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One child having fun on the pony rides.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL Celebration



This volunteer awaits the line of parents ready to pick up a backpack full of school supplies.

Turley photos by Brendan Rooney

HSNI and HCSO help students prepare for upcoming school year

By Brendan Rooney
Correspondent

HOLYOKE — Last Saturday, the Holyoke Safe Neighborhood Initiative (HSNI) and Hampden County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) hosted its 15th annual back-to-school celebration that saw thousands of residents, consisting of families and kids, take to McNally Field, where 2500 backpacks were given away, all full of various school supplies as a way to prepare for the upcoming school year, which begins on Aug. 24.

Reflecting on the historic milestone was Ed Caisse, the director of the HSNI.

See **BACK-TO-SCHOOL**, page 6

Holyoke library hosts author Brad Timm

By Christina Gioscia
Correspondent

HOLYOKE — On Wednesday, Aug. 12 Holyoke Public Library hosted local author Brad Timm. Timm presented his new book, "America is Wild." This book is for all ages. It



Turley photo by Christina
Author Brad Timm at his presentation on Aug. 12 at HPL.

acts as a guide to different plants and animals in each state across America. Timm shared with attendees that he tried to include a plant, bird, mammal, and reptile or amphibian for each state. The book's illustrations were done by Margaux Samson Abadie and Jill De Haan. His presentation on Wednesday at Holyoke Public Library focused on going through a couple states and describing the traits of some of the plants and animals. Timm also shared some fun facts about the plants and animals during the presentation, creating a fun and educational event.

After the presentation we spoke with Timm.

Timm first spoke about the mission of Northeast Wildlife Team which is the company he represents.

"So Northeast Wildlife Team, so we have two parts of our mission. So, one is to provide very accessible education resources just about the wildlife of New England. You know, their ecology and things like that. Then, the second part, which is our main focus, is to educate and inspire people to

take personal, simple personal, actions around their yards, their homes, their communities to help wildlife. So things like reducing their light use at night, planting native plants, reducing driving on warm rainy spring nights when the amphibians are crossing roads. So there's simple things that people can do. So, we can all pitch in and help out."

Timm shared the process and inspiration behind the book.

"The publisher had actually come and found me out," Timms said. "And they had an idea, they wanted to do a combined animals and plants book of the United States. What I did was picked all the animals, all the plants, and wrote about them. Then we got two amazing illustrators. I wrote it and we designed it so that it'd be accessible across all those ages. And the hope is that it really kind of opens people's eyes about the diversity of plants and animals we have in the United States. There are fun facts about each of them in the writing, that hopefully will connect people more. And then hopefully we'll inspire them to then want to do something to help these animals."

Timm says spreading correct information is so important in regard to respecting animals and not fearing them based off of false information.

"In our culture, a lot of these animals have unfortunately, been kind of demonized, and it's not based on true behavior," Timms said. "So things like snakes and sharks and spiders, right, have been portrayed as these animals that are out to get us. When actually it's quite the opposite. They see us as predators. And so they really want nothing to do with us. Most of them, the animals, are just trying to do what we're trying to do as humans right. They're trying to have young, take care of their young, find a place to live, find some food. And really that's what it's all about for them, similar to us. So, we have so much more in connection with these animals. And I feel like books like this, you know, that portray them as they are, you know, are really important and I love when people, you know, kind of start to learn new things about these animals that they previously maybe were scared about."

See **TIMM**, page 5



American Legion set to host back-to-school event

By Quinn Suomala
Correspondent

HOLYOKE — The American Legion is hosting a back-to-school event on Aug. 29 from 12-3.

Kids and their families are invited out to enjoy hot dogs, hamburgers and cotton candy.

All the food will be supplied and made for free by the Legion.

Additionally, the first 50 kids will receive free school supplies.

The school supplies include pencils, crayons, markers, erasers, notebooks and packs of tissues.

"We hope to give them everything they need," American Legion Bar Manager Lisa Garipey said. "There are a lot of kids whose parents can't afford school supplies, so we wanted to help."

While enjoying the free food and school supplies kids can also play and watch Charlie Berk create balloon animals.

"He comes to every one of these events that has to do with kids and does a wonderful job," Berk said.

The event will take place at the American Legion Post 351. The address is 50 St. Kolbe Drive in Holyoke.

The location is perfect for a fun, outdoor event. Kids will get to enjoy the backyard of the Legion and their proximity to Pulaski Park.

Garipey and the Legion will set up a variety of outdoor games for kids to play, including cornhole.

The Legion hoped that this event would allow kids to have some fun before school started again while also getting them some of the supplies they need.

"I hope the kids don't have to be embarrassed that they don't have what they need to go back to school," Garipey said. "Hopefully we can make a few kids feel better about the start of the year."

Garipey wanted kids to be able to walk into school with confidence, knowing that they have all the supplies they need.

She looks forward to being able to watch all the kids have fun while getting their supplies.

"I can't wait to see the looks on the kids faces," she said.

The Legion also wanted to ensure the community knew that they were there to help everyone.

"I'm part of the Auxiliary and it's our obligation to help the community as well as the veterans," Garipey said. "I hope people know that there are people who are willing to help and who care about their community."

Garipey is grateful for everyone who came together to help plan the event. The Legion and the Auxiliary had to plan out the supplies needed and the events of the day.

"The Auxiliary are amazing people," Garipey said.

The Legion can't wait to see everyone turn out for the day of the event.

State Rep. Duffy makes case for new term

By Brendan Rooney
Correspondent

HOLYOKE — The race for the 5th Hampden House District seat in the Massachusetts House of Representatives, which encompasses all of Holyoke as well as precincts A1 and B in Chicopee, is heating up, with three candidates vying for the seat in November. Much of the attention, however, has centered on the Democratic nomination, which voters will decide in the Sept. 1 primary.

The contest pits longtime Holyoke resident and challenger Dori Dean against incumbent State Rep. Patricia Duffy, who has represented the district



L-R: State Rep. Pat Duffy (D-5th Hampden House District) fields questions from political consultant and A.L. Cignoli Company President Anthony Cignoli, who served as moderator.

Turley photo by Brendan Rooney

See **DUFFY**, page 2

Police chief reports crime has decreased in city

HOLYOKE - Holyoke Police Officers, Detectives and Supervisors are making a significant difference in our community. The Holyoke Police Department made meaningful strides in 2025 as crime continues to decrease in the city.

During the first six months of 2026, overall crime in Holyoke decreased by 7.5 percent compared to the same period last year. Aggravated assaults are down nearly 40 percent. Larcenies have declined by 36 percent, and motor vehicle thefts have also fallen by 36 percent. These results

represent fewer victims, safer neighborhoods, and a stronger sense of security for our residents and businesses.

Holyoke Police Chief Brian Keenan states, “When I accepted the opportunity to serve as Holyoke’s Police Chief about a year and a half ago, I knew the challenges ahead. I wasn’t sure whether a department our size could meet those demands every day. What I’ve witnessed since has exceeded my expectations.”

He continues, “In many industries you have to do more with less. For a police department, that is incredi-

bly difficult, but these officers are doing it and are making myself and our community proud. We are far from perfect, but the number of illegal firearms and narcotics we seize coupled with the number of people we help whether in crisis or dealing with addiction is astounding.”

Chief Keenan attributes this to hard work of his officers, detectives and supervisors. Despite staffing challenges, officers continue to work tirelessly to remove illegal firearms and narcotics from our streets, serve arrest warrants, investigate

violent crimes, and respond to thousands of calls for service. At the same time, officers provide compassion to individuals struggling with addiction or mental health crises and comfort families experiencing some of the worst moments of their lives.

Through proactive community policing, regular quality-of-life checks in problem areas, visible patrols in our parks and neighborhoods, and strong partnerships throughout the community are producing measurable results. Just this past month, officers cleared more than 50 outstanding

warrants. Some involved relatively minor offenses, while others included individuals wanted on serious charges such as kidnapping and assault with a dangerous weapon. Every warrant served removes uncertainty from our streets and reinforces accountability.

The Holyoke Police have also expanded efforts to address retail theft. Extra patrols and targeted details have helped businesses reduce losses while reminding would-be offenders that theft is not a victimless crime. Every stolen item ultimately impacts local

businesses, employees, and consumers alike.

