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September 26, 2025 ■ FREE

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Ballot finalized following primary

By Gregory A. Scibelli
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HOLYOKE – Though the mayor’s seat is likely not on the line, there will be many contested races on the ballot for the city council and school committee.

Only 305 total voters from Wards 1 and 5 combined turned out to participate in the Sept. 16 primary.

There were two seats that needed to have the candidates narrowed down. In Ward 1, the city council seat currently occupied by Jenny Rivera had three candidates needing to be narrowed to two. Rivera, the incumbent, remained in the race with 49 votes, while challenger Victor Machado DeJesus carried 62 votes. Jose Candelario was eliminated from the race, only receiving 17 votes.

The other seat needing to have candidates finalized was for the Ward 5 School Committee seat. Jens Michaelsen received 72 votes and Aida Luz Oquendo received 54 votes to advance to the general election. James Alan Rossmeisl had 49 votes and was eliminated.

With those two races finalized, the entire ballot now takes shape.

Mayor Joshua Garcia is unopposed barring a major

write-in campaign. He is likely to win his second term in a walk after outlasting several candidates to win the mayor’s seat in 2021. City Clerk Brenna Murphy Leary is also unopposed.

In the at-large city council race, there are nine candidates for six seats. Tessa Murphy-Romboletti, the current council president leads the pack, along with Michael Sullivan, Patricia Devine, Kevin Jourdain, Howard Greaney, Jr., and Israel Rivera. Jennifer Keitt, Mimi Panitich, and Christopher Dunay are challengers.

Ward 3 Councilor David Bartley will be challenged by Anne Thalheimer. Ward 4 will be up for grabs between Peter Diaz, Jr. and Ricard Paul Purcell. Wards 2, 5, 6, 7 councilors will be unopposed. Nicole Marie Maisonet is the only councilor running in Ward 2, and will be new to the body barring a write-in candidate.

The Ward 5 school committee seat was the only contested race for School Committee. Gladys Lebron-Martinez will run in Ward 1, and Patrick Bryan Beaudry will be a new member for Ward 6. Longtime School Committee member William Collamore will not be seeking re-election.

See **BALLOT**, page 7



Holyoke High School cheer squad pose on The Big E merry-go-round at this year’s fair. See more photos on page 10.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Salute to Holyoke at The Big E

WEST SPRINGFIELD – The City of Holyoke was celebrated at The Big E last Tuesday.

Holyokers made their way to the big fair and were the featured part of the daily parade that takes place.

Representing the city were several city officials including Mayor Joshua Garcia, the Holyoke High

School band and cheerleaders, and the city’s Grand Colleen Moira Catherine Reardon.

HCC holds annual 24-hour film festival

By Brendan Rooney
Correspondent

HOLYOKE — This past weekend, Holyoke Community College (HCC) hosted its 8th annual Leslie

Philips 24-hour film festival, which kicked off with quite a celebration as more than 50 guests gathered and stopped by to partake in the ‘Green’ Carpet preshow which featured concessions, photo ops,

and a chance to get to know a little bit about the theatrical and fine arts program at the school.

Reflecting on how the fine arts program has evolved over the course of time,

while foreshadowing their involvement with the production was Donna DeFant, HCC Alumnus from the class of ‘77.

“I was one of the first actors to perform on this stage in 1975 when we opened with ‘The Elephant Man’, and then we did a ‘Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum,’” DeFant said. “I did my two years, and in the fall of 1977, I was tapped to direct a huge show called ‘The Madwoman of Chaillot’, and then I started coming back in all roles, such as guest performer, director, and then in 1983 we said ‘you know us alumni keep coming back, to do shows, lets do an alumni production.’” DeFant revealed that the idea led to a spark which created the fine arts alumni historic group, called and titled ‘The HCC Alumni Players’, which hit the ground running with their 1983 production of ‘Bustop’. She also provided a bit of history on how the 24-hour film festival became a reality.

See **FILM**, page 5



Group photo from HCC representatives and alumni.

Turley photos by Brendan Rooney

City needs help with open space plan survey

By Gregory A. Scibelli
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HOLYOKE – Most recently, the city of Holyoke sought the input of citizens for the use of opioid lawsuit settlements. The city utilized a survey and it is also appointing a committee to assist in the best use of the funds.

Now, the city is looking for more input. This time, surveys are needed for the city’s Open Space and Recreation Plan.

The OSRP is a tool that outlines community strategies for managing and improving natural conservation areas, recreational facilities, and open spaces. Municipalities are required to have an active OSRP to be eligible for certain grant funds.

The grant funding allows the city to do various projects that cannot be funded by the Community Preservation Act Fund. That fund has multiple purposes, including open space and recreation. But there are limits to how those funds can be used, including the inability to use it on artificial surfaces.

The city encourages to take this opportunity to share your thoughts and feedback on open space and recreation in Holyoke. Citizen input is valuable and will help shape the future of these important resources and amenities.

This survey is estimated will take you 5 minutes to complete.

Take the survey in English: <https://forms.gle/K188K9NCkA2qt4Po8>.

State agency closes down unsafe bridge near Heritage State Park

By Gregory A. Scibelli
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HOLYOKE – The Massachusetts Department of Transportation announced this week it has closed down a bridge on Appleton St that goes over the canal near Heritage State Park.

The mayor’s office issued a press release announcing the closure.

“An Inspection Team from MassDOT found a hole that was 20 inches high and

12 inches wide in Girder 3 in the area that the gunite (dry-mix concrete) had fallen off of Girder 3,” Garcia stated. “Due to the widespread deterioration of the girders that is visible and is not encased in gunite, it has been determined that the bridge be closed to all traffic.”

The press release, issued on Tuesday, Sept. 23, said another inspection was scheduled to be held later in the week.

Garcia said the City of

Holyoke Mayor’s Office, Engineering Department, Department of Public Works, Police, Fire, Economic Development and Planning, and Cataldo Ambulance have met and all agencies are aware and have made changes in their emergency response routes. The City is working on final detour routes at which time the public will be notified. In the meantime, Garcia asks that drivers follow detour route signage that is already

installed.

“On Thursday,” Garcia said, “MassDOT will be inspecting the bridge on Appleton Street over the second level canal at Race Street. We will immediately notify the public of any impacts on roadway access resulting from that inspection.”

“MassDOT lists these bridges for replacement in the State Transportation Improvements Program,” the Mayor said. “The City will

be lobbying our legislators and the Commonwealth to accelerate the schedule.”

“We will update the public as we develop a local response and traffic plan to this sudden event.”

The closure of the bridge could cause a major inconvenience from some motorists as it leads to the center of downtown Holyoke, though there are multiple streets that have bridges crossing the canal from Main St.

It is not known what

prompted an inspection from the state, though it is possible that since the bridge is on a MassDOT list for replacement, they were simply checking its status to gauge priorities for the Transportation Improvements Program. Appleton St. is a part of Rte. 141, which is a state route.

Residents should be prepared for potential delays as a result of detours that are created to get around the shuttered bridge.

Nominees sought for this year's Veterans Day awards

HOLYOKE – The City of Holyoke's Patriotic Events Committee is searching for nominations for this year's awards which are to be presented at the Veterans Day ceremony, on November 11th, 2025. The awards are Public

Safety of the Year, Veteran of the Year, Citizen of the Year, and Local Business of the Year. The criteria for these awards are as follows: For Public Safety of the Year, we are seeking an indi-

vidual who has shown outstanding performance in the protection of the general public and has exhibited a willingness to exceed expectations. For Veteran of the Year, we are pursuing a veteran who has shown grand support and

dedication for others in the community. For Citizen of the Year, we are searching for an individual who has exhibited inspiration through their leadership, volunteerism, and dear contributions to the advances

of the community. For Local Business of the year, we are seeking a local business that has shown great patriotism and support for the veteran community. Nominees must be residents of Holyoke or individ-

uals who have made valuable contributions to the City of Holyoke. Anyone can nominate. Nominations can be sent by email to rual@holyoke.org. Deadline for nominations is Oct. 25.

