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# HOLYOKE the Sun

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## City Council discusses union contract

By Quinn Suomala  
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – The city council discussed the approval of the appropriation of funds needed to accept a union negotiated contract.

The finance committee had sent the matter to the city council with the recommendation to deny the appropriation.

They had sent a 3-2 recommendation to deny, with Councilors Kevin Jourdain, Michael Sullivan and Carmen Ocasio voting to deny.

Councilors Patti Devine and Kocayne Givner voted to approve the transfer.

See **CONTRACT**, page 6

## Treasurer question heads to special ballot

By Quinn Suomala  
Staff Writer



A variety of elected and city officials gathered together for the press conference to announce the special election for appointing the city treasurer.

Turley photos by Quinn Suomala

HOLYOKE – Mayor Joshua Garcia, City Council President Tessa Murphy-Romboletti and Treasurer Rory Casey held a press conference to discuss the upcoming special election.

The special election, which is scheduled for Tuesday, Jan. 28, will be to change the treasurer position from appointed to elected.

“This proposal aligns with recommendations from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue and its broader effort between all branches of our government to modernize and strengthen our city’s financial practices,” Murphy-Romboletti said.

The government has been recommending this change to the city for many years, based

See **BALLOT**, page 16

## Director Rossi reveals DPW plans for 2025

By Quinn Suomala  
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – The Department of Public Works has a variety of projects planned for 2025.

One project they have been working on for about two years now that will be coming to fruition this year is the work to get a new long-term service agreement for the wastewater treatment plant.

The RSQ for the project should be coming out towards the end of January, which should keep the project on track for the new contract to begin in September.

Throughout this process, the DPW has worked with the Board of Public Works and an ad-hoc committee.

This service agreement could help Holyoke turn their

wastewater treatment into an opportunity for the city.

“It is going to set up the city of Holyoke for the next 20 years as far as capital projects, stabilizing rates and to be more climate resilient,” DPW Director Carl Rossi said.

On top of this project, the DPW is also working on replacing the central fueling station for the city.

That project is going into design right now. This project will look into upgrading the pumps and tanks at the station.

Also in the design stage is the Springdale Pump Station replacement project.

R o s s i also mentioned that they plan to try to reconfigure the station so they can add charging stations for electric garbage trucks, which is a potential option the city has been looking into.

The DPW has also been working on the City Hall parking deck repairs and reconstruction.

They put out a RSQ for engineering services that was awarded back in the fall. Now the engineer is working on the assessment so he can come up with recommendations for next steps.

After the recommendation is complete, the DPW will put out a bid for construction or demolition, depending on the recommendations from the engineer.

Additionally, the DPW is working on a sewer rehabilitation project near Essex and High Streets. The project is going out to bid with the hope that construction will begin in the spring.

“We also have the River Terrace sewer separation project, which the contract has been awarded and should be starting in the spring, too,” Rossi said.

In addition to these larger projects, the DPW will also be working on their usual sidewalk and pavement programs.

See **DPW**, page 6

## Ordinance committee discusses a municipal hearings officer

By Quinn Suomala  
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – The ordinance committee discussed the city hiring a municipal hearings officer at their meeting on Jan. 8.

The implementation of this position is key, as the council adopted MGLC 40U, which requires a municipal hearings officer.

“We’re still working with having the unicode updated to include the mass general law 40U, which is a statute involving the enforcement of unpaid municipal fines, and they do require that any municipality that adopts that section do have a municipal hearings officer,” Attorney Jane Mantolesky said.

This position would allow Holyoke to deal with a variety of municipal hearings in-house, rather than having to take it to the state or to another courthouse

“It would hear various types of building appeals as well as potential board of

health appeals,” Mantolesky said.

By adding this position, it could also potentially save the city money.

“Hearings held in Springfield Housing Court are a drain on tax dollars in the form of employee hours and travel expenses, for a relatively small amount we could have a contracted individual hear who files appeals on site, saving the city money,” Building Commissioner Leslie Ward wrote in a letter to the committee.

On top of this, Ward also mentioned that bringing this position in-house could allow the city to fund programs.

“Without a municipal hearings officer, the city is unable to take advantage of the municipal non-criminal building code violation program... this non-criminal violation program would allow the building department the ability to fund our own training through fine proceeds,” Ward said.

See **OFFICER**, page 6

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Criminal Defense Attorney  
413-537-4168

# Bridget Moynahan named 2025 JFK National award recipient

HOLYOKE – The St. Patrick’s Committee of Holyoke is thrilled to announce that renowned actress, author, and model, Bridget Moynahan, is the 2025 recipient of the prestigious John F. Kennedy National award. The award is presented annually to an American of Irish descent who has distinguished themselves in their chosen career and who demonstrates the values of family, faith and community exemplified by President Kennedy. John F. Kennedy was the first recipient of the National award and it was renamed in his honor after his death.

Moynahan, best known for her iconic role as Erin Reagan in the long-running hit television series *Blue Bloods*, has captivated audiences with her talent, grace, and commit-

ment to storytelling. Recently, Moynahan reprised her iconic role as Natasha, Carrie Bradshaw’s rival and Mr. Big’s wife in HBO’s *Sex and the City* reboot *And Just Like That...* She also starred in and produced the award-winning short film *Swipe NYC* opposite Richard Schiff and Lisa Edelstein.

A native of Longmeadow, Moynahan’s accomplishments in entertainment and her commitment to uplifting others serve as a testament to the enduring legacy of the Irish-American community.

“Bridget Moynahan represents the very best of the Irish American spirit, dedicated, talented, and passionate



Bridget Moynahan

about giving back,” said John Beaulieu, 2025 parade president. “Her career, her values, and her pride in her Irish roots make her an inspiring choice for this year’s John F. Kennedy National Award. The Committee looks forward to honoring Bridget and welcoming her to our cherished celebration of Irish culture and community.”

“Growing up in an Irish family has shaped my values of resilience, family, and community, qualities I see celebrated so beautifully in the Holyoke St. Patrick’s Parade,” said Moynahan. “To be honored with the JFK Award is deeply humbling, as it represents not

only a connection to my heritage but also a legacy of pride. I am grateful to the committee for this incredible recognition and proud to stand with those who celebrate Irish culture and history so vibrantly.”

Celebrations recognizing Moynahan are woven into the fabric of parade weekend and include highlights such as an acknowledgment at the Holyoke St. Patrick’s Road Race and a featured position in the grand Holyoke St. Patrick’s Parade. Additionally, she will be honored at the JFK Awards Dinner at the Delaney House in Holyoke on Saturday, March 22. The public is invited to join the St. Patrick’s Committee of Holyoke at the Reception. Ticket information is available at: <https://holyokestpatrickspade.com/events/jfk-award-dinner-2025>.

## Traditional Irish night on Feb. 22

HOLYOKE – The Hibernians of Hampden/Hampshire Counties invite the public to attend the Traditional Irish night in Holyoke, at the Log Cabin on Saturday Feb. 22.

There will be valet parking. Tickets are only \$50 per person. Call Joe O’Connor at 413-627-7148 or Fran Hennessey at 413-785-5687 by Feb. 18

or go online to Eventbrite.com.

The event will feature the Keohane and Kenneally Irish American Band and a Corned Beef and Cabbage dinner with Ribs by Mick Corduff executive chef at the Log Cabin.

The event was sold out the past 2 years so get tickets early. The Hibernians wish a Happy St. Patrick’s Day to all.

## HMC welcomes new chief medical officer

HOLYOKE – Spiros Hatiras, President and CEO of Holyoke Medical Center and Valley Health Systems, has announced Vishal Tiwari, MD as the new chief medical officer at Holyoke Medical Center.

“I am excited to have joined this team, working with and leading many well respected physicians and colleagues,” said Tiwari. “I have had working relationships with several members of the HMC medical staff in the past. I look forward to further incorporating best practices to continue delivering the highest quality of care to the patients we serve in the Greater Holyoke community.”

Before joining Holyoke Medical Center, Tiwari was most recently with Steward Health in the suburbs of Boston. There he oversaw several hospitals as the Vice President of Medical Affairs and Regional Medical Director. In addition, Tiwari served more than a decade at Baystate Health and Health New England as their Medical Director and Senior Medical Director. He also served as the Market Medical Director at



Vishal Tiwari, MD

Curana Health, a nationwide post rehab company.

Tiwari received his medical degree from S. N. Medical College with a Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery degree in India. He completed a postgraduate residency training at Unity Health System in Rochester, New York. Dr. Tiwari then went on to receive a Masters in Health Care Delivery Science from The Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth and the Geisel School of Medicine, a joint program at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire.

Tiwari’s focus has been building a strong, cross-functional, collaborative team with exceptional leadership skills to enhance working relationships with hospital staff, while ensuring the highest standards of service quality for patients.

“We are very excited to have Dr. Tiwari join Valley Health Systems,” said Hatiras. “His experience and commitment to high quality patient care have already made him a valuable member of our leadership team.”

Tiwari lives in West Springfield with his wife and two children.

## Free line-cook training classes available at HCC culinary program

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College will be running both daytime and evening editions of its free, line-cook training program at the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute, beginning Jan. 21 and Jan. 27.

