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Chicopee Register

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Community enjoys meatloaf dinner

By Kristin Rivers
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CHICOPEE - The community packed the senior center on Feb. 24 to enjoy a Meatloaf Dinner event sponsored by the Rotary Club of Chicopee.

The meatloaf was cooked by Mayor John Vieau, with the proceeds supporting the senior center. The meal also included a dinner roll, corn and butter, mashed red potatoes with gravy and Boston Creme Pie cupcakes, which were prepared by senior center volunteers and staff.

Besides sponsoring the event, members of the Rotary Club of Chicopee also volunteered to serve the meal and donated $500 to the senior center, with the

See MEATLOAF DINNER page 5

TURLEY PHOTO BY KRISTIN RIVERS

Rotary Club Public Relations and Member John Arthur presents a plate to attendees.

TURLEY PHOTO BY KRISTIN RIVERS

This group photo shows the many faces behind Advancing Chicopee Together, a new community initiative to help strengthen the city and build solutions for food access and maternal and prenatal care.

ACT Community Coalition officially launched

. By Kristin Rivers
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CHICOPEE - Advancing Chicopee Together, a coalition bringing community partners together to help identify the needs and strengths of the city and build solutions to create a healthier community, was officially launched on Feb. 27.

The announcement was made at a press conference at City Hall Auditorium with remarks from Mayor John Vieau, Ward 2 City Councilor Shane Brooks, Eliza Lake, director of Health Policy & Strategic Initiatives at the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, Health and Human Services Secretary Dr. Kiame Mahaniah, Jessica Collins, executive director at the Public Health Institute of Western Mass, Luz Lopez, director of Breaking Oppression, Monica Torres, community and special projects liaison for the City of Chicopee, Tammi Kazuch, chief of strategy, Development & Community Partnerships at Holyoke and Chicopee Health Centers and Assistant Planner Patrick Collins.

The initiative was launched in partnership with The Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts as part of Addressing Health Equity in Massachusetts (AHEM), a statewide initiative focusing on regional and racial equity in health.

The project was funded by a grant from the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation.

The two priorities ACT will focus on are food access and maternal/prenatal health, with strategies including improving awareness, coordination and connection for local food and maternal health information and resources, expanding education, support and access to services for pregnant and postpartum individuals and people with chronic diseases and increasing awareness and access to doula services.

On April 22, there will be a Food Resource Fair at The Hub at Market Square from 4 to 7 p.m. and, on May 30, a Community Baby Shower with the location to be determined.

Vieau explained how the initiative can help create healthier lifestyles and better access, whether it'd be for healthier food options, organizations providing food for people in need or finding resources for maternal and prenatal care.

"We have a bunch of community partners that meet very frequently and come together because they're really concerned about healthy lifestyles," Vieau said. "We're leading the way and we're grateful for our partnership

See ACT page 3

COURTESY OF MICHAEL EPAUL PHOTOGRAPHY

HB Real Estate - Business of the Year.

Community members honored at Shining Stars Awards Gala

By Brendan Rooney
Correspondent

CHICOPEE — The Castle of Knights Banquet Hall hosted the 41st Annual Greater Chicopee Chamber of Commerce Shining Stars Gala on Feb. 27.

The gala, since its inception in 1985, is built on the foundation of taking the time to recognize and honor a total of four local community members and organizations for their contributions to the city, which are featured among several categories, including volunteers, non-profits, businesses and citizens who help shape and impact the local community.

The program was sponsored and presented by Peoples Bank and countless others, such as Health New England, The Polish National Credit Union, Teddy Bear Pools & Spas, and many more.

Night Under the Stars

This year's theme was a "Parisian Night, under the Chicopee Lights," with a live jazz performance courtesy of Chicopee High Jazz Band, to landmark-inspired backdrops that featured a small photo-booth nestled in the center, headlined by a recreation of the Pont des Arts Bridge, once known as the "Love Lock Bridge," but with a Chicopee twist.

As soon as attendees graced the red carpet, they were given a lock and encouraged to write a message centered around what they love about the city and essentially 'lock' it in and place it around the aforementioned bridge, cementing an ever-growing network, and offering a reflection of what makes the city special.

Business of the Year

Emcees Melanie Wilk and Kris Theriault called up the first recipient, HB Real Estate LLC, who received the title of "Business of the Year." In patent award show fashion, similar to the Oscars, Theriault debuted a licensed black HB beret, which was also worn by the entire staff of the brokerage throughout the gala. Receiving the award were the owners and founders of the brokerage, Ray Hoess-Brooks, his husband, Jeffrey Hoess-Brooks, and Karen Kirby.

The brokerage first opened its doors back in 2021, and since then, HB has grown from a dozen agents to a powerhouse team of over 30. In addition, the company has also been a main proponent of the Western Mass community by having offices in Chicopee, Wilbraham, and, most recently, Northampton.

The company has also been instrumental in hosting community events like the Author Stroll, which has now been established to be a yearly event due to last year's success, while also being involved and lending support

See SHINING STARS page 6

Elks Lodge hosts Portuguese Night

By Brendan Rooney
Correspondent

TURLEY PHOTOS BY BRENDAN ROONEY

The Elks staff in the kitchen prepping the meal.

CHICOPEE — The Elks Lodge of Chicopee hosted 'Portuguese Nationality Night' as part of their ongoing cultural-themed dinners on Feb. 12, which have long been a tradition that runs all year.

The event drew more than 130 attendees, and those who attended were treated to a variety of festivities, including a cash bar and a plethora of 50/50 raffles.

Spearheading the event was Committee Chairman Kevin Agostino, who touched upon the lodge offering a sense of pride with these events.

"The Elks always allow us to express the differences and harmony of cultures," Agostino said. "Tonight was Portuguese Night, next month is Irish Night, and I just want to add that your heritage is a key piece of your identity, and it's something you take pride in, and I, being Portuguese, found myself growing up here because of my family ties, starting with my dad(Joseph), Dino Claudino, and countless others used to run this event, and as a kid I worked here in the kitchen, serving these events, and it means a lot to help me give back to the Elks because they do a lot of work for the community."

Among those in attendance were a variety of local dignitaries, such as Mayor John Vieau and City Council Vice President/Ward 6 City Councilor Sam Shumsky, and countless others.

First to reflect on the evening was Vieau, who discussed the importance of the Elks' continued support of hosting the monthly heritage dinners, which always draw a massive crowd.

"It's all about bringing the community together, and when you look around, everyone is happy, and smiling, and we had a great Portuguese meal, and we're just excited to be a part of it," Vieau said.

He also touched upon the importance of the Portuguese-American community in the city.

"I'll share that the Portuguese-American and their culture is truly something special, and they contain a ton of pride, and I feel we always have a big turnout, especially when we do the flag raising in June, and it's a special moment to realize we that we have the Portuguese American Club, which has been a main staple in our city, for years, and will continue to do so," Vieau said.

Portuguese American Club President Brian Mendes and his family were in attendance as well, along with countless others from the organization.

"It truly means a lot and I'm very happy that the Elks continue this tradition of these heritage dinners, offering a chance for all cultures to feel represented, and heard." Mendes said. "I'm also proud of Kevin(Agostino), who took over and

Portuguese American Club President Brian Mendes with wife Nicole Simard-Mendes and other board members in attendance.

See PORTUGUESE NIGHT page 6

IN THE CITY

Zoning Committee approves Cruise Control application withdrawal

City Council later votes to withdraw with prejudice

By Kristin Rivers
Editor
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CHICOPEE - The Zoning Committee approved a special permit application for withdrawal without prejudice for Cruise Control Transportation on Feb. 25.

Cruise Control Transportation, located on 78 West St., is a towing and storage business in Chicopee Center and was recently discussed by the City Council on Feb. 3 after it continued to operate in the city despite not having a special permit, leading to a cease and desist situation.

That special permit was not received in December 2025 after it failed to get 9 votes in support. After that, Cruise Control Transportation took the city to court, with a ruling that the City Council needed to revisit and revote on the item.

The councilors then voted to have the discussion moved to the Zoning Committee.

After the meeting began in executive session to discuss the item, Attorney Tom Reidy spoke on behalf of the applicant, Joshua Roy, on how the special permit application was "denied, appealed, remanded" and he wasn't involved with the original application.

"Upon some additional research, it looks like the use has existed at site for a significant period of time, such that our belief is that the zoning ordinance doesn't require a special permit. And so what we did, also, earlier this week was file 2414A, essentially, declaratory action with Land Court, asking Land Court to determine the applicability of the zoning ordinance to the use at this property," Reidy said. "If the determination is a special permit is required, we'll have to go through the special permit process. If the determination is no, this is a lawfully pre-existing non-conforming use and a special permit is not required, obviously, no special permit would be required."

Reidy said if the withdrawal without prejudice is approved, the appeal lawsuit would be dismissed "and there would only be the current, this week filed, land court determination."

"If you essentially deny, which would be a withdrawal with prejudice, then I think we would have to continue that litigation for the special permit with Land Court as we await the determination of the Land Court, whether or not the zoning ordinance is applicable," Reidy said. "On balance, we think the withdrawal without prejudice would wipe the special permit, stop that litigation, let's wait for Land Court to make their determination of whether or not it's applicable. If it is, we'll be back before you, and if it isn't, we won't need to be back before you."

Councilor-at-Large Joel McAuliffe asked Reidy, "if your client didn't think they needed a special permit, why did they apply for one?"

Reidy replied he thought the same thing.

"I don't know if it was a conversation with the Building Department, who said 'You need this,' but I don't have the answer to that," Reidy said.

"Do they believe they were pre-existing non-conforming use prior to application?" McAuliffe said.

Reidy said, "I don't know that they knew the concept of pre-existing non-conforming before the application."

"It has been—in talking with the land owner—and if you've looked at the complaint that was filed with Land Court, you look at the timing of ownership, operation from the 1970s on. So, I think 1996 is when all those parcels were combined and then if you look at the zoning ordinance in effect at the time, it was clear to us that the 2003 ordinance, which is the applicable ordinance, the new iteration wouldn't apply. And so, pre-existing non-conformities are just a little nuanced," Reidy said.

McAuliffe's next question was this.

"So your client or your position would be that you disagree with the city's position on this?" McAuliffe said.

Reidy replied he didn't know the city's position.

"If the city believes it's not pre-existing non-conforming and that is, in fact, that we need a special permit because it hasn't existed there before, then yes, we disagree with that," Reidy said.

On if the city's position was discussed during prior litigation, Reidy said he doesn't get involved in litigation as he's a permitting attorney.

On if his client had a business license, Reidy replied, "I don't know."

"I don't know that they're able to get it. I think that might have been the reason why," Reidy said.

"Are they currently operating?" McAuliffe said.

"I believe so," Reidy said.

Ward 4 Councilor George Balakier noted one of the quagmires the committee had was it being a request for withdrawal.

"We won't have public input and we really kind of can't have a public hearing, per se, with this one because of the delicacy of litigation here. That's what I was pretty much told by council," Balakier said.

Balakier said the decision now came down to whether to approve the application with prejudice or without prejudice.

McAuliffe still had questions on the process and that most of them "stem from the fact that we need to figure out how the ordinance is to be interpreted and how the zoning bylaws is to be interpreted."

"There's ongoing litigation that's going to answer that question, and so I can't form an opinion on this application or this withdrawal of application until I have that information, and so, I will personally vote to dismiss without prejudice, allow the process to play out," McAuliffe said. "If, in fact, we do need to issue a special permit or the applicant needs to apply for a special permit, then we can go through the process again."

McAuliffe requested that, since the business was currently operating, "to ensure compliance with all municipal ordinances, state and local law and to be responsive to the community around it."

"I don't think it's any secret or surprise to the applicant that the concerns that have been raised in our committee hearings are quality-of-life issues in the neighborhood. We expect that those will be addressed and adhered to. That's what we would expect of any business, special permit or not," McAuliffe said.

The motion to withdraw without prejudice passed unanimously, with one abstention.

City Council Decision

On March 3, the City Council held an extensive discussion on this, with a motion to accept the favorable Zoning Committee report and approve the special permit application withdrawal without prejudice. There were also several residents who voiced concerns about the business during public input.

Ward 2 Councilor Shane Brooks had also presented an amended motion for the special permit application to be withdrawn with prejudice.

