

City Council discusses special election for treasurer

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – The city council discussed the special election for the treasurer position at their meeting on Nov. 19.

The city council currently plans to hold a special election on Jan. 28 to see if the city wants to have the treasurer position be appointed or elected.

The council had previously voted in favor of this, but City Councilor Patti Devine filed an order to reconsider this decision.

Devine felt that holding this special election would be costly for the city and that the money may be better used elsewhere.

“I asked the clerk to give me some information just about what it costs to have an elec-

tion,” Devine said. “\$13,000 for poll workers and movers, \$150 to rent a UHaul, \$225 for rental at St. Paul’s, \$4500 for programming, election cards, and printing ballots and \$2000 for overtime.”

Devine felt that with these costs, as well as the risk that many people would not show up for a special election, it may be better to have the matter settled

by the city council.

“It’s a Jan. 28 election, I don’t know how we’re going to spread the word,” Devine said.

Several other councilors agreed with Devine on this issue.

“A lot of people are not going to vote that day, no matter who goes out there to put out whatever information because to them it might not be import-

ant to vote on just one thing,” Councilor Israel Rivera said.

The city council as a whole does agree that the treasurer should be an appointed position, however some councilors did not want to take the vote on this matter away from the people.

“I am speaking out in strong opposition to this second

See *TREASURER*, page 11

Garcia to interview police chief finalist

HOLYOKE – The finalist for the position of Police Chief will be interviewed by Mayor Joshua A. Garcia in a public session on Thursday, December 5, at 4 p.m. The interview will be conducted in City Council Chambers at Holyoke City Hall, 536 Dwight Street. The interview will conclude a competitive selection process facilitated by Public Safety Consultants, LLC.

In late October, the search for a new chief was extended by two weeks after one of the two finalists for the position withdrew his candidacy, according to Garcia. The extended application process closed on November 11. Two candidates for the position were interviewed by the search committee, but neither one was put forward. That left the original finalist — the one who had not withdrawn — still in the running.

Following the retirement of Chief David Pratt, the Mayor’s Office launched a search for a successor. Mayor Garcia appointed a Search Committee, composed of city officials, community leaders, and law enforcement personnel. The position was advertised, and applications were invited. Resumes were collected and screened by the committee. The process included a public listening session and public surveys. Candidates were selected to receive essay questions. Those essays were collected and reviewed. Those who made it past that round were invited for oral interviews by members of the committee. The next step was an assessment exercise. Only one candidate participated, as the other withdrew. The final step is the public interview conducted by Mayor Garcia.

See *CHIEF*, page 11



Transcend Massachusetts has a collection of recommended readings for those interested in learning more about the transgender community.
Turley photo by Quinn Suomala

TRANScend Massachusetts shares their work with city

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – Transcend Massachusetts, a program that is working to spread the narratives of transgender and gender non-conforming Latinx individuals.

Doctor Eunice Aviles is the creator of this program and she hopes that this initiative will help to spread the truth about gender diverse individuals.

For this work she has photos taken of various transgender and gender diverse Latinx individuals and helps to share their stories.

“We are using the voices of the individuals, they are using their voices to tell their stories,” Aviles said.

At the library she has an exhibit of some of these photos and captions underneath them. Included in these cap-

See *TRANSCEND*, page 12



Eli Stack and Aleah Nesteby worked together to run the Gender 101 presentation at the library.

City accepts traffic grant

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – The city council received and accepted a grant for traffic enforcement at their meeting on Nov. 19.

This grant is worth \$39,600 and is titled the municipal Road Safety Program Grant. The grant is through the Board of Public Safety through the support of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

The committee on finance, according to Councilor Patti Devine, was excited to receive this grant.

“I think a lot of people are going to be happy with this, we certainly were in committee,” Devine said. “This grant is intended to approve and support proactive traffic support throughout the city.”

“I am so grateful for this grant,” Councilor David Bartley said.

This grant is focused on allowing the city to increase their traffic enforcement capabilities.

The police department will now be able to have four hour details between 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. throughout the city.

Using the data gathered from these details they will get monthly reports on traffic that they will send to the city council.

These details and the reports will contain a variety of traffic concerns.

“It will encompass speeding, people with no insurance or no license, and the need to be ticketed,” Devine said.

Devine stated that during the finance committee discussion they asked the police department to give out more tickets and less warnings.

The police department responded that this comes down to the individual police officer’s discretion.

See *GRANT*, page 11

Holyoke Community College to host fall graduate reception

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College will honor its fall semester graduates with a special recognition event on Monday, Dec. 2.

The second-annual Fall Graduate Reception will run from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on the HCC main campus, 303 Homestead Avenue, beginning in the Leslie Phillips Theater for the official ceremony, and then continuing over appetizers and activities in the Campus Center.

HCC initiated the fall ceremony in 2023 to engage graduates who complete their degrees and certificates in December, by the end of the fall semester.

According to the HCC Registrar's Office, 197 HCC students will be fall 2024 semester graduates. Many of them will transfer to four-year schools for the spring 2025 semester. Although fall graduates are always invited to attend HCC's formal Commencement ceremony in the spring, historically, many do not attend.

"Last year's inaugural fall ceremony was very successful, and we plan to make this an annual event," said Sharale Mathis, vice president of Academic and Student Affairs. "It is a family-friendly event with food, photo opportunities, and a lot of fun. Our goal is to celebrate our fall graduates, strengthen their connection to HCC in the hopes that they will remain engaged with the college and attend our 77th Commencement ceremony on Saturday, May 31, 2025."



Holyoke Community College will hold a special graduate ceremony for fall graduates on Dec. 2. Submitted photo

During the first part of the event in the Leslie Phillips Theater, Registrar Allison Wrobel and President George Timmons will offer introductory remarks, followed by student speakers Hilario Peralto of Holyoke, and Alexandria Casavant of Northampton. HCC alum Trudy Monson '97, also of Holyoke, president of the HCC Alumni Council, will welcome the fall graduates as new members of HCC's Alumni Association.

About 6:15 p.m., students and their families will be directed to the Campus Center for appetizers, activities, and photo opportunities.

COLLEGE NOTES

Ortiz named AIC resident adviser

SPRINGFIELD – Holyoke resident Naisha Ortiz has been named a Resident Adviser for the 2024-2025 academic year at American International College.

Resident Advisers are students chosen for their leadership qualities, interpersonal skills, and dedication to fostering a positive impact on their fellow students.

Among the RA's responsibilities are mentoring, community building, safety and security, policy enforcement, and communication.

As mentors, RAs provide guidance and support to students living in the

residence halls, helping them adapt to college life, resolve conflicts, and make responsible choices. RAs also create a sense of community within the residence halls by organizing activities and social events and serving as liaisons between residents and the College. These leaders also ensure the safety and security of AIC students living on campus by monitoring the building, responding to emergencies, and enforcing College policies. Resident Advisors are a valued part of the AIC community, fostering a positive living and learning environment for their peers.

COLLEGE NOTES

Shannon Connelly recognized with senior care scholarship

HOLYOKE – A worker at Day Brook Village nursing home in Holyoke is among the 2024 scholarship recipients awarded by the Massachusetts Senior Care Foundation.

Shannon Connelly is a cook and supervisor in the kitchen at the long term care facility. She is pursuing a Licensed Practical Nursing degree (LPN) at Greenfield Community College. Connelly was recognized for her outstanding communication skills and her diligence.

"We commend the 2024 Mass Senior Care Foundation Scholars for their commitment to this profession and to the older adults and individuals with disabilities who consider our facilities their home," said Bill Bogdanovich, Chair

of the Mass Senior Care Foundation Board of Directors and President and CEO of Broad Reach Healthcare. "The Foundation is proud to support these dedicated individuals in achieving their educational and professional goals."

"We believe strongly that a well-supported and educated workforce is critical to promoting a positive resident experience," said Tara Gregorio, President of the Mass Senior Care Association. "Working with Mass Senior Care Foundation, our affiliate organization, we are focusing our resources on expanding career ladder opportunities, attracting new dynamic talent into the profession, while we also continue to address our frontline workforce shortages by improving recruitment and retention strategies."

HPL collecting giving tree items

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Public Library is partnering with Margaret's Pantry and the Sisters of Providence Ministries to collect holiday gifts for children who may not be lucky enough to get everything on their list. To participate please do the following: Stop by the lobby of the Holyoke Public Library.; Select one (or more) ornament(s) from the giving tree.; Take one

of the instruction fliers from the giving tree table.; Purchase only the item listed.; Return the unwrapped present with the attached ornament with the child's information to the Circulation desk at the Holyoke Library no later than Wednesday, Dec. 11 at 6 p.m.; Gifts returned after this date and time will have to be held as extra items for next year.