HCC Gateway to College program earns national nods for excellence

HOLYOKE – For the third consecutive year – and sixth time in the past nine – the Gateway to College program at Holyoke Community College has received a national excellence award from its parent network, Achieving the Dream.

Achieving the Dream presents excellence awards to its Gateway affiliates when those programs meet or exceed four benchmark criteria: grade point average, retention (one-year persistence rates), and graduation rate.

The Gateway to College program at HCC has won one or more benchmark awards for the last 10 years, and the excellence award in 2016, 2017, 2020, 2022, 2024, and 2025.

Through Gateway to College, students who have dropped out of high school, or are at risk for dropping out, complete their high school diplomas in college-based programs while



Gateway to College Learning Specialist Shannon Glenn, left, and Program Director Vivian Ostrowski hold a 2025 excellence award the program received from its parent network, Achieving the Dream. Submitted photo

simultaneously earning credits toward a college certificate or degree.

HCC has hosted a Gateway to College program since 2008. The program enrolled 144 students during

the academic year when they received the award.

"We earned this award because young people who disconnected from traditional education were willing to trust us and give school

another chance, and our amazing instructors and staff were patient and flexible and willing to give some grace as our young people navigated really challenging lives," said Vivian Ostrowski,

HCC's Gateway to College program director. "We now have 662 high school graduates from 25 school districts, and we hope that our community is stronger and kinder because of those grads and the hope and investment they bring."

During the assessment year (2024-2025), students entered Gateway with an average GPA of 1.57, compared to a network average of 1.89, and finished their first term with an average GPA of 2.89, compared to a national average of 2.55.

The one-year persistence rate at HCC was 94 percent, compared to a 63 percent network average; two-year persistence at HCC was 88 percent, compared to a national average of 63.

HCC's three-year graduation rate was 84 percent, compared to a national Gateway average of 65.

"Gateway to College programs provide a critical second chance for vulnerable high school students and

a powerful testament to the importance of wraparound support services and creating a sense of belonging in college," said Emily Froimson, executive vice president of Achieving the Dream. "Nearly 75 percent of program graduates nationwide continue their postsecondary education."

At the most recent HCC Gateway to College graduation in June, 47 students earned their high school diplomas from nine different communities: Chicopee, Easthampton, Holyoke, Ludlow, Northampton, Palmer, Springfield, West Springfield, and Westfield. Collectively, they finished Gateway with an average GPA of 3.1 and collected 398 college credits. Thirty-five of them are continuing on in college, most of them at HCC.

"Our graduates have earned more than 100 college degrees, with many more in progress," Ostrowski said.

Fill out an opioid survey

HOLYOKE – The City of Holyoke Opioid Community Survey is now accepting responses until Oct. 3. The survey is provided in both English and Spanish from one link.

Ten survey takers will be randomly selected for prizes and announced at the Nov. 3 public meeting.

Prize winners do not need to be present. Please share the link with your networks. The survey link is also available on Facebook and <https://www.holyoke.org/opioid-response/>

People without internet access may call 413-322-5610 and take the survey over the phone.

Fall Festival at St. Paul's

HOLYOKE – St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 485 Appleton Street, Holyoke will hold their Fall Festival on Saturday, Sept. 27 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Parish Hall and on the Church grounds.

There will be something for everyone: Gift

basket raffles, \$5 fun raising raffle, vendors, plants, bake sale, a cafe, and outdoor activities for families.

Free ample parking is located behind the church and all are welcome.

For more information, please call the church office at 413-532-5060.

Skeletal Secrets with the Skinner Servants Tour

HOLYOKE – As the night grows long and a chill lingers in the air, Wistariahurst Museum is delighted to announce a new, frightfully fantastic character tour: Skeletal Secrets with the Skinner Servant on Oct. 24 at 5:30 p.m. Join a ghostly guide as former residents of this historic house manifest to speak of eerie events and strange happenings that occurred during their mortal lives. Discover dark tales of death, loss, and spirits that are said to still roam our halls to this day as you wander through the home. This unique character tour of Wistariahurst Museum includes standing, walking, and transitioning between the first and second floors using our Grand Staircase in dim lighting. This tour may include loud noises, challenging subjects, and possible jump scares. Parents are advised to consider these factors before purchasing tickets. If any guest has a question about accessibil-

ity and how to fully enjoy this immersive tour, we ask that you email us with your inquiries.

"Our volunteers are eager to reveal these tales to our community," Penni Martorell, City History, comments. "This tour is the best way to learn some of the secrets hidden beneath our walls."

This new, spine-tingling tour offers a unique way to experience a guided tour of the historic house with our volunteers as they portray the spirits guests will encounter. Join us for a memorable journey through the ghastly tales of Wistariahurst. Venture into where history intersects with the supernatural this fall with general admission tickets selling at \$18. Museum Members can use their discount for \$15 tickets. Our specialized character tours are beloved by our community and sell fast, so make sure you secure your tickets before they are gone.

Nurse Appreciation Car Wash set for Sept. 27

HOLYOKE – Gary Rome Hyundai and MiraVista Behavioral Health Center are teaming up to honor nurses with Scrubs to Suds!, a free nurse appreciation car wash on Saturday, Sept. 27, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Gary Rome Car Wash • Dog Wash • Detail Center, 180 Whiting Farms Road, Holyoke, MA.

All nurses who present a work badge will receive the "Best in Show" wash (a \$24 value) at no cost as a thank-you for their dedication to patient care. On site, MiraVista staff will share information about behavioral health services, highlight nursing career opportunities, and showcase how the organization supports individuals and families across the region. Light refreshments will be available, and nurses will receive a small free gift courtesy of the Gary Rome Car Wash • Dog Wash • Detail Center and MiraVista (while

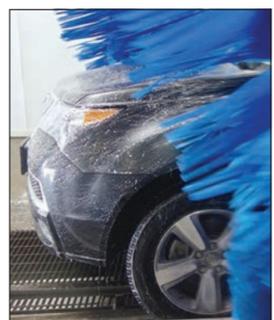
supplies last).

"I believe it is important to support those who give selflessly to our community," said Gary Rome, President of Gary Rome Hyundai. "Nurses are the heartbeat of healthcare, and they deserve recognition not only for their skill, but also for the compassion they show every single day. This partnership with MiraVista allows us to say 'thank you' in a meaningful way, and we are proud to celebrate their contributions."

"This innovative event is a wonderful way to thank not only our own dedicated nursing team, but also nurses throughout the community," said Kimberley Lee, Chief of Creative Strategy and Development at MiraVista Behavioral Health Center. "It is also an opportunity for nurses to learn more about the meaningful work being done at MiraVista and how they can be part of a growing and

supportive healthcare organization. We are especially grateful to Gary Rome for his partnership in bringing this fun and unique appreciation event to life."

As an added show of appreciation, Emergency Services employees are eligible for a 25% discount on car wash memberships at the Gary Rome Car Wash • Dog Wash • Detail Center—another way the dealership recognizes the critical contributions of those on the frontlines.



HPL to host puzzle race, swap event

HOLYOKE – On Saturday, Oct. 4 at 11 a.m., Holyoke Public Library will host a puzzle race and swap event.

The race is intended for amateur puzzlers age 13 and up. Bring puzzles to donate and swap.

Light refreshments will be provided. Call 413-420-8119 or email rsiniaho@holyokelibrary.org to register teams of two to four players.

