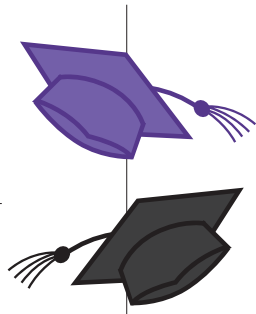


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Congratulations Class of 2024



Holyoke High School graduates celebrated their special day by throwing their caps in the air.
Turley photo by Quinn Suomala

Unified class graduates Holyoke High School

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – The class of 2024 at Holyoke High School North Campus kicked off their graduation ceremony with a class selfie with their Principal Lori McKenna.

This selfie was to give the

students a moment to remember during their graduation ceremony.

The students certainly had something to be proud of. They were a class of 250 students, with 36 graduating with honors, 39 with high

See HHS, page 5

Dean Tech class of 2024 supports one another

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – The seniors from Dean Technical High School celebrated their graduation on Thursday, May 30.

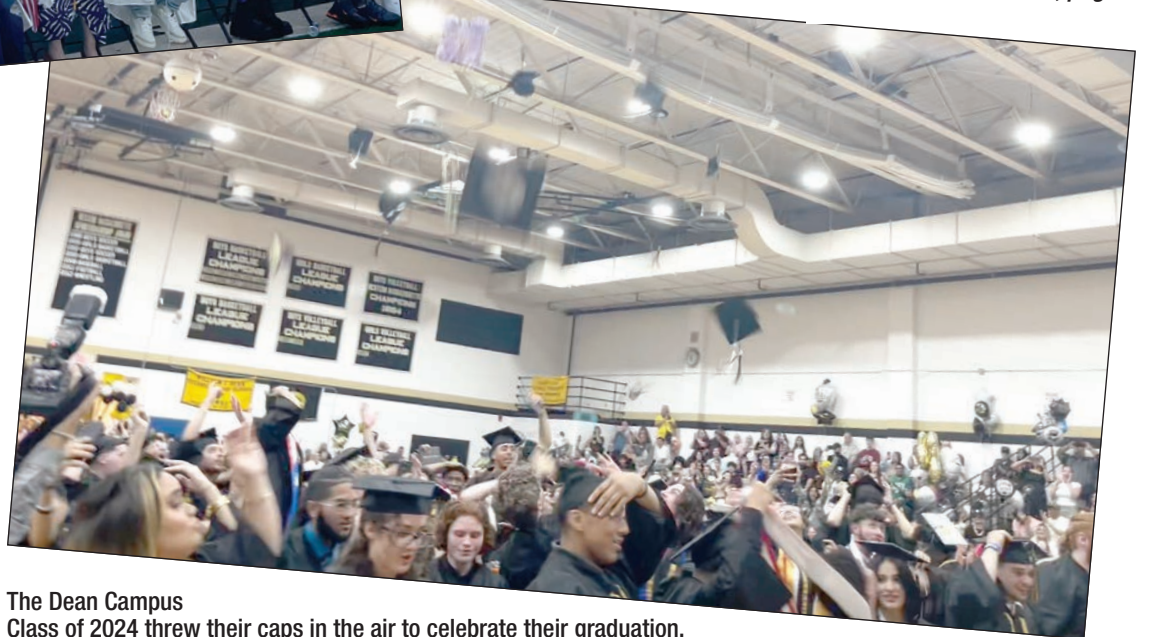
This class of 71 students had 14 students graduating with honors and nine gradu-

ating with high honors.

Members of the school committee, as well as Mayor Joshua Garcia and Dean Tech Principal Roseanne Caracciolo took to the stage to show their pride in the class of 2024 graduates.

“You all should be really proud of what you accomplished in your career here at Holyoke

See DEAN, page 6



The Dean Campus Class of 2024 threw their caps in the air to celebrate their graduation.
Turley photos by Quinn Suomala

Girls Inc. hosts ‘Women in Trades’ event

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – Girls Inc. hosted a “Women in Trades” day at their organization for kids from ages seven and up to attend.

The goal of this event was to allow the kids to see women working in these male-dominated fields.

“One of our mottos here is, ‘if she can see it she can be it,’” Special Projects and Volunteerism Manager Ana Gerena said. “I think a lot of our youth are not exposed to these different job fields so giving them the opportunity to see themselves in those roles is really what the goal is.”

They hoped that by allowing children to see women in these different roles, the kids could see that it was possible for them to have a position in that career.

“Maybe only one kid gets touched by one of these positions but that’s truly what we want from this experience is maybe change one or two kids’ decisions on what they want to do for their career,” Gerena said.



Mirose Martinez, Zanele Grasin and Shaanise Delaney had fun at the Girls Inc. “Women in Trades” event.
Turley photo by Quinn Suomala

Throughout the event the kids were able to go to four different stations. There was a woman in the trades wall, a firetruck, a chance to learn about driving lift trucks and a station teaching the kids the basics of car maintenance.

“In the auto performance the kids will actually get to mess around with a car and see how do you check the tire pressure, how do you know where

the oil is, etc.” Gerena said.

At the trades wall the kids were able to dress up as different trades people and learn about four women in trades.

At the firetruck the kids learned about what it is like to be a firefighter, some of the tools firefighters use and how they can become a firefighter.

During the station on lift trucks, Kara Sotolotto, the

See TRADES, page 12

School committee elects pro tem vice chair Lefebvre

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – The school committee held a special meeting in order to elect a pro tem vice chair to replace Former Vice Chair Erin Brunelle.

School Committee Member Mildred Lefebvre was elected unanimously as the pro tem vice chair.

This election came following a discussion of the proper procedure for having a vice chair on the committee, as well as who should be the chair of the committee.

“Just to make sure that we’re in line, that we’re not just making up practices, we’re in line with what our charter, our ordinances, our school committee policies are,” Mayor Joshua Garcia said.

Through research that Garcia, other members of the school committee and the assistant city solicitor did, they discovered that the current online copy of the

charter stated that the school committee elects their own chairman. It also said that the mayor has no voting rights.

However, that is not the most recent update of the charter. The city clerk found an amendment that gives the mayor voting rights on the committee and also says that they can preside at the meeting.

“The interesting part about that was...in the charter it does say that the school board in the first Tuesday of January the school committee elects its chairman, so now there are questions as to whether or not the mayor is really the chair,” Garcia said.

Assistant City Solicitor Jane Mantolesky did a variety of research into the matter in order to clarify what procedures the committee should be following.

