

Serving
the city
since 1995

HOLYOKE the Sun

FREE

January 3, 2025

Local news. Local stories.
Local advertisers.

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

thesun@turley.com

www.sun.turley.com

Keenan chosen as new police chief

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – Former Springfield Police Department Detective Brian Keenan has been selected as Holyoke’s new police chief.

Holyoke began the process of looking for a new police chief back in June when the Former Police Chief David Pratt announced his retirement.

Police Captain Isaias Cruz was appointed as the interim chief while the city began to look for Pratt’s replacement.

“It was about a six month process,” Mayor Joshua Garcia said. “At the press conference...we announced a search committee composed of city officials, community leaders, law enforcement and personnel. Together that search committee worked with a procurement officer.”

The search committee received the applications from various people interested in and worked on narrowing the choices down for Garcia.



Police Chief
Brian Keenan

During this process, the committee made sure to send out surveys to the community asking what they wanted to see in a future police chief.

From there, the committee narrowed it down to two candidates. However, one dropped out.

Therefore, Garcia and the committee decided to extend the application acceptance window by another few weeks to ensure that the city was getting a well-rounded pool of applicants.

By the end of this process, Keenan was the only applicant who made it through the committee’s process, so Garcia brought him in for a public interview to ensure he would be best for the city.

“Brian Keenan did extremely well,” Garcia said. “Keenan checks all the boxes. He is very experienced and knowledgeable in policing best practices.”

Keenan certainly stood out as a candidate during the pro-

See CHIEF page 11

Meet the 2025 Grand Colleen candidates



The contestants for the 2025 Grand Colleen. The nine will vie for one of five spots on the Grand Colleen Court at a pageant this Saturday, Jan. 4 at Holyoke High School. Find out more about the candidates on page 6.

Submitted photo

Looking back at 2024

BEST
of the **BEST**
YEAR IN PHOTOS

HOLYOKE – The landscape is continuing to change in Holyoke and 2024 was evidence of that. The city began construction on a new school building, continued the process of breaking its schools away from state control, and engaged in a long process to name a new police chief. Heading into 2025, there is a lot to look forward to in the city. Here is a look back at many of the other things that happened in Holyoke in 2024.



Krystal Bariffe and Ruthy Rivera from Saged Soul were two of the vendors at the Juneteenth celebration at Wistariahurst Museum. See more photos on page 12.

File photo

City spends 2024 taking back control of schools

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – Holyoke public schools have been working on the process of returning to local control throughout this year.

They plan to officially regain local control on July 1 of this year and the district staff as well as the school committee have been working hard to prepare for this transition.

The process to exit receivership began December of 2023 when Superintendent/Receiver Anthony Soto reached out to the commissioner and stated that HPS was ready to begin exiting receivership.

In that letter, Soto wrote that while the district still had areas that it could improve on, he felt they were ready to do so on their own.

“The district has strengthened and systematized support to school leaders and teachers to implement strong instructional practices so that students can acquire foundational skills and access grade-level content and

learning,” Soto wrote.

Following that letter the district received a response from the commissioner approving their transition out of receivership.

The district and the state then worked together over several months in order to develop a plan and a timeline for the district to transfer out of receivership.

They planned to have seven different meetings between the school committee and the commissioner to figure out the details of the transition plan.

During these meetings they discussed the district Turnaround Plan, the process for evaluating and hiring a superintendent, how to collaborate with stakeholders and discussed school committee bylaws.

These meetings began in April and went through August. On Aug. 19 the school committee held a meeting where the local control subcommittee walked through the discussed plan of transition.

See SCHOOLS, page 11

Tenant issues continue to plague renter population

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – The renter and tenant community has faced issues throughout this year.

In September, the city sent out warnings to landlords and multi-family homeowners who owed fines to the city for building code violations.

The warnings stated that if the property owners did not come into compliance by the end of the year, the fines would be added to their January 2026 tax bills.

Many of the property owners came before the city to discuss this issue. The city had sent out letters in May and had only given property owners 30 days to get a certificate of inspection.

“The time frames they were giving us were completely unrealistic,” multi-family homeowner Sarah LaRose had said. “Just think about how hard it is to get an electrician with 30 days notice or an engineer to come out to your house, which is what we’ve had to do and then get contractors.”

According to LaRose, Mayor Joshua Garcia had said that 634 properties had received the initial letter warning them to come into compliance with the building code.

Of those 634 properties, only 67

were able to come into compliance with in the deadline the city had set. The remaining 567 were fined.

Following this, the city sent out warning in September and in October to those who did not come into compliance for this order warning them of how much fines they had accrued up to that point.

The fine amounts added to \$100 daily for three family home owners or \$300 daily for all other landlords or multi-family homeowners.

Due to the large number of people in the city this was impacting, the city council discussed the issue at their meeting on Oct. 15.

During the meeting many property owners came forward to share the problems they were facing and how this issue put them at risk of losing their properties or being forced to increase rent prices to pay off the fines.

Following their presentation, the council passed the first reading of two ordinances. The first ordinance requested that the city establish a moratorium to give multi-family property owners more time to come into compliance with the order.

Within the order it stated that the two-month rollout for the property owners to come into compliance was unrealistic and that, based on state regulations,

the property owners should have had 18 to 36 months to come into compliance.

The city councilors agreed that this was a substantial issue that needed to be looked into.

“This was a horrible, horrible roll out,” City Councilor David Bartley had said. “Everything should just be rescinded, go back to ground level here.”

The council also passed the first reading of an ordinance requesting an ad-hoc committee made up of representatives from the building commission, the city council and multi-family homeowners.

Mayor Joshua Garcia agrees that creating an ad-hoc committee could be beneficial, and the council plans to continue to consider the idea.

After the city council meeting several property owners came to a public safety committee meeting where they continued to discuss the matter further.

In that meeting the committee decided that owner-occupied five dwelling units or less would get a grace period of two years to come into compliance with the building code.

Non-owner occupied five dwelling units or less will have a period of one year to come into compliance and the other larger properties have six months.

The reason for the shorter grace period for the larger properties is that the

city sent out a notice to those properties in 2018 asking them to come into compliance with the building codes.

Those notices were never enforced due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but property owners were still aware of the expectation.

However, these larger property owners will still have some leeway within this six-month grace period.

“Even with the larger property owners if they were working to get into compliance and showing good faith for the most part the city indicated that at least there would be some considerable release from the fines,” LaRose said.

With this in mind many property owners are “cautiously optimistic” that things will begin to improve.

They hope that an ad-hoc committee or something similar will be implemented soon so that the city can continue to work with property owners to ensure that the city’s expectations are feasible.

“It’s for building owners to advise the city on how feasible it is to implement certain bureaucratic requirements because let’s be real, sometimes things that are thought up at a desk don’t always play out as expected in the real world,” LaRose said.

The city plans to have another meeting about this topic in January so they can continue to work with property



CHURCH DIRECTORY

Your Community Church

Blessed Sacrament Parish
Rev. Duy Le
frduyle@blessedsacramentholyoke.org
1945 Northampton St., Holyoke
PARISH RECTORY: 413-532-0713
OFFICE HOURS:
Monday to Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Friday 8:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
WEEKEND MASSES:
Saturday: 4 p.m.
Sunday: 8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
DAILY MASS AND ROSARY
Monday - Friday: ROSARY 6:15 a.m.
Monday - Friday: MASS 6:45 a.m.
Legal Holidays: ROSARY 7:30 a.m.
Legal Holidays: MASS 8 a.m.
ROSARY AND MEDITATION
Monday Evening: 6 p.m.
www.blessedsacramentholyoke.org
FaceBook: @bspholyokema

First Baptist Church
Pastor Theresa Temple
1976 Northampton St., Holyoke
(413) 533-7728
firstbaptistchurchholyoke@comcast.net
Facebook: First Baptist Church of Holyoke, MA
Hours: Sunday worship service (winter hours) at 10:30 a.m. (summer hours) at 10 a.m.
Wednesday Bible Studies, one at 11 a.m. and one at 5:30 p.m.

St. Peter's Lutheran Church
Rev. Debora Stein
34 Jarvis Ave., Holyoke
Office: (413) 536-3369
Office: stpetersholyoke@gmail.com
Pastor: revdebma@gmail.com
Website: www.stpetersholyoke.org
Social media:
facebook.com/stpetersholyoke
OFFICE HOURS:
Monday - Wednesday 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.,
Thursday 2 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. (Call first)
Worship: Sundays at 9:30 a.m. (also on Facebook Live) & Thursdays at 7 p.m.
Other: Prayers with Pastor - Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. - on Facebook Live.

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
The Rev. Canon Joel Martinez
485 Appleton St., Holyoke
413-532-5060
Office@StPaulsholyoke.org
StPaulsholyoke.org
Instagram:
stpaulsepiscopalchurch_holyoke
OFFICE HOURS:
Tuesday - Friday 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Days and Hours of Services:
Sunday: 8 a.m.
Sunday: 10 a.m.
Sunday: 5 p.m. (Spanish)



Western Massachusetts
#1 Irish Pub!

Donovan's Irish Pub

Live Music, Great Food & A Pint To Raise Your Spirits!

Friday,
January 3
The Healys



Saturday,
January 4
Jim McArdle & Jerry Murphy



Friday,
January 10
Blaney Brothers



Saturday,
January 11
Dee Reilly




80 Jarvis Avenue, Holyoke
413-543-0791 • donovanspub.com
Sun. 12pm - 8pm; Mon.-Thurs. 11:30am-9:30pm; Fri. & Sat. 11:30am - 11:30pm


NOTICE

ERRORS: Each advertiser is requested to check their advertisement the first time it appears. This paper will not be responsible for more than one corrected insertion, nor will be liable for any error in an advertisement to a greater extent than the cost of the space occupied by the item in the advertisement.

Visit us at
www.turley.com



Free Fly Tying Classes



Sponsored by the Western Mass Fly Fishermen
starting January 9th, 2025.
Held at the Ludlow Elks Lodge,
69 Chapin Street, Ludlow, Mass.

Thursday nights for 8 weeks from 7PM to 9PM.

The classes are open to the public with children 10 years and up being accompanied by an adult.
Classes are geared to the beginner or novice.
Course materials and tools will be supplied!

Space is limited.

To reserve a seat please contact John Lawor at 413-579-1994.

For more information visit <http://wmffclub.org>

Sustaining sobriety and thriving through the holidays

HOLYOKE – Sara Harpin, a clinician in MiraVista Behavioral Health Center’s Opioid Treatment Program, counsels her clients that staying on the path of recovery during the holiday season, especially for those early in recovery, can be particularly challenging.

This is because the days between Thanksgiving and the New Year usher in activities that can be triggers for those in recovery with substance use. These range from parties with an abundance of alcohol, as well as access to other drugs, to family gatherings where old conflicts may surface.

