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Keenan sworn in, takes helm of PD

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – Holyoke swore in their new police chief, Brian Keenan, at a ceremony on Tuesday, Jan. 7.

Hundreds of members of the Holyoke and surrounding communities came together to welcome Keenan to the Holyoke police. They were all excited for this talented and experienced professional to join the police department.

“He is going to bring compassion, hard work and dedication to this department and this city,” District Attorney Anthony Gulluni said. “He intends, and he will, serve every person in this city.”

Prior to coming to Holyoke Keenan served on the Springfield Police Department for over 27 years. It is this experience that made many feel he was the right candidate for



New Police Chief Brian Keenan's new badge was pinned on by Joseph Keenan.

Holyoke.

“Chief Keenan’s extensive experience will be invaluable to addressing [the city’s] challenges and I pledge my full support as he takes on this task,” Mayor Joshua Garcia said.



Turley photos by Quinn Suomala

The police of Holyoke gathered around their new chief and to welcome him to the department.

It is not just his experience that makes many community leaders confident in Keenan’s capabilities, but his compassion.

Senator John Velis shared that Keenan has been a close friend of his for many years and throughout those years, Keenan has been a strong support for Velis and his family.

Keenan checked in on Velis’ wife every day while Velis was deployed to Afghanistan in 2018 and he helped support Keenan’s family this past summer while Velis’

wife had a medical condition.

Instances like these made Velis and others in the room who shared similar experiences with Keenan, all the more certain that Keenan would be a good fit for Holyoke.

“In an age where everyone says, ‘give me, give me, give me,’ you have a man right here who says, ‘how can I help you, help you, help you,’” Velis said. “He is kind, he is decent and he is an all around phenomenal person.”

Velis, Garcia and the search

committee for the new chief all believe that it is Keenan’s compassion that will help him to make the best decisions for Holyoke.

Keenan believes that the police department needs to be multifaceted, so that they can help people in multiple ways.

“We cannot arrest our way out of deeper social flaws,” Keenan said.

Keenan is grateful for the opportunity and looks forward

See KEENAN, page 6

Grand Colleen contestants decided at 2025 pageant

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – Erin Gauthier, Abigail Huebner, Moira Reardon, Erin O’Donnell and Maura Joseph were all chosen as the 2025 Colleen Court.

The Colleens were cho-

sen at the end of the 69 Annual Colleen Pageant on Saturday, Jan. 4.

The five Colleens selected for this year’s court were chosen after an extensive judging process. Each of the nine contestants were interviewed by a judge in the morning and rated based on intelligence, personal-

ity, poise and appearance. Each contestant could get a ranking of up to 10 for each of these qualities based on the answers they gave in their interviews.

Then the Colleen contestants had the pageant section of the process. The girls each started with a blank slate.

See COLLEEN, page 11



Erin Gauthier, Abigail Huebner, Moira Reardon, Erin O’Donnell and Maura Joseph were all chosen as the 2025 Grand Colleen Court.

End of receivership among agenda items for Garcia

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – Mayor Joshua Garcia has a variety of plans for improving Holyoke throughout 2025.

One of his main focuses is going to be working to ensure that the transition out of receivership in the schools goes well.

This transition has been coming for a long time, and Garcia wants to ensure that it goes well.

“We want to continue to be prepared and create a process for that day and also a process that needs to take shape after that day,” Garcia said.

Also, within the school district, Garcia hopes that the new Peck Middle School building will be ready to open for the new school year in August.

Another larger focus area for Garcia is public safety.

“My focus continues to be comprehensive,” Garcia said.

There is a new police chief coming in, who Garcia is confident will help to close the deficiency gaps identified in the police audit of 2023.

On top of that, Garcia and the city are continuing their work around the flex squad initiative and the initiative out of the building department to enforce housing code issues.

“The idea is to improve the

health and safety of neighborhoods which, in turn, should improve the quality of life and reduce issues around blight, mitigate issues around crime and so forth,” Garcia said.

Additionally, Garcia mentioned that the city is working to create a community response division. That will operate out of the War Memorial and will include the Race Street teams.

They are also going to replicate the Sheriff’s Department

“New housing units are opening up that we are very much looking forward to, a combination of affordable to workforce housing to market rate housing,”

—Joshua Garcia

program in Springfield, which helps convicted felons coming out of prison to reintegrate into the community.

Garcia feels these different initiatives demonstrate how he

See MAYOR, page 9

City holds celebration for Kwanzaa

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – Holyoke came together at City Hall on Dec. 28 to celebrate Kwanzaa, specifically honoring the third day of the holiday, which honors the values of ujima.

Ujima asks people to honor the values of collective work and responsibility, which help to build and maintain community.

“Collective work and responsibility, to maintain our families and to maintain our communities as well,” Theresa Cooper-Gordon said.

Mayor Joshua Garcia emphasized how important that value is for the community.

“Collective responsibility is a shared responsibility that we all take on in our community, we work together to solve problems,” he said. “When we learn about this very principle, it is an opportunity for individuals...to reflect a little bit and broaden our minds and understand that it is okay to support each other and support your neighbors.”

Garcia believes that this value demonstrates how everyone in the community are brothers and sisters and they can all work together to create a better community.

Various members of the community of Holyoke came together to honor this holiday.

Reverend Bernard Smith led the attendees in the song “Lift Every Voice and Sing”, which is the Black National Anthem.

“This is a song that is part of the rit-



Holyoke community members were welcomed into City Hall in order to celebrate Kwanzaa.



Reverend Bernard Smith led everyone in the song “Lift Every Voice and Sing.”



Mayor Joshua Garcia welcomed all the attendees to the Kwanzaa celebration.

ed in 1966 by Activist Maulana Karenga as a way to celebrate African-American culture. It takes place every year from Dec. 26 to Jan. 1.

“It honors lineage, family and ancestors,” Caldwell said. “It brings a cultural message to the best of what it means to be African and human in the fullest sense. For those of African descent, Kwanzaa was and is a chance to strengthen and reestablish connections to their origins.”

On top of honoring African heritage, Kwanzaa celebrates a different one of the seven principles (also called the Nguzo Saba, which is seven principles in Swahili) each day.

These principles are umoja (unity), kujichagulia (self-determination), ujima, ujamaa (cooperative economics), nia (purpose), kuumba (creativity) and imani (faith).

Each of these principles can help to strengthen and bring together a community. Those who celebrate the principles try to reflect on them not just during Kwanzaa but also each day of the year.

“Take this with you, use these principles, they are universal,” Cooper-Gordon said. “They are not just for one group of people. What community would not want to live by the seven principles?”

Cooper-Gordon encouraged all who attended the Kwanzaa ceremony to learn more about these principles and to try to take them into their daily lives outside of Kwanzaa.

“Bring that unity, bring that togetherness, so we can have a healthy, peaceful community,” she said.

If people are interested in learning more about Kwanzaa, they can go to <https://www.officialkwanzaawebsite.org/>.

ual of celebrating and we sing this song to celebrate and the words are very powerful and they mean a lot in terms of the struggle,” Cooper-Gordon said.

There were also some guest speakers, including President of the Kwanzaa Collective Ayanna Crawford and Professor H. Zahar Caldwell.

Both of them emphasized how Kwanzaa honors and unites the African-American community.