The amended motion received six yes votes, five no votes and two abstentions. After a revote request was made, the vote was taken a second time so McAuliffe could change his vote to support the majority.

The second vote was eight yes votes, three no votes and two abstentions.

Now, on the final vote on the amended motion which was the special permit application to be withdrawn with prejudice, it passed six yes votes, four no votes and three abstentions.

Narcotics arrest after search warrants

CHICOPEE - Over the past several months, the Chicopee Police Narcotics Unit, in collaboration with the FBI Western Massachusetts Gang Task Force (WMGTF), conducted an investigation into the distribution of illegal narcotics from a residence on Britton Street, and Lavalle Avenue in Chicopee. The investigation focused on Christopher Kurtz and Tiffany Boberek.

This investigation follows a prior investigation involving the same individuals. Despite previous search warrants and arrests, investigators developed new information indicating continued involvement in the distribution of illegal narcotics, which led to the current investigation.

As a result of this investigation, detectives applied for and were granted multiple search warrants. On Feb. 19, members of the Chicopee Police Narcotics Unit and the FBI WMGTF executed these search warrants. As a result of the search the following arrests were made:

Christopher Kurtz was arrested for:

Possession with intent to distribute a class B (crack cocaine) substance

Possession with intent to distribute a class A (heroin/fentanyl) substance

Possession of a class E substance

Tiffany Boberek was arrested for:

Possession with intent to distribute a class B (crack cocaine) substance

Possession with intent to distribute a class A (heroin/fentanyl) substance

Chicopee Public Library hosts programs for kids and families

CHICOPEE - Each month the Chicopee Public Library hosts a variety of free programs for children, teens, and families. The Youth Services Department provides opportunities for entertainment and enrichment that promote literacy and explore creativity. Here is the slate of events for March 2026.

Crafts! - Mondays in March 4 to 5 p.m. Stop by the Kids Room for arts and/or crafts! For kids and families of all ages.

Terrific Twos will be held on **Tuesdays, March 17 and 31 at 10:30 a.m.** Terrific Twos is for two- year-olds and their caregivers. This program features about 25 minutes of structured circle time, followed by about half an hour of semi-structured playtime. During circle time, we will sing songs, do rhymes, do some big movements, and read 1 book. The book choice rotates between either a read aloud picture book or a group read of a board book. Playtime involves a choice of craft, activity, or play.

Storytime will be held on **Thursdays, March 19 at 10:30 a.m.** Storytime is for children ages 3-5. This program features about 30 minutes of structured circle time, followed by 15-30 minutes of a craft or activity. Circle time will include two to three read aloud books, rhymes, songs, and felt boards. Children will be encouraged to ask and answer simple questions and recognize things like shapes, colors, letters, and numbers. There will be a puppet show in lieu of storytime on February 19, see below.

Saturday Playgroup will be held on **Saturdays at 1 p.m.** in March. We›ll put out some extra toys in the playspace. It's a great time for families with kids of all ages to meet up and play.

Little Kid Dance Party will be on **Wednesdays, March 11 and 25 at 10:30 a.m.** Moving and grooving for kids and their caregivers. Geared toward ages 0 to 5, but all are welcome! 45 minutes to one hour of energetic activity including singing and dancing, action rhymes, and playing with props like scarves and shakers.

The library will have **Bingo for Books on Wednesday, March 11 at 6 p.m.** Play a few rounds of bingo and win the best prize: books! For kids and families of all ages.

The **Kids Room Sewing Club** will meet on **Wednesday, March 18, from 3:30 to 5 p.m.** Learn basic stitches and practice skills by making fun projects. Recommended for ages 6 and up. Kids who are not familiar with using a needle and thread should attend with an adult. Teens are welcome.

The library **Homeschool Meetup** will be on **Thursday, March 26 at 12 p.m.** This group meets once a month September - June for homeschooling families with kids of all ages to hang out, do activities and learn together. This month each family will share spring traditions or activities and we'll make a Cherry Blossom craft.

Teens!

Visit the library after school and enjoy the Teen Space with friends! We've got board games, puzzles, the library's Switch, and coloring to enjoy.

Is your life lacking some cool, anime themed swag? Then stop by our **Anime Club** on **Wednesday, March 25 at 3 p.m.** and maybe walk away with some fun posters, knickknacks, or other goodies!

Friday Teen Hang

Join us every **Friday after school** in the Teen Space for some games and crafts! We'll have the Nintendo Switch available to play, coloring pages and paper to doodle, and more!

Teens are invited to join us at LEGO, Sewing Club, and Monday Crafts.

Visit the library website for more info about all of the library's events! www.chicopeepubliclibrary.org

St. Stanislaus School hosting Annual Auction

CHICOPEE – The St. Stanislaus School is hosting its Annual Auction in March 2026 as an online virtual event.

The Auction begins on March 7 and ends on March 14.

The Auction is to raise funds for a new stage and Performing Arts Fund. During these challenging times in our world, it is more important than ever to have current and relevant curriculum available in all areas of learning. Our goal is to raise $15,000 to $20,000 for our school.

The cost of providing a quality, safe and health environment is higher than ever at this time. Your contribution will help us to continue to provide for the 300 students in our school each day.

In order to reach this goal, we need donations from businesses, parents and individual benefactors. Please consider supporting our event by donating a gift certificate, monetary donation, merchandise or services. Your company will be listed in the bidding brochure, and your donation will be displayed in the online catalogue for bidding.

We hope you will donate an item or make a contribution to help support St. Stanislaus School where we believe that we should "Strive to be Servant Leaders for Today and Tomorrow."

Please contact Katherine Rorrio at 413-592-5135 or email ststanis@saintstansschool.org if you are able to donate. We will gladly have someone pick up your contribution.

Any donations will be tax deductible and will be given a receipt worth the value of the donation.

Thank you,
Auction Committee
Katherine Rorrio, Principal

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#13 Two 16" Grinders with Bag of Chips & Can of Soda $25.99 +Tax
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Any Wrap with Small Bag of Chips and Can of Soda $10.99
Any Wrap with French Fries and Can of Soda $12.99
Any 8" Grinder with a Bag of Chips & a Can of Soda $11.99
Any 8" Grinder with French Fries & a Can of Soda $11.99
Any Pita Pocket with a Bag of Chips & a Can of Soda $11.99
Any Pita Pocket with French Fries & a Can of Soda $11.99
Any 16" Grinder with a Bag of Chips & a Can of Soda $14.75
Any 16" Grinder with French Fries & a Can of Soda $15.50
10" Cheese Pizza ..... $8.95 Each Topping $1.75
4 Chicken Tenders with French Fries & a Can of Soda $10.99
Cheeseburger with French Fries & a Can of Soda $10.99

#5 8" Grinder or Pita Pocket with Fries & FREE Can of Soda $14.25+Tax
#6 One Large 2 Topping Pizza, & FREE 2 Liter Soda $23.99 +Tax
#10 One Large 1 Topping Pizza, 20 Wings & FREE 2 Liter Soda $40.99 +Tax
#14 One Medium 1 Topping Pizza, 10 Wings & FREE 2 Liter Soda $30.99 +Tax

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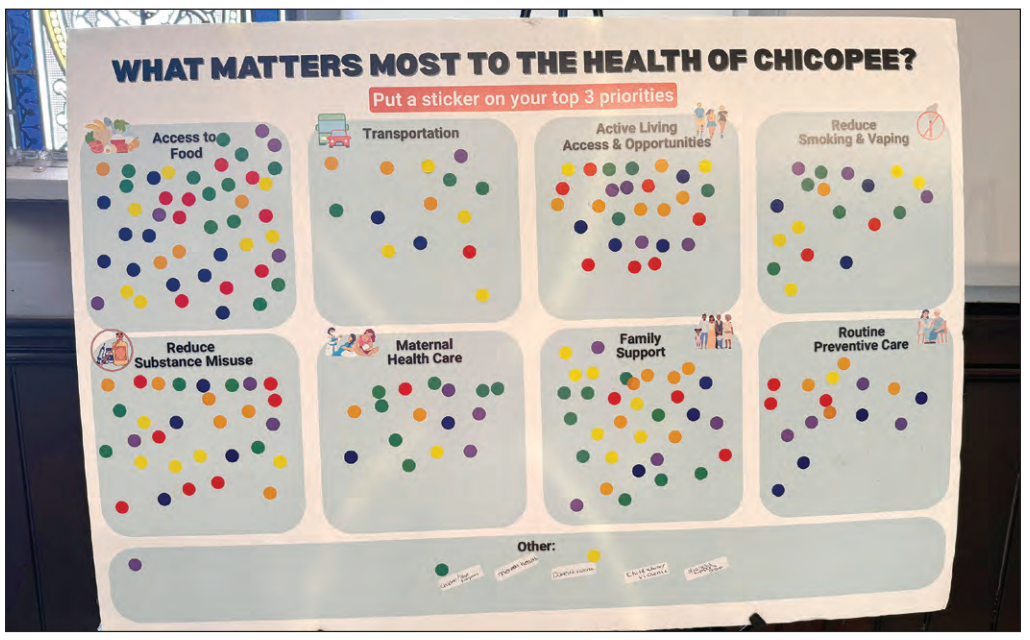


TURLEY PHOTOS BY KRISTIN RIVERS

This chart shows the community response to the needs that matter most to create a healthier Chicopee.

ACT from page 1

with all of you that are here."

Brooks said "It is a better day in Ward 2" due to the impact that ACT will have on his constituents.

"A lot of those residents rely on our services, especially in the downtown. It is the most challenging ward to represent in all of the city, but it is also the most rewarding ward to represent because of the benefits that we can now provide for our residents who rely so heavily on city services," Brooks said. "This initiative will allow us to do things that we've only dreamed of for years. It's been my honor for the last year to serve on the Public Health Institute of Western Mass's board of directors and to be a small part of what we'll be an enormous, impactful initiative on the region and the surrounding communities."

Lake explained the mission behind AHEM and how it "brings together individual organizations, local partners and state agencies in a coordinated effort to confront the root causes of health inequities."

"AHEM is specifically focused on addressing inequities in maternal health—as we've heard—heart health and diabetes—which food security is certainly a critically important piece of—and those are the leading disparities, leading drivers of premature mortality in the state," Lake said.

Also, strengthen community capacity and improve statewide coordination through increased playspace investments, technical assistance and partnering with organizations in Western Mass, initiatives like ACT and funders "to identify community priorities, build local infrastructure and support long-term systems change," and long-term impacts on how state government works.

"Our goal is clear. To ensure that equity is embedded in the systems that shape whole outcomes across the Commonwealth," Lake said.

Mahaniah said advancing health equity reflects the Healey-Driscoll administration's responsibility "for ensuring that equity is not just an idea in name, but a principle that guides how we govern, how we collaborate and how we serve communities across the Commonwealth."

"So, on behalf of the Healey-Driscoll administration, thank you to the neighbors, partners, family members and community members who are advancing Chicopee together. I love that logo, love the sign, love the branding and I really look forward to seeing all the good that you will do," Mahaniah said.

After recognizing the Steering Committee members and partners, Collins shared her organization was asked by the Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation a year ago to "work and uplift the tremendous organizations, city leaders and departments and efforts already going on in Chicopee."

"Our goal is basically to continue to strengthen the work by bringing more and more people and entities—not just in Chicopee, but regional entities as well—who are doing fantastic work. We are not a marginalized community. I think what happens is we are working so hard on what we're doing that we become an isolated community because we don't have time to look up and say, 'Oh, we can actually work smarter and harder,' and that's what we're doing here," Collins said.

Torres said the program is able to grow due to the relationships and partnerships with community organizations and providing the opportunity to reach communities that really need support.

"This has been truly inspiring as because being part of the community and representation of the mayor's office, we have resources that folks are not aware of. Being able to engage with the community, agencies, being able to provide folks who call looking for guidance, I'm able to say, 'Oh yes, I know this. I network with such agency.' So, being part of this from the ground up is special to me," Torres said.

Torres also noted a list of data information that helped pinpoint the community needs and available resources to share with the community.

"The need is here and we're here now acting together to advance Chicopee," Torres said.

To learn more, visit www.publichealthwm.org/advancing-chicopee-together.

A group photo comprising the many community partners collaborating to bring Advancing Chicopee Together, or ACT, to reality.