Paper City Food Festival to take place Oct. 11

HOLYOKE – Nueva Esperanza will host the 5th Annual Paper City Food Festival on Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 11 and 12 transforming downtown Holyoke into a two-block, open-air celebration of local cuisine, culture, music, and community. This year's festival will also serve a special purpose: a portion of

activities will support Grace "Gracie" Gianna Falcon, a courageous four-year-old from Holyoke who is battling B-Cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (B-ALL).

"The Paper City Food Festival is about the best of Holyoke—our flavors, our music, our small businesses, and our heart," said Paper City Food Festival organiz-

ers. "By coming together this year, we'll not only enjoy an incredible weekend downtown, we'll also stand with Gracie and her family."

On Saturday, Oct. 11, the event will take place from 2 to 10 p.m. and then 12 to 8 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 12. It will span two city blocks from Appleton to Dwight St.



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Lauren Fleit



Saturday, Sept. 27th

Frank Serafino



Friday, Oct. 3rd

The Healys

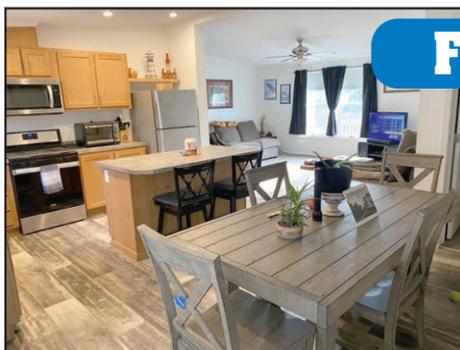


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Great Holyoke Brick Race returns

HOLYOKE – Ready, set...brick! One of Holyoke's most creative and quirky traditions is back on the starting line: The Great Holyoke Brick Race zooms into downtown on Saturday, Oct. 11 from 1 to 3 p.m., taking over Race Street along the canal in front of Paper City Studios and LightHouse Holyoke.

Part art project, part engineering challenge, and part pure community fun, the Brick Race invites families, artists, school groups, and teams of all kinds to design wild, wheeled contraptions that all share one common element: a standard building brick at their core. From sleek racers to wacky rolling sculptures, no two

creations are alike—except for the brick.

Now in its 14th year, the race began in 2011 thanks to artists Dean Nimmer and Bruce Fowler. After a few pit stops for construction on Race Street and the pandemic, the event has grown into a crowd-favorite tradition with 50–60 race car builds and 400+ spectators cheering along the 100 foot concrete track built by artist Micheal Karmody.

This year, the Brick Race team has been working with students and faculty at LightHouse Holyoke, weaving the planning and build process into their school curriculum. It's all part of the spirit of creativity, prob-

lem-solving, and collaboration that makes this event truly unique.

Want to race? Spots are limited! Already 29 racers are registered, with just 21 spots left—so don't wait. Register your brick racer now: Registration Form: <https://forms.gle/HZ9mJNYmtRehNkBr7>

For those who want to give their racer a trial run, there will be a Test Day & Workshop on Saturday, Oct. 4, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at LightHouse Holyoke / De La Luz Soundstage (114 Race Street). RSVP here: RSVP for Test Day <https://forms.gle/VeBFuAKM11S9Ra1c9>

The Great Holyoke Brick Race is made possi-

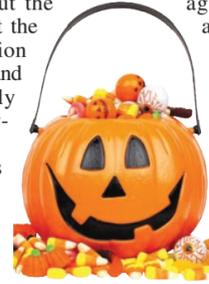
ble thanks to the Holyoke Local Cultural Council and generous local sponsors including Holyoke Gas & Electric, Witman Properties, Hampshire Towing, Clean Crop Technologies, BankESB, and many more. The event is also proudly supported by Holyoke Art Inc., the nonprofit providing fiscal and technical support for art spaces, programs, and cultural events in the city. Learn more at holyoheart.com. So mark your calendars, grab your friends and family, and start building your brick racers.

On Oct. 11, the bricks will roll, the crowd will cheer, and creativity will take the fast lane in downtown Holyoke.

Mall hosting Halloween event

HOLYOKE – Families and children of all ages are invited to Holyoke Mall's annual Halloween Mall-O-Ween, trick-or-treating event, on Thursday, Oct. 30 from 4 to 6 p.m. Participating mall retailers will be handing out candy throughout the center, making it the perfect destination for little ghouls and goblins to safely enjoy trick-or-treating.

Attendees can also participate in a Social Media Costume



Contest. Simply snap a photo while trick-or-treating at the mall, post it on Facebook and/or Instagram, follow and tag the mall @HolyokeMall, and use the hashtag #HolyokeMall Halloween2025. Contestants must be at least 18 years of age. Winners will be announced on Nov. 3 and awarded spectacular prizes.

For full details regarding Halloween Mall-O-Ween, please visit <https://www.holyokemall.com/event/halloween-mall-o-ween-2025/>.

Hibernian Clothing and Food Drive benefits Providence Ministries 2025

HOLYOKE – The Ancient Order of Hibernians of Hampden/Hampshire Counties along with the Polish National Credit Union Announce the Annual Clothing and Food Drive for Providence Ministries from September to Dec. 1.

Please drop off gently used clothing, blankets, sleeping bags, and/or non-perishable food

items to the Polish National Credit Union 270 Westfield Rd. Holyoke. Make a donation and be entered to win a raffle basket.

Please help those who are experiencing food insecurity and assist Providence Ministries as they continue to transform lives through their life-changing programs. Stop by the PNCU—your efforts will be greatly appreciated.

Volunteers sought to serve on Opioid Advisory Committee

HOLYOKE – The City of Holyoke seeks Holyoke residents (18+ years old) to serve on a volunteer Citizens Opioid Advisory Committee (COAC) overseen by the Office for Community Development to review grant applications and make funding recommendations to the Mayor.

Up to nine members will be selected. Committee members should live, stay, or otherwise have a strong connection to the City as the Committee will be making decisions that affect all Holyokers.

The COAC is an oppor-

tunity to actively participate in local government, and to make meaningful decisions regarding the use of opioid litigation settlement funds awarded to the city. Mayor Joshua A. Garcia seeks community members who have personal or lived experience with opioid use or substance use disorders including those actively using opioids, those in recovery, those with family members impacted by opioid use disorder, those who have experienced a loss associated with opioid use disorder and young adults.

COAC members will meet in the evening approximately three times per year depending on the grant cycles. Training and professional staff support will be provided. Committee members will be required to complete the Massachusetts State Ethics Training Program (free, online) prior to serving and comply with applicable City of Holyoke policies and procedures.

Those interested are asked to mail or email a letter of interest and resume (if available) to Mayor Joshua

A. Garcia, City of Holyoke, Room 1, 536 Dwight Street, Holyoke MA 01040 or by email to fays@holyo.org describing:

- (1) Your experience with opioid/substance use disorder;
 - (2) Why you would like to serve on the COAC
 - (3) Your connections to the City of Holyoke
- Other ways to apply will be made available if requested. Apply by Oct. 1.

For additional information: <https://www.holyoke.org/opioid-response/>

Hear some ghost stories at HPL

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Public Library will present, New England Ghosts on Tuesday, Sept. 30 at 6 p.m.

This is an adult program of supernatural story and magic. You will hear a legend from each New England state, true stories, information on how to visit sites, and it will be performed by Jonah Knight.

The event is rated PG-13.

Cemetery tours offered at Forestdale

HOLYOKE – Step past the cemetery gates and peer behind the veil with Wistariahurst as our volunteers channel the spirits of Holyoke's ancestors, leading you through the meandering paths of Forestdale Cemetery. Established in 1860, Forestdale Cemetery is a serene yet beautiful landscape and the final resting place for many of Holyoke's founding families, politicians, and other notables who helped breathe life into the city. Guests will walk amongst the monuments, markers, crypts, and crosses to discover the mystique of

Holyoke's vibrant heritage. "Learn some of Holyoke's history through the tales of the people that lived and died here," Penni Martorell, City History, shares. "Forestdale Cemetery is such a unique and beautiful setting to reflect on the history we share with the people you will see represented in our tour."

