



Nowak

Funeral & Cremation Services



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS • SUMMER 2015

413.543.1892



15 Ludlow Avenue, Springfield, MA 01151



NowakFuneral.com

Giving Animals a Better Life and a New Home: *Thomas J. O'Connor Animal Control and Adoption Center*

Funeral Director Anthony Nowak has added a new family member to his household. He is short and hairy and his name is Frodo. Frodo is a half rat terrier-half dachshund mix that Anthony recently adopted from the Thomas J. O'Connor Animal Control and Adoption Center, or TJO.



Frodo, happy to be in his new forever home!

at Thomas J. O'Connor. "We take in 3,200 to 4,000 animals a year," she said. "We are here to keep our community safe from things such as a growing animal population and the spread of disease. **Most of the animals in our shelter haven't had great care in their lives. Our shelter is a great starting place for these animals to find their forever family.**" "They have so much compassion for the animals," added Anthony. "They really wanted to make sure Frodo and I were a good fit."

TJO serves lost, abandoned and homeless animals. The animals could be dogs, cats, birds, reptiles and so on. TJO certified field officers assist the police in animal cruelty

The TJO provides animal control services for the cities of Springfield, Chicopee and Holyoke. The adoption center is located at 627 Cottage Street in Springfield.

"The experience has been amazing," said Anthony. "Frodo is really good. He's very smart and energetic." He added, "The people at the Adoption Center were very friendly, obvious animal lovers," as is Anthony. Frodo joins housemates of the feline persuasion: Sadie and Charlie.

Jessecah Gower is the Volunteer and Special Projects Coordinator

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The Popular Ludlow Senior Center Offers a Myriad of Services to Area Seniors

The Ludlow Senior Center is a large multi-purpose Senior Center that serves the community of Ludlow and beyond. "We are often asked, *How do I become a member of the senior center?*" said Carla Roberts, Program Coordinator at the Ludlow Senior Center. "My response is: If you live in the town of Ludlow and are over 60, you qualify. Our facility is actually open to seniors from all over that come and go as they want. We have a lot of people from Indian Orchard, Chicopee, Hampden, Wales, Palmer, all over really." Carla has worked for the Senior Center for close to 20 years. "In recent years I have noticed that seniors will check out the other centers around the area to see the differences. **We have so many that come back and say they love our center.**"

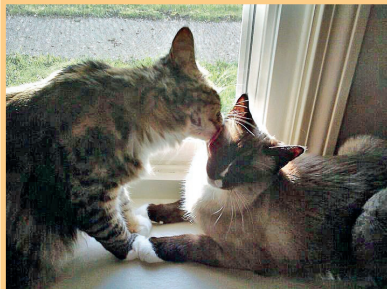
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Giving Animals a Better Life and a New Home: *Thomas J. O'Connor Animal Control and Adoption Center*

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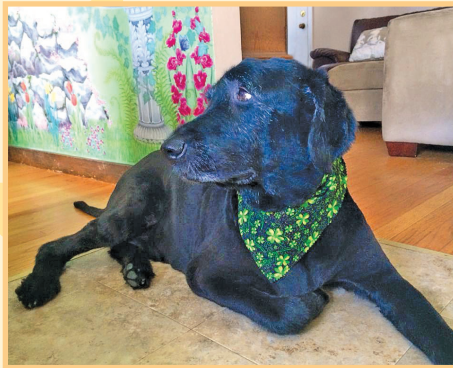
The Pets of Nowak!

Enjoy a peak into the beloved pets of the Nowak Funeral and Cremation Services Family.



These are Anthony's Calico and Siamese cats, Sadie and Charlie, Frodo's new siblings!

This is Champ, Nydia's nine year old labradoodle. Nydia says he is a gentle giant with only one emotion, happy!



Meet Meatball! This is Sheila's eight year old Shi Tzu.

This is Maxamillion. Max was a very special rescue mission for Sheila. As a kitten he was left on the door step of the police station where Sheila once worked. They have now been together for six years!



investigations and take over 4,000 calls per year. "We check on animals in our community, called well-being checks. It could be something as simple as a barking dog complaint. We go out and talk to owners. We also work with the police on animal code enforcement and their narcotics squad. Any time a person or family is removed from a home whether it be due to fire, an ambulance call, or DHS, we remove the animals," explained Jessecah. "Often the pets are reunited with their owners." TJO has a 55% re-claim rate for dogs, only slightly lower for cats. Officers respond to routine calls Monday through Friday from 9 am to 8 pm. Emergency services are available 24 hours a day.