Crawford also spoke on how important it was to her to share Kwanzaa with people outside of the African-American community.

“We can change the trend when Kwanzaa comes around,” Crawford said. “Let’s change the thought process on how we show up for each other, how we show up for each community, and how we show up for each culture.”

Crawford encourages anyone to come and learn more about Kwanzaa so they can support the African-American community.

Kwanzaa is a holiday that was creat-

McGee appointed to HCC Board of Trustees

HOLYOKE— Former Holyoke city councilor and one-time acting mayor Todd McGee has been appointed to the Holyoke Community College Board of Trustees by Gov. Maura Healey.

McGee is a tax attorney and director of estate and business planning for MassMutual Insurance, as well as a 1992 graduate of Holyoke Community College.

His term runs through March 1, 2029.

“I loved Holyoke Community College,” said McGee. “It has been part of my life for a very long time. I felt like an adopted son to President David Bartley. He always guided me along my career. I’m excited to be on this board. Anything I can do to help out, I will,



because Holyoke Community College is really a family to me.”

After graduating from HCC with an associate degree in liberal arts, McGee went on to earn a bachelor’s degree in history from Northeastern University, a juris doctor from Western New England School of Law, and a master’s degree in taxation from Boston University School of Law.

McGee served as a Holyoke city councilor for 18 years until 2023, his last three terms as city council president. He briefly served as acting mayor in 2021 after the resignation of Mayor Alex Morse.

He attended his first HCC board meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 26.



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CAMPUS NOTES

HCC fall 2024 dean's list

HOLYOKE — Holyoke Community College is proud to recognize the students who earned dean's list honors for the fall 2024 semester. Each term, HCC recognizes superior scholarship through the dean's list. The following students are from Holyoke.

Ariana Stephanie Alvarado Diaz, Lily Margaret Angers, Sophia Leo-Tate Anthony, Tyler Jonathan Applebee, Kimberly Ashwood, Cari Joy Avalone, Branden Bedard, Fatima Bergman, Kylie Blaha, Enely Bonilla, Dustin Corey Bonnoyer, Joraima Dalys Brigantty, Dawne K. Brown, Pearl Abigail Burns, Alvin Rey Torres Carabuena, Yaritzia Castillo Torres, Pablo Noah Cespedes-Ashe, Gracie Chesmore, Yariselis Beatriz Conde Estremera, Adriana Corcino, Herick Cortez, Emma Cay Counter, Jeremy Misael Cruz, Julian Anatoly Danilchenko, Dioanna Alexzandra Davis, Christian De la Torre Santoyo, Eleanor Grace Donohue, Brendan Michael Duval, Aolanis Analy Figueroa Pinto, Ishmael Flores, April Irene Grabowski, Christian Guzik, Adaryn Livingstion Hagar, Nicole Louise Henchey, Victor Michel Herlemont, Isabella Cristina Joubert Rios, Nuriye Kartal, Jemima Mueni Kitsa, Jordan Martha Larkin, Daneisha Luciano, Eric Edward Lukomski, Oceana Maldonado, Denisse Marie Martinez, Luis Yandel Medina, Ritah Mutesi, Jamil Navarro, Ninoshka Marie Negron-Reyes, Bekir Yusuf Okatan, Genesis Arlene Perez, Elle Elizabeth Platanitis, Rosamond Jacinta Goncalves Porter, Mayumi Dalay Ramon, Jandel Resto, Adiaris Jarleys Reyes, Camryn Rist, Lexyanna Rivera, Erick Joel Rivera-Gonzalez, Nicole Rodriguez, Katelyn Jasmine Rodriguez, Yadiel Omar Rodriguez, Jomar Rodriguez, Katelyn Roque I, Katherine Ryan Rousseau, Hannah Autumn Savenko, Patrick John Sweeney, Stephen Andres Szewczyk, Brian Daniel Torres, Keilymar Vazquez Negron, Ayanna Lee Vega, Caridad Vega-Ramos, Rachel Joy Westcott, Eleanor White, and Jady Williams.

STCC announces fall 2024 Dean's List

SPRINGFIELD – Springfield Technical Community College celebrates the accomplishment of the 922 students who were named to the fall 2024 dean's list.

The dean's list is published each semester to recognize excellence in academic performance. To be considered, degree-seeking students must earn 12 or more college level credits in the current semester, or a total of 12 or more combined college-level credits earned during the fall and spring semesters, and achieve a 3.3 or above grade point average.

Students from Holyoke making the Dean's List are:

Bethany Marie Anaya, Abdiel Jesus Bou, Einyer Abel Castillo, Laura F. Clark, Devin Colon-Grenier, Amber Ashli Daletto, Valerie Claire Daletto, Nicole Reid Faille, Joshua I. Flores, Alexis Omayra Jimenez, Jose A. Lopez, Christina Nicole Malfas, Jasim Kelvince Manzoor, Adaliz Morales, Britney Moran, Cormac Norton, Briell Pierce-Stone, Giovanni Lee Rios, Paola Andrea Rojas, Laticia Selden, Araceli Sumba, Jazmine M. Tirado, Penelope Maria Valdez, Cole R. Wood

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.

City to vote on changing treasurer to appointed position

HOLYOKE — At a Special Election Tuesday, Jan. 28, City voters will be asked if they want to continue the practice of electing the City Treasurer or approve a City Charter change to make the position appointed, rather than elected.

Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. In-person and absentee voting options are available. The City Clerk's Office has information on how to request an absentee ballot and can identify the location of residents' polling places.

Holyoke Mayor Joshua A. Garcia, City Council President Tessa Murphy-Romboletti, and City Treasurer Rory Casey will hold a press conference addressing the initiative on Thursday, Jan. 9, at 12:30 p.m. at Holyoke Media at 1 Court Plaza.

Garcia has worked with the City Council and State Legislature for two years to bring this matter to a vote. The Mayor supports changing the City Charter to make the Treasurer's post appointed. He said the goal is to improve the city's financial health and administrative efficiency, which benefits all residents.

"State officials and outside auditors have been urging us to make this change for many years," Garcia said.

The Mayor pointed to a 2007 evaluation of the existing practice that was conducted by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue's Division of Local Services. With an elected Treasurer, the assessment concluded, "The mayor does not function as a fully empowered, central authority who can demand that jobs get done. This lack of authority severely limits the ability of the mayor to impose sound financial management practices."

"All of Holyoke's department heads should be held accountable to the Mayor and City Council," Garcia said. "Under the existing system, there is no requirement that the Treasurer be accountable. Just as bad, if not worse, there is no requirement that an elected Treasurer possess any sort of credentials."

A 2015 analysis conducted by the Division of Local Services addresses that point, noting that the appointment of the treasurer "allows the City to establish minimum job qualifications, conduct an extensive interview process, and complete background checks of potential candidates. With access to a broader pool of candidates, the city can attract a person with the strongest credentials and most relevant pro-

fessional experience.

When the former Holyoke City Treasurer resigned on July 14, 2022, Garcia began working with the City Council to "navigate the steps necessary to change the Charter to make the position of City Treasurer appointed instead of elected. The public has heard me talk a lot about the need to modernize our municipal administrative operations to strengthen internal controls, polices, and procedures for how we manage our finances in order for us to better mitigate liability, reduce harm to local resources, protect local assets, and better comply with financial standards and regulations. A critical part of this strategy includes changing the position of Treasurer from elected to appointed. To do this, it will require a Charter change which is dependent on a citywide vote of the people."

