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Ordinance committee discusses parking

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – The ordinance committee discussed whether they would give VCare an additional parking space on High Street.

VCare is a business in Holyoke that provides a variety of services to elderly people in the community. One such service is transportation to various locations in the city.

According to City Councilor Jenny Rivera, VCare has had a recent increase in business and is thus requesting an additional parking spot on High Street.

As the business has been increasing, VCare has multiple vans running at once, creating difficulties with them just having the one parking space on High Street.

“They literally park at times on the corner of Dwight and High Street,” Rivera said.

Rivera also mentioned that people from VCare sometimes have difficulty pulling through to the parking space they have.

“Where they park it is really hard to pull in the van, so they want two parking spaces next to each other so they can just pull in and out with their vans,” she said.

While other councilors agreed that VCare provides a great service to the city, they were hesitant to provide them with a second free parking space.

City Councilor David Bartley mentioned that this matter had been discussed by the council previously when VCare first came before them. VCare had come before them requesting two spaces, and the council had agreed to give them one.

“Councilor McGiverin led this to say that think about the tenants, think about the businesses, think about the other users of the downtown,

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The Grand Colleen and her court pose with members of the Holyoke St. Patrick's coalition at this year's Colleen Gathering, held in Chicopee. Left, The 2025 Holyoke Grand Colleen and her court.

Turley photos by Kristin Rivers

Colleen Courts gather together

By Kristin Rivers
krivers@turley.com

CHICOPEE - The City of Chicopee hosted this year's Colleen Gathering at the Portuguese American Club last Sunday, March 9.

The gathering featured the 2025 Colleen and their courts from Chicopee, Holyoke, Agawam, West Springfield, Springfield and Westfield along with the 2025 award recipients from the surrounding communities, a luncheon, raffles and performances from Irish Thunder of Springfield and the Black Rose Academy of Irish Dance.

The Colleen and their courts also got to show off their Irish step dance moves with the Black Rose Academy of Irish Dance to huge fanfare.

Remarks were provided by Dave Haslam, a member of the Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Committee

and chairman for this year's Colleen Gathering, Mayor John Vieau and Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee President John Beaulieu. Also, every Colleen and their courts introduced themselves to the attendees.

Every year, the president of the St. Patrick's Committee of Holyoke selects a city to host the Colleen Gathering in early March, leading up to the Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Parade.

The parade will take place in Holyoke on Sunday, March 23 at 11 a.m.

Beaulieu thanked the Parade Committee of Holyoke for bringing the event to Chicopee and the Chicopee St. Patrick's Day Committee for their support, also praising the Colleen.

“You guys are amazing, a bunch of beautiful, educated and smart young women and that's all that

we can ask for. I'm getting to be a dinosaur, so if I see parade committees and this parade in the hands of such youth and vibration, we're going to continue parades for 100s of 100s of years to come, so give yourself a round of applause to all our regionals,” Beaulieu said. “Because without Holyoke, regionals don't have a parade, but without regionals, Holyoke doesn't have a parade.”

Vieau--who spoke on behalf of Holyoke Mayor Joshua Garcia--thanked everyone for “keeping the Irish-American heritage active in Western Mass” and added the Colleen “are the ambassadors of Western Mass.”

“I am really excited about the parade. I'm really excited about the next two weeks where you're really going to have some amazing experiences and, hopefully, memories that'll last a life-

time, so thank you for what you do,” Vieau said.

Haslam was excited to bring the event to Chicopee, sharing he's hosted it on three different occasions.

“So bringing this to Chicopee this year, the 2025 parade president for Holyoke, Johnny B, is from Chicopee, so he chose Chicopee to be the host location this year,” Haslam said. “We're just really kicking off that we're in the high holy days and we are just two weeks away from the parade, so, it's a really great, regional event to just get together and celebrate.”

Haslam got involved in the parade committee as he was born and raised in Holyoke and always attended the parade.

“My mom worked in city hall, so I always went to the reviewing stand area and just always had a fascination with it and to be able to continue this legacy, we do need

younger members to kind of partake and join in and really learn what it takes to put on this magnificent event,” Haslam said.

Sam Shumsky, who joined the Chicopee's St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee this year, was thrilled the city was hosting the event.

“It's a great event! It's great for the regional networking for our Colleen to meet other Colleen. It's great for parts of Chicopee to come together,” Shumsky said. “It's a great overall event for everybody.”

Haslam and Shumsky were elated with the turnout, with Shumsky enjoying seeing “all the happy faces” and Haslam enjoying the community coming together as one.

“The warm weather's coming, spring is arriving and St. Patrick's Day still

See COLLEENS, page 6

Teen book club helping make connections

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Public Library has a teen book club so teens can come in, make connections and discuss books they enjoy.

Their most recent meeting was on Tuesday, Feb. 25 where the group got to discuss different romance novels.

At the next meeting, which is planned for Tuesday, Mar. 25 at 4 p.m., the group will talk about graphic novels.

The group decided, after an in-depth discussion, to read a variety of graphic novels rather than just one.

“We were looking at reviews and none of us have a lot of experience

with graphic novels, so we thought instead of just picking one we would each pick a different one so we could broaden our horizons,” Teen Librarian Robin Siniaho said.

Siniaho hopes that through providing this book club for teens she can help show them how enjoyable reading and discussing it can be.

“I wanted to show that literary pursuits can be fun, to show the joy and to bring camaraderie for other people who like to read,” Siniaho said.

At the beginning of each meeting the members come into the teen space and get to enjoy some snacks. Then they begin discussing the book they read while doing a craft or some coloring.

“It is very casual and comfortable,” Siniaho said. “We sit around the table and talk about the book and many times branch out into other books as well.”

Siniaho also shared that as they get to talk about the books, they teens will often get the chance to relate the book's events to things in their own lives.

“People can really open up and it gets personal,” Siniaho said.

She feels that this aspect of the book club can be really important, as it allows the kids to make connections with one another.

“With teens sometimes they only interact with other teens at schools or maybe at sports, but a book club can be a whole new way to relate,” Siniaho said.

Additionally, Siniaho has found that the teens enjoy the low-pressure environment of the book club.

“We never pressure or give anybody a hard time about finishing the book or if they did not like the book,”

Siniaho said. “It is not homework and life is too short to spend time on a book that you are not enjoying.”

Also, she often finds that entertaining discussions can come up if someone did not like the book, as the group can really dig into why and explore ways the book could have been improved.

A highlight for Siniaho of the book club is working with the group to pick out what they are going to read next.

“Those conversations on making the final decision can be really interesting,” Siniaho said.

She works to provide the book club with a wide variety of genres to read throughout the year. They have read books in verse, they have read romance books and they have even read Stephen King's It.

More than anything, Siniaho wants to emphasize that this club can be for anyone who gets enjoyment from reading.

See TEEN, page 3

Alternative to MCAS exam presented

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – Superintendent/Receiver Anthony Soto discussed with the school committee Holyoke Public School's plans for a new competency assessment now that the MCAS is no longer required.

Now that the MCAS is no longer a required competency assessment for students to graduate high school, schools have been working to determine how to move forward.

One district, Frontier Regional School District in South Deerfield, has decided that they will continue to use the MCAS.

“There is one district that I know of that is continuing to use MCAS as that competency determination,” Soto said.

HPS does not want to follow in that decision. During the November

election, 10,296 Holyoke voters out of a total 14,184 voted in favor of getting rid of the MCAS.

Due to this, HPS does not plan to keep the MCAS.

Instead, Soto and other key HPS faculty and staff have proposed that HPS require students to receive a passing grade in grade nine and ten English, algebra one and geometry, and in biology to graduate from high school.

If students do not initially pass these classes, students can apply to pass a course equivalent that is approved by their principal and the superintendent.

“Our academic team and Dr Mahoney and some counselors, we solicited some feedback from different stakeholder groups,” Soto said. “We got some input from our teacher advisory group, we got

See MCAS, page 10

“I wanted to show that literary pursuits can be fun, to show the joy and to bring camaraderie for other people who like to read.”

- Teen Librarian Robin Siniaho

Applications now open for Carlos Vega Fund grants

HOLYOKE – The year marks the 14th for The Carlos Vega Fund for Social Justice mini grants.

Local non-profits and individuals are invited to apply for funding between March 10 and the April 18 deadline, by completing the application form available at www.carlosvegafund.org. All applicants must have either 501(c)(3) status or be fiscally sponsored by a 501(c)(3) organization.

For more than 40 years,

Carlos Vega fought for social justice in the Greater Holyoke area. In 2010, a small group of family and friends started the Fund to support the kind of social justice initiatives that were important to Carlos.

Carlos Vega Fund for Social Justice provides grants amounting up to \$2,000 to be used for a specific, one-time program or project that focuses on the fundamental primary causes of injustice, fosters change,

and promotes self-help and empowerment.

The purpose of the grants is to support the efforts of those who are addressing issues of poverty and oppression, and involve people who are socially and economically marginalized in the Greater Holyoke area.