Mall partners with Salvation Army

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Mall is proud to partner with The Salvation Army for their annual Red Kettle Campaign Kick Off event. This event signals the start of an initiative which funds programs and services for thousands of families, youth, and senior citizens in our community and across Massachusetts each year.



Bell ringers will be accepting donations at various exterior entrances and interior locations across the shopping center until Dec. 24. The event will also feature a performance from the Holyoke High School Madrigal Choir.

To complement the Red Kettle

Campaign, The Salvation Army is set to host another annual tradition, the Angel Tree. This program provides clothing and toys for children in need. According to The Salvation Army, each Angel Tree is decorated with numbered paper angel tags with the first name, age, and gender of a child who is in need of a gift. Contributors remove one,

or more, tags from the tree and purchase appropriate gifts for the child or children described on the tags. Guests are encouraged to visit the Angel Tree Thursday through Saturday from 3 to 6 p.m. beginning on Friday, Nov. 15 and until Tuesday, Dec. 24.

Decluttering program NAMI fundraiser

HOLYOKE – NAMI-WM will be holding a Responsible Decluttering Program fundraiser at our office; 1221 Main Street, Suite 100, in the Catherine Horan Medical Building. Volunteers will be collecting housewares, gently used clothing, towels, small household appliances, books, sporting goods and much more. All clothing should be in

kitchen or 30 gal. size trash bags, durable goods should be in manageable size boxes. Anything wet or soiled, in non-working condition, and any baby safety items will not be accepted.

Call the office to arrange a time to drop off items or to have them picked up. Visit the website to find a list of items that will be accepted.

Hampden County Sheriff Nick Cocchi warns public of new scam targeting travelers

Hampden County Sheriff Nick Cocchi is warning the public of a new phone scam targeting travelers.

In addition to the usual scams that continue to disrupt citizens' daily lives, a family member of a Sheriff's Office deputy who was traveling abroad reported a new variation. The scammer, posing as a deputy, asked her to verify her signature by offering it up at a nearby electronic terminal. That could prove just as dangerous as giving up cash.

"All of these scams are aimed at using a fear of being on the wrong side of the law to coerce people to give up their hard-earned money. And we only

expect these scams to increase as the holidays approach," Sheriff Cocchi said. "Law enforcement will never call you to settle a warrant or to solicit money for any reason. If you get one of these calls, hang up."

There also have been reports of a new round of a previously used scam in which Western Massachusetts residents are contacted via phone by someone claiming to be a Sheriff's Office deputy. In these phone calls reported over the past few days, the scammers represented themselves as a Hampden County Sheriff's Office deputy who claimed the person answering owed money for miss-

ing grand jury duty.

The Sheriff's Office will never conduct such business via telephone or electronic means. If it was a serious matter as the scammers claim, a uniformed deputy would be knocking at your door. Sheriff Cocchi warns that even if the phone number on the caller ID appears to be from a local law enforcement agency, it is not legitimate and likely generated via a spoofing service on the Internet.

Legitimate government and law enforcement agencies will never do business on the phone or by digital means.

Sheriff Cocchi is asking members of the public who receive such messages to

hang up and report it to their local police department. And if you're reading this, please share the message with loved ones.



UCCH offering community meal on Dec. 13

HOLYOKE – The United Congregational Church of Holyoke is inviting everyone to their monthly Community Meal, where they'll be serving lasagna with salad, rolls and more. Dinner will be served on Friday, Dec. 13 at 5 p.m. and will be immediately followed by a family movie at 6 p.m.

The Community Meal is hosted on the second Friday evening of each month at the church at 300 Appleton St.

All are welcome to attend, and the meal is completely free of charge. The menu changes monthly. Parents must accompany their children.

The United Congregational Church of Holyoke is an open and affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ. We welcome all individuals, regardless of where they are on their journey.

To learn more about UCCH, please visit the website at www.uccholyoke.org, find us on Facebook or Instagram, or call the office at 413-532-1483 Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

YMCA Miles of Smiles award presented

HOLYOKE – At this time of year it is most appropriate to give thanks for favors, friends, and loved ones. Therefore, members of the Holyoke YMCA Miles of Smiles award committee are giving a big “thank you” to the people who give us a warm welcome as we enter to work out, most notably this year's recipient of the 3rd annual Miles of Smiles award, Dionides “Donna” Rodriguez.

Donna was born and lived in the Bronx, New York until she was in the 6th grade when her family moved up to Holyoke. She has an older sister and younger sister and brother.

Donna is a 2013 graduate of Holyoke High School where she was active as a cheerleader, played on the volleyball team, and sang in the choir. After graduation she attended Holyoke Community for a semester before joining the workplace.

She has been employed at the Holyoke YMCA for the past year where she not only works at the registration desk but within the youth after school program. When not working the daily shifts she looks after her three sons, 7 year old Dakari, 6 year old Dazir, and 1 year old Damyus. The older two are starting their sports careers in the age



Dr. Roger W. Farnsworth, South Hadley, Ranking Board member, Donna Rodriguez, 2024-5 Miles of Smiles award recipient, Rosanna Mercado 2023-24 recipient, Charles Kulig, Chicopee, Chairman of the Committee. The presentation was held on Nov. 6 at the Greater Holyoke YMCA.

Submitted photo

group basketball league held at the Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Holyoke. When having a free minute she enjoys reading biographies and fiction novels as well as taking bike rides.

What Donna enjoys most about working at the YMCA is that she is very involved with helping the youth within the Holyoke community with

their activities, giving them care, support and comfort. She takes pride in her goal of developing self-confidence through her personal relationships with many of the youngsters she is constantly assisting. Knowing Donna Rodriguez is to know she is going to achieve and make all who know her proud.

Wistariahurst Museum to hold holiday open house, market

HOLYOKE – You better watch out, you better not cry. Better not pout, Wistariahurst is telling you why: our Holiday Open House and Festive Market is comin' to town! On Dec. 7 and 8 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., the mood will be right and the spirits up during this captivating weekend of jubilation. Our beloved museum will be decorated with the splendor of the holiday season and filled with cheer as we welcome guests back into our halls. Visitors will be able to explore the first floor of the museum, listen to holiday-themed music, and discover the fun of our Wisty Railroad train set on display. But wait, there's myrrh! Our winter wonderland will feature our Festive Market with local vendors selling a variety of products such as art, jewelry, and other amazing items perfect for your gift exchanges this year. Our Holiday Open House is guaranteed to bring joy to your world with historical fun and holiday cheer.

“There is nothing better than feeling the magic of the holiday season inside of the museum,” Rachel Powell, office assistant, muses. “The greatest gift we



see at the museum is seeing people of all ages come together to celebrate the museum and community in the warmth of our halls.”

Wistariahurst Museum's 4th Annual Holiday Open House and Festival Market truly offers something for everyone, and we're so excited to welcome the entire community to join us and share in the joy of the season. Our event is a time for celebration and a time to make cherished memories, so we've made sure to make admission to this event free and open to the public.

First Church opens Christmas Shop

LUDLOW – The first church in Ludlow, located at 859 Center Street, will be opening their Christmas shop on Friday, December 6th and Saturday, Dec. 7, and Friday, Dec. 13 and Saturday, Dec. 14 from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. There will be assorted Christmas items along with knitted, crochet, quilted items, and several home-made crafts.

The Humming bird shop will be open with an assorted fabrics and yarns for at reduced prices and the book store will also be open that is filled with some of your favorite authors along with a selection of children books at fabulous prices.

Colleen pageant applications available

HOLYOKE – The Saint Patrick's Committee of Holyoke is excited to announce that its application for the 69th annual Grand Colleen pageant is now live on their website. Eligibility, requirements, and the online application can all be found at holyokestpatricksparade.com/apply.

Applications will be accepted now through Sunday, Dec. 29. On Monday, Dec. 30, all contestants will have an orientation meeting at the Wyckoff Country Club and the pageant will take place on Saturday, Jan. 4, 2025 at Holyoke High

School.

Each year the Grand Colleen Pageant decides the five finalists who then go on to the Coronation Ball to have their Grand Colleen crowned. The Grand Colleen reigns with her Colleen Court on a majestic float over the two-mile parade route. Not only does the honor of being a Colleen represent women who are proud of their Irish heritage and community, but the journey helps them build connections, gain self-confidence, and develop skills that will help in their present and future career paths.