"This charter change represents a vote for good governance," said City Council President Tessa Murphy-Romboletti. "It ensures that our financial leadership is based on qualifications and professionalism, which are essential for managing Holyoke's future. This was one of the first orders I filed during my first term on the Council, and I'm hopeful that we can take this important step forward as a city."

Pyramid Management Group secures loan extension

SYRACUSE, N.Y.— Pyramid Management Group, one of the largest, most innovative, privately-held shopping center developers in the Northeast, has successfully worked with its lender to secure a three-year extension for the loan on Holyoke Mall at Ingleside in Holyoke. This extension will allow Pyramid to continue to reinvest in the property and ensure its continued health, vibrancy and success while serving a very large trade area that includes western Massachusetts, southern Vermont and New Hampshire, northern Connecticut and eastern New York State.

"The resilience and strength of our shopping centers, along with Pyramid's continued efforts to reimagine, redefine and enhance the guest experience, enabled us to successfully restructure and extend the loan," said Stephen J. Congel, chief executive officer, Pyramid Management Group. "We look forward to continuing that success over the coming years and remain committed to ensuring the health, vibrancy and longevity of the center for decades to come."

Holyoke Mall has been Western Massachusetts' dominant enclosed shopping center for over 45 years.

Anchored by Macy's, JCPenney, Target, Hobby Lobby and Best Buy, Holyoke Mall offers over 150 retail shops including restaurants like 110 Grill and Sumo Japanese Steakhouse and entertainment destinations Round 1, Billy Beez and Altitude Trampoline Park.

Holyoke Mall is a major employment driver in the area and an economic catalyst for the region. The property totals 1.6 million square feet, with more than 3,000 people employed by Pyramid and its tenants.

UCCH hosts ham dinner

HOLYOKE— 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 St. 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 congrega-



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PUBLIC NOTICE TO FORMER HOLYOKE PUBLIC SCHOOLS SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

Please be advised that student's Special Education (Chapter 766) records, with a withdrawal date within the year 2016/2017 will be destroyed on February 28, 2025.

If you wish to obtain a copy of your records, please contact the:

Holyoke Public Schools, Special Education Department
57 Suffolk Street, Holyoke, MA 01040
Tel: 413-534-2000 Ext. 1209

This does not pertain to current
Special Education Student's records.
This notice does not pertain to student's transcripts
Which are dealt under 603 CMR 23.06

AVISO PUBLICO PARA LOS EX-ESTUDIANTES DE EDUCACION ESPECIAL DE LAS ESCUELAS PÚBLICAS DE HOLYOKE

Favor informarse que los archivos de estudiantes de Educación Especial (Capítulo 766) con fecha de retiro dentro del año 2016/2017, serán destruidos el 28 de Febrero de 2025. Si desea obtener una copia de sus archivos, favor de comunicarse con las:

Escuelas Públicas de Holyoke,
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Calle Suffolk # 57, Holyoke, MA 01040
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Este aviso no concierne los archivos actuales de Educación Especial. Este aviso no concierne las transcripciones del estudiante bajo 603 MCR 23.06

Guest Column



I use only VA healthcare; can I get back Medicare taxes paid?

Dear Rusty

I'm 72 years old with 20 years of military service. I am retired collecting Social Security, my military pension and State retirement benefits. According to my SSA statement, over my working lifetime I paid \$14,302 into Medicare, but I never used that medical plan. I only bring in \$33,000 in annual income. Can I get those Medicare taxes back somehow? I've run into dead ends at SSA, Medicare and IRS websites.

Signed Veteran Seeking Answers

Dear Veteran Seeking Answers

First, I want to thank you for your military service to our country. You may find the "For Veterans" section of our www.amacfoundation.org website of interest.

Regarding the contributions you have made over the years to federal Medicare, I'm afraid you cannot get any of those taxes back even though you have never used Medicare healthcare services. That's because Medicare, like Social Security, is a "pay as you go" program where all contributions received from workers are used to pay for benefits for current beneficiaries; contributions aren't put into a separate account to pay for your coverage.

It's also important to know that your Medicare taxes were used only to fund Medicare Part A, which is coverage for inpatient hospitalization services. Those contributions via payroll taxes did not entitle you to outpatient healthcare services, as provided by Medicare Part B, for which there is a monthly premium.

FYI, you must be enrolled in Medicare Part A to collect Social Security benefits after age 65. Medicare Part B isn't mandatory to col-

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.

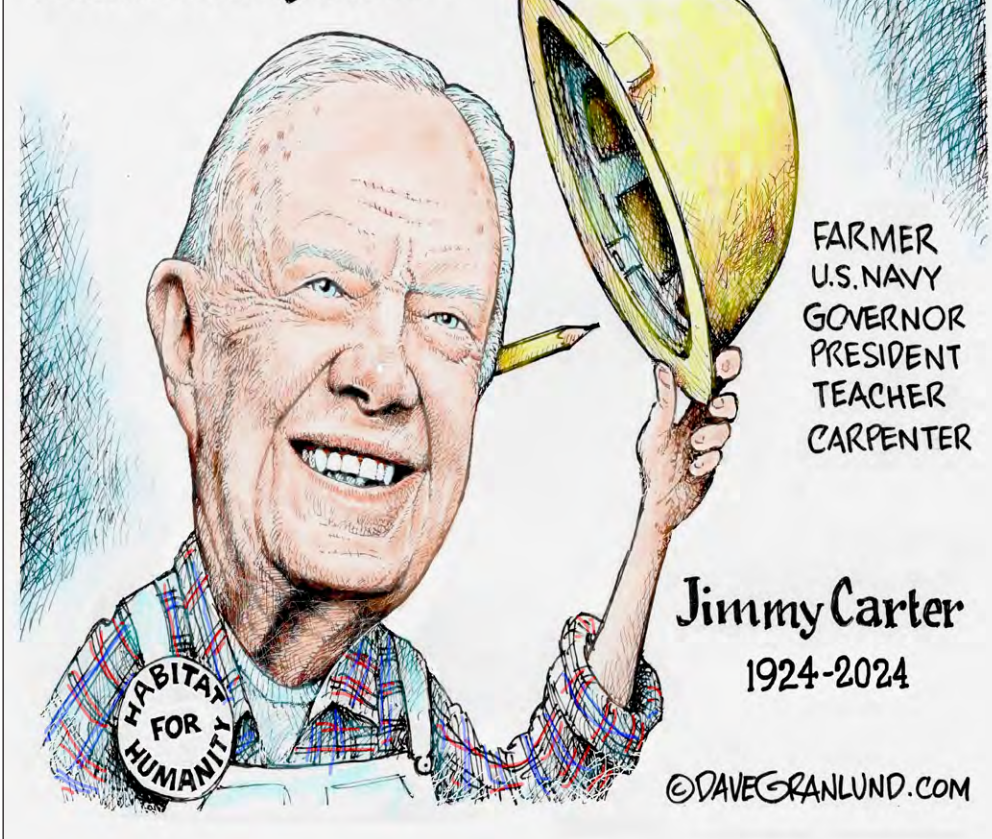
For more information, call 413-283-8393.