Discover all there is to know about living and dying in Holyoke from narratives of the people who now find solace beneath these hallowed grounds. Cemetery Tours at Forestdale Cemetery

include walking and standing on cement and gravel walkways with tours lasting around forty-five minutes. To fully enjoy this tour, we ask that guests wear comfortable shoes and weather-appropriate clothing. In the event of rain, the tours will be canceled, refunded, and not rescheduled. Wistariahurst Museum's Cemetery Tours blend history, concepts of the afterlife, and local connections to create an unforgettable outing. Tickets for this delightfully spooky and educational tour sell fast, so make sure to purchase your tickets before they're gone.

Parks and Rec hosting Harper's Haven event

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Parks and Recreation Department cordially invite the Holyoke community to the 5th Annual Harper's Haven Halloween Event. This event will take place on Friday, Oct. 3, from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at Community Field (off Cherry Street).

Music will be provided by DJ Brian Nicks. Enjoy pizza, cookies and goodie bags while supplies last. Visit and take pictures with Moana and the

Mandalorian. Dazzleday Balloon artists will be at the event. Visit with the Holyoke Fire Department. Wear your favorite Halloween Costume.

This event is free of charge, weather permitting. This event is sponsored by the Holyoke Parks and Recreation Department and Harper's Family.

For more information visit our web site at www.holyoke.org or call the Parks & Recreation Department at (413) 322-5620.

HCC hires Linda Chavers as first director of restorative practices and mediation

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College recently welcomed Linda Chavers, Ph.D., as the inaugural director of its new office of Restorative Practices and Mediation.

A published writer, educator, and consultant, Chavers has spent her career examining structures of institutional inequality and reimagining what justice can look like in the field of education. She brings to HCC a specialization in restorative practices in the workplace, including crisis management, curriculum design, diversity support, and organizational development.

Most recently, she has been working as a nonprofit leadership consultant and a national executive search consultant.

Prior to that, she spent 15 years in higher education, serving as co-director and English professor at The Clemente Course in the Humanities in Dorchester, Mass.; resident dean, assistant dean, and lecturer at Harvard College; and assistant professor of instruction at Temple University in Philadelphia. She also was an instructor of English at Phillips Exeter Academy, Exeter, N.H.

Chavers holds a Ph.D. in African and African American Studies from Harvard University, a master's degree

in English from Harvard, and a bachelor's degree in cultural studies from New York University.

She began her role at HCC on July 30.

"I am honored to join Holyoke Community College as the inaugural director of the office of Restorative Practices and Mediation," said Chavers.

The office of Restorative Practices and Mediation is part of HCC's division of People, Culture and Equity. In her position, Chavers works closely with the office of People and Talent (human resources) and the college's chief impact officer (affirmative action and Title IX) to ensure HCC approaches its work with care, accountability, and a commitment to equity.

"This office represents a bold step forward in our commitment to cultivating a campus culture rooted in healing, accountability, and relational justice," said Marlowe Washington, vice president of People, Culture and Equity. "We are pleased to welcome Dr. Chavers to HCC. She brings with her a rare blend of scholarly depth, lived experience, and visionary leadership."

Originally from Washington, D.C., and most recently Boston, Chavers now lives in Hartford, Conn.

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Guest Column

SOCIAL SECURITY Matters
By Russell Gloor



Should I claim Social Security early because it is going bankrupt?

Dear Rusty:

My best friend is going to be 62 and wants to begin taking her Social Security immediately.

Her reasoning not to wait is the thought that it is going to run out in 10 years, so she wants as much of her money before that happens. I have paid into Social Security my entire working life (44 years and counting). What are your thoughts on taking it as soon as you are eligible?

Signed:
Uncertain what to do

Dear Uncertain:

Deciding when to claim Social Security is a sometimes-confusing task, but no one should ever claim SS early because they believe Social Security will go bankrupt in the near future. Social Security cannot and will not go bankrupt. What your friend may be referring to is the fact that Social Security will be facing some financial issues in 2033 unless Congress acts soon to reform the program. And they will act, but likely not until they must.

The fact is, Social Security still has about \$2.7 trillion in reserved funds which are now being used to pay full benefits. If that Reserves balance were to be fully depleted, then Social Security would need to go to a "cash basis" (essentially, paying out in benefits only what is received in SS taxes), which would result in about a 21% cut in everyone's benefit. In other words, even if Congress neglected to reform the program, beneficiaries would still get about 79% of their monthly benefit starting in about 2033/2034. Hardly anyone believes that Congress will fail to eventually reform Social Security and, in fact, they already know how to do that reform (they just currently lack the bipartisanship to accomplish it). But neglecting reform would amount to political suicide for all members of Congress, which is extremely unlikely to happen.

Here at the AMAC Foundation, we are confident that Congress

will soon address Social Security's future financial dilemma, and we have been working on potential solutions. We have, for several years, been providing these suggestions to various members of Congress, and those members are now considering our proposals. Thus, we do not suggest making a Social Security claiming decision based on fear of the program going bankrupt.

That fear is unfounded. Instead, we suggest that everyone decide when to claim based upon their individual personal situation, considering their need for the SS money, their life expectancy, and their marital status. And remember, claiming early (before one's SS full retirement age (FRA)) also means Social Security's Annual Earnings Test will apply (the AET limits how much can be earned from working before FRA is attained).

So, our thought on the wisdom of taking Social Security as soon as you are eligible is that it is often not a wise decision and certainly not if that decision is made based on fear of Social Security "not being there" soon. Instead, we suggest making your Social Security claiming decision based upon your unique personal circumstances, including, especially, your life expectancy, financial need and marital status.

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

If you aren't stopping for these flashing lights... Then you'll be stopping for these flashing lights!



Guest Column

A picture is worth a thousand memories

This column was prompted by a picture.

You see, a coworker got out her phone and showed me a vase on her table that was filled with the most interesting velvet red flowers.

"What are these?" she asked. "Coxcomb or Celosia," I replied, and I went on to explain how the flower looks like a rooster's comb, hence the plant's name.

Seeing the image brought me right back to the late 1980s and early 1990s where I had a business growing dried flowers and crafting them into wreaths and arrangements that I later sold at area craft shows. It was a fun experience that I shared with my parents.

Read on to revisit some of my favorite flowers for drying.

many long lasting stems.

Newer to the catalogs, but really an heirloom, wheat celosia is the most delicate of the three. "Flamingo Feather" has rose tips with a silvery base. Pick often for an abundance of side shoots.

Globe Amaranth is another flower that is popular once dried. Clover-like heads on sturdy stems make great bouquet fillers. Nearly all varieties bloom well in the heat of the summer, producing even more flowers after they are harvested.

Cut when head reach the size of your thumbnail for best performance.

Lemon Bee Balm or Lemon Bergamot is the most underused of all the flowers mentioned here, but it shouldn't be! Whorls of mauve-pink bracts are best

See GARDEN, page 5

In the Garden

by Roberta McQuaid



Red-eyed vireo

The Massachusetts Audubon Society reported the sighting of a red-eyed vireo on Sept. 15 at their Broad Meadow Brook Sanctuary, located on Massasoit Road in Worcester.

The red-eyed vireo has an olive green back and wings, white underparts, gray crown and a white eyebrow and a black line through its eyes. It has a yellow wash on the flanks. Adults have red eyes hence this six inch tall songbird's name. Immature birds have brown eyes.

