



# Nowak

Funeral & Cremation Services



## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

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15 Ludlow Avenue, Springfield, MA 01151



NowakFuneral.com

## Welcome to Community Connections!

*N*owak Funeral & Cremation Services was built in 1957 by our grandfather Walter Nowak along with his brother Stanley Nowak. Our father Joe became the second generation owner in the early 1980's. Now as third generation family owners, we are extremely honored to continue serving the Springfield area.



*Anthony Nowak,  
Licensed Funeral  
Director and Owner*

We strive every day to serve our clients with three core values; compassion, dignity and respect. We have created this newsletter with those values in mind. Our community has grown over the years and it is not always easy to stay connected with those whose opinions, information and counsel we rely on. This newsletter is designed to help connect the families and caregivers in our community and to provide helpful information on a variety of subjects of interest to all.

We will feature articles on a variety of end of life issues, veterans information, hospice information, community-based organizations and events, resources for seniors and more. Each issue will also address a "Frequently Asked Question" about funeral service intended to inform and clarify information that is helpful as families begin to consider funeral planning.

We invite you to participate by submitting timely news articles about your organization or event. Contact us at [ngallagher@nowakfuneral.com](mailto:ngallagher@nowakfuneral.com).

We look forward to working with you to help ensure that our community remains one of the best places to live in Massachusetts. Please don't hesitate to call on us if we can help in any way.

Sincerely,  
*Nydia Nowak Gallagher  
Anthony Nowak*



*Nydia Nowak Gallagher,  
Licensed Funeral  
Director and Owner and  
Certified Preplanning  
Consultant*

## Great Futures Start at the Springfield Boys and Girls Club And You Can Help!



*SBGC members receive help with their homework after school.*

Every day millions of children leave school after the bell rings without a place to go or a person to watch over them. Employees and volunteers at the Springfield Boys and Girls Club (SBGC) are the people and the place for the 1500 Springfield Massachusetts inner city children in need of help.

The Springfield Boys and Girls Club has been serving children and teenagers for over 120 years. Families from all backgrounds are welcome, with special concern for those from disadvantaged circumstances. These children are encouraged to walk through the SBGC doors and have a FUN after school experience with purpose! Kids can find a program for any interest.

A wide range of activities are offered including swim lessons, computer

*Continued on page 2.*

## Indian Orchard Elementary School Hosts Popular After School Program

The Indian Orchard Elementary School is home to a satellite unit of the Springfield Boys and Girls Club. This program is one of the most popular after school programs in the area, and enrollment in the program is filled to capacity each year. “The neighborhood has a real gap for quality after school programs,” said Sarah Tsitso. “Parents tell me every year that it’s a real struggle to find places to put their children. The Indian Orchard After School Program is so popular due to the quantity and quality of the program. There aren’t a lot of options out there and it’s kept affordable. Enrollment is up over 15% from last year.” Annually 165 students participate, with more eager to join.

The program is open 3:30 to 6pm Monday through Friday during the school year, and 9am to 4pm Monday through Friday throughout the summer months. Volunteer mentors and staff assist students with homework, interact with them in group activities and sports, and host a story time for younger members. Teen members can attend group discussions on age appropriate matters such as hygiene and saying no to drugs and alcohol, peer pressure, and bullying.

Healthy living is a fundamental principal taught at the Indian Orchard after school program. Mentors help the children



Indian Orchard Elementary located at 95 Milton Street, Springfield MA.

develop a positive self-image and healthy social skills, as well as giving them a safe place to have fun in a tolerant atmosphere.

The after school program has been at Indian Orchard for more than 15 years. Nydia Gallagher and Anthony Nowak of Nowak Funeral & Cremation Services recently donated tissues, pencils, rulers and writing paper. “My brother and I were both students at Indian Orchard Elementary. We are very excited to show our support for the Boys and Girls Club!” said Nydia. They are also delighted to be sponsors at this year’s Festival of Trees in Springfield, with all proceeds benefiting the Boys and Girls Club. The Nowak family will also be donating and decorating a tree this year, and look forward to visiting with their neighbors at this annual event.

Individuals and organizations that can provide support to the club are encouraged to contact Mary Collins at 413-478-1700. “We can always use a donation of supplies,” said Sarah Tsitso, “our kids that attend the program go through a lot of materials.”

ON NOV. 22ND THE SPRINGFIELD BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB will be hosting their first Alumni Hall of Fame Induction at the Sheraton Hotel. “We are very excited about this special event. The SBGC has been around for 123 years and we have had thousands of people come through our doors. So many of them are doing amazing things in our community,” said Sarah Tsitso. Nominees have been selected and the committee is busy making the very difficult decision of the top inductees. For more information, or to purchase a ticket, contact Conor Bevan at 413-785-5266. Tickets are \$100 each, with a full meal served and a sneak peak at the Festival of Trees. Nominations are now being accepted for Alumni Hall of Fame inductees for next year.

## Springfield Boys and Girls Club And You Can Help!

*Continued from page 1*

classes, arts and crafts, music programs, lacrosse lessons and tutoring.