2024 Grand Colleen Elizabeth Gourd said, “I want to encourage anyone who is considering running or running again to please do so. This contest pushes you about 10,000 feet outside of your comfort zone but it will reward you for every single foot. It has changed my life for the better and I hope it can do the same for you.”

The 72nd Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade will be held on Sunday, March 23 and the 48th Holyoke St. Patrick's Road Race will be held on Saturday, March 22, 2025.



HCC opens registration for classes

HOLYOKE – The HCC Business and Community Services division has opened registration for its Spring 2025 catalog of personal enrichment and professional development classes.

The spring calendar begins Jan. 29, with individual classes running on different schedules throughout the spring semester. Many are available as single sessions that cost as little as \$39.

Personal enrichment classes for spring include piano lessons, dance, acrylic painting, watercolor painting, pen and ink drawing, sewing, voice over coaching, conversational Spanish, French, and Polish, Spanish for human service professionals, wine tasting, music technology, hat making, home décor, and color design.

In the professional development area, HCC is offering classes in QuickBooks, ServSafe, K-12 continuing education, investment strategies, trusts, and estate planning, as well as certification programs for people interested in becoming medical interpreters, real estate salesperson, and notary publics.

Most classes meet in the Kittredge Center for Business and Workforce Development on the main HCC campus, 303 Homestead Ave. Wine tasting classes meet at the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute, 164 Race St.

To see complete spring course listings and schedules, or to register, please visit hcc.edu/bcs. More classes will be added as spring approaches.

Guest Column



When should my wife claim Social Security benefits?

Dear Rusty

I turned 64 in July and my wife turned 62 in August. My wife has not worked for approximately 15 years, but does qualify for Social Security on her prior work record. My wife is having some physical issues and would like to not return to work. Since she is eligible to collect Social Security, that would be an option to provide additional income, so she doesn't have to work. My question is how would it affect her future SS spousal benefits based on my record if she begins collecting her own benefit now? I plan to work until at least my full retirement age, 67 and maybe longer, but plan to start collecting SS at 67 even if I continue working.

Signed: Working Husband

Dear Working

If your wife has the required 40 SS quarter credits, she is eligible to collect reduced retirement benefits at 62 for that needed extra income, but her age 62 benefit will be about 70% of what it would be if she waited until her SS Full Retirement Age to claim. That reduction would, in turn, carry over to her spousal benefit when you eventually claim your SS benefit.

Here's why: Your wife's spousal amount when you claim will be a combination of her own SS retirement benefit, plus an auxiliary amount, a "spousal boost" that she is entitled to as your spouse. At age 62, her own benefit will be cut by 30% and she can collect that reduced amount until you claim, at which point her spousal boost will be added to make

See SECURITY, page 5

Election letters to the editor welcome

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 newspaper 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.



Guest Column

The last of the autumn questions



Lori, a reader of the column, wrote in with this question for the Garden Lady: "I put my garlic cloves in three weeks ago and they have sprouted! The variety is a German White hardneck. Will they come back in the spring?"

Thank you for your question! It is not uncommon for garlic to send up shoots when fall weather is warmer than normal, much like ours has has been.

Typically, the shoots survive the winter just fine, and will resume growth come spring time. To be on the safe side, I would mulch around your plants with straw or chopped up leaves to provide some insulation.

Once spring arrives, pull back the mulch

and provide some fertilizer that is nitrogen rich to give the shoots a boost. A sprinkling of blood meal, fish emulsion, or composted manure would all do the trick.

Push the mulch back in place; it will help to keep weeds down. Garlic hates competition in this arena.

Early on, ample water and nutrients make the big fists of garlic we all want to see at harvest.

Hardneck garlic is typically the garlic grown in our area. Unlike softneck garlic, it needs the cold to complete its life cycle. It has fewer, but larger cloves.

Cloves from hardneck garlic are more pungent than softneck, but don't last quite as long in storage. Softneck don't grow stiff scapes as stems but have leaves that at harvest can be braided together to make a nice kitchen decoration.

Often you will see these garlic braids for sale at craft shows or in catalogs.

Michele, who gardens in Ware, has a question about tidying up her hydrangea bushes.

See GARDEN, page 5

10 ways to prevent medical errors



You count on doctors and hospitals to protect your health. But unthinkable, sometimes the opposite happens. Medical error is now the third leading cause of death in the U.S., according to a study by Johns Hopkins Medicine.

Cancer and heart disease are still the leading culprits. But 250,000 Americans die each year as a result of preventable medical mistakes like post-surgical infections and medication mix ups. What can you do to make sure it doesn't happen to you?

10 Tips for Guarding Against Medical Errors

1. Prepare a proactive medical summary of your health conditions, allergies, physicians and all medications. Show your family where it's kept. In the event of an emergency or hospitalization, it can provide the medical staff with crucial information fast.

2. Consult a trusted healthcare professional for recommendations when looking for a new doctor. Don't rely on word of mouth, online reviews or advertisements. Your best

path to a quality provider is another provider you know and trust.

3. Avoid hospitalizations if possible... really! Especially if you're elderly. Infections run rampant in hospitals. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), on any given day, one in 25 hospital patients has a hospital-acquired infection.

4. Organize shifts among relatives to ensure the patient is always accompanied if hospitalized. Don't let loved ones go it alone. But only enlist those who are observant and communicate well.

5. Pay attention, be observant, take notes and provide information readily while in the hospital. Ask questions, but courteously. Keep a record of the name and shifts of nurses and doctors.

6. Don't hesitate to "speak up for clean hands," to quote the CDC. Cleanliness helps prevent infection. Ask the medical staff to wear gloves or use foam hand sanitizer before touching you. Wash your own hands frequently; make sure visitors, too. And ask cleaning staff to regularly sanitize objects that others touch.

7. Speak up—politely—if you think something is wrong. Listen to your gut: doctors and nurses are human and can make mistakes. (If all else fails, go up the hospital food chain—ask for a meeting with "risk management" and a hospital care team to discuss your concerns.)

8. It's best not to chat with the nurse when he or she is dispensing your meds; dis-

See HEALTH, page 5

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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.

SECURITY, from page 4

her benefit equal her spousal entitlement. So, her total benefit as your spouse when you claim will consist of her reduced age 62 amount, plus an additional amount as your spouse.

If you claim at 67, your wife will be about two years short of her own FRA, which means that her spousal boost amount will also be reduced for early claiming. That reduced spousal boost will be added to her already reduced age 62 SS retirement benefit, which will make her total benefit less than 50% of your FRA benefit amount.

So, your wife claiming her own reduced SS retirement benefit at 62 also

means her spousal benefit amount will be affected and taking her spousal boost before her FRA means that the boost amount will also be reduced for early claiming. The only way your wife can get the full 50% of your FRA entitlement is to wait until she reaches her own FRA, 67, to claim Social Security benefits.

Having said all of that, if your wife's physical issues suggest that she claims her benefits early and she is comfortable with the smaller benefit she will get, then that may be the right choice. For reference, the reduction to your wife's spousal boost amount, if you claim at your FRA, will be about 17%, and that reduced spousal boost will be added to her reduced age 62 SS retirement amount. The end benefit for your wife, if

you claim at age 67, will likely be about 42% of your FRA entitlement instead of 50%.

FYI, you can further delay your own SS retirement benefit, up to age 70, for a higher benefit yourself, but that would also mean your wife would need to wait longer to get her spousal boost. You could also wait to claim your SS until your wife reaches age 67, her FRA, which would give you a higher personal amount and also ensure your wife gets her maximum spousal boost (but her total will still be less than 50% of yours because she claimed her own SS retirement benefit at 62). When to claim Social Security depends on financial need and life expectancy. If a long life expectancy is anticipated, waiting

longer to claim is often the best move. But financial need always trumps waiting longer.

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

GARDEN, from page 4

"The flowers at the tips of the branches of my blue hydrangea bushes have all browned and look unappealing. Some of the leaves are hanging on too. Altogether it's not a pretty sight. Can I cut down the branches to the ground? In effect, cleaning up the plant by the easiest way possible? It will sprout again when spring arrives, of that I'm sure."

I know exactly what you are talking about. From where I am writing, I can see my own hydrangea and it looks just as "pretty" as yours sounds!

Rest assured that the leaves will fall off. The flowers, on the other hand, will stick around awhile. Wind and wet

weather will eventually cause them to degrade and fall away from the plant.