Harpin says they don’t have to serve as triggers. She advises those in recovery to think ahead and have an exit plan for events.

This may mean taking a friend along with an agreement to leave after a cer-

tain period of time. Also, reflecting on who else may be present and a likely person to compromise one’s recovery. In both scenarios, it is advised to think out in advance what you will say when you want to leave and how you will refuse offers of alcohol or other drugs.

Harpin reminds that it is OK to say no as preventing relapse is the priority in recovery. Declining an invitation by saying you are grateful to be included but have a prior obligation is one option.

Harpin says unrealistic expectations contribute to relapse in the form of disappointment when people assume this holiday will be better than last year’s. Clinicians such as Harpin remind

those in recovery that recovery is all about staying connected to one’s supports outside family and friends during the holidays and beyond to prevent relapse.

Tips for managing recovery and preventing relapse during times of holiday stress and indulgence include:

- Make new memories that involve supportive connections and sobriety.
- Don’t isolate as holidays can be lonely and trigger thoughts of loved ones no longer here. Consider extra therapy sessions and more time with friends in recovery to avoid relapse.
- Limit contact where encounters are likely to be toxic for you.
- Be realistic and grateful for how you can positively connect to the joy of the holidays without overspending, over-stressing, and overindulging.
- Find the holiday spirit by looking beyond the traditions of the season and rediscover the real purpose and joy of the holidays.
- Enjoy sobriety-friendly celebra-

tions by trying non-alcoholic options like the new Mira Berry and Bright mocktail recipe. It’s a refreshing way to toast the season while maintaining your recovery. Click here to view the recipe: <https://www.miravistabhc.care/mira-bright-a-nonalcoholic-punch-recipe/>
For further information, visit: <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/navigating-holidays-recovery-2017121412931>.

To print or download a shareable copy of “Sustaining Sobriety – Thriving During the Holidays,” please visit: <https://www.miravistabhc.care/sustaining-sobriety-thriving-through-the-holidays/>.

If you or someone you know needs support now, you can contact the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. Call or text 988. For information on MiraVista Behavioral Health Center, visit <https://www.miravistabhc.care/>.

Girl Scout cookie season to begin

HOLYOKE – Girl Scout cookie season is nearly upon us. Time for Do-si-dos, Thin Mints, Tagalongs, Samoas and other favorites. The Girl Scout Cookie Program is the largest girl-led entrepreneurial program in the world, with Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts (GSCWM) serving over 5,000 girls from five counties in central and western Massachusetts. And it all gets rolling with the annual Cookie Drop.

Saturday, Jan. 11, hundreds of Girl Scouts, troop leaders, staff and volunteers from across central and western Massachusetts will descend on central loca-



tions in Springfield, West Springfield, Townsend and Worcester to unload the initial run of 32,629 cases (391,548 packages) of Girl Scout Cookies to bring back home and sell. It’s a fun and exciting time for everyone involved.

The annual Cookie Drop will take place on Saturday, Jan. 11 beginning at 7 a.m. in all locations (save for Townsend) which are listed below, along with the numbers of cases that will be delivered and distributed at each location. The press is invited to attend. Photo opportunities and interviews are available at all locations.

HCC to hold Registration Express event

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

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

The spring 2025 semester begins Tuesday, Jan 21. HCC also has Flex Start dates on Feb. 3 (Spring Start II) and March 24 (Spring Start III). Full-term spring classes run for 14 weeks. Spring Start II classes run for 12 weeks. Spring Start III classes run for seven.

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

“Registration Express at Holyoke

Community College provides an opportunity for students to complete the admissions and registration process all in one day and all in one place,” said Mark Hudgik, dean of strategic recruitment initiatives, admissions, and financial aid. “Admissions, Financial Aid, and Advising counselors will be available to help students get ready for the spring semester.”

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

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

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

HG&E customers to get extra discount

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Gas & Electric’s Commission recently approved an extra 10% Holiday discount for HG&E customers, to be applied to energy services billed during the December billing cycle. This discount applies to commercial and residential gas and electric customers who are not already participating in an economic development discount program.

“As the holiday season approaches, we at HG&E would like to express our gratitude to our valued customers by offering an additional 10% discount,” said HG&E’s Commission Chairman Fran Hoey. “We understand that the rising cost of everyday expenses can make things challenging and hope this discount will make your holiday season a little brighter.”

For the average homeowner who

heats with natural gas, the combined discounts (prompt payment and holiday discount) amount to savings of approximately \$76 on their bill. HG&E has implemented a holiday discount each year since 1992.

As a local municipal utility, HG&E is here to help customers manage energy expenses. HG&E has a variety of resources that can assist customers who are facing financial hardship, including payment plans, energy efficiency programs, and connections to fuel assistance. For customers who are looking to save energy and money this winter, HG&E is here to help, visit hged.com/save or contact customer service by calling (413) 536-9300.

“All of us here at HG&E offer our best wishes for a warm and bright holiday season,” said Jim Lavelle, General Manager.

UCCH hosting community meal Jan. 10

HOLYOKE – The holiday season may be behind us, but a good ham dinner is delicious at any time of the year. The United Congregational Church of Holyoke will be serving ham dinner at their monthly Community Meal on Friday, Jan. 10 at 5 p.m. Dinner will be immediately followed by a family movie at 6 p.m.

The Community Meal is hosted on the second Friday evening of each month at the church at 300 Appleton Street. All are welcome to attend, and the meal is completely free of charge. The menu changes monthly; past meals

have featured lasagna, Thanksgiving dinner, corned beef and cabbage, breakfast for dinner, steak sandwiches, and more. Parents must accompany their children.

The United Congregational Church of Holyoke is an Open and Affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ. We welcome all individuals, regardless of where they are on their journey. If you’d like to learn more about UCCH, please visit our website at www.uccholyoke.org, find us on Facebook or Instagram, or call our office at 413-532-1483 Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Decluttering program fundraiser

HOLYOKE – NAMI-WM will be holding a Responsible Decluttering Program fundraiser at our office; 1221 Main Street, Suite 100, in the Catherine Horan Medical Building. Volunteers will be collecting housewares, gently used clothing, towels, small household appliances, books, sporting goods and much more. All clothing should be in kitchen or 30 gal. size trash bags, durable goods should be in manageable size boxes. Anything wet or soiled, in non-working condition, and any baby safety items will not be accepted.

Call the office to arrange a time to drop off items or to have them picked up. Visit the website to find a list of items that will be accepted.

YMCA offers City employees discount memberships

HOLYOKE – In alignment with the City’s commitment to help all in the greater Holyoke community achieve their fullest potential in spirit, mind and body, the City and the Greater Holyoke YMCA have entered into an agreement that supports City of Holyoke employees in their journey toward better health. Beginning Jan. 1, the YMCA is offering a 20% discount on monthly memberships to all City employees, including those working in the Police, Fire, School Department, DPW, Water Works, and Gas & Electric. Additionally, the \$20 registration fee will be waived for new members.

This partnership is the result of collaboration between the Greater Holyoke YMCA and City of Holyoke leadership. As one of the oldest

social service agencies in Holyoke, the Greater Holyoke YMCA said it is proud to support the City of Holyoke’s workforce. The goal is to make health and wellness resources more accessible to City employees.

City employees will be able to enroll in the YMCA through onboarding, open enrollment, and on a monthly basis while deductions will be taken directly through their paychecks bi-weekly to make commitment to their wellness goals more efficient and affordable. In addition to the fitness reimbursement program available to employees enrolled in the city’s Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts health plan, the City of Holyoke is supporting this health engagement effort by using wellness credits provided to the city from Blue Cross Blue Shield

to ensure each municipal employee can achieve their health goals.

“Getting healthier is now more accessible for our municipal employees,” Holyoke Mayor Joshua A. Garcia said. “The Holyoke YMCA is a valuable resource in our community, and I’m thrilled to join and take full advantage of the many amenities offered by the YMCA through our strategic partnership with the City of Holyoke.”

“Being healthier just got easier,” said the City Personnel Director Kelly Curran. “I’m excited about his partnership and the payment option makes it more convenient and affordable to create healthy habits. When I was growing up, my grandfather was a prominent figure at the Y. I’m excited I get to help people have opportunity and access to such an important Holyoke resource.”

Guest Column



Can my wife claim her SS now and get half my SS benefit later?

Dear Rusty:

My wife will reach her full Social Security benefit at 66.5 years of age which is just under 2 years away for her now.

If she were to begin to get her monthly check now (i.e. early), would that prevent her from being eligible for the spousal benefit to receive half of what I am currently drawing?

Signed: Curious Husband

Dear Curious:

If your wife claims her own SS retirement benefit now (e.g., at 64.5 years) and you are already collecting your own SS benefit, then she will be automatically deemed to be filing for her spousal benefit immediately when she claims her own benefit. She does not have the option to defer claiming her spousal benefit until later.

This is a change made by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015, which requires all those first claiming SS to file for all benefits they are eligible for when they claim. What that would mean is that your wife's benefit now, including her spousal boost from you, would be actuarially reduced by the number of months early she claimed.

Her own SS retirement benefit would be permanently reduced by about 15% and her "spousal boost," the additional amount she would get as your spouse, would be reduced by about 19%, yielding a combined benefit which is roughly 42% of your Full Retirement Age SS benefit.

The only way your wife can get half 50% of your FRA benefit entitlement is by waiting until her own full retirement age (66 years and 10 months) to claim. Note too that your wife's

See SECURITY, page 5

Election letters to the editor welcome

The Holyoke Sun welcomes readers to participate in this year's election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to The Holyoke Sun, care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to thesun@turley.com. Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by noon Monday to be considered for that Friday's newspaper. No attack letters will be printed. No letters written by candidates supporting their own candidacy will be printed. If the volume of letters received is larger than the space available in the newspaper, or if the letters become repetitive, the newspaper reserves the right to print a representative sample. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last edition before the election.

For more information, call 413-283-8393.

Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the 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 The Holyoke Sun.



Guest Column

A New Year of possibilities



I spent last night curled up on the couch with a seed catalog in hand. It was a nostalgic few hours for me, in which I was transported back decades, to when gardening was new and my time and energy were boundless.

Regardless of it being the present day, I began circling this and that, and even curled a few pages too. All the fruit and vegetables I could grow, and store, and preserve, and eat, all year long.

Could my homesteading nature be bubbling back up to the surface? Perhaps. And wouldn't that wonderful if it could be a reality? It surely would. Talk about an admirable ambition for the New Year.

I started to think about what my family eats on a regular basis and what I would have to do to grow enough food to last throughout the year or at least seriously supplement what we typically buy. The most important considerations are taste and productivity. If a variety is productive, but doesn't taste great, then what is the point?