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.

Man of many hats...



Guest Column

Prepping for this years' big garden



Last week I wrote about the desire to go back to my roots, so to speak, and embrace my homesteading self this New Year.

It's funny how when you are young and inexperienced you just "have at it" without much thought or planning. Sure, I had a general idea when it was best to sow my seeds indoors so that my transplants would be a good size come Memorial Day, but beyond that I sort of gardened when and how I felt like it.

These days I find it's good to have a plan of action. Here is where I will start in the coming weeks.

The first thing on the agenda is to go through my seed stash and decide what to keep and what to chuck. I usually throw out any seed that is older than three years, except for maybe tomatoes. I have had 5 or even 7-year-old tomato seeds germinate.

The three year rule does not apply to hybrid onions, carrots or parsnips. Those I get rid of at the two year mark.

If you are into growing herbs, I rarely have luck with lovage, dill or valerian after the first year. After I've whittled down my stash based on age, I will then look at what I have left in the envelopes and if I like that particular variety enough to buy more, or if I'd better start off with a new type altogether.

If it didn't work last year, why grow it again? I feel this way especially as I get older.

I used to have a friend who was a bit morbid as he aged, and he'd say, "if I'm lucky I'll get another 10 gardens." While that used to depress me to hear that, I guess it's a good point to make.

Once I've got the seed package pile figured out, the fun begins. I'll get my seed orders in early, to beat the rush, especially if I want to grow transplants that take a lot of time to size up.

Onions are best started indoors around Valentine's Day. For flower lovers among us the fun starts earlier.

Wax begonias can be sown now! Yes, now! Coleus and petunia are not long after.

While many decades of growing have approximate dates burned into my brain on

some things, others I will have to look up, especially since I am trying to grow more of our food with vegetables coming in as soon as possible and without gaps.

There are some fantastic resources out there for custom tailoring your growing/sowing schedule. Seed catalogs are just one. I love Johnny's Selected Seed (www.johnnyseeds.com) for this reason. Because they cater market growers as well as home gardeners, this catalog is packed with useful tips.

Online you will find a treasure trove of topics that will get you excited and well-equipped.

Speaking of equipped, it's also a great time to take inventory of your supplies. Do I have enough seed starting mix on hand, and did I like it enough to use again?

One year I bought germinating medium that had such little fertility. My plants were on the yellow side and stunted.

I try to grow organically as much as possible, and this soil nearly made me run for the blue water. I ended up mixing that lousy soil with some good soil, and added some fertilizer to the whole batch before using it in bigger container plantings.

Many soil bags will actually state that supplemental fertilizer is necessary after three-four weeks. And I should say that I do find it worth the investment to buy potting soil that is geared specifically to seed sowing, ie the germinating medium or seed-starting mix I speak of. It is milled finer for tiny seeds and will not stay too damp, or too dry, leading to a higher success rate.

In addition to assessing your soil, take a look at your stash of containers and labels. If you are re-using, make sure to wash both well, so that any diseases or pathogens won't infect this years' efforts.

You really don't need fancy, purchased containers.

The plastic boxes that mushrooms come in work great as sowing packs; just drill holes in the bottom. Cut up yogurt tubs make wonderful labels, and clear lidded salad boxes are perfect to place the seed packs in until germination occurs.

Low budget and earth friendly!

Next week we'll look at the role heat and light play in indoor seed starting.

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.

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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.

SECURITY, from page 4

lect Social Security, but assuming that, as a retired military veteran, you now receive healthcare benefits under the military's TriCare-for-Life program for retired veterans, you must be enrolled in Medicare Part A and Part B to maintain your TriCare-for-Life coverage.

Your military TriCare coverage coordinates with Medicare to pay for your healthcare costs. Thus, even though it may not be transparent to you, you may be benefiting from your current enrollment in Medicare.

Note that some non-career veterans can use VA healthcare services based on their service years instead of TriCare-for-Life for retired military veterans. Non-career recipients of standard VA healthcare services are not required to be enrolled in Medicare but, in any case, cannot receive their past Medicare Part A contributions back if they choose to decline Medicare. You may have interest in this article I previously published on the topic of VA benefits versus Medicare: www.socialsecurityreport.org/ask-rusty-i-have-va-coverage-should-i-get-medicare-part-b/

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.



By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN
Guest Column

Excessive alcohol consumption has long been recognized as an illness that contributes to societal problems like drunk driving and domestic violence, along with a host of physical ailments that are potentially fatal.

Right up until the 21st century, though, there was consensus that moderate alcohol intake did little harm, and might even have had some health benefits. Red wine, in particular, was found to contain antioxidants like resveratrol that may lower blood pressure and polyphenols, which may improve blood flow to the heart. That was then, and this is now.

Increasingly, research is finding that the risks of even moderate alcohol intake outweigh its benefits. Alcohol consumption is a risk factor for several types of cancer, including breast, colorectal and oral cavity cancers. According to the National Cancer Institute (NCI), moderate drinkers have a 1.23-fold higher risk of alcohol-related cancers.

The World Health Organization (WHO) says that there is no safe level of alcohol consumption, and that even relatively low levels can increase the risk of breast cancer.

And a large British study released just this month found "light" drinking (about an ounce of spirits a day for men and half an ounce for women) was associated with an increase in cancer deaths among older participants. The risk was greater for those

The alcohol conundrum

who had existing health problems or who lived in low-income areas.

Just as cigarettes were once thought to be healthful and are now known to be dangerous, alcohol is on a trajectory to becoming another health pariah. Dr. Victoria Amesbury, an internist who has been practicing for 36 years, would be OK with that.

"One of the amazing things I run into all the time is well-educated women who drink," she says. "There are studies that indicate even two drinks a week is toxic, and that it is now thought there is a definite connection between alcohol and breast cancer."

"But when I tell a patient to stop drinking, they say all their friends drink and they don't want to be an outcast."

There's the rub. Alcohol is so ingrained in our society that it's hard to imagine life without it. Around the time America was founded, alcohol was actually thought to warm the body and aid digestion. It was used to treat colds and fevers and even given as a sedative during childbirth. During the mid-19th century, alcohol was the main painkiller used in surgery.

Look back at movies from the '30s and '40s (I'm thinking particularly of "The Thin Man" series) in which cocktails took center stage, consumed by glamorous people. How could we not fall in love with booze?

Should we all quit drinking cold turkey, particularly women? That's not likely to happen. Just as everyone hasn't been persuaded to give up cigarettes, not everyone will be persuaded to stop drinking alcohol, no matter what the research says.

I think the question becomes, "How do you mitigate your risk factors if you choose to continue drinking?"

For her patients who continue to drink, Dr. Amesbury recommends abstaining for

three or four consecutive days each week, and then consume only light amounts the other days, no more than five ounces of wine. If you want more to drink, mix the wine with club soda or another mixer.

Another tactic is to take a month-long "vacation" from drinking a couple of times a year, say a "dry January" and a "dry July." In those 31 days, research has found, moderate-heavy drinkers can see improvements in insulin resistance, blood pressure, body weight and cancer-related growth factors. It also allows liver cells to recover from alcohol's toxicity.

Only drinking alcohol during meals, drinking slowly, alternating alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages (particularly water!) are other measures you can take to mitigate some of the risks associated with alcohol.