Get Involved

Thomas J. O'Connor holds volunteer orientation once every month. Prospective volunteers get a tour of the facility and learn about the different areas where help is needed. If time does not allow you to volunteer, donations are accepted. **The center is always in need of such items as bleach, canned dog and cat food, and large dog treats such as rawhides and pigs' ears.** Used stuffed animals are also needed, and a fun way for children to get involved in the spirit of donating.

Anthony will be participating in the **Thomas J. O'Connor's 7th Annual Ride Like An Animal.** The motorcycle ride and poker run takes place on August 15th and pre-registration is now open online by visiting www.tjofoundation.org. The ride will be followed by food, prizes, and live music! "I am so thankful for my experience with the Thomas J. O'Connor Adoption Center and am excited to combine my love of animals and my love of riding in support of their incredible operation," said Anthony.

Another fun way for the public to get involved with the center's very special mission is through **The Lemonade Stand.** Held every Saturday in the TJO lobby, volunteers run a lemonade stand and act as a welcoming committee to prospective families looking to adopt an animal.

Important to Know

"Calling us does not condemn the animals," explained Jessecah. The animals at TJO are well cared for. "We have volunteers that groom the animals and work their brains and not just their bodies. We do not euthanize for time, space or treatable medical conditions. We are an open admission center no matter breed, age, sociability level or health." TJO even has hospice homes for animals that are in the end of life stage but are not in pain. **Animals at the center receive dental treatments, are de-wormed, have been spayed or neutered, have been microchipped, and receive their shots prior to adoption.**

If you or someone you know is in search of a missing pet, or wishes to adopt, please visit the Thomas J. O'Connor Facebook page. Pictures of animals and details of where they were found are updated frequently. For questions or concerns call 413-781-1484.

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The Ludlow Senior Center

Activities

The Senior Center offers a wide variety of activities, shopping, special speakers and medical services. You are sure to find something to suit your liking, with such options as:

- **Chair volleyball** is played two times a week on Mondays and Fridays at 1 pm. “It’s so much fun,” said Carla. “Players aren’t allowed to lift themselves up off the chair. It’s really hard to remember that rule,” she added playfully.
- **Yahtzee** reoccurs every Tuesday morning at 10:30 am, and a **movie** is shown Tuesday evenings at 5 pm.
- Starting in September an introductory **water color painting** class will be held on Wednesday afternoons.
- Special themed events like **Trivia Night** and **Bossa Nova Day** are scheduled throughout the year.
- Senior Center **day trips** occur throughout each month. To sign up call 413-583-3564 and ask for Sarah.

Medical Services

Professional medical services are also offered at the Ludlow Senior Center for a nominal fee.

- **Pedicures** are available every Tuesday. Appointments are required, and the cost is a reasonable \$10.
- “Audiologists come once a month,” Carla informed. Wing Medical Center **provides hearing tests**, hearing aid cleanings, and answer any questions you may have regarding your hearing.

- **Massage Therapy** by Meaghan Murphy is offered on Mondays. Fifteen minute massages are \$10 or 30 minute massages are \$20. Appointments are required. Massage therapy is open to anyone that attends the senior center.
- Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 1 pm to 2 pm volunteers from the Ludlow Town Nurses conduct **Blood Pressure Checks**. Recipients must be Ludlow residents.

Volunteer

“We have over 130 active volunteers,” informed Carla. “Our nutrition program utilizes the most volunteers, at 70% of our volunteer force. The cook has up to three volunteers. We have people that help set up the dining room and those that serve the meals to the tables. We have volunteers that clean up and wash dishes,” she added. The Senior Center averages 100 meals a day. **“Ninety five percent of our meals are cooked from scratch. Kathy, the cook, has the absolute best sauces. Kathy’s kitchen is just delicious.”**

“We also use volunteers for data entry and receptionist work. We have a volunteer lounge hostess to make coffee and put out refreshments,” Carla went on. All volunteer

candidates receive a tour of the center and are questioned about their background, what work they do, interests and hobbies, and what they think they would like to do at the Center. There is an application process as well as a CORI Check.