Previous mini grants have supported a variety of other organizations including: Girls Inc. of the Valley, Granby Public Schools, The Gray House,

Holyoke Public Schools, Holyoke Safe Neighborhood Initiative, Holyoke Senior Center and Western Mass Elder Care, Home City Development, OneHolyoke CDC, The Performance Project, Lorraine's Kitchen in Chicopee, Treehouse, Seeds of a Father, The Care Center, and Wistariahurst Museum.

The Carlos Vega Fund for Social Justice is administered through the Community Foundation of

Western Massachusetts and is overseen by an advisory committee. Since 2012, the Fund has awarded more than \$71,000 to more than 50 organizations in the greater Holyoke area.

In addition to our spring grant cycle, the Carlos Vega Fund advisory board is announcing a new track of funding to support local organizations with our Event Sponsorship request for up to \$500. The request form is available on the

Carlos Vega Fund website, carlosvegafund.org.

Looking to the fall of 2025, we will be honoring our 11th Carlos Vega Social Justice Award recipient who will be announced later this year.

For further information and/or to obtain an application, please visit the Carlos Vega Fund for Social Justice website at <http://www.carlosvegafund.org/> or contact Aaron Vega at carlosvega-fund.413@gmail.com.

Shuttle service available during St. Patrick's events next weekend

HOLYOKE – The City of Holyoke and the Tourism Advisory Committee are excited to announce the details of the Road Race and St. Patrick's Day Free Shuttle bus services. Thanks to funding from the Mass Gaming Mitigation Grant, the OPED team and Tourism Advisory Committee are delighted to offer shuttle services for the Road Race and St. Patrick's Day Parade.

The Shuttle will run on a loop every 30 minutes from the MGM Casino to City Hall in Holyoke. The MGM Casino provides free parking, so simply park your car and enjoy a safe ride to the festivities in Holyoke. Pick up will

be at MGM Springfield on MGM Way in front of South End Market, and drop off will be at the Holyoke City Hall parking deck on Dwight Street. Enjoy a fantastic weekend with all the best that Holyoke and Springfield have to offer!

March 22 and 23. The buses will run on a loop every thirty minutes from MGM and Holyoke City Hall.

- 11:00 a.m.: First shuttle leaves MGM Casino for Holyoke City Hall
- 4:30 p.m. (4:45 p.m. on Sunday): Last Shuttle Leaves City Hall for MGM Casino

Special Thanks to our operator Michael's Busline

"We're excited to offer this service once again", Aaron Vega Director of Planning and Economic Development said, adding "It's a great partnership with MGM and of course the amazing Parade Committee to ensure the weekend is filled with celebration and is safe for all involved".

Visit Explore Holyoke for more information about events and happenings in Holyoke and a full page of Parade related activities.

For more information, please contact the Office of Planning and Economic Development keittj@holyoke.org or vegaa@holyoke.org.

Urban Co-Works opens new location

HOLYOKE – Urban Co-Works, a premier coworking space provider, is thrilled to announce the opening of its newest location at 98 Lower Westfield Road in Holyoke, Massachusetts. This expansion marks the third location for Urban Co-Works, which began in 2017 in Schenectady, NY, and opened its second location in downtown Scranton, PA, in 2023.

"Holyoke is a vibrant city with a growing community of professionals and entrepreneurs in need of flexible, collaborative spaces to work and thrive," said Jeff Goronkin, CEO of Urban Co-Works. "Our team is excited to bring the Urban Co-Works experience to Massachusetts. We look forward to contribut-

ing to the city's economic development and offering a space that inspires creativity and connection."

The new Holyoke facility offers a state-of-the-art coworking environment featuring 55 private offices, three meeting rooms, an expansive event area with a fully equipped kitchen, and a coworking section with 20 workstations. Members will enjoy 24/7 access with a keyless entry system, free onsite parking, printing services, and complimentary beverages including coffee and tea. Conveniently located near some of Holyoke's best shopping and dining options, the space is designed to foster collaboration, innovation, and professional growth.

Goronkin shared his

vision for the new location: "Our goal is to create an environment in Holyoke that mirrors the success we've had in Schenectady and Scranton. We want to be a hub for business development, networking, and professional events. Urban Co-Works has always been about building strong communities, and we're excited to bring that mission to Holyoke."

Ned Barowski, owner of the building at 98 Lower Westfield Road, expressed his enthusiasm for the partnership. "We're thrilled to welcome Urban Co-Works to our space. Their presence will foster a vibrant professional community in the region, and we can't wait to see the positive impact they'll have on Holyoke's business ecosystem."

City offers wayfinding signage plan

HOLYOKE – The City of Holyoke, under the direction of the City's Office of Planning and Economic Development, along with consulting firm Stantec, have been developing a wayfinding and signage plan for the downtown area, an effort which began in October 2024. The intent of the plan is to create a modern wayfinding signage system that may eventually take the place of the current (city-owned) signs. The City will be using this wayfinding plan to develop and fabricate simple signs in the near future for downtown

Holyoke. Using a straightforward yet recognizable and consistent signage design, the new system would make downtown easier to navigate for those using all forms of transportation.

To date, this project has involved an inventory and analysis of current signage. The team is also analyzing other factors important to signage, including accessibility, ideal placement of signs, vehicle and pedestrian travel patterns, and more. The City will be using this wayfinding plan to develop and fabricate simple signs in the near future for downtown

Holyoke.

A public survey is now open for community feedback about wayfinding signage in order to 1) better understand people's experiences and destinations when visiting downtown Holyoke, 2) hear what people think about existing signage in downtown Holyoke, and 3) learn about people's preferences that will inform the development of design-related components of future signs in the City.

This survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. <https://tinyurl.com/holyokesigns>.

Providence Place announces next concert

HOLYOKE – If you missed our kickoff concert last month, you will not want to miss the next! Our second Spring Concert Series of 2025 is on

Sunday, April 6 at 2 p.m. in Our Mother of Sorrows Chapel at Providence Place. Providence Place is located at 5 Gamelin St. in Holyoke, right behind the

Holyoke Mall.

The April 6 concert performance is the Roberts and Nix Duo featuring Shelley Roberts, soprano; and Michael Nix, classical guitar and banjo; Songs and solos from England, Spain and America.

This event is free and open to the public with ample parking available, no RSVP is necessary. For more information on the concert or if you are interested in learning more about our retirement community, please contact Katelyn Bacon at 413-534-9700.



Roberts and Nix Duo features Shelley Roberts and Michael Nix.

Hibernians Kick Off the High Holy Days of March

In concert with the festivities surrounding the 2025 Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade, The Hibernians of Hampden/Hampshire Counties invite the public to attend the **Annual Communion Breakfast**, Sunday March 16 at 8 a.m.

Memorial Mass at St. Jerome's Church - Breakfast at 9 a.m. at Wyckoff CC, 233 Easthampton Rd., Holyoke; Honoring *Owen Donohue* with the 2025 Hibernian Christian Charity Award; Guest Speaker will be *Teri Schindler* - writer, director, producer; worked for NBC, HBO, and ESPN; won an Emmy for her work in 2000 Sydney Australia Olympics; founding member of WNBA; First woman to produce live NCAA broadcasts; all American Swimmer; married to announcer Mike Gorman; daughter Kristen and son-in-law Marc.

For reservations call Atty. John J. Driscoll at 413-534-0445 by March 14. Tickets are \$25 per person. Tables of 10. Tickets may be purchased at eventbrite.com

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

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St. Patrick Novena observed

HOLYOKE – Saint Jerome Parish located at 169 Hampden Street in Holyoke is once again hosting a Novena to Saint Patrick beginning on Sunday, March 9 and concluding on Monday, March 17. Nine priests from throughout the Diocese will be serving as the celebrants of the Novena Masses.

All are invited to attend. Information about Mass times and celebrants may be obtained by contacting the Parish Office at 413-532-6381.

Velis brings commission on combating antisemitism

HOLYOKE – Recently, State Sen. John C. Velis (D-Westfield) chaired the Special Commission on Combating Antisemitism's fifth meeting at the Springfield Jewish Community Center (JCC). During the meeting the commission had the opportunity to discuss trends in Western Massachusetts with community members, educators, and local Rabbis. This marks the first of several community meetings of the Special Commission to hear from those with subject knowledge expertise from throughout the Commonwealth.

"Ensuring Western Massachusetts has a seat

at the table is always at the forefront of my mind with everything and anything that I do. That's why from the onset of the Special Commission I was adamant that we needed to take the opportunity to come meet Western Massachusetts's vibrant Jewish community right where they are," said Velis, co-chair of the Special Commission. "I am so grateful for all of our speakers from throughout our region who took the time to share their experi-



John Velis

ences with the Commission and most especially to our gracious hosts at the JCC for making this hearing possible in the first place."

The Springfield Jewish Community Center is honored to host this discussion about an issue that is extremely important to the Jewish, and wider, communities locally," said Karen Jarmoc, CEO of the Springfield Jewish Community Center. "We very much appreciate that the Commission is holding this meeting in

Western Massachusetts and taking the time to hear about trends and concerns in the Pioneer Valley and in Berkshire County from community members."