The five-week daytime program starts Tuesday, Jan. 21. Classes meet Mondays and Wednesdays, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The 10-week, evening program runs Jan. 27 through April 9 on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays from 5 to 9 p.m.

“HCC tries to meet the needs of its students by offering multiple options for start days and times,” said Paul Sheehan, assistant project coordinator for culinary arts programs. “Over the last few years, we have offered our free line cook training as separate day and evening programs to help students find the schedule that works best for them.”

The program is designed for those already in the restaurant industry who want to upgrade their skills as well as unemployed or underemployed individ-

uals interested in starting new careers.

“We usually have a mix of young people entering the job market for the first time and people who are re-entering the job market, looking for a second career,” Sheehan said. “The course is perfect for anybody who’s looking for a job and has a passion for food and the dining industry.”

All classes meet in person at the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute at 164 Race St.

Participants will learn all the essential competencies they need to become successful line cooks: knife skills; how to prepare stocks, soups, sauces, desserts, poultry, fish and meat; culinary math and measurements; moist and dry heat cooking methods; as well as workplace soft skills, such as building a resume and searching for jobs.

Offered as part of HCC’s Business & Workforce Development division, the line cook course is free to qualifying applicants.

For more information, or to fill out an inquiry form, please go to [hcc.edu/line-cook](http://hcc.edu/line-cook).



Let imagination take flight. Build a fairy house to be featured along the Stanley Park’s Fairy walk. Submitted Photo

## Stanley Park offers Whimsical Fairy Walk

WESTFIELD – Join in for a magical weekend at Stanley Park’s Whimsical Fairy Walk, happening on Saturday, May 3, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday, May 4, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. This event is moving to the Spring and will kick off the park’s opening weekend. Bring family and friends to experience the enchanting world of fairies with a self-guided walk through the fairy-inspired trails. Discover handcrafted fairy houses, participate in fun activities, and create unforgettable memories.

The fairy walk is looking for business sponsors, volunteers, and fairy house builders to help make this event truly enchanting. Sponsors: Showcase

a business and support this whimsical community event; Volunteers: Help with event setup, guiding visitors, or running activities; Fairy House Builders: Let imagination take flight. Build a fairy house to be featured along the walk.

For more information or to sign up as a sponsor, volunteer, or fairy house builder, visit the website at [www.stanleypark.org](http://www.stanleypark.org) or contact us by [development@stanleypark.org](mailto:development@stanleypark.org) or phone at 413-568-9312 x 108 or x112.

Don’t miss this chance to be part of the magic. Mark the calendars and help bring the fairies to life at Stanley Park’s Whimsical Fairy Walk.

### COLLEGE NOTES

## SNHU fall 2024 President’s List

MANCHESTER – It is with great pleasure that Southern New Hampshire University congratulates the following students on being named to the fall 2024 President’s List. The following students are from Holyoke:

Blake Brisebois, Vanessa Plamondon and Emmelise Fogarty-Rodriguez.

## SNHU announces Dean’s List

MANCHESTER – Linda Sinn of Holyoke has been named to Southern New Hampshire University’s fall 2024 Dean’s List.

## WNE Dean’s List

SPRINGFIELD – Western New England University takes immense pride in recognizing the outstanding academic achievements of over 750 students who have been named to the Dean’s List for the fall 2024 semester. The following local students were named to the Dean’s List:

Alexus Perez of Holyoke and Olivia Geary of Holyoke.

## WNE President’s List

SPRINGFIELD – Western New England University takes immense pride in recognizing the outstanding academic achievements of over 640 students who have been named to the president’s list for the Fall 2024 semester. The following local students were named to the President’s List:

Naressa Kempadoo of Holyoke and Owen Pecia of Holyoke.

## NAMI to host annual meeting

HOLYOKE – The National Alliance on Mental Illness of Western Massachusetts annual meeting will be held on Sunday, Jan. 19, beginning at 1 p.m. The special guest speaker will be Crisliana Borelli. Recently, she was invited to and competed at the National US/Woman of Achievement Pageant in Irvine, California this past November. She returned home with the national title of Ms US 2025, the first woman from New England to do so in the 10-year history of the pageant. She will present her dual platform of mental health advocacy, and suicide prevention to help, support, and empower people from all walks of life who have struggled with a mental

health issue. Now, she is using her crown as a symbol and a tool to help others who struggle in silence regarding their mental health. Hear her inspiring words of hope.

This event is open to the public. Absentee ballots will be mailed only to NAMI-WM members who are eligible to vote. If the ballot has not been received by Jan. 13 please call the office. The ballots must be received in the office by Friday, Jan. 17. To register please go to [namiwm.org/events](http://namiwm.org/events) and click on the registration link or go directly to Eventbrite.com and search for NAMI Western Mass. A Zoom link will be provided to those who are registered. For more information contact the office.

## Artists needed for showcase event featured at Wistariahurst Museum

HOLYOKE – All submissions must be submitted by Feb. 7. Wistariahurst Museum is seeking artist submissions for the Third Annual Women’s History Month juried art showcase for the month of March. This year, the theme is Love, in all forms. Love, in all forms, aims for artists to consider how love impacts lives. Love can be painful, a process, joyful, romantic, platonic, a feeling, an object, a memory; love, in all its forms, is beautiful. Any medium for submission is encouraged. Submissions are open to anyone who identifies as a woman and non-binary artists of any age.

Submissions should include 3 to 4 quality images with information (title, date, medium, and size), an artist statement (approximately 300 words about your art and its relationship to the theme), and an artist bio (approximately 150 words about you as an artist) in one PDF. Wistariahurst is an artist-friendly space that encourages creativity and supports the growth of this region’s artists. All questions are welcome and encouraged. Five artists will be selected and awarded a \$100 stipend. Submissions are due Feb. 7, please send them to [info@wistariahurst.org](mailto:info@wistariahurst.org).

## Dream Designers STEM activities

HOLYOKE – Join us for exciting and interactive STEM activities designed to ignite curiosity, creativity and critical thinking in children 2.9 to five years old and their families.

Explore, experiment and discover the wonders of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math through hands-on experiences.

**Location:** Tuesdays at H.B. Lawrence Elementary School, 156 Cabot St., Holyoke

Thursdays at Szetela Early Childhood School, 66 Macek Dr., Chicopee

**Time:** 4 to 5 p.m.

**Dates:** Tuesdays: Jan. 28 through March 11

Thursdays: Jan. 30 through March 13

Children must attend with an adult. To learn more, call Shane at 413-310-1632.



## Grants available for Western Massachusetts farmers

HOLYOKE – Farmers in Western Massachusetts are invited to apply for Local Farmer Awards of up to \$2,500.

These grants are intended to help farmers purchase capital equipment related to planting, growing, harvesting and processing that will help farms compete in the marketplace. The Harold Grinspoon Charitable Foundation, in partnership with Big Y, the Massachusetts Society for Promoting Agriculture, the Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation along with the support

of other funders, is entering its second decade which has helped more than 300 farmers carry out a total of 672 projects.

The awards have helped farmers make necessary improvements such as upgrading electric fencing, purchasing no-till equipment, expanding irrigation, installing frost-free water systems, purchasing feed troughs and applying shade cloths for greenhouses.

John Lee, president of the Massachusetts Society for Promoting Agriculture comments “We are delighted

to once again support farmers in Western Massachusetts through these grants. It is truly inspiring to witness the creativity, thoughtfulness, and uniqueness they bring to their projects.”

To be eligible, farms must have gross sales of \$10,000 and be located in Hampden, Hampshire, Franklin or Berkshire County. For a full list of eligibility requirements and application information, farmers are encouraged to visit [www.farmerawards.org](http://www.farmerawards.org). The deadline for applying is Friday, Jan. 31.

## Scholarship and fellowship funds available for graduates

HOLYOKE – 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](http://www.HoraceSmithFund.org) or by phoning (413) 739-4222.

## Westfield Athenaeum hosts Shawn Farley art exhibit on constructivism

WESTFIELD – The Westfield Athenaeum, 6 Elm St., announces the next exhibit, the art of Shawn Farley, one of the most important artists working in Western Massachusetts today.

The show opened on Tuesday, Jan. 14 and will remain on display until Saturday, March 1. The event is free and open to the public.

Shawn Farley earned her Bachelors in Fine Arts at the University of Nebraska with a double major in dance and sculpture. Farley went on to obtain her Masters in Arts Administration from the University of Iowa. After moving to Massachusetts

in 1984, she became active in artmaking while continuing to study the Surrealists, Constructivists, Suprematists and the Russian Avant-garde.

Her artmaking has involved gathering found objects from parking lots, streets, nature, flea markets and tag sales, and has evolved from assemblage work with little painting to figurative sculptures fully painted. As an older artist, with the freedom to work full-time on her artwork, she feels she has come into her “creative time” and finds age means nothing.

In this current exhibit Farley employs foundry molds, discarded hard-

ware and other found objects as the building blocks for sculptures. Foundry molds are wooden forms, carved out or built up to create negative space, which in turn is used to make the inverse form or shape to be used for the casting of metal. The molds were primarily used during the last two centuries to create everything from parts for the Hoover Dam to sewing machines and automotive parts. Sometimes these works come together by intention, but more often than not, by chance placement of objects. I find these objects in the streets, but also from people who rescue them from the

trash or abandoned factory buildings.

