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Holiday change sent back

City Council discusses changing Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day

By Amanda Munson
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HOLYOKE – On June 17, the City Council discussed the possibility of changing Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day and amend it throughout the city. The Committee on Ordinance referred this order to the City of Holyoke to amend it, update the wording and formally adopting it, with the final vote was to leave to withdraw item 24.

Ward 4 City Councilor Kocayne S. Givner was in favor of making a motion to send item 24 back to committee which was passed and followed by a discussion, beginning with Ward 3 City Councilor David K. Bartley. “I’m just curious, here on the committee we took this up a couple of times. We just heard from the chair of doing four-hour meetings and doing the people’s business, we did it once and took a vote to move it forward to tonight, what’s the problem? Let’s take the vote, one way or the other, we’re going to change it or we’re not going to change it. This is rhetorical but we did this in the last meeting, we discussed this and went through the arguments.”

Councilor Kevin A. Jourdain agreed with Bartley, “I really don’t think we should send this back to committee. The gentleman has been dead for 500 years, there is no new information that’s going to come to light between now and when we come for a committee meeting. The decision to throw Mr. Columbus under the bus and back it over him, I just assume have that discussion tonight, take the vote and

See HOLIDAY, page 6

PRIDE rings through city

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – Holyoke celebrated their annual Pride Fest on Saturday, June 21.

Everyone in Holyoke and surrounding communities were welcome to come out and enjoy a day full of fun.

There were a variety of performers throughout the day, dozens of vendors and community resources.

City Councilor Juan Anderson-Burgos had worked hard to get the variety of entertainment for the day.

“The LGBTQ+ community has a big range of different styles,” Anderson-



The Holyoke community came together to celebrate Pride Month.

Turley photos by Quinn Suomala



Crocheters Sabrina La’Strain and Jax Jazzflower had a stand at the Pride event held last weekend. See more photos on page 12.

Burgos said. “It’s a culture that brings in so many walks of life, so we are trying to create a space that any member of the LGBTQ+ community can come and feel like they identify with what they’re seeing here.”

“The thing I really love about Holyoke Pride is the diversity because it reflects the community...and it’s really good to have the different faces we see in our community on stage and hearing all of their talent,” Singer/Songwriter Deanna Bach said.

Anderson-Burgos was also excited to be giving the community this day of celebration.

“This event is meant to build community,” Anderson-Burgos said. “It is meant to educate and bring people together. At Pride we celebrate ourselves and we try to help others who don’t get it to get it and to be more accepting.”

Anderson-Burgos and other officials all emphasized the importance of Pride in Holyoke.

“I think it’s really important to come out and show support to all of our fellow humans,” Senator John Velis said.

“We continue to be a community where we welcome everybody,” Mayor

Joshua Garcia said. “I know there is a whole lot happening across this country and even the world, but just understand that the space you are currently in, it’s a safe space.”

The community members and performers at Pride were all grateful for the safe space it provided.

“It’s important to have these kind of celebrations to remind us where we come from and where we’re going and, especially, that we’re not alone,” Bach said.

One of the big performers of the weekend was Alyssa Hunter, who is a Puerto Rican drag queen.

Anderson-Burgos was grateful for her for taking the time to come out and support Holyoke Pride. He also enjoyed seeing the Holyoke community welcome her.

“The highlight of the day was when Alyssa Hunter received proclamations from the city council, Senator Velis’s office, Representative Duffy’s Office and the mayor’s office,” Anderson-Burgos said. “She got emotional and said that, out of all the events she has been to around the world, she has never felt more welcome than she has been in Holyoke.”

Velis also took the time

to celebrate the steps he and State Representative Patricia Duffy have taken to support LGBTQ+ individuals here in Massachusetts.

He recounted that he was at the head of ensuring that veterans who had been dismissed from the military due to the Don’t Ask Don’t Tell policy would still get their state military benefits.

Additionally, he ensured that these people would also get their welcome home bonus when they returned from being deployed.

It is progress like that, and honoring past LGBTQ+ community members, that adds to the celebration of pride.

Anderson-Burgos is determined to keep Pride going, so that people can always know that they are welcome.

“I didn’t have Pride when I was younger...and I thought I was broken and I hated myself, I thought there was something wrong with me,” Anderson-Burgos said. “It was only once I started meeting more gay people and going to Pride that I realized I wasn’t alone. So if we’re going to celebrate, then that right there is the main reason we do it, so that no one ever feels alone again.”

State ‘officially’ announces end of receivership

By Gregory A. Scibelli
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HOLYOKE – On Monday evening at the Holyoke School Committee meeting, representatives from the state government announced the formal end to state receivership for the Holyoke Public Schools on June 30.

On Tuesday, July 1, local control of the public schools will return to the city.

The Capacity Building Plan was completed by the school committee, and was part of the conditions set forth by the state.

“Holyoke has worked hard to regain local control of its schools, and this is a great moment for the city, students, educators and families,” stated Gov. Maura Healey. “I’m grateful for the leadership of Mayor Joshua Garcia, the Holyoke School Committee and the educators of Holyoke for partnering with our administration to prepare for this milestone, and I’m confident that they will continue to successfully move the district forward.”

Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll praised the fact Holyoke will be the first school district to leave receivership.

“Holyoke is the first school district to exit state receivership, and they should take pride in that accomplishment,” said Driscoll. “With the support of local elected officials and DESE, and with Anthony Soto leading the district as interim superintendent, families can expect a smooth transition.”

Education Secretary Patrick A. Tutwiler said the schools will continue to work toward improvements, and the schools will receive support.

“While school improvement work will continue in Holyoke, it is time for local officials to take the lead,” said Tutwiler, who also serves as interim commissioner. “Community stakeholders have consistently shared their input into the district’s decision-making processes, and the School Committee partnered with a

Community Advisory Team as part of the capacity-building plan. This experience is a strong foundation for the district’s future.”

Mayor Joshua Garcia, who also chairs the school committee, was pleased to hear the announcement.

“This is a proud day for Holyoke,” said Garcia. “Our dedicated educators, resilient students, supportive families, and engaged community have united to drive this success, reflecting our shared commitment to the bright future of our schools.”

According to a press release from the governor’s office, Holyoke Public Schools serve approximately 4,800 students in preschool through grade 12 and has been in chronically underperforming status (receivership) since 2015. On October

See STATE, page 6

CPA Committee announces application cycle for FY2026

HOLYOKE – The City of Holyoke Community Preservation Act Committee is pleased to announce the opening of their FY26 grant cycle. Potential applicants are invited to submit eligibility application forms by Aug. 15.

Created by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 2000 and adopted by the City of Holyoke in 2016, the purpose of the CPA is to support Historic Preservation, Recreation, Open Space and Community Housing within Holyoke. The Holyoke CPA has funded a variety of popular projects throughout the City includ-

ing the Miracle League Playground, restoration of Lady Liberty at Veterans Park, the ongoing upgrades to Scotts Tower and surrounding park and many others.

Since adoption, the Holyoke CPC has disbursed over \$4.5 million dollars to preserve Holyoke’s character and improve quality of life for its residents. Please visit our website at www.holyokeCPAC.org for more information.

Potential applicants are encouraged to contact CPAC Administrator Naomi Klayman at klaymann@holyoke.org with questions and for support in the application process.

“Holyoke has worked hard to regain local control of its schools, and this is a great moment for the city, students, educators and families,”

- Gov. Maura Healey

Hibernians award scholarships to local students

HOLYOKE – Founded in Holyoke in 1880, the Ancient Order of Hibernians continue to live by their motto of friendship, unity, and true Christian charity. Don't be fooled or misled by the name "Ancient Order" for this national organization. This organization of Hampden/Hampshire Counties is very much in tune to being proactive in meeting the needs of the community. They ask prospective members "To be a voice for Ireland; Be part of the solution to help our neighbors-feed the hungry; cloth the needy; beautify the

city; award scholarships to the next generation; sponsor youth teams, and yes have fun." Presidents Joe O'Connor (AOH) and his wife Mary Kate O'Connor (LAOH) have seen a significant increase in membership "due to the ongoing commitment of our community involvement to several organizations such as Kate's Kitchen, Margaret's pantry, Soldiers Home, Homework House, Children's Museum, and to our commitment to providing scholarships for young women and men to further their education."