It builds a cup shaped nest of grasses, bark and spider webs suspended in the fork of a tree. It sings almost continuously from dawn to dusk with a series of short note phrases, "Here I am, where are you?"

It is frequently parasitized by the brown-headed cowbird, which lays its eggs in other bird's nests.

It feeds on insects, main-

ly caterpillars and migrates to the Amazon basin for the winter. Vireos are found in the forest canopy, particularly in woodlands and forests.

Other birds at Broad Meadow

Other birds at Broad Meadow Brook Sanctuary included a Nashville warbler on Sept. 16, a great blue heron, a sharp shinned hawk and a broad winged hawk, all on Sept. 15.

Helping birds

Bird friendly windows can prevent collisions, which annually kill millions of birds. Birds can't see glass. Instead, they see whatever happens to be reflected in its mirror-like surface. Often, this is open sky or trees, which, for a bird, are appealing and perfectly safe things to fly towards. It's estimated that between one hundred million and one billion birds

die every year in collisions with manmade structures, one of the biggest killers of migratory birds.

Bird-safe glass is specially designed to make glass a visible obstacle to birds. Bird safe glass is visible to birds while transparent enough for humans to look out. People may visit the Audubon Society at <https://www.audubon.org/news/what-does-bird-safe-glass-even-mean-for-ways-to-keep-birds-safe-from-window-strikes>.

Here are some of the tips they offer. Try placing your bird feeder about 1.5 feet from the window; it will slow them down. Apply a thin film to the outside of the windows. The glass will become visible to birds, but remain transparent to people. As an added bonus for being so eco-savvy, the film

See BIRDS, page 5



By Ellenor Downer

the HOLYOKE Sun

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The Holyoke Sun is published every Friday by Turley Publications, Inc., 24 Water St., Palmer, Mass. 01069. Telephone (413) 283-8393, Fax (413) 289-1977.



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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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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*.

FILM, from page 1

“Back in 2017, we decided to do this event, instead of doing a full-blown production, she said. “So this is our 8th production, and we hope to do it every September, and we hope to bring the alumni back, and most recently, we have opened the audience up to the community and some undergrads as well, all in honor of Leslie (Phillips) and her theater.” DeFant did admit that a two-year hiatus did occur due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, but she felt that no matter the odds, the event has always carried a sense of ‘homecoming’ to all who attend, especially the HCC alumni.

“We have always felt like a bit of family, and that’s why we love to come back and have the ability to do theater,” DeFant said. “You know, some of the people I went to school with are now professors here for a while, and we have always been friends, and it’s kind of cool to be here on the 50th anniversary of the theater’s grand opening.” DeFant also touched upon the opportunity of sharing the ‘big’ moment with her daughter and grandson, so three generations of her family have the opportunity to grace a familiar setting.

“My daughter (Corrie) was on this stage when she was four years old, and she did four other plays after that through the years,” DeFant said. “And my grandson is here, and he’s going to be on stage, and I’ll be on stage, and I’ll be directing as well, and it’s very exciting, and I hope my family and I get to do this again year after year.” DeFant then added, “I admit it’s fun to get together, and you never know who’s going to show up every year, and it’s great to take in this moment.”

Pivoting in a different direction, and offering a bit of insight on how everything came together was Natalia Castagno, Assistant Director for HCC Alumni



The Leslie Phillips Theater entrance showcased awards and history table.

Relations, who unveiled that the ‘Green’ Carpet was a way to celebrate and spotlight the actors performing, while replicating the authenticity of a real-life premiere for all attendees.

“We wanted to build and do something to make a fun event to celebrate the actors of the show, and the result was even better than we hoped for,” Castagno said. And when asked about the future of the festival, Castagno noted, “It’s all about maintaining this momentum, and understanding how to take it even further,” she said. “Hopefully, we can get some more actors, and I just appreciate everyone coming together in support to celebrate the art and theater program on campus. It’s been an incredible time, and we couldn’t have asked for better.”

The event consisted of multiple performances, such as the opening headliner, ‘The Yellow Bat Incident’, which was penned by Nelly Rodriguez and directed by Shaina Rose, featuring Corrie Evangeliou, Wendy Fox, and Jon Roe, all HCC alumni.

The performance kicked off around 7:30 p.m. this past Saturday, September

20th, and other productions followed suit from that point forward. In total, the event consisted of two acts and seven productions, which carried all night long, concluding the next morning, on Sunday, the 21st.

The Festival cast and crew also featured the talents of fellow HCC alumnus, Jerry Waller, Judas, Jacintho, David “Eddie” Martin, Terence Hegarty, Manny Morales, Leo D. Stewart, Karson Baird, Shaina Rose, Patti McCauley, Allison Wrobel, Kiriakos “KJ” Evangeliou Jr., Stephen Bailey, Dylan Bolus, Jonathan Duquette, Brandon K. Williams, Baram, Laurel Gielda, John Sieracki, Dot Wentworth, Nathan Alvarez, Jenny Wall, Kevin Candon, Laurie Heroux, and Tom Roché, along with Denise Boutin, Terry Adams, Sam Falcetti, Lisa Poehler, Terrence Haggerty, Kate Roberts, and Mary McCarthy.

In addition, Trudy Monson, President of the HCC Alumni Council, felt the event was a resounding success, and confessed this was her 2nd time being involved, and the 1st for the Alumni Council having a presence, which she hopes to

change going forward.

“We helped set up, handed out information, as the Alumni Council is just trying to be a little bit more visible,” Monson said. She then confessed that after a simple meeting with a current student, who questioned the process of being an alumni, forced her hand to take a more present role.

“I ran into a student while I was at Stop and Shop, and we started talking, and he was ‘like I go to school at HCC, and I told him I was an Alumni, and he was ‘like how do you join as an alumni?’ Monson then responded, “So I explained the process of how you become an alumni, and I felt it was important to be visible and let the public know all of the opportunities that we possess.” She also talked about the growth of the event, while noting her mission is to visit every club on campus.



Three generations of HCC theater represented by Corrie Evangeliou (mother), KJ Evangeliou (son), and Donna DeFant (grandmother).

Turley photos by Brendan Rooney

“I really like being in the public, and I feel this event and this college as a whole can only go further from where we are,” Monson said. “Being retired, I have the time, and I look forward to establishing those new connections and seeing what they would like to see, and how we can evolve not our campus, but our lifestyle and

identity.” All benefits and proceeds went towards the HCC Leslie Phillips Fund for Theater Arts and Education. In addition, various sponsors were also connected to the event, such as Focus Springfield Community Television, which filmed the festival and ported it online for future access.

The Holyoke Sun
OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

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

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

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

BIRDS, from page 4

will cut down on incoming infrared radiation, so it will also lower summer cooling costs. Keep curtains or shades drawn during the day to reduce reflection. Place window decals, sun catchers, tape strips, ribbons or anything else in a dense pattern in the “2x4” format, a single decal will not work. Install a screen or net a few inches outside of your windows, to lessen the impact.

Brimfield bird watcher

A Brimfield resident

continued watching for migrating common night-hawks in August, but did not have any luck. He has seen them in the past. He had three ruby-throated hummingbirds feeding on jewelweed, cardinal flower and nicotiana last month. He saw a pair of American Goldfinch drinking from the drip he has in his yard. He also saw a female pileated woodpecker on the top of a mountain ash where it ate berries for while.

Bird calls

A reader sent an email about a free bird call app

called Merlin.. She thought other readers might be interested. She said, “Just enter your location and press record. I never knew hummingbirds chirp. Now I do.”

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by calling me at 413-967-3505, leaving a message at extension 100, emailing mybackyard88@aol.com or edowner@turley.com or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005.

GARDEN, from page 4

cut when three inches long.