Influenced by the early 20th century art movements known as Suprematism, Constructivism, and Surrealism, her process employs automatism, allowing her to be guided by subconscious associations between fundamental forms and colors. The composition comes first, but with constant editing, a theme emerges. It might be women’s rights, climate change, or more personal themes such as aging, spirituality, or dreams. By embracing chance, welcoming play, and trusting her instincts, these compositions inevitably take on human qualities.



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### Accepting applications for the Lottery for Belcher Apts. Coming soon!

The Belcher Apartments project is a new development located in Chicopee, MA. Belcher offers 1, 2, and 3 bedrooms apartments. Applications will be available on February 1, 2025 and application deadline is on April 10, 2025.

Application will be accepted in person, via email at [Tperez@valleyopp.com](mailto:Tperez@valleyopp.com). The lottery drawing will be held publicly via zoom on April 28, 2025. For information contact our office at 413-594-3271.

Valley Opportunity Council  
516 Chicopee Street, Chicopee, MA 01013

Guest Column



## Should Social Security money be invested in the Stock Market

Dear Rusty

For most folks collecting Social Security, you get back what you put in within 3-5 years, so for those that scream - "SS is not an entitlement, it is my money" - that is not entirely accurate beyond 3-5 years. For me personally 4.4 years is the number. But had I been able to invest that money over the 43 years I worked at a modest 6% interest, I expect the amount would have been a lot more. And of course, the stock market averaged 9.5% over that time. Perhaps Social Security should invest in the stock market instead of U.S. Government treasury bonds.

Signed Interested Observer

Dear Observer

You bring up a point we frequently hear that if, instead of paying into Social Security, I had invested the same money in the stock market I would have gotten more.

That, of course, might be the case if you had the unwavering discipline to religiously invest the equivalent amount in the market, avoiding the temptation to use that investment for any other reason. And life is full of good reasons, financial emergencies, for example or the simple temptation to buy something desperately needed, or just occasionally skipping a month to pay bills. Also, the stock market is notoriously volatile, which can create substantial angst for investors, who are faint of heart.

The fact is that Social Security provides guaranteed financial growth from the age of eligibility normally 62, up to age 70 when the maximum benefit is attained. Benefits claimed at one's full retirement age are about 24% - 32% more than if taken at age 62 depending on Full Retirement Age and benefits taken at age 70 are about 75% more than benefits taken at age 62. And that is guaranteed growth for those with the patience to wait longer to claim.

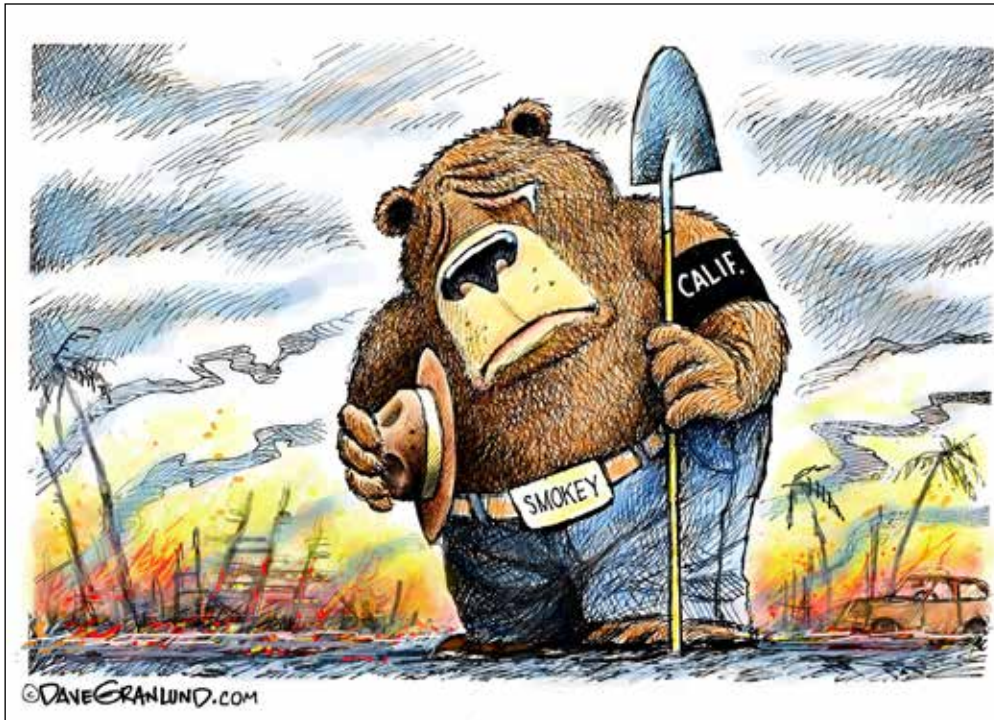
You may recall that the idea of investing Social Security reserves in the stock market has been floated a few times in previous years, but accompanying risks made Congress essentially unwilling to even entertain the idea. It has always been a political "hot potato" and those who suggest it are usually castigated for wanting to "give SS money to Wall Street," so I expect it is unlikely to happen.

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.



Letter to the Editor

## Open Letter from Holyoke City Council

The Members of the Holyoke City Council write to you today to ask for your support in the upcoming Special Election on Jan. 28.

We are asking you, along with the support of the Mayor and the current Treasurer, to change the position of Treasurer from elected to appointed.

Why?

Professional Expertise: An elected treasurer limits the pool from which we can hire qualified candidates, because any Treasurer must reside in Holyoke in order to be elected. We are a small city with big issues in front of us, and a complicated financial picture. We want to be able to widen our hiring capacity so we can find candidates with extensive and innovative financial experi-

ence. This person sometimes lives right here in our city; but sometimes, they may not.

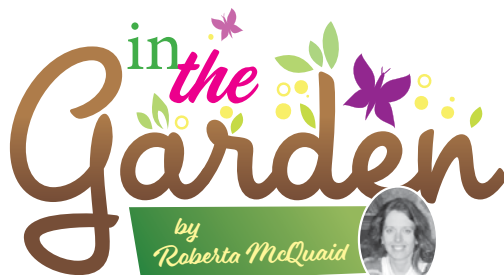
Accountability: An appointed treasurer would report directly to the City Council with day-to-day oversight being provided by the Mayor. This creates clear lines of accountability and makes it easier to quickly address financial concerns or performance issues.

Jan. 28, will likely be cold. It may even be snowy. But we ask that you make it a part of your day to make it to the polls on that day between the hours of 7 a.m. and 8 p.m. If you have questions around why the City Council has unanimously voted to ask for your support in this, please reach out by phone or email to any one of us. We would love to hear from you.

The Holyoke City Council

Guest Column

## Supplemental heat, light aid seed starting



Last week we looked at the supplies needed to start seeds indoors. This week we will dive deeper.

If you have never tried indoor seed starting, it is a worthwhile endeavor for sure. You can grow exactly what you want instead of being defendant on what lines the shelves of local nurseries each May.

Furthermore, there is great satisfaction in having a part of the "miracle." No matter how many times I have witnessed the germination process, it still amazed me that a tiny seed has what it takes within to grow into a plant. All that is needed is heat, moisture and light.

Almost all bedding plants, as well as some vegetables and herbs need warmth to germinate. We provide bottom heat through the use of heating cables or mats set at temperatures between 70-75 degrees.

This poses the question of whether or not seeds will germinate at regular household temperatures of close to seventy degrees. Probably, but not to their fullest potential since ideal temperature is measured not by air temps but by the temperature of the growing medium.

A room set at 70 degrees is likely to have temperatures within the germinating flat five to 10 degrees cooler, due to evaporation at its surface. Invest in a heat mat - if used for a few weeks each season it will likely last a decade or two.

There are many types available to suit your own specific growing needs, even mini mats that are about the size of a standard

flat. Perfect if all you are growing indoors are a pack or two of peppers and tomatoes!

Supplemental lighting comes into play at the instant your seeds have sprouted. Bottom heat is not necessary henceforth (it is even discouraged!).

Seedlings are removed from heat and placed within 3-6 inches of the light source. For short-term use, a shop light affixed with two cool fluorescent bulbs has worked fine for me, although one cool and one warm bulb was recommended "back in the day" to better simulate the full spectrum of the sun's rays.

Now, LEDs are an energy conscious replacement; one I will make when my fluorescent bulbs give out. If you are using fluorescent bulbs, be sure to keep your seedlings away from the ends of the bulb where the lights wanes.

If you plan to use lights for long-term growth a "grow-light" may be a good, albeit more costly investment. Many duplicate the sun quite well, and some are tailored to meet the needs of specific plant types.

For example, some contain more orange and red hues to promote fruiting and budding. They are priced by life expectancy, output and light spectrum.

Installing the lights of your choice with reflectors or "mirrors" will maximize intensity, and suspending the whole system with chains from the ceiling will make for easy raising as your seedlings grow.

If you plan to grow just a few seedlings and don't want to invest in lights, try positioning them in front of an unshaded south window. Turn the seedling flats numerous times during the day to promote straight, stocky growth. Plants that are tall and spindly indicate light intensity is too low.