The Hibernian Scholarship was named after Hibernian and Massachusetts State Senate President Maurice A. Donahue in 1980 who in 1968 challenged people at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago to help others: "Let us place ourselves in the shoes of the less fortunate, and determine humanely what we all must do-and do it." The Scholarship Committee chose outstanding young people to receive scholarships. Local winners included: Emma Kelley of Holyoke who

will attend Northeastern University to become a Physical Therapist, Peter Pluta of Holyoke who will attend Springfield Technical Community College to study Engineering, and Riley Mary Allen of Holyoke who will attend Westfield State University to become a therapist. Scholarship Chairperson Paul O. Mengel recently released a statement on the scholarship recipients: "These four people represent the core values that were so important to the man for whom the scholarship was named. Maurice A.

Donahue believed deeply in academic excellence, community service, and love of Irish History and Culture. He would be very proud of these scholarship award recipients." The scholarships will be presented at the Hibernian Traditional Annual Summer Picnic on Sunday, Aug. 24 at Hamel's Summit View Pavilion 555 Northampton St., Holyoke. For Reservations contact Fran Hennessey at 413-785-5687 or Joe O'Connor at 413-627-7148 by Aug. 19. The public is invited to attend.

Garden Tour on June 28

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Preservation Trust has announced it will host the Fifth Annual Garden Tour in the city. This year's event will feature new gardens, a photography contest, a tree tour with Forester Tom Kass, and a lecture from Bernie Conway, Assistant Gardener at NY Botanical Garden. The event will be held on Saturday, June 28 and admission is \$20 per person with children 12 and under free of charge. For more information and to purchase tickets, go to www.holyokepreservationtrust.org

City's fireworks fly tonight



HOLYOKE – The City of Holyoke will be hosting the annual Fourth of July fireworks on Friday, June 27 (with a rain-date of June 29). The event will take place on the grounds of Holyoke Community College, at 303 Homestead Avenue. Vendors interested in taking part in the event should contact the Parks and Recreation Department before June 13, for a permit application at 413-322-5620. We encourage everyone to come early to enjoy

the music and food from a variety of vendors as well as many children's activities. The event begins at 6 p.m., with the fireworks display scheduled to start at dusk. Many of the streets around the college will close early, please plan for alternate routes. We are currently searching for volunteers, please call the Mayor's Office at 413-561-1600. If you are planning to bring your dog to the fireworks, the dog must be always kept on a leash.

HCC offers free AI essentials course

HOLYOKE – Dive into the world of artificial intelligence with a free, 12-week training course offered by Holyoke Community College in partnership with the nonprofit CanCode Communities. "AI Essentials," a real-time, instructor-led online training program runs on Tuesdays and Thursdays, June 24 to Sept. 11, from 5:45 to 8:45 p.m. each day. The class is free to eligible Massachusetts residents. Over 12 weeks, participants will learn the fundamentals of AI, including

prompt engineering, tokenization, embeddings, model structures, retrieval-augmented generation (RAG), agency, compute, and ethics. The course emphasizes practical applications, leveraging tools such as Google AI Studio, n8n, and OpenWebUI to explore how AI models are built, trained, and deployed in the real world. "Along the way, participants will gain valuable professional development experience, enhancing their technical skills and problem-solving abilities," said Arvard Lingham, HCC

executive director of community education and corporate training. Tuition assistance is available for qualified Massachusetts residents 18 and older. Limited seats are available. Laptops and WiFi hotspots for Internet access will be provided for students who need them. Funding for the program comes from the Western Mass Alliance for Digital Equity. To sign up for classes, please send an email to admissions@albanycan-code.org, or go to cancode.org/apply-now and choose "AI Essentials."

Tykes Tuesday back in the summer

HOLYOKE – Summer is just around the corner and that means Tykes Tuesday is back for free family fun at Holyoke Mall Tuesday mornings from July 8 through Aug. 19. Tykes Tuesday, sponsored by The Care Center, features seven weeks of free family activities and exclusive discounts on Tuesdays starting at 11 a.m. on the lower level in Macy's Court. The kids' program is free, open to the public, and is best suited for children ages 12 and under. This year's activities include live animal

ambassadors, a magic show, free trampoline park admission, and more. Tykes Tuesday Schedule: • July 8: Wildlife on Wheels with Forest Park Zoo • July 15: Adventures at Altitude Trampoline Park (Limited Availability, Registration Full) • July 22: Celebrate Christmas in July with Mrs. Claus, Face Painting and More • July 29: Magic Show with Ed Popielarczyk • August 5: Meet and Greet with the Holyoke Fire Department and Belchertown

PD Dog • August 12: Superhero Training Academy with Face Painting and Balloon Art • August 19: Funtastic Forces with Mad Science Families are encouraged to pre-register at www.holyokemall.com/tykes-tuesday-2025/. Plus, families who come to all 7 weeks of Tykes Tuesday will be entered to win a Grand Raffle Prize of a Back-to-School gift pack. Those interested can get a loyalty punch card at the Holyoke Mall registration table on July 8.

Beaver's Club celebrates 80th anniversary

HOLYOKE – The Beaver's Club of Western Massachusetts celebrated their 80th anniversary with a dinner at the Delaney house in Holyoke on Saturday June 14. The club honored past presidents and presented a program highlight their charity projects and giving through the years. The Beaver's were formed on June 14, 1945 and adopted the motto "dedicated to service. The club is a service club open to all professional men of French and/or French-Canadian ancestry. "We were able to identify 110 and organizations that have been helped by the club in our 80 years" said current president and Club

historian Jim Brunault. "For many of the groups we have done several projects over time. We were able to identify at least 13 projects done for Providence Ministries in Holyoke and multiple projects done at Jericho-the bureau for exceptional children and adults" said Brunault. "This includes what was probably the club's largest project ever the building of the original barn for the Therapeutic Equestrian Center at Jericho. Other large projects have included building a dormitory at Camp Jolee and a pavilion at the Laughing Brook nature preserve in Hampden, MA. "Eleven past presidents were able to join us for the evening, and it was a great

night. Truly wonderful to see everyone and celebrate the club's achievements over time" said the chairman for the event Charles Davignon, a Past president of the club and the outgoing chairman of the board. "Altogether we had 50 members and guests without farthest past president coming up from Florida for the occasion and another coming in from South Carolina." The Beaver's is open to any professional men of French and/or French-Canadian ancestry and can be reached at any time C/o of the Beaver's Club of Western Massachusetts, PO Box 161, Holyoke, MA 01041 or follow the club on Facebook as the Beavers Club of Western Mass.

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SHHS 1975's 50th reunion

SOUTH HADLEY – Save the Date! South Hadley High School Class of 1975 50th reunion will be held on October 4, 2025. For more information and to be added to our email list, please contact either Karla (Koenig) Zukowski at kzukowski57@comcast.net or MaryPat (Fenton) Krumsiek at mpkrumsiek@ahoo.com.

Commerce 50th Class Reunion

SPRINGFIELD – The High School of Commerce Class of 75 is holding their 50th class reunion. It will take place at the Storowton Tavern, West Springfield, MA, on Saturday August 30, 2025 at 6 p.m. Contact Janet at jan0826@comcast.net to learn more.

COLLEGE NOTES

Colleges, universities announces graduates, Dean's Lists

Elms announces Dean's List

CHICOPEE – The College of Our Lady of the Elms has named the following students to the Dean's List for the spring 2025 semester. Congratulations to all the students who are named to the list.

Anna Alicea, Francisco Almonte, Shahla Colon, Trinity Colon, Felix Gutierrez, Jenna Hobert, Alysha Izquierdo, Emmie Lundgren, Ruth Ortiz-Torres, Liam Pond, Isabelle Salgado, Adalise Torres and Talia Uribe of Holyoke.

