

# the HOLYOKE Sun

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## Council action to pick up soon

By Gregory A. Scibelli  
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HOLYOKE – Action has slowed down among the Holyoke City Council and its subcommittees.

The council is set to resume meetings earlier next month, starting with the Development and Government Relations on Monday, Aug. 4. The whole city council is scheduled to meet on Aug. 5.

The subcommittee will take up a number of items that it was referred prior to the council taking a break for the summer.

Among the big items for discussion, Councilors Kevin Jourdain and Linda Vacon have filed an order seeking to potentially streamline polling locations.

According to their order, polling locations have been streamlined already in Wards

See COUNCIL page 8

## Holyoke to engage sister city in competition

By Gregory A. Scibelli  
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HOLYOKE – Earlier this year, a sister city in Ireland sharing Holyoke’s love of St. Patrick’s Day hosted Mayor Joshua Garcia for its annual parade, as well as attending Holyoke’s parade later in the month.

Now, another sister city, located in Puerto Rico looks to be engaging with Holyoke soon.

According to the mayor’s office, the city received a \$10,000 grant from Casella Waste Systems. The company operates Holyoke’s transfer station and gave the city the grant to support its participation in a sister city volleyball challenge and cultural tour.

Last year, Mayor Joshua Garcia made the suggestion to Salinas, Puerto Rico Mayor Karilyn Bonilla Colon to hold a volleyball challenge between the two cities annually. Garcia said the suggestion was made while Colon was in Holyoke attending the annual Patronales Festival.

A press release from the mayor’s office says the Holyoke and Salinas volleyball teams will be comprised of municipal lead-



Holyoke Mayor Joshua A. Garcia (center left) was joined by Holyoke city officials, Greater Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau leadership, members of the Holyoke Volleyball Team, and representatives of Casella Waste Systems for a check presentation.

Submitted photo

ers and community members. The challenge will switch from Holyoke to Salinas each year. This year’s first ever competition will be held in Salinas in September.

George Mulry, execu-

utive director of the International Volleyball Hall of Fame, will coach the local team. Holyoke is the birthplace of volleyball and home to the Hall of Fame.

In addition to the volleyball game, team mem-

bers and other key stakeholders will visit Salinas tourism and marketing sites and assets that could be replicated or enhanced in Holyoke. Holyoke recently designated a Puerto Rican Cultural District off Main

Street. The city’s leadership sees the arts and culture as two avenues among many others to strengthen the connection with Salinas.

A date for the volleyball challenge was not yet announced.

## Reptile Nook slithers into the library

By Quinn Suomala  
Correspondent

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Public Library had a visit from the Reptile Nook so community members could learn more about reptiles and other invertebrates.

“We are trying to get people to understand [the animals] so they don’t fear them anymore,” Co-owner and Lead Educator Jessica Decoteau said.

During this event Decoteau shared a variety of facts about the different animals she had brought in that day.

Meanwhile, Decoteau’s co-worker Maurice LaRosa brought the animals around for participants to be able to touch or hold.

The different animals brought in included Madagascar hissing cockroaches, a Russian tortoise, a bearded dragon and a red tailed boa.

The community members had fun getting to hold and pet these different animals while also learning more about them.

“My favorite part, I would have to say, is seeing people face their fear and develop a passion for these animals,” Decoteau said. “I hope people realize that these animals aren’t as scary and dangerous as they may have thought going in.”

Many people in the room

held a cockroach for the first time in their lives.

A fun fact about the Madagascar hissing cockroaches is that they are not the kind that infest houses. Additionally, they cannot bite people as their mouths are simply not large enough.

Decoteau also shared some fun facts about the reptiles she brought in.

“My favorite fun fact is that the tortoise can feel everything that touches her shell,” Decoteau said. “Her spine is attached to her shell, which means she has nerve endings in it just like we have them in our fingers and everything else.”

Tortoise shells are actually made of keratin, which are the same materials that human fingernails are made of.

Also, she and LaRosa both emphasized that snakes are not nearly as dangerous as many people believe.

Snakes are not aggressive animals, but are defensive. In fact, LaRosa shared that more people in the United States are killed by vending machines each year than they are by snakes.

Decoteau and LaRosa enjoy doing library events and other events for communities so they can help to spread their love of reptiles and other invertebrates to others.

See REPTILE, page 10

## Lawrence gets new logo, mascot

HOLYOKE – Inspired by similar efforts for Peck Middle School, Lawrence Elementary School recently developed an inclusive process to select a new mascot, colors, and logo.

“The identity of the Lawrence Lancers was determined a long time ago, as students progressed through their educational journey from the Lawrence Lancers to Peck Squires,” said new Lawrence Principal and HPS alumni Katie Bourque. “After talking with staff and students this spring, we agreed the mascot could use a refresh to better reflect our students’ interests and experiences.”

According to the Holyoke Public Schools, as part of the process to reimagine the mascot and colors for Lawrence School, nearly 300 Lawrence students, staff, and family members sub-

mitted their suggestions through a survey in early June. Their feedback led to a clear, new direction: A lion would be the new mascot, and the school colors would be purple, teal, and white.

With those decisions made, the next step was to develop a concept for how the Lawrence lion should appear. Lawrence students were invited to submit hand-drawn design concepts, and from there eight submissions were received. A team of Lawrence educators selected the final design, submitted by student artist Viviana Vadnais,

See LOGO, page 8



Inset, the original design concept by Viviana Vadnais, Grade 2, Lawrence Elementary School and above, the finished new logo.

Submitted art

## Wistariahurst Museum featuring seniors in upcoming ‘Creating COA Artists’ exhibit

HOLYOKE – Wistariahurst Museum is excited to welcome senior artists into the gallery for “Creating COA Artists” this August 2025. This exhibition features artists involved in Holyoke’s senior center and Council on Aging. Participating artists have anywhere from months to

decades of experience, and this exhibition celebrates artists at all stages. A variety of mediums are featured in this exhibition from watercolor, to acrylic, to ceramics and textiles. This diverse selection of artwork shows both a range of experience and mediums, coming together to form a truly unique exhibit.

The Holyoke Council on Aging and Senior Center has hosted a variety of art classes, encouraging their visitors to continue or begin creating. Many members of the senior center have used these classes to embrace their passion for the visual arts. Some of the artwork on view in the exhibit at Wistariahurst has been cre-

ated in these classes.

The opening reception of “Creating COA Artists” will be held Thursday, Aug. 21 from 5 to 7 p.m. Wistariahurst is an artist-friendly space that encourages creativity and supports the growth of this region’s artists. Open Gallery Hours will be held on Mondays (10 a.m. to 2 p.m.)

and Tuesdays (4:30 to 6:30 p.m.) through Sept. 23, which will also be free and open to the public. We hope that you stop by and explore “Creating COA Artists.”

This program is funded in part by a grant from the Holyoke Local Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass

Cultural Council, a state agency.

Visit the link below to register for the opening reception. Registration is not required, but encouraged: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/opening-reception-creating-coa-artists-tickets-1505175413179?aff=odtdtcreator>.



## Free youth kayaking offered

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Rows is pleased to announce another great lineup of free summer programming to help our community get out and explore on the Connecticut River. From free all ages kayaking days to a free learn to row week for Holyoke, Chicopee and Springfield middle and high school students, there are

endless options to enjoy the outdoors from our boathouse at Holyoke Rows, 25 Jones Ferry Rd., in Holyoke.

Holyoke Rows is pleased to announce Free Summer Nights for Youth and Families that will take place Mondays/Wednesdays through Aug. 20 from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Children, youth, and families are invited to come

down to the boathouse for free kayaking, fishing, and more. No registration needed, all equipment & instruction provided. Enjoy the outdoors from our boathouse at Holyoke Rows, 25 Jones Ferry Rd, in Holyoke. This program is offered as part of the Massachusetts DCR Summer Nights grant program.