Please give heat mats and supplemental lights a try, especially if you haven't been successful with indoor seed sowing in the

See GARDEN, page 5

HOLYOKE  
the Sun  
TEAM



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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.



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## 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.



Carolina wren

A Brimfield resident sent me a list of birds on Jan. 2 he saw in his yard. On the list was a Carolina wren. He said in the email, “[The Carolina wren was] foraging in the leaves under shrubs and has been seen at the feeders more frequently recently.”

The Carolina wren is six inches long and has brown feathers above with buff below. It has a distinct white eyebrow and white barring in the tail area. It often holds its tail in an upward position.

The female lays four to eight creamy or pink white eggs with brown marks in a nest of mosses, twigs, rootlets, bark and sometimes snakeskins lined with finer materials. They nest in tree holes and many other locations; they will use bird-houses.

The Carolina wren expanded its range into the northeast especially with the milder winters. There song is a loud, repeated “tea kettle, tea kettle, tea kettle.”

They inhabit forest understory, vines and woodlands in rural or suburban areas.

**Other Brimfield birds**

Other birds seen by the Brimfield resident beside the Carolina wren were four mourning doves, 20 American robins, 12 dark eyed juncos, one white-throated sparrow and two Northern cardinals. He said of the robins, “I first noticed one bird on the ground in the yard and 3 in a crab apple tree eating fruit. More flew into the tree than four on the ground foraging. More perched in a nearby tree.” He also said, “We have ten crab apple trees in the yard and several of them have small fruit that is held on the tree into the winter.”

**Flocks of robins**  
In my travels last week, I saw flocks of robins on three occasions, twice in Barre and once in Oakham. The Oakham flock flew across the road and landed on the ground and in trees on the opposite side. The Brimfield resident reported his wife saw a flock of robins in the center of Brimfield eating crab apples near the post office twice in recent days.

**Christmas Bird Count**  
The Brimfield couple participated in the annual Christmas Bird Count in Ludlow. He said, “We had 31 species in Ludlow, lots fewer birds at the reservoir because there was about 90% ice coverage [Saturday] compared to 10% Friday.”

**Suet cakes**  
I put out my suet feeder last month. I waited long enough because I did not have a bear either break or run off with the feeder. The birds are busy eating suet especially during this cold weather.

**New Hampshire Loon Preservation Committee**  
The New Hampshire Loon Preservation Committee reported in 2024 they surveyed 498 occupied or potential

loon territories on 327 lakes to assess presence/absence and breeding success of loons and the success of LPC’s management to help them. They documented the presence of 359 loon pairs and 126 unpaired adult loons. They also floated a record 156 nest rafts to help loon pairs displaced from their traditional nest sites by shoreline development, recreational lake use and water level fluctuations. They also installed signs and rope lines at 135 nesting loon pair locations.

They banded 57 loons and rescued 38 loons in distress and a result of illness or injury. The Loon Preservation Committee continued to expand their lead tackle buyback program. Ingestion of lost lead tackle by fisherman remained the cause of lead poisoning in the loon population. There were six documented deaths due to lead poisoning, two loon deaths from trauma due to boat strikes and two loon deaths due to entanglement in fishing gear in 2024.

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.

**SECURITY, from page 4**

Guess we’ll need to be satisfied with the interest on those Special Issue Government Bonds, which, by the way, returned about \$67 billion to the Social Security Trust Fund in 2023. FYI, average interest rate for new deposits to the Trust Fund in 2023 was 4.1%, and the overall effective rate of return on all Trust Fund assets was 2.4%.

Social Security has some issues and will face some financial difficulty in less

than a decade unless Congress enacts program reform soon. But it is a program, which most seniors rely on for a major part of their retirement income and one which keeps over 22 million Americans out of poverty. Here at the AMAC Foundation, we strongly advocate for sensible Social Security reform and we’re very optimistic about the program’s future. But Congress needs to act soon to avoid a cut to everyone’s Social Security amount in about 2033.

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](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at [ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org). Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

**GARDEN, from page 4**

past. This could turn the page of a new chapter of growing for you!

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](mailto:pouimette@turley.com) with “Gardening Question” in the subject line.

## CHURCH DIRECTORY

# Your Community Church

**Blessed Sacrament Parish**  
Rev. Duy Le  
[frduyle@blessedsacramentholyoke.org](mailto: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](http://www.blessedsacramentholyoke.org)  
FaceBook: @bspholyokema

**St. Peter’s Lutheran Church**  
Rev. Debora Stein  
34 Jarvis Ave., Holyoke  
Office: (413) 536-3369  
Office: [stpetersholyokey@gmail.com](mailto:stpetersholyokey@gmail.com)  
Pastor: [revdebma@gmail.com](mailto:revdebma@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.stpetersholyokey.org](http://www.stpetersholyokey.org)  
Social media:  
[facebook.com/stpetersholyokey](https://facebook.com/stpetersholyokey)  
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](https://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)

**First Baptist Church**  
Pastor Theresa Temple  
1976 Northampton St., Holyoke  
(413) 533-7728  
[firstbaptistchurchholyokey@comcast.net](mailto:firstbaptistchurchholyokey@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.

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56						57			58					
59						60				61				
62						63					64			

**CLUES ACROSS**

1. This regulates cortisol production (abbr.)
5. People of northern Vietnam
8. Employee stock ownership plan
12. Regions
14. The center of a city
15. Hindu serpentine deity
16. Roared
18. Sun up in New York
19. “Sir” in Malaysian
20. Shrimp dish
21. Muckraker Tarbell
22. Apex
23. Harmonic effects
26. One of Babe Ruth’s nicknames
30. Groups in organic chemistry
31. More pleasant-tasting
32. Spring forward

33. Noted writer
34. Building occupied by monks
39. “The world’s most famous arena”
42. Colorless liquid hydrocarbon
44. Long or fast speech
46. Things you can eat
47. Substance in which magnetic moments are not aligned
49. Actor Idris
50. I (German)
51. Taxes
56. Indonesian island
57. Nuisance (slang)
58. Shawl
59. Digits
60. Moved on foot quickly
61. “For goodness \_\_\_”
62. Facial body part
63. Russian river
64. Urinates

**CLUES DOWN**

1. Partner to “oohs”
2. Scaly water dweller
3. Pueblo people of New Mexico
4. Music producer Teo
5. Greek mythological goddess
6. Got together to discuss
7. Acquires
8. Involve
9. Some are tomato-based
10. Old Irish alphabets
11. A sheet of glass in a window or door
13. Blood poisoning
17. A moon of Saturn
24. Neither
25. Sums
26. They follow “A”
27. Satisfaction
28. People of southeastern Burma
29. Small amount
35. Guy (slang)
36. Sound unit
37. Midway between northeast and east
38. Affirmative
40. Almost at the top
41. Extremely slow
42. Pearl Jam’s debut album
43. Influential mid-century playwright
44. Martens
45. Approval
47. Dallas-adjacent Texas city
48. African nation
49. Dark brown or black
52. A place to get caught
53. Large-headed, elongated fish
54. Type of sword
55. Scottish tax or levy

CROSSWORD ANSWER on page 2

## John "Mick" Michael Jones

John "Mick" Michael Jones, 48, of Windsor Locks, passed away unexpectedly on Saturday, January 11, 2025. He was born in Midwest City, Oklahoma on April 7, 1976, the son of the late John Wayne Jones and Sandra Lee (McCoart) Jones.



Mick was a resident of Windsor Locks for over 20 years and worked as an estimator in the construction industry. He was known for his strong work ethic, dedication to his craft and handyman services in the community.

In addition to his professional life, Mick had a passion for golf and spent many hours on the course with his son and MB buddies. He also had a deep love for collecting LEGOs, a hobby that brought him great joy and satisfaction. However, it was his family that meant the most to him. Mick cherished every moment spent

with his loved ones and will be remembered for the warmth, love, and laughter he brought to their lives.

Mick is survived by his beloved partner, Jody Benton; his daughter, Kylie Jones; his son, Chase Jones; his stepdaughter, Halyn Valley; his brothers, James and Chuck Jones; his sister, Joanna

Cordes; his many nieces and nephews, and his best friend Koji. He will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

A celebration of life is planned for Saturday, Jan. 18 at The Grill at Copper Hill: 20 Copper Hill Road, East Granby, CT 06026. All are welcome to join any time between 12 to 4 p.m.

For online condolences, please visit [www.windsorlocksfuneralhome.com](http://www.windsorlocksfuneralhome.com). For those looking to support his family, in lieu of flowers, please consider donating at <https://gofund.me/875b96c7>.

### DEATH NOTICE

**Jones, John "Mick" Michael**  
Died Jan. 11  
Celebration of life Jan. 18  
Windsor Locks Funeral Home

### 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](mailto:obits@turley.com). Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.

### DPW, from page 1

They have received the community development block grant that is helping to fund the sidewalk replacement and they will be using Chapter 90 money to fund the various pavement projects.

Moreover, the DPW has applied to a variety of different grants to help fund potential new projects.

They have applied the Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grant, which they hope to receive an update about in the spring.

"We applied for the SWIFR grant to upgrade our recycling collection system," Rossi said.