There is also the growing trend of "mocktails," which can mimic favorite alcoholic drinks in flavor without the buzz. Think about mocktail mimosas, Moscow mules or sangria.

There was a time when a nonsmoker was considered weird, and now smokers are relegated to designated areas, or banned entirely. Maybe a time will come when not drinking is considered the cool thing to do. Until then, do what you can to lower your risk factors.

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.

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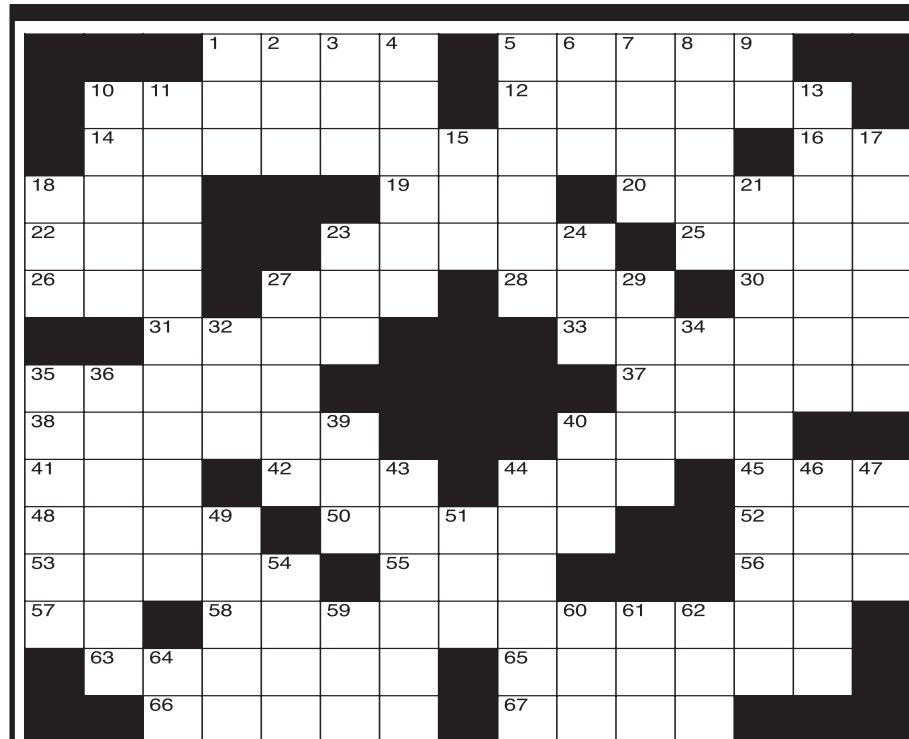


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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Hand (Spanish)
- 5. Siskel and __, critics
- 10. Seaman
- 12. Chemical weapon
- 14. One who eliminates
- 16. They precede C
- 18. Baseball stat
- 19. Americans' "uncle"
- 20. Cassia tree
- 22. Surround
- 23. Crisp and Pebbles are two
- 25. A sudden very loud sound
- 26. Affirmative
- 27. Disadvantage
- 28. Corpuscle count (abbr.)
- 30. OJ trial judge
- 31. New York art district
- 33. Become more bleak
- 35. Upstate NY city
- 37. Clarified butters
- 38. One who witnesses

- 40. Condemn
- 41. __ juris
- 42. Natural
- 44. Prohibit
- 45. Swiss river
- 48. Greek war god
- 50. 5 iron
- 52. New Zealand mountain parrot
- 53. Scandinavian surname
- 55. Follows sigma
- 56. Doctor of Education
- 57. Spanish be
- 58. One that feeds on bugs
- 63. Tooth issue
- 65. Get into
- 66. Lumps of clay
- 67. Overly studious student

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Variety of Chinese
- 2. Boxing's GOAT

- 3. Japanese classical theater
- 4. Prayer
- 5. Inspire with love
- 6. Ballplayers' accessory
- 7. Retailer payment system
- 8. More raw
- 9. Atomic #81
- 10. Fencing sword
- 11. Hostilities
- 13. Sea dweller
- 15. Resinlike substance secreted by certain insects
- 17. Businessmen
- 18. Rest here please (abbr.)
- 21. Loud devices
- 23. Make a soft murmuring sound
- 24. One point west of due south
- 27. Trout
- 29. Type of grass
- 32. South American plant
- 34. Letter of the Greek alphabet
- 35. Not secure
- 36. Traveler
- 39. Sweet potato
- 40. Period after sunrise and before sunset
- 43. Some are choppy
- 44. Asian country
- 46. Genus of mosquitoes
- 47. Cool!
- 49. Shriill, wailing sound
- 51. A baglike structure in a plant or animal
- 54. Within
- 59. Unhappy
- 60. Decorate a cake with frosting
- 61. Videocassette recorder
- 62. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
- 64. It cools a home

CROSSWORD ANSWER on page 9

In The News



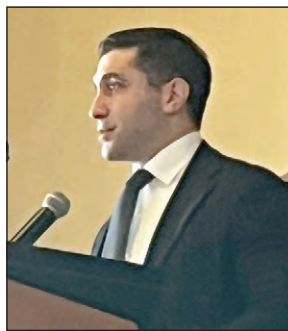
Hundreds of community members came to support Keenan at his swearing-in ceremony.



After being sworn-in, Keenan gave a speech promising to do everything in his power to help improve the city of Holyoke. *Turley photos by Quinn Suomala*



Senator John Velis shared his memories of Keenan's compassion.



District Attorney Anthony Gulluni spoke on the challenges Keenan will face as he takes on his new role, while also demonstrating his confidence in Keenan's abilities to tackle each one.



Mayor Joshua Garcia shared his belief in Keenan's ability to make Holyoke a better place for all who live in it.



Various community leaders gathered together to welcome new Police Chief Brian Keenan.



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KEENAN, from page 1

ard to the opportunity to help improve Holyoke.

One of his bigger priorities will be working to form community connections. "The police department derives its legitimacy from its relationship to the community and it is only by fostering these relationships that the police department will thrive," Keenan said.

He already has many plans in place for how he will work to improve the police department and their relations with the community.

"I plan to have community meetings in every neighborhood, to bring the police department to the people," Keenan said. "The police department will prioritize quality of life issues that affect people's lives."

Keenan also plans to develop action plans to help HPD in the areas they need improvement in that were highlighted in the police audit.

Additionally, he wants to ensure that the police working in the HPD can take pride in their work, in their facilities, in their training and their uniforms.

To do this, he plans to ensure that HPD has the best equipment and training that it can get all the while ensuring that even the smallest problems of the community are taken care of.

"My experience has shown me that by addressing the small issues, the big issues take care of themselves," Keenan said.

All in attendance of the ceremony agree that Keenan will bring a new, bright future to the HPD and, from there, Holyoke as a whole.

"One of the greatest challenges Holyoke faces is to make sure that every resident in every neighborhood is free to live safely and securely," Keenan said. "As your police chief, I will do everything in my power to meet this challenge."

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COLLEGE NEWS

Owls get win over Jon Jay

WESTFIELD – Lid Moreland scored 22 points and grabbed 11 rebounds and Eric Johnson added 17 points and nine boards as Westfield State University pulled away in the second half to defeat John Jay (NY) College, 91-75 in a non-conference men's basketball game at the Woodward Center last Friday afternoon.

