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Wreaths appear on all the graves in this section.

Veterans, volunteers come together to lay wreaths



The Army wreath is laid.

AGAWAM – On Saturday, Dec. 13, Wreaths Across America Day was celebrated at Agawam Veterans Memorial Cemetery. Agawam is the region's only veterans cemetery. Volunteers and Veterans organizations from all over Western Massachusetts spent the morning laying wreaths on all the graves at the massive cemetery. The main sponsors of the event were King Gray Coach Lines and Six Flags New England, which is up the street from the cemetery. The event featured ceremonial wreath laying for the six branches of the military as well as the Merchant Marines, Prisoners of War, and the Gold Star Families. Volunteers are invited to assist with Wreaths Out Day on Wednesday, Jan. 15, 2026 at 8:30 a.m. to collect the wreaths.

RIGHT: Kaci Mack prepares to lay a wreath during the opening ceremony.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

SEE MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE 10

Council president declares she will be re-elected

By Gregory A. Scibelli
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HOLYOKE – Current Holyoke City Council President Tessa Murphy-Romboletti recently issued a press release declaring she had secured enough votes to be re-elected as council president when the legislative body convenes at their first meeting of 2026, which will follow the inauguration.



Council President Tessa Murphy-Romboletti

Murphy-Romboletti was elected two years ago by a very narrow margin, securing the presidency 7-6. The city council was largely divided during her first time in the leadership role, something she is hoping to change.

She is the first council president in some time to publicly declare that she has the votes for re-election, but feels confident in that decision.

"I don't think making the announcement is bold, rather, it sends a strong message of my intentions and helps set the expectations of continuity," Murphy-Romboletti said. "Securing the votes for president will allow me to expeditiously announce committee assignments in early January, allowing for subcommittees to continue meeting without delay. Historically com-

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City Council to elect a vice president

By Gregory A. Scibelli
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HOLYOKE – For the first time, the Holyoke City Council will elect a vice president after they made a rule change 18 months ago to establish the position within its ranks.

The change was made through the council rules and did not require a charter change, according to Council President Tessa Murphy-Romboletti, who recently announced she has secured the votes to have a second term as the president of the council (see related story).

For years, the council, which is the legislative body of the city government, has operated with a president only, with usually the eldest or most experienced member of the council serving as a backup to run a meeting if the council president was not

See VICE PRESIDENT, page 2

Second branch of Catie's Closet opens in local public schools

By Gregory A. Scibelli
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HOLYOKE – Last Wednesday, another ribbon was cut at Peck Middle School as the nonprofit organization Catie's Closet opened up a branch at the new building.

Holyoke already has a branch located at Lawrence School.

Jennifer Rowe, program director for Catie's Closet, said the program is focus on providing students what they need in a judgement-free environment and making sure they have access to things when they are needed.

"We have had a lot of success with the location at Lawrence," Rowe said. "And we thought there would be a good need for items for children at the middle school level."

Superintendent Anthony Soto agreed, saying he was pleased to see a branch of the closet open at Peck.

"We have had a great relationship with Catie's Closet," Soto said. "They

have helped out in a number of ways. Most recently, they were a big help connecting students with clothing and needs following the fires."

While the physical locations of Catie's Closet are located at Lawrence and Peck, Rowe said anyone who needs assistance with clothing and other needs can get in touch and they will be connected with help.

Holyoke Public Schools added more information about the new agreement for Peck.

Catie's Closet has been operating inside H.B. Lawrence Elementary since 2021, helping to remove barriers to learning for the school's 350 students and empowering them with dignity, comfort, and confidence.

Under this recently signed agreement, HPS will open additional Closets in

2026, with the long-term goal of establishing a Closet in all district schools in need. This expansion follows the school district's recent emergence from state receivership.

HPS Interim Superintendent Anthony Soto has worked closely with Catie's Closet to ensure the partnership will strengthen equity, support, and opportunities among all students. This commitment aligns with one of the district's primary priorities for the current school year: student belonging and well-being.

"We have seen how valuable Catie's Closet has been for our Lawrence Elementary students and their families over the past four years that it has been in operation there," Mr. Soto said. "We very much appreciate being able to open this new Catie's Closet for our Peck Middle School stu-



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Greater Holyoke Chamber of Commerce Director Lisa Toty delivers remarks and pledges to assist the closet in its mission.

dents. We know that having access to clothing and other basic necessities helps our students feel more confident and better prepared for school every day."

Since 2010, Catie's Closet has partnered with schools and social services agencies across

See CATIE'S CLOSET, page 6

Hibernians announce Irish Cultural award winners

The Presidents of the Ancient Order of Hibernians (Joe O'Connor) and Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians (Mary O'Connor) have announced the winners of the Hibernian Irish Cultural Awards for 2026 at Hamel's Banquet Hall in Holyoke on Thursday, Dec. 4. All Awardees will march in the Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade March 22, 2026.

The Highest Award given is the Christian Charity Award and Sister Betsy Sullivan SSJ was selected for her leadership with the Sisters. She will accept the award on behalf of the Sisters of St Joseph who for over 375 years have sought to improve the lives of the people of Hampden/Hampshire Counties and beyond. The Award will be presented at the Hibernian Annual Communion Breakfast March 15, 2026-venue to be determined. Past recipients of this prestigious Award include: Barbara Bernard, Sr. Kathleen Keating, SSJ, Father Mark Mengel, Monsignor David Joyce, Brenda Lamagdeleine, Jim Kelly, Owen Donohue,

Karen Blanchard, and Sister Margaret Mc Cleary SP.