That grant, if the DPW receives it, would allow them to implement that National Recycling Strategy.

According to the grant website, this would improve post-consumer materials management and infrastructure; support improvements to local post-consumer materials management and recycling programs; and assist local waste management authorities in making improvements to local waste management systems.

The DPW will be posting updates on their different projects on their Facebook page, at <https://www.facebook.com/HolyokeDPW/>, as well as the DPW website.

The website will be updated within the next week or so, so that they will have information on all of their construction projects, paving projects or any other projects that may impact residents available on there.

This website can be found at <https://www.holyoke.org/departments/public-works/>.

### OFFICER, from page 1

Mantolesky proposed that they could hire the person already doing similar work for the fire department.

"The fire department also has a municipal hearings officer within their own department...he is doing their appeals, so it would be very, very similar to what he is doing in that role so I don't see why he can't also take this position," Mantolesky said.

Councilor Meagan Magrath-Smith also brought forward the option of potentially doing a group hire of the

position with other communities in the area.

"The municipal hearings officer is shared between Amherst, Belchertown, East Hampton, Hadley and Northampton," Magrath-Smith said. "They have an intergovernmental contract where they together have one municipal hearings officer."

The law department, the building department and the ordinance committee will look into this issue further.

For financing the position, the city council could either approve a rate or a general lump sum stipend.

This position has existed in the city

before, so the law office plans to look into the past rate the city used to get a starting point for the updated salary.

They also know that there is a base reimbursement rate of \$2,500 specified within the law for this position.

The committee tabled the matter so the law department could come back next meeting with ordinance language, the job description and the pay information.

They also requested that the law department meet with Mayor Joshua Garcia so they could discuss what appropriation would be necessary to create this position.

### CONTRACT, from page 1

Jourdain, Ocasio and Sullivan had all brought up concerns about the union contract containing department heads, the amount of vacation time included in the contract and the flex time granted within it.

"I certainly will not be voting to expand to yet another massive quantity of people all of these additional vacation benefits that we cannot afford," Jourdain said. "These absolute giveaways of vacation time are just outrageous."

According to Jourdain, the flex time would apply to department heads as well as those working under them. Jourdain did not feel comfortable allowing a transfer that would approve of this.

"No past or future mayor should be required to be hamstrung by that type of expensive requirement that there has

to be the payment of flextime," Jourdain said. "If the mayor needs you for 40 hours this week, you are not entitled to automatically five more hours and to create this rule is expensive to the taxpayers."

Overall, Jourdain and some other councilors did not feel comfortable supporting such a large increase given how much taxpayers were already paying.

Other councilors brought up the point that those under the contract are taxpayers and constituents as well.

"These are folks who are our constituents and are also having a hard time making ends meet," Councilor Juan Anderson-Burgos said.

They did not want to deny people the raises that they had negotiated for under this contract.

Additionally, the council was also conscientious of the fact that the union

had spent many hours putting this contract together with the city for it to go to the council.

"To say that we're not going to pay retro for a contract that has been in negotiation for a year and a half, it seems like a waste of everyone's time and I think it is kind of short sighted," Givner said.

Also, Givner pointed out that the adding of vacation time is an attempt to prevent the buy back of vacation time, which is a highly costly problem for the city.

"It is my understanding that this added week vacation is a substitute in order to get rid of the vacation buyback," she said. "So I think that is actually a big money saver for the city."

Jourdain also brought forward concerns on whether or not this contract was even possible, as it includes

retroactive pay.

"You cannot use current fiscal year money to pay bills from prior fiscal years," Jourdain said.

However, Attorney Michael Bissonette disagreed, citing that the city had done this prior and it was allowed under the law.

"The law department's negotiations are usually informed under Chapter 44, Section 68, on retro salary that allows for...the initiation of contract negotiations like this one," he said.

Magrath-Smith, Murphy-Romboletti, Israel Rivera, Jenny Rivera, Anderson-Burgos, Devine and Givner voted against the decision to deny the transfer, making it a 7-6 vote.

The council then made a motion to reconsider their actions and to send the matter back to committee where it could be discussed further.

## Public Notices

### City of Holyoke PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Holyoke Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing on **Thursday, February 4, 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  
01/17, 01/24/2025

### Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Division Docket No. HD25P0009EA

Estate of:  
**Robert F Kane, Jr.**  
Date of Death: 11/05/2024  
**INFORMAL PROBATE  
PUBLICATION NOTICE**

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Brittney A Kane of Mount Orab, OH**

a Will has been admitted to informal probate.

**Brittney A Kane of Mount Orab, OH** 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. 01/17/2025

**Commonwealth of  
Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court**

### Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 (413)748-7758

Docket No. HD25P0052EA  
Estate of:  
**Nancy L Lynch**  
Also known as:  
**Nancy B Lynch,  
Nancy Barton Lynch**  
Date of Death: 11/03/2024  
**CITATION ON PETITION  
FOR FORMAL  
ADJUDICATION**

To all interested persons:  
A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Edward B Lynch of Marstons Mills, MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: **Edward B Lynch of Marstons Mills, MA** be appointed as Personal

Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 02/10/2025. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.**

**UNSUPERVISED  
ADMINISTRATION**

### UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.

Date: January 13, 2025

**Rosemary A Saccomani**,  
Register of Probate  
01/17/2025

# SPORTS

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## Boys stays perfect with OT upset

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke High School boys basketball team is gearing up for a deep run in the state tournament. They showed just how serious they were with a massive victory over Central High School, one of the region’s toughest programs for more than a decade. The two teams ended in a 65-65 deadlock and went to overtime where Holyoke outscored the Golden Eagles 12-9. All five of Holyoke’s starters finished with double-digit points. Chauncey Ruiz had 19 points, Jacob Andujar finished with 18 points. Calvin Godbolt had 14 points and Jordan King-Perilli and Aden Cabrera had 13 points each. The Knights also beat Sci-Tech last Friday and are a perfect 7-0 so far this year. The Knights face Amherst Regional on the road on Jan. 17 at 7 p.m.



Chauncey Ruiz fights to get his shot off.

*Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com*



Calvin Godbolt shoots on the run.



Aden Cabrera enters the paint.



Jacob Andujar goes for a layup under tough pressure.



Jordan King-Perilli looks to make a jump shot.



Kiara Perez goes for a layup in traffic.



Syleys Rivera drives into the arc.



Kylie Blaha tries to work around a defender near the end of the court.

*Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli*



Evangeline Cauley looks to inbound the ball.



Janessa Torres holds the ball high away from her opponent before going for the basket.

## Knights continue to struggle

HOLYOKE – Last week, Holyoke High School girls basketball continued to have a rough time putting wins on the board. The Knights lost two more games, falling last Tuesday 50-40 against Longmeadow, and then 49-37 last Friday at East Longmeadow. The Knights

fell to 1-7 and are quickly losing room for error to qualify for the state tournament this season. Holyoke’s only win so far this season came in its first game on Dec. 12 against Chicopee. Holyoke tries to turn its fortunes around against West Springfield Friday, Jan. 17 at 7 p.m.

# Hampden Charter falls to Pathfinder

CHICOPEE – Last Friday night, Hampden Charter girls basketball was defeated by Pathfinder 50-24. The Wolves, which have players from Chicopee, Holyoke, and Springfield, struggled on offense in the matchup. But they rebounded to get their first win of the season on Jan. 13, 42-20 over Gateway Regional. The 1-6 Wolves next face Ludlow on Jan. 17 at 6 p.m.

## 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](mailto:sports@turley.com) or call, 1-413-283-8393.



Chloe Blake takes a shot.  
Turley photos by David Henry [www.sweetdogphotos.com](http://www.sweetdogphotos.com)



Danica Gagne gets the long jumper for the Wolves.



Giules Marino, of Holyoke, aims her shot.



Grace Vadnais receives a pass.



Kaylane Cormier heads into the offensive end of the court.

# Bonsignore will participate in Xfinity Series races in 2025

Joe Gibbs Racing announced today that four-time NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour Champion Justin Bonsignore will drive the team's No. 19 Toyota GR Supra in five NASCAR Xfinity Series races in 2025.

Bonsignore made his Xfinity Series debut for JGR last June at New Hampshire Motor Speedway. Despite having no practice or qualifying laps, the Holtsville, New York, native found his way into the top five before contact on a late-race restart relegated him to a 22nd-place finish.

The 36-year-old driver is no stranger to success on the NASCAR Whelen

Modified Tour. He has racked up 45 victories, 130 top-five finishes, 169 top-10s, 33 pole awards, and 5,442 laps led in 226 career starts. In 2024, Bonsignore posted five victories on the way to his fourth career championship. He has not finished lower than fourth in the final rankings in the past nine seasons.

"When we had the opportunity to work with the Joe Gibbs Racing team at New Hampshire last year, it was a perfect pairing," Bonsignore said. "As soon as that weekend was over, we started looking at options to run a larger schedule in 2025 and it all came together. When you work with a team like JGR, you know

you're going to have a car in contention to win every race you run. We're looking forward to having some fun and chasing trophies."