Elms College Spring 2025 Graduates

CHICOPEE – Elms College congratulates 279 students who graduated in Spring 2025.

Patrick Connon, Diana Figueroa, Chloe Gerhardson, Felix Gutierrez, Jessenia Perez and Sabrina Roman Hernandez of Holyoke.

AIC students named to Spring 2025 Dean's List

SPRINGFIELD – American International College (AIC) in Springfield, MA, is proud to announce that 468 students have earned a place on the Dean's List for the spring 2025 semester. These full-time students have attained GPAs ranging from 3.3 to 4.0. AIC applauds the dedication and achievements of these enterprising students:

Leslie Brazeau, Willie Lopez Morales, Elyse Manzi, Keila Oquendo and Dialis Santiago of Holyoke.

American International College celebrates graduates

SPRINGFIELD – American International College (AIC) held its 140th Commencement Ceremony on May 4, 2025, at the MassMutual Center in Springfield, honoring the graduates in the Class of 2025.

Amie Parnes, senior political correspondent for The Hill covering national politics, delivered the Commencement address to undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral recipients. In recognition of her distinguished contributions to political journalism and her commitment to fostering public understanding of national affairs through rigorous and insightful reporting, Parnes was awarded an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters

from American International College. Parnes is the co-author, with Jonathan Allen, of three political books published by Crown/Penguin Random House: *Lucky: How Joe Biden Barely Won the Presidency*; the no. 1 New York Times best seller *Shattered: Inside Hillary Clinton's Doomed Campaign*; and *HRC: State Secrets and the Rebirth of Hillary Clinton*, also a New York Times best seller. Their most recent book, *Fight: Inside the Wildest Battle for the White House*, was published in April 2025 by Morrow/HarperCollins and became another no. 1 New York Times best seller.

Leslie Brazeau of Holyoke with a Bachelor of Arts in Communications and Public Relations

Madeline Jacyszyn of Holyoke with a Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies

Joshua Frometa of

Holyoke with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in Management

Jack Narey of Holyoke with a Bachelor of Science in Health Science

Aidan Sullivan of Holyoke with a Bachelor of Science in Educational Studies

Elizabeth Winberg of Holyoke with a Bachelor of Science in Health Science

Dialis Santiago of Holyoke with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing in Nursing

Naisha Ortiz of Holyoke with a Master of Business Administration in Business Administration

Amy Person of Holyoke with a Master of Science in Nursing in Nursing

AIC extends its congratulations to the Class of 2025 and wishes all graduates continued success in their future endeavors.

Wistariahurst Museum to offer passport series

HOLYOKE – Take a trip to Wistariahurst Museum this summer for our Summer Passport Series at Sensory Friendly Sunday Fundays. We have an array of themed Sunday Fundays that will delight the whole family visit after visit. Wistariahurst visitors will get their own passport that will be stamped at every event. Guests will get rewarded prizes based on how many stamps they collect by the end of the Summer Passport Series. From toys, to coloring books, to limited Wistariahurst merch, you don't want to miss earning a prize! Aiming for the biggest prize? Make sure to visit Wistariahurst during each of the following Sunday Funday events:

June 8, June 22, July 13, July 27, Aug. 10, Aug. 24, Sept. 7, and Sept. 21 all from 12 to 3 p.m. Each day features a different

events from Celebrate Pride and Juneteenth to Garden Grooves and Dino Days.

Each of these events has unique activities and opportunities for engagement. From Drag Storytime at Celebrate Pride, to a Dino Dance Party at Dino Days, there's something new every visit. Sunday Fundays are designed for guests of all ages, with our friends with sensory sensitivities in mind. Throughout the first floor, children will be able to interact with fine motor activities, puzzles, and board games to engage with and enjoy. Gross motor activities like hula hoops, hopscotch, and bounce balls will get everyone moving and grooving. Need to take a break from the energy? A low sensory area will be available to guests as well. Throughout the first floor, guests can also interact with activities such as our Where's Winston scavenger

hunt. During your self-guided tour, keep your eyes open for our lethargic, little lion. Take a picture or selfie with him and show your picture to our front desk attendant to get an exclusive Winston sticker.

Our Sensory Friendly Sunday Fundays provide an excellent opportunity for families with sensory sensitivities to experience our museum in a relaxed environment at their own pace. Wistariahurst is thrilled to host these open hours, allowing families to explore, discover, and connect with our museum. This is why these events will be free and accessible to the public for all to enjoy. The first event of the Sunday Funday Passport Series is right around the corner. Join us Sunday, June 8 for Celebrate Pride. Pack your bags, pick up your passport, and start collecting stamps and memories.

Tourism committee seeking new members

HOLYOKE – The City of Holyoke is currently seeking enthusiastic and experienced individuals to join its Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC). If you're a hotelier, restaurant owner, or someone with a strong background in the tourism or hospitality industry — we want to hear from you.

Priority will be given to candidates with experience in these areas. We are also looking for a youth member who is under 21 years of age, a Holyoke resident and interested in promoting the positive things happening in Holyoke.

The TAC is a dynamic group made up of tourism experts and community representatives, including voices from iconic local institutions like the Wistariahurst Museum and the International Volleyball Hall of Fame.

Together, the committee advises the city on

all things tourism — from strategy and events to funding and promotion.

This is your chance to get involved, make a real impact, and yes — help give away money.

The TAC helps allocate funding for local events and community projects that make Holyoke a vibrant and welcoming place to visit.

For 2025 TAC utilized funds to support 11 events including:

- Holyoke Pride Festival on June 11
- The Great Holyoke Brink Race on October 11
- Holyoke Paper Fest on June 7
- Paper City Oaks Semi Pro indoor Lacrosse at Fitzpatrick's Arena - Summer 2025
- Holyoke Historical Society Garden Tour July 12
- LOCULUS Presents The Fourth Annual SIDEWAYS DOOR: A

Festival of Ecstasies & Escape Routes September 19 to 21

• Imagined Worlds Mural Project with the Holyoke Children's Museum

• Lemonade & Laughter at the Merry Go Round - fall 2025

• Holyoke Canals and its Mills - fall 2025

• BBJ Spring Spectacular Showing: A free night of musical theater - fall 2025

More information on all these events can be found at [ExploreHolyoke.com](https://www.exploreholyokey.com)

To learn more about TAC, visit <https://www.holyoke.org/departments/tourism-advisory-committee/>.

If you are interested in joining TAC please send cover letter and resume to vega@holyokey.org at the Office of Planning and Economic Development

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SOCIAL SECURITY
Matters

By Russell Gloor



What about non-career Veterans and their VA healthcare?

Dear Rusty:

In your answer to the retired U.S. Navy veteran about why he is forced to enroll in Medicare, you focused on military TriCare's requirement for the member to enroll in Medicare. But you said nothing about regular VA health care. If a non-career veteran is eligible for VA health care, couldn't that be used in place of Medicare?

Signed: Veteran Advocate

Dear Veteran Advocate:

Thank you for your feedback. FYI, I have previously explained numerous times that veterans who rely on the VA for 100% of their healthcare can, indeed, disenroll from Medicare Part B (thus saving the monthly Part B premium). I don't personally recommend it because of my personal experience, but it certainly is possible to do so.

Personally, I use the VA for some of my healthcare needs usually an annual checkup and optometry services at my local VA clinic, which is only a mile away from where I live. But for any extensive treatment needs medical tests, etc., I must travel about 40 miles to the nearest VA hospital facility.

For contrast, I have numerous private healthcare services, specialists and hospitals very near where I live, but to use them under the VA I must get VA preapproval and use only certain VA approved providers, which is inconvenient for me.

Personally, I prefer the freedom to go to any healthcare service provider I choose, without restriction, at any time I need to. So, I use my VA coverage when it is convenient for me, but rely also on non-VA, Medicare-approved specialists who I can choose to use or not at will. For me, it's a matter of convenience and the freedom to use whichever healthcare provider I want.