Chief Keenan states, “From businesses to people, our officers show compassion when they encounter any individual, offering help to those in need to providing comfort to a family who recently lost a loved one. We are here first and foremost to help. There are ebbs and flows in any urban center, but right now we are seeing the fruits of our labor and I am extremely proud of the women and men who serve the city of Holyoke on a daily basis. They continue to impress me.”

Broadway Brings Joy holding open house, ribbon cutting

HOLYOKE – Broadway Brings Joy (BBJ) will celebrate its new home with two nights of Open House events and an official Ribbon Cutting ceremony, welcoming students, families, and the community to see the space firsthand.

Tuesday, Aug. 25, 4:30 to 6 p.m. — Open House, with a ribbon cutting ceremony at 5 p.m., held in partnership with the Holyoke Chamber of Commerce and Holyoke Mayor Josh Garcia.

Wednesday, Aug. 26, 4:30 to 6 p.m. — Open House.

Both events will take place at the BBJ studio: 4 Open Square Way, Studio 403 (4th floor of Mill 4), Holyoke, MA 01040.

During both evenings, prospective and current stu-

dents will have the opportunity to tour the new studio, register for upcoming classes, and meet their teachers face-to-face. Community members are encouraged to choose the night that works best for them, but if they would like to attend the Ribbon Cutting, they would prioritize Tuesday, Aug. 25 at 5 p.m.

Attendees are invited to wear BBJ merchandise or red and black to join the official Ribbon Cutting photo alongside representatives from the Holyoke Chamber of Commerce and Mayor Garcia.

“This is a great opportunity for new students to see our space, register for classes, and meet their teachers,” said Debra Vega, Artistic Director of Broadway

Brings Joy. “Also a great opportunity for returning students to see our newly updated space for the first time.”

BBJ is also just a few weeks away from the first day of its Fall semester! Classes begin after Labor Day on Tuesday, Sept. 8. With a rebranded studio space, new classes, and new teachers, this Fall promises to be one to remember. Families who haven’t registered yet are encouraged to check out the Fall 2026 weekly class schedule, which will include two opportunities to perform this Fall.

“Although we offer dance classes, BBJ is different from a regular dance studio. We have cultivated a comprehensive Musical

Theater Training Program that includes Improv/Acting Classes, Private Voice Lessons, Audition Preparation, extensive Ballet training (continuing the legacy of Rose & Charles Flachs of Massachusetts Academy of Ballet who came before us), Tap, Jazz, Hip-hop, Latin Ballroom Basics, and Musical Theater Classes that feature singing live just like they do on Broadway.” And Debra would know, as she is a former Broadway performer herself.

Questions about class placement can be directed to Debra at broadwaybringsjoy@gmail.com. For more information on classes and pricing, or to register, visit www.broadwaybringsjoy.com.

Senior Center to show Zoom presentation on 9/11 tragedy

SOUTH HADLEY – In observance of the 25th Anniversary of 9/11, the South Hadley Public Library, in partnership with the South Hadley Senior Center and South Hadley High School, will host a live community viewing of a special Zoom presentation by FDNY First Responder Joseph T. Bonanno on Wednesday, Sept. 2 at 6 p.m.

Sponsored by the 9/11 Tunnel to Towers Foundation, Mr. Bonanno will share his personal experiences and reflections on the rescue and recovery efforts at Ground Zero following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Attendees are encouraged to submit questions for Mr. Bonanno in

advance through the South Hadley Public Library website at www.shadleylib.org.

Community members may attend the presentation at the South Hadley Public Library, the South Hadley Senior Center, or South Hadley High School. Please register with the location you plan to attend. Library registration is available at www.shadleylib.org. To register at the Senior Center, call 413-538-5030 (Option 3). Registration information for South Hadley High School will be announced soon.

This free program, sponsored by the 9/11 Tunnel to Towers Foundation, is open to the public. You do not need to be from South Hadley to attend.

DUFFY, from page 1

since 2021 and is seeking her fourth consecutive two-year term. In addition, Duffy currently serves on several legislative committees, including the House Ways and Means Committee and the Joint Committee on Veterans and Federal Affairs. She also serves as vice chair of the Joint Committee on Cannabis Policy.

The winner of the Democratic primary will advance to the Nov. 3 general election, where Jose Candelario Gonzalez awaits.

Now, with early voting set to begin Aug. 22 ahead of the Democratic primary, the Holyoke Taxpayers Association (HTA) hosted a public town hall with State Rep. Patricia Duffy on Aug. 11 at Holyoke Media. The event was held in partnership with OneHolyokeCDC, which provided live, in-house translation services, and was moderated by Anthony Cignoli.

Before the public forum began, organizers learned that Dean had withdrawn from the race the previous month, prompting adjust-

ments to the event to ensure the town hall could proceed as planned. Questions had been submitted in advance, a process HTA Executive Director Lori Belanger addressed during the event.

“Although we are disappointed by this change in format, we believe voters still deserve the opportunity to hear directly from the candidates about their issues affecting Holyoke,” Belanger shared.

It's Showtime

Once the forum got underway, questions started to flood in featuring various topics being discussed, such as the state legislation examining the Dover Amendment to allow municipalities to tax nonprofit organizations, which would generate additional funding for local operating budgets, among other topics. Duffy opened the discussion by addressing the challenges posed by the Dover Amendment and its current provisions, noting that Holyoke is not alone in facing these issues and outlining potential solutions.

“I want to be honest: this is something that my Hampden County colleagues



From left to right: State Rep. Pat Duffy (D-5th Hampden House District) listens as HTA Executive Director Lori Belanger delivers opening remarks, while political consultant and A.L. Cignoli Company President Anthony Cignoli serves as moderator.

and I have grappled with for a while because many of us face the same challenges, and the goal is always to strive for PILOT(Payment in Lieu of Taxes) agreements, because I do feel the struggle and empathize with the hit on our taxes here in Holyoke, and I have made a couple of attempts on how to remedy this,” Duffy said. “I proposed legislation before with Councilor Meg [Magrath-Smith]; it was heard by the housing committee, and then I filed legislation with Carlos [Gonzalez], where we

asked if we could consider a cap, but I can confirm that Holyoke and Springfield are facing similar challenges.”

Duffy then shifted towards the possibility of allowing group homes to enter PILOT agreements.

“I would say that there are wonderful group homes in the city, and they provide wonderful services, but the reality is that they don’t pay taxes, and so if a group home is coming in, can we automatically ask them to enter into PILOT negotiations? Can we at least consider

that? Can we crack that door open, because I don’t want to close the door on them, but we also have to acknowledge they put a hit on our tax, and the result is it’s a heavy lift for all of us,” Duffy said. Despite it all, Duffy remained optimistic that a solution will present itself as she cited, “We have a strong Western Mass delegation that is rising in seniority, in the legislature.”

MSBA & Holyoke Schools

The conversation then

shifted to the relationship between the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) and Holyoke, as the city looks to rebuild another middle school while navigating its new designation as a “Gateway City” and its emergence from state receivership.

“I feel the MSBA has always worked with us quite well, and I do know that gateway cities are looked upon favorably, so with that said, I feel we can advocate for streams of funding due to the success of our partnership with the completion of Peck Middle School, and I also work with the Gateway City Caucus,” Duffy said. “I understand we are a city of challenges, but we are also a great example of being considered a Gateway City; we have incredible delegation, and we’re going to pull together, so while I can’t promise extra funding streams, I can promise the best support from the state and the MSBA, and I can confirm it’s certainly on the agenda.”

There will be more coverage from this event in next week’s edition.

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Applications open for HERizon program

SPRINGFIELD – After a successful year in which participants reported increased confidence, stronger friendships and meaningful personal growth, applications are now open for HERizon, the Hampden District Attorney’s Office’s free leadership and empowerment program for high school girls across Hampden County.

Designed to help young women develop confidence, leadership skills and lasting connections, HERizon provides participants with mentorship, engaging discussions, interactive activities and opportunities to learn from female professionals and community leaders. The program meets bi-weekly at the Hampden District Attorney’s Office in Springfield and is led by young women who serve in a variety of roles throughout the District Attorney’s Office. Throughout the

program, students explore topics including healthy relationships, confidence, mental wellness, women’s health, self-advocacy and navigating challenges both in school and beyond.