I have "plugged" Fedco Seeds a number

of times through the years. The newsprint catalog is full of such great information; follow up by looking online (fedcoseeds.com) to get a color picture of what you will grow. I specifically enjoy reading the personal recommendations from the trialers in many of the descriptions!

The biggest problem I have growing tomatoes is with early blight. Last night I found a great disease resistant paste tomato called Plum Regal that will suit my needs well, hopefully yielding many quarts of sauce for the cupboards.

And what about that Little Dipper Butternut Squash? Disease resistance reigns true here, with taste and productivity ranking high too. Twenty-two fruits from three plants? I'll take it.

Succession planting is paramount if I want to grow lots of food consistently. This planting method is defined as "planting more than once."

It can be planting lettuce, for example, every two weeks throughout the growing season or planting beets in the spot the peas vacated. Reading the catalog reminded me that not every variety is suited for successional sowing. In other words, the lettuce I sow for an early spring sowing might not be best for planting in the summer, and summer lettuce definitely won't be the best to extend my growing from fall into winter. I will definitely plan accordingly.

See GARDE6, page 6



By Ellenor Downer



American wigeon

I received an email from a Brimfield resident on Dec. 15. He said he checked out a pond in Ludlow in preparation for doing the Christmas Bird Count with the Allen Bird Club. He said, "My wife and I have been covering the town of Ludlow since 1989 and did my first count with the club in the late 1970s."

He saw four American Wigeons. He said, "Males with white crown/forehead and female with gray head brown body was swimming with the males. The male's white spot was very visible even to the unaided eye."

The American wigeon is 21 inches long. The male has a white forehead and crown, gray head and a green iridescent patch through the eye. The male has a white spot before the tail, which the Brimfield mentioned in his email.

The female has brownish sides, grayish head and sides, a dark eyespot and light gray bill with black tip. The female wigeon lays six to 12 white eggs in a grassy nest. The nest is concealed in rushes, sedge or under tree clumps.

American wigeons feed on pond weeds, milfoil, wigeon grass, wild celery and eel-

grass. They may eat vexation stirred up by diving ducks such as canvasbacks. They summer on lakes and marshes and winter on wet meadows, lakes and protected coastal waters. They are usually found in small flocks. During courtship competing males give whistling calls and lift folded wings nearly vertical above their back. Males give soft descending three syllable whistles.

Other birds

Other birds seen by the Brimfield resident at the Ludlow Reservoir were 63 Canada geese, six mallards, 83 hooded mergansers, 161 common mergansers, one ring-billed gull, three common loons and one bald eagle flew directly overhead just above the tree tops. Other birds were two American crows, two tufted titmice and two dark-eyed juncos.

Hooded mergansers

I received an email from a woman on

See BACKYARD, page 5

the Sun TEAM



EDITOR/SPORTS
Greg Scibelli
thesun@turley.com



ADVERTISING SALES
Wendy Delcamp
wdelcamp@turley.com

The Holyoke Sun is published every Friday by Turley Publications, Inc., 24 Water St., Palmer, Mass. 01069. Telephone (413) 283-8393, Fax (413) 289-1977.



@ The Holyoke Sun



www.sun.turley.com

PATRICK H. TURLEY
CEO

KEITH TURLEY
President

DEANNA SLOAT
Graphics Manager



www.turley.com

Turley Publications, Inc. cannot assume liability for the loss of photographs or other materials submitted for publication. Materials will not be returned except upon specific request when submitted.



Digital Photos

TURLEY PUBLICATIONS, INC.

Purchase a photo that recently ran in one of our publications. Go to newspapers.turley.com/photo-request

Letters to the Editor Policy

Letters to the Editor have a maximum of 350 words. We require writers to include their name, address and phone number in order for our office to authenticate authorship prior to publication. Addresses and phone numbers are not published.

Unsigned or anonymous letters will NOT be published.

We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions. Libelous, unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks or defamation of character are not allowed.

Deadline for submissions is Wednesday at noon.

Please email (preferred) letters to thesun@turley.com. Mailed letters can be sent to The Sun, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069.

When a loved one is recovering from a heart attack



Few things are as frightening as a heart attack, not just for the person experiencing it but for family members. With prompt and proper treatment between 90 percent and 95 percent of heart attack patients (let's not call them victims) survive and return home.

A heart attack, technically a myocardial infarction, occurs when a blockage keeps oxygen-rich blood from getting to the heart. (Cardiac arrest, when the heart stops beating entirely, is a completely different animal – and perhaps a topic for another day.)

Heart attack patients typically spend between two and five days in the hospital. For those who receive angioplasty or stents to keep the arteries open, the stay is usually shorter. If coronary bypass surgery is required, expect your loved one to be in the hospital for five to seven days. Hopefully, there are no complications (like blood clots) that keep them there longer.

When your loved one is ready to continue their recovery at home, you may wonder what will change, how to best support their recovery, and how you should behave around them. Based on my years of experience as a critical care nurse and patient advocate, here are five things to do – and not do.

1. Just listen. Heart attack patients often experience something known as the “cardiac blues,” which can encompass a range of emotions, including sadness, anger, anxiety, confusion and loneliness. While distressing, these feelings usually abate with time.

It's important for you to hear what your loved one is saying and feeling without passing judgment or giving advice, such as, “You'd feel better if you'd just take a walk.”

2. But don't walk on eggshells. On the other hand, you shouldn't make your loved one feel fragile, which can only make them feel more anxious than they already do. Do some of the things you've always done, such as watching a favorite TV show or movie. While you don't want them going up and down stairs to help with the laundry as they've always done, you can sit together and fold clothes while you chat.

3. Get their OK to come with you to follow-up visits. As a spouse, partner or family member, you have a role to play on your loved one's care team. Part of this role is accompanying them to doc-

tor visits so you can listen, take notes and ask questions.

Ensure that their doctors know that they have permission to discuss medical information with you so you can be fully informed about what's going on or what needs to happen next.

Spouses are generally assumed to be the patient's representative in hospital settings, but if you are not married, it's wise to ask your loved one to complete a HIPAA authorization so your status as the patient representative is crystal clear. This also comes in handy if a situation arises where you have to advocate for them.

4. Know the right questions to ask. The cardiologist will likely answer all of these questions, but it's important to understand and jot down the responses, particularly if the doctor seems rushed.

In addition to instructions about dietary changes and cardiac rehabilitation, ask the following:

- What exercise is OK to do and what should not be done during recovery from a heart attack?
- How will their heart condition be monitored on an ongoing basis (echocardiograms, stress tests, etc.)?
- What are the chances of another heart attack after having one?
- What symptoms should we watch for to indicate another heart attack?
- How long before your loved one can return to their job?

5. Help them follow doctor's orders. Your loved one will likely come home with some new medications, dietary modifications and an appointment for cardiac rehabilitation. Cardiac rehab is a critical component of their recovery. Typically, a heart attack patient can't drive for a few weeks following their hospital stay, so make yourself available as a chauffeur.

A heart attack is sometimes a bucket of cold water telling the patient that they have to make some lifestyle changes to ensure their heart gets healthy and stays healthy. Encourage your loved one to follow the doctor's recommendations, and maybe try some new recipes.

But don't nag them. Instead, tell them you need for them to comply with the doctor's recommendations because you love them and you want them to stick around as long as possible. Otherwise, your heart may break.

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

SECURITY, from page 5

spousal benefit will be based on your FRA entitlement, so if you claimed earlier or later than your own full retirement age, her spousal benefit will still be based on your FRA entitlement.

Also, your wife should be aware that anyone, who claims early, is subject to Social Security's “earnings test,” which limits how much can be earned while collecting early benefits. Thus, if your wife is working, she will be restricted on how much she can earn before Social Security takes away some of her benefits.

FYI, the earnings limit changes annually, but for 2025 it is \$23,420 and, if that is exceeded, SS will take away \$1 in benefits for every \$2 over the limit. And, FYI, the earnings limit goes up a lot during the year FRA is attained and the earnings test no longer applies once full retirement age

is reached.

I hope this answers your question, but if you have need additional information, please feel free to contact us directly at SSAdvisor@amacfoundation.org, or call us at 1-888-750-2622.

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

BACKYARD, from page 5

Dec. 14. She said, “The ponds on Brook Road in West Warren have more treasures. Two days ago I saw a pair of hooded mergansers. I sat and watched for several minutes and they spent most of the time under water.”

Bird at feeder

I received an email from a woman on Dec. 20. She wrote, “I have spotted a bird I believe to be a yellow warbler coming to my feeder. My knowledge of the bird is that it migrates south or the winter.” She sent a photo, but the bird was eating so the beak and head were not visible. It had two white wing bars, olive color and some yellow. It may be a male American goldfinch in winter plumage. They do spend the winter here and retain some of their yellow feathers.

Loon fact

Most of the fish loons catch are small enough to be swallowed whole when they're still underwater. However, when a loon captures a larger fish, it may need to return to the surface to subdue it before it is able to consume it. Loons may slap a fish against the surface of the water or repeatedly drop and recapture it until the fish stops struggling and is manageable enough to be swallowed.

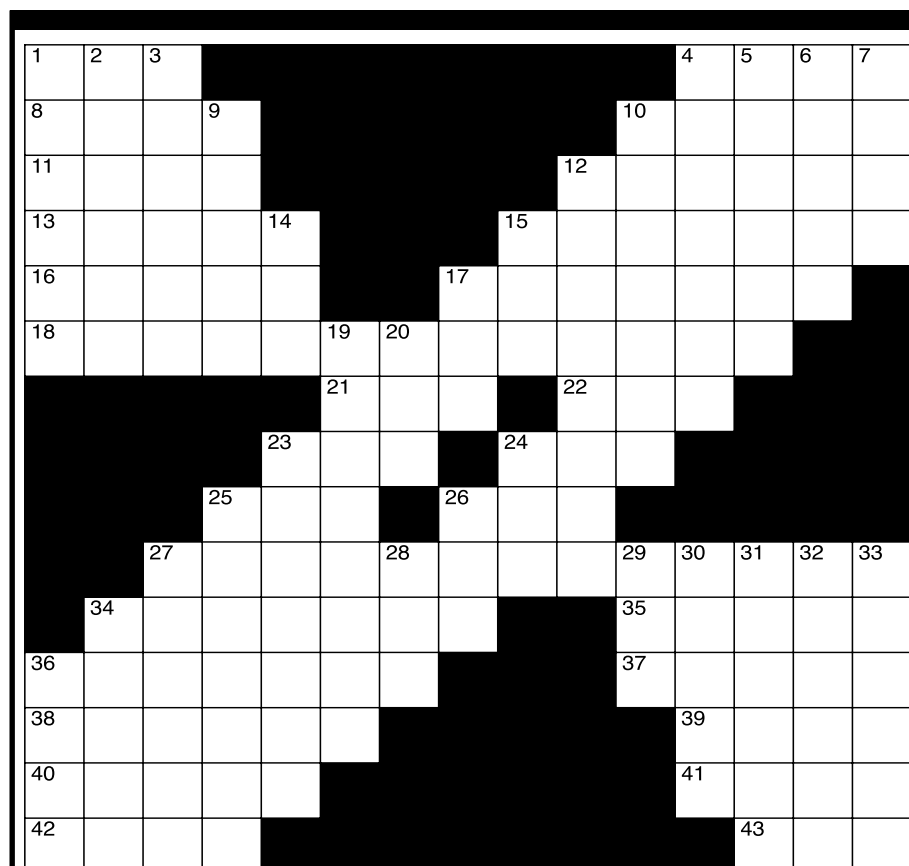
Loons swallow fish whole, headfirst. When a loon starts to swallow a large fish, it will first ensure that it is oriented