Bonsignore is looking to add his name to an impressive list of drivers who have won for the JGR Xfinity Series program. In the team's history, JGR owns 214 wins, including 10 in 2024. Since the team's inception, 23 different drivers have taken JGR to victory lane in the Xfinity Series, including 14 drivers who claimed their first career victory in the series driving for JGR. The organization has won four Xfinity Series driver championships and six owner's champi-

onships.

"We're excited to have Justin back in our car in 2025," said Steve de Souza, Executive Vice President of Xfinity Series and Development for JGR. "He has proven himself over and over again in the modifieds and he did a great job for us at New Hampshire with no track time before the race started. We're looking forward to seeing what he can do with more opportunities to adapt to the Xfinity cars and working with the same team multiple times this season."

The No. 19 team's full driver schedule will be announced at a later date.

## T-Birds reach .500 with road win

HARTFORD – The Springfield Thunderbirds (15-15-2-1) rode spectacular performances by Simon Robertsson and Colten Ellis to a 3-1 win over the Hartford Wolf Pack (16-16-2-1) on Sunday inside the XL Center.

The opening period yielded a scarce amount of chances for the two squads, as Ellis and Dylan Garand were each a perfect 8-for-8 in save opportunities. Dalibor Dvorsky came the closest of the two teams to breaking the scoreless tie when he wristed a forehand off the post on the stick side.

The Wolf Pack, which scored only once in their last three games on home ice, broke the ice at 3:37 of the second as Ryder Korczak cashed a 3-on-2 rush with his third of the season to give the visitors a 1-0 advantage. That Hartford lead lasted less than three minutes as Robertsson evened the slate at 6:20 with a backhand rebound after Garand denied an initial shot from Corey Schueneman.

With the 1-1 score carrying into the period's final minute, Springfield got a tie-breaking goal from a rookie for the

second straight evening. Robertsson was nearing the end of a shift but gutted it out with an incredible individual effort to split between two Wolf Pack defenseman before drubbing a forehand shot through Garand's legs at 19:08. The rookie's first career multi-goal game in the AHL gave the T-Birds the 2-1 lead heading into the third.

Ellis was the star of the show in a final period that saw the Wolf Pack relentlessly attack the Springfield goal. Time after time, the young backstop had an answer, racking up 19 third period saves, with a little help from his post along the way on a near-tying goal from Jaroslav Chmelar.

With Garand at the bench with just under two minutes remaining, Hugh McGing darted up the ice to cancel an icing and pound a loose puck into an empty net to end a 29-game goal-scoring drought.

With four points in their pockets out of the weekend, the T-Birds look to build on their momentum on Wednesday night as they make their first visit to Bridgeport to take on the Islanders at 7 p.m. at Total Mortgage Arena.

## Railers scored win over Wheeling Nailers

WORCESTER – The Worcester Railers HC (14-17-1-4 33pts) took down the Wheeling Nailers (25-7-2-0, 52pts), on Sunday afternoon by the final score of 2-1 in front of a crowd of 1,875 at WesBanco Arena. The Railers are back on the ice next at the DCU Center taking on the Adirondack Thunder on Friday, January 17th at 7:05 p.m. EST.

It was the Railers who struck first tonight as Justin Gill (1-1-2) scored 10:18 into the first period giving Worcester the 1-0 lead. The Railers extended their lead to 2-0 in the second period with a goal from Anthony Callin (1-0-1). Wheeling notched their first goal of the night 40 seconds into the third period as Logan Pietila (1-0-1) cut the Wheeling deficit to one. The Railers held off Wheeling for the remainder of the third period, leading to a 2-1 final score.

Worcester logged the first goal of the night as Justin Gill (3rd) scored on a wraparound goal 10:18 into the first period giving Worcester the 1-0

lead. Gill would be the only goal scorer through the first 20 minutes. Shots favored Wichita 13-9 in the first period.

Worcester extended their lead in the second period when Anthony Callin (9th) tapped Justin Gill's pass into the back of the net extended the Worcester lead to 2-0. Wheeling got the first power play opportunity of the game following a slashing call on Worcester's Anthony Repaci, but the Railers penalty kill successfully killed the penalty off and kept the score at 2-0 heading into the third period. Shots favored Worcester in the second 17-10.

It didn't take long in the third period for Wheeling to cut into the Worcester lead, as Logan Pietila (4th) scored just 40 seconds into the third period. The Railers held Wheeling off the scoreboard for the remainder of the third period, including a late barrage of shots in which Michael Bullion made a flurry of saves to give Worcester the 2-1 win in regulation. Shots favored Wheeling in the third 11-3 and 34-29 in the game.



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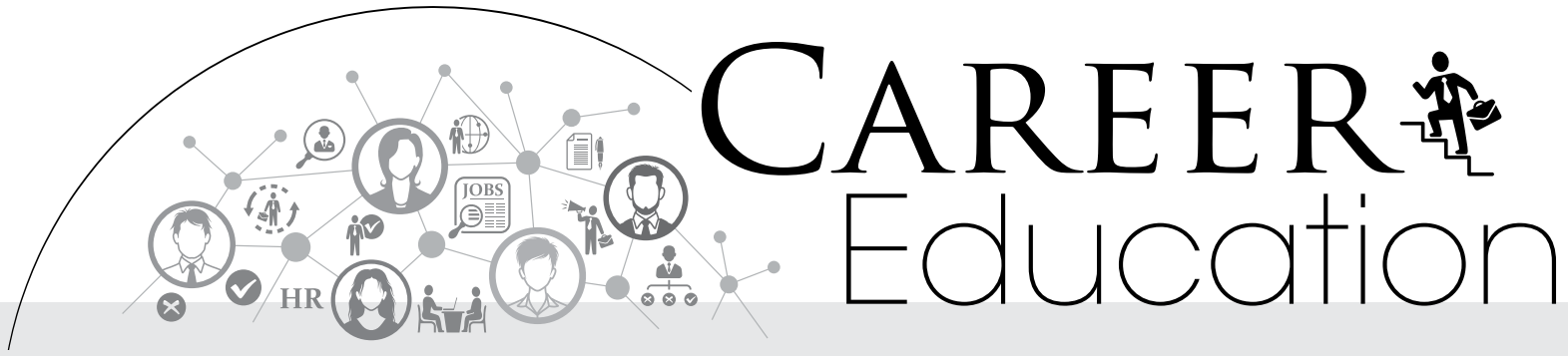
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# Hampden Charter School of Science: Empowering Students for a Brighter Future

Are you searching for a school where academic excellence meets a supportive community? Hampden Charter School of Science (HCSS) is a top-ranked, tuition-free public charter school serving grades 6-12 in Western Massachusetts. Since its founding in 2009, HCSS has been dedicated to preparing students for college, careers, and a lifetime of success.

### Why Choose HCSS?

HCSS stands out as a premier choice for families because of its unique combination of academic rigor, personalized attention, and community spirit. Our two campuses—the Middle School in West Springfield (Grades 6-8) and the High School in Chicopee (Grades 9-12)—offer students a seamless transition from middle school to high school and beyond. Here's what makes HCSS truly exceptional:

**Academic Excellence:** Our rigorous curriculum is guided by College Board AP standards and Common Core. With honors courses beginning in 7th grade, 14 AP offerings in high school, and innovative programs like Project Lead The Way

(PLTW), students are challenged to reach their full potential.

**Comprehensive College and Career Preparation:** HCSS begins college and career readiness as early as 6th grade, including early SAT/PSAT prep, dual enrollment opportunities, and experiential college campus visits. With a 100% college acceptance rate and over \$51M in scholarships awarded since 2013, our graduates are set for success.

**State-of-the-Art Technology:** Students benefit from one-to-one Chromebook access, SMART Interactive Displays, and hands-on science labs, preparing them for a tech-driven world.

**Award-Winning Extracurriculars:** From robotics and science clubs to competitive athletics and social activities, students thrive outside the classroom as well.

### Join Us for an Open House!

Explore what HCSS has to offer during our upcoming Welcome Saturday Open House events! Meet our dedicated staff, tour our campuses, and learn how HCSS can help your child achieve their dreams. Interested families can also join

a Virtual Information Session for an in-depth look at our programs from the comfort of home.

### What Parents and Students Love About HCSS

Parents and students consistently praise HCSS for its nurturing environment, where every student feels valued and supported. The school's commitment to diversity and inclusion fosters a vibrant community that celebrates different perspectives and cultures. Families also appreciate the convenience of free transportation and extensive tutoring services, ensuring all students have the tools they need to succeed.

### Student Success Stories

HCSS alumni have gone on to attend prestigious universities, including Ivy League institutions like Harvard, Columbia, and Dartmouth. Our students' achievements are a testament to the school's dedication to academic and personal growth. With a consistent college matriculation rate of over 95%, HCSS prepares students not just to attend col-

lege but to excel once they get there.

### How to Apply

Applications for the 2025-2026 school year are now open! Rising 6th-10th graders should apply no later than March 2, 2025, to secure a spot in our admission lottery. Visit [www.hampdencharter.org](http://www.hampdencharter.org) to apply and take the first step toward a brighter future.

At Hampden Charter School of Science, we believe every student deserves a world-class education. Join our community of learners, achievers, and leaders today—because your child's future begins here!