Stems are weak, so mix in with other flowers to keep heads upright or attach stems to a wooden pick for added strength.

Most of us are familiar with the Strawflower, a stiff petaled flower that feels dry even in the garden! To dry, simply insert a 23-gauge wire up through a tiny bit of the stem and into the flower’s calyx, just barely into the head itself. This will give the strawflower a strong “stem” for use in floral arranging.

After the flowers have been wired, be sure to let them dry fully, upright and in the dark to preserve their rich hues. You can also simply pluck the heads and dry them on a cookie sheet in the dark for hot-gluing later on.

Love in a Mist or Nigella is an old-fashioned beauty that has light blue, white or rosy pink short-lived flowers followed by really neat brown striped seed pods. When fully dry

these look like pepper shakers, dropping their seeds to an fro. The pods are desirable for dried wreaths and arrangements.

Keep picking as soon as the heads are fully developed to keep the plant producing.

Prince’s Feather is a member of the Amaranth family and grows lush plumes worth of a prominent place in your arrangements. Smaller side shoots are great for more delicate work.

Colors are typically shades of burgundy. Plants can grow anywhere from eighteen inches to several feet tall so site accordingly.

Winged Ammobium is a two foot tall, floppy annular that has an abundance of tiny white flowers. It is best picked when the center of the flowers just starts to show its yellow color.

If you wait too long, the centers will turn brown and unattractive. Gather small bunches of ten to twelve stems and secure them with rubber bands. Here too attach a wooden florist pick to tiny bunches for ease in floral arranging- besides giv-

ing the stem some strength, it will give it additional length.

An attic or barn loft are the best options in which to hang your harvest to dry. Flowers dried in the dark will retain their vivid colors very well and the heat will dry them out quickly.

Make small bunches of fresh cut flowers, securing them with a rubber band, not string. The rubber band will shrink along with the stems as they are drying. Hang them upside down and you will be rewarded with straight stems and upright heads.

Have fun experimenting with floral arranging or wreath making with these everlasting flowers.

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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Sunday 8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
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firstbaptistchurchholyokeye@comcast.net
Facebook: First Baptist Church of Holyoke, MA
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SPORTS

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Lippman leads Holyoke to first win

PALMER – Last Thursday evening, Holyoke High School girls soccer scored a 4-3 win over Palmer for its first win of the season.

Kyra Lippman would figure in all four goals for the Knights with two goals scored and assists on the other two.

The Knights improved to 1-5 for the season.



Egla Membreno Benitez heads up the field. *Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com*



Scarlett Mendes keeps control of the ball.



Leilany Figueroa heads the ball down.

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



Jennaya Torres sends the ball away.



Grace Bechard sends the goal kick up the field.



Kayleigh Coutinho focuses on her dribble.

Tigers defeat Knights

HOLYOKE – In a battle of neighboring school, South Hadley High School girls volleyball defeated Holyoke 3-1 last Monday evening. The Knights fell to 5-3 on the season while South Hadley rose above .500 to 5-4 for the season. South Hadley was led by Grace Matyszewski with nine kills and 17 digs as well as nine aces from the service line.



Jadhe Cortes Rodriguez sends a quick hit over the net.



Kiersten St. Lawrence reaches out to get a bump.



Tatiana Gonzalez sets up a ball near the net.



Melliani Santana Rodriguez sends a bump away.



Kelcy Brunelle tries to win the battle near the net.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Roster spots still open for fall baseball league

SOUTH HADLEY – The Quabbin Valley Baseball League fall session is underway with just two games played. Due to injuries and other obligations, a small number of roster spots have opened up on teams and the league would like to add a few more players for the remainder of the fall campaign.

Games are Sundays at 10 a.m. for the remainder through Nov. 2. Anyone interested in registering can go to www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org and click on the registration link. There are six games remaining in the season and the fee to play in the remaining games will be prorated for any player who joins. Players looking to join should be age 28 or older.

For more information or to ask any questions, contact Greg Scibelli at GScibelli22@yahoo.com.

Holyoke football rebounds for first win

HOLYOKE – Last Thursday night, Holyoke High School football picked

up its first win of the season 32-12 over Northampton. Georlee Aponte carried the

ball nine times for 119 yards and two touchdowns. Jesus Morales had 11 carries for 102

yards and two touchdowns. Quarterback Devin Velez went 5-for-6 in the air for 77

yards. The Knights, now 1-1, face Agawam on the road this Friday night, Sept. 26 at 7 p.m.



Devin Velez scrambles away looking to make a throw.



Jesus Morales rushes up the middle.



Georless Aponte heads up the field. urley photos by David Henry

Westfield State Owls get conference win over Dean College

WESTFIELD – Sophomore RB Aidan Patterson (East Lyme, Conn.) scored three touchdowns to lead Westfield State University to a 48-6 win over conference newcomer Dean College in a Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference football game on Saturday in Franklin, Mass.

Westfield snared its first win of the season to go to 1-2 overall and 1-1 in the MASCAC, while Dean

is now 0-3 and 0-2 in the league.

Patterson scored on runs of 18 and 10 yards in the first half, and caught a short pass and ran it into the end zone for a 11-yard touchdown in the third quarter.

Westfield jumped out to a 20-0 lead in the game, and led 20-6 at the half, the lone blemish on the scoreboard coming on a 71-yard scoop and score fumble recovery by Dean's K-Vorn Pemberton

with 20 seconds left in the first half.

Westfield held huge edges in nearly every statistical category, outgaining the Bulldogs 405 yards to 60, posting 24 first downs to Dean's 8, and had a 40:02 to 19:58 advantage in time of possession. Westfield held Dean to -53 yards rushing.

Westfield was 11-12 (92 percent) on third down conversions.

Owls QB Miles Foerster (Amherst, Mass.) was a perfect 10-10 passing for 137 yards and three TD's, connecting with Patterson, Casey Tang (Cambridge, Mass.) and Will Brewster (Westfield, Mass.) for the three scores. Foerster's perfect passing day sets a school record for completion percentage in a game with the perfect 1.000 mark. Colby Pires was 16-17 for a .941 mark against Worcester State in 2022.

Manny Mengata (Tewksbury, Mass.) carried 23 times for 126 yards, and Patterson added six carries for 46 yards. Nick Boucher (Dartmouth, Mass.) and JC Pena (Worcester, Mass.) each had TD runs late for the Owls.

Justyn Gardener (East Hartford, Conn.), Landon Andre (Belchertown, Mass.) and Tommy Bean (Stafford Springs, Conn.) each had five tackles to lead the Owls, with Gardener adding a pair of

sacks and Andre and Bean recording one apiece.

Da'Qwon Foster caught four passes for 43 yards for the Bulldogs. Sincere Wright led Dean with 13 tackles.

It was the first-ever meeting in football between the two schools.

Westfield will be back in action at home next Saturday, Sept. 27, hosting Worcester State at 2 p.m. as part of Family Weekend.

T-Birds make more personnel changes ahead

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds have announced a hire and multiple promotions to their business staff heading into the new season. Sophia Mackin has been hired as Coordinator of Digital and Social Media, Frank Grimaldi has been promoted to Director of Ticket Operations and Retention, and Steve Brousseau has been promoted to Senior Account Executive.

Mackin joins the Thunderbirds after serving as a social and digital media intern with the team for the previous two seasons. A native of East

Longmeadow, Mass., Mackin graduated from UMass-Amherst in May of 2025.

Grimaldi, a Springfield native, is an original staff member of the Thunderbirds front office, having been with the club since the team's inception in 2016. He served as an Account Executive from 2016 to 2018 before transitioning to his ticket operations & retention role before the 2018-19 season. He is an alumnus of Western New England University.