## Holy Trinity to host Greek Festival Aug. 23

HOLYOKE – A Greek Festival will be held on Saturday, Aug. 23 at the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church Grounds from 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 410 Main Street, Holyoke.

Greek food, parties music, vendors and

family-friendly features. We look forward to sharing another “Greek Day in Holyoke” with you. Admission is free; Ample parking. For more information, contact Sharon at 533-9880 or email holytrinityofholyokey@gmail.com.

## History Room holding Genealogy Labs at HPL

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke History Room, located at Holyoke Public Library, is inviting the public to come research in company, and seek advice from two professional genealogists.

The history room is hosting Genealogy Labs on the fourth Wednesday of the month.

The next one will be held on Wednesday, Aug. 27 from 2:30 to 5 p.m.

## Therapy dog to visit library

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Public Library will host a visit from Maki the Therapy Dog. He will appear on

July 28, Aug. 18 and 25 from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. on the fourth floor.

Call for a 15-minute time slot.

## Multiple game events at HPL

HOLYOKE – In July, the Holyoke Public Library will be holding multiple game events for adults and children. On July 24, there will be an event featuring tabletop games in the first floor board room from 3 to 5:30 p.m. And then on July 29 from 2 to 5 p.m., Nintendo Switch games will be available to play in the community room. For more info, contact Abbey at 413-420-8101 or email abueding-er@holyokeylibrary.org

## Polish Food Sales to be held Aug. 23

INDIAN ORCHARD – Polish Food Sales will be held on Saturday, Aug. 23, 2025 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Immaculate Conception Church Hall, 25 Parker St. Indian Orchard, MA.

Golabki (3) \$12  
Kapusta (Large) \$10  
Pierogi (12) Cabbage, Potato & Cheese \$14  
Sweet Cheese, Blueberry \$15

Payable by Cash or Check. No Credit Cards accepted.

## Stanley Park announces annual fundraiser, invites community

WESTFIELD – Stanley Park is pleased to invite the community to its Annual Fundraiser on Saturday, Sept. 13 at 5 p.m. in the Beveridge Pavilion. This cherished event helps sustain the Park’s natural beauty, facilities, and free public programs.

The evening will feature hors d’oeuvres, a buffet dinner, dessert, a cash bar, and show-stopping entertainment from Howl2Go Dueling Pianos—a high-energy, interactive, request-driven musical experience where two pianists battle it out with your favor-

ite songs and a healthy dose of humor.

Returning this year is an exciting online auction with an added raffle, filled with must-have prizes you won’t want to miss out on, including an hour-long scenic plane ride for three, a week-long Cape Cod vacation, gift

certificates to your favorite local businesses, museum passes, and much more.

Follow Stanley Park on Facebook for exclusive previews of auction and raffle items leading up to the event.

Seats are limited, so don’t wait—reserve yours

now at <https://auctria.events/ivorykeysandmelodies> and enjoy a memorable night while making a lasting difference for Stanley Park.

Please call the Development Office at 413-568-9312 x108 or email [development@stanleypark.org](mailto:development@stanleypark.org) with any questions.

## Hibernians holding annual summer picnic

HOLYOKE – The Hibernians of Hampden/Hampshire Counties invites the public to attend the Annual Traditional Summer Picnic featuring The Healy’s at Hamel’s Summit View Pavilion 555 Northampton St Holyoke on Sunday, Aug. 24 from 1 to 5 p.m., rain or shine.

Tickets are \$30 per person for adults and \$15-and-over, kids 10-15 are \$15.

For reservations by Tuesday, Aug. 19 call Joe

O’Connor at 413-627-7148 or Fran Hennessey at 413-785-5687 [aoh-holyoke.com](mailto:aoh-holyoke.com)

The Maurice A. Donahue Memorial Scholarship will be presented.

There will be Irish-American Music; dancing; A Super BBQ-hot dogs, hamburgers, potato salad, tossed salad, dessert; coffee. Also, included is a cash bar; kid’s games; giant raffle.

The event will benefit the Maurice A. Donahue Memorial Scholarship.

## ‘Month of Giving’ campaign extends through August

FCU collecting donations for food bank

Food insecurity continues to affect families across western Massachusetts, with inflation driving up the cost of everyday essentials. That’s why Freedom Credit Union is again rallying support for its summer campaign benefiting the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts. From June 1 through August 31, the community is invited to contribute to a stronger community

by donating nonperishable food, personal care items or monetary gifts at any Freedom branch.

“Thanks to the generosity of our members, staff and entire community, this campaign has grown annually, and so has its impact,” said Freedom Credit Union President Glenn Welch. “Last summer, we collected more than \$3,350 in donations, along with nearly 1,435 pounds of food and personal care items. This year, we’re aiming even higher. By simply adding an extra item or two to your

grocery cart each week, you can make a lasting difference—without stretching your budget.”

Suggested donations of non-perishable food and personal care items include:

- Baby formula
- Beans in cans or dried in bags
- Bread mixes
- Canned chicken, fish and meat
- Cereals
- Coffee and tea
- Cooking oils
- Spices
- Diapers, wipes and toilet paper

- Dried or canned fruit
- Evaporated/powdered milk

- Granola bars and crackers
- Feminine sanitary products

- Instant potatoes
- Pasta and noodles
- Peanut butter and nuts
- Rice and grains
- Sauces
- Shampoo and body wash/soap
- Soups, stews and chili in cans
- Toothpaste and toothbrushes
- Vegetables in cans

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**Karaoke by New England Disc Jockeys**

**Saturday Night 4:30-6:30pm**  
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# Senator John Velis, veterans frustrated with recent report

WESTFIELD – Following the recent report from the Commonwealth's Supplier Diversity Office which found that the state continues to fall short of its contracting goals with Veteran-Owned Businesses, Senator John C. Velis, Senate Chairman of the Joint Committee

on Veterans and Federal Affairs, today shared his frustration with the report. Dating back to 2015, the Commonwealth has set a yearly goal of contracting and purchasing goods from Veteran Owned Businesses with 3% of state agency discretionary funds. However, with many of

these contracts left unfilled by agencies, the state has fallen short by nearly \$1.3 billion cumulatively in the last 10 years, leaving Veteran business owners discouraged and unlikely to pursue future state contracts. "I have always been committed to making

Massachusetts the very best state in the nation for our Veterans to call home, and am truly concerned about what this report details when it comes to supporting our Veteran-Owned Businesses," shared Senator Velis, a veteran of the U.S. Army Reserves. "Honoring our veterans goes far

beyond a once year celebration, and it is really frustrating to hear that our state agencies are not living up to our goals of contracting and placing orders with Veteran-Owned Businesses. I can understand why so many are losing faith in a system that should be uplifting their hard work."

Velis shared that he encourages Massachusetts Veteran-Owned Businesses to reach out to the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs with their experiences and to share any feedback on how the state can improve efforts to meet its 3% annual discretionary spending goal.

## Commerce hosting 50th Class Reunion

SPRINGFIELD – The High School of Commerce Class of 75 is holding their 50th class reunion. It will take place at the Storrowton Tavern, West Springfield, MA, on Saturday Aug. 30 at 6 p.m.

Contact Janet at jan0826@comcast.net to learn more.

PLEASE RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

## Volunteer at Harmony House

CHICOPEE – July 29, at 6 p.m. at the South Hadley Library, 2 Canal Street, South Hadley, in their Common Room. Please come and meet members of the Board of Directors and current volunteers to learn more and have your questions answered by those who are directly involved in resident care. Harmony House is a local, non-profit organization whose mission is to provide a loving home offering compassionate care for people who are on hospice and are in need of care. If interested in learning more or becoming a volunteer, please complete the online volunteer application form at [www.harmonyhouse-wma.org/volunteer-1](http://www.harmonyhouse-wma.org/volunteer-1) or email us at [admin@harmonyhouse-wma.org](mailto:admin@harmonyhouse-wma.org).