Last spring, Velis sponsored legislation, that was later signed into law, to create the Special Commission which includes members appointed by the Legislature, Governor, state agencies, and organizations. The legislation also instructed the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to provide curriculum, resources, and professional development to school districts to teach students about antisemitism

in age-appropriate ways. During Tuesday's hearing the Commission also received an update on these ongoing efforts from DESE Acting Commissioner Russell Johnson.

The Commission is tasked with putting forth recommendations this fall on ways that Commonwealth can combat the alarming rise in antisemitism across the state and implement the White House's National Strategy on Counter Antisemitism. Velis shared that the Commission intends to continue to have hearings across the state ahead of the November 30th reporting deadline.

Lifeguard certification available

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Parks & Recreation Department is offering a lifeguard Red Cross certification training course at the Holyoke Boys and Girls Club (70 Nick Cosmos Way). The session will take place May 3, 4 and 18. Participants need to attend all three classes. Applicants must be 16 years of age. Strong swimmers are encour-

aged to apply. Participants must pass a pre-skills test at the start of class. \$175.00 for Holyoke residents and \$275.00 for non-residents.

A Lifeguard Re-Certification Class will also be offered on May 18. The class will run from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Holyoke Boys and Girls Club (70 Nick Cosmos Way). Update your

skills while also extending your certification for another two years. The cost is \$125 for Holyoke residents and \$225 for non-residents.

Please register at the Holyoke Parks and Recreation Department, 413-322-5620.

Participants must register and be paid in full before attending the class. Limited space available.

Library offering dominoes club

HOLYOKE – Love the strategic game of dominoes? Come play it at the Holyoke Public Library from 5 to 7 p.m. every Monday starting Monday, March 10.

The weekly games will be held in the first-floor board room.

For more information, call Abbey at 413-420-8101 or email abuedinger@holyokelibrary.org. The event is geared toward adults.



Post parade celebration at T-Birds game

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade and Road Race has long been a cherished tradition, bringing the community together in a vibrant celebration of Irish heritage, athleticism, and camaraderie. To cap off another great "green season," participants, volunteers, committee members, family, friends, and the community are invited to a special Post-Race and Parade Party with the Springfield Thunderbirds on Saturday, March 29.

For an exclusive price of just \$19 per ticket, attendees will enjoy an exciting evening of hockey action as the Thunderbirds take the ice against the Iowa Wild. As an added bonus, an optional \$3 food voucher add-on is available, providing a classic game-day snack of a hot dog and soda.

Grab your seats now! To ensure you're seated with the group, order your tickets no later than March 20 via QR code or the following link: [https://springfieldthunder-](https://springfieldthunderbirds.com/forms/hsp329)

[birds.com/forms/hsp329](https://springfieldthunderbirds.com/forms/hsp329).

For additional questions about the Thunderbirds game or to purchase tickets over the phone, contact Lauren Blanchard at 413-417-2289.

Celebrate another incredible year of the Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade and Road Race—don't miss this unforgettable night with the Springfield Thunderbirds.

For more information, please visit our website at www.holyokestpatrickspade.com.

Easter Bunny is hopping to the mall

HOLYOKE – Spring is on its way and Holyoke Mall is egg-cited to kick off the season with visits and photos from the Easter Bunny once again this year. Mr. Cottontail arrives at Holyoke Mall on Friday, March 28. Reservations are now open so reserve your time slot at www.whereisbunny.com. Guests who pre-book will receive a reservation gift.

The Easter Bunny can be found in his spring garden in Honor Court, on the lower level near Hobby Lobby, for greetings and pictures. The Bunny's Gazebo will be

open:
 • Monday to Friday: 2 to 7 p.m., extends to 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. on April 7
 • Saturday: 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.
 • Sunday: 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Children of all ages love visiting the Easter Bunny, so get dressed in your Easter best and bring the whole family to capture that perfect moment! Photo packages and pricing can be found here.

The Easter Bunny will also have 2 special events this season:

• Bunny Cares Sensory Friendly Event: Sunday, April 6: 9 to 10:30 a.m.

• Pet Photo Night: Monday, April 7 and Tuesday, April 8, 4 to 7 p.m.

To celebrate the start of spring, we will also be joined by Ed Popielarczyk for his Spring Spectacular Magic Show on Saturday, March 29. The fun-filled show will take place from 11 a.m. to 12 noon on the Lower Level, Macy's Court. This event is free, open to the public, and is best suited for children ages 12 and under.

TEEN, from page 1

"It is really causal and there is no judgement about not finishing the book, it is more of a love for reading club that it is about any particular title," Siniha said.

The library has a multitude of other events planned throughout the month of

March for people of all ages to enjoy.

"Come down and see what opportunities there are at the library," Siniha said. "A book club is just one way to start using all of our resources."

One example of an event is the adult dominoes club

that is scheduled for Monday, Mar. 10 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Additionally, there is a family movie night scheduled for Wednesday, Mar. 12 at 6 p.m.

To keep updated on all of the programs at HPL, go to their website at <https://www.holyokelibrary.org/>.

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Friday, March 14th

The Ruffians

Friday, March 21st

Blaney Brothers

Saturday, March 15th

The Corner Boys

Saturday, March 22nd

After the Road Race

Sunday, March 16th

Holyoke Caledonian Pipe Band 1:30-2:30pm

Special Guest

The Mummers noon

Monday, March 17th

Dee Reilly 3-6pm

The Healys

Sunday, March 23rd

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The Healys 5pm-?

After the Parade

The Healys



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SOCIAL SECURITY Matters

By Russell Gloor



Did we make a mistake starting my wife's Social Security now?

Dear Rusty:

I hope we haven't made a mistake.

My wife just applied for her Social Security benefit. She was born in May 1962 and the estimated amount of her benefit is \$1,280 per month. Her work income last year was \$5,616; however, mine was about \$65,000. I do not plan on taking my benefit until the age of 70 in July of 2027.

My worry now is about the penalty for earning too much. We figured that since her income was so low, we wouldn't have to worry about that penalty, so we signed her up, and then it hit me: what if they look at my income, especially since our tax return is filed as Married Filing Jointly. Do we have a problem, or are they just going to look at her income to determine if there is a penalty? I hope I haven't messed this up. Also, I think I read that any penalty you are assessed for earning too much is returned to you once you reach Full Retirement Age; is that true?

early Social Security benefits. So, the AET will not apply and will not reduce your wife's monthly Social Security benefit. FYI, if her earnings did exceed the annual earnings limit, it is true that some of the resulting penalty would be recovered after she reaches her full FRA of 67.

Note the distinction between "taxation of SS benefits" and the "annual earnings test" for those collecting early benefits. Taxation of benefits is always based on your joint income when filing married/jointly, but the Annual Earnings Test looks only at your wife's personal work earnings until she reaches her FRA.

As I expect you already know, by claiming now (at age 62 plus), your wife's monthly SS retirement benefit will be permanently reduced (by about 26%). Until you later claim your SS benefit, your wife will receive her reduced personal SS retirement amount. But, when you claim, her benefit amount will be reassessed to see if she is also entitled to an incremental amount as your wife. If her SS entitlement at her FRA (even though she claimed at 62+) is less than 50% of your FRA entitlement, then her benefit will increase. However, she will not get the full 50% of your FRA entitlement because she claimed her own SS retirement benefit before her FRA (more likely, she will get about 34% of your FRA entitlement).

Signed:
Uncomfortable Senior Citizen

Dear Uncomfortable Senior:

First, let me ease your anxiety – you haven't "messed this up." While it's true that your income will be included when the IRS determines how much of your wife's Social Security benefits are taxable, changing your IRS filing status is usually not wise. However, considering your combined income and your "married/jointly" IRS filing status, up to 85% of the SS benefits your wife receives during the tax year will be included as part of your overall taxable income as a married couple. Your wife's monthly SS benefit is about \$1,280, so about \$13,000 annually will be included in your Adjusted Gross Income when you file your taxes. You can have income tax withheld from your wife's SS benefit by filing IRS Form W-4V at your local SS office (you can have 7%, 10%, 12% or 22% withheld). Note your wife's tax obligation for this year will be less because she will not get SS benefits for all of 2025.

The other thing you are concerned about is whether your income will be counted when determining if your wife will be subject to Social Security's "Annual Earnings Test" and the answer to that is "no." At her current earnings level (about \$5,600), your wife is well below the annual earnings limit (\$23,400 for 2025) for those collecting

In the end, you really did not make a mistake by filing for your wife's Social Security to start now. By the time you personally apply at age 70, your wife will have collected about \$46,000 in Social Security benefits which, I'm sure, will be helpful. And only a relatively modest amount of income tax will be paid on her Social Security benefits.

The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. This article is intended for information purposes and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadvisory@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.



Guest Column



By Ellenor Downer

Male and female cardinal

I received an email from a Worthington resident, who reported the one male "red bird" in his yard all winter.

He said, "I feel like I know him and throw seeds to a special place he likes. His habit of showing up in the dim light of dusk and dawn almost makes him shine. He's real quiet right now, but I really look forward to hearing him as it warms up."

The red bird is also known as the northern cardinal. The male cardinal is bright red with black around the base of its red beak. The female is grayish brown above with buffy color below. Her beak is reddish and she has dark around her bill, but not as black as the male.