Agawam, Holyoke, Westfield, West Springfield Chicopee, Ludlow, Springfield

### HCSS High School

20 Johnson Rd. Chicopee, MA 01022  
Tel. 413-593-9090, Fax. 413-294-2648

### HCSS Middle School

511 Main Street West Springfield, MA 01089, Tel.413-278-5450



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MARCH 2, 2025










# CAREER Education



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Visit:  
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for more information!



## GATEWAY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT INVITES YOU TO JOIN US! [WWW.GRSD.ORG](http://WWW.GRSD.ORG)



Nestled in the foothills of the Berkshires, Gateway Regional School District offers a caring and supportive small school environment. With support from the Barr Foundation, Gateway is engaging in transformative work to reinvent the school experience to make learning joyful for every student. Each GRSD school has a focus that aligns with the district's vision of emphasizing real-world learning, collaboration, and innovation.



**Littleville Elementary School** incorporates engaging, hands-on projects and events:

- Hartford Wolf Pack School Learning Day
- Springfield Symphony Orchestra string instrument workshop
- Holiday Craft fair
- Interactive "Author's Experience" with writer Daryl Cobb.

Gateway Regional School's (grades 6-12) pilot program will equip student for success after high school through:

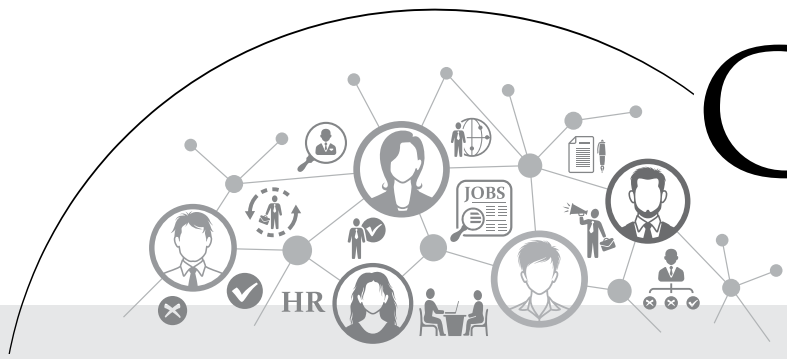
- Fun team-building activities
- College tours
- Career exploration with experts
- Life-skills workshops
- Community projects



**Chester Elementary School** focuses on sustainability, creativity, and environmental awareness:

- Teaching with Trout (raising brook trout from eggs to adulthood)
- School-wide composting initiative
- Student Media Club
- School-wide production of Willy Wonka Jr.
- Visit from the Whalemobile

**WE ARE EXCITED TO MEET YOU!**



# CAREER Education

## Gateway Raises the Bar(r) for Students

The Gateway Regional School District is making significant advancements in student engagement and staff development, thanks to funding from the Barr Foundation and enthusiastic commitment from students and staff. These funds are being used to support a variety of initiatives that align with the district's instructional vision, emphasizing real-world learning, collaboration, and innovation.

At Gateway Regional, a comprehensive plan has been developed for grades 6-12 to help students prepare for life beyond high school. This plan includes tailored learning experiences for each grade level, such as team-building activities for sixth graders, community exploration in seventh grade, and visits to community colleges for eighth graders. Ninth-grade students will engage in career exploration workshops led by industry experts, while tenth graders will visit four-year colleges. Eleventh-grade students will attend a local college fair and participate in life skills workshops, and seniors will celebrate their achievements with a banquet and lead activities for younger students. While some of these initiatives will be piloted this year, others will launch in the next school year, ensuring students are equipped with knowledge and skills for future success. The high school offers two Chapter 74 programs for students interested in welding and early childhood education. Graduates of these programs will complete a full comprehensive internship and be equipped to enter the workforce with the skills obtained.

Littleville Elementary is incorporating the Barr Foundation funds into engaging, hands-on projects and school-wide events. For example, students in grades three through five recently attended the Hartford Wolf Pack School Learning Day, where they applied physical science concepts like force and motion to a live hockey game. Kindergarten students participated in a String Instrument Workshop led by members of the Springfield Orchestra, while all grade levels are eagerly anticipating an interactive "Author's Experience" with writer Daryl Cobb in March.

Plans are in the works to create a Schoolyard Habitat for Monarch butterflies and other pollinators. Littleville is also planning a mentoring program that will pair high school students with elementary students for long-term support. The school recently hosted a successful Holiday Craft Fair, showcasing student-made goods and fostering creativity.

At Chester Elementary, the focus is on sustainability, creativity, and environmental awareness. For the third year in a row, students are engaged with hydroponic agriculture, growing healthy food for their own school lunches and community. Students are participating in the Teaching with Trout program, where they raise brook trout from eggs to adulthood while learning about ecology and conservation. A composting initiative led by fifth graders is teaching students how to sort waste and reduce their environmental impact. The Student Media Club provides third graders with opportunities to develop and produce their own videos, promoting teamwork and innovation. Chester is also preparing for a school-wide production of Willy Wonka Jr., with fifth graders in lead roles and younger students in supporting roles. Additionally, an in-school field trip featured the Whalemobile, a life-sized inflatable whale that taught students about marine biology and conservation.

District-wide, the Barr Foundation funds are also being used to enhance staff development and collaboration. Teachers are participating in study tours to locations such as Kentucky, Maine, Providence, Boston, and New York City to explore innovative educational practices. An internal instructional vision board encourages staff members to share ideas for projects that utilize the funds to further educational transformation.

Through these initiatives, the Gateway Regional School District is fostering creativity, collaboration, and real-world learning for students while empowering educators with new ideas and strategies. These efforts are preparing students for success both in school and beyond while creating a culture of innovation and engagement throughout the district.

## A New Year a New Career

A new year is upon us and as we declare resolutions, a new job might be in order. The first 5 years of a child's life are so important and since 1965, HCS Head Start has helped thousands of children and families prepare for school and life. We know that it takes a big heart to help shape growing minds and if you want to work with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in your community, Head Start might be the place for you.

The Head Start approach offers both families and their children, birth to five, an extraordinary school readiness experience. Educators who decide to teach in a comprehensive early learning setting have the opportunity to work collaboratively with other specialty areas like health, nutrition, mental health, and family and community engagement, that are designed to prepare vulnerable children for future educational success.

Data shows that when children are enrolled in a high-quality Head Start

program they are better prepared for kindergarten and beyond. Staff and parents work together, learning from one another, to create the best early educational experience both at home and at preschool. This is possible because when parents are involved and engaged in their child's education, children have better outcomes.

In addition to teaching, Head Start also has various career opportunities in the areas of health, nutrition, human services, administration, mental health, and special education. Professional development opportunities and career ladders are built within the Head Start model to promote growth and advancement.

Holyoke Chicopee Springfield Head Start, Inc. offers programs in several cities and towns in Western Massachusetts working with over 1,000 children each year. If you are interested in a rewarding Head Start career please visit [www.hcsheadstart.org/employment/](http://www.hcsheadstart.org/employment/) or call 413-788-6522.

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# CAREER Education

## HCC gearing up for spring semester

Registration is open for spring 2025 semester classes at Holyoke Community College.

The HCC spring 2025 semester begins Tuesday, Jan. 21, for full 15-week spring semester classes begin. HCC will also be running three accelerated spring flex start sessions: Flex Start I classes begin Jan. 21 and run for seven weeks. Flex Start II classes begin Monday, Feb. 3, and run for 12 weeks; Flex Start III classes begin Monday, March 24, and run for seven weeks.

Thanks to the state-funded MassEducate program, a community college education is now free for all Massachusetts residents who have yet to earn a bachelor's degree.

"MassEducate provides an exciting opportunity for eligible students to attend college without the concern or weight of how to pay for it," said Mark Hudgik, HCC dean of strategic recruitment initiatives, admissions, and financial aid. "There has never been a better time to enroll.

Eligible students who want to earn a certificate or degree need only to complete the standard HCC application, complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) for the 2024-2025 school year, and register for at least six credits (typically two classes).

"Our admissions counselors, academic advisers, and financial aid staff are available to make sure prospective students get all the assistance they need," said Hudgik.

Class schedules and information about MassEducate can be found on the HCC website: [hcc.edu](http://hcc.edu).

Enroll today [hcc.edu/admissions](http://hcc.edu/admissions).

## The MacDuffie School more than just a school, a community

At The MacDuffie School, we believe education is more than academics—it's the foundation for a lifetime of achievement. Our vibrant community fosters creativity, leadership, and excellence while instilling respect and integrity in everything we do.

At MacDuffie, you're not just a student—you're part of a community that celebrates your individuality and supports your growth. Our small class sizes and dedicated teachers ensure you're seen, heard, and challenged to reach your full potential. Here, students don't just prepare for college—they prepare for life.

Choosing the right school is a big decision. That's why we invite you to learn more about MacDuffie and how it can shape your future. Visit our website, schedule a tour, or attend our April 5th open house to see for yourself what makes us different.

Your journey starts here. Define your future at MacDuffie—apply today! [admissions@macduffie.org](mailto:admissions@macduffie.org)

## Come and see what's new at St. Joan of Arc School

Physical Education Teacher Larry Moore and SJA students are enjoying a new basketball hoop funded by generous donations from our Annual Campaign.