A Meet-and-Greet event is scheduled for Tuesday,

July 29, at 6 p.m. at the South Hadley Library, 2 Canal Street, South Hadley, in their Common Room. Please come and meet members of the Board of Directors and current volunteers to learn more and have your questions answered by those who are directly involved in resident care.

Harmony House is a local, non-profit organization whose mission is to provide a loving home offering compassionate care for people who are on hospice and are in need of care. If interested in learning more or becoming a volunteer, please complete the online volunteer application form at [www.harmonyhouse-wma.org/volunteer-1](http://www.harmonyhouse-wma.org/volunteer-1) or email us at [admin@harmonyhouse-wma.org](mailto:admin@harmonyhouse-wma.org).

## Veterans Cemetery friends group holding golf tournament

AGAWAM – The Friends of the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Agawam and the Friends of the Agawam Veterans Council proudly announce their First Annual Golf Tournament in support of Wreaths Across America, a national effort to honor and remember our fallen veterans during the holiday season.

This exciting event promises a day of camaraderie, remembrance, and community support. Golfers, sponsors, and community members are invited to participate and help lay

wreaths at the graves of veterans resting at the Agawam Veterans Memorial Cemetery this December.

Event Details: 18 Holes of Golf with a cart, lunch, dinner and a raffle entry.

Location: Agawam Municipal Golf Course

Date: Aug. 31

Time: 12 noon

Registration Options:

- Individual Golfer: \$125
- Team of Four: \$450
- Dinner Only: \$30
- Tee Sponsor: \$100 (Company or "In Memory of" dedication)
- Other Sponsorship

Opportunities Available

- Payments Accepted: Check (payable to FMVMCA, PO Box 03, Feeding Hills, MA 01030)
- Venmo
- Credit Card (by phone)

To Register or Sponsor: Contact Marline Claremont at 413-221-9548 or email [wreathfriends@gmail.com](mailto:wreathfriends@gmail.com).

Registration forms are available upon request. Join us in honoring those who served with a round of golf, good food, and great company—all for a noble cause.

## Stanley Park hosting Chakra Dance sessions

WESTFIELD – Join us Aug. 18 on the Stanley Park Acre Lawn next to the Pavilion Annex from 6 to 7 p.m. for two Chakra Dance sessions led by Harlene Simmons from All Natural Reiki.

Chakra dance is rhythm for your soul, a movement-based practice that combines dance, music, and visualization to balance and activate the body's seven energy centers, or chakras. This dance is to balance your Chakras (energy centers) and discover a deepened connection to your true self and feeling of coming home.

**Music for your Base Chakra:** vibrational, connecting your body to earth

**Music for your Sacral Chakra:** sensual, connecting to your inner goddess or god

**Music for your Solar**

**Plexus Chakra:** fiery & dynamic, strong defined movement.

**Music for your Heart Chakra:** uplifting, joyful softening of your heart.

**Music for your Throat Chakra:** more ethereal, chanting as you dance, expressing your inner truth.

**Music for your Third Eye Chakra:** High vibrations, opens up to intuitive guidance through dance.

**Music for your Crown Chakra:** opening to a feeling of oneness, connected to the divine.

Dress comfortably, easy, flowing clothes are recommended. Donations to the Park of \$5 per person, per class, is suggested.

For more information on Chakra Dance classes and all other Stanley Park events, check online at: [www.stanleypark.org](http://www.stanleypark.org).

## Take caution during periods of intense heat

PIONEER VALLEY – As temperatures continue to rise across the region, MiraVista Behavioral Health Center is reminding community residents who may be taking medication to support their mental health to be extra cautious in summer heat.

According to MiraVista Behavioral Health Center Medical Director, Dr. Kenneth Richmond, "Increased temperatures can affect the impact of medications. It is important for anyone on medications, including those which may be prescribed for a mental health condition, to talk with their health care provider about how extreme temperatures and exposure to sun may change how they feel, cause certain side effects and what they can do during periods of increasingly hot weather to be safe."

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than 1,200 people in the United States die from extreme heat every year, with individuals who take medications that affect thermoregulation among those at higher risk.

Dr. Richmond added, "Many people don't realize that the medications they take to support their mental health may also impact how their body manages heat. Be informed, take precautions, and know the warning signs of heat-related stress such as dizziness, confusion, excessive sweating, blurry vision or skin rashes."

The CDC has made an Extreme Heat guide available to visitors on its website with tips on staying cool, staying hydrated, identifying individual risk factors and knowing the symptoms associated with overheating and when

to seek medical care. Their guide can be found at [https://www.cdc.gov/heat-health/about/index.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2F](https://www.cdc.gov/heat-health/about/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2F)

[www.cdc.gov/heat-health/about/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/heat-health/about/index.html) or on the MiraVista website at [www.miravistabhcare.com](http://www.miravistabhcare.com)



## Foundation for TJO Animals welcomes Janna Brown as new Executive Director

*A trusted local voice takes the lead to strengthen support for animals*

SPRINGFIELD – The Foundation for TJO Animals is proud to announce that Janna Brown, a familiar face and trusted voice in Western Massachusetts, has been named its new executive director. After a year of serving as interim director and

five years as a board member, Brown is bringing her lifelong passion for animal welfare and her signature energy to the organization full-time.

Before stepping into nonprofit leadership, Brown spent two decades as a meteorologist, most recently spending nine years at Western Mass News, where she became a household name. Her heart, however, has long belonged to the animals at the Thomas J. O'Connor Animal

Control and Adoption Center on Cottage Street, where she volunteered weekly walking dogs, cleaning kennels and lending a hand wherever needed.

"I started at the TJO adoption center as a dog volunteer, walking pups, cleaning kennels and other tasks as needed," said Brown. "My admiration and support for what they do there grew into a passion and career centered around helping care for ani-

mals. I am honored to take on this role and work alongside such a dedicated team and board of directors. Together, I believe we can achieve great things and make a positive impact at TJO and in our community."

During her time in the spotlight, Brown helped bring visibility to TJO's mission, with the Foundation being named Western Mass News' charity of choice—a reflection of her personal

commitment to the cause.

"We are thrilled to welcome Janna as our new executive director," said Board President Heather Heeb. "We are confident that her leadership will bring new energy and effectiveness to the Foundation for TJO Animals. We look forward to working alongside Janna and her team to continue our mission in supporting the needs at the Thomas J O'Connor Animal Control

and Adoption Center."

The Foundation for TJO Animals, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, raises funds to support lifesaving veterinary care and enrichment for the animals served by the Thomas J. O'Connor Animal Control and Adoption Center. The Foundation relies entirely on the generosity of its supporters to carry out its mission—and now, with Janna Brown at the helm, its future looks brighter than ever.

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Please contact **Pat James 413-726-8661.**

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 <b>Friday, August 1st</b> <b>The Healys</b>	 <b>Saturday, August 2nd</b> <b>Dee Reilly</b>	 <b>Sunday, August 3rd 3-6pm</b> <b>9 Volt Radio</b>

**80 Jarvis Avenue, Holyoke**  
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 Sun. 12pm - 8pm; Mon.-Thurs. 11:30am-9:30pm; Fri. & Sat. 11:30am - 11:30pm

Guest Column



## What is the formula for deciding when to claim?

Dear Rusty:

*I am curious about the "formula" to decide when to take Social Security while still working.*

*I am past the Full Retirement Age. How do you best address such? Should we schedule a call?*

Signed: Wondering When

Dear Wondering:

Well, you can always contact us by phone on 1-888-750-2622 to speak to one of our certified Social Security Advisors or you can send your questions to us via email at SSAdvisor@amacfoundation.org. You don't need to pre-schedule a meeting, as we have multiple advisors answering the phone on most normal business days. If they all happen to be busy when you call, simply leave a voicemail and an Advisor will return your call promptly.