The Next Watershed Moments

By Keith Davies
Coordinator, Chicopee 4Rivers Watershed Council
Guest Contributor

Editor's Note: This is the third and final part in a multi-part series about the Chicopee 4Rivers Watershed Council.

So, what's next for these four rivers: Swift, Ware, Quaboag, and Chicopee? C4R has got the ball rolling, but it won't keep rolling if there is no push behind it.

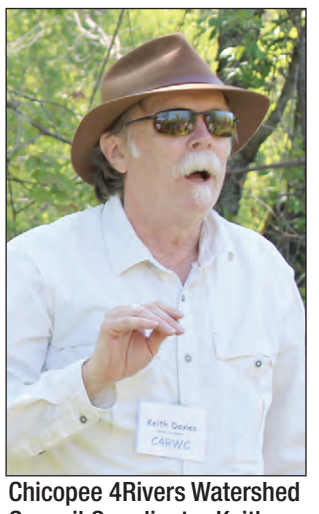
Who pushes? Leaders and volunteers, communities.

During 2026, C4R will hold a series of community information sessions to highlight our potential and vision. The first will be a spring kick-off event at the Palmer Historical Cultural Center, 2072 Main St., in Three Rivers on Sunday, March 22 at 2 p.m.

Throughout the year, C4R will have fun paddles, nature paddles, clean ups (suggested sites?), water quality monitoring, and more.

We hope to post on our website our events schedule by March 22. These events and the meetings will be a good opportunity to see our rivers, meet others and hear how we can together Care 4 rivers-C4R.

Our needs: we need to strengthen our leadership team, add qualified and committed people to help with organizational, communication, database and financial management. People with water resource and aquatic biological savvy can also help. We have reached a point where we can do more as a community group to Care 4 rivers.



Chicopee 4Rivers Watershed Council Coordinator Keith Davies prepared paddlers for the inaugural launch on the Lower Ware River Blue Trail in spring 2023.

Our vision is to promote stewardship, conservation, enjoyment, and restoration of the rivers, ecosystems and wildlife habitats of the Chicopee-4 Rivers basin, while balancing and fostering river friendly city and town economies and community life.

We have planted the seed for this with our basic monitoring and paddling trails. But sprouts need more to grow.

We could go to the next level by adding broader water quality monitoring (adopt a stream, macroinvertebrates), trail teams, storm water education and action efforts, wildlife monitoring, annual rivers report card, restoration efforts, and perhaps a rivers celebration event!

We could be the source for Caring for our local 4 Rivers. Now we're talking!

Sounds inviting? Something inside you saying: "yes, I feel I want to help and make a difference!" Our local rivers are beautiful and magical places, places to discover – but also to care for.

Rivers have been the lifeblood of New England for centuries, likely thousands of years. They still are and can continue to sustain us and wildlife as we live in balance with them.

C4R is a means to gather us together to do that, albeit in a humble way. We invite you to join in the vision, let's C4R!

For more information about C4R and to get involved, people may visit www.c4rivers.org, email chicopeewatershed@gmail.com, or mail C4RWC, P.O. Box 126, Three Rivers, MA 01080.

Cub Scouts worked to remove a tire from the riverbank

Fly Fishing EXPO

Hosted by: Western Mass. Fly Fishermen

Monday, March 16
6:30 PM TO 9:00 PM
SPEAKER AT 7:30 PM

Ludlow Elks Lodge
69 Chapin Street, Ludlow, Mass.

REFRESHMENTS FOOD FOR SALE

Admission: $8
Free for children under 12 years

Mention where you saw this ad or show your WMFF membership card and get $1.00 of your admission.

More info at WMFFCLUB.ORG

Exhibitors: Fly rod builders, fly fishing/material vendors. Mass. State and Wildlife experts, other related exhibitors.

Giant Raffle: Many fishing items, bucket raffles for custom tied flies.

Door prize: Fly rod combo.

Guest Speaker:
Dr. Andy J. Danylchuk –
From Striped Bass to Trout: Science-Based Best Practices for Catch-And-Release

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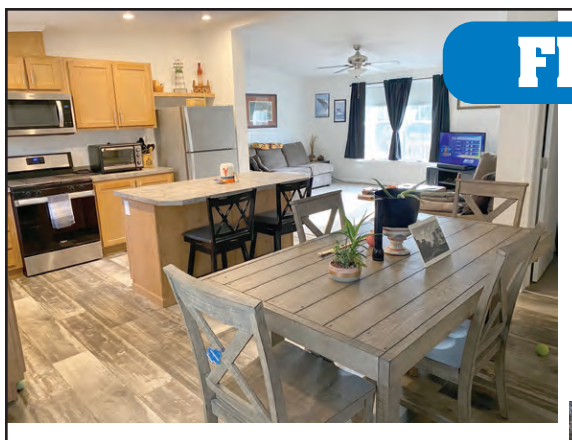

FIVE ISLANDS
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OPINION

SOCIAL SECURITY Matters
By Russell Gloor

I lost money as a widow and ex-spouse by not knowing the rules

Dear Rusty:

I just found out, as someone who was collecting widow's benefits on my second husband, a very small amount, for some time, that I was, all along, entitled to divorce benefits from my first husband, which are much more. I thought I had to wait until my first husband passed before I could collect anything from him. Now I learned I have the right to collect as a divorcee. All of these years I have been missing out on a bigger benefit because I didn't know this. Please make this clear and stress it for others in my position.

Signed: Lost Benefits

Dear Lost Benefits: I am truly saddened that you lost out on benefits from your first husband for such a long time. Although you could not collect an ex-spouse benefit from Husband #1 while you were married to Husband #2, as soon as your current husband died you again became eligible for ex-spouse benefits from Husband #1.

Basically, the rules say you cannot collect benefits from an ex-spouse if you have remarried and remain married. In other words, you cannot be "currently married" to collect benefits from an ex-spouse. But the death of Husband #2 meant that you were now eligible to collect ex-spouse benefits from your first husband – husband #1. I hope when you later filed for your ex-spouse benefits you asked for six months of retroactive benefits.

In your situation, when your Husband #2 died, you actually had a choice – either collect your surviving spouse benefit from your recently deceased husband #2, or to collect a regular ex-spouse benefit from your first husband if that is more than your benefit as your second husband's widow. Regular ex-spouse benefits from your first husband are available even though he is still living (and, indeed, even if he remarried) because you are no longer married to husband #2.

This, however, is not always the way things work out for someone who has had multiple marriages. It all depends on the SS benefit each former spouse was entitled to. That's because your survivor benefit as your 2nd husband's widow is based on the full (100%) amount he was receiving from Social Security when he died.

In contrast, your benefit as your first husband's ex-spouse while he is still living will be based upon half (50%) of his full retirement age SS entitlement. And often, 100% of a deceased person's SS benefit is more than 50% of another living person's amount. But not always.

It's important to also know that if you claim any SS benefit before reaching your personal Rull Retirement Age , the monthly amount will be reduced. Benefits as a spouse (or a surviving spouse) do not reach maximum until the spouse reaches FRA, which is somewhere between age 66 and 67 depending on the spouse's year of birth.

It's also important to know that if a surviving spouse is working, any SS benefit received will be subject to Social Security's Annual Earnings Test, which limits how much can be earned before SS benefits are affected. For 2026, the earnings limit for those collecting early SS benefits is $24,480 and, if that limit is exceeded, Social Security will take away some of your benefits. Note that the earnings test goes away when you reach your full retirement age.

Finally, be aware that if your first husband also predeceases you, you will then become eligible for a surviving ex-spouse benefit from him, even if he has remarried.

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

Small team. Big impact. Powered by community

By Brandice J. O'Brien
Marketing and Communications Manager, Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity

WEST SPRINGFIELD - Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity (GSHFH) operates much like other nonprofits—with ambitious goals, growing needs, and limited resources. What makes us unique is our scale: a four-person full-time team managing daily operations, programs that benefit our partner families, donor engagement, and construction efforts across our service area. Community support isn't just appreciated — it's what makes this work possible.

Greater Springfield Habitat manages two programs — homeownership and home preservation — serving families across Hampden County. While our expenses currently exceed revenue by $27,000, and individual donations account for 13% of our income, this gap represents an opportunity for our community to strengthen and sustain this vital work.

"When you donate directly to GSHFH, your impact is exponential," said Michael Clemente, vice president of the Greater Springfield Habitat Board of Directors. "Local donations stay right here. We prioritize keeping our operating costs low to ensure every dollar maximizes its impact within our community."

Even with these challenges, Greater Springfield Habitat continues to build two to three new homes annually, while completing multiple home repair projects across Hampden County. Three new construction projects are in development for 2026.

"I've always been a fan of the 'octopus' partner concept that leads to a finished home – the many hands, including Habitat for Humanity, the donors of every size, the volunteers and the eventual owners," said Kevin Bowler, new GSHFH volunteer. "As a believer in the value of building familial wealth, any time a neighbor can have the opportunity for that brought into their reach, I'm a fan."

SUBMITTRF PHOTO
Jennifer, a Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity homeowner, beams as she holds up a key to her new home.

In June 2025, GSHFH sold a colonial home in Springfield to a Moroccan family of six.

"This house represents stability for us," said new homeowner Driss. "It will allow us to focus on raising our children and helping them achieve their goals, so they can grow and contribute positively to society."

In December 2025, the affiliate celebrated the completion of construction on a modular home. The project was a collaboration between Holyoke Housing Authority (HHA), the University of Massachusetts DesignBuild program, and GSHFH.

"We at the Housing Authority are always excited to see vacant parcels become homes, particularly at a time when there's a huge demand in the Commonwealth for good housing," said Matt Mainville, HHA executive director, at the dedication. "… we also recognize housing resources are limited, dollars for development are hard to acquire. So, when we're able to partner with Habitat, UMass, and the City, it's always a recipe for success."

The work we're doing today is meaningful — but it represents just a fraction of what's possible. With greater local investment and engagement, Greater Springfield Habitat could expand our programs, serve more families, and bring our board's long-term vision for affordable housing to life.

Michael said if the affiliate had an abundance of resources, he'd like to see old mill buildings in Holyoke, Springfield, Chicopee, West Springfield, Westfield, and Ludlow converted into housing.

"These larger spaces would allow us to support dozens of families at once. Commercial developers often struggle with abatement costs and regulations. GSHFH is uniquely positioned to secure grant funding and navigate these processes. It's a long-term goal that could truly transform our community. The first step is funding."

Greater Springfield Habitat hosts a variety of community-friendly fundraisers throughout the year, bringing together supporters of all ages to celebrate, connect, and invest in affordable housing in Hampden County.

Our upcoming Pickleball Tournament will take place on Sunday, March 29, at The Picklr in Westfield. Whether you're a seasoned player or just looking for a fun way to support a great cause, this event promises friendly competition and meaningful impact. Learn more at habitatspringfield.org/pickleball.

Supporters can also participate in Hops for Habitat — an ongoing partnership with local breweries that allows craft beer enthusiasts to give back while enjoying their favorite pours. Learn more at habitatspringfield.org/hops-for-habitat. We continue to offer our popular, Habitat-themed in-house designed dress socks for purchase (habitatspringfield.org/socks), and our signature fall fundraiser, Habitat Family Fun Fest, will return this October. Throughout the year, we also host bingo nights, raffles, and other fun opportunities for community participation.

Every event — big or small — helps build and preserve homes for families across Hampden County. Every gift makes a local impact. To support our work, visit habitatspringfield.org/donate.

Garden related chores to ease in the season

Last week I'm writing about a blizzard, while this week it looks as if the mercury is going to climb! How about our crazy New England weather?

If the skyrocketing temps have you feeling the urge to get a jump on the gardening season, you are not alone! Here are a few tasks, straight from the archives that will get you outside, and a few more to get you back indoors, because inevitably, winter is here for awhile longer. I think.

Perform appropriate garden chores.

I am usually negligent in cutting down asparagus foliage in the fall. Weather permitting, in other words, if the snow melts enough over the course of the next two weeks, I will get out there and cut it back to its base soon, then haul off the branches to prevent any bugs that overwintered there from infesting this year's spears.

In the Garden by Roberta McQuaid

It is also time to prune blueberries, apples, raspberries and grapes.

Pruning can vary depending on the age and health of your specimens. If you are not experienced at it, consult any number of good books on the subject before you head outdoors with your pruning shears and loppers.