Westfield State improves to 10-3 on the season, while John Jay is now 8-4.

The Bloodhounds jumped out of the gate quickly, getting out to a 12-3 lead in the first 4:08 of the contest. The Owls worked their way back into the contest, tying the game at 17 all on a drive from AZ Allah with 10:32 left in the half.

The Owls led 38-34 at the half.

Westfield slowly pulled ahead in the second half, leading by as many as 14 points on several occasions, the last at 70-56 after a Kobe Parker three pointer with 7:15 left in the game.

The Bloodhound gang wouldn't go away, as they used an 8-2 spurt of their own to trim the lead down to seven, 80-73 on a Syl Granda fast break layup with 3:18 left.

Westfield did enough at the foul line, making one of two on three straight trips, before Johnson knocked down a pair of free throws with 52 seconds left to boost the lead back to 11 at 87-76.

Moreland threw down a breakaway dunk late for the final margin.

Granda led John Jay with 27 points and 11 rebounds. Keyshawn Miller scored 14 for the Bloodhounds, with TJ Chisolm dished out five assists.

The Owls finished with six players in double figures in scoring, as Parker added 13 points and five boards, Timmy Jacobus and Kenneth Rogers, Jr. each scored 11, and Allah finished with 10 points and seven rebounds.

Westfield turned the ball over just six times (to John Jay's 14) and outrebounded the 'Hounds 49-43.



Chauncey Ruiz is off balance as he finds his own way to the hoop.



Calvin Godbolt extends for a long shot.



Aden Cabrera gets a jumper off.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Knights out to perfect start

HOLYOKE – Thanks to three more wins in the past 10 days, Holyoke High School boys basketball is off to one its best starts in years. The Knights are a perfect 6-0.

During the past 10 days, Holyoke defeated Greater Lawrence Tech 59-48, Putnam 86-58, and Central 77-74.

In the big win over Putnam last Friday night, Jordan King-Perilli had 22 points to lead the team. Calvin Godbolt and Aden Cabrera had 17 points each. Holyoke had a big offensive game, scoring 20 points or more in every quarter of the game. The Knights had a commanding lead by halftime.

The Knights will be back in action on Jan. 10 against the High School of Science and Technology, then host Northampton on Tuesday, Jan. 14 at 7 p.m.



Jordan King-Perilli tries to break through the defense.



Jaycob Andujar heads for the layup.

Knights fall to Terriers

HOLYOKE – Last Monday night, Holyoke High School girls basketball was defeated on the road at West Springfield High School in its final game of the 2024 part of its schedule.

The 50-37 say Kiara Perez come out as a bright spot. She scored 14 points

with a pair of treys. Tiana Timudour had 10 points for Holyoke. The Knights are 1-3 to start the season and had a tough matchup coming up against Central this week.

Holyoke will host Springfield International Charter on Monday, Jan. 13 at 7 p.m.

Worcester Railers prevail over Reading Royals

WORCESTER – The Railers played, and won, a biblical hockey game Saturday night.

They went fourth and multiplied. In front of the sixth largest crowd in team history, on IceCats Night, Worcester built a 2-0 lead thanks to goals by fourth line forwards Kolby Johnson and Ryan Mahshie and prevailed for a 3-1 victory over the Reading Royals.

Attendance was 8,056. It was the sixth time ever the team has broken the 8,000 mark and the Railers are a perfect 6-0-0 in those games. The triumph extended Worcester's points streak to three games. That includes two wins and a shootout loss. It is just the second time this season the Railers have picked up points in three straight games, the first time since the last week of November.

The night marked the impressive Worcester debut of rookie goaltender

Hugo Ollas. He stopped 31 shots. The saves were not just quantity, they were quality. Ollas never gave up the lead during several Reading surges after the Royals had reduced their deficit to 2-1 in the second period.

"When we got loose (defensively) in the second period," coach Nick Tuzzolino said, "I thought he bailed us out well. Then we got a little hesitant on the penalty kill and allowed that soft tip, but other than that he was big and reliable."

"We're not a perfect team. We'll have breakdowns, and when we did he was there."

John Muse's retirement left Worcester scrambling for a replacement. The Railers got Ollas on loan from Hartford, an AHL team they have worked well with on occasion through the years. Ollas had been in

Bloomington. Plans are to keep him here, close to Hartford, and work closely on his development.

The game was scoreless after one, but Johnson gave Worcester the lead 21 seconds into the second period. He got his second of the season from in very close. Mahshie made it 2-0 at 6:29 with a power play goal, his first for the Railers.

"To be honest," Tuzzolino confessed, "I was pretty mad at myself last night. The (bench) penalty I took, and my use of the fourth line. Because of the game, because of the penalty, I really gripped it tight and wound up not playing them at all in the third and late in the second."

"So at the pre-game skate this morning I told (Johnson) that it was my fault and you're gonna get a regular shift tonight."

Matt Miller scored the Reading goal

at 13:26 of the second period. It came on the power play, less than two minutes after a huge momentum swing. Griffin Loughran had a breakaway for Worcester that Keith Petruzzelli stopped at 12:52, then Loughran was penalized for slashing.

The Railers had a 26-6 edge in shots on goal going into the penalty and were outshot by 26-5 the rest of the way.

Worcester's last goal was an empty netter by Anthony Callin, a flip from deep in the defensive zone at 18:12 — cue the overture.

Potential All-Star Connor Welsh had two assists to extend his points streak to six games. He is 1-8-9 during the streak. Callin is 8-4-12 in his last 12 games.

The victory allowed Worcester to retain sole possession of fourth place in the North Division. If Reading had won, the teams would be tied with 28 points, so the win was a four-point swing.

Basketball Hall of Fame 2025 candidates announced

SPRINGFIELD – The Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame announced the list of eligible candidates for the Class of 2025, featuring several high-profile first-time nominees.

Candidates for the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame Class of 2025 include Carmelo Anthony, Sue Bird, Maya Moore, Dwight Howard, Doc Rivers, Billy Donovan, Sylvia Fowles, Chamique Holdscaw, Mark Few, Lisa Bluder, Marc Gasol, and Micky Arison.

"The nominees on the official ballot for the Class of 2025 represent a broad cross-section of our game," said John L. Doleva, Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame President and CEO. "From Olympic Gold Medals to NBA and WNBA titles to collegiate championships, these nominees epitomize the career of a Hall of Famer."

The first look at the list of eligible nominees was provided by "NBA Today" on ESPN, hosted by Malika Andrews, with Brian Windhorst, Chiney Ogumike, and Tim MacMahon. A complete list of eligible candidates can be found below.

Finalists chosen from the applicable Category Screening Committees for the Class of 2025 will be announced on Friday, Feb. 14, in San Francisco as part of NBA All-Star Weekend.

The entire Class of 2025 will be unveiled during a nationally televised broadcast at the NCAA Final Four in San Antonio on Saturday, April 5.

The announcement time and broadcast network for both the Finalist and the Class Announcement will be announced in the

near future.

The Hall also unveiled an update to its eligibility requirements, reducing the waiting period for Player candidates from three full seasons out of the game to two seasons. The change was unanimously approved by the Hall of Fame's Board of Governors.