Both sexes have crests and are 8 1/2 inches long. Although the Worthington resident said the cardinal was quiet now, soon he will sing a series of clear repeated whistles that vary and sound like "whoit whoit whoit, cheer, cheer, cheer." The call is a metallic "chip." Both male and female sing.

The female cardinal lays two to five buff white eggs with dark marks in a nest of twigs, bark strips, vines, leaves, rootlets and paper lined with fine grass and hair. They build their nest in dense shrubbery or among branches of small trees.

Bird watchers may witness mate feeding, a common ritual between a breeding pair. The male

picks up a seed and brings it to the female. They touch beaks and his mate takes the offered seed. Mate feeding continues through egg laying and incubation.

Cardinals come to feeders. They feed either on the ground and come to platform style feeders. They prefer sunflower seeds, safflower seeds and cracked corn.

Tuesday morning I saw a female cardinal in a lilac bush. I love to see the male cardinal perched on a snow covered branch or ground especially after newly fallen snow. I have a pair of cardinals, which I usually see early in the morning or at dusk.

See BACKYARD, page 6

Sweet potatoes get my vote

My dad was a "meat and potatoes" kind of guy. Mashed, baked or fried, potatoes were his thing.

Growing up, we usually had potatoes most nights for dinner. Since I have been an adult, I don't eat potatoes very often at all.

I often wonder if that particular Irish gene missed a generation, since I prefer the sweet potato over the regular potato any day of the week. Read on to learn all about this nutritional powerhouse.

According to www.nutritiondata.com, sweet potatoes are "low in sodium, and very low in saturated fat and cholesterol. They are also a good source of dietary fiber, vitamin B6 and potassium, and a very good source of vitamin A, vitamin C and manganese."

If these facts aren't reason enough to try adding this veggie to your garden this growing season, delight in the fact that it is also a very pretty vine!

In fact, once I grew "sweet potato vine" in the planter boxes at Old Sturbridge Village. I didn't



by Roberta McQuaid

the first frost usually occurs in early to mid-October.

This equates to 100 days bare minimum of growing time.

You can purchase plants through the mail or try sprouting your own from sweet potatoes purchased from the grocery store.

Dick Raymond, author of my favorite gardening book of all time, "Garden Way's Joy of Gardening" (Storey Publishing \$24.95) has some great tips for doing this: Seven or eight weeks prior to Memorial Day, simply cut the spuds in half lengthwise and lay them down in moist peat moss in a shallow tray. Cover with plastic wrap and place in a sunny window until sprouting occurs.

Slips should be separated and planted about six inches deep, twelve to fifteen inches apart from one another.

He advises to water well for the first two weeks; after that sweet potato plants are

See GARDEN, page 6

The Holyoke Sun welcomes election letters to the editor

The Holyoke Sun welcomes readers to participate in this year's election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to The Holyoke Sun, care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to thesun@turley.com. Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by noon Monday to be considered for that Friday's

newspaper. No attack letters will be printed. No letters written by candidates supporting their own candidacy will be printed. If the volume of letters received is larger than the space available in the newspaper, or if the letters become repetitive, the newspaper reserves the right to print a representative sample. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last edition before the election.

For more information, call 413-283-8393.

Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the newspa-

per plans to print stories about contested races for Congress, state Senate, state House, district attorney and Governor's Council during the weeks leading up to the election, as well as a question-and-answer voters guide. In order to ensure fairness to all candidates, no political press releases will be printed, nor will reporters cover political rallies or fundraisers.

Candidates who wish to further publicize their candidacy, beliefs and events may contact advertising, 413-283-8393 about paid advertising in The Holyoke Sun.

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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.

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'Pray for the dead and fight like hell for the living,' Mother Jones' war cry

By Deborah Daniels
Correspondent

Finding myself in possession of a fine metal button assist device with the name Childs Holyoke stamped on it led me to quite a fascinating journey into some mill history.

The compelling photo that clinched the topic showed a woman sorting rags to be recycled into fabric in the early 1900s. The caption read that many rags came from hospital wards and were infected with disease. Horrors, did the woman know that? Were there any safety precautions taken to protect her from this? This was just the kind of injustice that Mother Jones would champion.

Who was Mother Jones? She was a labor activist who encouraged workers to protest poor and unsafe working conditions and to demand a living wage for the factory work they did. Holyoke was an "Irish Depot" for immigrant workers looking for work as America industrialized and grew factories instead of farms.

Mother Jones was born in Cork, Ireland in 1830 and christened Mary Harris. She saw first hand the starvation and poverty of the Irish people as the potato crop failed in 1845. Her family fled to Toronto, Canada to escape the famine. Mary learned dress-making skills and was trained to be a teacher.

She taught in Michigan and Chicago before moving to Memphis, Tennessee. Here she married George Jones in 1861, a foundry worker and member of the International Iron Molders Union. They had four children. A yellow fever epidemic struck Memphis in 1867 and killed George and all four of her children. The tragedy left Mary Jones a grieving widow mourning her losses and without income. The Union supported her for a time.

She moved to Chicago and opened a dressmaking shop. Calamity visited her again, the great Chicago fire of 1871 burned her shop down. She had survived famine, a plague, the loss of her



This button hole assist device has Childs Holyoke stamped on it.



Mother Jones is shown in her typical black dress which she customarily wore.

family and now the destruction of her business. She knew only hard work would save her. And work she did for the next 25 years. She became good at organizing workers by the turn of the century. She was paid a stipend by the United Mine Workers Union to increase membership, which she did tripling membership from ten thousand to three hundred thousand. She wore a black old fashioned dress and urged workers to join the union. Workers referred to her as Mother Jones. She organized the wives into mop and broom brigades that developed in them a sense of support for their working husbands. Her mantra was that strong working families needed decent pay and working conditions.

Mother Jones led a march of mill children from Philadelphia to President Theodore Roosevelt's summer home on Long Island in 1903. The children aged 12-14 years walked to new towns and staged rallies with music, skits and speeches advocating for better working conditions in the evening. This kept her and the movement in the news all summer long.

She was effective at getting people to think about how factory management was exploiting workers. She was by far the most charismatic organizer for The United Mine Workers Union. She attended strikes for economic justice for the working poor. It was a time when wages shrunk, working hours

increased and there was no insurance for unemployment, health care or old age.

She was financially supported by the Socialist Party briefly. She worked to help striking garment workers in Chicago, bottle washers in Milwaukee breweries, Pittsburgh steelworkers, El Paso streetcar operators and Calumet copper miners. She shone a light on horrifying accident and mortality rates in the mining industry and opposed obligatory "Company housing" and exclusive use of the "Company store" for workers.

She defied Industrial Workers of the World leaders accused of causing riots, violence and murder in their attempts to unionize miners and railroad workers. She lived out West for a time and she was appalled at the events in Ludlow, Colorado. Coal miners struck against poor labor conditions. The Colorado National Guard and private soldiers attacked the tent colony where the miners lived and 21 people were killed, wives and children among them.

The miners retaliated, destroying property and fighting with the National Guard. John D. Rockefeller Jr. was part owner of the mining company and Mother Jones spoke out against "oily John" for his exploitation of the miners. Congress and President Wilson demanded an investigation.

The miners were vindicated and unions gained a foothold in helping to

Child Labor in Holyoke in 1879

age	totals	Lyman	Hadley	Merrick	Alpaca	Hampden
10	5	1	0	2	0	2
11	13	2	1	1	1	1
12	37	10	2	8	5	4
13	49	8	4	8	6	4
14	181	80	7	14	18	28
15	221	70	24	24	26	33
16	32	10	6	2	1	0
total	538	181	44	59	57	72

This is a work chart of child laborers in five mills in Holyoke dated 1879.



This is a Lewis Hines photo of an overseer of child workers at a bobbin winding machine in Yazoo City, Mississippi.

improve working conditions. While Mother Jones saw no immediate solutions to many of the unfair labor practices she witnessed, gradually the federal Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 came about. It did set a minimum working age for children and restricted them working in hazardous conditions. Mother Jones drew attention to labor prac-

tices that needed reform.

It needs to be noted that the Holyoke mills were the result of Irish laborers, who built the dam and the system of canals that powered the many factories that produced paper, textiles, steam boilers, cutlery, wire and more. They made up 1/3 of Holyoke's population of 5,000 in 1855. There were

also German and French Canadian immigrants located here, but the Irish were the most numerous living in the "Patch" in one room shanties.

Childs was not a mill, but a Holyoke department store that must have sold or given the button assist device out, it was not a mill as I had thought.