For starters, since you have reached your Full Retirement Age, know that your work earnings will no longer negatively affect your Social Security benefits. You can earn as much as possible and your monthly SS amount will be the same, based on your average lifetime monthly earnings for your highest 35 years and based on your age when you claim. Since you have not yet claimed SS, you are already earning Delayed Retirement Credits, which increase your monthly SS amount by .667% for each month you continue to delay. That's 8% for each full year you delay past your FRA. You should not, however, wait longer than age 70 to claim because that is when you will get your maximum SS benefit amount. For you, that means that your age 70 amount will be 28% more than the amount you would have received at your FRA of 66 years and 6 months in October 2023 and about 15% more than if you were to claim now.

Note too, that if your more recent income is among the highest of your lifetime, Social Security will automatically increase your monthly SS retirement amount to account for that event. They will check your work earnings each year to see if you are entitled to a larger SS amount because of your recent earnings.

Since (according

to your AMAC member record) you are married, you may also wish to consider whether your wife will get a spousal benefit from you when you claim. If your wife's personal SS retirement amount at her FRA is less than the amount you were entitled to at your FRA, then she will get a spousal boost when you claim. With her spousal boost (if claimed at her FRA), her total SS benefit should be about 50% of your FRA benefit amount not half of the higher amount you will get because you waited longer to claim. But your wife cannot get a spousal boost until you are collecting your SS.

And here is something else to think about: received SS benefits will become part of your overall income taxed by the IRS when you submit your income tax return. If you file your income tax as "married/jointly" and your combined income from all sources is more than \$32,000 then some of your SS benefits will become taxable income. If your combined income is between \$32,001 and \$44,000, then half of the SS benefits you received during the tax year becomes part of your taxable income. Or, if your combined income from all sources exceeds \$44,000, then about 85% of your received SS benefits will become part of your income taxed by the IRS. Just something to keep in mind, especially since you are still working.

*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.*



Guest Column

## Revisit wildflower gardening

After driving by an exquisite wildflower border, I was prompted to revisit and update a column I wrote some years back on the topic of wildflowers.

If you wish to give the natural look a go, preparation is the key. Read on for more useful advice.

Wildflower or meadow gardens can be beautiful, even breathtaking, if properly cared for. Besides being pretty, they are low maintenance and environmentally friendly, and they often attract butterflies, bees and other pollinators.

Our goal at the time of sowing is a grass-free, weed-free seed bed. Since wildflower seed is sown in winter or early spring, we have lots of time to achieve that goal.

At summer's end rototill the spot intended for your wildflowers. If the grass is especially thick you may need to go over it several times. Allow what is left of the grass to decompose.

Pull any weeds that sprout, or lightly cultivate the soil – don't go too deep or you'll expose more weed seeds to the light! You can also skip the tiller, and eradicate the grass by use of black plastic or a tarp – of course you'll have to look at it for several weeks!

If that's okay, then start now by mowing the grass as close as possible. Lay the black plastic or tarp on top and secure it in place with bricks or rocks. The heat, coupled with the absence

of light will kill the grass underneath. By early fall you will be able to rake away any debris that remains. Plan to sow your seeds in early spring. There are many wildflower mixes to choose from. I'd recommend selecting one that is suited to the northeast. A mix that contains both annual and perennial flowers is a good option – the annuals providing you with color the first year while the perennials are establishing themselves.

Don't skimp on the seed. In fact, use up to three times more than the packet says you need to ensure you'll end up with lots of blooms. To avoid bare spots, divide your seed in half and sow the entire area with the first half, then go to the second.

Don't cover the seed at all, just firm it into the soil. A lawn roller works great!

Gently water until your seeds have sprouted and your plants are up and growing – this will usually take at least a month. Watch now, as the season unfolds in all of its beauty!

At the end of the growing season, after the plants have gone to seed, you should mow the entire field with your mower on its high-

est setting. This will prevent trees and shrubs from establishing themselves in your meadow. The mower will do a fair job of chopping up spent stems and leaves – just let them fall where they will.

First, they will act as winter mulch. Then, over time they will break down and add organic matter to the soil – just as leaves and twigs do in the woods. In the absence of a mower you can go the old fashioned route and cut the meadow with a scythe or hedge clippers.

In all instances care should be taken not to damage the crown of the plants, this can severely weaken or even kill perennial wildflowers.

As far as fertilizers go, wildflowers generally don't need it! In fact, rich soil does more harm than good, causing weeds to thrive and compete with your flowers for sunshine and water. Speaking of water, once your meadow is established it will only require water in cases of severe drought or if you plan to re-sow annual seeds in bare spots the following spring.

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

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## 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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Letters to the Editor have a maximum of 350 words. We require writers to include their name, address and phone number in order for our office to authenticate authorship prior to publication. Addresses and phone numbers are not published.

Unsigned or anonymous letters will NOT be published.

We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions. Libelous, unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks or defamation of character are not allowed.

Deadline for submissions is Wednesday at noon.

Please email (preferred) letters to thesun@turley.com. Mailed letters can be sent to The Sun, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069.

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## Celtic United falls to Monson

MONSON – Last Thursday night, Celtic United Gray suffered a 4-0 loss against Monson Mustangs in PVSSL adult action.

The Celtic United, which are based in Holyoke, are clinging to the No. 8 seed in the Women's Division with the playoffs set to begin next week.



Regan Teixeira surrounds the ball.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com  
Madison Grabowski sends a pass by her opponent.



Aubrey Romani clears the ball away.



Sara McMurray goes after a loose ball.



Lauren Blakeley watches a teammate as she looks to pass.

## Tommy Catalano scores win at Monadnock Speedway

WINCHESTER, New Hampshire – For Tommy Catalano, watching his brother Trevor earn his first NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour victory at Monadnock Speedway last year was emotional for several reasons.

Trevor's triumph came in only his eighth NASCAR Whelen Modified

Tour appearance. Entering Saturday's Duel at the Dog 200 at Monadnock Speedway, Tommy had 96 career starts on his resume, none of which had resulted in a win despite several close calls.

Years of patience and hard work brought a second Catalano to Monandock's

Victory Lane in thrilling fashion.

Tommy was tasked with fending off Patrick Emerling during an over-time restart while on older tires. Emerling briefly took the lead from Tommy, but a nudge to Emerling's back bumper knocked him out of the groove just enough for

Tommy to earn an emotional breakthrough victory by the slimmest of margins – .007 seconds.

"I didn't really want to get [Emerling] like that into [turn three]," Tommy said. "I was hoping to kind of move him up the hill a little bit. Everyone was kind of tight right there. Justin

[Bonsignore] was right on my bumper. It's unbelievable.

"Hopefully this isn't the last one."

After starting 12th, Tommy cycled to the second position after electing to stay on track during a caution with 42 laps remaining that, ironically, involved his brother Trevor.

Tommy lined up second behind Luke Baldwin for the ensuing restart, with Tyler Rypkema providing the two a buffer between Emerling, who led the remaining lead lap cars off pit road. Knowing he needed to move quickly, Tommy dove underneath

See WIN, page 7



Israel Neto makes a quick pass during recent action.

## Pioneers grab win in playoffs

By Tim Peterson  
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW – Four days after giving up a pair of stoppage time goals and having to settle for a tie against rival Vermont Green FC in the regular season finale, the Western Mass. Pioneers hosted the Long Island Rough Riders in a USL League Two play-in match.

Once again, the Pioneers held a two-goal advantage late in the second half, but this time there wouldn't be any miracle comeback by the opposing team. The Pioneers

advanced into the Eastern Conference quarterfinals with a 2-0 shutout victory before a large crowd at Lusitano Stadium, last Tuesday night.