If you don't want to wait that long, feel free to cut the flower heads, and just the flower heads off. You see, most hydrangeas bloom on old wood.

Newer varieties – those bred in the last 20 years or so, often bloom on both new wood and old wood, so you'd never really want to cut them all the way down because you would be missing out on an opportunity for flowers to form. In case you don't follow my logic, flowers can form on the new growth the plant puts out in the spring, and the old growth from the previous year. Lots of gardeners remarked about what an amazing year it was for hydrangeas. So many flowers!

We attribute that to a mild winter

last year and ample rainfall. I'm uncertain what the droughty fall will do, if anything, to next year's show.

I also wonder if hydrangeas put on a banner year one year, if the following year will be sparser because they are in recovery mode? I know it happens that way for fruit trees, my Asian pears for example, but not certain if it works the same way with flowering shrubs.

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.



HEALTH, from page 4

traction can lead to medication mistakes. Take care to know your pills in every way possible. Ask the nurse to review each pill with you before you swallow it.

9. Exercise vigilance especially during the admission and discharge process. The potential for errors is most likely to occur during the transition process to get you admitted or discharged.

10. Obtain copies of your written discharge instructions. Make sure you completely understand your follow-up plan after a doctor's visit, emergency room visit or hospitalization. Know what medications you'll be taking and how often, and when to follow up with your physician. It sounds obvious, but in one recent study, 54% of discharged patients couldn't accurately recall their follow-up instructions!

Why Medical Errors Happen

The modern healthcare system is remarkably complex, and patients are no longer held firmly at its center. Various factors have contributed to an environment where mistakes are more likely to occur.

For example, hospitals are trapped between tight financial constraints and attending to patients. Often, they're under pressure to discharge patients quickly—sometimes too early—to free up beds. Many hospitals are chronically understaffed with regards to nurses (the patient's primary point of contact!) and support staff (like janitors, charged with

the very important job of keeping the hospital clean).

It's no better for physicians, who are continuously pulled in multiple directions. Today's doctor spends hours documenting health records and completing insurance forms—time that once was directly devoted to patients. At the same time, they're reimbursed by health insurers at ever-shrinking rates, even as their malpractice insurance premiums soar.

This is why many doctors are increasing their patient load or relying on less-qualified Physician Assistants to handle their caseload. End result: less one-on-one time with patients and a greater risk of something falling through the cracks.

For all these reasons, patients and their families need to take a more active role in managing their healthcare. They need to be informed and vigilant. They need to be ready to advocate for themselves whenever necessary.

Of course, it's impossible to eliminate 100% of your risk of becoming a victim of medical error. But by paying attention and speaking out, you can vastly improve your odds.

Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, a registered nurse and board-certified patient advocate, is the founder of Northshore Patient Advocates LLC (NSHore). She is also founder and CEO of Nurse Advocate Entrepreneur, which trains medical professionals to become successful private patient advocates. Teri offers a free phone consultation to newspaper readers as well as to nurses interested in becoming advocates. Reach her at Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com.

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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Long piece of squared timber
- 5. Emaciation
- 10. "Bewitched" boss Larry
- 14. Combining form meaning "different"
- 15. Current unit equal to 10 amperes
- 16. Older
- 17. Large, stocky lizard
- 18. Ringworm
- 19. Actor Pitt
- 20. Indian hand clash cymbals
- 22. Data at rest
- 23. Jeweled headdress
- 24. Indicators of when stories were written
- 27. Check
- 30. Cigarette (slang)
- 31. Arctic explorers (abbr.)
- 32. Yearly tonnage (abbr.)
- 35. Delivered a speech
- 37. A place to bathe
- 38. Postmen deliver it
- 39. Surface in geometry
- 40. More (Spanish)
- 41. ___ and Venzetti
- 42. Exclamation at the end of a prayer
- 43. Hawaiian dish
- 44. Aggressively proud men
- 45. Fellow
- 46. Mark Wahlberg comedy
- 47. Mock
- 48. When you expect to get somewhere
- 49. Songs
- 52. Pair of small hand drums
- 55. Play
- 56. Sword
- 60. Evergreens and shrubs genus
- 61. Filmed
- 63. Italian Seaport
- 64. Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea
- 65. Pores in a leaf
- 66. U. of Miami mascot is one
- 67. Snake-like fishes
- 68. Pretended to be
- 69. Body part

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Piece of felted material
- 2. Ancient Greek City
- 3. Aquatic plant
- 4. Potentially harmful fungus (Brit. sp.)
- 5. Body art (slang)
- 6. One who follows the rules
- 7. Ordinary
- 8. Honorably retired from assigned duties and retaining one's title
- 9. Relaxing space
- 10. Japanese socks
- 11. Indian city
- 12. Rip
- 13. Icelandic book
- 21. Satisfies
- 23. Where golfers begin
- 25. Small amount
- 26. Snag
- 27. Determine the sum of
- 28. A distinctive smell
- 29. Exposed to view
- 32. Stain or blemish
- 33. Small loop in embroidery
- 34. River herring genus
- 36. Large beer
- 37. Deep, red-brown sea bream
- 38. Partner to cheese
- 40. At a deliberate pace
- 41. Gurus
- 43. Of each
- 44. Angry
- 46. Popular beverage
- 47. Flower cluster
- 49. Blocks
- 50. Those who benefitted from efforts of relatives (slang)
- 51. Polio vaccine developer
- 52. A (usually) large and scholarly book
- 53. Popular soap ingredient
- 54. NBAer Bradley
- 57. Popular movie about a pig
- 58. Musician Clapton
- 59. Not a sure thing
- 61. Recipe measurement (abbr.)
- 62. Father

CROSSWORD ANSWER on page 9w

Costello shows her kindness through nursing profession



By Barb Turcotte

The name Joanne Costello may be familiar to you for many reasons. Though now retired, this mother of three began her career in nursing for a private practice, then went onto working at Baystate Medical Center for thirteen years. She started in the Neonatal ICU then moved to the Labor and Delivery department. Her son Ryan lives in Italy with his family, her son Mike lives with his family in Georgia and her daughter Meghan (Terone) lives in Connecticut with her husband. After motherhood began she then switched to part-time teaching childbirth classes.

Another reason Joanne's name might be familiar is she was a strong advocate for her daughter who was a Children's Miracle Network poster child at Baystate Children's Hospital in the early and mid-nineties. When the now 38-year old was diagnosed with cancer she was only six years old. Joanne talked about the amazing Random Acts of Kindness that she and her family received while she stayed at the hospital with her daughter. She spoke of these niceties being received from not only the hospital personnel but the sharing and comradery of other parents of pediatric patients. Neighbors and family came forward to help with meals for the family as well as helping her then husband with the care of their two sons.

We often think of Random Acts of Kindness only being bestowed upon strangers, but these gestures can be shared with people we know as well. Perhaps sending a quick text in the middle of the day just letting them know you're thinking of them or maybe sending a card, bringing back a lost art of communicating. These can make such a difference in someone's day.

When Meghan became ill Joanne stopped her professional nursing and instead used her skills to help

her daughter continue to the next plateau of wellness. Meghan has had a difficult medical journey and the biggest Random Act of Kindness that has ever been bestowed on her has happened recently, that being her brother Mike was a willing and qualified kidney donor for her. Her older brother Ryan unfortunately though willing, wasn't able to do that. Though this wasn't a 'random act', what an incredible act of unselfishness to offer this.

In those early Joanne felt she wanted to help other pediatric parents going through their own hardships and decided to add another qualification to her nursing by becoming a licensed massage therapist. This gave her more flexibility and her intention was to give parents back massages to help ease their tensions. She did this at no charge, instead doing as Random Acts of Kindness for others. Then as Meghan got older and her medical needs became less demanding, Joanne turned her massage therapy into a second career of which she retired from.

Joanne being a mother of an ill child as well as being a nine-year breast cancer survivor herself, knew well the value of this service. She proposed her idea of giving children, their parents and adult cancer survivors chair massages while they were being administered their chemo therapy. It was a way for them all to relax and take their minds off of their worries for a little bit.

Because Joanne was so adamant knowing this was such a valuable service she kept working with the director of the cancer center. The director also believing the same brainstormed but unfortunately they were unable to get an actual position approved for a program. Well with Joanne's persistence and the director's belief in this idea a plan was established and was successful. She would be paid one-half through a charity and one-half from a second budget in order to do this which would entail her being a private contractor rather than an employee. Joanne developed the process and implemented the plan as well as trained other therapists. She is still asked to return on a per-diem basis to train new therapists. You may well have experienced a massage and thanks to her, many people have benefited from this practice with this ongoing service still in effect. Another way Joanne enjoyed giving back was giving Random Acts of Kindness chair massages at charity events.