Mother Jones is shown in a library. Submitted photos

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11		
12			13			14				15				
16				17		18				19				
20						21				22				
			23		24				25					
26	27	28	29				30							
31							32							
33								34	35	36	37	38		
				39	40	41		42	43					
		44	45					46						
	47													
49					50				51		52	53	54	55
56					57				58					
59					60					61				
62					63						64			

CLUES ACROSS

- Unsheared sheep
- Rock TV channel
- Streetcar
- Concerning
- Expression of recognition
- Greek goddess of youth
- An iPad is one
- Adult beverage
- Manning and Wallach are two
- Makes a petty verbal attack
- Tyrron Lannister's nickname
- Pointed ends of pens
- Wristwatches
- Body part
- Made a mistake
- Adjusted
- Turkish honorific title
- Yell
- Historic Alabama city

CLUES DOWN

- Works of body art
- Cub
- Type of sea bass dish
- To call (archaic)
- Unfortunate
- Separate oneself from others
- Hero sandwiches
- Former OSS
- Open spaces in a forest
- Innermost brain membranes
- Fortune
- Hunting expedition
- Doomed queen Boleyn
- Peyton's little brother
- Type of wrap
- Scottish tax
- Soviet Socialist Republic
- An increase in price or value

CLUES ACROSS

- Abba __, Israeli politician
- A desert in Asia
- Eat greedily
- Doomed French queen
- Beat
- One who survives on blood
- As a consequence
- Counted on
- Acquired Brain Injury
- Behavior Science
- Unclean
- One who does not drink
- Wild ox of the Malay Archipelago
- __ student, learns healing
- Bacterial skin infection
- Expresses surprise
- What one says on a wedding day
- Crony

CLUES DOWN

- Where you entered the world (abbr.)
- Unit of length
- Side that is sheltered from the wind
- More (Spanish)
- Autonomic nervous system
- Violent troublemakers, originally in Paris
- Statements that something is untrue
- Greek alphabet letter
- Suspends from above
- Popular types of cigars
- Girls
- U.S. philosopher and logician
- Nocturnal hoofed animal
- Relaxing spaces
- From a distance
- Form of Persian
- Amounts of time
- Trigonometric function

CROSSWORD ANSWER on page 8

Blessed Sacrament Parish

Rev. Duy Le
 frduyle@blessedsacramentholyoke.org
 1945 Northampton St., Holyoke
 PARISH RECTORY: 413-532-0713
 OFFICE HOURS:
 Monday - Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
 Friday 8:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
 WEEKEND MASSES:
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 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
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First Baptist Church

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

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Pastor: Fr. Albert Scherer, OFM Conv.
 Email: pastor@ourladyofthecross.com
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 (413) 532-5661
 parish@ourladyofthecross.com
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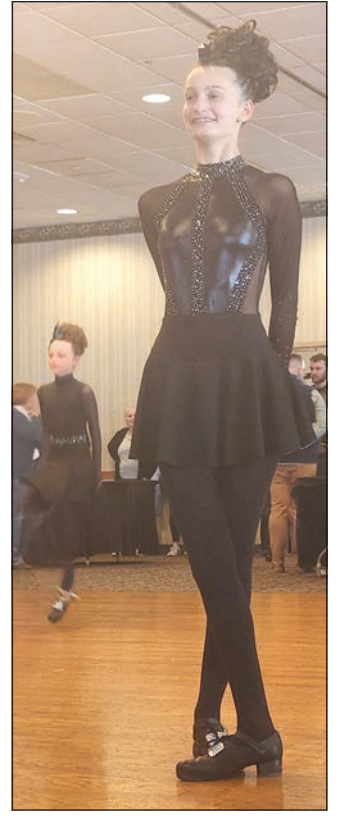
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 Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. -
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 Days and Hours of Services:
 Sunday: 8 a.m.
 Sunday: 10 a.m.
 Sunday: 5 p.m. (Spanish)



The 2025 Colleens and their courts. Represented are Chicopee, Westfield, Agawam, West Springfield, Springfield, and Holyoke.



Dancing is a regular part of the gathering as members of the Colleen courts get a chance to try Irish step dancing.



Holyoke's Committee members were also in attendance at the event. *Turley photos by Kristin Rivers*



Chicopee Parade Committee member Meghan Balakier and Holyoke Parade Committee member Dave Haslam welcome attendees to this year's Colleen gathering.



Dancers from the Black Rose Academy of Irish Dance perform Irish step dancing for the Colleen courts.



Irish Thunder, of Springfield, performs at the Colleen Gathering.



The next step for the Grand Colleen and Court are next weekend's activities including the road race and the main event, the St. Patrick's Day Parade.



Grand Colleen Moira Catherine Reardon addresses the gathering.

BACKYARD,
from page 4

Red-winged blackbirds
The Worthington resident saw a red-winged blackbird at his feeder and heard them on snow shoe recent hike by a beaver pond. He said, "They don't sound very confident and I wonder what they find down there with the pond totally frozen and the cattails denuded by the wind." He said, "The arrival of redwings is exciting for me, as I consider them our first migratory returns."



Bald eagle
In his email, the same resident wrote about seeing a bald eagle. He said, "Two weeks ago driving along the East Branch in Cummington, I saw an eagle lite in a dead tree, break off a small branch and fly off, hopefully to a new or repaired nest. It sure

didn't feel like spring then and even today [written March 3] I had zero degrees this morning." He also reports pretty good numbers of goldfinches at his feeder along with the winter regulars.

Brimfield birds
On Feb. 19, I received an email from a Brimfield resident, who sends emails on a regular basis. He said, "Hope you survived our recent bout of nasty weather. Our driveway was cleared on Sunday evening and subsequently turned into a skating rink. Fortunately I had lots of sand and rock salt and a little calcium chloride on hand. Using all of that, I was able to get our cars up and out of the driveway. Of course I had to get the frozen garage doors unstuck before I could get the cars out of the garage."

He took part in the Great Backyard Bird Count of Saturday and Sunday. He said, "I had nine species Saturday, things got a little more interesting on Sunday when there were 15 species seen including an adult sharp-shinned hawk that chased some junco into a

quince bush (it missed) and a Carolina wren."

Bluebirds
He had a pair of eastern bluebirds earlier in the day on Feb. 18 and later five bluebirds showed up, two males and three females. He said, "That's the most we have ever seen in the yard. Previously we had seen a single bird a few times and a pair investigated a nesting box one year but were chased away by house wrens."

Non-bird critters
During the snow/ice storm in February, my daughter and I saw a wet opossum digging in the snow for seeds while clearing my walk and driveway. On March 1, two of my grandchildren and I saw a porcupine in a tree while driving on our road.

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.

COLLEENS,
from page 1

has a very deep meaning in this part of the region," Shumsky said.

"It was perfect, it was daylight savings time last year, it's daylight savings time again this year. We're here to spring forward and continue on with our march," Haslam said.

Haslam emphasized events like this also continue those deep-rooted traditions.

"It's great to have everyone come together. It is a great networking event as well and we're starting to see some collections of tartan, intermingling. So it's great to see all the pride and the colors, but, also, in the spirits of the girls that are represent-

ing their own community," Haslam said.

Shumsky added community plays a big role as well.

"Not only is it great for the Colleens--going back to my previous comment about how it's great for them and the other Colleens--but it's great for just Chicopee as a whole. You're getting all different towns and cities, Agawam, West Side (West Springfield), Springfield, Holyoke. You have all these cities that may not come to Chicopee often or may not even know about this wonderful place," Shumsky said. "So, it's a great opportunity for them to get to experience part of Chicopee's culture."

Haslam and Shumsky look forward to seeing the crowds and families coming together for the parade,

expressing gratitude for everyone coming out for the event.

"Thank you for having us. This is, obviously, a great event. There's so many happy people here. We're getting ready for the Irish step dancers right now, so it's just we're able to come together and it's really nice we're able to do so here," Haslam said.

"It's great to have so much representation here in the city of Chicopee. It's great that we have so many partners in the other cities and towns that are coming here to celebrate the Irish heritage and it's, overall, great for local businesses and it's great for people to network with people you may not regularly see," Shumsky said.

GARDEN,
from page 4

reportedly somewhat drought tolerant. When fertilizing, choose a formulation that is a bit lower in nitrogen, otherwise you will have lots of vines at the expense of sweet potatoes.

Dig up your bounty on a dry day, being extra careful not to damage the skin. Don't leave them exposed to the sun for more than an hour and don't wash them either.

Picky, aren't they? Fresh sweet potatoes

aren't all that sweet - a curing period of two weeks in the dark at 70-80 and at high humidity will bring out the great flavor we are accustomed to. Long-term storage should be at temperatures around 60 degrees.

To make sweet potato fries simply cut the root into thick wedges then toss them with seasoned olive oil (or a favorite salad dressing). Bake on a cookie sheet at 350 degrees for one hour, flipping occasionally. Some ketchup as a dip may help reluctant kids to give the "funny orange French fries" a try.

My dad is probably looking down and wishing I did an article on good, old fashioned russets. Sorry, Dad, but Happy St. Patrick's Day anyway!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 33 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.

