficulty is asphalt is oil; pavement is essentially oil, so as the cost of oil spikes so does the cost of pavement," Johnson said. "So, the amount of work we are able to get done with the same amount of money is far less."

### INSURANCE | from page 5

rating they've received is a projection, not a guarantee.

Review the insurance contract carefully. Make sure you fully understand any policy you are considering. All terms and conditions of an insurance policy are outlined in the contract. You should know how much you'll be paying for how long in order to receive protection, what will happen if a premium payment is late, and any information on restrictions as to insurance company investments. Since insurance contracts are legal documents, they can be wordy and difficult to understand. If you're having trouble with the language of the contract, ask your agent to explain it in layperson's terms.

Be ready to answer lots of questions and be honest with your answers. You'll likely need to fill out a lengthy application, which may include giving specific information about your health, family history, profession, and even your driving record. Be ready

to spend some time answering honestly. Insurance companies use third-party sources to verify your answers, so any untruths will probably be discovered, putting your policy in jeopardy.

Store your documents in a safe place. Once you've purchased a life insurance policy, keep it in a safe place, like a safety deposit box. Let your beneficiaries know about the policy, what you want them to do with the death benefit, and where they can find a copy of the policy. Otherwise, it's possible their benefits could go unclaimed. Give your lawyer a copy of your policy, too.

Watch out for mail-order life insurance. You may get offers to buy life insurance through the mail at attractively low prices. The pitch may say you will be approved regardless of age and health. Be careful! Never purchase such a policy until you have read and understood every word, not just the advertising. Also, check with state insurance authorities to find out if the company is licensed to sell insurance in your state.

Johnson and others hope that the state will look further into this issue, as municipalities across the state are struggling with chapter 90 funds.

In the meantime, Agawam is doing the best they can with the funds available to them.

Throughout the year the town engineers also plan to use a new technology in order to scan Agawam's roads. This technology is done through a program called StreetScan.

"The StreetScan is a highly configurable pavement management program that we can customize ourselves," Chase said.

The company will provide 3D imaging, a 360 degree camera and they take pictures and they do scans of the cracks in the roadway and then they score the roadways on a scale of 0-100 (good, satisfactory, fair, poor, very poor, serious, and failed).

The town will then put this information into their system where it will be analyzed so they can better prioritize which streets need maintenance.

Currently, the engineers go out to each

road in the town and assess them to decide what streets need work.

The deciding factors for this are: the pavement condition, the type of repair/maintenance needed, the average daily traffic volume, the proximity to schools, the proximity to other road work (avoid mobilization costs), other planned utility or construction projects, input from the public and the budget.

This new system will help them to have a better assessment of the pavement condition and what maintenance is needed.

"This is going to really give us a system of getting out there and not being subjective but purely scientific seeing what there is for conditions of the roadway," Chase said.

This program will cost about \$22,000 a year and the town will have the option of adding additional features in the future for an additional cost.

The city council appreciated this update and look forward to seeing how this work helps to improve the town over the next few years.

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Keith and Mikayla Ouellette from Mainely Drafts Horse and Carriage ran the horse and carriage rides.



Attendees of the Snowflake Spectacular were able to enter the raffle.



Mayor Christopher Johnson and City Councilor Anthony Russo were asked to speak on why they feel the senior center is so important to the community.



Penny Hardick, President of the Friends of the Senior Center Danny Stallone and Director of the Friends Al Fenney all helped to run the raffle.



Attendees of the Snowflake Spectacular got to meet the horses.



Seniors gathered around to enjoy the appetizers provided to them by the senior center staff.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY QUINN SUOMALA



With Keith Ouellette from Mainely Drafts Horse and Carriage acting as the coachman, the attendees set off for the horse and carriage ride.



More than a hundred people gathered in the senior center to enjoy the Snowflake Spectacular.

**SENIOR ■ from page 1**

have helped and accepted her throughout this year.

“My motivation is to really appreciate the seniors and the staff all at one event,” Sullivan said. “It is thanking the staff and seniors for welcoming me into the senior center.”

Sullivan also made sure that the staff at the senior center could relax and have a good time. Another company was hired to serve lunch so the kitchen staff could sit

back and enjoy the meal.

“The staff deserve it, we’ve worked really hard this year,” Sullivan said.

The senior center has never done a holiday lunch to this extent, so Sullivan looks forward to seeing everyone have fun.

“Just getting people together and celebrating and seeing the surprises we have in store,” Sullivan said.

Sullivan also feels that this is a great way to show the progress the senior center has made in getting back into the full swing of things as they exit out of COVID.

“Hearing COVID as an excuse for the last four years, I’m kind of tired of hearing about it, so let’s get us back on track, get us moving in the right direction and get people back together, celebrating and having fun in the senior center,” Sullivan said.

One of the key fund sources for the event was the Sherman fund.

“Our wagon rides are being paid out of the Sherman fund, which is an endowment that has been left by a generous family from Agawam for activities, which this is a great activity and a great use of the funds,” Sulli-

van said.

Specialty Bolt & Screw, a local business, also donated funds which allowed each senior to get a special gift for the event. The gift was a winter-themed blanket as well as candy cane.

The Friends of the Senior Center also acted as a sponsor for the event, which helped greatly to lower the cost of attendance.

Overall, this event was a huge success with all in attendance having a lovely time and truly getting into the holiday spirit.



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