Assess your tools

Was the rototiller running rough last fall? Perform or schedule a tune up for later this month and beat the rush. Same goes for the weed whacker and lawn mower.

Hoe and spade blades can be washed of dirt and debris then sharpened with a metal file. Medium grit sandpaper works wonders to smooth out the wooden handles of these and other garden tools.

After which, boiled linseed or tung oil can be applied to both the handle and the metal blade. It helps the wood resist moisture which leads to cracking and prevents rust on the blades.

I love my Dad's old spade. It has a great, handmade wooden handle that is about to crack through; sure wish I had oiled it 20 years ago!

Take inventory.

Many of us have our seed orders in by now. If you don't, or if you plan to buy your seeds locally, it is a great idea to go through your leftovers.

Before you decide whether or not they are keepers, consider their age and how they were stored. My rule of thumb is that if any seed is over three years old it isn't worth the risk. Some seeds, such as those for parsley, hybrid onion, carrot and parsnip expire even sooner. These are discarded after only one year.

If seeds were stored in a moist or overly hot location, their viability can be cut short sooner than normal. If you have concerns that they might not germinate, sow a few seeds indoors in pots in a warm location and see what kind of results you get.

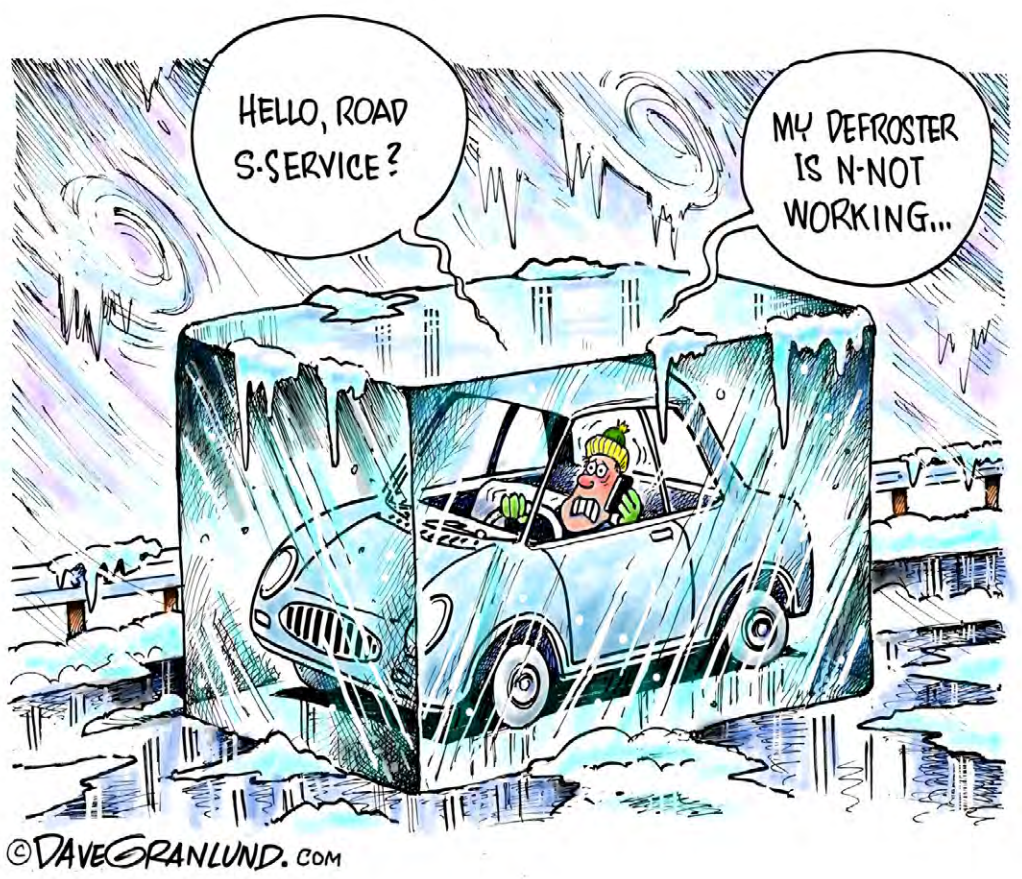
Nothing is more upsetting than planting seeds in the garden and having few or no seedlings come up. Time is wasted and the harvest is delayed by unknowingly utilizing dead seeds.

We can also take inventory of the various supplies we use during the growing season. How are you set on lime, grass seed, and fertilizers?

Plan to take advantage of preseason sales by knowing what you need ahead of time. Do you have enough containers, trays and labels?

If you find yourself short, you need not buy them. You can start seeds in repurposed

See GARDEN page 8



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Send letters to:
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The deadline for submissions is Tuesday at noon.

WE CARE ABOUT YOUR NEWS!

The Chicopee Register welcomes submissions of news in or related to Chicopee and its residents. Our "People News," is filled with submitted engagement announcements, wedding announcements, birth announcements, your new baby or news about your 25th or 50th anniversary celebrations. Please e-mail correspondence along with a photo to chicopeeregister@turley.com or send it to:
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Election letters to the editor

The *Chicopee Register* 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 Chicopee Register care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to journalregister@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 Thursday'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 the editor at 413-283-8393.

Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the newspaper 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 Chicopee Register.

IN THE CITY

RiverMills Senior Center lists upcoming events

Women's History Month

CHICOPEE - The Council on Aging will host a Massachusetts Women's History Month program on Wednesday, March 25 at 12:30 p.m. at Chicopee Council on Aging's RiverMills Center, 5 West Main St.

Join History Professor Maura Henry of Holyoke Community College for this program in honor of Women's History Month. During this presentation, you will learn about Massachusetts women Abigail Adams, Deborah Sampson, Elizabeth Freeman, and the birth of America. Although this is a free event, you must register in advance at RiverMills Center or by calling 534-3698.

St. Patrick's Day Dinner

CHICOPEE – The Council on Aging will have a St. Patrick's Day Dinner on Thursday, March 12th at 5 p.m.at Chicopee Council on Aging's RiverMills Center, 5 West Main St.

Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with a delicious Corned Beef dinner catered by Hamel's, while listening to traditional Irish songs by local Western Mass band Banish Misfortune. Beer, wine and non-alcoholic beverages will be available for purchase. Tickets are $20 and there is a limit of 2 tickets per person. Registration is now open for this dinner. Please call RiverMills Center at 534-3698 to inquire about ticket availability. You must register in person.

Drum Circle

CHICOPEE – The Council on Aging will offer a Drum Circle on Wednesday, March 11 at 1:30 p.m. at Chicopee Council on Aging's RiverMills Center, 5 West Main St. Join Carol LaLiberte, professor at CT State Community College, as she leads you through a drum circle. Drum circles improve mood, boost cardio health, increase energy, memory and provide a sense of community and belonging. No musical experience needed! You must register in advance at RiverMills or by calling 413-534-3698.

Nutrition Workshop

CHICOPEE - Council on Aging will offer a general nutrition workshop on Monday, March 16 at 10 a.m. at Chicopee Council on Aging's RiverMills Center, 5 West Main St.

Join representatives from Ascentria Care Alliance's SNAP-Ed program to talk about the solutions and barriers for a lifestyle of healthy nutrition, physical activity and wellness. You will also play some Nutrition Jeopardy and will be able to grab a sample of a healthy soup and recipe to make at home. Although this is a free program, please register at RiverMills Center or by calling 534-3698.

Poison Prevention

CHICOPEE – The Council on Aging host a poison prevention program on Wednesday, March 18 at 10 a.m. at Chicopee Council on Aging's RiverMills Center, located at 5 W. Main Street.Every year, Poison Prevention Week is recognized during the third week of March. Join Regional Public Health Nurse Fiona Cioch for a presentation on poison prevention in your home so you can keep yourself and your family safe. Though this is a free event, you must register at RiverMills Center or by calling 534-3698.

Parkinson's Foundation

CHICOPEE - The Council on Aging will host a Parkinsons Foundation Information Session on Thursday, March 19 at 10 a.m. at Chicopee Council on Aging's RiverMills Center, 5 West Main St.

Join the Parkinson's Foundation for an information session about what the Parkinson's Foundation is all about, as well as a discussion on the 10 early signs of the disease. This program will provide an overview of the foundations mission and work and highlight the wide range of resources, educational programs, and genetic testing opportunities available through the foundation. Although this is a free event, you must register in advance at RiverMills Center or by calling 534-3698.

ABC's of Genealogy

CHICOPEE - The Chicopee Council on Aging will host the program "ABCs of Genealogy" on Monday, March 23 at 1:30 p.m. at Chicopee Council on Aging's RiverMills Center, located at 5 W. Main Street.

Join David Robinson of Old Bones Genealogy, as he goes through the ABCs of family research, where you will learn how to start digging deep into your family history. You might be surprised as to what you find. You must register in advance at RiverMills Center or by calling 534-3698.

Red Cross Ready

CHICOPEE - The Council on Aging will offer the program "Red Cross Ready" on Friday, March 27 at 10 a.m. at Chicopee Council on Aging's RiverMills Center, located at 5 W. Main Street.Representatives from the American Red Cross of Massachusetts will be at RiverMills Center to present the Red Cross Ready program. This program is a national standardized free preparedness education curriculum for adults taught by certified presenters. This program is designed to help people understand, prepare for, and respond appropriately to disasters. You must register in advance at RiverMills Center or by calling 534-3698.

MEATLOAF DINNER
from page 1

check presented to Executive Director Sherry Manyak.

After declaring a challenge to Chef Bobby Flay, Vieau shared the process of making his famous meatloaf recipe, expressing excitement for the dinner.

"I'm excited tonight because the Rotarians of Chicopee are helping me with the serving and we have over 130 guests that are joining us tonight. The staff is working diligently to prepare tonight's meatloaf," Vieau said. "We have 20 pounds of hamburger here and we're going to add some breadcrumbs. One, two, threeish, four. It might look like a lot, but there's a lot of hamburger here and it's the good stuff."

Next was scrambled eggs, with Vieau explaining each cup contained three to four eggs, followed by sautéed onions and garlic.

"We add just a little spice to it, stepping in here with a little bit of red hot pepper flake, just so there's a little bit of kick. People like that," Vieau said. "And you need, always, a touch of black pepper, because that adds a little flavor to it, and you know what today is about. Flavor Country here and my favorite recipe right here."

And, of course, the secret sauce.

"The sauce that everyone's trying to figure out what it is that takes this meatloaf and separates it from average and turns that into extraordinary," Vieau said. "Add that in and now we're going to get some gloves and we're ready to start mixing!"

As for the final touch? Heinz Ketchup to the top of the meatloaf and baking it at 350 degrees for about an hour.

Rotary Club President Fred Borys emphasized community involvement in the organization supporting and sponsoring the event.

"We're just trying to get a little more involved in the community. Got both local and international responsibilities as Rotarians. It supports our senior citizens for their well-being and, the major thing is I would just try to be directly involved in the community. Make a bigger footprint, maybe make a little impression on some of the folks, hopefully a good one. Maybe interest a few of them in becoming members," Borys said.

Borys said the members were excited to help out and noted Vieau also became a member of the Rotary Club a few years back.

"Not just a Rotarian in name only, but is being very active. He initiated this, we talked about it for some time," Borys said. "We're excited to be here."

On upcoming events, Borys shared a Celebrity Bartending Night at The View Tavern coming up in early May, with a goal to raise $10,000.

"That's going to be primarily earmarked for local projects. We recently donated $3,500 to the Boys & Girls Club, we had a donation to the Love of Good Foundation and we're looking to piggyback on that," Borys said.

Rotary Club Vice President Scott Channell was looking forward to volunteering.

"Any time you can help out the community, it's always a great thing. So, it's just part of our mission at Rotary to service above self. So, it's just a great thing," Channell said.

Channell also emphasized giving back.

"We're here, really, to have fun, camaraderie and serve whenever we can," Channell said.

"And tell them a little bit about Rotary too," Borys said.

Vieau encouraged the community to get involved with the Rotary Club, thanking the senior center and the Friends of RiverMills for their work and support.

"These are the good deed-doers of Chicopee. They're the people that give back to this community in ways that I didn't know existed and I'm so grateful to be a part of that," Vieau said. "If anyone's interested in joining the Good Deed-doers Club, the Chicopee Rotary meets twice a month at View Street Tavern on the second and fourth Tuesday at 5 p.m. and you're more than welcome to join this wonderful group of people."