In her research she found that a mayor was allowed to be chair of the school committee, but she couldn’t find

See LEFEBVRE, page 11

City celebrates Pride Month with exciting lineup of events



HOLYOKE – The City of HolyokePride Committee proudly announces the commencement of Pride Month with a series of vibrant and inclusive events designed to celebrate and support the LGBTQ+ community. Pride Month will begin June 3 at 5 p.m. with a flag-raising ceremony at City Hall, symbolizing the city’s commitment to diversity, equality, and unity. Holyoke’s Pride Month celebration will continue with a lineup of exciting events: 5K Rainbow Run, June 8. Lace-up your running shoes and join us next weekend for the 5K Rainbow Run, a fun and energetic race that promotes health and inclusivity. All ages and abilities are welcome to participate. The run will start at 9 a.m. and participants are encouraged to wear

their brightest rainbow attire.

PrideFest will be on June 22. Mark your calendars for PrideFest, a vibrant celebration held at Veterans Park from noon to 6 p.m. The festival will feature live performances by renowned singer-songwriter Mary Lambert and Yuhua Hamasaki from season 10 of RuPaul’s Drag Race. Enjoy a day filled with music, food, art, and community spirit.

A full list of Pride Month events, including detailed schedules and additional activities, can be found on the official Holyoke Pride website at www.holyokepride.org. The website also provides information on how to support Holyoke Pride through event sponsorships, donations, and volunteer opportunities.

City Councilor Juan Anderson-

Burgos said “Holyoke is a city that thrives on diversity and community spirit. Pride Month is a time to honor and support our LGBTQ+ neighbors, friends, and family members. We invite to join us in celebrating love, acceptance, and equality.”

Join in making this Pride Month memorable and impactful. Let’s come together to celebrate who we are and support each other in building a more inclusive and loving community. For media inquiries, please contact: Jeff Bianchine at info@holyokepride.org, 413-420-8303 ext 3. Stay connected with Holyoke Pride on social media: Facebook: HolyokePride, Twitter: @HolyokePride, Instagram: @HolyokePride.

HCHS holding baby playgroup on June 18

CHICOPEE – The Holyoke Chicopee Family Community Program is holding a Baby Playgroup.

You are Invited to Baby Playgroup, ongoing weekly on Tuesday.

Join us on June 18 from 3 to 4:30 p.m., for ages 0-12 months.

Lincoln Grove Head Start, 216 Broadway St., Chicopee, MA 01020

Connect with other parents and bring your little one for nursery rhymes, sensory play, story time and more.

Holyoke Chicopee Head Start offering ‘Raising A Reader’ Family Shared Reading Program

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Chicopee Family & Community Program is currently hosting a “Raising A Reader” Family Shared reading program.

The program is for families with children from infant to five years old.

Let’s get together for fun activities that develop reading readiness and social emotional skills! Take home a red bag each week with books to borrow.

The program takes place on Wednesdays, 4 to 5 p.m. at HCS Head Start the first and third Wednesday of the month at 41 Commercial St., Holyoke. Please call or email Shane at ShaneW@headstart.org or 413-310-1632.

This program is funded by the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) grant awarded to HCS Head Start by the Department of Early Education and Care.

Preservation and restoration training

HOLYOKE – The Veterans Services Department of Holyoke will be Training on the Preservation/Restoration of Cemetery Headstones on Saturday June 15, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Elmwood Cemetery, 2190 Northampton St. This training is for volunteers and those who would like to learn how to do this work for the veterans and relatives interned in the community. This event emphasizes our support, as a community, not just for Veterans, but for their families as well. To attend the training, please contact the Veteran Services Dept at 413-322-5630. The number of attendees are limited to 20, so please respond by Thursday, June 13.



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COLLEGE NOTES

Vasquez-Prieto recognized

SPRINGFIELD – Jacinda Vasquez-Prieto of Holyoke was among more than forty students recognized by American International College during its Academic Awards ceremony on April 23, in the College's Griswold Theatre. These awards shine a spotlight on excellence across all subject areas, celebrating the hard work and achievements of our learners.

Vasquez-Prieto, whose major is Biology, was awarded the College's Outstanding Achievement in Biology by a Senior. AIC congratulates these deserving students for their remarkable achievements.

AIC honors local students

SPRINGFIELD – American International College has recognized fifty students during its 2024 Co-Curricular Leadership and Involvement Awards Ceremony on April 22 in the College's Schwartz Campus Center Auditorium.

The Co-Curricular Awards Ceremony shines a light on students who embody AIC's spirit through their leadership, service, dedication as student employees, volunteerism, and other outstanding contributions.

Leslie Brazeau of Holyoke was presented with the Rex's Best Award, given to juniors and seniors who have demonstrated personal growth through sustained leadership in clubs, organizations, athletics, or the community while serving as a positive role model in and out of the classroom.

Joshua Frometa of Holyoke was presented with the Volunteer of the Year Award, given to a student who has worked in a volunteer capacity consistently and selflessly.

AIC congratulates these deserving students for their remarkable achievements.

Bike rodeo night to be held June 17

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke bicedped and SRTS will be hosting Bike rodeo night on June 17, at 5 p.m. at The Armour yard, 164 Race St. Everyone is welcome. There will be multiple competitions, like best cowboy outfit and best decorated bike. Free bike lights will be provided and there will be raffle tickets for all attendees as well.

Seats limited for Senior Center Travel Club trip to Mystic Seaport

HOLYOKE – Visit Connecticut's Mystic Seaport Museum with the Holyoke Senior Center's Travel Club. The club will adventure to the nation's leading maritime museum on Tuesday, June 18, to delve into ocean exploration, innovation, recreation, art, artifacts and more. Find a sea story by exploring the Museum's exhibitions, historic village, collections, and working shipyard. A ticket to the museum, bus transportation, and a boxed lunch are included in the price of the trip.

The trip is \$80 per person. Payment in full is required to reserve your a and

Holyoke company Rutto Bats, Inc. awarded loan

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Economic Development and Industrial Corporation awarded Rutto Bats, Inc. a \$100,000 loan from its Manufacturers Loan Program. The funding is a part of a financing package with The Life Initiative, Mill Cities Community Investments and MassDevelopment's State Small Business Credit Initiative that helped Rutto Bats leverage \$1M in funds.

Owned by Holyoke residents Kipnetich Rutto and Melinda Couture, the company started in 2016 with the purchase of a small lumber business in Belchertown. The business evolved to specializing in

wholesale billet production for sale to finished bat makers. Over the last few years, the company transitioned into a manufacturer of finished baseball bats.

After several years of trying to locate a suitable manufacturing facility in Holyoke, the company recently secured a lease at 1 Bigelow Street and is in the process of setting up its manufacturing facility.

Rutto Bats sought financing to complete their transition to a full-scale manufacturer of finished baseball bats and applied from \$100,000 from HEDIC to fill the gap and help realize a \$1M total financing package. HEDIC approved the financing at its May meeting.