The Senior Center is currently looking for volunteer drivers to transport seniors to out of town doctor appointments. Volunteers are also needed to take pictures and film for The Senior Scene TV Show.

The Ludlow Senior Center is located on the ground floor of 37 Chestnut Street in



Seniors enjoying themselves at the 2015 Winter Carnival.

Ludlow. To preview their newsletter with a complete listing of events, dates and times visit www.ludlow.ma.us, or call 413-583-3564 to get more information.

Frequently Asked Question

How can I personalize my loved one's funeral?

At Nowak Funeral and Cremation Services we are honored to help you create a funeral service that exceeds your expectations. Personalized services focus on the things that made your loved one special, and can provide families with a sense of closure knowing that their loved one's life has been truly celebrated. "We do a lot of traditional services with unique elements. If someone wanted something extraordinary we would absolutely do our best to accommodate them," said Nydia Nowak Gallagher, Funeral Director at Nowak Funeral and Cremation Services.

Displaying images or personal objects during services belonging to the deceased can be very moving. Family members may find it therapeutic to work on displays together while they gather pictures, awards, artwork, or uniforms to be shared on a memory table. **"We work with the families to make it as personal for them as possible.** We once held a funeral for a co-owner of a local golf course where we made a display incorporating his personal golf clubs. We also had custom golf tees made with his name embossed on them as keepsakes for family and friends," said Nydia.

If you wish guests to be more involved, you can have memory cards present on the seats. Each person in attendance can write down a special memory of the deceased. These can be kept as special keepsakes for the family to be read in the future, or incorporated into the eulogy. Enhance the standard guest book by asking those signing in to add a brief sentence about how they knew the deceased or where they met him or her. "Family members often may not recognize many of the names, and it is comforting for them to have a little more information representing how widely loved and respected the deceased was," added Nydia. "During another service we were honoring a woman who was known for the Christmas cookies she baked and gave away each year. She had many many tins she would use to give her cookies out. The family brought in all the tins and displayed them during her service."

Caskets have many personalization options as well. Engravings can be made on the top exterior of the casket with names, dates, a cross, military images, and so on. The fabric head-panel can be personalized inside the casket with a choice from hundreds of designs. Picture frames can be built into the panel. "It is our privilege to be able to offer these items and services to better memorialize the very special life that was lived," Nydia went on to say.

The **readings and music** for the services should reflect the values of your family. Personalize this part of the service by having a friend or family member do the reading or sing.

After the service is complete, you may choose to have a motorcade accompany friends and family to the **committal ceremony** at the grave site. If the deceased was a motorcycle enthusiast the procession may involve many motorcycle riders. Another idea would be to have the deceased's motorcycle on display during the services. The deceased may be entitled to **military rites** at the committal ceremony. Trumpets or bagpipes could be played. You could have a special release such as colored balloons, butterflies, or doves.

Running events have become more popular across the nation. A twist on the traditional procession to the cemetery might be appropriate if your loved one was an avid runner. Invite guests to follow the hearse on foot in an athletic send off.

Many families hold parts of the funeral or visitation at locations specific to the deceased. For example, if the deceased belonged to a weekly bowling or pool league, they may choose to gather there. Outdoor services may occur at a golf course or along the beach, depending on the deceased's favorite pastime.

Cremated remains have a wide variety of **disposition options** that give family members great freedom of expression. Traditionally urns and custom jewelry have been an exceptional way to honor your loved one's memory as well. Other options for cremated remains include:

- incorporating ashes into paint used to make a one-of-a-kind piece of artwork
- launching ashes into space to orbit the earth
- adding ashes to fireworks for a special display
- compressing ashes to create a unique diamond or gemstone
- placing ashes in a biodegradable urn along with seeds to be planted

"Personalization has to do with being observant of what was really important to your loved one, and being creative on how to best honor them. At Nowak Funeral and Cremation Services we offer a free consultation to go over all personalization options. We will work diligently to honor each family's request," said Nydia. "Sometimes unique service choices occur during pre-planning stages. Other times unique elements come to mind when the family comes in after their loved one has passed on. We start to talk about the person's life and what we can do to accurately honor them." For more information on pre-planning or personalization options, please call Nowak Funeral and Cremation Services at 413-543-1892.