Brousseau joined the Thunderbirds front office full-time during the 2021-22 sea-

son after spending two seasons as a game-day intern with the team. A native of Freeport, Maine, Brousseau has been recognized for his excellence, having been named a finalist for the Howdy Award this past April for outstanding customer service in the hospitality industry. He is an alumnus of Springfield College.

In addition, the Thunderbirds have also brought in Andrew "Guam" McCormic as Retail Office Coordinator and Ethan Vattaso as Gameday Operations Assistant.

McCormic served as the

Gameday Operations Assistant last season before transitioning into this role, where he will assist in gameday merchandise and retail sales. He is a 2025 graduate of Springfield College and will be entering his fourth season with the T-Birds organization.

Vattaso, a current undergraduate at Springfield College, is entering his third season as part of the Thunderbirds' gameday staff. He will manage the staff and oversee live entertainment elements throughout home game nights at the MassMutual Center this season.

Registration open for 5K

WESTFIELD – Come run, stroll and roll. Stanley Park will be hosting the 13th Annual Run Stanley which has grown into a fun yearly tradition for the whole family, whether they like to run, walk, roll, or bark. Join us for this all-inclusive event on Sunday, Oct. 5 at 10 a.m. at Stanley Park. This event includes the 5K trail run/walk, a 5K K9 trail run/walk, the Munchkin Run hosted by Dunkin' Donuts, and The Stroll & Roll. The Stroll & Roll is a wheel friendly 1-mile non-competitive walk-through Stanley Park's accessible pathways.

There is also the Stanley Cup School Spirit trophy

for the school with the most participation in Run Stanley. Form a team and get friends and family involved. When you register, be sure to enter your school name.

Run Stanley 2025 continues our fundraising efforts to benefit the care of the Frank Stanley Beveridge Wildlife Sanctuary. Please join the community of runners, walkers, hikers, dog owners, and nature lovers of all ages who care about Stanley Park for a fun event that will help to improve the safety and accessibility of its wildlife trails.

Registration is now open. You can register by going to <https://runsignup.com/Race/MA/Westfield/RunStanley>

BALLOT, from page 1

Ward 2's Rosalee Tensley Williams, Ward 4's Orland Isaza, and Ward 7's Ellie Wilson are all unopposed.

Yadlette Rivera-Colon is the current vice chair of the school committee and will run unopposed in Ward 3.

The general election will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 4. The last day to register to vote is Oct. 25 and the last day to request a vote by mail ballot is Oct. 25.

Go to www.holyoke.org/ clerk-voter-information to get more information on the election.

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23	Base Price \$27.50	24	Base Price \$28.00
25	Base Price \$28.50	26	Base Price \$29.00
27	Base Price \$29.50	28	Base Price \$30.00
29	Base Price \$30.50	30	Base Price \$31.00
31	Base Price \$31.50	32	Base Price \$32.00
33	Base Price \$32.50	34	Base Price \$33.00
35	Base Price \$33.50	36	Base Price \$34.00
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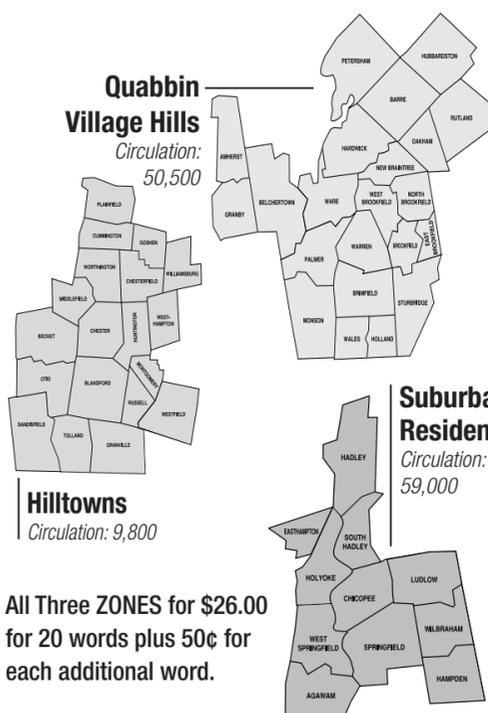
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Better Business Bureau advises on how to avoid hotel booking scams

If you are planning an upcoming trip, keep an eye out for hotel booking scams. BBB Scam Tracker continues to receive reports of travelers falling victim to lookalike websites. Always confirm you are on the right website before making hotel reservations.

What you'll learn:

- How scammers use fake hotel websites and ads to trick travelers
- Key red flags to watch for before entering payment details
- The safest ways to confirm and book your hotel reservations

How the scam works

You search for hotels in the city you plan to visit. Among the top search results is what appears to be an official hotel website or a legitimate travel booking agency. When you click the link, you find a website with professional photos from the hotel and reasonable pricing.

Everything looks normal, so you decide to book a room. You enter your credit card information and check out. However, when you review your credit card statement, you notice you've been

charged a much higher rate than you agreed. It turns out that you weren't on the official hotel website after all! You accidentally clicked on a third-party site without affiliation with the hotel.

In a recent BBB Scam Tracker report, a consumer shared, "Purchased a hotel reservation for a Hilton hotel in Chicago. But when I called the hotel they said they don't have any record of the reservation. Same answer after I called them multiple times. Then they transferred the call to Hilton reservation and they said the same. Then only I realized that they are a fraudulent company. And when I researched them online I found lot of similar incidents. These people should be prosecuted and their company should be banned."

In a different BBB Scam Tracker report, a consumer shared, "I thought I was on the actual hotel website to book directly (two rooms, one night, at \$139.00 per room), but the "Reservation Confirmations" reflected "Resort Fees" and "Tax Recovery Charges and Service Fees" amount-

ing to \$220.83. I asked the hotel manager to look at the charges. He said that the hotel records showed the booking came from a third party. Here is the takeaway: book hotel rooms directly with the hotel, either by phone or making very sure that you are on the hotel website and not a third party site. In my experience, the website I booked through looked exactly like the hotel's website but apparently was not. Never book through a third party provider if at all possible."

In another example of an online hotel booking scam, a consumer lost over \$600 and reported their experience to BBB Scam Tracker: "The scammer accepts hotel reservations at one rate over the phone and then changes the rate with new amount in an email confirmation. Reservation desk also adds hundreds of dollars in taxes and fees on top of the changed rate and then refuses to make any changes or offer a refund once the customer realizes what has changed. When attempting to dispute the rate, Reservation Desk also will make the customer wait 5-7 business days per

request to draw the process out longer while never offering any resolution."

Another consumer reported this experience on BBB Scam Tracker: "When searching the web for a particular hotel, like [company name redacted], the hotel's logo appears on their website. You think that you are contacting the hotel that you searched for, but you are not. They are a third party that operates under the guise of being associated with the hotel. They told me they handle overflow calls for the hotel, not true. In addition to the cost for the hotel, they assess a \$16 "service" fee without advising you."

When you contact the company to cancel your reservation, you may not be able to get through to anyone. And even if you do, they'll likely tell you you've made a non-refundable reservation. The best they can do is cancel your reservation and charge you for it anyway.

How to avoid hotel booking scams

- Only book hotels through official websites. The best way to avoid this kind of scam is to check and dou-

ble-check you are on an official hotel website before you enter your credit card information. Scammers are pros at building fake lookalike websites to fool you into giving up your information. Look closely at the URL to ensure you are on the hotel's official website or a booking agency you know and trust.

- Only make reservations through secure websites. You'll also want to ensure websites and their payment pages are secure, meaning they start with https:// and display a padlock symbol. If a web page isn't secure, don't enter your personal information and close the tab.
- Contact the hotel directly. If you're unsure about a booking site or deal, call the hotel directly to confirm that the offer is real and that your reservation is in their system.
- Look for red flags in communication. Be wary of unusual payment requests, such as wire transfers, prepaid cards, or payment through untraceable methods. Also, be on the lookout for typos and grammatical or spelling errors. Legitimate hotels typically do not have

these errors.