properly, sometimes dropping the fish and picking it up several times until it is properly positioned. Once the fish is aligned so that it is headfirst in the loon's mouth, the loon begins the process of swallowing. Loons have sharp, rear-facing projections along the roof of their mouths and on their tongues. These projections, called denticles, interlock with the fish's scales, ensuring that the fish is not able to escape back into the water. Loons then press their tongue into the fish and begin to inch it down the throat, into the esophagus. Depending on the size of the fish a loon is trying to eat, it may take a few seconds to several minutes for the loon to swallow. Once in the esophagus, the fish moves down into the gizzard. A loon may open its mouth and repeatedly extend its neck upward and then contract it back towards its body to help move particularly large fish through the esophagus to the gizzard.

American crow

I saw about five or six American crows foraging on a lawn on my way to church this cold Sunday morning. With the temperature registering 8 degrees F, the crows had their feathers all puffed up for warmth.

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by calling me at 413-967-3505, leaving a message at extension 100, emailing mybackyard88@aol.com or edowner@turley.com or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005.



CLUES ACROSS

- Americans' “uncle”
- Chair
- Ancient kingdom
- Alaskan glacier
- One from Somalia
- Ancient alphabets
- Relating to vocabulary
- Small mongrels
- Natural settings
- Weekend entertainments
- Line from which light seemingly streams
- Your own private code
- Swiss river
- Satisfaction
- A person's brother or sister
- Folk singer DiFranco
- The Blonde Bombshell
- Kids' school project
- Bluish greens
- Classifying
- Cube-shaped
- Choo-choos
- Indian religious god of dissolution
- French department
- Leak into gradually
- Foundation

- Midway between south and southeast

CLUES DOWN

- Counterbalancing debt
- In slow tempo
- Glamorous city
- Japanese lute
- Makes law
- Informative book
- Animal's body part
- American playwright
- Blood poisoning
- Angels
- Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)
- Written account
- Unwelcome pest
- Saddle horses
- Type of gibbon
- Delta is one
- NE Massachusetts cape
- Soup cracker
- Yes vote
- Muddy ground
- Physics apparatus (abbr.)
- Type of drug
- German city
- Animal disease
- Martini ingredients
- Get away
- Spanish municipality
- Thrust a knife into

CROSSWORD ANSWER on page 11

Meet the Grand Colleen candidates



Blythe Grace Bullock
Holyoke, age 19
Hopkins Academy and Holyoke Community College dual enrollment graduate, currently working and inspires to pursue a Nursing degree.



Abigail Elizabeth Collings Vann
South Hadley, age 18
current South Hadley High School Senior who plans to pursue a BA in Art History with a minor in Criminal Justice.



Caitlyn Ann Eichhorn
South Hadley, age 22
South Hadley High School and Lower Pioneer Valley Career and Technical Education Center (Career TEC) graduate, currently at STCC majoring in Early Childhood Education and Care.



Erin Marie Gauthier
Holyoke, age 20
Holyoke High School graduate, currently at Baypath University pursuing a BA with a dual major in Medical Science and Biology and on the Pre-Veterinary track.



Abigail Katherine Huebner
South Hadley, age 20,
Granby Junior/Senior High School graduate, currently at Sacred Heart University pursuing a BA dual major in Marketing and Management with a Digital Marketing minor.

Grand Colleen pageant takes place on Jan. 4

HOLYOKE – The St. Patrick’s Committee of Holyoke will hold the Grand Colleen pageant on Saturday, Jan. 4 at Holyoke High School.

Each year the Grand Colleen Pageant decides the five finalists who then go on to the Coronation Ball to have their Grand Colleen crowned. The Grand Colleen reigns with her Colleen Court on a majestic float over the two-mile parade route. Not only does the honor of being a Colleen represent women who are proud of their Irish heritage and community, but the journey helps them build connections, gain self-confidence, and develop skills that will help in their present and future career paths.

2024 Grand Colleen Elizabeth Gourd said, “I want to encourage anyone who is considering running or running again to please do so. It has changed my life for the better and I hope it can do the same for you.”

The 72nd Holyoke St. Patrick’s Parade will be held on Sunday, March 23 and the 48th Holyoke St. Patrick’s Road Race will be held on Saturday, March 22, 2025.



Erin Frances O'Donnell
Holyoke, age 20
Holyoke High School graduate, currently at Holyoke Community College obtaining her RN licensure, and enrolled at Westfield State University completing her BA in Nursing.



Moira Catherine Reardon
Holyoke, age 21
Holyoke High School graduate, currently at Springfield Technical Community College majoring in Health Science and studying Diagnostic Medical Sonography.



Olivia Rose Royland
Holyoke, age 19
Classical Conversations program graduate, currently at Holyoke Community College pursuing an Associates degree in Education.



Maura Catherine Joseph
Holyoke, age 22
Hampshire Regional High School graduate, and Franklin Pierce University graduate with a degree in Criminal Justice, currently working as a Preschool Paraprofessional Educator.

GARDEN, from page 4

Likewise, I may love “Jade” green beans, but they wouldn’t be the best for my first sowing because they are white seeded and typically white seeded beans rot in cool soil. I’ll start with a dark seeded bean.

I am really looking forward to trying to grow a few new things this year, watermelon and cantaloupe to be exact. Less fruit to buy is a good thing, right? I learned some tips from the catalog. Namely, to start the melons indoors, then

transplant at two or three weeks old, before the roots tangle, into soil that has been amended with lots of aged manure or compost and prewarmed with black plastic mulch.

Using row covers over the plants until flowers appear will keep off the cucumber beetles and provide additional heat. The catalog also provided some interesting tips on how to harvest ripe melons.

When I did manage to grow a plant to maturity, there is absolutely nothing worse than cutting into a melon notoriously unripe with no way to ripen it. Best to

call it chicken food at that point. So this year I will grow ripe melons, lots of lettuce and butternut squash along with gallons of tomato sauce. And more. A New Year of possibilities.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 33 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.

LOWER PRICES TO BOOST YOUR BUDGET! INFLATION PRICE BUSTERS **PRICES IN RED ARE AT OR BELOW LAST YEAR'S PRICES!**

<p>USDA INSP. FRESH BONE-IN ASSORTED PORK LOIN CHOPS..... \$1.99 lb</p> <p>USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS PORK LOIN CHOPS or ROAST \$2.99 lb</p> <p>USDA INSP. FRESH PORK SIRLOIN CUTLETS.. \$2.44 lb</p> <p>SLICED IN OUR DELI CORNED BEEF COOKED \$6.99 lb</p> <p>SLICED IN OUR DELI MUEENSTER CHEESE..... \$5.99 lb</p> <p>TAILGATE TIME!</p> <p>USDA INSP. STORE MADE ITALIAN MARINATED BONELESS CHICKEN BREAST \$2.99 lb</p> <p>USDA INSP. STORE MADE BONELESS KOREAN BBQ MARINATED PORK BUTT STRIPS..... \$3.35 lb</p>	<p>USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF STRIP LOIN CUT. FREE \$6.11 lb WHOLE OR HALF</p> <p>USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF CHUCK ROAST or STEAKS \$6.29 lb</p> <p>USDA INSP. GROUND FRESH DAILY DIET LEAN GROUND BEEF \$4.99 5 LB BAG</p>	<p>USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS BEEF SIRLOIN STEAKS \$5.99 lb</p> <p>USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS & SKINLESS CHICKEN BREAST 10 LB BAG..... \$1.91 lb</p> <p>USDA INSP. FRESH CHICKEN DRUMSTICKS 10 LB BAG 77¢ lb</p> <p>USDA INSP. FROZEN FRENCH TOAST STICKS 2 LB BAG \$5.49 ea</p> <p>USDA INSP. IQF FROZEN 51/60 COUNT PEELED & DEVEINED RAW SHRIMP 2 LB BAG \$7.99 ea</p>
---	---	--

90 Meat Outlet 90 Avocado St. Springfield 413-737-1288 www.90meat.com

HOURS: Mon. - Wed. 8-4
Thurs. 8-6 • Fri. 8-6 • Sat. 8-3

We reserve the right to limit quantities.

Adventure tours of Warren ☀️
Share the Adventure with us!

3 Day Hampton Beach Getaway

March 15.....**8-Night Bahamas Cruise**..... from \$1499
 May 23**7-Night Bermuda Cruise**..... from \$1699
 June 10-12....**Hampton Beach Getaway** \$529
 June 28.....**Boston Harbor Lunch Cruise**..... \$175
 Sept 12-26....**Portugal & The Azores** \$6549

Share the Adventure with us soon!

For further information call Randall at (413) 436-5357 or email adventuretours@att.net or go to www.adventuretoursofwarren.com

SPORTS

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

SEND US YOUR SPORTS SUBMISSIONS

www.sports.turley.com

Knights offense too much for Pacers

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

HOLYOKE – Holyoke High School won the previous games against rival Chicopee High by 19 and 20 points. There also wasn't very much suspense in the only meeting of the 2024-25 regular season between the boys' basketball teams.

Led by the duo of senior Calvin Godbolt and junior Jordan King-Perilli, the Purple Knights celebrated an 84-58 non-league victory before a large crowd in their home opener at John "Jin" O'Connor Gymnasium on December 23.

"Chicopee is one of our rivals just like every other team that we play during the regular season," said Holyoke head coach Juan Maldonado. "We're very happy that we were able to win tonight's game."

Overall, it was the sixth time that the Purple Knights defeated the Pacers on the hardwood since the beginning of the 2017-18 regular season.

While Maldonado and Chicopee head coach Jordan Miller matched wits in a varsity game for the first time, they've known each other for their entire lives.

Coach Miller and I are like brothers," Maldonado said. "Our parents have known each

other for a very long time, and we grew up together. Jordan's brother, Gavin, is the boys' varsity basketball coach at Chicopee Comp. We're very close, and it's always very special whenever we do play against them."