Chairperson Carl Eger, Jr. said "HEDIC is pleased to have the opportunity to support the entrepreneurial spirit of these Holyoke residents." At the meeting Rutto Bats presented its request with Couture said "finding a home in Holyoke to grow our business along with the financing is the culmination of

years of efforts." The combined financing will support the company's growth, which will include new manufacturing equipment to increase production and meet the growing demand for Rutto Bats. The company has key partnerships with Dick's Sporting Goods, Major League Baseball, The Players Alliance, MLB Youth Alliance and others.

Rutto Bats in 2022 providing custom wooden bats to Holyoke High School Varsity Baseball team.

HEDIC's Manufacturers Financing Program offers gap co-lending and, in some cases, direct financing for eligible manufacturers that have good credit and a strong business plan. These loans are intended to fill a lending gap and help to stimulate business growth in the City. Contact HEDIC staff at 413-322-5655 to learn more about the program.

Summer mental health tips offered to those in need

HOLYOKE – As summer break approaches, the joyous anticipation of freedom from school routines fills the hearts of adolescents. Yet, amidst the excitement lies a poignant reality: mental health concerns do not take a hiatus when classrooms empty and textbooks gather dust. It is imperative to acknowledge and address the ongoing mental health challenges that adolescents face, even during the carefree days of summer.

Some teens may relish hours of independence while others may struggle with a lack of routine and ability to socialize. The adolescent years are a pivotal time of transition, marked by physical, emotional, and social transformations. While summer vacation may signify a break from academic pressures, it can also introduce new stressors. The absence of structured routines, social isolation, familial tensions, and heightened expectations can exacerbate pre-existing mental health issues or instigate new ones.

Busy parents and caregivers may want to find a moment that's good for both them and the young person in their care to ask about their break expectations and to really listen to any concerns and how they might want to address them.

Budgets may dictate what family activities are on the summer calendar, but some are free – movie night at home, making dinner together, checking out the local library for summer programs, evening walks, start a small garden.

What's important is finding space and time in which a young person can feel comfortable to share how they are feeling emotionally. Listening without judgement about how a young person is feeling throughout the year can help an adolescent open up about what may be distressing them.

Are they feeling lonely, bored, excluded? Are these negative feelings prolonged and in need of therapeutic treatment or can they be addressed by adding some structure, exercise, volunteering, reading, into

the day?

Signs a young person may be experiencing a mental health challenge and need professional support include ongoing changes in sleeping, eating and other everyday routines, anxiety that interferes with daily function, expressing hopelessness, increased anger or irritability, substance use, or loss of interest in what they used to enjoy.

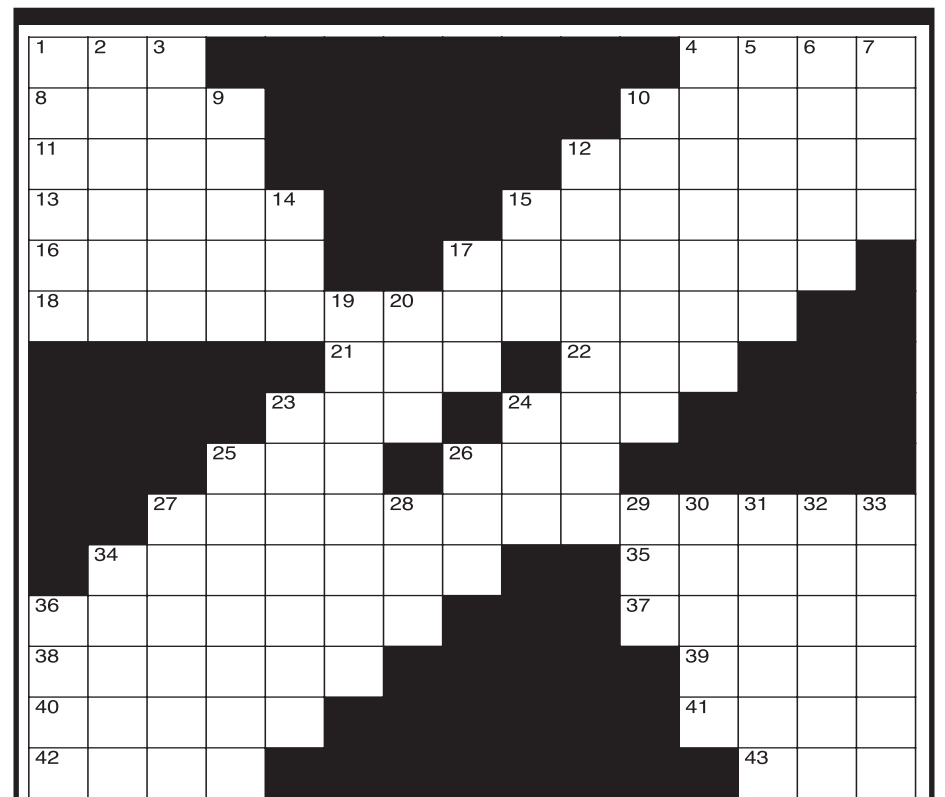
Mental health challenges are treatable. There is a range of both short-and long-term therapies, including counseling, medication and sometimes a combination of both, available to help address and manage them.

Inpatient treatment is available as well to help youth in acute crisis stabilize and

learn skills to manage their mental health as they move forward.

As we embark on the summer months, let us remember that adolescent mental health knows no vacation. By embracing MiraVista as a steadfast ally, we reaffirm our commitment to nurturing the holistic well-being of adolescents year-round. Together, let us create a future where every adolescent feels supported, empowered, and resilient in the face of life's challenges.

Khadene Harry-Stoby is Adolescent Unit Nurse Manager for MiraVista Behavioral Health Center in Holyoke. The psychiatric hospital offers inpatient treatment for adults and adolescents in crisis, and outpatient substance use recovery services.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Baby's dining accessory
- 4. Something free
- 8. Ancient Egyptian deity
- 10. Set-like mathematical categories
- 11. Top-quality
- 12. Expansive
- 13. Seizure
- 15. People with congenital absence of pigment
- 16. Gains
- 17. Mocked online
- 18. Clint's son
- 21. Body part
- 22. Humor
- 23. Code number
- 24. Your physique

CLUES DOWN

- 25. Family of regulator genes
- 26. LA football player (abbr.)
- 27. "The Blonde Bombshell"
- 34. Charity
- 35. Bluish greens
- 36. Examined closely
- 37. A type of equation
- 38. Stretched uncomfortably
- 39. Indian religious god
- 40. Clocks
- 41. Slowly leak through
- 42. Witnesses
- 43. Midway between south and southeast

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Nestlings
- 2. Induces vomiting
- 3. A place to eat
- 4. Partner in the air
- 5. Offered one's take
- 6. Nobel-winning French biologist
- 7. Farm animals
- 9. Prevent from growing
- 10. Sensationalist periodical
- 12. Soft-bodied beetle
- 14. Very fast airplane
- 15. Imaginative creation
- 17. Recipe measurement (abbr.)