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Young Knights in action

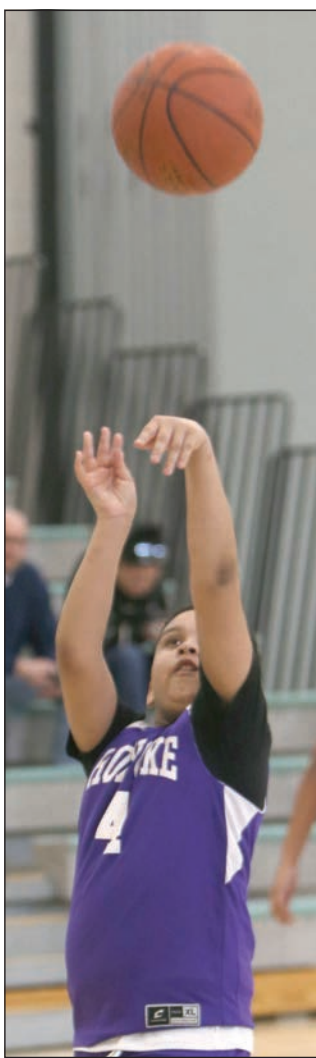
WESTFIELD – Last Friday evening, Holyoke's 5/6 youth basketball team was in action at Westfield last Friday evening in the final game of the season for the Red Division. Holyoke lost the matchup 54-30, ending their season.



Abdiel Colon sends a shot away.



Jayceon Gonzalez heads for the basket.



Yaduel Morales reaches out for the loose ball.



Jaydrian Santiago carefully dribbles toward the hoop.



Jaevien Vincente shoots on the run.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Holyoke wrestlers complete tourney competition

Wrestling season has come to an end and several area teams crowned champions at the sectional and state levels.

In the Division 2 state tournament, Max Holloway took home a state title at 215 pounds. Stella Christopher won a state title in the girls meet while Gabriella Ramos was a runner-up. Minnechaug's Kal Ly won the 132-pound bracket while John Bermudez was a runner-up at heavy-weight. Holyoke's Steven Santiago finished second in D2 at 120 pounds.

Ludlow's Lucas Alvan was a state champion in the Division 3 meet at 175 pounds.

In the sectionals held last month, Agawam had a big day with multiple placers. They had four champions. Ryan Sexton at 150, Max Holloway at 215, and Jordin Agosto at 126 all took home titles. Cole Ingham was a runner up at 175, as was Kaleb Progulske at 106. Keymani Rivera (157), and Tyler Gervais (190) both took third place. Agawam would finish third overall in the meet with 204 points.

Minnechaug was the second-place finisher behind champion West Springfield with 213 points. They had two champions, Kal Ly at 132 pounds and

John Bermudez at 285. Matthew Macphail and Hunter Gormally had runner-up finishes. The Falcons had one third place finisher and five fourth-place finishers.

Chicopee's Michael Jenkins placed second at 144 pounds.

In the Division 3 Western Mass. tournament at Mt. Greylock, Belchertown, which returned its program to varsity status this season, saw Jack Bergerson finish fourth at 175 pounds and Evan Perkins finish fifth at 150 pounds. Brogan Bottari also took fifth place at 120 pounds.

Ludlow, Granby, Quabbin, and Pathfinder participate in the Central Mass. Championship meet. Ludlow's Lucas Alvan took first place at 175 pounds while Noah Simard was second at 150. Ryan Gomes had a third-place finish at 126 pounds.

Quabbin's top finisher was Abe Brown at 126 pounds. He finished in second place. Three others, Brady Dennis at 215, Brent Benoit at 132, and Cole Wilson at 150, all took fourth place in the meet.

Pathfinder had one placer, which was Dominic Jerry at 165 pounds. Granby's Nathan Benson finished fifth at 113 pounds.

Streets of Holyoke set for 10K Road Race to be held next Saturday

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

HOLYOKE – The rich tradition that is the Holyoke St. Patrick's Road Race will make its return next Saturday, March 22. This will be the 48th running of the popular race.

Louis Serafini was the big winner of last year's event. He completed the very hilly, 6.2-mile course in 30:12. Serafini is from Cambridge.

The top female was a local runner from Western Massachusetts. Anna Steinmen, of Springfield, came across the finish line at 37:00.

Ryan Davis, of South Hadley, was one of the top local finishers at 34:36. He was 20th overall.

This year's race would feature runners from all over the region, the state, and surrounding states as many are preparing for the Boston Marathon, set to take place in just under a month. Many runners over the years have enjoyed using the St. Patrick's Day Road Race as practice for the marathon because of the challenging hills throughout the streets of Holyoke that runners must navigate through.

Of the more than 6,000 runners who were registered last year, 4,442 finished the 10K course. Race officials have said the par-

ticipation level in the event is still rebounding from the pandemic. Prior to the pandemic in 2019, race participants totaled about 7,000. The race was not held in 2020 and 2021 before it returned in 2022 with around 5,000 participants. More made their way out to the race last year, but that number was surpassed this year.

Because of that, the start of the race featured multiple waves, though 4RUN3 ran the bibs and electronic results kept accurate results for all those involved.

A number of this year's participants were featured in the usual celebratory costumes and outfits for St. Patrick's Day, while many others opted for cartoon and other fictional characters, such as Spider-Man. Several local running clubs also made their way to the race, as did the youth of the region. Youth participants in the race were as young as seven-years-old.

Security was in full force at the event with plenty of presence from the Massachusetts State Police, Holyoke Police, and Hampden County Sheriff's Department, and the event went off without any incidents.

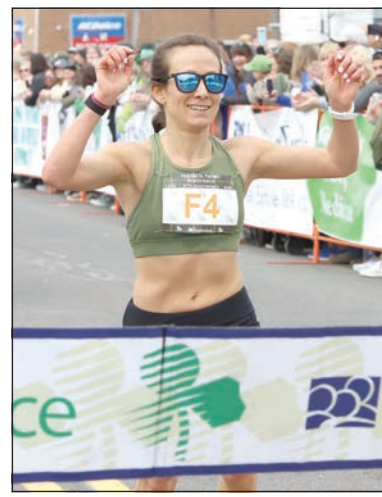
If you're still looking to participate in this year's race, go to www.holyokestpatricksroadrace.org.



The pace truck makes its way across the finish line followed by state police, which escorts the first set of runners.



Male top finisher and first overall Louis Serafini, of Cambridge, finishes the race at 30:12.



Anna Steinmen, of Springfield, was the top female finisher at 37:00.



The runners are off in the 2024 Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Road Race.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli

Railers fall to Lions in weekend finale

TROIS-RIVIÈRES, QC — The Worcester Railers HC (27-24-2 60pts) lost to the Trois-Rivières Lions (38-12-4-2, 82pts), on Sunday afternoon by a final score of 3-1 in front of a crowd of 2,684 at the Colisée Videotron. The Railers are back on the ice next at the DCU Center on Thursday, March 13th at 7:05 p.m. EST.

Trois-Rivières scored first Sunday afternoon as Isaac Dufort (1-0-1) gave the Lions a 1-0 lead followed by a Tyler Hylland (1-0-1) shorthanded goal. Worcester answered back with a shorthanded goal of their own, as it was Tyler Kobryn (1-0-1) who cut the Lions lead to one. Anthony Beauregard (1-0-1) finished off the scoring with an empty net goal, leading to the 3-1 Trois-Rivières win.

Despite Worcester outshooting Trois-Rivières 14-5 in the first period, it was the Lions who went into the second period with a 2-0 lead. It was Isaac Dufort (11th) who scored the first Lions goal 7:15 into the first period on a loose puck in the slot. Tyler Hylland (10th) then scored

a shorthanded goal on the rush off of a Worcester turnover 18:47 into the first. The Railers brought in Michael Bullion in from the bench for Hugo Ollas following the second Lions goal after allowing two goals on five shots faced.

The Railers got on the board in the second period with a shorthanded score of their own. Tyler Kobryn (7th) made it a 2-1 game 15:42 into the second period. Despite power play opportunities for both sides neither team was able to net another goal in the second. Shots favored Worcester 13-7 in the second.

The Railers had two power play opportunities to tie this one up in the third but were not able to capitalize on the man advantage. Later in the period Railers sent Michael Bullion to the bench in an attempt to tie the game up late in the third but Anthony Beauregard (23rd) was able to jump a pass and score on the empty Worcester net to give the game its 3-1 final score. Shots favored Worcester 17-11 in the third and 46-25 in the game.

T-Birds beat Islanders, move toward playoff berth

BRIDGEPORT, Conn. — The Springfield Thunderbirds (30-20-2-4) blitzed the Bridgeport Islanders (12-38-4-3) for five unanswered goals in the final 40 minutes to pull away with a 5-2 win on Sunday afternoon at Total Mortgage Arena.

For a third straight game, the T-Birds were slow out of the gates, forcing Vadim Zherenko to be tested early and often in the first period, as 14 of the first 18 shots in the game went to the Islanders. Marshall Warren broke the levee 12:47 into the game with a wrist shot that eluded Zherenko through traffic, giving Bridgeport a 1-0 lead.

After the T-Birds were forced to go down a man on a post-whistle roughing penalty, Liam Foudy made Springfield pay with his seventh goal of the season early at 14:45 to buoy the Isles lead to 2-0.

Springfield finally got pressure on Hunter Miska's net in the closing minutes, finishing the period with the final six attempts on goal, but the Bridgeport netmind-

er remained perfect, stopping all 10 T-Birds shots in the first 20 minutes.

Zherenko was timely in the opening half of the second period as the Islanders continued to mount a push to extend the lead. The Springfield backstop shined, with a pair of odd-man stops off Jack Randl and Adam Beckman to maintain the 2-0 score.