The Man of The Year Award "Mr. Hibernian" 2026 will go to Hibernian Jordan Lemieux. The Award is given to that member who truly lives by the Hibernian Motto of Friendship, Unity and True Christian Charity. The Award will be given at the Hibernian Irish Night in Holyoke at the Log Cabin on Feb. 28, 2026. Also, The Woman of the Year Award "Ms. Hibernian" 2026 is Catherine Kit Collamore of Holyoke.

Sister Betsy is currently President of the SSJ Congregation. She is originally from Hungry Hill in Springfield, Mass. and both her parents come from County Kerry. After graduating from Cathedral High in 1962, she entered the Sisters of St Joseph and has given 63 years of service to the community as an educator, social worker, health care provider, health administrator, assisting the Sisters of Providence, and patient advocate. Moreover, Betsy's sister, Eileen joined the SSJ in 1967.

From a tiny group in Le Puy France in 1620, six



Submitted photo
Mr. Hibernian Jordan Lamieux, Ladies President Mary O'Connor, Christian Charity Award winner Sister Betsy Sullivan SSJ, Hibernian President Joe O'Connor, and Ms. Hibernian Catherine Collamore.

sisters decided to help the poor and this was the beginning of the congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph-ministering to the sick and teaching children. During the French Revolution, many members were suppressed for their religious beliefs and 5 were martyred at the guillo-

time. In 1880 the sisters came to Springfield (coincidentally the same year the AOH was chartered in Holyoke). The sisters continued good works and were founders of Our Lady of Elms College, assisted residents at York Street jail, assisted with reli-

gious ed., parish work health care, justice work, social work, helped the poor, and assisted immigrant families, and established a homework house.

The mission continues, "to unite neighbor with neighbor, with God, without distinction that all may be

one." The Hibernians salute the Sisters for their 375 years of service!

Jordan M. Lemieux, Mr. Hibernian 2026- Born in Holyoke in the Elmwood Section. He attended HCC and joined the Air Force/National Guard 1976-1989 and received a degree in Business Administration and Management. He was a 32year veteran of the Holyoke Fire Dept. retiring in 2014. He has been most valuable to the Hibernian Organization since 1998 assisting us with his technological talents. He loves spending time with his family and grandchildren.

Jordan rushed to 911 to help at Ground Zero with a crew from Western Mass. His job was to counsel New York firefighters.

Catherine Kit Collamore is the Financial Secretary for the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians Division 2. Kit has been active with the Ladies group and has created the Children's Christmas Party and assists with the Scholarship and Kates Kitchen.

Brain Health, Dementia Prevention Jan. 5

CHICOPEE - The Council on Aging will offer the program "Brain Health and Dementia Prevention" on Monday, Jan. 5 at 10 a.m. at RiverMills Center, located at 5 W. Main Street.

Join the Arbors for the presentation on brain health and dementia prevention. During this workshop, you will get an overview on Dementia, what it is and the different types of dementia. You will also learn if memory loss is a normal part of aging and what the difference is between normal forgetfulness and potential Alzheimer's forgetfulness. You will also learn about brain health and how to keep your mind sharp. You must register in advance at RiverMills or by calling 534-3698.

Museum announces return of 'Penguin Plunge' on Jan. 24

WESTFIELD - Amelia Park Children's Museum announces the return of the Penguin Plunge to be held on Saturday, Jan. 24, 2026, at 1 p.m. at Hampton Ponds State Park, Westfield MA. Check-in begins at 11:30 a.m. Proceeds from the Penguin Plunge will benefit the museum.

"The Penguin Plunge is a long-standing tradition in Westfield. We are very excited that we're able to host the Penguin Plunge in 2026," said Diane Chambers, Executive Director of the museum. "We want to make this event a Plunge for the record books!" A member of the founding board, Chambers, explains that interest in the museum is at an all-time high. "We are seeing a tremendous increase in the number of visitors we serve. Please join

us as we work to enhance our facility and programs to continue serving our community's growing needs." Through the years participants and sponsors of the Plunge have helped to raise over \$370,000 to support Amelia Park Children's Museum.

Plunge participants may join as an individual or as a team. Each participant pledges to raise a minimum of \$75 from friends and family and is encouraged to collect as many sponsors as possible. Those under the age of 18 will receive a registration discount of \$25.

There are monetary prizes of "cold hard cash" for the top three individuals or teams that raise the most money; first place - \$300, second place - \$200, third place - \$100.

A costume contest is

part of the fun, and participants are encouraged to come dressed creatively. There will be prizes for Best Individual Costume and Best Team Costume.

Register in advance online or at the Plunge on the day of the event from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Participants will receive a free 2026 Penguin Plunge T-shirt (while supplies last).

Sponsorship opportunities, registration and pledge forms are available via the museum website <https://www.ameliaparkmuseum.org/penguin-plunge> or can be picked up at the museum.

Don't want to jump in the water? No worries! Be a spectator and cheer on the brave participants. Hot chocolate, coffee, s'mores and other refreshments will be available to keep everyone warm.

RE-ELECTED, from page 1

mittee assignments are not announced until the third or even fourth week of January, which only delays our ability for subcommittees to meet and continue the important and time sensitive work that our city desperately needs us to get done. I know all too well that change can be hard for some folks in our city, but I will continue to serve in the same way I did in my last term - making the decisions that I believe keep the city's best interest at heart."

She said she is not concerned the vote will not go her way.