Joanne and Jim have now been together for seven years and are enjoying retirement while relishing trips to

locations such as Africa, India, Poland, Ireland and many sites within the states. There are many more places they want to see so wishing them many safe journeys as they continue to explore! I know they will also go on doing Random Acts of Kindness while experiencing these travels.

Doing a Random Act of Kindness not only feels wonderful for the recipient but it will also add an indescribable joyfulness to your day. As the saying goes, "Try it, you'll like it!"

If you would like to share a Random Act of Kindness story please contact me at bdt514@aol.com or 413-575-9385. Who knows, you might see your story in this column, 'Just 'Cause' you witnessed, did or received something nice being done. See you soon with another Random Act of Kindness.

NOTICE

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Spartans pull away from Knights

EAST LONGMEADOW – On Thursday, Nov. 14, Holyoke High School football was in nonplayoff action against East Longmeadow.

The Knights were able to score before halftime to trail by just a touchdown 21-14,

but the Spartans scored early in the second half and their defense would do the rest in a 35-20 decision.

Holyoke fell to 3-7 on the season heading into its Thanksgiving Day matchup with South Hadley.



Lyshad Wilson makes a block on the line for Holyoke.



Asa Allen attempts to make the reception.

Avantaey Rivera starts to return the ball after a kickoff.



Matthew Dumoulin punts the ball away for the Knights.



Quarterback Devin Velez makes a pass attempt.



The defense works together to make a tackle.

Jamboree completes Unified season

HOLYOKE – Unified basketball came to a close for Western Mass. teams as they competed in their end of season jamboree events. Agawam and Palmer were among several teams that came to Holyoke on Nov. 14 to celebrate another successful season. Unified basketball has increased in popularity with more teams coming into the league this year.

MIAA seeks to throw out judge's decision

Minnechaug, Monson unaffected by appeals

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

Minnechaug Regional High School and Monson High School filed injunctions at the beginning of the month with the Hampden Court Superior Court.

The schools were appealing a ruling from the MIAA that forced the schools to take forfeits for Western Mass. tournament games because of a procedural issue that was not followed by Minnechaug, Monson, Pathfinder Regional, and several other schools in the region.

According to information sent by the MIAA to member schools, they were supposed to input games to their schedule on the Arbiter website used to track results and formulate tournament data.

Those games, which were not yet known due to the how the schedule is structured, were simply sup-



Manny Rivera heads down the court.



Devin Feliciano shoots in traffic.



Emiliano Santiago shoots from the free throw line.



Isaiah Laporte Walter shoots from short distance.



Armando Zambiano concentrates as she takes a shot.
Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

See MIAA, page 8

Holyoke YMCA unveils virtual golf simulator

HOLYOKE – On Thursday, Nov. 14 from 4 to 7 p.m., The Greater Holyoke YMCA will host an exciting kickoff event to introduce this innovative amenity, offering local families—especially those from underrepresented communities—an incredible opportunity to experience the world of golf, all while breaking barriers and creating new pathways for enrichment and recreation.

The virtual golf simulator, which is the first of its kind in Holyoke, will give families who traditionally don't have access to golf courses a chance to learn and play in a safe, inclusive,

and welcoming environment. As part of The Greater Holyoke YMCA's mission to create equity and opportunity for all, the introduction of the simulator underscores a commitment to bringing diverse, transformative experiences to our community.

"We're incredibly excited to bring this to the Y-and, more importantly, to our community," said Conor Bevan, CEO of The Greater Holyoke YMCA. "Golf is often seen as an elite sport, but we're here to change that narrative. The Virtual Golf Simulator is just one example of how The Greater Holyoke YMCA is breaking the norm and pro-

viding our community with everything it deserves. It's more than just golf—it's about opening doors to new experiences, creating opportunities for growth, and making sure that all families, regardless of their background, can access and enjoy these opportunities."

The virtual golf simulator joins a growing list of state-of-the-art programs and services at The Greater Holyoke YMCA, which already includes swimming lessons, childcare (both preschool and school-age), teen programs like Virtual Reality Workforce Readiness, personal training, a cutting-edge wellness center,

sports clinics, and so much more.

"This is a place where families of all kinds can come together, grow, and thrive," Bevan said. "It's not just about physical health, but also about expanding minds, building relationships, and creating a sense of belonging."

The event is free and open to all, with opportunities for attendees to try out the simulator, learn more about The Greater Holyoke YMCA programs, and enjoy light refreshments. The Greater Holyoke YMCA encourages everyone in the community, whether experienced golfers or first-timers to join in and celebrate this exciting milestone.

Thunderbirds, Blues, announce long-term extension

SPRINGFIELD – Last month, the Springfield Thunderbirds and St. Louis Blues announced the extension of their affiliation agreement through the end of the 2030-31 season. The deal further solidifies the long-term future of the American Hockey League in Springfield, one of the league's charter cities.

"We are thrilled to continue our richly rewarding long-term partnership with the St. Louis Blues," said Thunderbirds President Nathan Costa. "The Blues and Thunderbirds share similar core values regarding player and staff development and maintaining a deep commitment to their communities. Our collaboration has enabled us to grow our franchise both on the ice and throughout the region. We cannot wait to see the next generation of Blues stars hone their talents in Springfield in front of the best fans in the AHL."

In the first three seasons as the Blues' AHL affiliates, the Thunderbirds have experienced tremendous success on and off the ice. In 2022, the team captured the Richard F. Canning Trophy as Eastern Conference Champions, reaching the Calder Cup Finals for the first time in club history. The T-Birds

received the AHL President's Award as Team of the Year that same year.

"On behalf of our local ownership group, we are proud to announce an extension of our affiliation agreement with the St. Louis Blues. I want to thank Blues Chairman Tom Stillman, General Manager Doug Armstrong, and the Blues staff, as well as our President Nate Costa and his team, for building a culture of cooperation and success that is unparalleled within the AHL. This agreement will ensure that AHL hockey has a home in Springfield for many years to come," commented Paul Picknelly, Thunderbirds Managing Owner.

The club built upon their success last season, posting a franchise-record 20 sellout games, including a 14-game sellout streak to end the campaign. 2023-2024 also marked the T-Birds' eighth consecutive season of attendance growth (6,321 fans per game).

"First, I want to thank Springfield Thunderbirds President Nate Costa, the local ownership group under managing partner Paul Picknelly, and the entire team and staff for their continued dedicated efforts and support and belief in our City of Springfield,"

said Springfield Mayor Domenic J. Sarno. "Special thanks and appreciation to the St. Louis Blues organization for their continued strong commitment to our local T-Birds! Both organizations are class acts that share a strong emphasis on community and fan engagement and putting a quality product and team on the ice."

Since the start of the partnership, the Blues have also promoted several Springfield staff members to the parent club in St. Louis. Most notably, Drew Bannister became the first T-Birds coach to earn a promotion to an NHL bench when he was named the Blues' head coach on May 8.

"Springfield provides a first-class environment for players in the Blues organization to develop on and off the ice and continue their progress toward the NHL in a well-established, supportive market with strong, experienced leadership," said Blues Assistant General Manager Ryan Miller.

In addition to Bannister's rise to the NHL, 26 players have skated in games for both the Thunderbirds and the Blues, including young stars Jake Neighbours, Zack Bolduc, Matthew Kessel, Joel Hofer, Scott Perunovich,

and Zach Dean.

"This is an exciting day for both the St. Louis Blues and the Springfield Thunderbirds organizations," said Thunderbirds General Manager Kevin Maxwell. "This agreement provides stability for our players and staff, and it will continue to offer our fans the chance to identify with our prospects and follow their careers as they graduate onto the Blues."

The affiliation extension assures Springfield's continued tenancy in the American Hockey League, which dates back to 1936. The City of Firsts has had an active AHL franchise on the ice every season since 1954.

"The city of Springfield has been a cornerstone of the American Hockey League for more than 80 years," said AHL President and Chief Executive Officer Scott Howson. "Hockey in Springfield has experienced a renaissance since the arrival of the Thunderbirds. Stability with an NHL affiliate is very important for AHL clubs, and we're pleased that Springfield's partnership with the St. Louis Blues will continue to bring excitement and entertainment to the fans of Western Massachusetts."