That said, I fully understand that some veterans rely exclusively on the VA for their healthcare needs, and I have explained

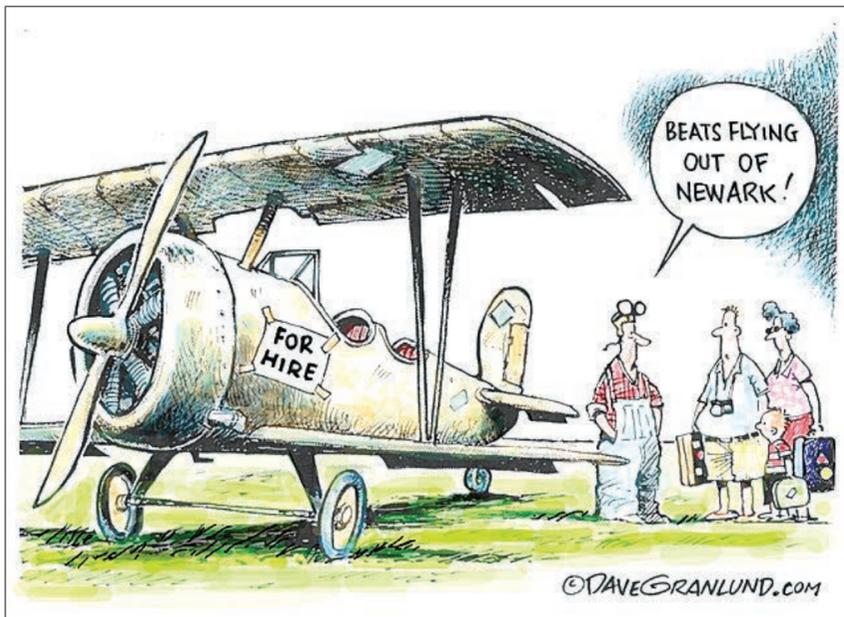
to many who have written to me that they have that option. I have also published several public articles about this as well. Here is one such article:

<https://socialsecurityreport.org/ask-rusty-why-should-a-veteran-pay-for-medicare/>

So, please rest assured that we regularly advise our veterans about their healthcare options under Medicare, including the ability to decline Medicare Part B coverage if they have full VA healthcare coverage. FYI, free Medicare Part A (inpatient hospitalization coverage) is mandatory to collect Social Security after age 65, but Medicare Part B coverage is always optional because there is a premium associated with Part B.

A veteran can decline Medicare Part B coverage and save that monthly premium, but they would need to contact Social Security to do so. Social Security will want to interview the veteran to ensure they are aware of the potential financial consequences of not having Medicare Part B. And they may need to file form CMS-1763 Request for Termination. But a non-career veteran can opt out of Medicare Part B if they get all of their healthcare services through the Veterans Administration.

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



Renovate your strawberry patch, divide irises

I started over with new strawberry plants this year, but for those of you who are completing your harvest, it's high time to renovate your patch so that it will remain productive.

Sure, it will be hard work, but it's absolutely necessary if you want to keep the berries coming!

First, get up the courage to run the lawnmower over your row of strawberries. Yes, you heard correctly. This will give you an opportunity to see what you have to work with in a dense planting, as well as cut down on foliar diseases.

Set the mower at a height of two and a half to three inches and use the bagger attachment if you have one. Small plantings can be clipped away by hand. Compost the leaves away from your patch.

Now, assess your surroundings and think back to when you were doing all that picking. Was your back sore from reaching in to a very wide row? Were most of your berries on the small side? If you answered yes to both of these questions, then serious renovation is in order.

Use the tiller or a shovel to shrink your row back to a manageable width. Fourteen inches is about as wide as the experts recommend. Choose the healthiest part of your row and measure out fourteen inches. Then, remove all the runners that have emerged outside of the boundaries.

Those of us in the business of growing things usually find this part difficult. "Can't just this one stay?" Ease your guilt by giving away the extras; or, use them to start another patch.

Next, get rid of any "mother" plants that are four years or older. Unfortunately, they have aged beyond their productivity. Simply dig them up and send them off to the compost pile.

Finally, remove daughter plants that are spaced closer than four inches from one another—another difficult task, but one that must be accomplished if we want large, healthy berries. As you work within the row, be sure to eradicate any and all



by Roberta McQuaid

that irises need at least six hours of full sun a day for optimal flowering. They despise "wet feet," so plant where drainage is good.

If your soil is lean, compost can be added to richen it up. While you're at it, add a sprinkling of lime as well; irises prefer a soil near neutral. Dig a shallow hole wide enough to fit the rhizome. Make a ridge of soil in the hole for it to sit on so that its fibrous roots can hang down.

The top of the rhizome should be level with the soil surface and exposed, not buried. This goes for bark mulch as well, keep it clear or blooms may be sacrificed. If your irises hardly flower but aren't overcrowded and are planted where they receive enough sun, assess your planting depth and adjust if necessary.

Examine your rhizomes closely when replanting. If you notice a lot of soft, rotten tissue, your iris patch could be infected with the iris borer.

Usually by midsummer, one to one and a half inch larvae have made their way from the leaves into the rhizomes. They hollow out the fleshy roots causing foliage to collapse and rot to take over. Control this pest by proper sanitation.

In the fall, after a hard frost, cut iris foliage back to the ground as low as possible. Throw it and any nearby debris or mulch away. With any luck, overwintering eggs will be removed by your efforts.

In the spring, about the time that the tulips are blooming, inspect iris foliage for chew edges, small holes, or tan colored water marks running down the leaf. If these are present, tiny larvae can be crushed inside the leaf before they burrow into the rhizome.

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.

weeds that you come upon, since these will compete with your strawberry plants for moisture and nutrients.

Now that your patch has been renovated, it's time to reinvigorate. Add an inch or two of compost or aged manure to the row, along with a sprinkling of balance organic fertilizer.

Water at least every other day for the next couple of weeks or until a healthy stand of leaves has returned to the plants. Keep up with weeding, and continue to pinch back runners until frost hits.

Managed in this fashion, a strawberry patch can remain productive for five years or more.

Another favorite plant that may be in need of reinvigoration is your iris. If once upon a time they bloomed strong and now there is barely a blossom to be seen, chances are they are overcrowded. It's time to divide them and replenish their soil.

In our climate, this should be accomplished every three or four years. Surprisingly, and unlike most other perennials, division of irises should take place no later than July or August.

This will give them ample time to take hold in their new location prior to the ground freezing.

At first glance the act of dividing irises may appear to be difficult. An overgrown iris patch does look like a maze of thick roots, but take heart, the rhizomes are shallow rooted and come out of the ground with relative ease.

Start digging at the outer edge of the clump, lifting as you go. Once the entire clump is removed, rhizomes can be pried apart by hand. The healthiest "fans" of foliage are those the furthest from the center. Leave about two inches of rhizome attached to each fan for replanting.

If you are changing your site altogether, keep in mind

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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.

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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The Pemi Loop at sixty

By Julie Midura
Guest Columnist

Last December, I got this harebrained idea to do something CRAZY for my birthday this June. It would be my way of proving to myself that '60' isn't as old as it sounds in my head.

The Pemi Loop-called "the 2nd hardest day hike in the United States" by Backpacker Magazine-is a 32-mile hike that encircles the largest wilderness area in the White Mountains of NH. With 10 summits and 10,500 feet of elevation gain-along with technical climbs and descents-completing this rugged hike in one day would be the hardest endurance challenge I had ever attempted. As such, it would require significant training.

But in January, just one month after the idea took hold, life took a turn when our 1-year-old granddaughter, Charlotte, was diagnosed with inoperable brain cancer. Three months later, in April, our middle daughter's high risk pregnancy with twins became more serious when both babies were diagnosed with heart issues. The nail in the coffin came in May, when our 160-mile backpacking trip on the A.T. through NJ and NY-my one and final opportunity to train for the Pemi Loop-ended just 6 days in. Our youngest daughter had been rushed to the ER with a life-threatening pregnancy complication and was forced to deliver the baby five weeks early. (Mom and baby are now doing well.)