“HERizon is about helping young women recognize their own potential and giving them the tools and support to become confident leaders in their schools and communities,” said Hampden District Attorney Anthony D. Gulluni. “When young women feel empowered to use their voices, advocate for themselves and support one another, the impact extends far beyond the classroom. Programs like HERizon are an investment in the future of our community.”

The program continues to make a meaningful impact on participants. At the conclusion of this year’s program, in an anonymous

survey, participants rated their overall experience 4.8 out of 5, while 100% said HERizon helped them grow as a person.

Participants described HERizon as a place where they felt supported, encouraged, and comfortable being themselves. Feedback on the survey included:

“It was a breath of fresh air to connect with other girls face to face and build a community.”

“Everyone was so supportive and passionate. I loved this group and the friendships that were built.”

“I loved being able to open up. Besides my own room, I feel like this was the room I was most comfortable.”

Many also said the program helped them become more confident, set healthier boundaries and step outside their comfort zones.

“My confidence is so much better.”

“I’ve been able to set boundaries for myself without having to feel bad about it.”

“I’ve become more of a girl’s girl, combined with so much more confidence.”

Participants cited discussions on confidence, healthy relationships, positive self-talk, self-love and women’s health among their favorite topics, along with hands-on experiences like a car maintenance workshop and opportunities to connect with peers from across Hampden County.

HERizon is open to high school girls throughout Hampden County and is offered at no cost. Applications for the upcoming program are now being accepted.

Students interested in applying can learn more here. Questions about the program may be directed to Halie Matthew at Halie.Matthew@mass.gov.

City to host reading of the Declaration of Independence

HOLYOKE — Mayor Joshua A. Garcia, State Representative Patricia Duffy, and City Council President Tessa Murphy-Romboletti will read aloud the opening statements of the Declaration of Independence on Saturday, Aug. 29, at 10 a.m. at Veterans Park.

The public is invited.

The reading, part of Holyoke’s observance of the

nation’s 250th birthday, is being sponsored by Holyoke Veterans Services, the city’s Patriotic Events Committee, and the Mayor’s Office. Representative Duffy will present the city with a facsimile of the Declaration of Independence.

City Councilor Juan Anderson-Burgos will greet the gathering and introduce the readers.

Public invited to Hibernians Summer Picnic on Aug. 30

HOLYOKE – The Hibernians of Hampden/Hampshire Counties invite the public to attend the Annual Traditional Summer Picnic 2026 on Sunday Aug. 30 at Hamels Pavilion in Holyoke from 1 to 5 p.m., rain or shine. This year for young people ages 1-10 we are offering mac and cheese, chicken fingers and lemonade, face painting, and sculpture balloons.

The giant barbeque will

include: hamburgers, hot dogs, potato salad, corn on the cob, tossed salad, dessert, coffee, iced tea, cash bar, music, dancing, raffle.

Featuring The Healy’s “The Institute for Better Living.”

The cost is \$30 for adults and kids 16 and over; kids 10-15 are \$15. For reservations/tickets call Ryan Allen at 413-531-3040 or Fran Hennessey at 413-785-5687 by Aug. 25.

Care Center to hold rowing event Aug. 22

HOLYOKE – The Care Center’s 26th annual Rowing Strong, Rowing Together Young Parents Regatta will take place at the Holyoke Rows Boathouse, 25 Jones Ferry Rd. in Holyoke, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 22 (rain date Sunday, Aug. 23). All are invited to this family-friendly event. Come for the boat races, stay for the cotton candy and face painting.

Now in its 26th year, the Young Parents Regatta is

the annual culminating event of Rowing Strong, Rowing Together– a transformative regional program designed by The Care Center and Mount Holyoke College. The program partners community boathouses with agencies supporting young mothers and has received national recognition for its innovation and impact. This year participating teams include young mothers from Holyoke, Springfield, Chelsea, and Hartford, CT.



More than 100 spectators and fans are anticipated.

Knowing that young mothers are subject to stigma and isolation, this program

fosters a sense of belonging and provides an opportunity to showcase their collec-

See ROWING, page 10

NAMI offering education program

HOLYOKE – NAMI Western Massachusetts is pleased to offer their NAMI Family-to-Family Education Program in person, starting Tuesday, Sept. 15, from 6 to 8:30 p.m. in Greenfield.

What is the NAMI Family-to-Family Education Program? NAMI Family-to-Family is a free, 8-session educational program for family, significant others, and friends of people with mental health

conditions. It is a designated evidenced-based program. This means that research shows that the program significantly improves the coping and problem-solving abilities of the people closest to a person with a mental health condition.

NAMI Family-to-Family is taught by NAMI-trained family members who have been there and includes presentations, discussions, and interactive exercises.

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Guest Column

SOCIAL SECURITY Matters

By Russell Gloor



I worked for my ex-husband but wasn't paid and now have little Social Security – What are my options?

Author note: This is article number 500 in the AMAC Foundation's "Ask Rusty" series of Social Security articles, which have been published nationwide every week since February 2017. "Ask Rusty" is provided free of charge as an integral part of the AMAC Foundation's mission to "support and educate America's seniors." If you would like to help the AMAC Foundation fulfill its mission, charitable donations are graciously accepted at <https://amacfoundation.org/donate/>.

Dear Rusty:

Sadly, I was in business with my ex-husband. I'm a nurse and he was a chiropractor. He refused to pay me "on the books" and now, at age 73, after divorcing him due to his financial irresponsibility. (I don't want to burden you with the thefts that he perpetrated), I am stuck with a small \$773 Social Security payment each month. At age 73 I am now faced with having to go back into the workforce. Is there anything I can do to prove that I worked 40 years for my husband, but wasn't paid?

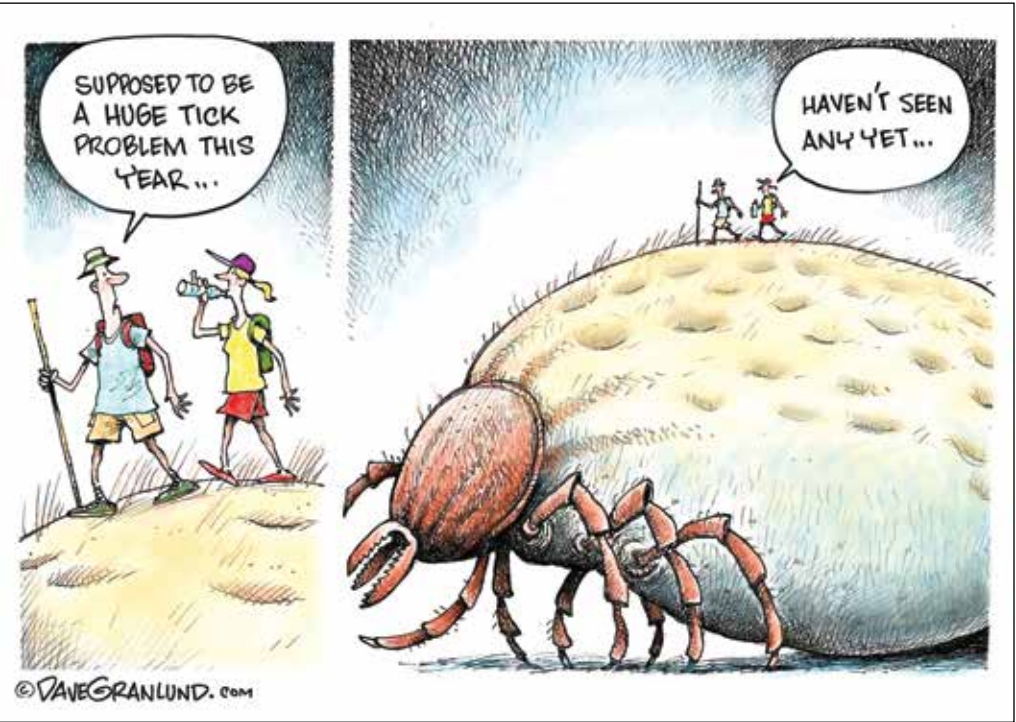
Signed: Distressed Divorcee

Dear Distressed:

We are so sorry to hear of your unfortunate circumstances. Assuming your ex-husband is now collecting Social Security retirement benefits or is at least eligible to if you are divorced at least two years, you should be able to collect an ex-spouse benefit as his former wife. In that case, you would be entitled to receive 50% of the Social Security benefit he was entitled to at his own Full Retirement Age because he and you were married for over 10 years. The way that will work is that you would continue to receive your personally-earned \$773 monthly

Social Security retirement amount earned from other employment, but you would also be entitled to a supplemental "spousal boost" to bring your payment up to half of the SS payment amount your ex-husband is entitled to at his SS Full Retirement Age. In other words, because you were married to your ex for more than 10 years, you are entitled to the same Social Security benefits as though you were still married. That is true, even if he has remarried and his new wife is also getting a spouse benefit from his record. You will still be entitled to an ex-spouse benefit from your ex-husband as his former wife. And if he dies before you, as a surviving ex-spouse you will get the same Social Security benefit he was receiving at his death, instead of the smaller amount your will get while you are both living. Regarding rejoining the workforce, while you can certainly go back to work at age 73 without it negatively affecting your Social Security benefits, if you are struggling financially, I suggest you visit this website sponsored by the National Council on Aging: www.benefitscheckup.org. At this website, you can enter your zip code and find much information about other supplemental assistance you may be entitled to where you live, including healthcare and medication assistance, housing, nutritional assistance, etc. Regarding your question: "Is there anything I can do to prove that I worked 40 years and wasn't paid?" Social Security determines benefits based solely on your personal earnings as reported to the Internal Revenue Service, which is, in turn, dependent on how your joint income taxes were filed over the

See SSI, page 5



Guest Column

Garden Lady discusses weeds and seeds

I came back from vacation and was shocked as to how much the garden had grown.

in the Garden

by Roberta McQuaid



Crops were ready to be harvested and weeds that were merely inches tall had grown by leaps and bounds! Of course, we did have nearly a half foot of rain that week, and this probably played a part in such exuberant growth. Read on to learn how indiscriminate watering by Mother Nature can mean weeds, weeds and more weeds. Why such a growth spurt? Because just like other seeds, those of our least favorite weedy plants need both sunlight and water in order to germinate and grow well. When we water on purpose, we can direct the rain where we'd like – usually at the base of the plant. Unfortunately, rainfall that lands on a brick path, the garden aisle, and also in between plants within the row can cause a lot of weeds to sprout. Hand weeding and hoeing are both great exercise,

years that rainfall isn't so plentiful. Mulch doesn't have to be expensive – it can be as simple as a "biscuit" of spent hay, a few sheets of newspaper secured with stones, pine needles or grass clippings – as long as these materials are applied thick enough to exclude light, weed seeds should not sprout. Sometimes I will put a layer of corrugated cardboard down first, wet it then add the mulch on top. It really seems to make a difference having that preliminary layer to keep light out. This may be an unlikely pairing for this column, but there are plants that we desire to grow this time of year, and they are cover crops. Cover crops add lots of organic matter to the soil when incorporated in during the spring or summer months. While winter rye is the standard, you can grow oats, too. If sown right now, oats will germinate but die back as soon as frost hits. Leave the plants in place, though, and they will prevent erosion by holding onto the soil with their roots. Plant parts can be incorporated come spring time. In preparation for sowing cover crop seed, the soil surface should be scuffed up so that the seeds will make good contact with earth. Once prep is complete I rake the soil smooth and broadcast the grain, first throwing the seed in one direction and then the other. It's a good idea to divide the seed in half and

See GARDEN, page 5



your health



By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN

Guest Column



Menopause is having a moment

“Why didn't our mothers tell us?” seems to be the predominant feeling about menopause on the part of Gen X women, those approximately between the ages 40 and 60. For my mother's generation and those that came before her, it was simply “The Change.” Just get on with it. And doctors don't seem

to pay it much mind either, even though it affects half of their patients and comes with 34 known symptoms ranging from hot flashes and irregular periods to night sweats and mood changes. “Doctors seem to think we are either pre-pregnant, pregnant or invisible,” one woman commented. In the last few years, though, the conversation has

See HEALTH, page 5

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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State Sen. John Velis, Holyoke Mayor Joshua Garcia, and Gov. Maura Healey with the event's Premier Sponsor MassMutual.



Gov. Maura Healey with members from the HCSO.

Turley photos by Brendan Rooney

BACK-TO-SCHOOL, from page 1

“I remember the first night I debuted the program; we truly found out how many families and individuals were struggling, and then right around the corner was the upcoming school year, so we decided to implement a change, and we conducted a back-to-school event, where we had 650 people and gave away 350 backpacks, and every year since then has shown substantial growth,” Caisse said. “So I feel the work we are doing is extremely important, and it’s something we have done for the past 15 years and will continue to do so, which is predicated on building relationships with the agencies that have the resources in place to help people rebound and get to a better place,” Caisse said.

Echoing similar sentiments was HCSO Sheriff Nick Cocchi, who touched upon the importance of what the HSNi program embodies.

“This isn’t about just handing a child a backpack. It’s about showing young people that their community believes in them and is invested in their future,” Cocchi said. “And if we want to reduce incarceration, we have to be willing to invest in prevention; That means getting out into our neighborhoods, building relationships with kids and giving them positive opportunities they may not otherwise have. Every young person we can help find the right path today is one less young person we may have to see come through our doors tomorrow. That’s what HSNi is all about.”

In addition, HSNi extends far beyond its annual back-to-school event, providing year-round mentoring, a



(l-r) HCSO Deputy Ana Silva and Bob “The Bike Guy” Charland helping a child with a brand new bike and helmet as parents watched on.

variety of outreach programs, and initiatives focused on improving Holyoke’s graduation rate—positive impacts that Gov. Maura Healey highlighted.

“I’m blown away. You’ve got to realize these are the programs that we need to invest in, that I support as governor,” Healey said. “You look at the graduation rate, and just since the time of this program beginning in 2011, graduation’s gone from 48% to well over 70%. That’s a huge indication of success, and I support it as governor.”

Additionally, longtime community fixture Bob “The Bike Guy” Charland was on hand for the ninth consecutive year to host his Golden Ticket bike giveaway, bringing plenty of smiles and excitement to children and families in attendance.

“This whole program is a great way to give back



Pony rides were one of the many attractions at the events.

to the city of Holyoke, and I always enjoy this event because it shows a positive side to law enforcement, while also providing a sense of gratitude that no one can take away from you, when you can give these kids something that typically their parents couldn’t afford, right before the start of school; it’s truly just an incredible moment to be a part of,” Charland said.

The afternoon also

featured a variety of activities for children, including bounce houses, water slides, laser tag, free haircuts, and power cars, along with an assortment of more than 40 sponsors and resources that consisted of various lines for assistance, including bundles of clothes being passed out, providing families with an opportunity to enjoy one final day of fun before the start of the new school year, which helped bridge the entire event

and I have to tell you, I’m even more excited about the steady leadership we now have in place. We’re excited to move forward as one team and continue working together to find solutions to these challenges,” Garcia said. “However, I can’t minimize the work that Anthony [Soto] achieved during this transitional period, and I can confirm he and Jackie worked well throughout receivership, and he has certainly prepared her for this role, and so he’s staying on as the CFO for our district, so we have a little bit of a Batman and Robin type of situation that will benefit us extremely well, which will we all hope will contribute and build towards a sense of upward mobility taking shape for our district.”

Garcia did note that there is still work left to be done.

“We still have to improve our graduation rate; we have to work on getting kids to school and closing the attendance gap, and we have to address the educational outcomes of falling short when it comes to our students with special needs, and kids who are English as a second language speakers, so once we recognize and isolate the significant issues, that’s when we can find solutions, allocate resources, and then pivot to assist in other areas as well,” the mayor said.

The event’s Premier Sponsor was MassMutual, while Top Sponsors included Peoples Bank, Springfield Pharmacy, the City of Holyoke, Sodexo, Westfield Bank, The Care Center and Cradle to Crayons, to name a few.

To date, the HCSO has provided backpacks and school supplies to more than 35,000 students and shows no signs of stopping anytime soon.

(l-r) Jen Caisse, Ed Caisse, the director of the HSNi, Holyoke Mayor Joshua Garcia, and Mike Pratt, HSNi.

together, with the message of support and community being felt by all.