"I have spent the last month taking the time to meet with many councilors to discuss my intentions and ask for their votes for president," she said. "While certainly nothing is official until votes are cast, I feel confident that I have more than the seven votes needed to be president."

Murphy-Romboletti did not elaborate on the council members whose votes she has secured and did not say exactly how many votes she believed she had.

She did she was not aware of any other councilor or councilor-elect who is going after the presidency as well.

Murphy-Romboletti said a focus of her next term as president will be improving cohesiveness among the group, and planned to invite council on a retreat to help unite the body.

"While the concept of a City Council retreat may be

a new notion for many councilors, this is not a new concept," she said. "Many other municipalities host this kind of exercise, and I am actually following the lead of our School Committee and the Mayor's Department Heads who have done something similar. We are in the process of figuring out a date in late February or early March that works for as many Councilors as possible and ideally it will be hosted at a neutral location like the Holyoke Public Library.

"The purpose of the retreat is simple: to get to know one another, share our personal motivations for serving, and spend some time brainstorming goals and priorities for the term ahead. My hope is that this will help set a strong, collaborative foundation as we begin our work together.

She said the retreat will be posted to the public because it will be a gathering of potentially the majority of the council, constituting a quorum and thus invoking the rules of the Open Meeting Law. "As I always do with my decisions, I have done my research on how other public bodies are able to host similar retreats that fully adhere to the Open Meeting Law," Murphy-Romboletti said. "This means the agenda will be posted to the public, we will stick to the topics listed in the agenda, and while the retreat will not be recorded, it will be open to the public to attend if they so choose."



Luke Matthew Sabourin

March 18, 2025

Parents: Matthew and Amanda Sabourin, Belchertown
Grandparents: Allan and Joanne Beauregard, Belchertown
Diane Sabourin, Chicopee
Trish Sabourin and the late Dave Sabourin, Holyoke
Great Grandmother: GiGi, Holyoke



Wesley George LaPlante

December 21, 2024

Parents: Krysta and Giles LaPlante, Belchertown
Sibling: Hayden Theresa LaPlante
Grandparents: Karin and George Howard, Belchertown
Judy and David LaPlante, Granby
Carol and Joseph Remillard, Belchertown

VICE PRESIDENT, from page 1

otherwise available.

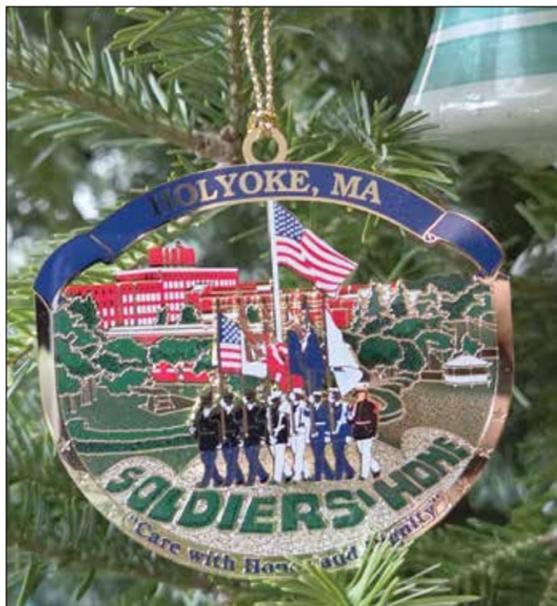
Murphy-Romboletti is looking forward to having a vice president to work with and supported having one.

"We discussed this topic at length publicly in the Council's Charter and Rules subcommittee, of which I have been a member of for the last four years," she said. "The rule change was approved by the full council in June of 2024. There is no need for a charter change as this is a parliamentary position that is empowered to run the meeting when the president is absent or has to recuse themselves. I've always been of the opinion that we can always change the rule if we find a vice

president is not needed or does not work well for the body."

While Murphy-Romboletti has been vocal about seeking another term as president, she says no one on the council has specifically declared taking a run at the new vice president position. "I have heard some councilors express interest," she said. "I'm not really sure who it will be, but we do have a lot of councilors who would do a great job filling that role."

The first council vice president will be elected when the council convenes following the swearing-in ceremony in early January.



The Greater Holyoke Chamber of Commerce is presenting an ornament series.

Chamber releases 'Holyoke Memories' Commemorative Ornament Series

Series features four designs

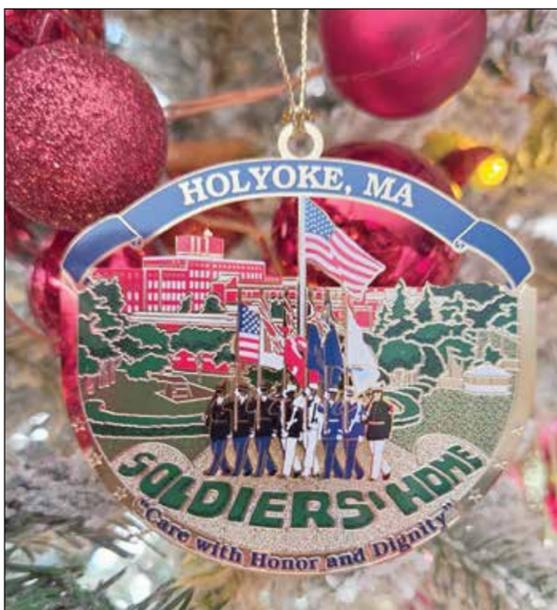
HOLYOKE – The Greater Holyoke Chamber of Commerce is proud to present a revitalization of “Holyoke Memories,” a commemorative ornament series dedicated to celebrating the city’s rich history and iconic landmarks. This meaningful collection invites residents and enthusiasts to honor Holyoke’s distinctive heritage through cherished local symbols.