Tough start hurts Railers in loss

PORTLAND, ME – Worcester was outshot in a fateful and fatal first period, 21-1, and outscored by the Maine Mariner 4-0, on the way to a 5-2 defeat.

Lincoln Hatten and Cole Donhauser had the Railers goals. It was the first ECHL goal for Hatten, the first in a Worcester uniform for Donhauser. It was also shorthanded.

Drew Bavaro, Patrick Guay, Bennett Stockdale, Wyllum Deveaux and Evan Vierling had the Portland goals. Former Railers forward Jimmy Lambert had three assists for the winners.

Hatten scored from in close at 3:35 of the second period to make it a 4-1 game, Donhauser assisting. Donhauser scored unassisted with a wrist shot from the right wing at 19:29 of the third period to make it 5-2. He was plus-2 for the night.

Henrik Tikkanen made 33 saves for Worcester. Ryan Bischel had 27 for the Mariners.

Bavaro opened the scoring with a power play goal at 6:30 of the first period, just before the Railers would have gotten Jordan Kaplan out of the penalty box. He snapped a 40-foot wrist home from above the circles.

Guay made it 2-0 at 9:02. He finished off a 2 on 1 break, converting a pass from Lambert. Stockdale scored a little more than a minute later with a shot from the left circle. Deveaux scored on a deflection at 16:23 to make it 4-0 on the scoreboard.

The Railers actually won the last 40 minutes, 2-1. Vierling had the only Maine goal in that span, scoring on the power play at 16:40 of the third period, but there was no way Worcester could climb out of its early hole.

Volleyball World Congress elects Fabio Azevedo as new president

HOLYOKE – The 39th FIVB World Congress unanimously elected Fabio Azevedo as the new FIVB President, ushering in a pivotal era for the global volleyball community. Azevedo will serve an eight-year term, building on the achievements of his predecessor, Dr. Ary S. Graça.



Fabio Azevedo

During his campaign, Azevedo outlined his Strategic Vision 2024-2032, focused on advancing volleyball's professional standards, expanding its global reach, and doubling the sport's current 800-million-strong fanbase

through innovative engagement and the global volleyball movement.

Following his inauguration, Azevedo announced 2018 IVHF Inductee Hugh McCutcheon as the new FIVB Secretary General. McCutcheon, a former Olympic medal-winning coach for the USA men's and women's national volleyball teams, brings

extensive experience to the role.

With this dynamic leadership team, the FIVB is set to elevate volleyball's global prominence and growth.

MIAA, from page 7

posed to feature the school and opponents TBA (to be announced). Those fillers in the schedule would eventually be filled with Western Mass. tournament games, or nonplayoff games if teams did not qualify.

Those filler games were supposed to be on team schedules by mid-September. Because the procedure was not followed, the MIAA imposed forfeits on the schools that did not follow the rule. Under the MIAA's rul-

ing, Minnechaug and Monson, which had soccer teams in the Western Mass. tournaments, would have to take losses affecting their standing for the state tournament. If the schools won, they were still able to advance in the tournaments. Monson girls soccer reached the Western Mass. finals. Pathfinder boys soccer did as well. Minnechaug girls soccer made it to the semifinals.

An injunction was filed by Monson and Minnechaug, seeking to not have the athletes punished for an administrative issue. Judge Tracy Duncan granted the injunction, and both schools had

their forfeits changed to whatever their actual results were.

Minnechaug boys soccer benefited the most from the change, securing the No. 5 seed in the Division 2 state tournament. The changes had the ability to affect schools such as Agawam, Ludlow, Holyoke, and Chicopee Comprehensive in Division 2. Monson's injunction affected seedings for schools such as Granby, Quabog, Palmer, and Pathfinder.

Pathfinder did not appeal to a court, and was defeated on the road in the first round of the tournament.

The injunctions also led to delays in the state tournament starting in the case of field hockey and girls volleyball.

Northampton and Pioneer Valley Regional also won injunctions, though the MIAA is appealing those rulings. They are appealing despite the fact the tournaments have already concluded. The MIAA is not commenting on the court cases.

No schools from Western Massachusetts made it to the state finals in boys soccer, girls soccer, or field hockey.

List of Holiday Happenings around the region

The following is a community calendar of holiday happenings going on in your community and beyond.

Ongoing SPRINGFIELD

HOLIDAY CONCERT TICKETS. The 215th Army Band of the MA Army National Guard presents their annual free holiday concert at Symphony Hall, 34 Court St. on Sunday, Dec. 8 at 2 p.m. Admission is free with ticket. Tickets available at Pride Convenience Stores; One Financial Plaza, 1350 Main St., Springfield (weekdays 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Springfield Visitors Center, 1319 Main St., Springfield; or send a self-addressed stamped envelope to Spirit of Springfield, 1350 Main St., Springfield, Suite 1004, Springfield, MA 01103. Ticket holders seated first.

Friday, Nov. 15 - Saturday, Nov. 16 LUDLOW

HOLIDAY FAIR. First Church Ludlow, 859 Center Street. A real craft show, giant raffle with corn hole set,

giant tv; quilts, hand crafted decorations, baked goods, snack bar, bookstore, fabric shop beautiful cemetery logs. A fun day for all

Saturday, Nov. 16 EAST BROOKFIELD

EAST BROOKFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY CRAFT FAIR. 122 Connie Mack Drive. Saturday, Nov. 16 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Start your holiday shopping and support local crafters. No all vendors accept credit cards.

LUDLOW

FALL FOOD TRUCK FESTIVAL, 782 Center Street. Saturday, Nov. 16 from Noon to 5 p.m. Live music, drinks, food trucks, firepits. Free entry.

ST. NICK'S CHRISTMAS BAZAAR. St. Elizabeth Parish, 181 Hubbard Street. Saturday, Nov. 16 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. 40 Vendors, basket raffle, lottery ticket raffle. Light lunch available.

ST. NICK'S CHRISTMAS BAZAAR. St. Elizabeth Pastoral Center,

Hubbard Street (parking lot in back of church). Saturday, Nov. 16 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Approximately 40 vendors selling stained glass, hockey apparel, chocolates, ornaments, an other items to start our Christmas shopping. Free admission and parking. For more information call at Flaherty, (413)531-6997

SOUTH HADLEY

VENDOR MARKET. Brunelle's Marina, 1 Alvord Street. November 16 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Fun for the whole family!

Sunday, Nov. 17 CHICOPEE

HOLIDAY CRAFT FAIR. Moose Club, 244 Fuller Road. Craft and vendor fair for National Federation of the Blind, Springfield Chapter.

Friday, Nov. 22 LEEDS

HOLIDAY BAZAAR. Linda Manor, 349 Haydenville Road. Friday, Nov. 22 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Public Notices

City of Holyoke Notice of Public Hearing

The Ordinance Committee of the Holyoke City Council will hold a public hearing to hear a special permit extension application of 876 Grow Inc at 360 Race Street (028-06-018A) to build and operate a marijuana cultivation and processing establishment. Hearing will take place on Wednesday, December 11th, 2024 at 6:30 pm at Holyoke City Hall 536 Dwight St and can be accessed remotely via www.zoom.us Meeting ID 841 7403 1269 Meeting Passcode 002495 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 with same Meeting ID and Passcode. For a copy of the application or to provide comments, please contact City Council Admin Asst Jeffery Anderson-Burgos at Anderson-BurgosJ@holyoke.org or by phone 413-322-5525.

Ordinance Chair,
Israel Rivera
11/22, 11/29/2024

**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. HD24P2369EA
Estate of:
Penelope Doyle
Date of Death: 09/18/2024
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 **James Allen Doyle of Southwick, 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: **James Allen Doyle of Southwick, 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 12/10/2024. 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: November 12, 2024
Rosemary A Saccomani, Register of Probate
11/29/2024

City of Holyoke Notice of Public Hearing

The DGR Committee of the Holyoke City Council will hold a public hearing to hear a special permit application of Daniel LaFlamme (Daniel's Truck Center Inc) to operate a light truck repairing and detailing center at 41 Temple St (085-00-012). Hearing will take place on **Tuesday, December 10, 2024 at 6:30 pm** at Holyoke City Hall 536 Dwight St and can be accessed remotely via www.zoom.us Meeting ID 814 6137 2448 Meeting Passcode 626329 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 with same Meeting ID and Passcode. For a copy of the application or to provide comments, please contact City Council Admin Asst Jeffery Anderson-Burgos at Anderson-BurgosJ@holyoke.org or by phone 413-322-5525.