"We're very happy with this result, especially after what happened on Friday night," said longtime Western Mass. Pioneers head coach Federico Molinari. "It was in the back of my mind during tonight's game. You just hope it doesn't happen again."

The Pioneers, who finished the regular season with a 10-1-3 record, played their last home game of the

season.

Pioneers' goalie Trey Sheppard, who made his first home start of the season against Vermont, was feeling much better after posting his first shutout against the Rough Riders.

"I didn't sleep very well the other night, but I received a lot of support from my teammates," said Sheppard, who's from Columbus, Ohio. "I just forgot about the past and focused on tonight's game. I'm really looking forward to playing for this team again next year."

Sheppard is also one  
See PLAYOFFS, page 7

## Western Mass. softball captures gold

DEVENS – Earlier this month, the entrant from Western Massachusetts captured the gold in this year's Bay State Summer Games for softball.

The tournament began this year with West team actually suffering a loss 3-0 in the opener playing in the Willard Field Complex in Devens. The tournament started on July 8 with two games. Following an opening loss, the West bounced back with a 4-3 win over the Northeast team.

Action continued on Wednesday July 9 as the

West scored two wins in the game. They defeated Metro 2-1 and then trounced on the Central Mass. team 10-2 to earn a spot in the gold medal game, which took place on Thursday, July 10. The West found itself in a rematch with Coastal and this time prevailed in a slugfest, winning 11-7.

Among the players on this year's team from Western Mass., Chelsea Hull of Monson High School, Agawam's Alexina Lentes, and Holyoke's Mia Bauer were on the team.

# Valley Blue Sox scored slugfest win before break

HOLYOKE – The Valley Blue Sox had great offensive success in their 14-11 victory over the Sanford Mainers. Valley (16-19) had the bats going early thanks to short-stop Michael Elko and right fielder Isaac Wachsmann, however, Sanford (18-18) started the offensive explosion first.

In the top of the first, Mainers' Zack Kent singled up the middle to score Domenico Tozzi. Peter Koblinsky scored an earned run on an E2 by Hayden Perry and Kent scored unearned. Sanford had a dominant top of the second inning, scoring four more

insurance runs thanks to wild pitches and an error by the Blue Sox.

Valley found their footing in the bottom of the inning. It started with Wyatt Hunt being hit by a pitch which was followed by Andrew Loikits' double. An E6 error occurred which allowed Hunt to score and Loikits to advance to third. Kai Cunningham then singled into center field scoring Loikits. Cunningham found his way down to second base on a nice steal and was then driven in to score off of a single by Chris Carson. It was now 7-3 at the end of two innings.

Sanford acquired two runners on first and second before Sam Miller nuked a three run home run shot into left field to make it 10-3 heading into the bottom of the third.

Just when it looked like the Blue Sox were going to be crushed by the Mainers, Valley had an incredible offensive explosion. Wachsmann crushed a homer into left field to start the scoring frenzy. Nichoals Spaventa and Hunt walked and then Loikits reached first base on an E1 which allowed Spaventa to score to make it 10-5. Cunningham hit a sac ground out to score Hunt

and advance Loikits. Hayden Perry walked to reach first. Carson drove a ball into left center to score Loikits and advance Perry to third. Then Michael Elko came to the plate. Elko ripped a triple into right field scoring Perry, Carson and himself on an E4 to tie the game at 10-10. Wachsmann came up to bat for the second time that inning and crushed a homer into the same exact spot as before to give Valley their first lead of the night 11-10 to end the inning.

Wachsmann was hyped about his home runs. "There was not a lot going through my head [during the home

runs.] I was just trying to put together good at bats and help the team get back into the game."

Valley's Head Coach Endy Morales was impressed with Wachsmann's performance. "He's a super talented guy and when pitchers make mistakes and when facing really good hitters, you make them pay, that's just the name of the game right there."

More scoring occurred in the bottom of the fourth. Hunt tripled which was then followed by Loikits walking and stealing second. Cunningham then walked to load the bases up. Perry's

sac ground out scored Hunt and advanced Loikits to third. Carson walked and then Elko slapped a double off the center field wall to drive in Loikits and Carson. The Blue Sox were now up 14-10.

Sanford was ultimately not able to catch up to Valley's explosive offensive momentum as the game ended 14-11 in favor of the Blue Sox.

Morales was hyped about the win. "Absolutely incredible [game]. I told the [team] in the second inning this game was going to be a dog fight and they responded," Morales said.

## Mass. Pirates near end of regular season

GREEN BAY, WI – The Massachusetts Pirates were held to just 10 points in the second half as the Green Bay Blizzard clinched a berth in the upcoming Indoor Football League playoffs with a 56-27 victory at the Resch Center. The Pirates (7-8) led three times in the first half but could not slow down the Blizzard (10-5) as Green Bay swept the season series from Massachusetts.

The Pirates took the opening kickoff and put together an 11-play drive that resulted in a 24-yard field goal by Josh Gable for the first points of the contest. The Blizzard wasted no time coming back as quarterback Max Meylor threw two passes to JT Davis and then handed off to Kymani Clarke for a two-yard touchdown run for a 7-3 lead.

The Pirates would reclaim the lead with 52 seconds on the clock in the quarter as quarterback Kenji Bahar scored his 26th rushing touchdown of the season on a one-yard scamper, capping a six-play 44-yard drive, giving Massachusetts a 10-7 lead after one.

The second quarter saw both teams turn the ball over. The Blizzard were deep in their own territory and on second and 12 from the 12, Meylor was intercepted by defensive back Smoke Monday, who returned it to the four-yard line. On the next play,

Bahar fumbled the ball as he tried to hand off to Pooka Williams Jr. Sean Mustin recovered the ball, and it led to the Blizzard's second score. Meylor threw a five-yard shovel pass to Lowell Patron for the third lead change of the game, with Green Bay out front 14-10.

The Pirates' offense almost misfired again on the next possession. With a first and goal at the three, Bahar fumbled again. This time he recovered at the 19. A defensive pass interference penalty moved the ball back to the four-yard line, and two plays later, it was Bahar running it in for his second rushing touchdown of the night to put Massachusetts back out front 17-14 with 3:36 remaining in the first half.

Green Bay would answer as Meylor threw his second touchdown pass of the half, as Andre Williams pulled in a 12-yard strike. Andrew Mevis added the point after for a 21-17 lead with 60 seconds on the clock. The Pirates drove all the way to the Green Bay six, but Gable's 14-yard field goal attempt was no good as the Blizzard led by four points at the break.

Green Bay started the third quarter with a bang as on the first play Meylor threw a 30-yard touchdown pass to Williams, his second TD reception of the game, to give the Blizzard an 11-point lead at 28-17.

The Pirates added a

25-yard field goal from Gable to close the deficit to eight points with 8:12 remaining in the quarter, but the lead increased to 15 as Meylor connected with Patron for his second touchdown. The successful six-play, 30-yard drive gave the Blizzard the confidence to attempt an onside kick. The kick was recovered by Green Bay's Kevin Ransom, and five plays later, it was Meylor throwing his fifth touchdown pass of the game. Clarke made a six-yard TD reception, and the quarter ended with the Blizzard leading 41-20.

The fourth quarter began with the Pirates scoring on a six-play 30-yard drive with Bahar hitting Teo Redding with a clutch four-yard touchdown pass from five yards out. Gable's PAT made the score 41-27 with 9:42 to play.

The Blizzard would score the next two touchdowns as TJ Davis found the end zone from 27 yards out on Meylor's sixth TD pass of the game. Then Ransom intercepted Bahar and returned it 28 yards for a touchdown. Green Bay's good fortune continued as the conversion snap bounced to Mevis, who executed a perfect drop kick to make the final score 56-27.

The Pirates' final regular season game will be next Friday night at the Tsongas Center at 7:05 against the Bay Area Panthers.