The SBGC fosters development throughout a child’s formative years into young adulthood. Teen members are offered job readiness programs as well as junior staff employment opportunities. “We are open to first graders through young adults 18 years old. Our older children have more leadership roles and can become junior counselors. A junior counselor will be paired with a member of our youth development staff and help out with our younger kids and lead activities,” said Sarah Tsitso, the Executive Director of the Springfield Boys and Girls Club.

The SBGC can be a much needed home away from home for a young person in need. This agency also operates year round, giving inner city children a place to go and

feel safe throughout the summer, all the while being surrounded by supportive adults that lead by example. To become a member go to their website at [www.sbcg.org](http://www.sbcg.org) and fill out an application, or call 413-732-7201. The website also offers comprehensive information about upcoming programs and events.

If you would like to get involved and make a difference, volunteer opportunities can be found to fit any skill set. “We love to hear from the committed folks in the community. Volunteers are needed that are willing to come in and teach. The kids need exposure, and we need people to bring their talent into the club and let the kids know what their job is like, and what their life is like on a daily basis,” said Sarah Tsitso. It only takes a few hours a week to help a child begin to make healthy lifestyle choices and foster meaningful relationships. Volunteer on your own or ask about group and corporate options by contacting Conor Bevan at 413-785-5266, or emailing [bevan@sbcg.org](mailto:bevan@sbcg.org).

# The Festival of Trees Lights Up the Holiday Season and Provides Support for the Springfield Boys and Girls Club

The Festival of Trees has been a long standing tradition known to Springfield residents, hosted by the Springfield Boys and Girls Club. Located on the second floor of downtown Tower Square, it has been bringing holiday delight to attendees for the past 14 years. Area residents can attend the Festival and tour the beautifully decorated trees Wednesdays through Sundays, beginning November 28th through December 14th.

Area families and businesses are already busy at work creating a feast for the eyes for the 2014 season. This event is fun for all ages, with over 100 unique trees on display and special visits from Santa. The trees are raffled off at the end of the end of the Festival. The winners not only receive a tree, but all the decorations on it and all the gifts under it! "Most of our trees come with lots of great stuff. We had a tree last year that had \$1500 worth of gas cards on it," said Sarah Tsitso.

Nowak Funeral & Cremation Services will join in the festivities this year with their peace inspired tree. "Our tree decorations will highlight the dove. The dove is a symbol of peace, caring, and devotion. We hope everyone will love it as much as we have loved putting it together," said Nydia Gallagher, Funeral Director at Nowak.

Proceeds from the event benefit the Springfield Boys and Girls Club and go towards their general operating budget. "Last year at Tower Square,



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we welcomed over 9,500 visitors who enjoyed 130 beautifully decorated trees. The 16-day special event raised over \$85,000 for the Club!

"said Conor Bevan, the Director of Development for the Springfield Boys and Girls Club. "The SBGC Board of Directors is committed to keeping club membership fees low so we can bring in as many kids as possible. But

that makes budgeting challenging. We really rely on events like the Festival of Trees to continue our work," added Sarah Tsitso.

Entertainment abounds, as many area choirs will perform throughout the festival. "We have a chorus that operates out of the club that performs during the festival. Our kids not only sing, but also help with the themes and decorating trees for the festival," said Sarah Tsitso. To find pictures and a list of entertainers check out the event website at [www.visittrees.com](http://www.visittrees.com). Parking is validated and admission prices are low. Current and active military personnel and their families are admitted free.

Volunteers are always welcome and needed for set up and tear down, as well as greeting guests and selling raffle tickets. If you would like to help please call Bevin at 413-785-5266, or email her at [peters@sbcq.org](mailto:peters@sbcq.org).

# *Frequently Asked Questions*

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## *How do I survive the holidays after the loss of a loved one?*

Coping with loss during the holidays can be difficult. “Holidays can definitely be harder for bereaved people. They are used to being surrounded by their family during the holidays, and when that person isn’t there it brings up emotions that can be challenging to handle,” said Nydia Gallagher.

***Give yourself permission to be flexible.*** Everyone experiences the death of a loved one differently. Recognize there is no time limit to the grieving process and holiday traditions may be adjusted.

***Be tolerant of what you aren’t able to accomplish and be proud of the things you are able to accomplish.*** You may feel too tired to haul out all your holiday decorations, and that is okay. It is important to listen to what your body and mind are telling you.

***Plan ahead for family and work gatherings.*** Knowing your schedule can reduce your chances of being caught off guard emotionally.

***Stress reducing activities may be extra helpful during the holidays and times of increased anxiety.*** Getting enough rest and exercise is not only crucial for physical health, but mental health as well. You may not relish the idea of group gatherings or intimate conversations, but surrounding yourself with supportive friends and family will help ease you through this period of time.

***Talk about the person that died.*** “At times a person experiencing the loss of loved one may not want to celebrate certain occasions at all. But it is important to still share memories of that person. It will not assist the grieving process to hold those feelings inside,” Nydia added. Your love did not end with the death of someone close to you.

If you would like information on area support groups please contact Nydia Gallagher at 413-543-3978.