Vieau also hoped the community enjoyed the meal, wanting their feedback.

"Hopefully this is a success like it was last time and enjoy your meal!" Vieau said.

Borys and Channell's message was this.

"Just want to let them know that we're here," Borys said. "We do the best we can to publicize our presence. We donate where we can, we try to make ourselves visible and hopefully, this alerts a few of them to that we're around. We have a couple of cards to give out that they can access our website and see what we do."

"We're always looking for more volunteers. We're always looking for others that would like to give service above self," Channell said.

Rotary Club Vice President Scott Channell and Rotary Club Secretary Chelsea Parker get ready to serve.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY KRISTIN RIVERS

RiverMills Senior Center Executive Director Sherry Manyak and a volunteer put the Heinz ketchup on the meatloaf.

The Rotary Club of Chicopee and RiverMills Senior Center Executive Director Sherry Manyak pose for a group photo with the Rotary Club's check donation to the RiverMills Senior Center.

A close-up shot of the Boston Crème Pie cupcakes.

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SHINING STARS
from page 1

to dozens of other local nonprofits.

Reflecting on the achievement was Hoess-Brooks, who shared that it's extremely "humbling" to be recognized by the committee, citing his admiration for the city.

"We really love Chicopee, and it stems from the unwavering support and love from all of our friends, family, and our community," Hoess-Brooks said.

He also acknowledged the hard work that happened behind the scenes to make this night a reality.

"The attention to detail that the committee utilized and rolled out is just amazing, and everything was fantastic, and I feel this is a great celebration of Chicopee overall, which gives us another opportunity to come together and reflect on what makes our community so special to be a part of," Hoess-Brooks said.

PHOTO BY BRENDAN ROONEY

Chicopee High Jazz Band performed at the event.

Nonprofit of the Year

Next was Lorraine's Soup Kitchen & Pantry as "Nonprofit of the Year." The award comes from a point in time of collective perseverance as the 501c3 faced the challenge and obstacle of increased demand after several residents faced delays with SNAP benefits just a few months prior.

When facing the roadblock, the organization stepped in to provide assistance and ensure community members were able to put food on the table.

Offering insight into what this distinction means to the non-profit was Board Member John Paquette.

"I can tell you that the reception amongst our board was that we are speechless. And we feel that stems from the support of the community, and now being the Non-profit of the Year is a reflection of all of our volunteers, the board of directors, those who work on mobile pantries, help out at the kitchen, and just are consistently working, no matter the cause, if it's fundraisers, or providing food assistance, as we all continue our daily conquest of combating food insecurity, is just incredible to say the least, it's truly an honor," Paquette said.

Ernest LaFlamme Jr. "Citizen of the Year Award"

Al Picard is a lifelong Chicopee citizen who has dedicated and prided himself to making life better for the people of Chicopee, and his sense of humanitarian efforts started early on through the guidance of his parents, who told him, "Leave a place better than you found it."

This set the foundation for his long-rooted volunteerism, as his first act of giving back was when he was about 10 years old, and he went door to door seeking donations to help raise awareness and funds for a new ambulance for the city.

Picard shared that the moment of significance left him "speechless, and full of gratitude".

"I am deeply and greatly honored to be recognized by the Chicopee Chamber of Commerce, and it's two-fold because one, it shows their appreciation and what they feel I have done for the community. The second reason is that this award is named in honor of Ernest LaFlamme Jr., and he has been a main staple of my life," Picard said. "When I was a kid, he found me summer jobs to help me pay for my college education."

Picard shared LaFlamme helped guide and nurture him on his path to getting involved with nonprofits, which is a major point of his legacy. In addition to more than 40 years as an educator, Picard has also served on boards and volunteered for countless non-profit organizations, such as the Friends of River Mills Senior Center, Lorraine's Soup Kitchen & Pantry, Inc., Department of Veterans Services, the Charter Review Board and the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

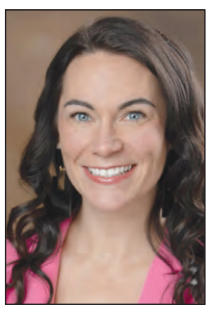
"He (LaFlamme Jr.) sat down with me, and gave me lots of advice, and through that process he helped raise thousands and thousands of dollars, which at that time led to the construction of what is now the new Chicopee Senior Center," Picard said.

Volunteer of the Year

Lastly, the final award of the night, "Volunteer of the Year," was bestowed upon Heather Leclerc, who has been a voice behind the scenes for years and instrumental in helping champion the Shining Stars event by stepping up to take on the role of Chair of the Member Relations Committee since 2023.

Leclerc is also a board member of Lorraine's, one of the founders and current executive VP of Riley Home Realty, and a team member of the Home Builders and Remodelers Association of Western Mass, where she has assisted in helping grow membership, plan events, and manages all forms of communication. Leclerc told us she is very honored to receive this award.

"It's truly special to take in this moment, especially knowing this is happening in the city I grew up in," Leclerc said. "It means a lot. I have always put a ton of time into my family and kids, and everyone, and just humbled, through it all."



Heather Leclerc Volunteer of the Year

Al Picard - Ernest LaFlamme Jr. "Citizen of the Year Award."

COURTESY OF MICHAEL EPAUL PHOTOGRAPHY

Lorraine's Soup Kitchen & Pantry - Nonprofit of the Year.

PHOTO BY BRENDAN ROONEY

Photo booth and Parisian-inspired landmarks.

PORTUGUESE NIGHT
from page 1

carried the torch of what Portuguese Night used to be under the vision of his dad, and Dino(Claudino), and it's truly special knowing they continue this journey."

Pivoting to the topic of community and how the Elk's continues to evolve was Shumsky.

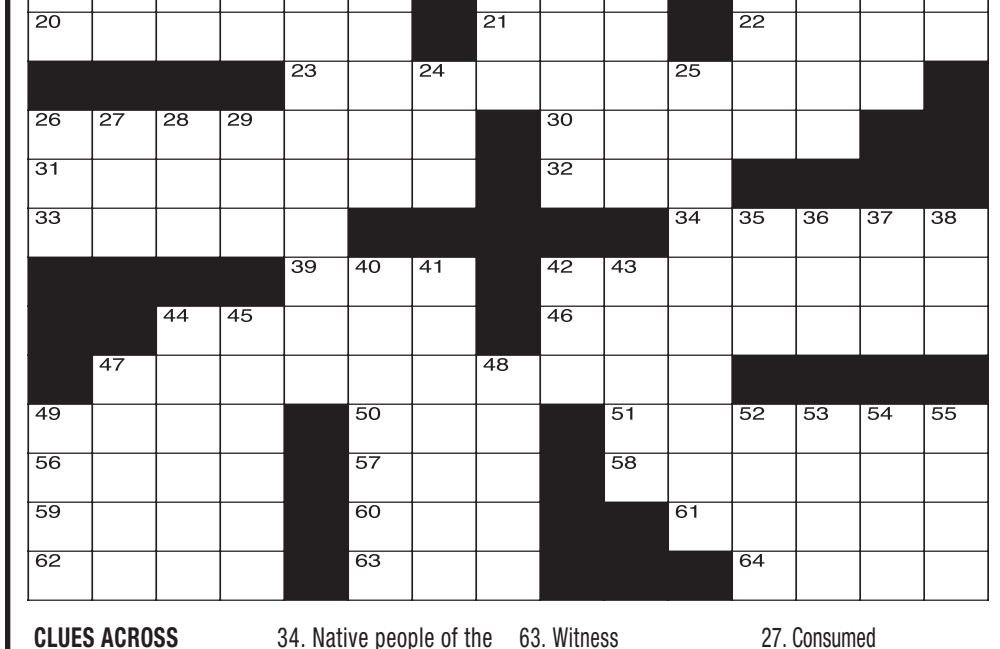
"I think it's a great way to get people out in the community and get them involved," Shumsky said. "There is a wonderful camaraderie among all who show up each month, and it's incredible because each night offers a small glimpse into cuisines and cultures that act as the main foundation that helps shape and mold the city of Chicopee into being the melting pot that our community exemplifies."

Also offering a bit of insight into what Irish Night will contain was Hughes Tardif, the Exalted Ruler of the Chicopee Elks.

"We're doing some Irish food, so we're having corned beef and cabbage, and we're currently looking at about 200 people in attendance, and we're going to have raffles, and going to play some Irish music. Normally, our average is in the range of 130, but we're super excited, so it's going to be a great time," Tardif said. "I also want to add that I think the community just loves the price. For $20, the portions of the food are like no other, the atmosphere is always a huge point of feedback, and it's just the reception of the people who love these specialty dinners. Our numbers continue to keep growing."

TURLEY PHOTO BY BRENDAN ROONEY

The evening's raffle table.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Unit of dry measure
5. One who defies authority
8. Social media giant
12. Render holy
14. "Much __ about nothing"
15. Computer manufacturer
16. Creed
18. Immoral act
19. Mountain pass
20. Winged nut
21. Don't know when yet
22. Elected officials
23. Corrupt tendencies
26. Popular adult beverage
30. Made a mistake
31. Morally correct
32. Type of whale
33. Portable conical tent
34. Native people of the Congo
39. More (Spanish)
42. Classroom implements
44. Cognizant of
46. One who tells
47. Free from bondage
49. Thick piece of something
50. Containing two adjacent nitrogen atoms
51. Removed from the record
56. Legendary singer Turner
57. Broke up the earth
58. Hunting expedition
59. Contributes
60. Unit of work or energy
61. Wreckage on the sea bed
62. Affirmative! (slang)
63. Witness
64. Scrape (Archaic)

CLUES DOWN

1. "__ and flows"
2. Humble request for help
3. A position of leadership
4. Continent
5. Adherent of a particular religion
6. Things that can be eaten
7. Self-governing Netherlands territory
8. Long-tailed crow
9. Repeated
10. Bluish greens
11. Humanities
13. Someone who serves in the armed forces
17. Labor (Spanish)
24. Zero
25. Shared by involving three parties
26. Queens ballplayer
27. Consumed
28. Rest here please
29. Men's fashion accessory
35. American time
36. Sound unit
37. They __
38. Soviet Socialist Republic
40. Places to play video games
41. A sudden attack of illness
42. When you hope to arrive
43. Charges
44. Actress Seyfried
45. A tributary of the Ohio River
47. Omit when speaking
48. Armored fish
49. Remain
52. From a distance
53. Adventure story
54. Geological times
55. Eat dinner

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SPORTS

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Colts pick up win in state tournament opener

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

CHICOPEE– The four seniors listed on the Chicopee Comp boys' varsity basketball roster should take junior's Xavier and Elijah Kleps, who are twins, out to eat at a local restaurant.

The Kleps combined to score 38 points, which helped the eighth seeded Colts celebrate an exciting 59-55 double overtime victory over the 25th seeded Melrose Red Hawks in a Division 2 round of 32 state tournament game played at Herbert H. Curry Gymnasium, last Thursday night.

"This is the first time that we've advanced past the first round of the state tournament in the past three years," said Chicopee Comp head coach Gavin Miller. "The twins do a lot of different things for us both offensively and defensively. They made some big shots in overtime and kept the seniors high school basketball careers going a little bit longer."

Comp (18-4) was scheduled to host ninth-seed Newburyport High School in a round of 16 contest on Tuesday night. The winner of that game will advance into the elite eight against either 16th-seeded Foxborough or top-seeded St. Mary's of Lynn.

It was also the first time that the Colts hosted a state tournament game since the MIAA changed the postseason format prior to the 2021-22 regular season. During the previous three years, they've lost road games in the round of 32 to Burlington, Scituate, and Leominster.

The Comp seniors are Modesto Galindrez, Colby Paul, Francis Jordan, and Brody Fay, who scored his 1,000th career point at the end of the regular season.

"We're a close knit team this year," said Xavier Kleps, who's the Colts sixth man. "The seniors are special to me and I'm very glad that they get to play another game."

Xavier Kleps scored 12 of his 14 points after halftime, while Elijah Kleps, who's the Colts only non-senior starter, finished the contest with a game-high 24 points.