The T-Birds finally snapped out of their offensive zone funk at 10:31 as, on his 31st birthday, MacKenzie MacEachern turned in the high slot and flipped a shot toward Miska's net that got a friendly deflection from Nikita Alexandrov before finding the twine. Alexandrov's 16th goal in just 33 games cut the Bridgeport lead in half, 2-1.

Like the Islanders did in the first, Springfield went to a power play and struck for the second time in as many minutes as Dalibor Dvorsky returned from retrieving a

new stick on the bench and beat Miska under the crossbar at 12:17 for his ninth power-play goal of the season. The game-tying goal brought Dvorsky into a tie among AHL rookies in man-advantage tallies.

The tie score carried into the final period, and the power play came up with the difference-making play as Matt Luff sent a puck perfectly into the paint, where Matthew Peca guided it past Miska just 1:17 into the third to give Springfield its first lead, 3-2. Peca's 26th of the season eventually became the game-winner, giving the captain his second game-deciding goal in as many days, an 11-game point streak, and the AHL lead in game-winning goals.

Samuel Johansson picked up assists on both of the T-Birds' power-play goals, giving him 15 helpers on the man advantage for the season, tied for fifth most in the AHL. Corey Schueneman also had a

two-assist night from the T-Birds' blue line.

Springfield's special teams were not finished, as just over five minutes after the Peca goal, Otto Stenberg retrieved a loose puck at the offensive blue line and fed a perfect blind pass to spring Hugh McGing on a shorthanded breakaway. McGing delivered the finishing strike through Miska, making it 4-2 at 6:22 of the third.

Bridgeport's power play could not make up the difference on a late chance, and Dvorsky capped the five-goal run with an empty-netter in the final minute to cap off the win.

Zherenko completed a magnificent bounce-back performance with 36 saves for his 10th victory of the season and fourth in his last five starts.

With their magic number down to 18 in pursuit of a Calder Cup playoff berth, the T-Birds begin a three-game weekend on Friday as they make their lone visit to Upstate Medical University Arena against the Syracuse Crunch for a 7:00 p.m. puck drop.



Read or subscribe to The Holyoke Sun online at www.sun.turley.com

Public Notices

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. HD25P0466EA
 Estate of:
Robert John Weiss
 Also known as:
Robert J Weiss
Date of Death: 11/07/2024
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION
 To all interested persons:
 A Petition for **Formal Adjudication of Intestacy** has been filed by **Theodore J. Moriarty of West Roxbury, 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: **Hyman G Darling of Springfield, MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **With Personal 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 04/03/2025**. 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: March 06, 2025
Rosemary A Saccomani, Register of Probate
 03/14/2025

Community Outreach Meeting
 Notice is given that a Community Outreach Meeting for a proposed Marijuana Establishment is scheduled for **April 1, 2025 at 5 p.m. at 1 Cabot Street, Holyoke, MA 01040**.

Exceptional Grow, LLC is the proposed Tier 1 Cultivation company. There will be an opportunity for the public to ask questions.
 03/14/2025

City of Holyoke
Public Hearing Notice
 The Holyoke Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, March 25, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.com** ID: :836 3939 8493; Call in *67 646 558 8656 to hear, pursuant to the Holyoke Zoning Ordinance, a Site Plan Review (Sec 10) and a Special Permit for Multiple Principal Structures (Sec 5.4); Florence Bank submitted by Holyoke Retail, LLC to be located at 1504 Northampton Street (015-00-012, -013, -059).

APPLICANT:
 Holyoke Retail, LLC
 PLANNING BOARD:
 Mimi Panitch
 03/07, 03/14/2025

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. HD25C0060CA
 In the matter of:
Diane Humber
 aka **Ida Dianna Freeman**
 aka **Ida Dianne Humber** aka **Diane McCollum**
 aka **Diane Humber**
 aka **Diane Ida McCollum Humber**
CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME
 A Petition to Change Name of Adult has been filed by **Diane Humber aka Ida Dianna Freeman aka Ida Dianne Humber aka Diane McCollum aka Diane Humber aka Diane Ida McCollum of Holyoke, MA** requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to: **Ida Dian McCollum**

IMPORTANT NOTICE
 Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: **Hampden Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 04/10/2025**.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.
 Date: March 06, 2025
Rosemary A Saccomani, Register of Probate
 03/14/2025

City of Holyoke
Office of Procurement
 536 Dwight Street, Room 3
 Holyoke, MA 01040
INVITATION TO BID
IFB #2025-28SD
MVP GREEN
INFRASTRUCTURE

SULLIVAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL & HOLYOKE HIGH SCHOOL
SEALED BIDS ARE DUE BY 2:00PM, APRIL 10, 2025
 The City of Holyoke invites electronic bids from qualified individuals or firms for Green Infrastructure improvements at the two (2) Holyoke Public Schools for:

Exterior site work including porous pavements and a rain garden at both the Sullivan Elementary School (400 Jarvis Avenue) and Holyoke High School (500 Beech Street), Holyoke in accordance with contract documents and specifications prepared by the City of Holyoke.

Bidding procedures shall be in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 30, Section 39M and Chapter 30B, Section 5 and minimum wage rates as required by M.G.L. Chapter 149, Section 26- 27H, inclusive as amended. It shall be the responsibility of each supplier to assure compliance with any OSHA, EPA, CORI, DEP, and/or FEDERAL, STATE of MASSACHUSETTS rules, regulations or other requirements, as each may apply. Electronic bids for this project shall be received by the City of Holyoke through Projectdog from responsible, responsive & qualified bidders. Plans can be obtained through project dog by creating an account and referencing Projectdog Project Code 867426.

Potential Bidders are strongly encouraged to attend the pre-bid conference will be held beginning at 10:00 AM on Thursday MARCH 20, 2025 starting at the Sullivan Elementary School, 400 Jarvis Avenue, and ending at Holyoke High School 500 Beech Street, Holyoke, MA 01040 (Bidders are recommended to street park in the area of the schools.)

The City reserves the right to reject any or all bids, and/or waive any informality, if it is deemed to be in the public interest to do so.
 03/14/2025

Trial Court of Massachusetts
Juvenile Court Department
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
Middlesex County
Juvenile Court
Lowell Justice Center
370 Jackson Street, 4th Flr.
Lowell, MA 01852
978-441-2630
DOCKET NUMBER: 24CP0120LO
SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION
CARE AND PROTECTION, TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS
TO: Richard Rodriguez, Father of Jaydez K Rodriguez:
 A petition has been presented to this court by DCF – Cambridge/Somerville, seeking, as to the following child, **Jaydez K Rodriguez**, that said child be found in need of care and protection and committed to the Department of Children and Families. The court may dispense the rights of the person(s) named herein to receive notice of or to consent to any legal proceeding affecting the adoption, custody, or guardianship or any other disposition of the child named herein, if it finds that the child is in need of care and protection and that the best interests of the child would be served by said disposition.

You are hereby ORDERED to appear in this court, at the court address set forth above, on the following date and time: **05/01/2025 at 09:00 AM Pre Trial Conference (CR/CV)**

You may bring an attorney with you. If you have a right to an attorney and if the court determines that you are indigent, the court will appoint an attorney to represent you.

If you fail to appear, the court may proceed on that date and any date thereafter to a trial on the merits and adjudication of this matter.

For further information call the Office of the Clerk-Magistrate at 978-441-2630.
 WITNESS: Hon. **Brian P**

Frane, FIRST JUSTICE.
 DATE ISSUED: 03/05/2025
Elizabeth Sheehy,
 Clerk-Magistrate
 03/14, 03/21, 03/28/2025

City of Holyoke
 Office of Procurement
 536 Dwight Street, Room 3
 Holyoke, MA 01040
2025-28W
Wistariahurst Museum:
Wall and Ceiling
Bedroom Restoration Project
Documents are available starting on 3/12/15 at 10AM
 The City of Holyoke is seeking sealed bids from qualified businesses to provide the conservation treatment of one bedroom on the second floor featuring 19th-century English pattern block printed wallpaper and ceiling affected by water damage from a leaking chimney at Wistariahurst Museum, 238 Cabot St., Holyoke, MA 01040 including all materials and labor necessary to complete the work.

Involvement with any City of Holyoke Procurement shall be in accordance with M.G.L. 30B, 30, c. 30B & 5, c. 7C & 44-57 and Ch.149 all as amended. It shall be the responsibility of each supplier to assure compliance with any OSHA, EPA, CORI, DEP, and/or FEDERAL, STATE of MASSACHUSETTS rules, and regulations or other requirements, as each may apply.

Bids will be received until **12:00 PM, EST on Tuesday, April 8, 2025**. Email submissions will not be accepted.

Interested Bidders are strongly recommended to attend the site visit scheduled for March 20, 2025 at 2:00PM at 238 Cabot St., Holyoke, MA 01040.