Holyoke students in grades 1-12 return to the classroom on Monday, Aug. 24. Pre-K and Kindergarten students start on Aug. 26. Offering insight into the district’s future now out of state receivership was Holyoke Mayor Joshua A. Garcia, who admitted, “he’s excited with the current leadership in place.”

“I feel great. I’m excited about Jackie [Glasheen] serving as our first locally appointed superintendent,

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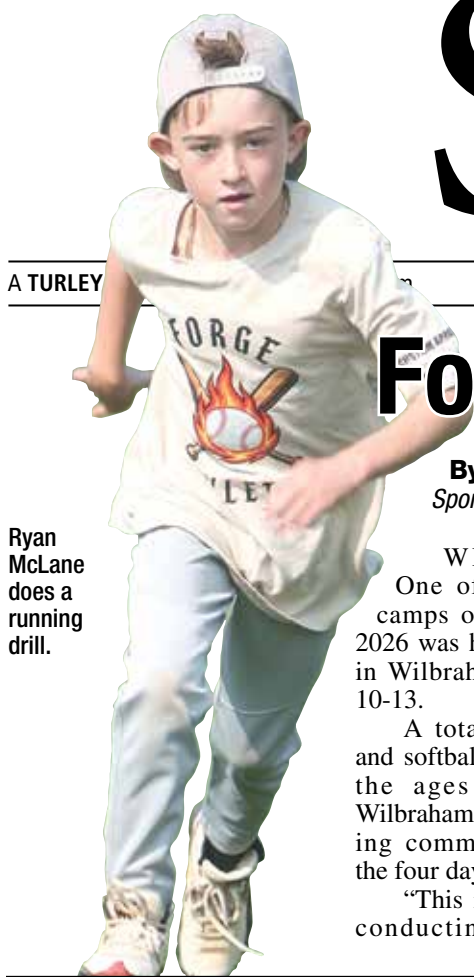


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Ryan McLane does a running drill.

Forge Baseball Clinic returns to WMass

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

WILBRAHAM— One of the last sports camps of the summer of 2026 was held at Spec Pond in Wilbraham from August 10-13.

A total of 57 baseball and softball players between the ages of 6-16 from Wilbraham and the surrounding communities attended the four day clinic.

"This is our fourth year conducting the baseball

clinics, and this is probably the best one yet," said camp director Dustin Brisson "We have almost 60 kids, including a couple of softball players for the first time, this week. It's the most campers we've ever had at this clinic and I'm very pleased."

Brisson, who is the owner of Forge Athletics, was born in Florida and played college baseball at the University of Central Florida from 1997-2000. The first baseman was drafted by the Boston Red Sox in the 15th round of the 2000 MLB draft.

Brisson, who played 345 minor league games, advanced to Double A Portland. His baseball career came to an end due to an injury.

"I was blessed to have the opportunity to play professional baseball," Brisson said. "I'm doing what I can to give back to these kids."

Some of the camp instructors were Lindsay Beer, David Wendt, Ace Adams Chade Shade, who's the head coach of the Springfield College baseball team, Pat Strange, who's the pitching coach at Westfield State University, Dan Gomez, who's the head baseball coach at Western New England University, and Terry Doyle, who's the the baseball coach at New England College.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Campers receive some instructions from one of the coaches in the Forge Baseball Clinic.

"It's an honor to have these coaches working at our clinic this year," Brisson said. "They want to help these kids. This is a high level skills clinic. I just want the older kids to have the opportunity to work with the college coaches."

A couple of the guest speakers at the clinic were Brandon Seymour, who's

the general manager of the Valley Blue Sox, Nancy Street, who's a board member of the Miracle League of Western Massachusetts, and Duke Castiglione Jr who's a sportscaster at a television station in Boston.

Ray Fagnant, who grew up in Chicopee and is the Boston Red Sox Northeast Regional Scouting

Supervisor, also spent a day at the clinic.

A few of the different stations were hitting, fielding, and throwing.

"My main goal is to teach the players the basic fundamentals of the game," Brisson said. "I also want to keep the kids active at this

See CAMP, page 8

Blue Sox look back on 'resilient' campaign

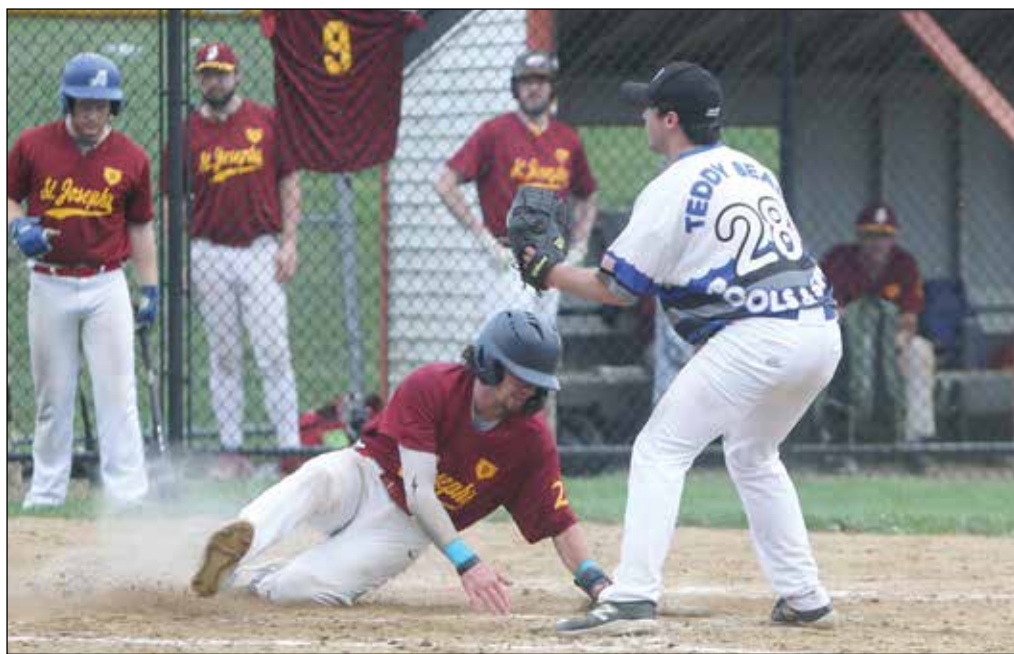
HOLYOKE — When the Valley Blue Sox walked off the field following a 14-5 loss to the Sanford Mainers in Game 2 of the NECBL South Division Semifinals on Aug.2, the scoreboard marked the end of a 2026 season to remember.

Valley returned to the postseason for the first time since 2024 after navigating the ups and downs that come with collegiate summer baseball. A scorching start gave way to a difficult stretch of roster turnover and injuries before the Blue Sox caught fire at exactly the right time, winning 10 of their final 13 regular-season games to clinch a playoff berth.

"We don't do it for the wins," head coach John Raiola said. "The wins happen as a result of continuing to show up, [doing] the right thing every day and [continuing] to grind and work."

After opening the season with an 11-inning tie against the Newport Gulls, Valley won seven of its next eight games to jump near the top of the NECBL South Division standings. Strong pitching, reliable defense and timely hitting fueled victories over Ocean State, Upper Valley, Danbury, North Shore and Mystic, giving the Blue Sox an early identity as one of the league's toughest teams.

See BLUE SOX, page 8



Nate Carrill slides safely home.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Tri-County finals forced to a winner-take all game three

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

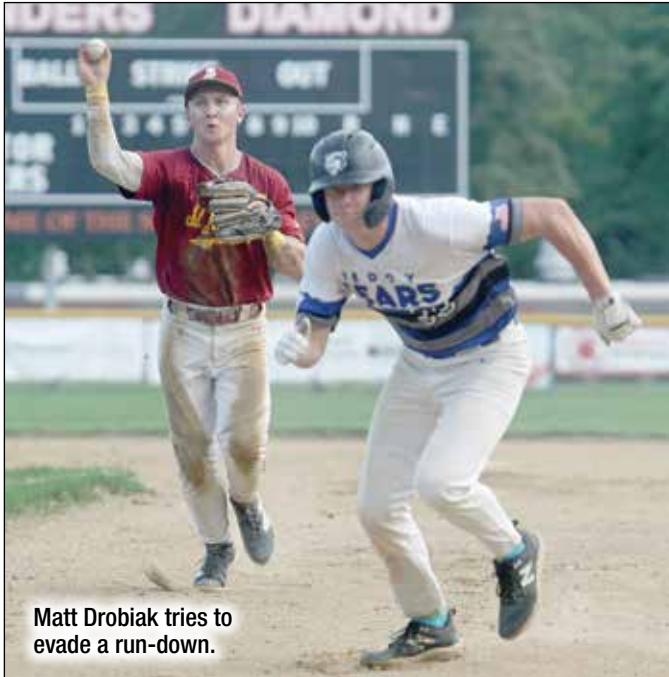
SOUTH HADLEY— Third-seeded Teddy Bear Pools & Spas had a golden opportunity to sweep the top-seeded St. Joseph's Saints in the Tri-County League championship series.