"We hadn't been able to win a state tournament game since I've been a member of the team. We just found a way to get it done in overtime," Elijah Kleps said. "We made some key stops on defense, which helped us a lot. We just want to keep this run going a little bit longer, especially for the seniors. It won't be the same without those guys next year."

It was the third time this season that Elijah scored 20 or more points in a game. He scored a season-high 28 points in a 73-64 road win against Holyoke on January 28. Three days later, he scored 24 points in another win at Minnechaug Regional.

Elijah Kleps made seven of the Colts 15 field goals in the round of 32 contest. He also knocked down a pair of 3-pointers in the first half.

See COLTS page 8

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

Xavier Kleps runs into a defender.

Brody Fay fights to get a shot off.

Colby Paul takes a very long jump shot

Elijah Kleps goes for the three-pointer.

Chicopee defeats Holyoke in 7/8 semifinal

CHICOPEE – On Monday evening, the playoffs in the girls Suburban Basketball League got underway. In the seventh and eighth division, Chicopee and Holyoke met in a semifinal matchup. Chicopee would pick up the win and advanced to the finals, which are schedule to take place this Sunday.

Winnie Pueschel looks to make a move toward the hoop.

Sarina Garcia one-hands a shot.

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

Kiah Ashmore sends a shot away.

Aubrey Klett takes a free throw.

Ruby Garcia drives toward the hoop.

HCC Women celebrate final home game

TURLEY PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

Erin Bullough, of South Hadley, tries to overcome pressure.

Tatiyana Zuniga passes in transition.

HOLYOKE – Women's basketball played their last regular season game on Friday evening, Feb. 20, hosting regional opponent Bunker Hill CC. The Lady Cougars defeated their opposition 67-56 to earn their seventh straight win. Holyoke's two second-year players, Emily McGrail (Ware, MA / Ware HS) and Erin Bullough (South Hadley, MA / South Hadley HS), were honored with a sophomore night that included a pregame ceremony recog-

See HCC WOMEN page 8

Johanys Andrades goes for the layup.

More players wanted for Pioneer Valley Baseball

SOUTH HADLEY – The Pioneer Valley Baseball League, an adult baseball league for players who are age 18 and over, is now fully open for registration for the 2026 season.

The adult league will be administered by the Quabbin Valley Baseball League, and a registration link is on the home page of the league's website www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org. Thought it will be under the Quabbin umbrella, there will be no major changes in how the league is operated.

This year, the PVBL will have a 22-game regular season schedule followed by a double-elimination playoffs. The league, which had five teams last year and had to utilize multiple byes throughout the season, will be fielding a

See PVB page 8

Thunderbirds score much-needed win over Checkers

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds (21-25-5-2) overpowered the Charlotte Checkers (30-18-4-0) on Saturday night before a sellout crowd of 6,793 inside the MassMutual Center on Military Appreciation Night, coming away with a 5-1 victory.

Zach Dean provided instant offense on Friday night, and the third-year pro experienced deja vu on this night, jabbing home a 2-on-1 pass from Hugh McGing just 2:20 into the action to give Springfield a 1-0 lead.

Unlike a night earlier, Steve Ott's team was able to build upon its early lead with two successful penalty kills, followed by a power-play redirection by Matthew Peca at 18:57 of the first, as the captain tipped a Calle Rosen shot through Kirill Gerasimyuk.

The T-Birds' offense proved to be far from finished, as Alek Kaskimaki took a breakaway pass from Otto Stenberg at 4:30 of the second and stayed with his initial shot to cash in on a rebound past Gerasimyuk, extending the lead to 3-0.

Charlotte finally got on the board just 52 seconds later when Noah Gregor crashed the net to chip a Brian Pinho pass over the shoulder of Will Cranley, but it proved to be just a small blip on the T-Birds' radar in what would evolve into a firestorm of offense for the home team.

Only 1:03 of game time passed before Springfield had restored its three-goal advantage, as Jakub Stancl circled the offensive zone to the right circle before firing the puck back toward the goal mouth. Dylan Peterson parked himself right outside the crease and allowed the puck to ricochet off his skate and past Gerasimyuk to make it a 4-1 game, chasing Gerasimyuk from the game in the process.

Charlotte backup Louis

See T-BIRDS page 8

IN THE CITY

Events & announcements schedule

Powerback Rehab To-You

CHICOPEE - The Council on Aging will host Powerback Rehab for Physical Therapy appointment every Monday starting Jan. 5 at 10 a.m. at RiverMills Center, located at 5 W. Main Street.

Powerback Rehab To-You is a mobile therapy program that brings care directly to you! Powerback Rehab will be at RiverMills Center for appointments to help your recovery whether dealing with a recent injury chronic pain or seeking performance enhancement. These appointments are free. This program is open to members 55 and older. There are limited appointments, so you must register in advance at RiverMills or by calling 534-3698.

First Central Bible Church Announces Programs for Children and Youth

CHICOPEE - First Central Bible Church, located at 50 Broadway Street in Chicopee, is now offering five age-suitable programs from infants through grade 12 that are designed to help children and youth come to know the Bible, grow closer to God, and build a Christian community.

Sunday Morning

Before Sunday service, from 9:15 to 10:15 a.m., the church's Sunday School partners with parents and caregivers in nurturing children's faith through engaging lessons and activities. Classes are held for ages two through grade 9. Nursery care is provided for children through age two. For adults, a variety of studies are available during this time.

During the service, from 10:15 to11:30 a.m., First Central offers Junior Church for age five through fifth grade. While adults attend the service, children experience Bible teaching at their level through lessons, songs, games, and projects. The nursery is available for children through age four.

Wednesday Evening

Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 8 p.m. children ages two through fifth grade are invited to participate in Awana, which combines Scripture memorization, Bible teaching, fun activities, and mentorship to help children know, love, and serve Jesus Christ. Please register on the church website at www.firstcentral.church.

Wednesdays from 6:30 to 8 p.m., young people in grades six through twelve can join the church's Youth Group, which combines large- and small-group discussions. Sample topics include how the world's values differ from God's and the nature of sin. Participants explore their viewpoints while learning to apply Christian principles to their lives. No registration is required.

First Central Bible Church, located at 50 Broadway Street, Chicopee, exists to glorify God by making and maturing disciples of Jesus. Sunday service is held at 10:30 a.m. All are invited to join us in worship, prayer, learning from the Word, glorifying God, and feeling the warmth of fellowship. For more information, please visit www.firstcentral.church.

First Central Bible Church of Chicopee launches Awana Program

CHICOPEE – First Central Bible Church today announced the kickoff of Awana, a global, Bible-based discipleship program that helps churches and families raise children and youth to know, love, and serve Jesus Christ.

The program is open to the community and will be held at the church located at 50 Broadway Street, Chicopee.

Weekly sessions run on Wednesdays from September 10, 2025 to May 20, 2026 from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm and are for children ages two through fifth grade. Registration is required on the church website at www.firstcentral.church. There is no charge.

All families looking for a positive activity for their kids are welcome.

Awana combines Scripture memorization, Bible teaching, fun activities, and mentorship to help young people build a lasting foundation of faith. The program provides a safe, structured environment where kids can make new friends, build confidence, grow spiritually, and explore how God's Word applies to their everyday lives.

If you have questions, please call the church office at 413-592-5353.

Volunteer Drivers Needed

CHICOPEE - RiverMills Center is looking for volunteer drivers at the senior center. Volunteer drivers transport older adults to doctor's appointments, the bank, shopping to the senior center and back to their homes.

Those interested in becoming a volunteer driver must have a good driving record and fill out a volunteer application, which includes a CORI check. Anyone interested in volunteering should contact Rivermills Volunteer and Activities Coordinator Brandon Dumas at 534-3698, ext. 130.

Polish Junior League of Massachusetts launches Annual Scholarship Offering

REGION – The Polish Junior League of Massachusetts has announced its annual scholarship program for students of Polish heritage.

The League will be awarding scholarships to undergraduate students, and one scholarship will be granted to a graduate or returning student. In addition to the Undergraduate Scholarship program, there are two memorial scholarships, the Helen Weber Scholarship and the Josephine Karwoski Memorial Scholarship, each offering a focus on specific areas of study.

The scholarships and services provided by the Polish Junior League would not be possible without funds raised through the League's Annual Fashion Show and public donations. By contributing, individuals, businesses and corporations are helping to expand the level of awards and positively affect students.

Sheryl Mardeusz, president of the Polish Junior League says, "we are proud to continue helping graduate and undergraduate students throughout New England and are extremely pleased to be able to help even more individuals pursue their educational goals."

To be eligible, applicants, in addition to being part of the Polish community, must have a permanent address in the Western Massachusetts counties of Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden or Hampshire. Applications can be received after January 2, 2026 with an application deadline of May 1, 2026 and scholarship criteria can be found on the League's website polishjuniorleaguema.org.

For 87 years, the Polish Junior League of Massachusetts, a nonprofit organization of women developed as civic leaders, has made a demonstrable impact on their community. True to its mission, the League has worked diligently to help students obtain the best education, so they may contribute to enhance the social, cultural and political fabric of civil society.

*Scholarship Program Key Information

Applications can be submitted between January 2, 2026 and May 1, 2026

Permanent address in Western MA counties of Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden or Hampshire

Enrolled in sophomore year (36 credits minimum)

GARDEN from page 4

fruit and vegetable boxes, the kind that mushrooms, strawberries and lettuce mixes come in. They work great as long as you make a few drainage holes in the bottom.

Pint sized ice cream containers are perfect for a second transplanting of tomato or pepper plants. Seeds of squash or annual flowers can be sown in single serving ice cream cups. As a kid I always saved our Popsicle sticks for labeling seedlings or garden rows.

When I run out of labels, all it takes is a trip to the recycle bin to make some more.

Last year I cut them out of quart-sized yogurt containers; they were the perfect length.

Practice good garden hygiene

Disinfect any containers, labels, stakes etc. that you wish to reuse this gardening season by washing them in hot soapy water then a quick rinse of one part bleach to nine parts water. This mixture will kill any pathogens left behind from previous gardening endeavors.

Out with the old, and in with the new – all in due time!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 34 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.

HCC WOMEN from page 7

nizing the athletes and their accomplishments. Posters, photos and decorations were hung on the walls and in the stands around Golas Court.

McGrail led the Cougars in blocks during Friday's game and was second in rebounds, tallying six of each. She leads Holyoke in blocks this season with 59 and blocks per game, averaging 3.5. McGrail is sixth in NJCAA Division III in blocks and third in blocks per game. Bullough sunk the Lady Cougars first basket of the game on Friday. She leads Holyoke in three-point shooting percentage this season and is second in three-pointers made. Bullough has made 41.3% of the three-point shots she has attempted this year, ranking her fourth in NJCAA Division III. She has drained 31 total shots from long range on the year. Annastacia Dixon (Keene, NH / Keene HS) had an outstanding game in the regular season finale, leading Holyoke in points with 24 and rebounds with eight.

Annastacia Dixon gets the short jumper away.

Women's basketball closes out the regular season with a 10-3 regional record and a 14-7 overall record. They are the second-place team in the New England (Region XXI) standings and will be the #2 seed entering the regional tournament. This will be HCC women's basketball's first postseason appearance in over 15 years. The Lady Cougars will get a bye to the tournament semifinals and will host the winner of one of the two quarterfinals.

COLTS from page 7

Another Comp junior is Jacoby Haney, who scored eight of his 11 points during the second quarter.

Galindrez chipped in with six points and Fay scored four points in the opening half.

Melrose (12-9) was led offensively by junior Ian McGrath with 22 points. He made a total of six 3-pointers. Senior Jack Casey added 10 points.

The visitors held the lead throughout the first quarter.

A made free throw from Elijah Kleps did tie the score at 11-11 with 33.7 seconds left in the opening quarter.

The Colts' first lead of the game was at 21-20 following a Haney lay-up in the middle of the second stanza.

Comp put together a 7-1 run during the final two minutes of the half giving them a 31-26 halftime advantage.

In the final seconds of the third quarter, the Colts held a 43-33 lead following an inside hoop from Elijah Kleps.

With 6:20 remaining in regulation, Xavier Kleps drained a 3-pointer giving the Colts a 48-35 lead. During the final six minutes of the fourth quarter, Red Hawks came storming back with a 14-1 run.

Jacoby Haney flies for the shot.