The series features four intricately designed ornaments, each representing a significant piece of the city’s past. The collection includes tributes to the beloved Mountain Park, the historic Kenilworth Castle, the celebrated St. Patrick’s Day Road Race and the venerable Soldier’s Home. Please note: inventory for both Mountain Park and St. Patrick’s Day Road Race ornaments is limited, which means availability of the overall series is limited

as well. Each ornament serves as a miniature keepsake of these important local institutions.

This initiative not only offers beautiful decorations but also acts as a means of preserving and sharing the stories that have shaped the Holyoke community for generations. The “Holyoke Memories” ornament series is now available for purchase, both online and at the Holyoke Farmers’ Market, located at the Holyoke Council on Aging, Senior Center every Tuesday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Community members can choose to order ornaments online for convenient pick-up at the market or opt for shipping, with an additional fee applied for delivery. This collection presents a wonderful opportunity to own a piece of local history or to share civic pride with others through a thoughtful gift.

All four ornaments can be viewed and purchased online through the Holyoke



Submitted photos

Chamber’s official shop. To explore the collection and secure these timeless keepsakes, please visit Greater

Holyoke Chamber Store <https://holyokechamber.square.site/>

HCC opens registration for Spring 2026 noncredit classes

HOLYOKE — Holyoke Community College has opened registration for its Spring 2026 catalog of non-credit personal enrichment and professional development classes.

The spring calendar begins Jan. 12, with individual classes running on different schedules throughout the semester.

New next semester is a series of classes for seniors focused on basic technology. Each one-hour class is available for just \$20 and cover a wide range of sub-

jects, including Windows 11, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint, Canva (for graphic design), Artificial Intelligence, Zoom, smartphone use (Android or iPhone), managing and editing photos, document storage, web browsers, and computer scams.

Other classes for spring include cooking (Caribbean, charcuterie, Puerto Rican, Southern), wine tasting (winter reds, Tuscany, New Zealand, Rose, summer wines), sewing (for begin-

ners), sewing (machine), watercolor painting, acrylic painting, drawing, piano, conversational French, conversational Spanish, music technology, voiceover coaching, financial literacy, retirement planning, K-12 education (professional development), writing and publishing (fiction, nonfiction, screenwriting, short stories, query letters, mysteries, travel, blogs), ChatGPT, how to launch a pet-sitting and dog-walking business, and Quickbooks.

Most classes meet in

the Kittredge Center for Business and Workforce Development on the main HCC campus, 303 Homestead Ave. Cooking and wine-tasting classes meet at the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute, 164 Race St. Some classes meet over Zoom.

To see complete spring course listings and schedules, or to register, please visit hcc.edu/bcs.

More classes will be added as spring approaches.

NAMI holding calendar raffle fundraiser

HOLYOKE – NAMI-WM is holding a calendar raffle fundraiser for February 2026. Participants will pay \$15 for a chance to win prizes awarded each day of the month. These prizes include gift cards to various local businesses, and cash prizes.

Through our fundrais-

ing, we are able to raise awareness and provide essential education, advocacy, support groups and programs throughout your Western Mass area.

Mental health support and awareness has become an increasingly important issue with all of the changes in the world. Our dedication

and commitment to mental health awareness and support within our communities is vital. Our Board of Directors, along with our dedicated staff, colleagues and volunteers work together with an ongoing goal to get our services, advocacy and assistance out into the community.



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Mixed Media Exhibit coming to Wistariahurst

HOLYOKE – Wistariahurst Museum is excited to announce the upcoming exhibit *Metamorphosis*, opening Jan. 6, 2026. This exhibit features artists who have attended one or more of the artist sessions held at Wistariahurst Museum. These sessions, led by artist and volunteer Linda Devine, serve as a way for local artists to network, share their work with one another, and develop as artists. The artist sessions have been held monthly since January of 2025, and the group of artists has strengthened their skills each session. To celebrate the growth these artists have made over the past year, they will be exhibiting their work in Wistariahurst’s gallery. *Metamorphosis* has a theme of change, which each artist has interpreted their own way through several mediums, from paint-

ing and sculpture, to writing. Artists express themes of personal change, changes in nature, fashion, culture, and more.

Artists featured in this exhibit include J. Arthur Birth, Natasha Colon Ortiz, Linda Devine, Lydia E Freytes Rodriguez, Emily Munsell, Maureen Naff, Catalina Rojas, Whit Kilpatrick Russell, Carolyn Ruzsala, Deborah Skelly, Darlene Swiszc, Chuck Collins, and Mike Worden.

The opening reception of *Metamorphosis* will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 6, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Wistariahurst is an artist-friendly space that encourages creativity and supports the growth of this region’s artists. Open Gallery Hours will be held from Jan. 6 through Feb. 24 on Mondays (10 a.m. to 2 p.m.) and Tuesdays (4:30 to 6:30 p.m.), which will also be free and open to the public.

Cradles to Crayons places local drop box

HOLYOKE – While many children head out to sled or build a snowman with friends, others face clothing insecurity and lack access to coats, warm clothing layers, gloves, and boots to stay warm during these weather extremes.

Cradles to Crayons needs winter weather gear. Can you help us by sharing an urgent plea with your audience?