Teddy Bear held a 1-0 lead entering the top of the third inning in game two.

St. Joe's rallied for three runs in the third and fourth innings and they evened the best-of-three series at 1-1 following a 6-3 victory at South Hadley High School Friday, Aug. 7.

The game came to an end after five innings due to darkness, which didn't please the Teddy Bear players and their supporters.

"It's a very frustrating situation," said Teddy Bear player/manager Ryan Magni. "I think we should've been



Matt Drobiak tries to evade a run-down.

able to finish the final two innings of tonight's game at St. Joe's Park before playing the deciding game tomorrow

night."

The baseball field at

See TRI-COUNTY, page 10

Lusitano keeps the soccer going

Hosts collegiate
exhibition match

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW— In what could become an annual tradition, the UConn and UMass women's soccer teams met in an exhibition match in front of a large crowd at Lusitano Stadium on Aug. 5.

Neither team was able to find the back of the net during the contest, played in three 30-minute intervals, but it was still a memorable evening at the 108-year-old stadium located on Winsor Street in Ludlow.

"It's very exciting to be hosting a college soccer match here at Lusitano Stadium," said Joe Ferrara Jr., who's the Managing Director of the New England Mutiny and the General Manager of the Western Mass. Pioneers. "Both UConn and UMass have been very supportive of the Mutiny over the years. I also have a personal relationship with both coaching staffs."

The last time a college soccer match was held at Lusitano Stadium was on October 17, 2018.

On that fall evening, the Worcester State University Lancers squared off against the Western New England University Golden Bears in a non-conference men's match-up.

Cyrus Raines, a Belchertown High School graduate, delivered his first collegiate goal during the second half, which lifted

the Lancers to a 1-0 shut-out victory. Raines, who's a defender, finished his college soccer career with three goals.

The Worcester State head coach at that time was Jason Willis, who's currently an assistant coach for the Western Mass Pioneers. He also coaches a Western United Pioneers team.

Willis graduated from Ludlow High School, and he helped the Lions boys' soccer team win two state titles and three Western Mass. titles back in the 1990's.

Ferrara, who also graduated from Ludlow High School in the 1980's, played many soccer games on the grass stadium field.

"I recall scoring a lot of big goals on this field while I was in high school," Ferrara said. "I also played for the Lusitano Whites, which won the first ever summer league championship on this field. I hope the college players appreciate the history of this place."

This past spring, Ferrara approached UMass head coach Jason Dowiak about playing the exhibition match against UConn at Lusitano Stadium.

"Because it was UMass turn to host the exhibition, I asked coach Dowiak if he would be interested in playing the game here this year," Ferrara said. "He thought it was a very good idea."

It was something that Dowiak, who was hired as the UMass women's soccer coach in 2017, had always wanted to do.

See SOCCER, page 10

Matt Hirschman nabs in win Thompson 150

THOMPSON, CT – Defending NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour champion Austin Beers earned the pole position last Wednesday night with the 19.154-second fast lap and quickly ran with the lead at the start of the Thompson 150. Matt Hirschman followed on the tail of Beers throughout the opening circuits while mechanical trouble took fan-favorite Jon Kennedy out of action early on.

Matt Hirschman made his way into the lead around a loose Austin Beers in turn two, slowly but surely extending that lead through the first third of the event. Andrew Krause met an early end on lap 60 as he slammed the turn one wall to call out the first caution. All but three lapped cars took the chance to jump to pit road with Hirschman winning the race to the backstretch while Eric Goodale and Matt Swanson nearly collided for the runner-up spot.

After hanging around sixth, Patrick Emerling entered the top-five picture to chase down Mike Christopher Jr., Beers and Hirschman. It was all for not as Matt Hirschman ran away in the 80+ green flag run to the checkered flags to take his first career Thompson Speedway NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour win over Austin Beers and Patrick Emerling.

Chase Dowling kept it clean all race long to finish fourth with Matt Swanson climbing back from a pit-road gamble to finish fifth.

The Crown Vics kicked off Wednesday’s racing action with their feature event. Ethan Williams looked strong enough to take his first win of the season but it was July’s winner Jack Emerson who took over at the halfway point. Emerson ran away with it to take win number two with Williams relegated to second over John Dulac.

The SK Light Modifieds got things started with a bang as Dennis Sneade and Milania Shilosky made contact coming off turn four, plowing up the infield grass and pit wall before coming to a halt on lap 4. Back under green, Austin Goff got the jump on Corey Caddick and began to run from RJ Marcotte. Marcotte made contact with Goff, spinning the 07 into the turn one wall to call up the lap 17 caution. With Marcotte sent to the rear, Caddick and point leader Kevin Davis went to war at the front for the final three circuits with Davis getting the win over Caddick with John O’Sullivan taking third.

It was a battle for the ages between top Late Model aces Jake Johnson and Matt Lowinski-Loh throughout their 25 lap feature. The two top guns

ran side-by-side, slamming doors on one another, beating and banging around the Thompson highbanks for twenty-three laps until Jared Roy’s spin in turn four. The green-white-checkers sealed the fate for Johnson, who slid sideways on the final lap to give Matt Lowinski-Loh the Wednesday night victory.

Following NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour time trial qualifying, Derek Ramstrom took the lead early in the Thompson Sunoco Modified feature with Bryan Narducci and Todd Owen in hot pursuit. Point leader Keith Rocco made his way into third and then second as Ramstrom fell back behind Narducci. Bryan Narducci never faltered in the caution-free feature to take his first win of the season over Rocco and Owen at the line.

Rookie Charles Beal lost the pole position on the initial green, falling back through the top five leaving Ryan Lineham and Al Stone III out front. Jarrod Soucy motored his way underneath Stone by the halfway point as former track champion Ryan Waterman and former Thunder Road Speedbowl champ Jason Woodard battled for fourth. In the end, no-one had any steam for Lineham who took the night-ending win over Soucy and Stone.



Adam Smola swings off a tee.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Brodie Craven makes a throw.

CAMP, from page 7

clinic. I really don’t want them standing around doing nothing.”

Brisson was aided at the clinic by his wife, Kasey.

“My wife is the backbone of the organization,” Brisson said. “She keeps

everything in order. I appreciate all the support from many different people that I’ve received running this camp.”

Brisson and his staff is already looking forward to holding the baseball clinic at Spec Pond again next summer.

BLUE SOX, from page 7

But the middle of the summer presented new challenges.

As is common throughout the NECBL season, the roster shifted constantly as players departed and newcomers arrived. Valley reached the 20-win mark, a milestone Raiola said should not be overlooked.

finish by sweeping a must-win doubleheader on the final day of the regular season to secure the seventh seed in the NECBL playoffs.

Along the way, Valley reached the 20-win mark, a milestone Raiola said should not be overlooked.

“Twenty wins is an accomplishment,” Raiola said. “It is tough to win 20 games in this league.”

The late-season push reflected the resilience the Blue Sox built over the course of the summer.

“Look at what happened [and] where we were in the middle of the year, and then [look at] how we ended it,” Raiola said. “Do you quit when times get tough, or do you stick it out and keep working?”

The postseason, however, presented another challenge.

With four games in three days just to reach the

playoffs, Valley entered its opening-round series against Sanford with a taxed pitching staff and an everyday lineup that had shouldered a heavy workload during the season’s final stretch. The Mainers capitalized, winning Games 1 and 2 to end the Blue Sox’s season.