McGrath scored 11 of those points with the help of three 3-pointers.

A lay-up by senior Connor Smith (7 points) tied the score at 49-49.

Comp had several chances to retake the lead, but they missed a shot and had a turnover during the final minute, which sent the game into overtime.

After Melrose took a 52-49 lead at the start of the first OT, Xavier Kleps buried a 3-pointer from the left corner tying the score again with 2:25 left.

Then Galindrez hit a jumper in the lane giving his team a two-point lead.

Melrose tied the score once again following an inside hoop from senior Leo Kleinbub (6 points) with 46 seconds remaining in the first overtime.

Neither team was able to retake the lead, which kept the game going for another four minutes.

The Red Hawks took a 55-54 lead following a Kleinbub free throw with 2:10 left in the second OT before the Kleps took over the spotlight.

Comp took a 56-55 lead with 1:15 left on the scoreboard clock when Elijah Kleps hit a jumper. His brother made a pair of free throws before another foul shot by Elijah sealed the deal with 3.4 seconds left.

T-BIRDS from page 7

Domingue did not fare much better, as McGing revved up the ice on a breakaway 55 seconds later. McGing was tripped and may have earned a penalty shot, but as he was falling, the puck continued on a straight line path under Domingue's legs, giving McGing credit for the third T-Birds goal in a 2:50 blitz, extending the lead to 5-1.

There would be no more goals in the final half of the game, but the fireworks were far from done, and with just eight seconds remaining and tempers flaring, Cranley and Domingue met at center and dropped the mitts for a goalie fight, the first in T-Birds history, which left the sellout crowd in an uproar to close out the victory.

PVB from page 7

sixth team this season.

There are several spots open for that sixth team, so players interested in joining the league should get signed up as soon as possible to claim a spot.

The league is a wood-bat only league utilizing playing under regular baseball rules though all players do bat. The league operates on a Saturday-Tuesday schedule. Games are played on Saturday mornings with 10 a.m. starts typical and on Tuesday evenings with start times in the 5:30 to 6 p.m. range. The league will start play in late April and run through the end of August. There are slots open for both full-time players and part-time players. The fee for full-time players will be $260 with part-time players getting up to 11 games for $130. Fees paid go toward the operation of the league, paying for insurance, umpires, fields, and baseballs. No one profits in any way.

In addition to the new sixth team, there are limited open roster spots on the other teams in the league, so get your registration in as soon as possible to participate in this season.

Games are played at ballfields throughout the region from as far south as Southwick's Whalley Field, through South Hadley's Beachgrounds and up north at Frontier Regional High School in South Deerfield.

For any questions, please go to the league website for more information. The league hopes interested players will come out and join the fun this spring and summer.

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IN THE CITY

Scholarship and Fellowship Awards application deadline is March 15

REGION - The Horace Smith Fund will be awarding $317,000 in scholarships and fellowships to residents of Hampden County, who have also graduated from an eligible high school or private school. This year 21 scholarships, four fellowships and one William R. Rooney Award for students with special needs will be presented to recipients at the June 18 Awards Night ceremony at Storrowton Carriage House in West Springfield.

Scholarships are offered not only to graduating high school seniors but also to students already in college or those wishing to return to college. Scholarships of $12,000 are distributed as $3,000 annually and renewable each year until graduation. Fellowship awards of $15,000 are distributed as $7,500 annually and renewable for one additional year to students pursuing a full-time graduate degree. Students must maintain at least a B average to renew.

Recipients are selected on a variety of criteria, including academic records, merit, and financial need. Of great importance is a personal written account of why the student feels deserving of financial assistance. Applicants must submit their transcripts and, if applicable, college entrance exam scores or graduate degree specific tests, and three letters of recommendation.

Completed applications must be received either electronically or be mailed to The Horace Smith Fund at 16 Union Avenue, Suite 2K, Westfield, MA 01085 no later than March 15, 2026. Applications are available at local high school guidance offices, college financial aid offices, and on-line at www.HoraceSmithFund.org or by phoning (413) 739-4222.

City of Chicopee Data Collection Program begins

CHICOPEE - The Chicopee Board of Assessors is notifying businesses that data collectors from the assessors' office will be visiting all businesses starting January 27, 2026 to collect personal property information. Each data collector will carry an official photo identification card issued by Real Estate Research Consultants, Inc. and a letter from the Chicopee Board of Assessors.

The Department of Revenue requires the Assessors to visit businesses every five years to re-list the taxable personal property that is used by the business. The data collectors will also confirm the legal owner, business name and mailing address for each location.

Data collectors will have identification and any questions can be directed to the Assessors' office at 594-1430.

Purse bingo to support Lorraine's Soup Kitchen

CHICOPEE – A Designer Purse Bingo event to benefit Lorraine's Soup Kitchen & Pantry will be taking place on April 17 at the Knights of Columbus Council 69 on 460 Granby Rd.

Doors open at 5 p.m. and the games start at 6:30 p.m. 10 games = 20 chances to win.

Tickets include entry for 10 games, dauber, door prize ticket and light refreshments. Cash bar, outside food welcome.

Raffles and door prizes.

Bring non-perishable food items to be entered into a special raffle. $35 pre-sale only. For tickets, contact Donna at 413-557-9280, Kim at 413-474-2991 or the kitchen at 413-592-9528.

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for Ages 8-16

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July 27-31, Minecraft Designers (ages 8-10, 11-14)
August 3-7, Python Programmers (ages 8-10, 11-14)
July 20-24, Make Your First Video Game (ages 8-10, 11-14)
July 13-17, ROBLOX Coders (ages 8-10, 11-14)
July 6-10 and 13-17, Fun Bites with Chef Swanigan (ages 9-16)
July 20-24 and 27-31, Around the world with Chef Swanigan (ages 9-16)
July 6-10 and 13-17, Cooking without Borders with Chez Vargas-Gonzalez (ages 9-16)
July 20-24 and 27-31, Passport to Flavors with Chef Vargas-Gonzalez (ages 9-16)

Check out our adult enrichment courses, too! hcc.edu/bcs

HOLYOKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Make the most of the summer camp

Summer camp season will soon be here, and throngs of children will board buses each morning or pack their parents' cars full of essentials to survive a few weeks away from home.

Looking back, many adults who experienced summer camp have fond memories of their adventures — whether they all went according to plan or there were some hiccups along the way. Parents want their children to make their own summer camp memories. Even if the canoe capsizes or the cabin leaks during a summer thunderstorm, such experiences can build character and strengthen friendships.

According to RegPack, an online registration software company, more than six million American children participate in some form of camp each year, including sleep-away camp or day camp. The American Camp Association says that number is closer to 14 million, with the most popular camp session length around one week or less. Families getting prepared for camp can follow these guidelines to ensure the experience is one kids won't soon forget.

Search for an accredited camp

Accredited camps must meet more than 300 standards related to program quality, safety and health, according to the ACA. An accredited camp will likely give parents the most peace of mind.

Consider children's readiness

There's no magic age when a child may be ready to go to camp, but generally kids who are ages seven or eight may be fine to start a resident sleep-away camp. Day camp kids can begin as early as age three, the same age kids often begin preschool programs. Gauge whether the child has spent time away from home at friends' or family members' homes to decide if a resident camp will be the right fit or if a day camp is a better fit.

Connect with fellow campers

If possible, attend a meet-and-greet prior to the start of the season. Neighborhood day camps tend to draw kids from local communities, so there's already a chance kids will know a few fellow campers.

Get to know camp counselors early on

Campers can introduce themselves to camp counselors and other program directors and are urged to ask questions about specific programs. Counselors can direct campers toward activities they may enjoy.

Make the most of all situations

Much of summer camp will likely be smooth-sailing, but it's reasonable to expect some bumps along the way. Campers shouldn't expect perfection, but use the situations that may go awry as learning experiences on how to handle adversity — trying to find the fun in them anyway. Even a medical situation can be overcome, particularly because camps staff qualified medical personnel to ensure campers are safe and well.

Greene Acres Equestrian Center L.L.C.
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BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL CARE
K-6th Grade • Full & Part-Time • Homework Support
School Bus Pick Up & Drop Off • Indoor & Outdoor Activities
PRESCHOOL Year round program for Ages 3-5 yrs.
Full & Part Time • Choose from Full Day or 3/4 Day Options
Creative Educational Kindergarten Readiness Curriculum
TODDLER/YOUNG PRE-K Year round program for Ages 15 mos.-3 yrs.
Choice of Full Day 7:00-5:00 or 3/4 day option 8:30-2:30
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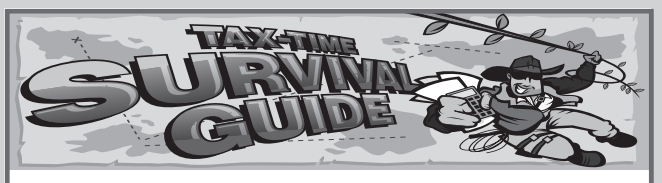

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Email **admin@oakham-ma.gov** for a full job description and town employment application.

The Town of Oakham is seeking an experienced working **HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT.** The Highway Superintendent serves as the working department head responsible for the planning, administration, and day-to-day operations of the Town's Highway department. Pay rate is $31.82 – $40.30/hr depending on experience.

Email **admin@oakham-ma.gov** for a full job description and town employment application.

REAL ESTATE

FOR RENT

All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status (number of children and or pregnancy), national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, or any intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination.

This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertising in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain about discrimination call The Department of Housing and Urban Development " HUD" toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. For the N.E. area, call HUD at 617-565-5308. The toll free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

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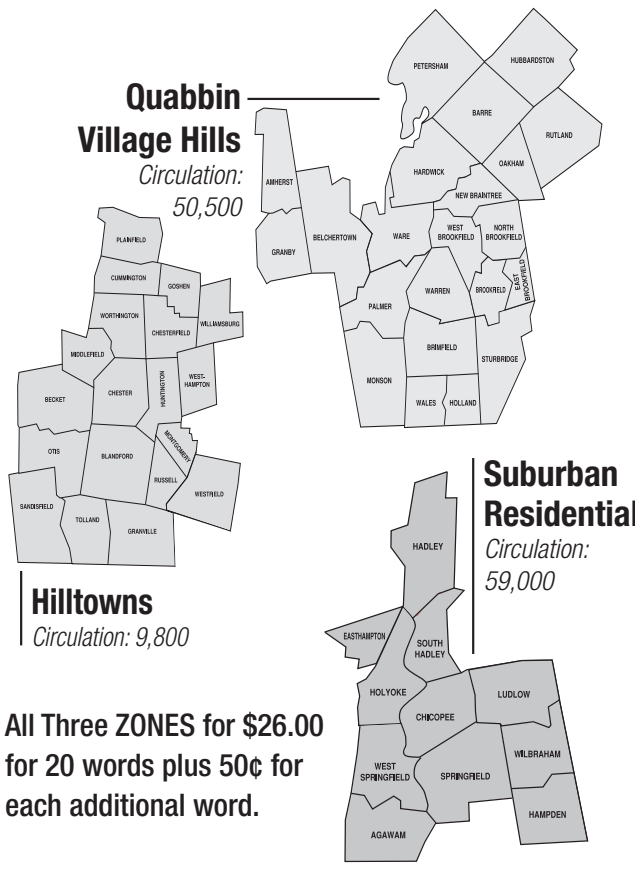
1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20 Base Price $26.00
21 Base Price $26.50	22 Base Price $27.00	23 Base Price $27.50	24 Base Price $28.00
25 Base Price $28.50	26 Base Price $29.00	27 Base Price $29.50	28 Base Price $30.00
29 Base Price $30.50	30 Base Price $31.00	31 Base Price $31.50	32 Base Price $32.00
33 Base Price $32.50	34 Base Price $33.00	35 Base Price $33.50	36 Base Price $34.00
37 Base Price $34.50	38 Base Price $35.00	39 Base Price $35.50	40 Base Price $36.00



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IN THE CITY

Holyoke Community College is accepting 2026-27 scholarship applications

HOLYOKE - The Holyoke Community College Foundation is now accepting scholarship applications for the 2026-2027 academic year.

The application deadline is Friday, March 13, 2026.

Last year, the HCC Foundation awarded 410 scholarships worth about $364,000 to 379 incoming, current, and transferring HCC students. Some students received multiple scholarship awards. The average scholarship award is typically around $900.