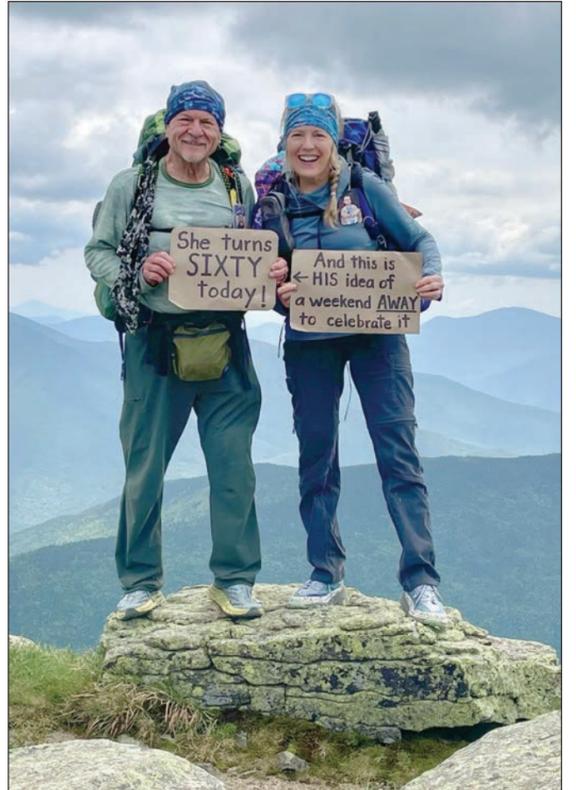
Over the last 6 months, our family has needed us, and my time has been better spent being there for the people I love, rather than spending my weekends training for an epic endurance hike. So I shelved the idea of a solo, single-day Pemi Loop in favor of completing a 'leisurely' three-day Pemi Loop backpacking trip with my husband instead. After all, we wouldn't really need to TRAIN for it... would we?

The short answer, as we discovered last weekend, is "Yes, you DID need to train for it, you fools!"

Although our bodies most definitely took a beating, weary legs and several falls were a small price to pay for admission.

Because I have no desire to carefully preserve this now sixty-year-old body. I prefer to use it up until there is nothing left. To wring out every last bit of my youth on adventures and experiences such as this.

You see, although our bodies most assuredly have a shelf life, there are parts of us that will forever remain ageless. And I plan to carry the best parts of my younger self into my older years. I plan to worry less about



Photos submitted

'acting my age' and spend more time celebrating it. I plan to scramble up steep rock ledges. Watch the sun rise and set from mountaintops. Sleep in the wilderness. Slow dance on summits. Kiss... even when someone is watching.

I plan to slide into the next decade, battered, bruised and bandaged, all while yelling, "Dang, what an amazing ride!"

So on our final day of the trip, I was disappointed to hear Tom say, "I hate to

tell you this, but this will be my last Pemi Loop."

However, he said the same exact thing two years ago when we completed our FOURTH Pemi Loop. I'm secretly hoping that hiker amnesia kicks in again in two years when he turns 70. Because don't you agree that there's no better place to become a septuagenarian than on a walk around the largest wilderness area in New Hampshire?

See you in the wild places, my friends!

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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Computer manufacturer
- 5. Noted space station
- 8. Kurt Russell film "Captain"
- 11. Automaton
- 13. Everyone has one
- 14. Incline from the vertical
- 15. Fights
- 16. Dunn & Bradstreet (abbr.)
- 17. Finishes off
- 18. Places to store things
- 20. Dutch painter Gerard ___
- 21. Smaller quantity
- 22. There's a North, South and Central of these
- 25. In an early way
- 30. More spacious
- 31. Short-term memory

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Creative expression
- 32. One who possesses
- 33. Sesame
- 38. Forbid
- 41. A way to explain
- 43. Not around
- 45. Evoke or suggest
- 47. Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea
- 49. Dekameter
- 50. Fencing sword
- 55. "Luther" actor
- 56. Affirmative (slang)
- 57. Afflicted
- 59. One point north of northeast
- 60. Born of
- 61. Arabic name
- 62. Hong Kong food stall: ___ pai dong
- 63. Not the start
- 64. Post

CLUES ACROSS

- 2. Fiber from the outer husk of a coconut
- 3. City in ancient Syria
- 4. College army
- 5. More disturbed
- 6. Pays no attention to
- 7. Restored
- 8. Competitions
- 9. Lyric poems
- 10. Famed American lawman
- 12. Expression of disappointment
- 14. Scars
- 19. Satisfy
- 23. Central European river
- 24. Brass instrument
- 25. One who gets paid to perform
- 26. Propel with oars
- 27. Long period of time
- 28. Woman (French)

CLUES ACROSS

- 29. Type of plane
- 34. Pitching stat
- 35. Pointed end of a pen
- 36. Pro sports league
- 37. Body part
- 39. Inoffensive
- 40. Yellowish cotton cloth
- 41. Feline
- 42. Does not tell the truth
- 44. Set out to attract
- 45. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation
- 46. Abba __, Israeli politician
- 47. Repair
- 48. Genus of flowering plants
- 51. Tributary of the High Rhine
- 52. Prejudice
- 53. C. European river
- 54. Restrain
- 58. Father

CROSSWORD ANSWER on page 8

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Your Community Church

The Holyoke Sun • JUNE 27, 2025 • 5

MiraVista expands 24-hour admissions

HOLYOKE – MiraVista Behavioral Health Center is proud to announce the expansion of its mental health services to include 24-hour admissions for individuals in need of inpatient psychiatric care.

Coupled with the recent launch of MiraVista's Direct Admissions process, this important advancement ensures more timely, compassionate, and seamless access to lifesaving treatment for those facing urgent mental health challenges.

"At MiraVista, we understand that mental health crises don't adhere to a schedule — and neither should the care available in response," said MiraVista Hospital Administrator, Shelley Zimmerman. "Our 24-hour admissions capability, combined with our Direct Admissions process, reflects a commitment to providing immediate support, minimizing barriers to care, and restoring hope

for individuals and families across our community, the Commonwealth, and New England."

The new Direct Admissions option allows designated referral sources — including outpatient providers, crisis teams, and primary care physicians — to connect individuals directly to MiraVista without the need for an emergency department evaluation, when clinically appropriate. This streamlined pathway reduces delays and ensures that individuals receive the right level of support, at the right time, in the right setting.

"MiraVista's enhanced admissions process is an essential step forward for behavioral health in our region," said Zimmerman. "By offering 24-hour access and eliminating unnecessary hurdles, we are truly meeting people where they are and making it easier to receive the care they urgent-

ly need."

Patrick Connon, Director of Intake at MiraVista, emphasized the readiness and dedication of his team. "When someone is ready to seek treatment, that moment matters," Connon said. "Our intake team is prepared around the clock to respond quickly, compassionately, and professionally. We are committed to being there when individuals make that critical decision to reach out for help — because when they're ready, we are ready."

Key benefits of MiraVista's 24-Hour Admissions and Direct Admissions Process include:

- Around-the-clock acceptance for psychiatric inpatient admissions, seven days a week.
- Streamlined direct referrals from providers, supporting faster transitions into care.
- Increased capacity to respond to urgent mental

health needs without unnecessary delays.

Compassionate, expert care delivered in a safe and supportive environment.

Individuals, families, and healthcare providers seeking inpatient psychiatric care can now reach MiraVista's Intake Department 24 hours a day at 413-264-0819.

Connon added, "We believe that every moment matters when it comes to mental health. Expanding access is more than a service enhancement — it's an affirmation of MiraVista's mission to deliver hope and healing whenever it's needed most."

For more information on MiraVista Behavioral Health Center's services, including Direct Admissions criteria, please visit www.miravistabhccare.com or connect with Kim Lee at klee@miravistabhccare.com or 413-264-3042.