Cradles to Crayons Gear Up for Winter initiative aims to provide 50,000 coats to children living in low-income and homeless situations across Massachusetts so they can stay warm and feel prepared for the winter weather.

to the limits. Cradles to Crayons Gear Up for Winter will help provide warm clothing like coats, boots, and hats so local families have one less expense to worry about,” she added.

Thousands of families rely on Cradles to Crayons to keep their kids warm during New England’s harsh winter weather. This need includes clothing items, boots, hats, gloves, and coats. We need more donations to meet the growing need across Massachusetts this year.

Cradles to Crayons has donation drop box locations in your area where we accept new or gently used clothing items:

- Old Navy store in Holyoke- 50 Holyoke Street Holyoke, MA
- Old Navy store in Hadley- 335 Russell Street Hadley, MA
- Lander Grinspoon Elementary School- 257 Prospect St Northampton, MA

Plow contractors wanted

HOLYOKE – With winter nearing, the Department of Public Works is seeking individuals to assist city plow operators in the 2025-2026 winter season. Qualified individuals with the proper equipment are encouraged to apply in person at: DPW, 63 Canal Street, Holyoke



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Why won't Social Security give me my benefits?

Dear Rusty:

I called the Social Security office, as well as went with my husband when he went to collect his Social Security. Because I work full-time at about \$800/week, they said I could not file for my Social Security. Yet I seem to read articles all the time about people doing so.

My husband just filed for his benefits and is now collecting them. Out of the two of us, his Social Security will be larger. Please advise me.

Signed: Wanting my Benefits

Dear Wanting my Benefits:

If you have not yet reached your SS Full Retirement Age and you are working full time, you are likely being affected by Social Security's Annual Earnings Test, which limits how much you can earn while collecting Social Security prior to your FRA. Your FRA is somewhere between 66 and 67, depending on when you were born. The annual earnings limit for those collecting SS benefits prior to FRA in 2025 is \$23,400 (changes yearly) and, if that is exceeded, Social Security will take away benefits equal to \$1 for every \$2 you are over the limit. If you applied for your benefits and are still working, and were denied, it's likely because Social Security determined that your current annual earnings considerably exceed the earnings limit and, thus, you cannot collect benefits. That's because the penalty for exceeding the limit would be more than your benefit amount.

FYI, the earnings limit will go away when you reach your full retirement age so, after FRA, you can claim your benefits even if you are still working. Or if you stop working before your FRA you can collect your SS benefits at that time.

None of this means you are losing money, because your monthly SS payment will continue to grow until you later claim

(e.g., after you stop working, or only work part-time), or until you reach 70 years of age. When you later claim, your monthly benefit will be higher and, depending on your longevity, you may recover what you didn't get now because you are working. And that includes both your own SS retirement benefit and any spousal boost you may be entitled to from your husband.

So, my suggestion is this: as long as you are working full time and exceeding Social Security's annual earnings limit, continue to wait to claim your Social Security. Then, when you reach your full retirement age – again, between 66 and 67, depending on the year you were born or if you stop working before that, go ahead and apply for Social Security again.

At that time, your application will be approved, and you will be awarded your own earned SS retirement amount plus any additional amount you may be due as your husband's spouse. To be entitled to a spousal boost from your husband, your own FRA entitlement must be less than 50% of your husband's FRA entitlement. But the amount you get will be reduced if you claim before your full retirement age.

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.

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 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*.



Editorial

Yes, Virginia, There is a Santa Claus

By Francis P. Church in 1897

Dear Editor,

I am 8 years old. Some of my little friends say that there is no Santa Claus. Papa says "If you see it in the Sun, it is so." Please tell me the truth, is there a Santa Claus?

Virginia

Your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except what they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds.

All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's, are little. In this great universe of ours, man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect, as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as

certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to our life its highest beauty and joy.

Alas! How dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus! It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

Not believe in Santa Claus? You might as well not believe in fairies! You might get your Papa to hire men to watch all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if they did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove?

Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see.

Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders that are unseen and unseeable in the world.

You tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, or even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived, could tear apart. Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernatural beauty and glory beyond.

Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else as real and abiding.

No Santa Claus? Thank God he lives and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, maybe 10 times 10,000 years from now, he will continue to make glad the hearts of children.

Guest Column

Iconic Christmas tree benefits Habitat for Humanity

The season of giving is here and in true community spirit, many will say no one does Christmas quite like New York City or Habitat for Humanity. Each year, a Norway Spruce is donated, decorated, and displayed outside of Rockefeller Center in Manhattan. After the tree is taken down in the New Year, the trunk is milled into lumber and donated to Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI) where it will be used for a future build.

The partnership between Real Estate Company Tishman Speyer, which owns and operates Rockefeller Center, and HFHI formed in 2007. The collaboration inspired "The Carpenter's Gift," by David Rubel, a children's book that follows the journey of a young boy who wished for a decent home and how it comes true in an unexpected way. Books are available for \$10 each at Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity (GSHFH) by calling (413) 739-5503.

"The heartwarming tale told in 'The Carpenter's Gift' brings together – through beautiful illustrations and a moving, multi-generational story – two great traditions: the Rockefeller Center tree and the neighbor-helping-neighbor program of Habitat for Humanity," said late President James "Jimmy" Carter in a previous interview. "The tree annually brightens the Christmas season for millions who see it. Habitat houses brighten the

lives of families all over the world – for those who live in them and those who build them."