## Quabbin Valley set to host second league

Following up on the resounding success of its inaugural campaign, the Quabbin Valley Baseball League, an over-28 adult baseball league will hold its second Fall League this September and October.

Seeking to create a similar competition environment to its spring/summer league, Quabbin Valley, with contributions from the Valley Wheel Over-28 Baseball League, created a four-team fall league last year featuring the Braves, Dodgers, Cardinals, and Twins.

Those same four teams are set to return and each team tends to have openings on them. Additionally, the

league is open to welcoming more teams in to the league if it finds enough interest.

While the fall league schedule is still under construction, it will mostly feature Sunday morning games played with wood-bat only, which is customary for fall baseball. There could be some Saturday games added to the schedule depending on the completion of the spring/summer season as well as to make up rainouts, potentially. Games are nine-innings long and there is a small playoff and championship held at the end of the season. Last year's fall season was eight games and that is the goal for this year. Free and low-cost fields

are used as well as just one umpire in an effort to keep the costs lower for players. The cost to play will likely range from \$40 to \$60 for the eight-game schedule. Players from outside the Quabbin League may also pay a small fee for insurance as well.

An interest/registration form, will be forthcoming soon, but until then, to express interest in the league, you can email the coordinators of the league at either GScibelli22@yahoo.com or ikhandfield@gmail.com.

Scheduled and team placement for unaffiliated players will be finalized in mid-to-late August. Please join in the fun this fall.

### WIN, from page 6

Baldwin in Turn 1 to take the lead, which also pinned Emerling on the top line.

By the time Emerling worked his way back to second behind Tommy, another caution would trigger an overtime restart. The fastest car at Monadnock all evening would now be lined up to Tommy's outside for the final two-lap sprint, but even with the odds against him, the seasoned veteran was not ready to surrender the win just yet.

Emerling led at the white flag. Through determination and sheer will, Tommy led at the checkered flag, albeit just barely.

The scene in Victory Lane was nearly identical to last year's Duel at the Dog 250, with the only difference being the role reversal of the brothers.

As the Catalanos celebrated, Emerling felt a mix of frustration and disappointment with his second-place effort. He was critical of the

maneuver Tommy pulled on him to take the victory but does not plan to linger on Saturday's defeat for long.

"We had the best car today," Emerling said. "We led basically the whole race and the whole team executed really good. We were doing exactly what we had to do and had the race won in the last corner but got smashed out of the way. That's not the type of racing that I do, but I guess that's how it goes."

If Emerling had edged Tommy at the line, he would have snapped a streak of different winners to open 2025, having previously won at New Smyrna Speedway. Austin Beers' victory at Lancaster Motorplex last weekend tied the record for seven different winners in seven events that was set in 1999.

Instead, Tommy's valiant effort during the final laps set a new NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour record; eight winners in the first eight races.

Building up Catalano Motorsports has been a prolonged, methodical effort not only by Tommy, but his mother Amy, his father Dave, his brothers and every member of his team. That elusive first victory finally arrived on Saturday, a day Tommy wasn't sure would ever materialize.

"It's just nuts," Tommy said. "You see all the people that have won so far this year and if you said any of them were going to win their second race [this year], that wouldn't have surprised me at all. To come here and do what we did is phenomenal."

"You start getting down thinking it's not meant to be, but you keep plugging away and keep at it."

Kyle Bonsignore finished third in his 100th NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour start, followed by his cousin Justin Bonsignore and Beers. The rest of the top 10 included Rypkema, Baldwin, Stephen Kopcik, Craig Lutz and Anthony Nocella.

## How to contact the Sports Editor

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

### PLAYOFFS, from page 6

of the goalies listed on the Amherst College men's soccer roster. The Mammoths are the defending NCAA Division 3 National Champions.

Sheppard, who's going to be a sophomore in the fall, missed most of the Pioneers regular season because the Amherst men's soccer team made a trip to Europe where they played several matches.

"It was definitely a very cool experience," he said. "We played a few games over there, but I'm very glad they gave me an opportunity to play here."

Sheppard certainly enjoyed having a solid defense in front of him led by Pioneers captain Aidan Kelly, who's a member of the UMass-Amherst men's soccer team.

"Aidan is a great defender," Sheppard said. "He makes all of the plays."

The other three Pioneers starting defenders in the home finale were Jaiden Willems, Juan Hermoso, and Gustavo Barosa.

Willems suffered an injury in the middle of the first half against Long Island (9-3-1). He was replaced by Jared Smith.

"I thought Jared was the man of the match," Sheppard added. "We have a very good defense."

The play-in match was scoreless until the 26th min-

ute of the opening half.

That's when Mamadi Jiana, who graduated from Chicopee High School, received a pass from Israel Neto before blasting a shot into the net.

"I felt very good after scoring what turned out to be the game winning goal in front of the hometown crowd," said Jiana, who mostly likely played his final match wearing a Pioneers jersey at Lusitano Stadium. "It's always very special

whenever we're playing at home."

A couple of minutes later, Neto fired a shot from the top of the box, but Long Island goalie Ethan Wood managed to knock the ball over the crossbar resulting in a corner kick.

The Pioneers held a 1-0 halftime advantage.

In the middle of the second half, Neto chipped a pass from the right side of the box to a wide Santiago Blasco Gomez, who put the ball into

the net giving the Pioneers a 2-0 advantage.

Unlike what happened in the regular season finale, Sheppard and the defense didn't allow the Rough Riders to make a late comeback.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com  
Gustavo Barbosa gets a leg on the ball.



Jose Suarez Monaco goes after the ball.



Rees Sheppard socks a free kick away.



Juan Hermoso heads up the field but eyes an open teammate.

# Public Notices

## City of Holyoke Notice of Public Hearing

The DGR Committee of the Holyoke City Council will hold a public hearing to hear a Special Permit Application for Home Occupation of Ella Sussman and Tyrone Obanner at 1-9 Martin Street (122-00-018) for a psychotherapy/psychiatric outpatient mental health practice per sec 4.8.2. Hearing will take place on **Monday, August 4th, 2025 at 6:30 pm** at Holyoke City Hall 536 Dwight St and can be accessed remotely via [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us) Meeting ID 875 5615 2100 Meeting Passcode 333169 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 with same Meeting ID and Passcode. For a copy of the application or to provide comments, please contact City Council Admin Asst Jeffery Anderson-Burgos at [Anderson-BurgosJ@holyoke.org](mailto:Anderson-BurgosJ@holyoke.org) or by phone 413-322-5525. DGR Chair, Kocayne Givner 07/18, 07/25/2025

## City of Holyoke Notice of Public Hearing

The Ordinance Committee of the Holyoke City Council will hold a public hearing on **Wednesday August 6th, 2025 at 6:30pm** to hear a special permit application of Sixan MA LLC at 15 Main Street (033-06-022) a recreational marijuana retail establishment per sec 7.10. Meeting will take place at Holyoke City Hall 536 Dwight St and can be accessed remotely via [zoom.us](http://zoom.us) Meeting ID 812 7823 3053 Meeting Passcode 964670 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 with same Meeting ID and Passcode. For an electronic copy of the application or to submit a comment for this public hearing, please contact City Council Admin Asst Jeffery Anderson-Burgos at [Anderson-BurgosJ@holyoke.org](mailto:Anderson-BurgosJ@holyoke.org) or by phone 413-322-5525. Ordinance Chair, Israel Rivera 07/18, 07/25/2025