DGR Chair, Kocayne Givner
11/22, 11/29/2024

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Division
Docket No. HD22P1939EA
Estate of:
Kenneth Neil Langevin
Also Known As:
Kenneth N. Langevin
Date of Death: 01/19/2022
INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE**
To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Justin Draper-Langevin of Ludlow, MA**

Justin Draper-Langevin of Ludlow, MA has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve **without surety** on the bond.

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any,

can be obtained from the Petitioner.
11/29/2024

City of Holyoke PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Holyoke Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, December 10, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.com**; ID: B3639398493; CALL IN 1 646 558 8656 to hear, pursuant to the Holyoke Zoning Ordinance, a **Site Plan Review** petition (Sec 10) for the conversion of existing mill space to 84 residential apartments and a Special Permit for a Reduction in Parking Requirements (Sec 6.1.7), submitted by Open Square Realty LLC, c/o Yedidya Blau to be located 110 Lyman Street / 383 Dwight Street (022-01-003, -004, &-005J).

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

APPLICANT:
Open Square Realty LLC,
c/o Yedidya Blau
PLANNING BOARD:
Mimi Panitch
11/22, 11/29/2024

LEGAL NOTICE CITY OF HOLYOKE GAS & ELECTRIC DEPARTMENT OVERHEAD CRANE & HOIST INSPECTIONS, MAINTENANCE & REPAIRS ANNUAL CONTRACT - REBID

Sealed bids for the above contract will be received by

Holyoke Gas & Electric Dept **until 2:00 p.m., December 18, 2024**, at the Office of the Manager, 99 Suffolk St, Holyoke, MA 01040, at which time proposals will be publicly opened and read.

Additional information may be obtained from:

Chi Wong
Holyoke Gas & Electric Dept
99 Suffolk St
Holyoke, MA 01040
(413) 536-9308
cwong@hged.com

Bid Deposit
A Bid Deposit in the amount of \$3,750 must accompany all bids and may be in the form of a certified, treasurer's, or cashier's check payable to HG&E from a responsible bank or trust company; cash; or a bid bond from a licensed surety payable to HG&E.

Prevailing Wage Rates
Rates, which are to apply to the work, are set by the Mass Dept of Labor & Industries.

The right is hereby reserved to reject any or all proposals, or to accept any proposal that in the opinion of the Manager may be in the best interest of the City of Holyoke.

Please mark sealed envelopes, "**Bid for Overhead Crane & Hoist Inspections, Maintenance & Repairs Annual Contract - REBID**" and address them to:

James M. Lavelle, Manager
Holyoke Gas & Electric Dept
99 Suffolk St
Holyoke, MA 01040
11/29/2024

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 \$225, 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.

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- 2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.
- 3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts' public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

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

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

STCC Allied Health hosted careers exploration night

SPRINGFIELD – Springfield Technical Community College hosted its Allied Health Careers Exploration Night on Nov. 18, offering an opportunity for prospective students and community members to explore the college's wide range of programs in the health sciences.

The well-attended event featured live demonstrations, tours of facilities and first-hand accounts from current students about their experiences in the highly regarded health programs at STCC.

The evening showcased various fields, including dental hygiene, nursing, radiology, sonography, physical therapy and occupational therapy, among others. Visitors had the chance to interact with faculty, explore cutting-edge equipment and ask questions about academic pathways and career opportunities.

The open house event happened at a time when enrolling in STCC programs is free for qualifying state residents.

MassEducate and MassReconnect cover the full cost of community college tuition and fees for all eligible students.

Christopher Scott, dean of the School of Health and Patient Simulation at STCC, highlighted the importance of the event in preparing future healthcare professionals. "This event allows prospective students to see the incredible opportunities available in health care careers and the hands-on education STCC provides," Scott said. "Our programs are designed to prepare students for high-demand fields with real-world experience, innovative technology and the support they need to succeed."

One student at the event, Madison Pease of Southampton, a senior in the Dental Hygiene program, praised the practical experience she has gained during her time at STCC. "I think the hygiene program is really great for anyone who's looking for a career and who

might not have the ability to go to a four-year college," Pease said. "It's also a really good opportunity for students to get first-hand experience in dental hygiene."

Her classmate, Madison Beaulieu of Westfield, emphasized the program's focus on community engagement. "STCC's Dental Hygiene program offers a good community-based system where we have outside people from the community who need our help. Also, we have hands-on experience here compared to a lot of other schools," Beaulieu said.

Attendee Katie Orszulik of Agawam expressed her excitement about the event. "It's great for people to be able to come to STCC and see what this school looks like and what the departments have to offer. They can find out about all the different types of equipment and different programs within each department like sonography and radiology, nursing, physical therapy and occupational therapy,"

Orszulik said.

The event also inspired high school students like Justin Grout of Ware, a senior in high school, who attended with the goal of learning more about the Radiologic Technology program. Diagnosed with pectus excavatum, a breastbone condition, Grout's personal medical experiences influenced his career aspirations. "I became interested in it after having so many x-rays done on me and I wanted to pursue that field," said Grout.

STCC's Allied Health Careers Exploration Night highlighted the college's commitment to providing students with accessible pathways into high-demand healthcare professions. With hands-on learning, state-of-the-art facilities, and a supportive community, STCC continues to prepare students for fulfilling careers that make a difference in the lives of others.

STCC College Theatre Workshop to perform comedy Dec. 5-7

SPRINGFIELD – The College Theatre Workshop at Springfield Technical Community College will hold three performances of *This Random World: The Myth of Serendipity*, a thought-provoking comedy by acclaimed playwright Steven Dietz.

The performances, directed by STCC professor Phil O'Donoghue, will be held at the Scibelli Theater on campus on Dec. 5, 6 and 7 and are free to the public, with donations accepted.

The public is invited to join the College Theatre Workshop for this engaging journey exploring how lives intersect in surprising ways. "This Random World" centers on Scottie, an older woman nearing the end of her life. Through interconnected stories involving her children, caretakers and strangers, Dietz weaves a tale that reminds us of the "myth of serendipity" - the idea that life's random encounters are often more connected than they appear.

"This play is a one-joke wonder," says Chuck Lavazzi of KDHX Radio in Louisville, Ky., "but the variations on that joke are so ingenious that it never goes stale, remaining thoroughly entertaining right up to the surprising final



Front row: Victoria Surreira, Jenna Pitts, Migdalia Vazquez, Anthony Lopez, MJ James and Evan Whatley. Back row, left to right: Christina Bishop and Luis Serano.

scene."

Director Phil O'Donoghue expressed his enthusiasm for the production, saying, "'This Random World' has challenged both actors and audiences over the years. It was a hit when it opened in 2016, and it remains a hit

to this day. Our cast has embraced the challenges of this amazing play, and I know our audiences will, too."

Steven Nelson, Interim Dean of the School of Liberal and Professional Studies at STCC, said the play offers students a unique opportunity to explore

deep themes of connection, chance and the human experience.

"The campus community looks forward to the College Theatre Workshop's productions each semester, and we encourage the greater Springfield community to join us and see 'This Random World,'" Nelson said. "Thank you to Professor O'Donoghue and his talented students for their hard work in bringing this thought-provoking play to our stage at STCC."

Performance Details: Dates and Times Dec. 5 at 11 a.m., Dec. 6 at 7 p.m., Dec. 7 at 7 p.m., at Scibelli Theater, Building 2, Springfield Technical Community College. Admission is free but donations are appreciated.

Cole Wood serves as the Production Manager, ensuring a memorable and seamless experience for the audience.

"Come experience 'This Random World' at STCC, where a web of connections and coincidences unfolds, challenging perceptions about fate, relationships and life's unexpected twists," O'Donoghue said. "Don't miss this opportunity to enjoy a play that has captured audiences nationwide."

GRANT, from page 1

The council feels this grant comes at a good time for the city considering the concerns brought up about traffic safety throughout the area.

"We want these [people] ticketed, we want speeders ticketed, we know there is a danger out there, we have all seen how people drive around the city," Devine said. "I think this is a great grant and we're hopefully going to see a lot of enforcement."

Devine also made sure to take a moment to show her gratitude for the

police officers that will be doing this work.

"I want to be cognizant of the fact that the police officers have to go stop that car and talk to that person and it could be very dangerous," Devine said.

Councilor Israel Rivera also shared the councilors' excitement about this new grant. He felt that this grant could be a first step in some long term improvements for the city around the area of traffic safety.