Since 2007, trees have been harvested from and used in Mid-Atlantic and New England states, with the exception of the first tree. That spruce came from Connecticut, and its lumber was used in Mississippi.

This year's Norway Spruce hails from East Greenbush, a suburb of Albany, New York. It's 74 feet tall, 45 feet wide, and weighs roughly 11 tons.

The tree is topped with more than 50,000 multi-colored lights and 5 miles of wire wrapped around it. A three-dimensional star, designed by architect Daniel Libeskind in 2018, is perched on top. The star weighs approximately 900 pounds, has 70 spikes, and is covered in 3 million crystals.

"That's so cool," said Trina Winans, Greater Springfield Habitat volunteer and supporter.

GSHFH intern Nate Shlosser agreed.

"That is a very kind and generous thing," he said. "I'm very thankful for it because it means another family will have the wood needed for a home."

The tree caught Rockefeller Center head gardener Erik Pauze's attention after a picture of the spruce reached him via a Rockefeller Center security supervisor. Erik visited the tree at Judy Russ's family property in East Greenbush.



"As soon as I saw it, I knew it was perfect," Erik said.

Erik returned to the Russ property several times to water and care for the tree.

The spruce arrived at Rockefeller Center on Nov. 8. The 2025 Rockefeller Center Christmas tree is lit daily from 5am to midnight until mid-January 2026 when it's turned off at 10pm. There are a few exceptions. On Christmas Day, the tree is lit for 24 hours. On New Year's Eve, it is lit from 5am to 9pm.

TEAM



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Turning clutter into visual peace this holiday season

By Emily-Rose Pappas
Staff Writer
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BELCHERTOWN – With the holidays coming up and gifts are purchased for friends and family, its important to also consider how much room you have for these new items in your homes. Oftentimes, the idea of decluttering or organizing a home can be daunting or stressful, especially when one does not know where to begin.

For Allegra Haupt, decluttering became a source of real peace as she looked at the reduction of clutter as a reduction of visible stressors

“With the holidays approaching, and the potential onslaught of new material items in the house, there is often a frenzied tucking away of things and preparing guest rooms. Fine. Don’t sweat it or worry about the “big decluttering.” Instead, and more importantly, focus on ‘soul decluttering.’ Take a moment to sit down in the room that your family or guests will be inhabiting,” said Haupt.

Paying attention to one’s physical environment is important, as it allows you to consider your space and what you already have, and how it can ultimately affect your inward peace and, for many,

their anxiety or other mental health-related struggles.

Haupt explained that the positioning of an object can portray a message to the people who see it, right down to the placement of a vase of flowers, a childhood toy, or something else. She took this, and her experiences growing up in a chaotic environment to create a space that creates peace.

And thus came an inspiration to begin her own business that teaches people how to organize and declutter spaces, called Creating Joyful Spaces.

“As I got older, I continued to pay attention to physical environments and beauty, and the ways in which many people have dreams, yet are stuck in the process of creating spaces that reflect them,” said Haupt. “I started the business because I know that I can help other people transform their spaces, and doing so brings me tremendous joy.”

Haupt works in a Montessori classroom, and also as a campus chaplain, and through her time in college, where she learned in her anthropology class, which focused on setting up physical spaces to maximize human interactions, and how to show the most information with the least amount of



visual clutter. Decluttering became a way for her to help people.

“It is a means to an end, and the end is Joy and Lightness. What I really love is people. As we work together to remove layers of “stuff,” my hope is that individuals

find space to become ‘their truest selves.’ The work of taking things away and then highlighting the important items often allows people to see themselves more clearly,” said Haupt.

While not all of the stuff in your home is considered

clutter, Haupt’s first step to any decluttering journey is to “step into a room in your house and consider how you feel,” and decide if that item still serves you, whether for aesthetics, usefulness, or for the memories it holds. Decluttering can be hard for these reasons, but as you remove it, Haupt encourages people to think of how it will make someone else feel.

Following Marie Kondo, a well-known author teaching people how to declutter, starting with categories makes decluttering less daunting and a lot easier. Clothing is the easiest to declutter, as we can easily remove clothes that no longer fit us. Special items can be dealt with separately.

“Also, categories aside, if a specific pile is really weighing on you, start there. The energy you will gain from dealing with it will likely fuel more decluttering,” said Haupt.

On your decluttering journey, you may even find repeats of items like a random fifth set of nail clippers. Whatever you find, decluttering your home and living simply can greatly improve your life and mental health.

“I strongly believe that a simpler life, in which we spend less time managing ‘stuff’ and more time enjoying people, leads to greater

happiness. The time spent – and the stress involved – getting the house ready for guests could actually be spent with friends,” said Haupt.

Decluttering is a freeing process that changes the focus on the items in your home from a clutter point of view to something that reflects you as a person, and your inner thoughts. A tidy space can help a racing mind.

“I have never had anyone say, “I regret doing that project.” Most say the work has continued to have very significant ramifications: a feeling of lightness, the ability to make decisions, decreased family stress, and energy and motivation to continue the work,” said Haupt.

You can learn more about her business, Creating Joyful Spaces, at www.creatingjoyfulspaces.com, where she teaches people how to beautify, downsize, and stage their homes, supporting them in whatever project they are undertaking.

Consider looking at decluttering this season and consider it alongside the real meaning of the holiday season: gratefulness and time meant to be spent with loved ones, not how much more “stuff” you may receive or gift.