- 19. Evoked a response
- 20. French river
- 23. Shiny yellow minerals
- 24. Make illegal
- 25. U.S. military branch
- 26. River in France and Belgium
- 27. A woman of refinement
- 28. Male child
- 29. Type of medication
- 30. German city
- 31. Animal disease
- 32. Mediterranean dietary staple
- 33. Sneak out
- 34. Radioactivity unit
- 36. Performs on stage

CROSSWORD ANSWER on page 11

Social Security's earnings test and Cost of Living Adjustments



By Russell Gloor

Dear Rusty

Is there a limit on earnings when you're fully retired? Also, should all retirees receive Cost of Living Adjustments or is there an exception?

Signed: Retired But Wondering

Dear Retired

Your questions are fairly simple but, nevertheless, often perplexing to those wishing to apply for Social Security, because the SS rules are many over 2,700 of them and those about to apply for their benefits may be simply unsure and want to avoid a costly mistake. I'm happy to answer your questions and, hopefully, clarify any uncertainties you have on these topics.

Social Security imposes an earnings limit on anyone who collects Social Security before reaching their Full retirement Age. If you haven't yet reached your FRA somewhere between 66 and 67, depending on the year you were born and you continue to work, there is a limit to how much you can earn before they

take away some of your benefits.

So, the answer to your first question is, yes, there is an earnings limit \$22,320 for 2024 if you haven't yet reached your Full Retirement Age. If the annual earnings limit is exceeded, Social Security will take away some of your benefits (\$1 for every \$2 you are over the limit, up to the year you attain FRA when the assessment is less). However, if you have already reached your Full Retirement Age the earnings limit no longer applies and you can earn as much as you like without consequence. And here's a nuance to be aware of: if you work and exceed the earnings limit and have some benefits withheld as a result, when you reach your FRA, you will get time credit for any months you didn't get benefits, which will result in your monthly amount being a bit higher after your FRA.

Regarding Cost of Living Adjustment, everyone, without exception, who has earned a Social Security benefit and reached eligibility age (62) receives the annual COLA increase whether they are already collecting their benefits or not. If you're not yet collecting, the COLA is added to your "primary insurance amount" or "PIA" on which your benefit will be based when you claim.

If you are already collecting SS, COLA will be added to your gross monthly SS benefit amount. However, since there was a \$9.80 increase in the 2024 Medicare Part B premi-

um, and since the Part B premium is taken from everyone's SS benefit payment, Social Security recipients enrolled in Medicare Part B will not see the full 3.2% COLA in their net monthly Social Security payment. Everyone will receive the COLA increase, but no one enrolled in Medicare Part B will get the full COLA increase in their net SS payment because some of the COLA increase is used to pay their increased Medicare premium.

Social Security's rules are myriad and often confusing, but no question is too simple to be asked. The AMAC Foundation's Social Security Advisory Service is available, at no charge, to answer all your Social Security questions - SSAdvisor@amacfoundation.org via email or call 1-888-750-2622.

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

June question for the Garden Lady



by Roberta McQuaid

A line, who gardens is Springfield wrote in with this question for the Garden Lady: "In my yard I have several trees with a grey/white substance. A plant expert at Sixteen Acres Garden Center diagnosed it as lichen. He said there was nothing I could do to treat it. This substance is covering my trees. Could lime on the soil help? My soil is acidic. I also have Japanese maple trees. I do not want lichen to attack them. There has to be a solution. Thank you for your assistance."

This was one of my more interesting questions!

Lichen is a living organism that is part fungus, part algae. It grows on many different things, from rocks, to trees, even the ground and other surfaces like gravestones and metal fences.

As far as your trees go, it isn't hurting them.

Because it grows on the surface of the bark, it doesn't affect the vascular system of the tree. In other words, it doesn't rob the tree

of vital nutrients or moisture because it cannot penetrate that part of the plant; it is only on the surface.

Lichen simply needs sunlight, moisture from the air and a place to attach! Kind of amazing, if you think of it.

I realize you don't like it though, so what can we do?

One expert recommended spraying a soapy solution (made with a mild detergent) on the lichen and rubbing it off with a soft brush. I would be extra careful if I did that, especially on young trees or trees that have soft bark.

As you may have gathered, liming the soil will not help.

Melissa wrote in with this question: "Lilacs are among my favorite bushes! I really wish they had a longer bloom time than they do - doesn't everyone!? I didn't have as many flowers as I should have this year. I think my shrub needs to be pruned. Can you please advise? I remember hearing that you shouldn't do it too late in the summer, and how much is too much? I have some old stems that are a good 5-6 inches in diameter. I think they need to go but I wanted to hear what you had to say. Thank you!"

Here are the basics of lilac pruning, starting with deadheading. As soon as possible after the flowers have gone by it's important to remove spent blossoms down to the first leaf.

By doing this you will stop seed forma-



tion, energy will be conserved and redirected to next season's flower production. Since buds are set in summer you should tackle any necessary stem or branch pruning soon after flowering.

If pruning takes place in fall, winter, or in spring prior to bloom there is a good chance you will cut off next year's flowers!

How do you know if pruning is necessary?

One reason to prune would be because your flowers are out of reach- the bushes have simply gotten too tall. Another reason, and it usually joins the first, would be that the main stems have gotten woody and unsightly - this sounds like your concern.

Consider rejuvenating the plant.

Start in the center of the bush at ground level and work out, cutting out the oldest stems. Then concentrate on reducing the overall height to 6-8 feet.

Severely overgrown lilacs can be handled in this manner over a three year period, pruning out 1/3 each year. You will see flower production increase dramatically if you follow these directions.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 31 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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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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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.

HHS, from page 1

honors and 11 with a seal of biliteracy. They had all worked hard throughout their high school careers to be able to walk across the stage on Friday, May 31. As the students entered their graduation ceremony, they were cheered on by all of the staff at HHS, who lined up around the entrance to the field where their ceremony took place. All of the staff were beyond proud of their students for reaching this moment. "We, everyone here, all the staff members over there, your families, we're all proud of you," Superintendent Anthony Soto said.

Soto also took a moment to give the gathered seniors a bit of advice for the lives they have ahead of them. He warned them that not everything would be easy, nor would it all go according to plan, but he encouraged them to never give up.