"I think for us this is a small step in what we're looking for for the long term," Rivera said.

In the past Rivera had filed an

order about a traffic squad that is currently in committee. He hopes to see that order be pushed forward so that improvements on traffic safety can continue to be made in the city.

"If something like this is managed by a traffic squad then it is more intentional, there are more teeth into it and we'll be moving in a direction where that squad can come and report to us regularly even without grant funding," Rivera said.

Overall, the council was grateful for this grant and they look forward to seeing how traffic safety can continue to improve in the future of the city.

TREASURER, from page 1

order to reconsider our vote," Councilor Linda Vacon said. "For us to turn around and go against our vote after all of the debate on it...it is doing a disservice to the people we represent."

Councilor Kevin Jourdain pointed out that the treasurer being an elected position was initially voted in by the public, so he felt it was only right that it being changed to an appointed position should also be voted on by the public.

"The public of Holyoke voted to have an elected treasurer," Jourdain said. "For us to turn around and say we are going to take away their right to vote on the treasurer after they voted it in, should

come from them."

Councilor Juan Anderson-Burgos brought up the idea that the council was elected by the people, and so they do also have the ability to speak for the people in some circumstances.

"I am thinking that we were put in a position of power because the voters believe in us and that we would never take the voice away from voters," he said. "This is us trying to do what we think is best for the city as a whole."

Jourdain and others disagreed with this idea.

"Just because the 13 of us are on board, doesn't necessarily mean that the public is on board," Jourdain said. "This is their government. We are simply the servants and we are talking about taking

their powers away."

Additionally, Councilor David Bartley brought up the point that this order reconsidered the actions that were made in a previous meeting.

According to Bartley, this goes against the rules of the city council and is thus not possible to do.

"A vote can be reconsidered in the same session but not afterwards," Bartley said. "You can't do it this way."

With all of this in mind, the council decided to send this matter to be discussed in the charter and rules committee.

Having this discussion in charter and rules will not cause the election to be delayed should the council vote in favor of the election happening.

CHIEF, from page 1

Holyoke's Personnel Director, Kelly Curran, oversaw the search process.

"After a very diligent interview process, the Chief of Police Search Committee feels that the candidate who has passed all the rounds should be interviewed by Mayor Garcia," Curran said.

Mayor Garcia invites residents to attend the December 5 interview in person. Residents who are unable to attend in person are welcome to join via Holyoke Media on cable Channel 15 and streamed live at: <https://boxcast.tv/channel/d0fbxuecgtqbfmbo-6p6x>.

Interviews will take place at Holyoke City Hall, 536 Dwight St, City Council Chambers and can also be accessed remotely via [www.zoom.us https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89333587055?pwd=cFQBVKK-85wAOyDwvXIGL68IXHxdPS.1](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89333587055?pwd=cFQBVKK-85wAOyDwvXIGL68IXHxdPS.1)

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In The News

TRANSCEND, from page 1

tions are QR codes to go to the Transcend Massachusetts for people to have access to an extended exhibit.

These photos will be on display at the library through Dec. 3.

In collaboration with this exhibit, Aviles and others working with Transcend Massachusetts also ran various events at the library.

One of the first events was a Gender 101 presentation that helped to educate people on some of the vocabulary around trans and gender diverse individuals.

Aviles has many more event ideas planned throughout the next few months.

“We are going to have three other events,” Aviles said. “One will be a Q&A with participants...and at another Mel from Trans Health, the director of marketing, they are going to be doing a workshop on how to fight information about the community.”

Another event Aviles has planned is one in conjunction with Mirabel Delgado, who started a support group for family members of trans and gender non-conforming individuals.

Aviles was inspired to begin to work on this initiative when she saw how much trans and gender nonconforming individuals were overlooked and misunderstood throughout the United States and Puerto Rico.

“I traveled to Puerto Rico and...I realized that they [trans and gender diverse individuals] were invisible,” Aviles said. “So I decided to start doing visibility work.”

Additionally, Aviles has worked in mental health for years and she has seen many trans and gender diverse individuals come through her office.

“When I was still a student finish-



Doctor Eunice Aviles has a variety of photographs of transgender and gender non-conforming individuals on display as part of her exhibit at Holyoke Public Library. Joey Delgado is pictured above with his supportive parents Angel and Marybel. *Turley photos by Quinn Suomala*



ing my doctorate degree and I was at a clinic...they referred me this young trans woman whose parents were from Puerto Rico and I experienced her pain because of the trauma she went through,” Aviles said.

Aviles saw how much trans and gender diverse individuals were suffering, especially due to the hatred and adversity they often face in their daily lives.

Due to this, she was inspired to create this project as a way to stand against trans hate.

Through this work she hopes that she can help to stop trans hate by spreading truthful information about these individuals.

“This project, the idea of having a physical exhibition is for people to gather, for people to talk about the community and learn more,” Aviles said.

This exhibit of the photos at the library is the first exhibit that Aviles has had in the United States.

She chose Holyoke Public Library as the location as she has long been close with the library staff.

“Holyoke Library has been my home for many years,” Aviles said. “Everybody is respectful, nice, it is just a wonderful space and group of humans.”

The library was very supportive of her having the exhibit and her various events at the library, which made Aviles all the more excited to have her work there.

“I need to make sure it is a safe space for everyone, given the community that is being featured,” Aviles said. “They [the library] made it really easy for us.”

Aviles hopes that this exhibit at the library is only the first step in her continued work for this project.

She plans to collaborate with other organizations throughout the country in order to keep this work going.

“This will continue with other communities and other states,” Aviles said. “It is not going to die here.”

Already she has some other programs and states interested in picking up this work, and she is open to working with anyone else who is interested in supporting this project.

Aviles’s ultimate goal with this work is to create an educational resource that anyone will be able to access in order to learn more about trans and gender non-conforming people.

“The idea of the website is to have an educational tool that everyone can access for free,” Aviles said.

As part of her next steps she hopes to be able to secure funding to help her keep the website functional for many years to come.

“We need donations to maintain the website,” Aviles said.

The website can be found at <https://www.transcendexpo.com/>. It contains further information about the project as well as information on how to contact Aviles.

People interested in participating in this project are welcome to reach out to Aviles to learn more.

Turley Publications, Inc.

Scarlett Legasey
January 25, 2023
Parents: Thomas & Jessica Legasey, Rutland
Grandparents: Donald & MaryAnn Dunbar, Ware
Thomas & Sharon Legasey, Spencer

Baby's Name: _____

Birthdate: _____

Parents' Names: _____

Parents' Town of Residence: _____

Grandparents' Names & Town of Residence: _____

Telephone #: (not to be printed - for office use only) _____

Please check the newspaper you would like your announcement to appear.

<input type="checkbox"/> Agawam Advertiser	<input type="checkbox"/> Quaboag Current
<input type="checkbox"/> Barre Gazette	<input type="checkbox"/> The Register
<input type="checkbox"/> Chicopee Register	<input type="checkbox"/> Sentinel
<input type="checkbox"/> Country Journal	<input type="checkbox"/> Town Reminder
<input type="checkbox"/> The Holyoke Sun	<input type="checkbox"/> Ware River News
<input type="checkbox"/> Journal Register	<input type="checkbox"/> The Wilbraham-Hampden Times

Deadline for photos and forms is Monday, December 16, 2024

Turley Publications would like to help you show off the newest member of your family this Christmas, FOR FREE!

Mail to:
Turley Publications
24 Water Street
Palmer, MA 01069
Attn: Jamie Joslyn
Include a self addressed/stamped envelope if you would like the picture returned or email photo to: jamie@turley.com with subject line: **BABY'S FIRST.**
This offer is available to all babies born in 2024.
Pictures will be published the week of December 23-27, 2024.

Transcend Massachusetts is a project started by Doctor Eunice Aviles that aims to share truthful stories about transgender and gender diverse individuals and to create an educational resource available to anyone. Underneath the photographs of transgender and gender diverse individuals are excerpts of their stories and a QR code to go to the website to learn more.

Gender 101

November 23, 2024

J. Aleah Nesteby, FNP
Eli Stark, AGNP

Transcend Massachusetts put on a Gender 101 presentation in collaboration with Transhealth for people to learn more about transgender and gender diverse individuals.

Donovan's Irish Pub

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Wednesday, Nov. 27 The Healys	Friday, Nov. 29 Alex Rohan	Saturday, Nov. 30 Baird Souls
Friday, Dec. 6 The Healys	Saturday, Dec. 7 Corner Boys	

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