“We just ran out of gas before we got to the finish line,” Raiola said.

Still, the finish did little to diminish what the group accomplished.

“We don’t always want to have to win 10 out of the last 13 to get in. We’d like to take care of business a little bit before that, but that’s the way it went this year,” Raiola said. “Credit to [the players] who had to go out there and show up every single day, tired, same lineup and grinding their way through it ... Overall, [We want them to] be better at the end than when they started.”

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.

Public Notices

City of Holyoke Notice of Public Hearing

The Ordinance Committee of the Holyoke City Council and the Planning Board will hold separate public hearings to hear a zone change application from IG (general industry) to DR (downtown residential) of Ryan Ripa at 12 Crescent Street (030-02-001) to expand residential and community-serving use by providing a zone consistent with the surrounding mix of industrial, residential, and commercial development. Planning Board public hearing will be held on Tuesday, September 8th, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. remotely via zoom.us with Meeting ID 827 4898 0463 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 using same meeting ID. Ordinance Committee public hearing will be held on **Thursday, September 17th, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.** at Holyoke City Hall 536 Dwight St and can be accessed remotely via zoom.us Meeting ID 825 0684 5908

Meeting Passcode 098318 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 to the Planning Board, please contact Brianna Tejada at tejadab@holyoke.org. For the Ordinance Committee, please contact City Council Admin Asst Jeffery Anderson-Burgos at Anderson-Burgos J@holyoke.org or by phone 413-322-5525.

Planning Board Chair,
Lauren Niles
Ordinance Chair,
Meg Magrath-Smith
08/21, 08/28/2026

City of Holyoke Notice of Public Hearing

The Ordinance Committee of the Holyoke City Council and the Planning Board will hold separate public hearings to hear a zone change application from BL (limited business) to BH (highway business) of John

Borowski at 120 Pine & 0 Pine Street (006-09-018) to provide zoning that is more advantageous for selling the property. Planning Board public hearing will be held on **Tuesday, September 8th, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.** remotely via zoom.us with Meeting ID 827 4898 0463 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 using same meeting ID. Ordinance Committee public hearing will be held on Tuesday, September 29th, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. at Holyoke City Hall 536 Dwight St and can be accessed remotely via zoom.us Meeting ID 834 4684 8765 Meeting Passcode 126459 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 to the Planning Board, please contact Brianna Tejada at tejadab@holyoke.org. For the Ordinance Committee, please contact City Council Admin Asst Jeffery Anderson-Burgos at Anderson-Burgos J@holyoke.org or by phone 413-322-5525.

Planning Board Chair,
Lauren Niles
Ordinance Chair,
Meg Magrath-Smith
08/21, 08/28/2026

City of Holyoke Public Hearing Notice

The Holyoke Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, September 8, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.** via Zoom.com; ID: 827 3536 5267; 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) submitted by IHI Wave, LLC (2026-15) located at 956 Dwight Street (075-04-016).

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

APPLICANT: IHI Wave LLC
PLANNING BOARD:
Lauren Niles, Chairperson
08/21, 08/28/2026

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The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
Docket No.
HD19P2090GD
In the interests of:
David Ferriter**

Of: West Springfield, MA RESPONDENT Incapacitated Person/ Protected Person CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF PETITION TO EXPAND THE POWERS OF A GUARDIAN

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by **Baystate Medical Center of Springfield, MA** in the above captioned matter requesting that the court:

Expand the powers of a Guardian of the Respondent.

The petition asks the court to make a determination that the powers of the Guardian and/or Conservator should be expanded, modified, or limited since the time of the appointment. The original petition is on file with the court.

You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 a.m. on the return date of **09/15/2026**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail

to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

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. **Claudine T. Stoudemire**, First Justice of this Court.

Date: August 18, 2026

Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate

08/21/2026

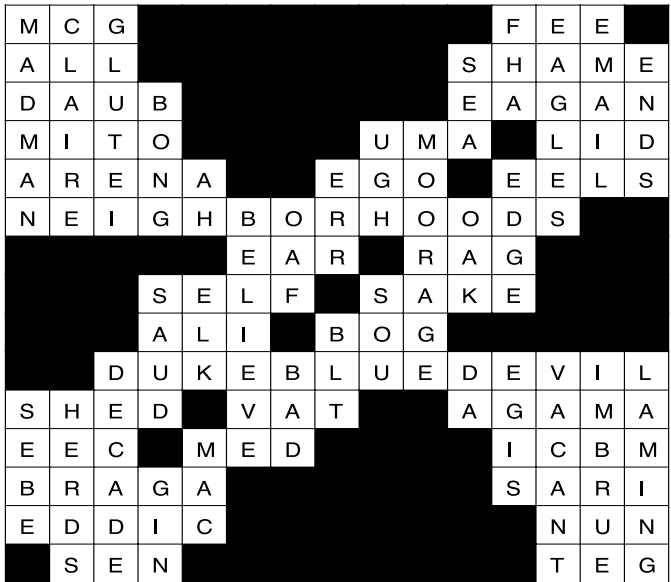
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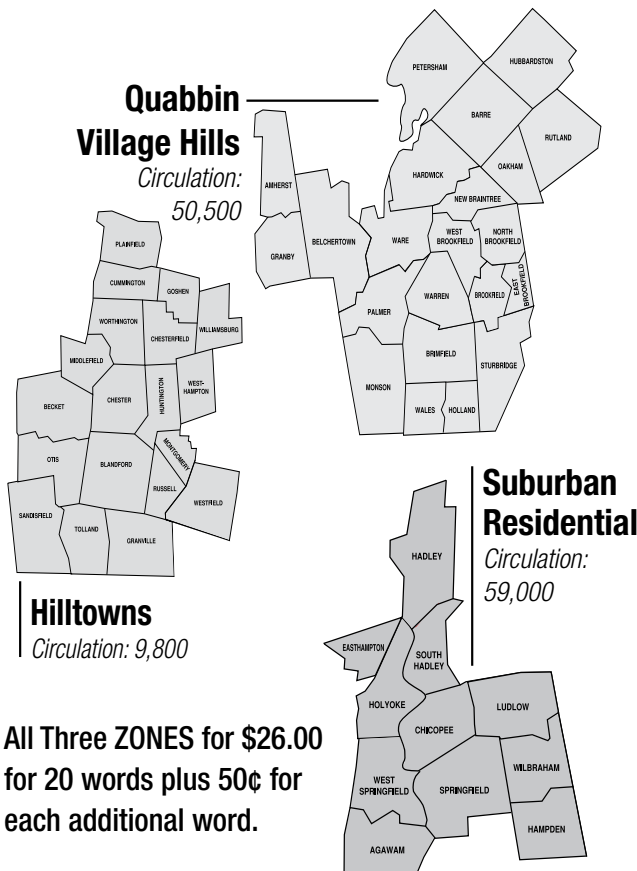
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Chamber to hold networking event, including Irish celebration

WEST SPRINGFIELD – Join the West of the River Chamber of Commerce for a special social event on Friday, Sept. 18 at West Springfield Town Hall, located at 26 Central St.,

West Springfield from 8 to 10 a.m. The September Morning Social will include mingling with mayors, city councilors, and economic development members from County Kerry, Ireland.

Coelho named to Simmons University Dean’s List

BOSTON - Juliana Coelho, Holyoke resident, was named to the 2026 spring semester dean’s list at Simmons University in Boston.

To qualify for dean’s

list status, undergraduate students must obtain a grade point average of 3.5 or higher, based on 12 or more credit hours of work in classes using the letter grade system.

Church holding fall festival

HOLYOKE – St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, 485 Appleton Street, Holyoke will hold their fall festival on Saturday, Sept. 26 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Parish Hall.

There will be something for everyone: Gift basket raffles, 50/50 raffle,

vendors, plants, bake sale, and a Cafe’. Free ample parking is located behind the church and all are welcome.

For more information, please call Trudy Monson at 413-335-1145 or the Church Office at 413-532-5060.

There will be a celebration of Ireland with networking and fun all rolled into one. Registration is required through the chamber’s website or by contacting the chamber.

Final Summer Art Class

CHICOPEE – The final Summer Art Class for children ages 2.9 to 5 years old will be held on Thursday, Aug. 27 from 3:30 to 5 p.m.