## City of Holyoke Notice of Public Hearing

The DGR Committee of the Holyoke City Council will hold a public hearing to hear a special permit application of LN Berneche, Inc. for a motor vehicle repair garage in the IG zone at 37 Appleton Street (036-01-002) per sec 7.2.13 (a). Hearing will

take place on **Monday, August 4th, 2025 at 6:30 pm** at Holyoke City Hall 536 Dwight St and can be accessed remotely via [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us) Meeting ID 875 5615 2100 Meeting Passcode 333169 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 with same Meeting ID and Passcode. For a copy of the application or to provide comments, please contact City Council Admin Asst Jeffery Anderson-Burgos at [Anderson-BurgosJ@holyoke.org](mailto:Anderson-BurgosJ@holyoke.org) or by phone 413-322-5525. DGR Chair, Kocayne Givner 07/18, 07/25/2025

## City of Holyoke Notice of Public Hearing

The DGR Committee of the Holyoke City Council will hold a public hearing to hear a Special Permit Application for Home Occupation of Robert Rose at 414 Hillside Ave Suite 167 (124-00-108) for a custom fabrication shop per sec 4.8.2. Hearing will take place on **Monday, August 4th, 2025 at 6:30 pm** at Holyoke City Hall 536 Dwight St and can be accessed remotely via [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us) Meeting ID 875 5615 2100 Meeting Passcode 333169 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 with same Meeting ID and Passcode. For a copy of the application or to provide comments, please contact City Council Admin Asst Jeffery Anderson-Burgos at [Anderson-BurgosJ@holyoke.org](mailto:Anderson-BurgosJ@holyoke.org) or by phone 413-322-5525. DGR Chair, Kocayne Givner 07/18, 07/25/2025

## Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Hampden Probate and Family Court 50 State Street Springfield, MA 01103 Docket No. HD22P2444PM In the matter of: Eliezer Lopez Rodriguez of Holyoke, MA Protected Person/ Disabled Person/Respondent CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF CONSERVATOR'S ACCOUNT

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, you are hereby notified pursuant

to Rule 72 of the Supplemental Rules of the Probate & Family Court, that the **first and final** account(s) of Nancy Godbout of Granby, MA as Conservator of the property of said Respondent has or have been presented to the Court for allowance.

**You have the right to object to the account(s).** If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of **08/22/2025**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to object to the account(s). If you fail to file the written appearance and objection by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you, including the allowance of the account(s).

Additionally, within thirty days after said return day (or within such other time as the Court upon motion may order), you must file a written affidavit of objections stating the specific facts and grounds upon which each objection is based and a copy shall be served upon the Conservator pursuant to Rule 3 of the Supplemental Rules of the Probate & Family Court.

You have the right to send to the Conservator, by registered or certified mail, a written request to receive a copy of the Petition and account(s) at no cost to you.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
**The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense.**

Witness, Hon. Barbara M. Hyland, First Justice of this Court.

Date: July 15, 2025  
Rosemary A. Saccamoni  
07/25/2025

## LEGAL NOTICE CITY OF HOLYOKE GAS & ELECTRIC DEPARTMENT REFURBISH VAULT COVER #74

Sealed bids for the above contract will be received by Holyoke Gas & Electric Dept until **9:00 A.M., August 14, 2025**, at the Office of the Manager, 99 Suffolk St, Holyoke, MA, at which time bids will be publicly opened and read.

## COUNCIL, from page 1

3, 4, 6, and 7. Each of these wards have just one polling location now while Wards 1, 2, and 5 still have multiple locations.

"All of these other wards seem to function fine with one polling location and it would be a potential cost savings and less administrative burden to use the one location per ward method," the order states.

As time has gone on, there are more and more elections taking place with multiple primaries happening each year, especially during the presidential election years. Elections cost towns and cities a lot of money as they have to be staffed with poll workers and security at every location that has a poll. Every location also needs to have at least one voting machine with it. There is also a question of how valuable multiple ward polling locations are when turnouts are much lower in some primary elections or elections when there are few contested races. Even municipal elections do not draw a massive voter turnout.

Councilor Kocayne

## Prevailing Wage Rates

Rates, which are to apply to the work, are set by the Mass. Dept of Labor & Industries. OSHA course is required. Additional information may be obtained from:  
Chi Wong  
Holyoke Gas & Electric Dept  
99 Suffolk St  
Holyoke, MA 01040  
[cwong@hged.com](mailto:cwong@hged.com)  
(413) 536-9308  
The right is hereby reserved to

reject any or all proposals or to accept any proposals that in the opinion of the Manager may be in the best interest of the City of Holyoke.

Please mark sealed envelopes, **"Bid for Refurbish Vault Cover #74"** and address them to:  
**James M. Lavelle, Manager**  
Holyoke Gas & Electric Dept  
99 Suffolk St  
Holyoke, MA 01040  
07/25/2025

Givner is looking for the city to improve its ordinance for permitting process. He states in his order that the current process is inefficient, and wastes many hours per applicants. He is asking city department involved with the special permitting process to come review it with the city council.

Tabled orders waiting for the committee to evaluate and make recommendations to the city council as a whole include one from David Bartley that states: "The DGR committee meet with city officials responsible for managing our parking enforcement staff. The staff has been repeatedly threatened with physical violence and subject to beratement from the public and have privately paid for body cameras. Send a communication advising the council of policies and procedures to ensure employee safety in advance of the subcommittee meeting."

Multiple councilors also have issued and order looking for: "the City Engineer and DPW develop and install safety measures for passenger cars, trucks and motorcycles in the vicinity of Holyoke's canals as the current protective measures

have recently and regularly been breached resulting in loss of life, property damage, and costs to HG&E. Refer to DPW, City Engineer, HG&E Manager & Commissioners, and Emergency Management Director to strategize improvements and the Mayor to finance these projects."

The Ordinance Committee is next set to meet on Wednesday, Aug. 6. No agenda for that meeting has been released as of press time, though the committee is one of the most active subcommittees the council has.

All council meetings and subcommittee meetings are held in the city council chambers at city hall and are available live through Holyoke Media. Videos of the meeting are made available after the meetings have concluded.

The City Council concluded work in FY2025 with passage of the FY2026 budget prior to the end of June. The council last met on June 30 and did not hold any meetings in July. They are currently only scheduled for one meeting on Aug. 5 next and then nothing until September.

All city councilors are also up for election this fall.

## LOGO, from page 1

who will be entering third grade in August. Her concept was then fully devel-

oped by a professional graphic artist who also worked on the Peck School logo.

As a thank you, Viviana

will receive a framed photo of her original drawing alongside the final design and a T-shirt with the new logo.

## The Holyoke Sun OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

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

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

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

## ADVERTISING SALES HELP WANTED

- Do you want to work in your community helping local businesses connect with their customers?
- Do you want a career supporting local journalism, which tells the unique stories of our communities?
- If so, then join our team! Turley Publications is looking for an outgoing, energetic person interested in selling advertising for our community newspapers. The right candidate will assume an established territory with a portfolio of customers.

You must be a self-starter with excellent communication and organizational skills.

Basic computer skills are required. Previous print sales experience is preferred but we will train the right candidate.

**Turley Publications, a locally owned family business, offers a competitive commission structure, 401k, and health plan.**

Send resume & cover letter to:



Jamie Joslyn  
24 Water Street  
Palmer, MA 01069  
Email: [jamie@turley.com](mailto:jamie@turley.com)

# Job Connection

## HELPING YOU FIND HELP

### JOB OPPORTUNITY

## newspaper correspondent

The Holyoke Sun seeks **Experienced Writers/Journalists** to produce news and/or feature stories of local interest for various towns and cities.

- **Must be dependable, professional and able to meet strict deadlines**
- **Salary based on a flat rate by story and photo**

Send writing samples with resume to



Editor, Greg Scibelli  
24 Water Street  
Palmer, MA 01069  
or email directly to [gscibelli@turley.com](mailto:gscibelli@turley.com)

## Park Administrator

Full-time Park Administrator for a large, over-55 mobile home community. Responsibilities include overseeing facilities and maintenance crew, as well as enforcement of cooperative rules. Individual would be expected to take an active role in day-to-day operations, in coordination with President, Board of Directors, maintenance crew and office staff.