Yoga classes offered at Stanley Park

WESTFIELD – Yoga will be starting for the 2025 season on Thursday evenings through Aug. 21 from 6 to 7 p.m., on the Acre Lawn next to the Pavilion Annex. Please join certified instructor Michelle Gagnon, as she leads the yoga classes. This class is for all levels of yoga practitioners, and all abilities are welcome. The poses are foundational, and modifications are always available. As a class we will harness the power of our breath in alignment with the movement of our bodies.

Children 10 and up are welcome accompanied by an adult. Please bring your own mat and any props as needed, wear comfortable and stretchy clothes. Prepare to strengthen, stretch your body, and open

your minds. Bring lots of water (you might also want a small towel). Pre-registration is strongly encouraged.

Donations to the Park are welcome, with a suggested donation of \$5 per person per class.

Registration forms are available on our website at www.stanleypark.org and will also be available at the Park. You may sign up on our website, by e-mailing us for the registration form at development@stanleypark.org, or register at the Park at your first class.



HOLIDAY, from page 1

throw the chips down on the table and let's go. To send it back to committee, for what? This in my opinion does not have the votes, will not pass this term, so why are we doing this? I personally think we don't need these kinds of wildly divisive issues in the city. Doesn't help anybody at all, perhaps item 25 gets us to a place of how we understand each other. We've had this conversation before. Item 25 moves us in the direction of being respectful to all people, it's why I filed it in the first place and that was denied. Item 24 is saying 'I'm stepping on your history, I don't care about

you, and I got a lot more to say about that tonight if we're going to have that debate.' Having said that, item 24, we should just give leave to withdraw or let's just take a vote."

Item 25 is the Columbus Day holiday ordinance be changed so the holiday can be known both as Columbus Day and Indigenous Peoples Day. "So everyone may celebrate both, one way or the other, or neither if they choose according to their own conscience. This will allow the maximum amount of sensitivity to the issue. It's recommended that the order be denied."

At-Large City Councilor Israel Rivera wanted more

discussion and stated that he thinks it's important that everyone is being heard. "It's the reason why it's here again. I didn't want to take this up to be divisive, I don't file orders intentionally to be divisive. It's crazy that it's brought up that way but there are orders that literally do that. It is what it is, if we want to vote on it, let's do it. I don't care, like that's not the idea, no one is playing games here. I was going through the orders of what was in my jacket and addressing the orders that are in the jacket. If people feel some type of way about that, then I'm sorry but this is the due process. I only said to table it or send it back to

committee so that we don't get into this. So ultimately, it's up to you guys, if you want to vote on it then do the vote, if you want to leave to withdraw and we continue the fighting because you're not going to get the votes to leave to withdraw, we're here for it. The intention was not to be divisive."

City Council President Tessa R. Murphy-Romboletti expressed her disappointment of the back-and-forth discussion and that the item is back on the agenda, stating that they have discussed this before and have bigger items to discuss.

Ward 7 City Councilor Meg Magrath-Smith chimed in saying that it

was her fault.

"We were in ordinance and because again, tensions are crazy high on this issue. I will be honest with you, this is way before my time and sometimes I think folks think things are happening, I had no idea this was going to be some kind of flash point. All of you sort of remember these conversations that have happened before. The goal was to not to try to get everyone at their throats. I'm a schoolteacher and I talk about this stuff all the time with my students, and the room does not feel like this. It's an honest conversation about some messy history. This wasn't to be divisive, and this is some-

thing my students talk about all the time. I just didn't expect this honestly that this is how we would approach this issue, I asked Councilor Rivera earlier to send it back to committee because there was very little conversation that happened in ordinance. It immediately became flash points and arguments and that was not what I was attempting to do."

Further discussion by Jourdain was on the topic of not stampeding over other people's history, stating that this is a free country and people can celebrate what they want. Item 25 was voted on to be taken back to committee and the discussion ended on the subject.

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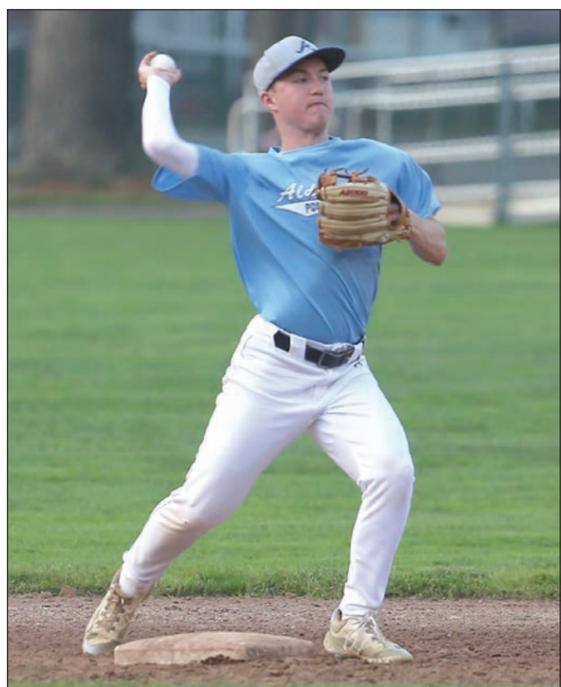
Aldenville suffers loss to Northampton

CHICOPEE – Last Friday evening in a close game, Aldenville Post 337 American Legion baseball could not hold on to a 1-0 lead or add to it. In the sixth, Northampton would add runs and come away with a 5-2 win at Szoat Park. Aldenville also fell to East

Springfield during the past week and are 2-3 on the summer season. After a night off Friday, Aldenville, which includes players from Chicopee, Holyoke, and South Hadley, is back in action against West Springfield at 7:30 p.m. at Szoat Park in Chicopee.



Alex Savlick throws to first for an out.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Ryan Netkovich makes a relay throw to first.



Brandon Carillon squares around a grounder.



Justin Moskal delivers to the plate for Aldenville.

Gaines shines for PeoplesBank in win over rival St. Joe's

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

THORNDIK – People's Bank, who captured the last eleven Tri-County League championship titles, and the St. Joseph's Baseball Club are scheduled to face each other four times during the regular season.

The first two meetings on the baseball diamond were won by People's Bank without very much trouble.

A week after defeating St. Joe's, 13-3 at Mackenzie Stadium in Holyoke, People's Bank celebrated a 6-1 road victory at St.

Joe's Park in Thorndike, last Friday night.

"This is a very big win early season win for us against St. Joe's, who's currently in first place," said People's Bank player/manager Joe Ferry. "I thought our pitching and defense was the difference in tonight's game. We also had some timely base hits."

People's Bank, who had two games postponed last week, had a perfect 4-0 record following the road win, while St. Joe's had a 5-2 record.

Each of the five Tri-County League teams gets

two points for a victory and one for a tie.

"We always want to beat People's, but they're a very veteran team and we have a bunch of younger players," said St. Joe's player/manager Brian Hayes, who shares the coaching duties with Paul Marcinek. "They don't swing at many bad pitches. They also don't make very many mistakes defensively."

People's Bank jumped out to a 2-0 lead against St. Joe's lefthander Jackson Petrin in the top of the first inning.

Petrin, who was a senior on the Pope Francis base-

ball team this past spring, tossed a two-hitter against Minnechaug Regional in the Western Mass. Class A finals, which was held at Mackenzie Stadium on May 27. He didn't have the same kind of success in his start against People's Bank.

With one-out in the opening frame, second baseman Dave Clark (3-for-3) lined a single down the right field line. First baseman Kyle Platner followed with a ground ball single up the middle into center field putting runners at the corners. Platner moved into scoring position on a wild pitch.

Catcher Frankie Ferrentino, who's a first-year player, drove home both runners with a bloop single to center.

Ferrentino is a member of the Merrimack College baseball team.

Petrin retired the next two batters on a foul pop-up caught by third baseman Jacob Petrin and a strikeout.