Baystate Health announces Voluntary Separation Program to support transformation efforts

SPRINGFIELD – Baystate Health is committed to delivering exceptional care to western Massachusetts while strengthening our long-term stability. Over the past year, our collective transformation work has strengthened Baystate Health in meaningful ways, allowing us to reinvest in our people, technology, and patient care. Thanks to these efforts, we’ve made important progress, and we must now sustain our momentum through continued financial transformation.

Like many health systems nationwide, we’ve faced

significant financial pressures from rising labor costs, inflation, and reimbursement challenges. Addressing these realities is essential to continue investing in our people, services, and facilities. As we plan for our future, we face new challenges, including external pressures such as the One Big Beautiful Bill, which is creating additional headwinds for health systems across the country.

In light of these factors, we are taking proactive steps to position Baystate Health for long-term stability and success by introducing a Voluntary Separation

Program across Baystate Health and its subsidiaries, including Health New England. This program offers eligible employees in non-direct patient care areas the option to voluntarily separate with financial support, helping us responsibly manage costs and align our workforce with future needs. We continue to significantly recruit and hire physicians, Advanced Practice Providers and bedside caregivers to support the health needs of our communities.

This voluntary program is designed to minimize the need for other workforce

reductions. We recognize how personal this decision is and are approaching it with empathy, respect, and transparency. We’re committed to providing clear communication and resources to support

employees during this transition.

This initiative is part of Baystate Health’s broader multi-year transformation to achieve operational excellence, strengthen our finan-

cial foundation, and ensure we can continue our mission: improving the health of our communities every day, with quality and compassion.

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CLUES ACROSS	38. Evil spirit	CLUES DOWN	34. Chemical ring
1. Light cavalry	39. Monetary units	1. Two-toed sloth	36. The bill in a restaurant
5. Coconut palms	40. Partner to cheese	2. Fat from a pig's abdomen	37. Car mechanics group
10. Rounded knob	41. About Sun	3. Romanian city	38. One-time presidential candidate Dole
14. Central Japan city	42. Group of like-minded people	4. Specifies	40. Health care for the aged
15. Sandwiches	43. After B	5. Rounded, glaciated valley	41. Wise persons
16. Shape produced by a curve	44. Seaside room	6. Spoke	43. Passage with access at one end
17. Ancient region in modern-day Syria	45. Recipe measurement	7. Collection of sacred books	44. Make a wound
18. French modernist painter	46. Partly digested food	8. Extravagantly theatrical	46. America's spies
19. Grandmother	47. Flat-faced dog	9. Very fast airplane	47. Roof of the mouth
20. Mammary gland of cattle	48. People of southern Africa	10. Forearm bones	49. Plants of the lily family
22. Rocky peak	49. Salts	11. Ancient kingdom	50. Pinkish-red color
23. Secret plan	52. Beard lichens	12. Legitimate: ___ fide	51. Vaccine developer
24. Songs to one's lover	55. Sanders is one	13. Semitransparent gemstone	52. Mottled citrus fruit
27. More (Spanish)	56. Fencing sword	21. Counsels	53. A place to store garden tools
30. Father	60. Ethnic group of Albania	23. Head honcho	54. Rare goose native to Hawaii
31. Chinese principle underlying the universe	61. Metric weight unit	25. Cool!	57. Popular Hollywood pig
32. Ballplayer's accessory	63. Italian seaport	26. Touch lightly	58. Musician Clapton
35. Together	64. Longtime late night host	27. Extract money via taxation	59. A move exposing one to danger
37. A person's brother or sister	65. Extremely angry	28. Dyes	61. Historic Spanish soldier
	66. Miami mascot	29. Clinging sweetness	62. CNN's founder
	67. Mid-month day	32. Sodas	
	68. Marked for omission	33. Coastal village in Guam	
	69. Body part		

CROSSWORD ANSWER on page 8

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The Holyoke Sun • DECEMBER 26, 2025 • 5

Holiday meals and protecting your pets

By Nancy Alperson
Correspondent

I was pretty excited to spend Thanksgiving with good friends. We've known each other since our oldest kids were babies. For as long we have known them, my house was the one that had all of the pets, and their house was pet-free and fur-free. That is until their kids grew up. Then they got a very cute, perfectly-sized, little goldendoodle. This year however that goldendoodle is still cute and perfectly-sized but no longer little. In fact, her perfect height placed her nose at exactly the same height as the tables. Of course we were sitting at the main table, so she could not walk up to that without us noticing. However, she was able to approach the table with cheese and crackers that we thought were human snacks but that she thought were dog snacks. Although less perfectly placed for her height, standing on her hind limbs also placed the counters that were covered in tasty dishes and the sink with morsels of leftovers within her reach as well. She thus demonstrated an interest in pursuing human food that our friends had previously not seen.

The dog has always been sweet and quiet before this Thanksgiving, but she also demonstrated other new behaviors that led our friends

to believe she must be sick. She was barking at everyone and cowering.

No matter how much we love the holiday season, it can be stressful. If you think it is just you, go on pretty much any online forum about families or flip through any magazine at the grocery store, and you will see articles or posts about holiday stress. There's a lot of hustle and bustle. There are different foods and a much larger quantity of them. There are packages coming in from online stores. On top of it, there may be guests coming to your house. If humans find it stressful, and we know what is happening and why, it's not that surprising that our pets may find it stressful too. In addition, depending on your household's holiday traditions, there may even be a large wooden object that looks and smells like the same tree that dogs would normally pee on in the yard.