The City reserves the right to reject any or all bids, and/or waive any informality, if it is deemed to be in the public interest to do so.
 03/14/2025

PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

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

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

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

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The Holyoke Sun
OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

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

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

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

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Find archives of this local newspaper at **www.newspapers.turley.com**

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Executive Director for Community Survival Center in Indian Orchard
Resume and references to **survivalcenterio@gmail.com**
Need experience in Management, Public Outreach, and Social Media
Four-day work week; 5 weeks vacation; 5 days sick/personal time; holidays \$60,000 salary

LOCAL TREE SERVICE looking for climber and ground person. Must have driver's license in good standing. Call **413-507-1949**.

TOWN OF WILBRAHAM

FIREFIGHTER/EMT

The Town of Wilbraham is looking to fill a vacancy for Firefighter/EMT. Paramedic Certification or currently enrolled in paramedic school highly preferred.

For application and more info, visit **www.wilbraham-ma.gov**. Open until filled

Worthington Police Department Full-time Police Officer

The Worthington Police Department is seeking qualified candidates for **Full-time Police Officer**. Applicants must be a minimum of 21 years of age or older, a U.S. Citizen and possess a valid driver's license. They should also have a high school diploma/GED, license to carry and be certified by Massachusetts Municipal Police Training Committee and be POST certified.

This is a benefited position with a salary range of: \$52,000.00 - \$75,733.00. The successful candidate shall be highly motivated, self-disciplined, possess a community policing philosophy and live in or near Worthington. This position has the potential to be elevated to Police Chief.

Send letter of interest, resume and three references with relevant contact information to:
Worthington Police Department P.O. Box 247 Worthington, MA 01098

Or via email to: **sboard@worthington-ma.us**
Subject line: Employment

Responses will be accepted and reviewed until the position is filled.
The Town of Worthington is an Equal Opportunity Employer

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

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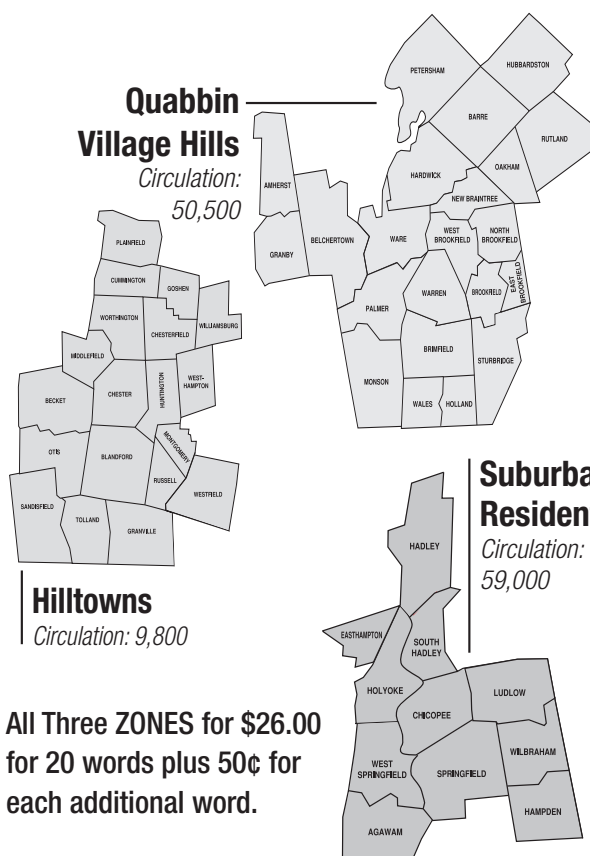
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SPRING FEVER



These beautiful blooms and colorful art display are on exhibit at the Smith College Botanical Garden Spring Bulb Show which takes place now through Sunday, March 16.

Turley staff photo by Kara Walsh-Vey

PARKING, from page 1

so we gave them the one parking spot," Bartley said. "Now they want two...if they wanted to pay for the parking, then that is another story, but they don't. They want to take away from someone else's use."

City Councilor Linda Vacon asked if there could be potentially a temporary parking space put in.

"In some situations similar to this we have been able to set up a drop off time within the area," Vacon said. "It would allow the van to not be jammed up against the corner and also not be taking up the space 24/7."

City Councilor Meagan

Magrath-Smith agreed with Vacon.

"They can use the one temporary spot to drop people on and off like a loading area," Magrath-Smith said. "Because they should be dropping people off, they should not be parking somewhere and making people walk."

The councilors did not want to make it difficult for VCare to provide services to their customers, but they also do not want to make it unfair for other businesses in the area who have to pay for their parking.

"What makes it difficult is that the service is needed," City Councilor Israel Rivera said. "The necessity is there

but I am kind of on the side of where Councilor Bartley was saying is that it is not fair to the rest of the businesses."

Due to this, the committee tried to come up with potential alternate options for VCare outside of a second parking space.

City Councilor Carmen Occasio proposed that VCare could work internally to alternate the pick-up times of their vans so multiple vans are not arriving at the same parking spot at once.

Bartley mentioned that maybe the vans could use the bus lane located outside of City Hall as a place to wait until their one parking spot is available.

"Why can't we allow VCare, because they are public transportation basically, why can't they cue their vans up there?" Bartley said. "We can set up a system to allow them to park there."

Due to these proposed options, the committee tabled this matter to discuss it at a future meeting where they would have a legal form to go off of and they could call in representatives from VCare who they could question.

The legal form will plan out a potential ordinance for a second parking spot, and the legal team will come back with an opinion concerning if VCare could use the bus lane as Bartley proposed.

MCAS, from page 1

some input from counselors at each of the high schools."

Soto also clarified that as HPS is making this transition, students this year who have already passed the MCAS will not have to also make these competency requirements.

This, instead, pertains to any students who are currently seniors and have not yet passed that assessment.

After Soto presented this to the school committee, he requested that they send the matter to a subcommittee to

discuss further.

"What I would like to do is hopefully go into a deeper discussion at a sub committee meeting where we can dive deeper into any questions the school committee would have," Soto said. "Ultimately we are looking for this year for the school committee to adopt a competency determination assessment."

He wants to have this matter discussed and decided on as quickly as possible so that the students in the high school currently, specifically the seniors, know what they

need to do to graduate.

"Part of why we are putting this in front of you is because we want students to know what the competency determination is going to be for this year," Soto said.

Ultimately, while the school committee will make a decision on what the competency assessment is for this year, this may not stay true for future years.

"I anticipate that the state is working on further guidance that will either support whatever local decisions are made or provide more guidance on what is expect-

ed in competency determinations," Soto said.

However, as the districts wait for state guidance, they will simply have to set their own competency measures.

This matter will be further discussed at the next leadership and accountability subcommittee, where the subcommittee will come to a decision they then recommend to the full school committee.

From there, the school committee will discuss the matter and take a vote on what to do for this school year.

SUMMER CAMP GUIDE



Kamp for Kids to celebrate 50 years of summer fun for all abilities with a Golf FUN-raiser on April 10

SPRINGFIELD – Kamp for Kids, a summer day camp for children and young adults with and without disabilities, has planned a season of special celebrations in honor of the camp's 50th Anniversary, starting with a Golf FUN-raiser event on Thursday, April 10, 2025, from 4:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Max's Swing Lounge, located at 1000 Columbus Avenue in Springfield.

The Golf FUN-raiser event will bring together supporters, community members, campers and friends to begin a season of celebration

for 50 years of growth, inclusion, and joy for children and young adults of all abilities. Proceeds from the Golf FUN-raiser will directly benefit Kamp for Kids, helping to ensure that the camp continues to thrive for years to come.

Tickets are \$100 and include access to the driving range, mini golf, appetizers, two drinks, and the chance to win exciting contests and prizes. Tickets can be purchased at kamp50.eventbrite.com. Sponsorship Opportunities are also available for businesses and individuals.

Those interested in sponsoring this event should reach out to Kelly Brown at Kelly.Brown@BHNInc.org or 413-654-0930. Sponsorships can also be made on the event website, Kamp50.EventBrite.com.

Founded in 1975 by Dick and Judy Hoyt, Kamp for Kids was created to offer an inclusive camp experience for their son, Rick, who had cerebral palsy, and his brothers without disabilities. Over the years, the Hoyts

have championed disability inclusion, inspiring countless families worldwide. Today, Kamp for Kids continues to honor their legacy, demonstrating that every child—regardless of ability—deserves the chance to participate in meaningful, fun, and educational experiences.

Located in Westfield, Kamp for Kids serves children and young adults ages 5-22, both with and without disabilities,

hailing from cities and towns throughout Western Massachusetts. Each summer, the camp provides a unique environment for growth and inclusion, offering activities such as expressive arts, outdoor education, arts & crafts, non-competitive sports, and a spray park—all designed to create a sense of belonging and joy for every camper. Kamp for Kids operates during the summer months, serving about 150 campers in three sessions.

"Kamp for Kids is celebrating 50 years of creating a space where every child, re-

gardless of ability, can grow, learn, and have fun together," said Anne Benoit, Program Director of Kamp for Kids. "We're excited to celebrate this milestone and look forward to many more years of providing life-changing experiences that foster inclusion, friendship, and personal growth."

BHN has been providing behavioral health services to children and families in Western Massachusetts since 1938.

The agency provides community-based services that include innovative, integrated whole-health models as well as traditional clinical and outpatient and therapeutic services, day treatment, addiction services, crisis intervention and residential supports.



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