- Watch out for misleading ads. Look at search results carefully. Just because a website is the first result on the page doesn't mean it's legitimate. Watch out for high-ranking ads that scammers could sponsor.
- Research businesses you aren't familiar with. If you find a booking site that looks professional but you haven't heard of it before, proceed with caution. Search for reviews on third-party websites and keep a close eye out for reports of scams. Never share your personal information with a person or business until you know they are trustworthy.
- Check the cancellation policy. Review the hotel's cancellation policy carefully. Scammers might not provide clear information on this, making it difficult to get a refund.
- Search BBB.org. It's always best practice to search hotels near you on BBB.org to check reviews, ratings, and BBB Accreditation. When booking a hotel online, look for the BBB Seal; it's The Sign of a Better Business.

Public Notices

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
Docket No.
HD25P1955GD
In the matter of:
Christopher Arroyo
Of: Holyoke, MA
RESPONDENT
Alleged Incapacitated Person
CITATION GIVING NOTICE
OF PETITION FOR
APPOINTMENT OF
GUARDIAN FOR
INCAPACITATED
PERSON PURSUANT TO
G.L. c. 190B, §5-304**

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by **Valley Springs Behavioral Health of Holyoke, MA** in the above captioned matter alleging that **Christopher Arroyo** is in need of a Guardian and requesting that (or some other suitable person) be appointed as Guardian to serve **Without Surety** on the bond.

The petition asks the court to determine that the Respondent is incapacitated, that the appointment of a Guardian is necessary, and that the proposed Guardian is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court and may contain a request for certain specific authority.

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 **10/27/2025**. 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. **Barbara M. Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: September 22, 2025
Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
09/26/2025

PUBLIC NOTICE
AT&T Mobility, LLC is proposing to install new wireless antennas on an existing Building located at 110 Lyman Street, Holyoke, Hampden County, Massachusetts 01040. The installation will consist of the collocation of panel antennas at approx. 135ft, 137ft, and 139ft above ground level on the 173-ft tall smokestack. Any interested party wishing to submit comments regarding the potential effects the proposed facility may have on any historic property may do so by sending comments to: Project 250050563PR, EBI Consulting, 21 B Street, Burlington, MA 01803, or at (617) 715-1822.
09/26/2025

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No.
HD25P1903EA
Estate of:
Helen F Condino
Also known as:
Helen F Farnham
Date of Death: 06/30/2025
CITATION ON PETITION
FOR FORMAL
ADJUDICATION**

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Mission Care of Holyoke of Holyoke, MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: **Kimberly Benjamin-Prokop of Westfield, MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **With Personal Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 10/13/2025. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)
A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in

an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: September 17, 2025

Rosemary A Saccomani,
Register of Probate
09/26/2025

**THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION
NOTICE OF A PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING
Project Description:
Chicopee –
Bridge Replacement, Br# C-13-038 I-391 over Route 116 (Chicopee Street)
Project File No. 612187**

A Public Informational Meeting will be held by MassDOT to discuss the proposed project in Chicopee, MA.

WHERE: Chicopee Comprehensive High School
617 Montgomery Street
Chicopee, MA 01013
WHEN: Wednesday, October 8th, 2025, 6:00 PM

PURPOSE: The purpose of this meeting is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed project. All views and comments made at the meeting will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

PROPOSAL: The proposed project consists of the full replacement of the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Bridge which carries I-391 over Route 116, locally known as Chicopee Street, in the Willimansett neighborhood of Chicopee. The existing bridge is a concrete structure, originally opened to traffic in 1979. It provides three northbound lanes (towards Holyoke) and three southbound lanes (towards Chicopee), though the left lanes of both directions are currently closed to traffic. Though safe for all users, this bridge has reached the end of its useful lifespan and must be replaced. MassDOT proposes to replace the existing structure with a new bridge which will provide three lanes in each direction, a 75-year design life span, and incorporate modern bridge design elements to reduce maintenance impacts to the Willimansett neighborhood and the traveling public. During demolition of the existing structure and construction of the new

bridge, some limited detours and closures may be required to ensure public safety, but in general, MassDOT will seek to maintain traffic on both Chicopee Street and I-391. We invite all members of the community to attend the meeting and learn more about this project.

This location is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (including but not limited to interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, open or closed captioning for videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats, such as audio tapes, Braille and large print), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), fax (857-368-0602), TTD/TTY (857-368-0603) or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible prior to the meeting, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten (10) business days before the meeting. In the event of inclement weather a cancellation announcement will be posted on the internet at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events>.

JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR
CARRIE E. LAVALLE
CHIEF ENGINEER
09/26, 10/03/2025

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No.
HD25P1904EA
Estate of:
David R Pine
Date of Death: 08/07/2025
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION**

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Cynthia R Lewis-Pine of Holyoke, MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: **Cynthia R Lewis-Pine of Holyoke, MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the

Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 10/13/2025. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: September 15, 2025

Rosemary A Saccomani,
Register of Probate
09/26/2025

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No.
HD25P1963EA
Estate of:
Monica Antonie Seibert
Date of Death: 08/18/2025
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION**

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Olivia A.J. Seibert of Holyoke, MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: **Olivia A.J. Seibert of Holyoke, MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or

your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 10/28/2025. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: September 23, 2025

Rosemary A Saccomani,
Register of Probate
09/26/2025

NOTICE OF TIER CLASSIFICATION 680 TO 686 SOUTH EAST STREET HOLYOKE, MASSACHUSETTS RTN 1-50840

A release of oil and/or hazardous materials has occurred at this location, which is a disposal site as defined by M.G.L. c. 21E, § 2 and the Massachusetts Contingency Plan, 310 CMR 40.0000. To evaluate the release, a Phase I Initial Site Investigation was performed pursuant to 310 CMR 40.0480. The site has been classified as TIER II pursuant to 310 CMR 40.0500. On **September 16, 2025** the Holyoke Housing Authority filed a **TIER II Classification Submittal** with the Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). To obtain more information on this disposal site, please contact **Todd Kirton, LSP of Tighe & Bond, Westfield, Massachusetts, 413-572-3222**. The Tier Classification Submittal and the disposal site file can be viewed at MassDEP website using Release Tracking Number (RTN) **1-50840** at <http://public.dep.state.ma.us/SearchableSites2/Search.aspx> or at **MassDEP, Western Region, 436 Dwight Street, Springfield, Massachusetts, 413-784-1149**. Additional public involvement opportunities are available under 310 CMR 40.1403(9) and 310 CMR 40.1404.
09/26/2025



Holyoke's Grand Colleen Moira Catherine Reardon waves to the crowd.



Mayor Joshua Garcia waves to the crowd. *Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com*

Holyoke shines at The Big E



The parade always features various performers.



The Holyoke Community Charter School cheer squad marches.



The Clydesdales are always a featured part of the parade.



The Holyoke's St. Patrick's Day float runs through the parade route.



The Mardi Gras float full of people throwing beads to the crowd.



Sullivan Middle School cheer squad gathers for a group photo before the parade.



The Holyoke High School band poses before the beginning of the parade.

Send Us Your Holiday Event Information

Turley Publications will print your holiday calendar listings FREE OF CHARGE in our Holiday Dazzler Supplement which publishes Nov. 19th.

Deadline for submissions is October 20th

Community Holiday 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 _____

Please specify if you would like your name and number printed in the paper.

CLIP OUT AND MAIL TO:

Turley Publications, Attn: Jamie Joslyn, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069 or email* them to: jamie@turley.com

***Be sure to indicate "Holiday" in the subject line of your email.**