"Nine years ago the mayor ran for treasurer of Holyoke and didn't get it, but he didn't give up," Soto said. "He went out, he got experience, and now he stands here in front of you, addressing you as mayor because he didn't give up."

There was one student who stood out as a reminder to all to always persevere. Tatiana Restrepo was selected as the perseverance speaker for the graduation ceremony.

Restrepo had moved to the U.S. in her freshman year of high school, not knowing a word of English. Despite this, she worked hard and graduated with high honors, a seal of biliteracy, a member of national honor society and having already started early college courses.

"I won't lie and say it was easy," she said. "But my heart knew there was something greater for which I had to keep fighting and I knew that so much effort and pain would pay off."

Restrepo had worked hard, and

Mayor Joshua Garcia, who had taken her into his home, was proud of all she had accomplished.

"She has high honors, the seal of biliteracy, and this is largely because we have a community that allows our students to feel like they belong," Garcia said.

Garcia emphasized the importance of pushing through hard moments, and also finding belonging.

"You've grown up in Holyoke where diversity is unifying and embraced," Garcia said. "And because of your experience here you are far more prepared than kids growing up in communities like Amherst or Northampton or South Hadley."

Student speakers also emphasized the community they found in Holyoke and at HHS.

"We've shared laughter and tears, victories and setbacks and through it all, we've grown stronger," Salutatorian Ava

Tellier said. "We've learned so much, not just in our classes, but from each other."

Despite starting high school in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the students had formed strong friendships and they had succeeded.

"During that time some of us managed to forge friendships that are still going to this day, even with these challenges that made our freshmen year far from normal, we still got through it," Valedictorian Rebecca Romero said.

All of the students had gone through hardships, but they came out stronger, learning from their experience.

The students graduated with some final advice from McKenna ringing in their ears.

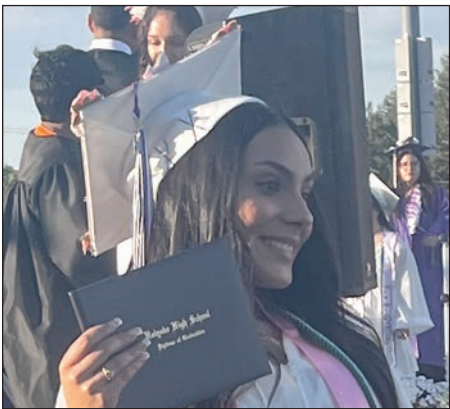
"Listen to those that are telling you that you can do it, that you will make it and that you are unstoppable," McKenna said. "Believe in yourself, believe you can do it and keep working hard until you get to where you want to be."



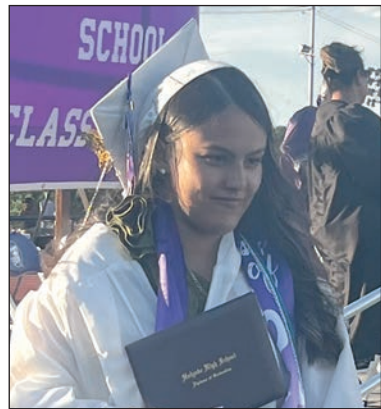
The graduating seniors from Holyoke High School enjoyed entering their graduation ceremony to the cheers of the crowd.



The Holyoke High School band and orchestra performed music throughout the graduation ceremony.



Jada Carrasquillo celebrates receiving her diploma.



Savannah Bigio was proud to receive her diploma.



Veronica Colon celebrates receiving her diploma.



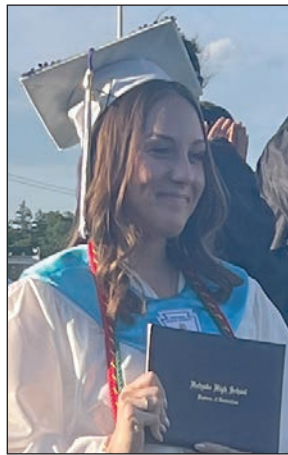
Eddie Bauzo Colon celebrates receiving his diploma. *Turley photos by Quinn Suomala*



Superintendent Anthony Soto gave the graduating seniors some advice during his speech at the graduation ceremony.



Valedictorian Rebecca Romero receives her diploma.



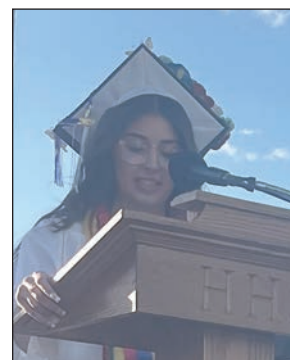
Salutatorian Ava Tellier receives her diploma.



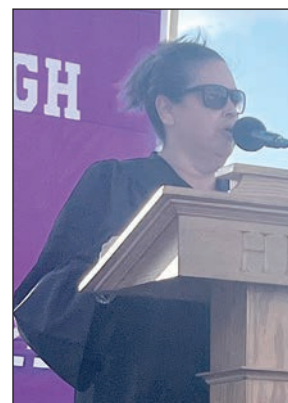
Holyoke High School Principal Lori McKenna kicked off the graduation ceremony by taking a selfie with the senior class, all of whom had props for the photo.



The Holyoke High School Madrigal Choir performed "God Bless America."



Perseverance Speaker Tatiana Restrepo shared her story of hard work throughout her time at Holyoke High School.



Pro Tem Vice Chair Mildred Lefebvre congratulated the seniors on their graduation.



School Committee Member Rosalee Tensley Williams read one of her poems to the seniors.



The class of 2024 seniors moved their tassels on their caps from the right to the left.



Mayor Joshua Garcia and Superintendent Anthony Soto led the procession of the school committee members and the class of 2024 graduates.

Turley photos by Quinn Suomala



Class of 2024 seniors lined up to receive their diplomas.



Mayor Joshua Garcia reminded graduates of all the skills they had to be proud of thanks to growing up in Holyoke.



Class of 2024 President Feliz Santiago was excited to receive his diploma.



Class of 2024 Kal Rosado received a diploma.



Valedictorian Issac Rosado-Cruz showed his gratitude to his family and loved ones who supported him throughout his education.



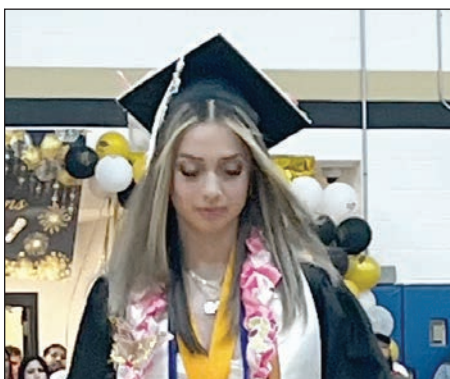
Pro Tem Vice Chair of the School Committee Mildred Lefebvre gave some words of advice to the graduating class of 2024.