Jordan Miller, who had been the Pacers JV boys' basketball coach for the past eight years, replaced Craig Smith as the varsity basketball coach. Smith retired from coaching at the end of last season.

"This rivalry game isn't as big as it should be right now. When we're finally able to

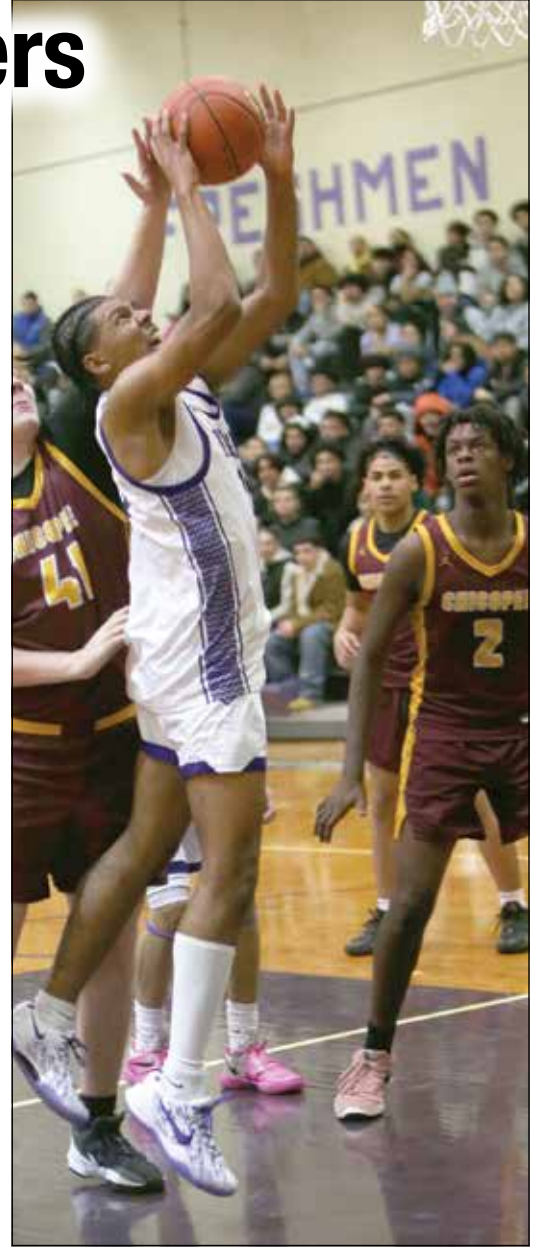
See BASKETBALL, page 8



Calvin Godbolt goes for a layup.



Julian Fasoli starts his way down the court.



Chauncey Ruiz gets the bank shot with the defensive pressure nearby.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com



Georlee Aponte gets ready to go up.



Jordan King-Perilli flies for backwards layup.



Aden Cabrera goes for a shot in traffic.

Tournament-bound Knights ready for 2025

HOLYOKE – Earlier this week, Holyoke High School wrestling got ready for a major challenge as they traveled more than 150 miles for a wrestling meet at Parsippany Hills High School in New Jersey. The tournament will be followed by a dual meet on Wednesday, Jan. 8 as Holyoke takes on Longmeadow on the road at 7 p.m.



Josiah Cedeno goes for a takedown.



Zaire Burton-King looks for a win.



Steven Santiago wrestles a match for the Knights.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com



Nathaniel Velasquez gets ready to grapple.

Longtime ref Lavoie wins MIAA award

LUDLOW – Last month, long-time referee Joe Lavoie was recognized as the MIAA Football Official of the Year. According to information provided, Lavoie joined the Western



Joe Lavoie

Massachusetts Football Officials Association (WMFOA) in 1974 (51 years) as a junior at AIC in Springfield, MA.

Lavoie was a 3-year starter for Milt Piepul's 8-1 ('75) AIC Yellowjackets. He was selected All-New England Honorable Mention by the AP and Boston Herald ('75), and selected to the ECAC team of the week versus Northeastern University.

After college, Lavoie taught and coached football

See LAVOIE, page 8

Islanders outlast Thunderbirds in 7-5 track meet

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds (13-13-2-1) could not escape a furious push by the Bridgeport Islanders (7-19-2-2) in a high-flying 7-5 contest on Saturday night inside the MassMutual Center.

The Islanders tried to spoil the T-Birds debut for rookie netminder Will Cranley when Liam Foudy opened the scoring on a rebound to the goaltender's right at 7:36.

Springfield would be tested after the Islanders went to a power play at the 13:04 mark, but captain Matthew Peca took matters into his own hands to change the tide. After skating out of his zone with possession, he challenged a forward wide on the left side before surprising Henrik Tikkanen with a short-side snapper to tie the score, 1-1, on Springfield's second shorthanded tally of the season. Peca's tally was his team-leading 12th of the campaign and second in as many nights.

Peca was in the middle of things again just 5:04 later, weaving into the offensive end to create a 2-on-1 outnumbered attack. This time, Peca played the role of playmaker, laying a perfect pass to the blade of Matt Luff in the right circle. With no wasted movement, Luff one-timed it past a sliding Tikkanen, giving Springfield the 2-1 lead with just 1:26 left in the frame. Peca's assist was his 100th as a member of the T-Birds, making him the first player in club history to hit the 100-assist plateau.

The Islanders gave a glimpse of what was to follow in the middle period when Tyce Thompson one-timed a slapper off the post and off Cranley to tie the game, 2-2, at 3:15 of the second period, as the T-Birds were scrambling to get back into position.

The T-Birds' special teams had the next notable moment just 2:09 later, as Marcus Sylvegard beautifully spotted

Luff on a pass from the left corner to the top of the crease, allowing the veteran winger a tap-in for his second of the night to restore the Springfield lead, 3-2, at 5:24.

After a rare stretch of scoreless hockey on this evening, the Islanders found their way to a tie score again when Matt Maggio surprised Cranley with a quick wrister from the left circle off a setup from Grant Hutton, evening the game, 3-3, at 14:20.

Before the T-Birds could escape the onslaught, the Islanders got their second lead of the night at 19:06, when a poor Springfield line change set up a 3-on-2 for Bridgeport. Gemel Smith neatly left a puck for Foudy near the crease, and the veteran winger had an open net for his second of the night and a 4-3 Islanders lead after 40 minutes.

Midway through what had been a quiet third period, the T-Birds power play connected for a second time as

Sylvegard deflected an attempt from Aleksanteri Kaskimaki over Tikkanen's shoulder, and the game was tied again, 4-4, at 10:04 of the third.

Despite their scrappiness to get back even, the T-Birds could not salvage a point on this night, and Maggio capped his four-point night with a corner-picking wrister at 16:20, which gave Bridgeport a 5-4 lead. Cole Bardreau added an empty-net tally at 18:45 to push the lead to 6-4.

That Bardreau tally proved pivotal when Hunter Skinner found the net from the right side with 25 seconds to play, trimming the margin back to 6-5. Ultimately, however, the T-Birds ran out of time, and with the clock about to expire, Marc Gatcomb flung a clearing effort into the empty cage to round out the scoring. Cranley finished his T-Birds debut with 35 saves, while Tikkanen escaped with his first win in six tries with 31 stops.

BASKETBALL, from page 7

beat Holyoke, it'll become a much bigger game." Miller said. "Juan and I played basketball together when we were younger. I really wish that we could face them again during the regular season."

Following the contest, the Purple Knights had a 2-0 overall record. They posted a 76-64 win at the Springfield International Charter School in the season opener a week earlier.

The Pacers saw their overall record fall to 1-4. They defeated archrival Chicopee Comp, 51-50, at the Pioneer Valley Tip-off held at the UMass Mullins Center on December 15.

Godbolt, who scored a game-high 30 points, and King-Perilli (23 points) combined to make 12 of the Purple Knights 15 3-pointers in the home opener.

"We didn't make very many 3-pointers in our first game," Maldonado said. "We do have a couple of very good shooters, and they were making shots in tonight's game."

With the help of several turnovers leading to lay-ups, the Purple Knights raced out an 8-0 lead less than three minutes into the first quarter.

"We started off very slowly in tonight's game," Miller said. "We just couldn't adjust to their pressure defense and could never catchup."

In the middle of the opening quarter, a foul-line jumper from Chicopee junior Dom Garcia (9 points) did close the gap to 10-6.

The Pacers' three double digits scorers were senior Jovan Gollman (13 points), sophomore Brandon Thomas (11 points), and senior Jayanothy Serrano (10 points).

Senior Charles Cyair also added seven points for the visiting team.

Holyoke managed to build a 10-point lead (16-6) following a fast-break lay-up from junior Aden Cabrera, who netted six of his 11 points during the first eight minutes of the contest.

Chicopee did slice their deficit to 16-15 after reeling off the next nine points during the final two minutes of the first quarter. Charles and Thomas began the comeback run with an inside hoop and a lay-up. Then Serrano hit a runner in the lane before burying a 3-pointer from the right side.

The visitors couldn't take the lead as senior Jacob Andujar (6 points) made a 3-pointer from the top of the key, which jump started an impressive 21-3 Holyoke run.

During the first four minutes of the second stanza, two 3-pointers from Godbolt and three more long bombs from King-Perilli helped the Purple Knights build a 37-18 lead.

Sophomore Michael Medina (3 points) joined in the fun by sinking

another 3-pointer which gave Holyoke a commanding 41-21 lead with 3:15 left in the first half.

"We made a few 3-pointers during the second quarter, which helped us build a large halftime lead," Maldonado said. "I'm hoping to we can continue to play well the rest of the regular season."

Chicopee responded with a 7-2 spurt, but they were trailing 46-28 at halftime.

The Purple Knights made four more 3-pointers during the third quarter which added nine points to their lead. Three of the four shots from behind the three-point line were made by Godbolt. He made back-to-back treys with less than two minutes remaining in the quarter giving the home team a commanding 71-41 advantage.

Holyoke's largest lead was 81-44 with 5:25 remaining in the contest following a tip in basket by King-Perilli.

With both team reserve players on the court, Chicopee finished the game with a 14-3 run, but the outcome had already been decided by that point.

The two basketball teams could face each other again in the Western Mass tournament or the Division 2 state tournament.

Railers fall to Thunder in home finale

WORCESTER – The Railers lost 7-3 loss to the Adirondack Thunder on Sunday afternoon to close out the first half of the 2024-25 home schedule.

Worcester went into the second period with the scored tied, 1-1. The Railers then allowed four goals in a little less than seven minutes starting at 3:53 and their afternoon was over.

Coach Nick Tuzzolino refused to place the blame for the defeat on Bullion's shoulders when asked if it was his fault.

"I would never say that in that light," Tuzzolino said. "We've got to be good in front of him and could have been better. Could have blocked a couple of those shots. I'm sure he has his own thoughts on those goals but we're a team."