Requirements include previous management experience; general knowledge of building, property and vehicle maintenance; excellent organizational, communications, and time-management skills.

Resumes can be sent to:

**Pine Valley Plantation Cooperative,  
281 Chauncey Walker St., OFC30,  
Belchertown, MA 01007**

or emailed to [office@pvpcoco.com](mailto:office@pvpcoco.com)  
**Attention: Richard Kelleher, President**

Please include days and times that you would be available for an in-person interview.

## PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

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

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

visit [www.publicnotices.turley.com](http://www.publicnotices.turley.com)



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(413)477-0083

**MORE HEAT LESS WOOD.** Central Boiler Classic Edge HDX Outdoor Wood Furnace. EPA Certified. Titanium Stainless Steel. \$2K Tax Credit. Call (508)882-0178

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\$100 or best offer.  
Call Judy at 413-419-8263.

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Excellent Condition, always stored indoors. Adjustable seat, Scotty Rod Holders, Hummingbird fish finder, trolling motor, paddle, Stohlquist fishing vest, and many extras. \$600.  
Call Frank 413-537-5254

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Donald Roy (860) 874-8396

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## SERVICES



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Cellars, attics, garages cleaned, yard debris. Barns & sheds demolished. Swimming pools removed. Cheaper than dumpster fees and we do all the work. Lowest rates. Fully insured. (413)283-6512, cell (413)222-8868.

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Find archives of this local newspaper at  
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(413) 222-5542  
frenchyn@gmail.com

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THE TOWN OF HUNTINGTON IS SEEKING A PART-TIME TREASURER.

\$20,384 - \$23,110 annual salary based on experience. Approximately 16 hours per week. Application and complete job description are available online at [www.huntingtonma.us](http://www.huntingtonma.us) or by emailing [admin@huntingtonma.us](mailto:admin@huntingtonma.us). Position is open until filled. *Town of Huntington is an Equal Opportunity Employer.*

### TOWN OF WORTHINGTON HIGHWAY POSITION OPENING

The Town of Worthington is soliciting letters of interest and resumes from qualified candidates for a **full-time Equipment Operator/General Laborer** position within the Highway Department. Valid MA CDL operator, Hydraulic Hoister's licenses and OSHA-10 certification is preferred.

More in-depth information can be found on the Town's website: [www.worthington-ma.us](http://www.worthington-ma.us)  
Questions will be answered by the Highway Superintendent at 64 Huntington Road, Monday - Friday, 7 AM to 3 PM; the telephone number is 413-238-5830 or send letter of interest, resume and three (3) references with relevant contact information to [highway@worthington-ma.us](mailto:highway@worthington-ma.us) and [sboard@worthington-ma.us](mailto:sboard@worthington-ma.us). This posting will remain pertinent until the position is filled.  
*The Town of Worthington is an Equal Opportunity Employer.*

Post your job openings in our classifieds.  
**WE GET RESULTS!**

## HELP WANTED

### TRUCK DRIVER/LABORER

The Town of Peru Highway Department is now accepting applications for the position of **Truck Driver/Laborer.** Preferred applicants will have a valid Class B CDL, Class 2A Hoisting license, and a current DOT Physical card. Construction and mechanical experience preferred. Must be able to work in all weather conditions. Position is full time 40hrs/week with mandatory overtime during snowstorms. Excellent benefits.

Email resume to: [townadmin@townofperu-ma.com](mailto:townadmin@townofperu-ma.com) or mail to **Town of Peru, Board of Selectmen, 3 East Main Rd. Suite 107, Peru MA 01235.** For additional information contact the Highway Superintendent at (413) 655-8224. *(The Town of Peru is an equal opportunity employer).*

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**4 ROOMS, 2 BEDROOMS,** 1.5/baths, appliances included. \$1500/mo. No utilities. 1st/last/security. References and proof of income required. Call 413-589-0401.



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

**WARE: 3 BDRM.,** quiet dead end street. Refrig/stove/off-street parking. \$1300/mo. First/last. (508) 723-2638.

## FOR RENT



All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status (number of children and or pregnancy), national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, or any intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination.  
This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain about discrimination call The Department of Housing and Urban Development "HUD" toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. For the N.E. area, call HUD at 617-565-5308. The toll free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

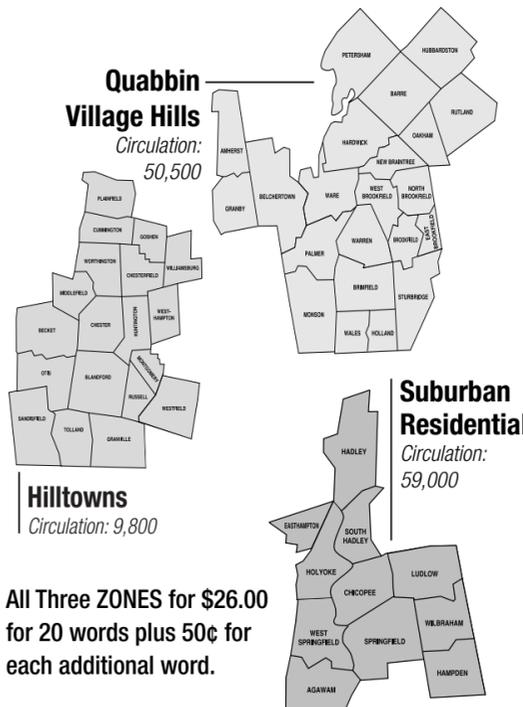
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FRIDAY AT NOON



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Turley photos by Quinn Suomala  
Jessica Decoteau and Maurice LaRosa from the Reptile Nook welcomed everyone to their program.



Maurice LaRosa from the Reptile Nook showed off the red-tailed boa the Reptile Nook owns.



Co-Owner and Lead Educator Jessica Decoteau showed the group an adolescent Madagascar hissing cockroach.



Maurice LaRosa from the Reptile Nook passed around a Madagascar hissing cockroach for people to hold.



Maurice LaRosa from the Reptile Nook let everyone at the Reptile Nook program meet his bearded dragon.



People at the Reptile Nook program were able to pet a Russian tortoise.

**REPTILE**, from page 1

Decoteau has been doing this kind of program for several years now. The Reptile Nook does a multitude of library events throughout the year, and they are also open to be booked for parties.

To keep up to date on the Reptile Nook's programs, go to their website at <https://www.thereptilenook.com/> or find them on social media at @thereptilenook.

The library also has a variety of other events planned for the rest of the

summer.

There is a craft hour for kids and teens every Monday of July at 2 p.m. that anyone is welcome to come and enjoy.

Also, on Wednesday, July 30 at 1 p.m. Rona Leventhal will be at the

library. This program will involve kids in mysteries, puzzles and mind twisters.

To keep up to date on the different events at the library go to their website at <https://www.holyokelibrary.org/> or stop by the library to talk to one of their staff.

# Send Us Your Autumn Event Information

Turley Publications will print your Autumn event **FREE OF CHARGE** in our **Autumn Fest Supplement** which will be published **September 10, 2025.**

Total circulation of 85,000 reaching over 200,000 readers in the Pioneer Valley.

**Deadline for Calendar submissions is August 11.**

## Community Autumn Events

Event Should Be Non-Profit & Open to the Public

**FREE Calendar Listings Reaching over 200,000 Readers in the Pioneer Valley**

Event Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Time \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Description \_\_\_\_\_

Cost \_\_\_\_\_

Contact name & phone number for more information \_\_\_\_\_

**MAIL YOUR LISTING INFORMATION TO:**

**Turley Publications, Attn: Jamie Joslyn, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069 or email\* them to: [jamie@turley.com](mailto:jamie@turley.com)**

**\*Be sure to indicate "Autumn Event" in the subject line of your email.**