Dean Technical High School Principal Roseanne Caracciolo offered words of congratulations to the gathered seniors.



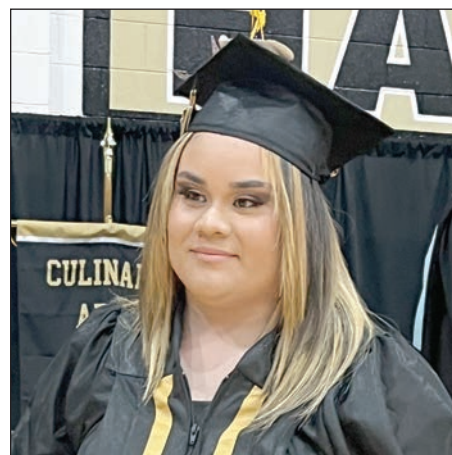
Superintendent/Receiver Anthony Soto gave his congratulations and some words of advice to the Dean Technical High School graduates.



Salutatorian Dayshaliz Torres thanked the Dean Technical High School staff for their support of her and her classmates throughout their time at the school.



Martin Phillips receives his diploma.



Tanairy Carrasquillo receives her diploma.



Robert Rosario Lanauze was proud to receive his diploma.

DEAN, from page 1

Public Schools and we are extremely proud of you," Superintendent/Receiver Anthony Soto said.

Both Soto and Garcia highlighted that in Holyoke students receive more than an education in school, they receive one in life.

"As Holyokers, let me tell you, you know a lot, more than what you probably think," Garcia said. "You know what you learned in the classroom, which is what got you here tonight...you are also educated in the neighborhoods in which you are from. You know about struggle and hardship, you know firsthand about social justice and you also know about social injustice."

Garcia emphasized that by living in Holyoke students learned about different cultures, ethnicities and traditions. He also made sure to congratulate students on being bilingual.

"Only 20% of Americans that live in the United States speak two or more languages," Garcia said.

Caracciolo took the time to congratulate the graduates for facing down the challenge of COVID-19 and succeeding despite the obstacles it put in their paths.

"You started high school without being in a building," Caracciolo said. "You started high school, to meet all new faces, but you didn't get to see each other outside of the masks you had to wear."

She commended the students' abilities to succeed, to begin their high school education and make friends with those around them even without being able to attend in person.

"You made friends without faces," Caracciolo said. "You made real friends of the heart. Do you realize how amazing and resilient you had to be? This celebration is not only to award certificates and diplomas, this is to celebrate your perseverance in a world turned upside down."

Caracciolo was correct that the students had formed tight friendships and bonds throughout their time at Dean Tech.

Class President Felix Santiago highlighted how important it was that all the students of the class of 2024 had supported each other throughout their high school careers.

"I can definitely say that we all helped each other and we all moved together," Santiago said. "We're all making friends that will be together for the rest of our lives, whether we're across the world from each other or across the street, we will forever be the class of 2024."

The students also took the time to thank and honor the staff at Dean Tech for all that they did in order to help the students get to graduation.

"It's evident that the CTE teachers are dedicated to our success," Salutatorian Dayshaliz Torres said. "This school has provided us with invaluable

experiences, friendships, job opportunities and love."

The class of 2024 also wanted to acknowledge and show their gratitude to their families who supported them throughout their education.

"I want to express my deepest gratitude to our parents, guardians and loved ones," Valedictorian Issac Rosado-Cruz. "Thank you for your endless sacrifices and belief in our potential. Your faith in us has been a driving force in our success and today we share this achievement with you."

The ceremony itself ended with final words of congratulations and advice from Caracciolo before the students took their tassels from right to left and officially became graduates from Dean Tech.

"This phase of life that ends today is just a start as you find your way," Caracciolo said. "We know that you have every tool to face the world beyond this school. At last, we get to make it clear that you are done with your time here."

SPORTS

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Knights ousted in opening round

WEST SPRINGFIELD – Though the Holyoke High School boys volleyball team was on the road to start the Division 2 State Tournament, they did not have to go far as they traveled to neighboring West Springfield in the Round of 32. Unfortunately, the Knights were defeated in that opening round 3-0. Every set was competitive, but the Terriers simply pulled away each time at the end. Holyoke's season finishes at 13-7.



Ilan Rivera Soler keeps the play going with a set. *Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli*



Michael Melendez looks to set.



Michael Melendez serves the ball away.



Holyoke attempts to block a spike.



Adrian Centeno-Feliciano spikes the ball.



Gedeon Ortiz-Torres bumps to start a play.

Western Mass. Pioneers piling up goals, pick up another shutout



Zach Sauer advances up the field. *Turley photo by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com*

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW— The Western Mass. Pioneers outscored their first four opponents of the regular season, 14-0.

The Pioneers improved to a perfect 4-0-0 and remained in first place in the USL-2 Northeast Division standings with a 5-0 shutout victory over Black Rock FC before a large crowd at Lusitano Stadium in Ludlow, last Friday night.

"It's always very nice to win a home match," said Pioneers head coach Federico Molinari. "We scored a couple of early goals, which took a lot of pressure off the players. The starters and the reserve players played very well tonight. I'm very happy with the per-

formance."

The Seacoast United Phantoms, who are the only USL-2 team to beat the Pioneers on their home turf since the start of the 2019 regular season, will be making their only visit to Ludlow during the regular season on Friday night.

"That's going to be a very big match," Molinari added. "The players have been working hard so far this season. We must continue to work hard next week at practice and remain focused."

While the Pioneers will have a full week to get ready for the home match, the Phantoms (3-0-0) were scheduled to play at Block Rock FC

See PIONEERS, page 8

Blue Sox manage just one hit in season opener

LYNN, MA – Michael O'Connor broke up the Navigators' combined no-hit bid with a two-out double in the top of the eighth inning.

That was the only hit the Blue Sox could muster up in their first game of the season. Though the Navigators combined for just three hits in the entire game, they found success by taking many walks and won 4-0.

Gregory Shaw and Brett Dunham's starting pitching duel: Both starters did not give up a single hit or run. Shaw recorded 3.2 innings pitched, 0 H, 0 ER, 0 R, 2 BB, 4 K's. Dunham went 5 innings pitched with 0 H, 0 ER, 0 R, 0 BB, 8 K's.

Scoreless 1-4 innings: Very little action in these innings. Just four baserun-

ners combined (three for the Navigators and one for the Blue Sox).