Worcester got two goals from Jordan Kaplan and one from Griffin Loughlan. Anthony Repaci assisted on all three goals. Repaci's historic season continues unabated. He extended his points streak to seven straight games. He is 3-10-13 during the streak.

The game was his 193rd for Worcester, passing Barry Almeida as the all-time franchise leader in that category. The assists give him 90 in a

Worcester uniform, tied with Almeida on that list. They are tied for fourth among all Worcester pro players with Tom Cavanagh of the Sharks next at 92.

The Railers were 2 for 5 on the power play and are among the league leaders in that category. They have at least one power play goal in seven straight games. That ties a team record set in February of 2022.

"That's probably the most frustrating thing," Tuzzolino said. "It's all those little pieces. We just have to find the right piece."

Loughran gave Worcester an early lead at just 2:36 of the first period. Repaci found his linemate all alone at the bottom of the left circle and Loughran made no mistake burying a 15-footer.

It was 1-1 after 20 minutes, then the Railers hit an iceberg.

"I think we got confidence early," Tuzzolino said, "then some of those goals they scored killed our confidence, and confidence is the easiest thing to lose and the hardest to get back."

Ryan Francis was 2-3-5 to pace the Adirondack offense. Josh Filmon, Ryan Wheeler, Alex Young, Grant Loven and Dylan Wendt had the other Thunder goals.

LAVOIE, from page 7

in Ludlow for Steve Marino and subsequently in Agawam for Roger LeClerc, before joining private industry as a computer systems programmer/analyst. Retired from MassMutual with 30-plus years of service.

He was a 1971 graduate of Ludlow High School playing football for Chick Patullo and baseball for Bill Mullins.

In high school, he was selected All-Suburban League and All-Western-Mass as a tri-captain for Chick Patullo, Jim Cavallo, Dave Dzuira, and Joe Andreis, who instilled the love of football, hard work, and fair play into their teams.

As an official, he was elected president of the WMFOA in 1993, and started and taught a first, second, third-year official's training class, and game sign-in requirement for new officials to attend pre-games and work the chains in varsity games. That process is still in effect today. In 1994, amended the training classes to have a separate class for first-year officials and started instructing the second and third-year officials' class, and still instruct that class today.

Among his many accomplishments, he officiated numerous MIAA playoff and championship games around the state and at Gillette Stadium. He joined the Western Mass Basketball Officials Association in 1980, was elected board President in 2013, subsequently elected sec-treasurer from 2015-2017. He still

officiates basketball games.

Lavoie earned a CAGS from Springfield College, an MS in management from RPI Hartford, and an MBA from Western New England College. He has taught business and computer systems courses at HCC for over 25 years.

Lavoie has been married to high school sweetheart, Edna (Robertson) Lavoie, for over 45 years, and has three wonderful sons. Two sons live and work in Boston, and one son lives in Longmeadow and is an attorney in Springfield.



Referee Joe Lavoie (center) officiates with his crew on a rainy Thanksgiving morning at Agawam High School this year.

Turley photo by Gregory A. Scibelli

New fleet of F-35s at Barnes Air National Guard Base

WESTFIELD – Congressman Richard E. Neal joined U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren, U.S. Senator Edward J. Markey, Governor Maura T. Healey, Major General Gary W. Keefe, Colonel David L. Halasi-Kun, State Sen. John Velis and Westfield Mayor Michael McCabe in celebrating the stationing of a new fleet of F-35 aircraft at Barnes Air National Guard Base, which was made official after Air Force Secretary Frank Kendall signed the Record of Decision.

After the Secretary of the Air Force approved Barnes ANGB as the preferred location for the new fleet of F-35s on April 17, 2023, the selection required favorable completion of an Environmental Impact Statement. Upon favorable completion, the Secretary of the Air Force needed to sign and report to Congress the ROD.

Once reported to Congress, the decision to station the new aircraft at Barnes became official, putting in motion the assignment of twenty new F-35A Lightning II aircraft at Barnes ANGB.

“This is a great day for the City of Westfield and all of western Massachusetts, as Barnes has solidified its place in our community for years to come. The decision to station a new fleet of F-35 aircraft at Barnes comes after years of advocacy by the Western Massachusetts Delegation, as well as Major General Keefe and state and local officials. Ultimately, the Air Force recognized not only Barnes’ critical role in defending our nation, but also something we in Massachusetts already know – we take care of our servicemembers,” said Neal. “I want to thank the dedicated airmen and women of Barnes who faithfully serve our nation. It is their integrity that has upheld the superb reputation of the 104th – an integral factor in this decision-making process.”

“This decision is a big win for Massachusetts. I worked hard to get this

commitment for Barnes to enhance our national security, position our F-35s at a more climate-resilient base, and strengthen our economy in western Massachusetts,” said Warren. “I’ll keep working to bring home more wins for Massachusetts service-members and their families through my work on the Senate Armed Services Committee.”

“Finalizing the decision to assign F-35s to the 104th Fighter Wing ensures Barnes Air National Guard Base will remain a key part of our nation’s air defense and a vital contributor to the western Massachusetts economy,” said Healey. “This decision not only reinforces the Wing’s historic legacy but also provides a lasting economic impact, creating high-quality jobs and enhancing the region’s resilience. This decision is a testament to the 104th’s extraordinary history and their ongoing dedication to the defense of our state and our country.”

The decision to station the new fleet of F-35 aircraft came after a rigorous selection process by the U.S. Air Force that reviewed F-15C units throughout the nation. Barnes was ultimately selected in April 2023 after the Air Force considered several factors, including community support, environmental factors, and cost.

The review process also included an assessment of the location’s ability to facilitate the mission and infrastructure capacity.

“The Department of the Air Force’s decision to allocate F-35s to the 104th Fighter Wing marks a monumental moment for our unit and its critical role in our nation’s air defense,” said Keefe,

The Adjutant General, Massachusetts National Guard. “The 104th Fighter Wing has long been a cornerstone of our nation’s air defense capabilities, and this transition to the next-generation airframe solidifies our readiness and relevance for decades to come. This decision not only enhances our operational capabilities but also ensures the Wing’s ability to continue its proud tradition of excellence as we look forward to future missions and challenges.”

“This Record of Decision continues the 78-year legacy of fighter aircraft operating at Westfield-Barnes Regional Airport and solidifies a bright future for the 104th Fighter Wing and the 1100 dedicated airmen and civilians who work on this base. We look forward to our nation’s most capable fighter aircraft, the F-35, inheriting the air defense mission from our venerable F-15C,” said Halasi-Kun, Commander of the 104th Fighter Wing. “This new aircraft ensures the critical defense of the airspace of New England and New York and the protection of the 40 million Americans beneath that blanket of freedom. None of this is possible without the support of our local communities and our elected officials. Local, state, and federal representatives were instrumental in this decision-making process. Their efforts ensured the future of this fighter wing for generations to come, and soon the premier aircraft will be placed in the most capable hands at the best location to defend this nation we love.”

“I am beyond thrilled that the Secretary of the Air Force has solidified the assignment of the F-35As to the

104th Fighter Wing today, ensuring that the 104th remains a critical piece of our country’s national defense strategy for decades to come. This final signature is the product of the Commonwealth’s steadfast dedication to remain one of the best states in the nation for our service members and families to call home,” said Velis, Chairman of the Legislature’s Veterans’ Committee and a U.S. Veteran. “Through the passage of legislation such as the SPEED Act, and subsequently parts of the HERO Act, Massachusetts has demonstrated to the Department of Defense our commitment to continually surpass all expectations related to our care for service-members and military families and today’s announcement is a recognition of that support for our military.”

“With the stationing of the F-35s at the Massachusetts Air National Guard’s 104th Fighter Wing, the 104th will continue its proud stewardship as the first line of defense for the northeastern seaboard of the United States,” said McCabe. “The City of Westfield is honored to host them and would like to thank everyone who worked with us to make this happen.”

For nearly eight decades, the 104th Fighter Wing of the Massachusetts Air National Guard has played a critical mission in our nation’s air defense. One of the oldest flying units within the Commonwealth, the 104th provides operationally ready combat units, combat support units, and qualified personnel for active duty, all of which support the Wing’s goal to organize, train, and equip personnel to provide an operationally ready squadron to the Air Combat Command.

The assignment of a new fleet of F-35A aircraft at Barnes ANGB guarantees the long-term viability of the base, ensuring the 104th Fighter Wing can continue its vital mission for years to come.



Gas prices remain unchanged

REGION – Northeast gasoline prices are stable to end 2024 as trading remains subdued in oil and gas markets, typical for the end-of-year holiday period.

Last week, oil prices rose slightly by 1.6% on optimism that global crude demand could soon pick up after an improved outlook from the World Bank about the potential for economic growth in China, the world’s largest oil importer. Petroleum prices have been suppressed all year on weak global demand.

Domestically, gasoline demand topped a robust 9 million barrels a day last week, according to the Energy Information Administration, which is in line with expectations for a busy holiday travel season. Gasoline production from American refiners more than met that demand with output jumping to 9.97 million barrels a day, an increase of 201,000 barrels a day from the prior week. The strong production helped increase Northeast inventories by about 1 million barrels and counterbalance any increase in crude prices.

The average gas price in Massachusetts is unchanged from last week (\$3.02), averaging \$3.02 per gallon. Today’s price is a penny lower than a month ago (\$3.03) and 20 cents lower than this day last year (\$3.22). Massachusetts’ average gas price is the same as the national average.

“Thinly traded oil and gas markets are a major reason pump prices aren’t moving much, even with strong demand through the end of the year,” said Mark Schieldrop, Senior Spokesperson, AAA Northeast. “With gasoline demand expected to fall sharply after the holidays, pump prices are unlikely to break out of hibernation in the short term.”

Legislature to take up Substance Use Disorder Bill

BOSTON – Senator John C. Velis (D-Westfield) and other House and Senate members of the conference committee reached a final agreement on a compromise Substance Use Disorder bill that the Legislature will take up this week.

An Act relative to treatments and coverage for substance use disorder and recovery coach licensure aims to reduce overdoses in the Commonwealth and expand access to substance use recovery programs in communities throughout the state.

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

The bill includes provisions to expand access to life saving overdose

reversal treatments, bolster non opioid pain medications and strengthen treatment for residents in recovery including the following:

Mandates that insurance providers cover opioid reversal drugs. This bill mandates that all health plans cover emergency opioid antagonists, opioid reversal drugs such as naloxone and Narcan without cost-sharing or prior authorization.

The bill updates requirements for insurance providers to ensure adequate coverage and access to pain management services without prior authorization, including non-opioid alternatives to pain treatment.