A schoolyard basketball hoop is so important in creating not only a healthy environment, but helps with critical thinking, resilience, perseverance & teamwork.

The Dollar General Literacy Foundation recently awarded St. Joan of Arc School a \$500 grant to support its youth literacy program. A Book Club was formed for third and fourth grade students to encourage reading and literacy at a young age. This Book Club helps our students gain a deeper understanding of their reading, of other people through conversations, and provides an opportunity to safely fail and celebrate success. The club meets monthly to discuss the book, work on a fun activity, and share their findings.

The school will be holding

an Open House on Saturday, Jan. 25 from 9 a.m. to noon (no appointment needed). Appointment only tours for families will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 28 and Thursday, Jan. 30 from 3 to 7 p.m. Please call Chris or Janine in the Business Office at 413- 276-4608 for registration information or to make an appointment.

St. Joan of Arc School is a welcoming, safe & secure school community providing social, physical, spiritual & intellectual wellness for students in Pre-K 3 to Grade 8. SJA has innovative offerings that include affordable tuition and extended care, free breakfast and lunch, extracurricular programs, technology, music, library, and Duolingo language classes. Easy access to I391 & I90. Financial Aid and tuition assistance is available. To learn more visit [www.sjachicopee.org](http://www.sjachicopee.org).

We look forward to meeting you!

Explore Your Passions.  
Be a Leader.  
Choose MacDuffie.



## OPEN HOUSE

Saturday, April 5, 2025 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.



The MacDuffie School is a special place, and it all begins with our mission:

*To foster in all students the intellectual habits of mind, high ethical standards, and respect for diversity required for becoming effective individuals in their personal and work lives, and moral and responsible participants in the world beyond.*

*There's no better way to get a feel for The MacDuffie School than spending time with us!*

Please register for our Open House at [www.macduffie.org](http://www.macduffie.org) or contact the Admissions Office at (413) 255-0000 to reserve your spot.

**Come Be A Part Of Our Community!**

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Granby, Massachusetts

[www.MacDuffie.org](http://www.MacDuffie.org)

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in Grades 6 through 12

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Saturday, Jan 25th 9am-12 noon ~ No Appointment Needed

Jan 28th & Jan 30th 3pm-7pm ~ By Appointment Only



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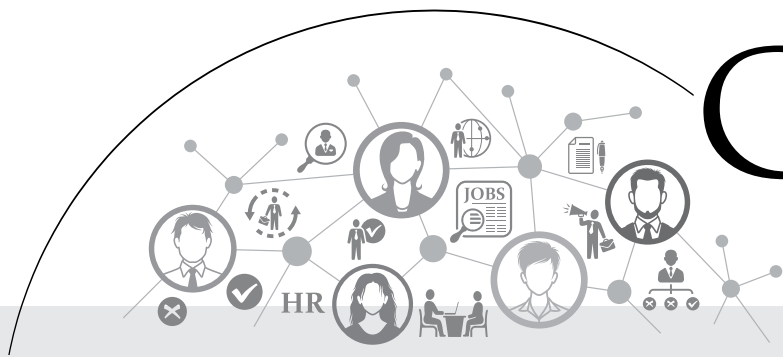
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# CAREER Education

## Come and see what great things are happening at St. Stanislaus School in Chicopee

This year the school's theme is "Many Gifts, One Spirit", which is our belief that every student has gifts to share with others towards the goal of making our world a better place. Our school encourages our students to focus on a different Corporal Work of Mercy to help our greater community. Some of the outreach programs we have participated in this year were: collection of canned goods for Lorraine's Soup Kitchen, for which our students collected 3,800 canned goods; and recently we collected toiletries, diapers, and other personal items to support the wish lists of both The Gray House and Christina's House in Springfield. The Works of Mercy which have been covered are - Feeding the Hungry and Working for Peace.

Service projects are done throughout the year to help teach students the value of giving back.

The school will be holding an Open House on Sunday, Feb. 2 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. (no appointment needed). If you would like to schedule a private tour for

another time, please call the school to schedule an appointment at (413) 592-5135.

St. Stanislaus School is a Roman Catholic, Franciscan, co-educational Pre-K through 8th grade school. Students are assisted in developing their potential spiritually, physically, and socially within a safe and diverse community. A foundation of academic excellence is created to prepare students to become contributing members of a global society. The school has a welcoming Franciscan environment, modern air-conditioned facility, strong core curriculum, enrichment classes, certified faculty, full-day preschool (PreK3 & 4) and Kindergarten, free breakfast and hot lunch, before & after school program, and one to one use and integration of iPads & Chromebooks into curriculum. Financial Aid is available. Interested students are invited to "spend a day with us". To learn more please visit [www.saintstansschool.org](http://www.saintstansschool.org).

We can't wait to meet you!

## Join us at PVPA for an open house to see what we can offer your child

Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School (PVPA) has a 25+ year history of providing an excellent, arts-focused, college-prep education to students in Grades 7-12.

PVPA students thrive in an creative, challenging learning environment that offers them a broad exposure to the performing arts. Our students consistently show that incorporating the arts into education creates, not just better artists, but better students who are equipped to be active participants in their future.

With an extensive Course Catalog of over 65 Arts Classes across Music, Dance, Theatre, Visual Arts and Technical Theater, students have access to both introductory courses and audition level courses, with multiple performance opportunities, offered alongside their core academics.

Join PVPA for an Open House and see why we are consistently voted one of the Best Charter Schools in the



Valley!

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Weds, Jan 15 4-6pm  
Sat, Jan 25 & Feb 1  
10am-12pm  
Tues, Feb 18 10am-12pm

**Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School**  
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photo credit: Julian Parker-Burns

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**OPEN HOUSE**  
SUNDAY, FEB. 2, 2025  
11AM-1PM



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

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of Weeks: \_\_\_\_\_ X per week rate = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Credit Card:  MasterCard  VISA  Discover  Cash  Check# \_\_\_\_\_  
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**BALLOT**, from page 1

on the material weaknesses identified through the annual city audits.

One such weakness is that with an elected treasurer, the treasurer has no job hours that they must attend to.

"I could not show up and I still have to get paid, it doesn't matter," Casey said. "That is one of the things that they cited, there have been treasurers in the past who have not shown up or who have tried to take second jobs in addition to their work as treasurer."

Furthermore, if people walk into the job with no financial training or experience, it opens the city up to potential phishing schemes or fraudulent money transfers.

"People walk into the role and they don't know how to do it, they don't know what to do with bank accounts or how to wire funds," Casey said. "We've had money be wired fraudulently because people have fallen victim to these phishing schemes."

Casey emphasized that when the treasurer walks into their first day in the office, they are handed complete control of \$200 million dollars. If someone does not properly know how to handle such funds, the city could be put in serious trouble.

Moreover, when a treasurer is elected there is no one to hold them accountable for their actions.

Casey also brought up the point that the treasurer, in recent history, has not been a greatly sought after position.

In the past few years, there have been four treasurers who have stepped down from the position early, resulting in the need for a special election. Casey has had to step forward to ensure that the position was even filled.

"Let's say nobody took out papers... it would revert to a write-in," Casey said.

With all of this in mind, the city council has unanimously supported the



City Treasurer Rory Casey explained why he supported the election, which could fire him from the position as treasurer.



City Clerk Brenna Murphy-Leary addressed the logistics of the special election.



Mayor Joshua Garcia emphasized the importance of the special election.



City Council President Tessa Murphy-Romboletti welcomed everyone to the press conference addressing the special election for appointing the city treasurer.

decision to change the treasurer position from elected to appointed.

"There are not many issues that we agree on completely, but this is one of

them, and it's something that we believe is important for the public to consider," Murphy-Romboletti said.

Garcia, Murphy-Romboletti and Casey all discussed how crucial this election could be for the well-being of the city moving forward.

"This change is going to help us strengthen our internal controls and support our initiatives to improve financial reporting, streamline operations and implement advanced financial management systems," Garcia said.

This transition could solidify the financial future of Holyoke.

"This is a practical solution that will take the politics out of municipal finance, ensuring the best governance for

Holyoke," Murphy-Romboletti said.

Additionally, they made sure to clarify that the decision is not meant to take power out of the hands of the voters, this is just a way to make the city stronger.

Casey, Garcia and Murphy-Romboletti emphasized that it is important to have this election now so the city knows how it needs to move forward for election season.

They need to know if the city is going to have to put the treasurer position on the ballot or not.

"There is an election this fall and we need to know now what the direction is going to be," Casey said.

The three also made sure to let people know that this decision rests ultimately in the hands of the voters.

Thus, they encourage people to go out on Jan. 28 to make their voices heard.

"There is arguably nothing more important you can do on Jan. 28, 2025, than vote," Casey said.

There are vote by mail applications available for this election. The last day to vote by mail is Jan. 22, with the time cut off at 5 p.m.

Additionally, people are welcome to do an in-person absentee vote if they are going to be unavailable on the day of the election. The deadline for this is noon on Jan. 27.

On the day of the election, Jan. 28, all polling locations are going to be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

If people are interested in learning more about this election and what the results could mean for the city, they can go to the website <https://www.yeson1-28.com/>.

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