St. Joe's threatened against People's Bank lefty Danny Gaines, who's from Holyoke, with one-out in the bottom half of the first inning. Jacob Petrin (2-for-4) began the rally with an infield hit and right fielder Pat Fitzgibbons drew a walk.

Gaines escaped further trouble by getting the next batter to hit into an inning ending double play.

After neither team scored in the second inning, People's Bank centerfielder Seth Allen hit a groundball to the third baseman leading off the third inning. He wound up at second base following a throwing error. A Clark pop-up single to center and a walk by Platner loaded the bases.

The visitors, who had seven base hits in the game, took a 3-0 lead when

See GAINES, page 8

Western Mass. Pioneers suffer rare league loss against Vermont Green FC

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

BURLINGTON, VT. – Not very much went the right way for the Western Mass. Pioneers against Vermont Green FC in the first matchup of the regular season between the USL League-Two rivals.

Vermont Green scored a goal at the end of both halves leading to a 2-0 shutout over the Pioneers before 2,500 enthusiastic soccer fans at Virtue Field, which is located on the University of Vermont campus, last Tuesday night.

"I thought we played well, but we just couldn't put our chances away," said Pioneers head coach Federico Molinari. "They did put their chances away."

The Pioneers had a 5-1-2 record following the road loss.

Vermont Green (6-0-1) took over sole possession of first place in the Northeast

Division.

Since joining USL League-Two in 2022, Vermont has finished in third place behind the Pioneers in the league standings.

The overall series record between the two clubs is now tied 3-3-1. Three of the seven matchups ended 1-0.

In the second meeting of last season, Vermont made the trip south on Rte. 91 needing to defeat the Pioneers to qualify for the league playoffs. They got the job done with a 3-1 victory.

Their first meeting of 2024, which was played at Virtue Field, finished in a scoreless draw.

The last time the Pioneers celebrated a victory over Vermont Green was a 1-0 home shutout in the second meeting of the 2023 campaign. The lone goal of that match was scored by Mamadi Jiana, who played

See PIONEERS, page 8



Mamadi Jiana runs down the loose ball.



Israel Neto looks to clear the ball away.



Jaiden Williams shoots on goal.

Springfield Thunderbirds bringing back Community Caravan

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds are proud to announce the return of the T-Birds Community Caravan, with support from MassMutual, marking the third annual summer tour designed to bring the excitement of Thunderbirds hockey to communities across the region.

This year's Caravan will include three stops throughout the Greater Springfield area during the summer months, continuing the initiative's mission to keep the T-Birds top-of-mind in the offseason while deepening the team's connection to local families and fans. This summer's Caravan dates are as follows:

- Saturday, July 19 - Sonny's Place, Somers, CT - 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.
- Saturday, August 9 - Amelia Park Ice Arena, Westfield - 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

*The Westfield Community Caravan will also feature the annual T-Birds Street Hockey Tournament on the outdoor deck hockey court at Amelia Park. The Street Hockey Tournament features teams of players ages 9-12. To register your team, click here.

"After a fantastic continuation of the program last summer, we're thrilled to bring back the Caravan and keep building on its success," said Thunderbirds President Nathan Costa. "We're equally excited to welcome back MassMutual as a partner and thank them for embracing our mission of being champions in the community beyond the Thunderdome."

Each free-to-attend event will feature appearances by Thunderbirds mascot Boomer, team staff, and a lively mix of interactive

games, street hockey, family-friendly activities, and local vendors. Fans can also enjoy delicious food options, with each Caravan date spotlighting a local nonprofit beneficiary, helping to raise awareness and support for impactful community organizations.

"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."

The Springfield edition of the Caravan will be collecting donations benefiting The Gray House. Among the requested items

are baby food, diapers and wipes, school supplies, and non-perishable food items. The Thunderbirds will also be hosting food drives at the July and August Caravan stops. The July Caravan at Sonny's Place will benefit the Enfield Food Shelf in Connecticut, while the August Caravan in Westfield will collect items for the Westfield Food Pantry.

Additional information for all Community Caravans will be released in the coming weeks via the Thunderbirds' website and social media channels.

For more information on upcoming events, including the Community Caravan, stay tuned to the T-Birds on social media @ThunderbirdsAHL, or visit the Community Tab on www.SpringfieldThunderbirds.com.

GAINES, from page 9

Ferrentino was hit by a pitch. Then right fielder Cam Rivest, who's the varsity baseball coach at Ludlow High School, hit a sacrifice fly scoring another run.

St. Joe's broke the ice an inning later.

Fitzgibbons, who hit a hard ground ball into left field leading off the fourth inning, scored when centerfielder Aaron Little, who played baseball at Ludlow High School, hit a sacrifice fly.

Second baseman Nate Carillon continued the St. Joe's rally with a walk and catcher Bobby Trigilio was hit-by-a-pitch loading the bases with one-out. Just like they did in the first and third innings, People's Bank ended the inning with a double play.

"Our defense was awesome tonight," Ferry said. "We turned three double

plays early in the game." Gaines, who allowed one run on three hits in four innings, was relieved by fellow lefty James Flahive, who's normally a starter, at the start of the fifth inning.

"Danny has been one of our top starting pitchers for a very long time," Ferry said. "It's still early in the season and we knew he could give us at least four strong innings."

Flahive, who threw 70 pitches over the final three frames, was credited with the win. He didn't allow any runs on two hits.

People's Bank final two runs were scored in the fifth and sixth innings on sacrifice flies from designated hitter Johnny Gegetskas and Platner.

The third meeting of the regular season between the two teams was scheduled to be played at Mackenzie Stadium on Tuesday night.

Read The Holyoke Sun online at www.sun.turley.com

PIONEERS, from page 7

soccer at Chicopee High School, and is still a member of the Pioneers. He also plays for the men's soccer team at Bryant University.

The Pioneers had a couple of scoring chances during the first half of last Tuesday's match.

In the eighth minute, Robbie Lyons fired a shot from the top of the box, but Vermont goalie Niklas Herceg managed to make the save.

A little more than ten minutes later, a Lyons free kick sailed wide

Herceg made another save following a shot attempt from Augustine Boadi during the 32nd minute.

Vermont Green took a 1-0 lead 11 minutes later.

The scoring play began with Stephane Njike sending a crossing pass into the box from the left side. Then Joseph Picotto flicked a shot into the back of the net past Western Mass goalie Cam Hall.

The Pioneers had an

opportunity to score the tying goal in 52nd minute when Boadi sent a pass to Lyons, but his shot went over the crossbar.

In the 73rd minute, Jared Smith's free kick just missed going into the net.

With the Pioneers still trailing by a goal late in the second half, Vermont goalie

Niklas Herceg received a yellow card from referee Elvis Jandric.

Molinari thought his team should've been given a free kick following the card, but the referee gave the home team a goal kick instead.

"It should've been a free kick for us because the referee gave their goalie a yellow card," Molinari said. "The referee made a mistake and it's a very tough loss for us."

low card," Molinari said. "The referee made a mistake and it's a very tough loss for us."

Following the match, Molinari and several of the Pioneers got into a heated argument with Jandric in the middle of the field.

The home team sealed their victory when Hall

attempted to make a diving save on a shot taken by Tyler Trimnal. The ball bounced away from the Pioneers keeper and Njike put the ball into the back of the net sending the Vermont Green supporters into a frenzy.

The Pioneers did get back into the win column following a 2-0 win against the

Boston Bolts.

The Pioneers goals were scored by Jorge Veintimilla and Jiana.

The second meeting between Vermont Green and Western Mass. is scheduled to take place at Lusitano Stadium on July 11. It's also the regular season finale for the Pioneers.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com
Robert Lyons crosses the field.



Gustavo Barbosa traps the ball and heads up the field.



Augustine Boadi hustles up the field.

Public Notices

City of Holyoke

Notice of Public Hearing

The Holyoke Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, July 8, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.com**; ID: 83639398493; CALL IN 1 646 558 8656 to hear, pursuant to the Holyoke Zoning Ordinance, a Special Permit for a Parking Reduction (Sec 6.1.7) and a Special Permit to vary Dimensional Regulations (Sec 8.8.4), submitted by Vila Nova Properties, located at 718 Dwight Street (006-06-009).