"Previously, our Guidelines for Nomination and Election required an individual to be retired from the game for three full seasons, which effectively equated to a four-year wait due to our internal process," said Jerry Colangelo, Chairman of the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame. "To better recognize the distinguished careers of potential first-ballot nominees in a more timely manner, the Board has appropriately shortened the waiting period. We are excited about this change and believe that honoring individuals while their contributions are still fresh in people's minds is both meaningful and impactful."

Enshrinement Weekend will begin at the Mohegan Sun on Friday, Sept. 5, with the Tip-Off Celebration and Awards Gala, followed by the Enshrinement Ceremony the next day at Springfield's historic Symphony Hall.

VIP Packages for the Hall of Fame Enshrinement Weekend will go on sale on Friday, Feb. 14. All single-event tickets to the Ceremony, Tip-Off Celebration, and Awards Gala, as well as other ancillary events, will go on sale on Saturday, April 5, at 12 noon. All packages and tickets will be available for purchase at hoophall.com.

The complete listing of events and pricing will be released on Monday, Feb. 3.



Thunderbirds suffer loss against Rochester Americans

SPRINGFIELD — The Springfield Thunderbirds (13-15-2-1) felt the brunt of the top team in the North Division as the Rochester Americans (20-9-3-0) skated away 5-2 winners on Friday night inside the MassMutual Center.

The opening minutes would not go auspiciously for the T-Birds, as the North Division's top team flexed their offensive muscle early. Just 3:02 into the action, rookie Riley Fiddler-Schultz used a defender as a screen and ripped a wristshot through Vadim Zherenko's blocker arm to give Rochester a 1-0 advantage.

Things got no better for Springfield at 6:13 as Graham Slaggert threw a shot on goal from the right circle, generating a Zherenko rebound and a second-chance finish from Brendan Warren to extend the lead to 2-0.

Unlike Tuesday night, though, the T-Birds offense had a rebuttal, and just 2:45 after Warren's tally, Drew Callin took a feed at the offensive line from Simon Robertsson and bull-rushed the net from the right wing before deking to the backhand and beating Devon Levi to cut the lead in half, 2-1.

Both teams were liberal with their shooting opportunities in the opening 20 minutes, as each club launched 16 attempts at the opposition net.

Rochester's potent offense did not let off the throttle in the middle stanza. On their second power play in the frame, Brett Murray deflected home his league-leading ninth man-advantage tally to make it a 3-1 score at 6:28. Fiddler-Schultz pig-

gybacked that goal with his second of the game at 7:36, which spelled the end of the night for Zherenko. Colten Ellis came on in relief and stopped the next seven Amerks' shots to close the period.

The 4-1 score held into the dying minutes of the third before a Tanner Dickinson power play marker got Springfield back within two, 4-2, with 5:01 remaining. That's as close as the T-Birds would get, though, as Lukas Rousek ended the goal-scoring with an empty-netter just over a minute later.

The T-Birds conclude their five-game homestand next Saturday when they host the Providence Bruins at 7:05 p.m. on Jan. 11 for the annual Throwback Night contest.



How to contact the Sports Editor

Have the scoop on a local sports story? Want to submit a team photo, pass along a potential story idea, or just find out how to get a copy of that great photo of your young athlete? Please send all sports-related press releases and information to Sports Editor Greg Scibelli at: sports@turley.com or call, 1-413-283-8393.

High school coaching classes available

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

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

All coaches (stipend or volunteer) first serving as an interscholastic

coach after July 1, 2005 must complete the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching Course, and an approved Sports First Aid course.

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

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

Additional requirements for all coaches:

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

- All MIAA member school coaches (stipend or volunteer) are required to take annually the on-line National Federation Concussion Course, or other MA Department of Public Health recognized education program, prior to the start of

their season. Rugby Coaches must see Rule 76.2 for additional coaches' education information.

Any questions, please call Donna Harrington at 508-541-9804 or email dharrington@miaa.net.

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

MAYOR, from page 1

is trying to approach public safety comprehensively. He is aware it is not just policing and is working to ensure the different facets of it are all covered.

He has another initiative focused on housing in Holyoke. He is working to get new housing units that are affordable.

“New housing units are opening up that we are very much looking forward to, a combination of affordable to workforce housing to market rate housing,” Garcia said.

The city and Garcia are also working on decreasing the combined sewer overflow issue to try to clean up the Connecticut River.

The city is on a long term agreement as they work toward improving this issue and Garcia is hoping to see more steps taken in the next year.

On top of all of this, Garcia has also been working to attract what he calls “industries of the future,” such as clean tech industries.

He feels that the very assets of Holyoke that helped it to be the first planned industrial city in the United States will also help it to attract these companies.

“We produce clean energy,” Garcia said. “We’re about 80% carbon free in our municipality and being able to operate these industries and keep energy rates low and maintain their missions that are focused around green energy, just seems like a good fit here in the city.”

Furthermore, Garcia also has been focused on improving internal control. Related to this is the upcoming election to change the treasurer position from elected to appointed.

Garcia and the city council agree that this could help to strengthen the local government as it will ensure that whoever is treasurer truly

understands the city’s financial system. “It’s very complex and we need to make sure that the people who go into those roles are highly skilled, qualified and capable,” Garcia said.

Should this election go well, the city also wants to create the position of a Chief Financial Officer to help manage the city’s resources.

Together Garcia believes that these positions will prevent the city’s finances from falling behind during major changeovers in city government, such as the mayoral election.

“I think this will protect our city, strengthen our accountability position and... make sure that whatever the outcome is of our elections that our internal government continues to flow efficiently and effectively,” Garcia said.

Between all of these upcoming initiatives, Garcia is also keeping a close eye on the city economy so he can work to keep costs and taxes as low as possible.

He believes that the different work the city is planning on will help to ensure that these rates can stay the same or even go lower as the city moves forward.

More than anything, he thinks the focus on internal government will help to improve the city as a whole.

“Public safety, education, economics development, all those quality of life initiatives, board of health, building department, all those things they’re working on, they need the support of their internal government,” Garcia said.

With this in mind, Garcia goes into 2025 with a strong focus on improving local government and gratitude for all those in the community who have helped him this past year to improve the city.

Scholarship and Fellowship Funds Available

AGAWAM— The Horace Smith Fund, located in Westfield, Massachusetts has scholarship and fellowship money available for graduates of Hampden County public and private high schools. Graduating high school seniors and students already in college may apply for Scholarships of up to \$12,000. Those in their final year of college and previous college graduates pursuing advanced degrees may apply for Fellowships of \$15,000. Applicants must maintain at least a B average in college and be enrolled as full-time students.

Awards are made based on both academic achievement and merit. Of great importance is a personal written account of why the student feels deserving of financial assistance and their goals in pursuing higher education.

Last year, \$297,000 was awarded to 24 individuals. Scholarships were given to 16 graduating seniors from 13 Hampden County high schools. Five scholarships were also awarded

to current college students to assist them in completing their undergraduate degrees. Three fellowships were given to college graduates pursuing advanced degrees, who had graduated from Hampden County high schools.

The Horace Smith Fund was established in 1899 by the successful and generous philanthropist named Horace Smith, co-founder of Smith & Wesson, established in Springfield. The scholarships and fellowships are named for Walter S. Barr, a West Springfield businessman, whose widow left the bulk of the family estate to The Horace Smith Fund in 1950.