The class is held at the Head Start Center, 216 Broadway Street in Chicopee.

It is designed for kids to explore, imagine, and truly express themselves. Art supplies included.

Sponsored by the Holyoke Chicopee Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Grant from the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care.

Applications available for FY27 CPA funding

HOLYOKE – The city has announced that it will now be accepting applications for granting from the Community Preservation Act.

Potential applicants are invited to submit an eligibility application form by Sept. 4. The eligibility form is the first step in a multi-step application process: after project eligibility is established, applicants will then be invited to submit a full application for consideration by the committee, followed by public presentations of each project’s scope, benefit, and budget. Finally, CPAC makes its recommendations to the City Council for funding approval.

The Eligibility Form and other application materials are available by contacting CPA Administrator Naomi Klayman at klaymann@holyoke.org, and will also be posted to the City of Holyoke website. Eligibility requirements can be found on the Massachusetts Community Preservation

Act’s website.

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) is a state law enacted in 2000 and adopted by the City of Holyoke in 2016. The CPA supports historic preservation, recreation, open space, and community housing projects within Holyoke. The program has funded a variety of popular projects throughout the city, including community housing at Appleton Mills and Library Commons, the fully accessible Miracle League Playground, the restoration of Lady Liberty at Veterans Park, and ongoing upgrades to Scott Tower and the Holyoke Merry Go Round.

Since its adoption, the CPAC has disbursed over \$5 million to preserve Holyoke’s character and improve quality of life for its residents.

Applicants are encouraged to contact Naomi Klayman with questions and for support throughout the application process.

Chicopee Comp. High School Class of 1986 to hold class reunion

CHICOPEE - The Chicopee Comprehensive High School Class of 1986 will celebrate its 40-Year Class Reunion on Saturday, September 26, 2026, at The View Street Tavern in Chicopee.

Appetizers, cash bar, music, dancing - and an opportunity to reconnect with classmates. For those interested, a round of golf will also be held that morning/afternoon.

Classmates are encouraged to email their current contact information to chicopeecomp86@gmail.com to receive future reunion updates and to let us know if you plan to attend.

We look forward to celebrating 40 years with the Class of 1986!

ROWING, from page 3

tive strength and power. The Care Center’s Coach, Halley Glier, reflected on the impact this program has had over the past two and a half decades: “This program has been a container for young moms across New England to take risks, experience the benefits of teamwork, and connect with our waterways. Women leave with confidence and support, which ripples out to their kids, families, and communities. It’s about way more than just rowing. It’s about learning to overcome obstacles, leaning on each other’s strengths, and inspiring others in the process.”

Located in Holyoke, The Care Center is a comprehensive and transformative educational program for young mothers and all women facing systemic barriers to success. The Care Center offers individualized instruction to prepare students for the high school equivalency exam; college preparatory classes and coursework; an on-site associate degree program; as well as transportation, meals, childcare, counseling, and the skills and support needed to successfully complete college. The Care Center has received national recognition for its innovative approach including a Presidential Award in 2011. Additional information can be found at www.carecenterholyoke.org.

TRI-COUNTY, from page 7

South Hadley High School doesn’t have any lights and the first pitch of game two was thrown by Teddy Bear righthander Sean Rosemond at 5:55p.m. The three umpires made the decision to end the game at 7:45 p.m.

“The pace of tonight’s game was very slow,” said St. Joe’s manager Paul Marcinek. “We were very lucky to finish five innings which made it an official game.”

Had the game ended before the bottom of the fifth inning, it would’ve resumed at South Hadley High School the following day. If the score would’ve been tied, game two would’ve been replayed from the beginning, which has been a TCL rule for many years.

Teddy Bear won game one of the championship series, which was an old fashion pitcher’s duel, 3-1, at St. Joe’s Park, last Thursday night.

Righthander Matt Drobiak, who graduated from South Hadley High School in 2024, went the distance for Teddy Bear. He allowed a run on six hits and three strikeouts without issuing a walk.

Drobiak outdueled St. Joe’s righty Trey Yesu, who graduated from Monson High School in 2022.

Yesu also went seven innings allowing three runs (two earned) on six hits with six strikeouts and two

walks.

Teddy Bear took a 1-0 lead in game against lefthander Jackson Hayes with two outs in the bottom of the first inning following a run scoring double by second baseman Ramon Jimenez.

St. Joe’s took the lead against Rosemond in the top of the third inning.

Catcher Nate Carillon and second baseman Greg Vourous began the St. Joe’s rally with back-to-back singles. After Drobiak retired the next batter on a pop-up, before Carillon scored the tying run following a wild pitch. Then right fielder Brian Hayes drew a walk before centerfielder Pat Fitzgibbons hit a two run single into right field giving St. Joe’s a 3-1 lead.

With one-out in the bottom of the third inning, Drobiak, who started at first base, launched a solo home run over the left field fence.

Holding a slim 3-2 lead, St. Joe’s scored three more runs in the fourth inning.

The first two runs crossed the plate following a two-run single down the right field line by Vourous.

At that point, Rosemond was replaced on the mound by righthander Mason Barcomb.

Shortstop Jacob Hayes greeted the relief pitcher with an RBI single into left field giving the visiting team a commanding 6-2 lead.

After Jackson Hayes retired the first two batters in the bottom of the fourth on flyballs to center, consecutive walks by third baseman Alex Gochinski, right fielder Ty Evans, and catcher Eric Robert loaded



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

TOP PHOTO: Greg Vourous fires a throw to first base. Ray Toth makes a throw on the run.

SOCCKER, from page 7

“I’m beginning my ninth season as the UMass women’s soccer coach and this is something that I’ve always wanted to do,” said Dowiak following the scoreless draw. “I’ve watched several Mutiny games here in the past and this was really a very special night for us. I’m very glad that the soccer community came out and supported us. This was an electric atmosphere for an exhibition game.”

A year ago, UMass posted a 5-8-4 overall record and went 3-6-2 against their Mid-American Conference foes.

“I thought my team played very well against a fantastic UConn team, and this is a positive step for us,” Dowiak added. “I feel like we can go into tough environments and still be successful.”

One of the three graduated students listed on the UMass women’s roster is Bianca Cardano, who’s from Monson. She attended Minnechaug Regional where she played soccer for Nundi Goncalves, who’s another Ludlow High graduate.

“I’ve played a lot of games at this stadium,” Cardano said. “My family and friends were here tonight. It was a very special night.”

Cardano, who’s a management major, fell in love with the UMass campus when she made her official visit.

“UMass was always my top choice,” she said. “The girls on the soccer team are like members of my own family. We’re hoping to finish first in the Mid-American Conference.”

Cardano, who’s a starting defender, played in 16 games as a freshman before missing her entire sophomore season recovering from a right knee injury. She was limited to just three matches (two starts) in 2024.

A year ago, Cardano was a starter in ten of the 14

matches that she played in.

“We’re really hoping that Bianca is able to play the whole season for us this year,” Dowiak said. “She’s a fantastic leader on and off the field.”

Cardano isn’t the only Minnechaug girls’ soccer player to play soccer at UMass.

Jess Howe, who was a member of the Lady Falcons 2005 Western Mass championship team and the 2008 state title team, was a defender at UMass from 2009-2012.

UConn head coach Margaret Rodriguez played soccer at Lusitano Stadium for a couple of seasons as a member of the Western Mass. Lady Pioneers. She also played for the Mutiny for one year when they played their home matches at Agawam High School.

“We’ve led the Big East in fan support during the past several years,” Rodriguez said. “This was a good way for my players to get used to playing in this type of a setting under the lights.”

The Huskies, who finished the 2025 campaign with an 11-4-3 overall record and a 7-1-2 conference record, were picked to finish second behind Georgetown in the BIG EAST Preseason Women’s Soccer Coaches’ Poll.

Redshirt sophomore Se-Hanna Mars, who plays for the Mutiny, was selected to the preseason All-Big East team, along with senior Anaya Johnson.

There is a very good chance that the UConn and UMass women’s soccer teams will be meeting at Lusitano Stadium again next August.

Western Mass. soccer fans will get another chance to take in collegiate action at Lusitano Stadium, as the Western New England University men’s team hosts Wesleyan University on September 22 at 7 p.m.

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