Applicant: Tiago Martins
Planning Board: Mimi Panitch
6/20, 06/27/2025

City of Holyoke

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Applicant: Tiago Martins
Planning Board: Mimi Panitch
6/20, 06/27/2025

**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.**

HD25C0198CA

In the matter of:
Jayden Michael Cauley-Heard

CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME

A **Petition to Change Name of Adult** has been filed by **Jayden Michael Cauley-Heard of Holyoke, MA** requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to:

Jayden Michael Cauley-Guzman

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 07/08/2025.**

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: June 10, 2025

Rosemary A Saccomani

Register of Probate

06/27/2025

CITY OF HOLYOKE

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Holyoke Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, July 8, 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 Section 6.4.6.4, a Special Permit for an Increase in Sign Size for Peck Middle School, located at 1916 Northampton Street (Parcel 110-00-028), submitted by Holyoke Public Schools.

The complete application may be viewed through the Holyoke

Planning Dept M-F, 8:30-4:30 p.m.

Applicant:
City of Holyoke
Holyoke Public Schools
Planning Board:
Mimi Panitch
06/20, 06/27/2025

City of Holyoke Planning Board

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Holyoke Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, July 8, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.com** ID: 836-3939-8493; Call in *67 646 558 8656 to hear applications submitted by MIFA Victory Theatre, for the property located at 81-89 Suffolk St (012-06-006/-007) pursuant to the Holyoke Zoning Ordinance, Section 10.0, a Major Site Plan Review (File #169); pursuant to Section 6.4.6.4, a

Special Permit for an **Increase In Sign Size and Multiple Signs** (2025-22); and pursuant to Section 6.1.7, a Special Permit for the Reduction of Parking Requirements (2025-23).

The proposed **Victory Theatre** renovations include a 5,935 s.f./18,755 gsf square foot building additions for offices, performance area, and loading dock and other associated site improvements.

For a complete copy of the application and site plan, contact the Planning Department at (413) 322-5575.

APPLICANT:
SLR International Corp.
c/o John Hammer;
MIFA Victory Theatre
c/o Donald Sanders
PLANNING BOARD:
Mimi Panitch, Chairperson
06/20, 06/27/2025

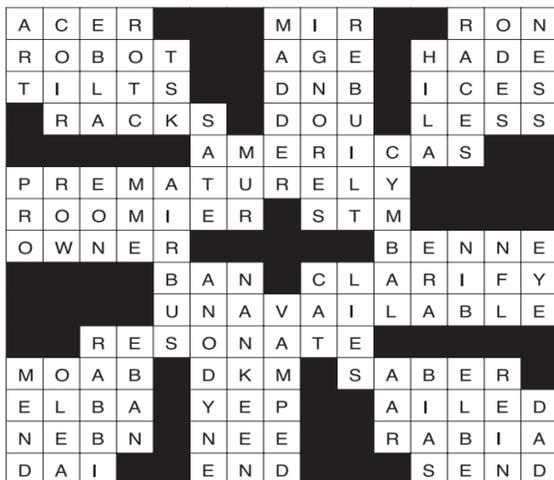
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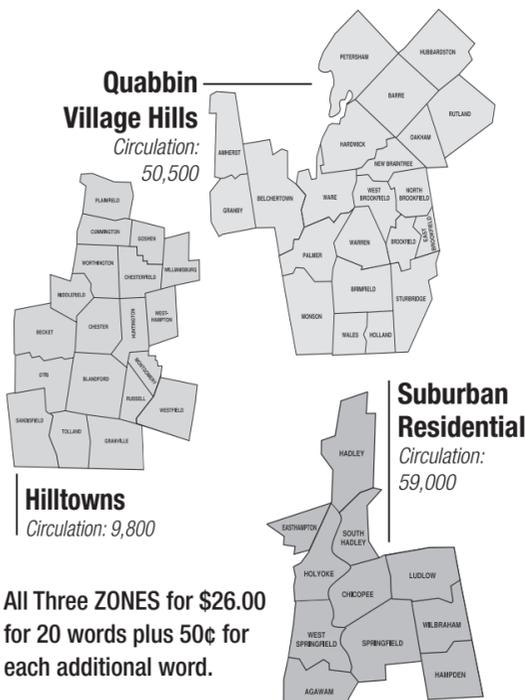


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In The News



Drag Queens Serenity Lockheart and Ruby Monroe miced the Holyoke Pride festival.



City Councilor Juan Anderson-Burgos welcomed the Holyoke community to Pride.



Singer/Songwriter Deanna Bach performed some of her own songs at the Holyoke Pride.



Carley Taft from Tapestry and Jon Marx from Planned Parenthood enjoyed Pride.



Jenn Knight advertised OutstandingLife at the Holyoke Pride festival.



Hundreds of community members and vendors gathered in Holyoke's Veterans Park to celebrate Pride.

Turley photos by Quinn Suomala



At Holyoke Pride Soenoire sold some of his art.

Beauty of nature celebrated at Robinson State Park Day

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – Robinson State Park Day was celebrated by the town on Saturday, June 21.

RSP Day happens every year on the third Saturday in June as a way to honor the beautiful park

right in Agawam.

Conservation Ecologist Rod Parlee and Robinson State Park Volunteer Nancy Bobskill were proud to share the reasons why people should honor and care for this beautiful park.

“It offers so many resources to the people in this area, resources that are far

flung from just trees,” Parlee said. “Trees are important resources, but the recreation it offers, the clean air the trees provide, the wildlife... it’s all important.”

“I think it’s important because this is a beautiful space that is open to everyone and it is also important to remember that living things

provide what is called ecosystem services,” Bobskill said.

Robinson State Park contains over 55 native species of trees and dozens of different bird species, not to mention the many other species of different flora and fauna. The ecosystem it offers is diverse, unique and crucial to keeping this area healthy and flourishing.

“I don’t think I’ve encountered another forest in this area quite this diverse,” Botanist Jared Lockwood said.

“This forest is always changing,” Arborist Matt Largess said. “I call it the Yellowstone of the East.”

Lockwood came out to enjoy RSP Day, and he even co-lead a tree walk with Largess.

During this tree walk, Lockwood gave a minimum measurement for two trees in the park, a swamp white oak and a hickory, and found that they were likely the two tallest trees of their species in Massachusetts.

The swamp white oak measured to be at least 103 feet and the hickory to be a

minimum of 110 ft tall. Both trees are likely even taller, as it was hard to see to the top of the tree due to the leaves from lower branches blocking the view.

The goal of RSP Day is to help show people in Agawam and surrounding areas how valuable this state park is.

Throughout the day, people were welcome to go on bird walks, tree walks, build bee feeders or nests, play games and participate in a mini bio blitz.

“There is a little bit of everything for everyone to enjoy,” Bobskill said.

During the bio blitz, kids and others were provided with a piece of paper and a pencil as they were taken around the park.

As they went around the park, the leaders of the blitz named different species of flora and fauna that they encountered.

The goal of this was to get a list of the variety of different species present within the park, and to show the participants how many species they have right in

their backyard.

A true bio blitz, which can last for 24 hours, is when scientists all come out to a location and keep track of the species they encounter.

“This helps the towns come up with a natural resource inventory and understand what they have, and then compare it to the natural diversity database and see which ones of those species are threatened, endangered or uncommon,” Parlee said.

This can help towns to better protect the environment around them. The RSP Day volunteers were delighted to allow kids and adults the chance to see what a bio blitz can look like.

“I hope people learn how special this place is and that they come back and utilize the park on their own,” Parlee said.

Bobskill also hoped people enjoyed meeting the community around the park.

“There is a community of people who love nature and we want them to join in and support nature in any way that they can,” Bobskill said.

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Arborist Matt Largess and Botanist Jared Lockwood led the tree walk into the woods at Robinson State Park.

Turley photo by Quinn Suomala