5th Inning: This is where it started to fall apart for the Blue Sox. Andrew Bianco got the game's first hit, advanced to second-base on a walk from Brendan Jones and advanced to third-base on a stolen base. Jones would steal second-base and advance to third-base on a throwing error by Blue Sox catcher Frankie Ferrentino. Ryan Gerety would drive in Jones on a sacrifice fly to make it 2-0.

6th Inning: Blue Sox pitcher Jack Niedringhaus hit his first batter of the inning and walked the next two. Navigators pinch hitter Jesse Jaconski grounded into a

See BLUE SOX, page 8

New names make Bay States Games HOF

BOSTON – Boston Field Hockey Umpires Association, Fred Roach (Softball Coach), and Kevin Cummings (BSG Executive Director) have been selected for induction into the 2024 Bay State Games' Hall of Fame. The inductees received their award at a pre-game ceremony at Fenway Park on May 25 prior to the Red Sox game against the Milwaukee Brewers.

Boston Field Hockey Umpires Association - Field Hockey

The Boston Field Hockey Umpires Association (BFHUA) was founded in the mid 1960's and is the largest field hockey umpire association in Massachusetts with over 200 members that officiate at the middle and high school level. BFHUA has supported Bay State Games on a volunteer basis since the early 1980's. Accepting the award, Patti Rowe has been on the organization's executive board since 1987 and has served as president since 2020.

Fred Roach - Softball

Fred Roach is from South Hadley, Massachusetts. Fred has coached high school softball in western Massachusetts for the past 24 years, currently at West Springfield High School. Fred has been Head Coach of the West Region softball team for 21 seasons, having led the team to many gold medals. He has served as a dedicated volunteer for decades and mentored countless western Massachusetts softball players who have gone on to successful playing careers in college.

Kevin Cummings -

Bay State Games Executive Director

Kevin Cummings from Medford, Massachusetts has been involved with the Bay State Games since 1984 and is celebrating his 40th year with the organization in 2024. Kevin started with the organization as a Sport Coordinator and was promoted to Executive Director in 1999. He has dedicated his life's work to organizing the Bay State Summer & Winter Games and helping to provide

opportunities to tens of thousands of athletes over 40 years. Kevin's induction into the Hall of Fame was a surprise organized by board members and fellow staff members.

The Bay State Games Hall of Fame was created to recognize past participants who have gone on to prestigious and successful athletic careers, as well as former and current coaches, officials, sports organizers, and volunteers who have made significant contributions to the organization throughout its 38-year history. Past inductees among the over 60 previous honorees include the NBA's Dana Barros ('06), Tom Thibodeau ('17) and the late Reggie Lewis ('02); WNBA's Rebecca Lobo ('03), the NHL's Bill Guerin ('09) and Keith Yandle ('14); Major League Baseball's Carlos Pena ('11) and Rich Hill ('13); Olympians Nancy Kerrigan ('07), Jim Pedro ('04) and Bill Cleary ('14) as well as US Paralympic Gold Medalist Joe Lemar ('15).

Thunderbirds to host Community Caravan

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds today announced the return of the T-Birds Community Caravan, with support from MassMutual. This marks the second annual iteration of this community program.

The T-Birds Community Caravan will make a total of three stops in the Springfield area throughout the summer months:

Saturday, June 8 - Look Park

(Northampton), 12 to 3 p.m.

Saturday, July 20 - Forest Park

(Springfield), 1 to 3 p.m.

Saturday, August 17 - Amelia Park

(Westfield), 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Each event will feature an appearance from Thunderbirds mascot Boomer and team staff, as well as a wide variety of activities and vendors, street hockey activities, and various food options. Additionally, each Caravan will also feature a benefiting non-profit organization.

"We're delighted to support the Springfield Thunderbirds not only on the ice but also throughout the local community," said Dennis Duquette, head of community responsibility at MassMutual and president of the MassMutual Foundation. "Their caravan provides terrific activities for local kids and families, and we're proud to be a part of it!"

"After a successful launch of this event last summer, we are excited to see it grow even more this year," said Thunderbirds President Nathan Costa. "We are excited to welcome MassMutual as a new partner for this initiative, and we thank them for sharing in our goal of being champions within our community, even in our offseason months."

More details of each Caravan stop will be announced in the coming weeks on the Thunderbirds website and social media platforms.

PIONEERS, from page 7

on Tuesday night.

"We're now looking forward to next week's home match against Seacoast," said Pioneers forward Alec Hughes. "If we can win that one, we'll be a very tough team to beat this year. We're the top two teams in the Division and it's a game that you always want to win."

A year ago, Seacoast walked into Lusitano Stadium and celebrated a 2-1 victory. It was the Pioneers' only home loss during the 2023 regular season.

The dynamic duo of Scott Testori and Hughes combined to score three of the five Pioneers goals in last Friday's home match against Black Rock.

"I scored two goals and Scott scored one goal, but I also thought we left a few goals on the table," said Hughes, who has another year remaining as a member of the UMass men's soccer team. "We share a lot of the same traits and it's a lot of fun playing with him. We work well together."

Testori, who plays college soccer at UConn, scored the first goal of the match on a tap in during the sixth minute of the opening half.

Patrick Gryczewski was credited with the assist.

During the 20th minute, Hughes added his name to the scoring sheet following a corner kick goal.

Jared Smith sent the ball into the box from the left corner where Hughes headed it into the net past Black Rock

goalie Christian Braae-Anderson.

"It's always nice to score a goal, especially on a set piece," Hughes said. "It gave us an early 2-0 lead."

The Pioneers third goal also came on a header from Aidan Kelly following another corner kick.

Braudilio Rodrigues, who was a member of the Western Mass. Pioneers in 2022, was recognized during a ceremony at halftime. He's currently playing professional soccer for the Seattle Sounders.

Twenty minutes into the second half, Gryczewski sent a pass from the right side to Hughes, who finished off the scoring play by putting a low shot into the left corner of the net.

Lawrence Goddard, who scored a pair of goals in the Pioneers' previous road match against the Albany Rush, replaced Hughes.

About ten minutes later, Mamadi Jiana, who played soccer at Chicopee High School, also came off the bench and scored an unassisted goal.

Holding a commanding 5-0 lead, the only question remaining for the Pioneers faithful supporters during the final twenty minutes of the match was if goalie Gianluca Cersosimo would post his fourth consecutive shutout.

"This is just an amazing team," said Cersosimo, who didn't have to make any saves. "Even though I didn't have to make any saves, I still had to remain focused for the entire match, especially during the final twenty minutes. Shutouts are nice, but the most important thing for

us are the wins."