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

UCCH, from page 3

tion of the United Church of Christ. All individuals welcome, 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.

Public Notices

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

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 PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Holyoke Stormwater Authority will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, January 21, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.** to hear, pursuant to Section 38.0 of the Holyoke Ordinance, an application for a Stormwater Permit requested by the City of Holyoke for stormwater infrastructure retrofits at Holyoke High School, known as parcel 059-00-015.

The hearing will be held in person at the Holyoke Chamber of Commerce, 177 High Street, Holyoke, MA 01040 and remotely via video conference. Meeting location and zoom link will be posted on the City’s meeting website in advance of the meeting at: <https://www.holyoke.org/departments/public-meetings/>

A copy of the application and site plan may be obtained electronically by sending an email to the Holyoke City Engineer at houlv@holyoke.org or by appointment requested through this same email address

STORMWATER AUTHORITY: Mary Monahan, Chairman 01/10/2025

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Division Docket No. HD24P2662EA Estate of:

Joseph A. Ribeiro Date of Death: 11/23/2024 INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Susan R Taylor of Holyoke, MA**

a Will has been admitted to informal probate. **Susan R Taylor of Holyoke, MA** has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve **without**

surety on the bond.

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner. 01/10/2025

City of Holyoke PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Holyoke Stormwater

Authority will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, January 21, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.** to hear, pursuant to Section 38.0 of the Holyoke Ordinance, an application for a Stormwater Permit requested by the City of Holyoke for stormwater infrastructure retrofits at Lt. Clayre P. Sullivan School, known as parcel 147-00-010.

The hearing will be held in person at the Holyoke Chamber of Commerce, 177 High Street, Holyoke, MA 01040 and remotely via video conference. Meeting location and zoom link will be posted on the City’s meeting website in advance of the meeting at: <https://www.holyoke.org/departments/public-meetings/>

A copy of the application and site plan may be obtained electronically by sending an email to the Holyoke City Engineer at houlv@holyoke.org or by appointment requested through this same email address.

STORMWATER AUTHORITY: Mary Monahan, Chairman 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.



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- 1 Email all notices to notices@turley.com
- 2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.
- 3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts’ public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

Public notice deadlines are Mondays at noon, Fridays noon for Monday holidays.

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

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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.

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The Holyoke Caledonian Pipe Band opened the Colleen Pageant.



The Holyoke High School Madrigal Choir performed the National Anthem and the Irish National Anthem.



Irish step dancers from the Cassin Academy of Irish Dance performed a series of Irish step dances as part of the Colleen Pageant.



Blythe Bullock had her time to shine in the Colleen pageant.



Abigail Huebner was the third Colleen contestant to cross the stage.



Erin Gauthier was the first of the Colleen contestants to go on stage.



The Colleen Court from 2024 was invited on stage so they could welcome in the new Colleens.



Moirá Reardon was one of the Colleen pageant contestants.



Erin O'Donnell had her chance to dazzle the judges during the Colleen pageant.



The fourth Colleen contestant was Olivia Royland.



President of the St Patrick's Committee John Bealieu welcomed everyone to the pageant.



Co-Chair Kelsey Lecca introduced the Colleen contestants.



Abigail Collings Vann was the eighth Colleen contestant.



The ninth and final Colleen contestant to cross the stage was Caitlyn Eichhorn.



Maura Joseph was awarded the 2025 Miss Congeniality award.



The 2024 Colleen Court congratulated the new Colleen Court for 2025.



The 2025 Colleen Pageant contestants lined up one final time before hearing who would become a part of the Colleen court.



Turley photos by Quinn Suomala



2024 Grand Colleen Elizabeth Gourde gave her thanks to everyone in the audience and shared her experiences as a Colleen.

COLLEEN, from page 1

During the pageant three judges judged them based on appearance and poise.

After this their scores were totalled and the top five scores were selected to be this year's Colleen Court.

The Grand Colleen for 2025 will be selected on Feb. 15 at the Log Cabin.

A Message to Our Valued Customers,

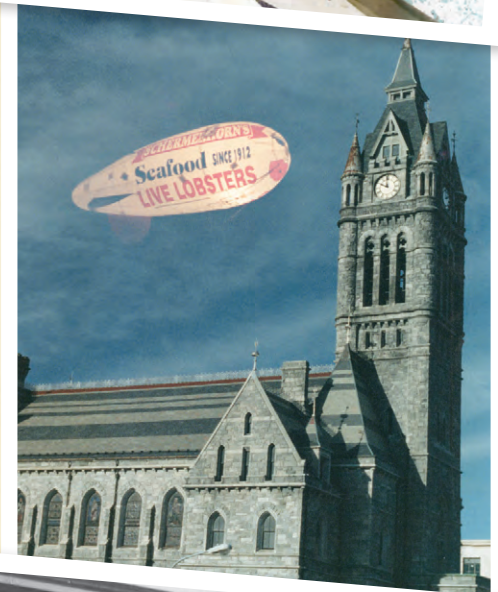
The Fitzgerald-Proulx family would like to extend our deepest gratitude to each of you for your unwavering support of Schermerhorn's Seafood Restaurant in Holyoke, MA, over the past 112 years. For the last 45 years, we have had the privilege of serving this incredible community from our location at 224 Westfield Rd. From day one, our mission was simple: to offer the freshest, most delicious seafood—from Maine lobsters and shellfish to our renowned fried seafood, including the famous fish & chips. It has been an honor to share our love of great food with you. As we close this chapter, we reflect on some of the many moments and milestones that have made this journey so memorable:



****The Historic Schermerhorn's Blimp**:** The only licensed blimp to fly in Holyoke, it brought joy to countless people before being stolen many years ago (and still remains missing). Its story continues to be a cherished part of our history.



****Expanding Our Reach**:** Opening a second location at Six Flags New England allowed us to share our seafood with thousands of visitors each year. We were also proud to participate in community events like Celebrate Holyoke and the Halloween Extravaganza, where we delivered over 6,000 lobsters to the University of Massachusetts.



****Giving Back**:** Supporting youth and adult sports teams, as well as contributing to local charities and events, has always been a point of pride for us.

****Unwavering Service**:** We took great pride in serving you seven days a week, closing only on Christmas Day to spend time with our loved ones. Mike has always cherished the opportunity to serve our loyal customers alongside our hardworking staff. We are incredibly grateful to our manager, Bill Kelliher, and our devoted team—Jim, Linda, Heidi, Debbie, Chris, Robert, TJ, Christine, and Ernie and our hundreds of past employees. Their dedication played a vital role in maintaining Schermerhorn's reputation for excellence.



Lastly, we want to acknowledge our children—Michael, Elizabeth, and Nick—who worked alongside us for many years. They began their journeys with us during high school and beyond and carried the values they learned from our family-owned business into their own professional lives, where they continue to exemplify the principles of hard work and determination.

As we say goodbye, we will miss the many friendships and connections we've built with both new and longtime customers. Though it is bittersweet, we look forward to spending more time with our growing family and embarking on the next chapter of our lives. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your loyalty and support throughout the years.



*With sincere thanks and gratitude,
Mike & Marilyn Fitzgerald*