"The scholarship program is the flagship initiative of the HCC Foundation, and it reflects the incredible generosity of our donor community," said Amanda Sbriscia, vice president of Institutional Advancement and executive director of the HCC Foundation. "Every scholarship tells two stories - one of a donor who believes in the power of education, and one of a student whose path forward is made possible by that belief."

Students must be currently enrolled at HCC or have been accepted for the upcoming academic year to be eligible for scholarships.

Applicants only need to fill out a single online form to be automatically matched with the scholarships they are most qualified to receive. There are scholarships for new students, current students and students transferring to other institutions, scholarships based on financial need, scholarships for students in specific majors, scholarships for residents of certain communities, and scholarships that recognize academic achievement.

"Last year's 410 scholarship awards represent 410 opportunities for students to focus on their studies rather than financial stress," said Sbriscia. "We're proud to continue this tradition of supporting HCC students as they work toward their goals."

To view scholarship opportunities and begin the application process, please go to: www.hcc.edu/scholarships.

The HCC Scholarship Resource Center, on the first floor of the Donahue Building (Room 158), is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., to help current and incoming students navigate the process of applying for scholarships.

The HCC Foundation is a 501(c)(3) that works to advance the college's mission, vision, and values. Founded in 1968 as the Friends of Holyoke Community College, in response to a devastating fire that forced the college to rebuild on a new campus, the Foundation now manages assets of more than $20 million, the largest community college foundation endowment in Massachusetts.Questions should be directed to the HCC Foundation office at 413-552-2182, or by email to scholarships@hcc.edu.

Talk on Maude Tait

CHICOPEE - The Chicopee Historical Society will present a talk on the legendary Maude Tait, born in Chicopee, an aviatrix whose home base was the Springfield Airport during the Roaring Twenties and early 1930s.

Sue Bousquet, docent at the Lyman and Merrie Wood Museum of Springfield History, will present a talk on this remarkable woman for Women's History Month. The event is free and open to the public, 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 18 in the Bazan Community Room of the Chicopee Public Library, 449 Front Street, Chicopee, Mass.

PUBLIC NOTICES

SALE OF MOTOR VEHICLES UNDER G.L. c.255 Sec. 39A

Notice is hereby given by Interstate Towing, Inc. pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 255, section 39A, that on March 20th, 2026 at Interstate Towing, Inc the following Motor Vehicles will be sold at private sale to satisfy our garage keeper's lien thereon for storage, towing charges, care and expenses of notices and sale of said vehicles.

2013 Chevrolet Impala
VIN: 2G1WG5E38D1193345
Trevor Smith
541 Front St., Apt. 3R
Chicopee, MA 01013

2006 Jeep Liberty
VIN: 1J4GL48K16W187798
Konan Martes
431 Appleton St., Apt. 2R
Holyoke, MA 01040

2012 Honda Crosstour
VIN: 5J6TF2H51CL004174
Shamara Price
1197 Page Blvd.
Springfield, MA 01104

2003 Ford Explorer
VIN: 1FMYU60E03UB79994
Raul Alejandro Fuentes
7811 Basswood Ave.
El Paso, TX 79925

2006 Toyota Camry
VIN: 4T1BE32K36U726460
Eric Phakos
44 Mount Carmel Ave.
Chicopee, MA 01020

2003 Cadillac Deville
VIN: 1G6KD57Y73U144747
Robert Kapecki
17 Goodwin St.
Indian Orchard, MA 01151

2011 Nissan Altima
VIN: 1N4AL2AP0BN402227
Lorin Heath
25 Genesee St., 2nd Floor
Springfield, MA 01104
03/06, 03/13, 03/20/2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
Docket No. HD26P0370PM
In the matter of:
Marie Stathis
Of: Chicopee, MA
RESPONDENT
(Person to be Protected/ Minor)
CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF CONSERVATOR OR OTHER PROTECTIVE ORDER PURSUANT TO G.L. c. 190B, §5-304 & §5-405

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by Chicopee Rehabilitation and Nursing of Chicopee, MA in the above captioned matter alleging that **Marie Stathis** is in need of a Conservator or other protective order and requesting that Sara Spooner of Auburn, MA (or some other suitable person) be appointed as Conservator to serve **With Surety** on the bond.

The petition asks the court to determine that the Respondent is disabled, that a protective order or appointment of a Conservator is necessary, and that the proposed conservator is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court.

You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 a.m. on the return date of **03/25/2026**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

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. **Claudine T. Stoudemire,** First Justice of this Court.
Date: February 25, 2026
Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
03/06/2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Division
Docket No. HD26P0349EA
Estate of:
Margaret Ann Deitz
Also Known As:
Margaret Ann McClure
Date of Death:
January 8, 2026
INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Steven Lee McClure of Chicopee, MA**

a Will has been admitted to informal probate.

Steven Lee McClure of Chicopee, 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.
03/06/2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
Docket No. HD26P0388GD
In the matter of:
Marie Stathis
Of: Chicopee, MA
RESPONDENT
Alleged Incapacitated Person
CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIAN FOR INCAPACITATED PERSON PURSUANT TO G.L. c. 190B, §5-304

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by **Chicopee Rehab & Nursing Ctr of Chicopee, MA** in the above captioned matter alleging that **Marie Stathis** is in need of a Guardian and requesting that **Sara Spooner of Auburn, MA** (or some other suitable person) be appointed as Guardian to serve **Without Surety** on the bond.

The petition asks the court to determine that the Respondent is incapacitated, that the appointment of a Guardian is necessary, and that the proposed Guardian is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court and may contain a request for certain specific authority.

You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of **03/25/2026**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

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. **Claudine T. Stoudemire**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: February 25, 2026
Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
03/06/2026

SALE OF MOTOR VEHICLES UNDER G.L. c.255 Sec. 39A

Notice is hereby given by Interstate Towing, Inc. pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 255, section 39A, that on March 13th, 2026 at Interstate Towing, Inc the following Motor Vehicles will be sold at private sale to satisfy our garage keeper's lien thereon for storage, towing charges, care and expenses of notices and sale of said vehicles.

2007 Hyundai Tucson
VIN: KM8JM12B57U638384
Migdalis Miranda Colon
62 Lionel Benoit Rd., Apt. A
Springfield, MA 01109

2006 Nissan Altima
VIN: 1N4AL11D96N380301
Walter King
26 Hunt St.
Springfield, MA 01108

2006 Honda Civic
VIN: 2HGFA15559H338327
Curtis Berry
10 Bess Rd.
Enfield, Ct 06082

2013 Hyundai Santa Fe
VIN: 5XYZU3LA5DG051625
Pedro Disla
99 Massachusetts Ave.
Springfield, MA 01109

2014 Nissan Maxima
VIN: 1N4AA5AP7EC910721
Julie Vazquez
150 Eddy St.
Springifeld, MA 01104

2007 Ford Edge
VIN: 2FMDK46C77BB61373
Abelardo Claudio Mendez
011037 Stilton Dr
Chester, VA 23831

2005 Audi A4
VIN: WAUDF68E25A429903
Samuel Rosario
53 8th St.
Newington, CT 06111

2018 Freightliner Cascadia 126
VIN: 3AKJHHDR4JSKB9685
Nurmukhammad Khaydarov
3471 Village Dr., Apt. L
Frankilin, OH 45005

2005 Honda CRV
VIN: SHSRD78525U331720
Saira Murayes Navichoque
95 Park St., Apt. 1
Lawrence, MA 01841

2003 Honda Odyssey
VIN: 5FNRL18653B060830
Peddle
3800 N Lamar Blvd., Suite 230
Austin, TX 78756
02/27, 03/06, 03/13/2026

SALE OF MOTOR VEHICLES UNDER G.L. c.255 Sec. 39A

Notice is hereby given by Interstate Towing, Inc. pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 255, section 39A, that on March 6th, 2026 at Interstate Towing, Inc the following Motor Vehicles will be sold at private sale to satisfy our garage keeper's lien thereon for storage, towing charges, care and expenses of notices and sale of said vehicles.

2014 Kia Optima
VIN: 5XXGM4A78EG310568
Guilherme De Campos Gravena LLC
119 Margaret Turner Rd.
Charlotte, NC 28216

2009 Honda Odyssey
VIN: 5FNRL38699B412974
Erwin L Vallejoparra
76 Norton St.
Patchogue, NY 11772

2001 Honda Civic
vin: 2hges26781h538573
Zuleika Cartagena Ocasio
59 Mosher St., Apt. 3r
Holyoke, MA 01040

2012 Honda Civic
VIN: 2HGFB2F53CH566898
Luis Reyna De La Cruz
26 Cambridge St., Apt. 26
Springfield, MA 01109

2016 International 4000
VIN: 1HTMMMML1GH001318
Gigi's Towing
657 Broadway
Revere, MA 02151
02/20, 02/27, 03/06/2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Division
Docket No. HD26P0409EA
Estate of:
John David McClure
Also Known As:
John D. McClure
Date of Death:
January 3, 2026
INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Steven Lee McClure of Chicopee, MA**.

Steven Lee McClure of Chicopee, 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.
03/06/2026

PUBLIC NOTICES
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2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.
3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts' public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

Public notice deadlines are Friday at 3 p.m.

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

E	P	H	A			R	E	B		M	E	T	A
B	L	E	S	S		A	D	O		A	C	E	R
B	E	L	I	E	F	S	I	N		G	H	A	T
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Y	E	A	H		S	E	E				R	A	S	E

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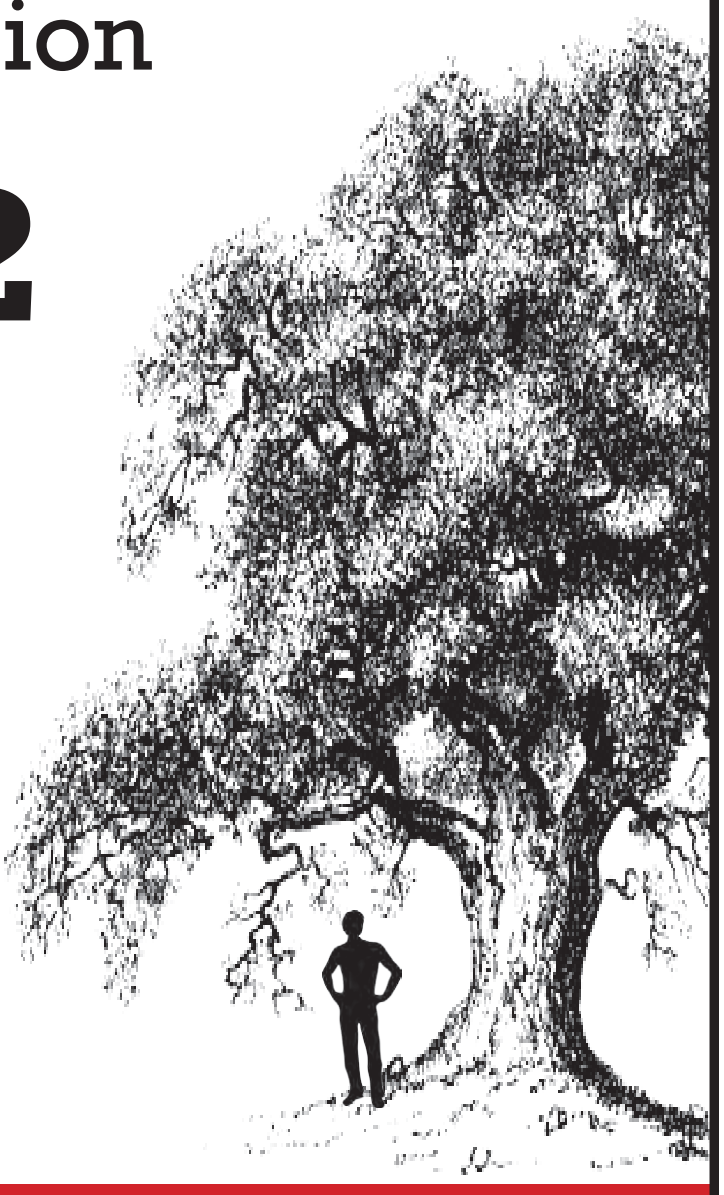
413-478-4212

DL&G TREE



INSURED AND CERTIFIED