Cersosimo, who's a second-year member of the Pioneers, graduated from Long Island University. He also replaced Nicholas Oberrauch as the team captain for the match. Oberrauch didn't play against Black Rock because of an injury.



Kerman Sukia traps the ball and looks to pass.
Turley photo by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com



Jared Smith tries to settle the ball.



Gianiuca Cersosimo sends a long kick away.



Santiago Gomez guides the ball left.

BLUE SOX, from page 7

double play to make it 3-0. Matthew Chatelle would score on a wild pitch to make it 4-0 Navigators.

8th inning: Michael O'Connor got the Blue Sox first hit off of relief pitcher Joe Castrichini with two outs in the top of the eighth inning.

Walk Trouble: The Blue Sox pitching staff recorded a total of nine walks.

Stolen Bases: The Navigators stole a total of five bases.

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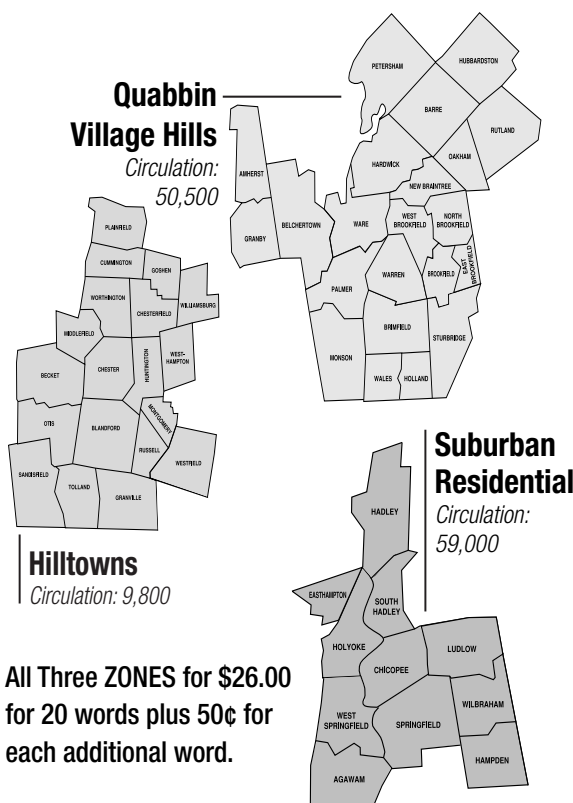
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In The News

LEFEBVRE, from page 1

anything stating that the mayor had to be chair.

"The mayor may preside, he doesn't have to but he may preside, he may vote but he's not required to vote and any person that is elected to be a chairperson is done by a majority vote of all the members of the school committee," Mantolesky said.

Therefore, there must be a majority vote of every single member of the school committee in order to elect a chairman.

Mantolesky also wanted to clarify to the committee the function of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 43, which does state within it that a mayor should be chair of a school committee. However, she stated that this does not apply to Holyoke.

"Case law has come out, that is decades old, that essentially says that that statute, unless you choose one of the plans that are stated in the later section of that statute...the entire statute does not apply to you," Mantolesky said.

Given this information, Mantolesky encouraged the committee to elect a pro tem vice chair, and she also encouraged them to continue to look into the matter of electing a chair.

"I think you should keep a vice chair but I also think you should take this time to also elect a chairperson, just considering the language we have now, or you could table it," Mantolesky said.

The school committee was unable to vote on the matter of committee chair that evening, as

the item was not on the agenda. Additionally, they wanted to wait until there was further information revealed on the matter to make any final decisions.

For now they decided to elect a pro tem vice chair in order to give the committee and the city solicitors enough time to look for further information on committee policy and the city charter in order to decide how to best proceed with this matter.

"At least from now to Jan 2 we won't be out of line...and that will give us from now until our normal voting day in January to look into the minutes, to find some information somewhere that says otherwise," Garcia said. "So elect a vice chair and just continue what we're normally doing because then we won't be in conflict with anything."

Public Notices

NOTICES, from page 9

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Hampden Division Docket No. HD24P1194EA Estate of: Laura Talbot Also Known As: Laura Ferro Date of Death: 04/07/2024 INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Benjamin Ferro of Holyoke, MA.**

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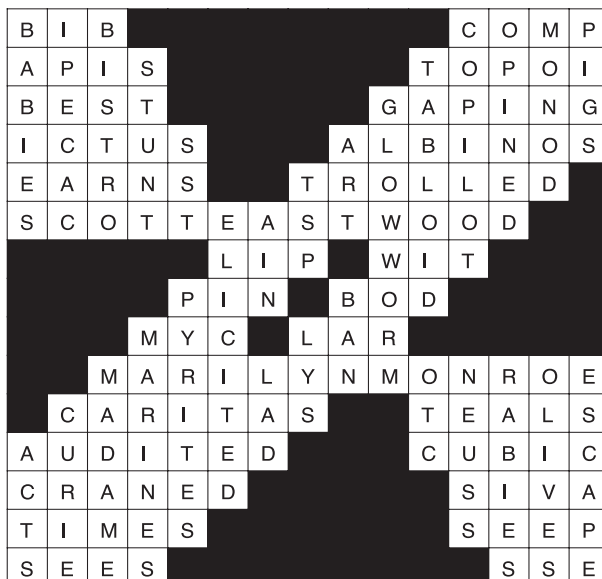
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TRADES, from page 1

vice president of LiftTruck Parts and Service, talked about her journey in getting into mechanics and electronics.

Sotolotto hoped her presentation would inspire some of the girls to join mechanics and electronics work.

"I would love to see more women get involved in it," she said. "I feel like it is something that we're lacking these days, people in the trades, and I think it would be good for young girls to see that it's a good opportunity for them."

This is not the first time that Girls Inc. has put on such an event. They first began the program during the pandemic as a panel.

"We had tradeswomen talk about why they love their job and how they got into it," Gerena said.

After that program they did take a break while they were moving into their new building, but they were excited to bring the program back and in person for this year.

Already Gerena has already seen programs similar to this have results. Lieutenant Maria Plechar from the fire department shared a story of one of her own experiences with such a program.

"I came to Girls Inc. many years ago and there was this girl and she said, 'I want to be a firefighter,'" Plechar said. "So I told her when she was ready to come see me and I gave her the website and, sure enough, she became a firefighter."

Gerena really enjoys doing the program and hopes to be able to make it into an annual event for the kids.

"I just love when we can get the youth and the community together," she said. "I think it's just such a special sauce and being able to provide that is such a big goal of ours."



The young ladies had fun seeing the fire truck at the Girls Inc. "Women in Trades" event. *Turley photos by Quinn Suomala*



FireFighter Chris Stortz put on the full firefighting equipment to show the kids.



The kids were able to look inside the fire truck at the event.



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