Mandates insurance coverage for recovery coaches. The bill mandates all health plans cover recovery coach services without cost-sharing or prior authorization at no less than MassHealth rates, regardless of the setting in which the services are provided.

This legislation establishes recovery coach licensing and oversight within DPH and codifies the practice of recovery coaching to ensure qualifications, proper use of titles, and compliance with DPH regulations. It also directs BSAS to study and report on barriers to certification, credentialing, and other employment and practice requirements for recovery coaches, as well as establish a peer support program for recovery coaches and their employers that includes mentorship, technical assistance, and other resources.

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

Commonwealth.

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

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

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

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

Classifieds

12 WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS | SERVING 50 LOCAL COMMUNITIES

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

COMMUNITY MARKETPLACE

Call us at 413.283.8393

FOR SALE

MAXIMUM EFFICIENCY. EXTRAORDINARY performance. Central Boiler certified Classic Edge Titanium HDX OUTDOOR WOOD FURNACE. Call today **413-296-4320**.

FIREWOOD

FIREWOOD

Fresh cut & split \$200.00
Seasoned cut & split \$300.00
All hardwood.

Tree length available
*Also have seasoned softwood for outdoor boilers (Cheap). Quality & volume **guaranteed!!** New England Forest Products **(413)477-0083**

MORE HEAT LESS WOOD. Central Boiler Classic Edge HDX Outdoor Wood Furnace. EPA Certified. Titanium Stainless Steel. 26% Tax Credit. Call **(508)882-0178**

WANTED

WANTED TO BUY

ANTIQUES AND OLD STUFF WANTED.

BUYING Bottles, Crocks, Jugs, Pottery, Costume Jewelry, Toys, Games, coins, sterling, Glassware, Silver-plated items, watches, Musical instruments, typewriters, sewing machines, tools, radios, clocks, lanterns, lamps, kitchenware, cookware, knives, military, automotive, fire department, masonic, license plates, beer cans, barware, books, oil cans, advertising tins, hunting, fishing, signs, and more Donald Roy **(860) 874-8396**

JUNK REMOVAL

A Call We Haul FAST REMOVAL

Junk, Appliance, Cleanouts.

We load it & take it.

413-531-1936
CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED

SERVICES

DRYWALL AND CEILINGS, plaster repair. Drywall hanging. Taping & complete finishing. All ceiling textures. Fully insured. Jason at Great Walls. **(413)563-0487**.

ELECTRICIAN

NEED AN ELECTRICIAN?

Look no further!
PJ's Electrical offers fast and reliable electrical services for your home or business. Call now for a FREE estimate!
(413) 366-1703
LICENSED & INSURED

HOME IMPROVEMENT

HANDYMAN RESIDENTIAL REPAIRS. Powerwashing, home repairs, interior/exterior painting, ceiling/wall repairs and chimney repairs. Fully licensed/insured. Lic. #105950CSL. Call **413-566-5596/413-433-5073**.

SERVICES

HOME IMPROVEMENTS. REMODELING Kitchens, baths. Ceramic tile, windows, painting, wallpapering, siding, decks. Insurance work. Fully insured. Free estimates. **(413)246-2783** Ron.

LANDSCAPING

A+ ROZELL'S LANDSCAPING & BOBCAT SERVICE

Excavator Services
Overgrown property?
Extreme Brush Cutting!
Shrub, Stump, Tree Removal
Lawn/Arborvite Installed
Loam, Stone, Mulch, Sand
Storm Clean-up
Small Demolition/ Junk Removal
Insured
Josh Rozell 413-636-5957

MASONRY

STOP WET BASEMENTS

ABC MASONRY & BASEMENT WATERPROOFING
All brick, block, stone, concrete. Hatchway doors, basement windows, chimneys rebuilt & repaired, foundations repaired, basement waterproofing systems, sump pumps. BBB+ rating. Free estimates. Lic #14790. Call **(413)569-1611, (413)374-5377**

PAINTING

DUTCH TOUCH PAINTING

Interior only \$199.00 for average 12x16 room. Very neat, references, prompt service call **(508)867-2550**

SERVICES

KEN'S PAINTING SERVICES. Interior painting/staining, wallpaper removal, wall/ceiling resurfacing, cabinet painting. Quality workmanship, fully insured. Free estimates. Call **413-896-8264**.

PLUMBING

GREG LAFOUNTAIN PLUMBING & HEATING Lic #19196 Repairs & Replacement of fixtures, water heater installations, steam/HW boiler replacement. Kitchen & Bath remodeling. 30 years experience. Fully insured. \$10 Gift Card With Work Performed. Call Greg **(413)592-1505**

ROOFING

JENKINS ROOFING specializing in residential roofs & repairs, chimney repairs. Hampden, MA - **413-566-5596/413-433-5073**. Lic. #105950CSL. Fully insured.

RUBBISH REMOVAL

BOB ROBILLARD'S RUBBISH REMOVAL Attics, Cellars, Garages cleaned, Pools/Hot Tubs Removed. Family owned/operated since 1950 **(413)537-5090**

TREE WORK

AAA-TROM'S TREE SERVICE PROFESSIONAL SERVICE. Residential removal of trees. Free estimates, Fully insured W/Workman's Comp. Remove them before the wind takes them down. Cordwood, stump grinding. Call **413-283-6374**.

SERVICES

DL & G TREE SERVICE - Everything from tree pruning, tree removal, stump grinding, storm damage and brush chipping. Honest and Dependable. Fully insured. Now offering a Senior Citizen and Veteran discount. Call today for free estimate **(413)478-4212**

STUMP GRINDING

DL & G STUMP GRINDING Grinding stumps of all sizes, insured & certified. Senior discounts. Call Dave **413-478-4212**.

AUTO

AUTO FOR SALE

2010 HYUNDAI SONATA
138,400 miles. Well-cared for and in good condition.
\$2,500/OBO - MUST SELL.
Please call **(541) 654-6007**, leave message.

CASH FOR JUNK AND REPAIRABLE CARS
FREE TOWING
FAST SERVICE
CASH PAID AS IS
CALL OR TEXT
413-219-6839

Read your local newspaper online at www.newspapers.turley.com

PETS

ENGLISH SPRINGER SPANIEL MALE, liver tri-colored. current on shots, soft temperament. \$100. **413-596-8190**.

HELP WANTED

The **Town of Oakham** is seeking an experienced municipal **Treasurer/Collector**. 15 hours a week, negotiable pay based on experience. Please send resumes to admin@oakham-ma.gov.

TOWN OF BLANDFORD HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

The Town of Blandford is seeking a qualified individual for the position of Highway Superintendent. Salary range starting at \$75,000-\$80,000+ negotiable based on experience/skills.

Please visit our website TownOfBlandford.com or email Administrator@TownofBlandford.com for more information.

REAL ESTATE

FOR RENT



ALL REAL ESTATE advertised herein is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act, which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation, or discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, or intention to make any such preference, limitation, or discrimination." We will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. All persons are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised are available on an equal opportunity basis.

BEDROOMS(s) AVAILABLE NOW:

4BR/2BA house in peaceful Palmer neighborhood, flexible terms. \$925 including utilities/parking. Pets/420 ok. Friendly live-in landlady. Women/NBs only. Email your situation/preferences: deirdre@mit.edu

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 advertised 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.

Advertise your HOME IMPROVEMENT SERVICES

in our classifieds.
WE GET RESULTS!
Call **413-283-8393**



FILL OUT AND MAIL THIS MONEY MAKER

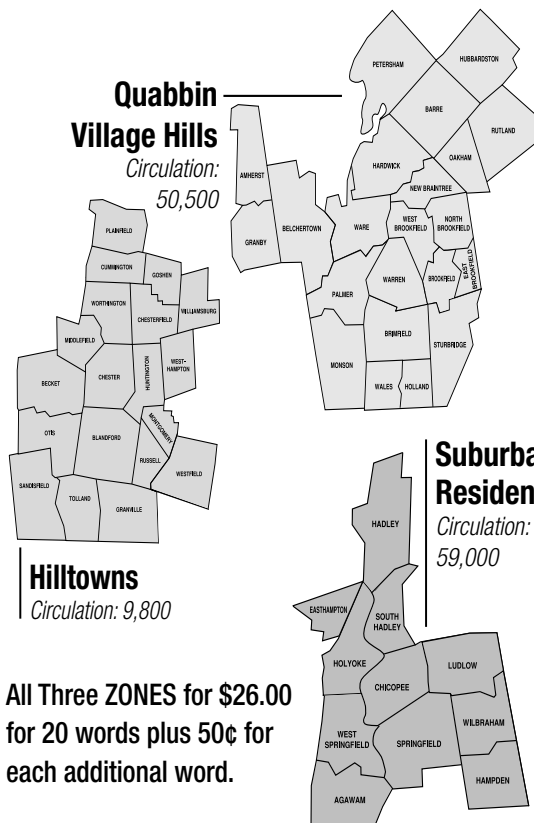
MAIL TO: Classifieds, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069
or call: 413-283-8393

DEADLINES: MONDAY AT NOON

CATEGORY:

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

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____
Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Number of Weeks: _____ X per week rate = \$ _____
Credit Card: MasterCard VISA Discover Cash Check# _____
Card #: _____ Exp. Date _____ CVV _____
Amount of charge: _____ Date: _____



All Three ZONES for \$26.00 for 20 words plus 50¢ for each additional word.

GREAT VALUE!
ALL 3 ZONES NOW FOR THE PRICE OF ONE!

OUR CLASSIFIEDS REACH 50 COMMUNITIES EVERY WEEK!

CHIEF, from page 1

cess. He has 27 years of experience policing in Springfield, where he helped with many issues similar to those Holyoke is facing.

"He is able to speak as to why the discrepancies exist in our audit," Garcia said. "He knew the audit very well...and he could speak to the transferable skills that he can replicate here to advance our audit and improve our policing infrastructure."

Garcia and Keenan firmly believe that Keenan's experience in Springfield will help him to bring a new life to the Holyoke Police Department.

Additionally, Garcia appreciated how Keenan shares his philosophy on balancing compassion with enforcement.

"He is a very compassionate individual but understands that compassion needs to work hand in hand with enforcement," Garcia said.

Keenan believes that people should

be given support to help prevent them from having to turn to more desperate measures to survive.

"If you look at the folks taught are down on their luck, there is not a woman in the world who wants to be a prostitute, there is not a guy on the planet who wants to do panhandling, there is no one who wants to battle alcoholism or drug addiction," Keenan said. "Unfortunately circumstances happen in the world where these things happen and if you get folks and you meet them where you are sometimes you get them to a point where you can help them...I think helping people is just as important as enforcing the law."

In his time at HPD, Keenan plans to make this a department-wide philosophy.

One of the first things he wants to do as chief is to get out and begin meeting the people of Holyoke.

"I want to establish trust with the citizens and other department heads because a police department derives its legitimacy from its relationship with the public so I

want to make those bonds and connections extremely strong," Keenan said.

After that he wants to begin developing a new five year strategic plan for the department to follow. It will focus on discussing crime issues, social service issues and developing the staff.

He also wants to work on implementing strategies to improve the issues highlighted in the 2023 police audit.

More than anything, Keenan wants to help move Holyoke toward a brighter future through his work.

"I would love to leave Holyoke in a much better place than we have it," Keenan said. "I would love to establish some great infrastructure and some great technology. I would like to leave Holyoke in a place where the open spaces in the parks are returned to the people for recreation, a place where people want to raise families, a place where people feel free to use the streets."

He also hopes to develop the next police officer from within the department

so they truly know Holyoke and can continue the work Keenan plans to do.

Garcia and others on the search committee are confident in Keenan's abilities to help make that aspiration a reality.

The public is invited to the Oath of Office ceremony for Brian Keenan, Holyoke's incoming police chief.

The ceremony will take place in the ballroom at Holyoke City Hall, 536 Dwight Street, on Tuesday, Jan. 7, at 11 a.m. Father Mark Stelzer will offer an opening prayer.

The speakers will be Holyoke Mayor Joshua A. Garcia, State Senator John Velis, and Hampden County District Attorney Anthony Gulluni. Judge Tina Wescott Cafaro will preside and administer the oath of office.

SCHOOLS, from page 1

With this plan in mind, Commissioner Russel Johnston announced on Oct. 29 that the district could have a provisional exit from receivership planned for July 1.

One of the main priorities for the schools committee was to ensure they knew the process to hire and evaluate a superintendent.

"We just cannot lose local control ever again," City Councilor Kevin Jourdain said at a meeting. "So we have to make sure whoever this new visionary leader is going to be for our city, they've got to be real solid."

A community advisory committee was formed by the school committee and

they are going to look into what the best steps are for hiring a superintendent.

While Soto can stay on as the current superintendent, should he want to, the district wants to ensure that that is the best choice for the district moving forward.

"The advisory committee is going to convene and have a conversation and they are going to have surveys and public input," Mayor Joshua Garcia said. "They are going to facilitate a community engagement process to hear back from the community on what the school board should do."

This committee will meet from about December through March as they discuss the next steps the district should take.

Then they will report back to the school committee where they will begin

the final steps of the process, whether it be beginning the search for a new superintendent, rehiring superintendent Soto or some combination of the two.

Garcia hopes that the district will do an interim contract with Soto, should he be interested, and then use that extra time to do a superintendent search.

"Focusing on the transition and doing the superintendent search and when you find a new superintendent there is a bit of a curve you have to overcome...I think might be a little too much," Garcia said in a recent interview.

The advisory committee will be hard at work making these decisions over the next couple months and the school committee will provide updates to the community as they receive them.

In the meantime, the school committee is focused on ensuring that all of their members are prepared to take up the responsibilities of running the district once more.

Already the committee has worked on reviewing their budget transfer policies and they have received training on how to evaluate a superintendent.

They are also working on going through all of the schools committee policies to ensure they are up to date and will do what is best for the district.

Overall, this process has taken a lot of hard work and dedication from the school committee, district leadership, the commissioner and the mayor and they all look forward to seeing how their hard work will pay off as the transition occurs.

Public Notices



City of Holyoke PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Holyoke Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, January 14, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.com**; ID: 836-3939-8493; CALL IN *67 646 558 8656 to hear, pursuant to the Holyoke Zoning Ordinance, a Site Plan Review (Sec 10), a Special Permit applications for an Increase in Fence Height (Sec 4.6.3.2) and a Parking Reduction (Sec. 6.1.7) for the proposed Motor Vehicle Repair Garage (File 167), submitted by LN Berneche on behalf of American Environmental, to be located at 37 Appleton Street (036-01-002).

A complete copy of the application may be seen in the Office of Planning and Economic Development at 20 Korean Veterans Plaza, 8:30 am-4:30 pm, M-F.

APPLICANT: LN Berneche, Inc

PLANNING BOARD: Mimi Panitch, Chair 12/27/2024, 01/03/2025

City of Holyoke Notice of Public Hearing

The Ordinance Committee of the Holyoke City Council and the Planning Board will hold separate public hearings to hear zoning change applications from BL to DR for Tiago Martins and Jeffrey Dias at 712-718 Dwight St (006-06-009 & 006-06-010) as well as 736 Dwight St (006-09-002 & 006-09-001) to develop properties with duplex/triplex apartments. **Ordinance Committee hearing** will take place on **Wednesday, January 22 at 6:30 pm** at Holyoke City Hall

536 Dwight St and can be accessed remotely via www.zoom.us Meeting ID 883 9245 1976 Meeting Passcode 005736 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 with same Meeting ID and Passcode.

Planning Board hearing will take place on **Tuesday, February 11 at 5:30 pm via www.zoom.us** Meeting ID: 836 3939 8493 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 with same meeting ID. For a copy of the applications or to provide comments to the Ordinance Committee, please contact City Council Admin Asst Jeffery Anderson-Burgos at Anderson-BurgosJ@holyoke.org or by phone 413-322-5525. To provide comments to the Planning Board, please contact Brianna Tejada at tejadab@holyoke.org

Ordinance Chair Israel Rivera
Planning Chair Mimi Panitch
01/03, 01/10/2025

City of Holyoke Notice of Public Hearing

The Holyoke License Board will be holding a Public Hearing on **Wednesday, January 8, 2025, at 5:15 pm**. You can join via Zoom.com; ID 82543074809; CALL IN: *67 646 558 8656, or in person at City Hall Annex 20 Korean Veterans Plaza Room 406 regarding the application for a **Transfer of an Off-Premise Liquor License for 787 Mini Mart LLC at 399 Hillside Avenue**, pursuant to M.G.L. Ch.138.

Applicant: 787 Mini Mart LLC.
License Board: Anthony Luciano
12/27/2024, 01/03/2025

City of Holyoke Notice of Public Meetings

The Holyoke Community Preservation Committee will hold 2 public meetings on **January 15, 2025 and January 22, 2025 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. over zoom**, for the public to learn about and comment on projects seeking funds. For the zoom link please contact klaymann@holyoke.org. See proposals at <https://holyokecpac.org> 12/27/2024, 01/03/2025

City of Holyoke PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Holyoke Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, January 14, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.com**; ID: 836-3939-8493; CALL IN *67 646 558 8656 to hear, pursuant to the Holyoke Zoning Ordinance, Special Permit applications for an increase in the height of both Temporary and Permanent Fencing (Sec 4.6.3.2) and an Increase in Sign Size (Sec 6.4.6.4) for the proposed South Street Plaza Coffee Shop/Drive-Thru Restaurant (File 158), submitted by Salmar Realty, Inc., to be located at 209 South St (080-00-039).

A complete copy of the application may be seen in the Office of Planning and Economic Development at 20 Korean Veterans Plaza, 8:30 am-4:30 pm, M-F.

APPLICANT: Salmar Realty, Inc.
PLANNING BOARD: Mimi Panitch, Chair 12/27/2024, 01/03/2025

CITY OF HOLYOKE PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Holyoke Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, January 14, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.com**; ID: 836 3939 8493; CALL IN *67 646 558 8656 to hear, pursuant to the Holyoke Zoning Ordinance (Sec 6.4.6.4) a Special Permit for an Increase in Sign Size and Multiple Signs for Super Fresh, located at 235 South Street (oso-00-039), submitted by Gabriel Garcia.

The complete application may be viewed through the Holyoke Planning Dept M-F, 9-4 p.m.

APPLICANT: Gabriel Garcia

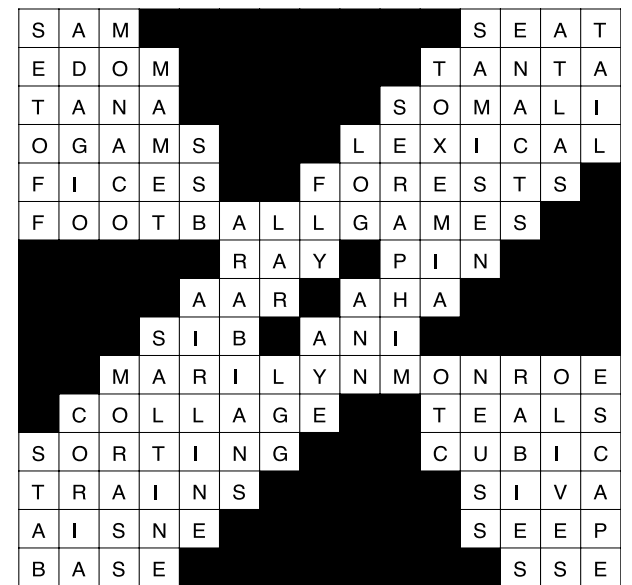
PLANNING BOARD: Mimi Panitch 12/27/2024, 01/03/2024

City of Holyoke PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Holyoke Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing on **Thursday, January 16, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.**, in the City Hall Annex, Room 403, Holyoke MA to hear the petition of Mark Hoey, who is requesting an appeal from the zoning officer notice of determination letter dated 09/03/2024 and violation letter dated 11/06/2024, from Section 4.6.3/4.6.1, at a property known as 25 Cleveland St (095-00-034).

A complete copy of the application may be seen in the Office of Planning & Economic Development, 20 Korean Veterans Plaza, Rm 401, 8:30-4:30, M-F.

Applicant: Mark Hoey
Board of Appeals: Josh Knox
12/27/2024, 01/03, 01/10/2025



The Holyoke Sun
OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.

BEST of the BEST Looking Back at 2024



Tessa Murphy-Romboletti is sworn in as the Holyoke City Council President.



Holyoke hosted its second annual Mayoral Bike Ride, and dozens of community members came out to participate on May 13.



The 2024 Grand Colleen Court was determined at a January pageant. The finalists are: Elizabeth Katherine Gourde, Natalie Belle Morris, Hunter Rose Edward's, Taryn Shaylene Ryan, and Amelia Frances George, who is also Miss Congeniality.



The Holyoke contingent marches in a parade at The Big E held in late September.



The Dean Tech graduation took place on May 30.



Holyoke's graduation for 2024 was held outside on the turf of Roberts Sports Complex.



State Sen. John Velis delivers letters of appreciate to veterans at the Holyoke Veterans Home.



People gathered at the Merry Market to support local businesses and get some shopping done in mid-December.



Teen Librarian Robin Siniho joined in on making Alice in Wonderland themed top hats with the other attendees of the Mad Hatter Tea Party in early April.



A flag is raised honoring Purple Heart recipients at ceremony held at City Hall in August.



The St. Patrick's Road Race, a 10K event, takes place in late March.

File photos