So how do we help a dog who is no longer a tiny puppy sleeping through her first holiday season but is now struggling with the stress and responsibilities that come with new sensations, temptations, and unexpected guests? There's no one magic answer, but following your pets' normal routines can be one of the best ways to keep their behaviors closer to being routine. Make sure that you are feeding your pets on their

regular schedules. Make sure water is available. Give them their regular potty breaks. If you have a cat make sure they have access to their litterbox.

There are also several tricks that may not be routine. If you know you are going to have guests over and you have a young energetic dog, make sure the dog gets extra exercise before your guests arrive. Invest in some good toys like Kongs or puzzle toys that will keep them distracted for a little while. If sounds like doorbells set your dog or cat off, ask your guests to send you a text when they get there. You may also want to put a note on your door to remind them. If you were to walk by a counter with free candy, would you stop and take some? I certainly would. Counters and tables with food are the pet equivalent of a free candy counter. Your life will be much easier if those dishes are put up high and away from nose level.

Some people want to keep their pets away from their guests, particularly if they feel like a pet will find the company stressful. Don't set your dog up for failure. Find a quiet room that is either dog-proof or has their crate. The idea is to let them stay in a room that is just theirs. Make this room off-limits to guests. A white noisemaker can also help protect the room and therefor

your pet from the stressful sounds coming from the rest of the house. There are products that can help keep pets calm, like Feliway for cats and Adaptil for dogs. There are also Thundershirts, which are special shirts that basically make your pets feel like they are getting a big hug.

Some people do want their pets to interact with their guests. If this is what you want, don't overwhelm your pet with too many people at once. Think about how you feel when you walk into a crowded room. It can be overwhelming and scary. That can also be the case for pets. Have one or two people meet your pet at once. If your pet is good with receiving treats, meaning they don't snap at human fingers, consider providing your guests with some treats to help jumpstart their friendship with your pet. Just make sure your pet only ends up getting a small number of treats.

Some people want their dogs with them the whole time. That's fair as well, but it is important to remember that the dog will not magically know how you expect them to behave. For example, if you want your dog to stay snuggled at your feet, particularly when surrounded by strange people and tasty-smelling foods, you will probably need to work with a dog trainer. A dog trainer can help you set and



Submitted photo

A silly dog stealing some pizza.

achieve appropriate goals with your dog. Your vet may have some recommendations for dog trainers in your area.

Even when you do everything right, some pets are just more stressed out than others, just like some people are more anxious than others. If your pet seems particularly prone to anxiety, you may want to find out from your vet whether your pet is a candidate for medication to handle stressful events.

Just like people can find holidays a mixture of good food, company and stress so can our pets. Make sure to plan ahead and think about how you want your pets to participate in the holidays with you this season.

Dr. Nancy Alperson is a small animal veterinarian and Belchertown Veterinary Hospital in MA. She sees dogs, cats, birds, reptiles and small exotic companion mammals. She and her husband live with many pets including two golden retrievers who are champions at counter surfing and raiding the garbage can if given the chance.

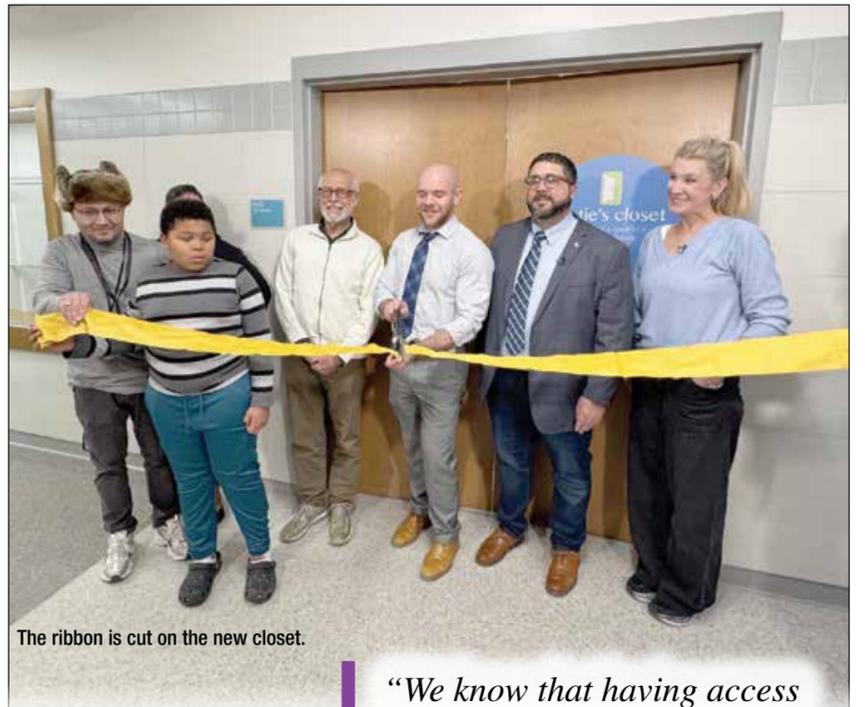
Susan Stevens-Blackshear is a certified veterinary technician at VCA Plainfield in CT. She has a special interest in behavior cases. She and her husband also own a variety of pets including a cat named Mr. Peeps who is always delighted to partake in any tasty dishes.



Multiple sizes of clothing are available for males and females.



Superintendent Anthony Soto speaks on the opening.



The ribbon is cut on the new closet.

“We know that having access to clothing and other basic necessities helps our students feel more confident and better prepared for school every day.”

- Supt. Anthony Soto

CATIE'S CLOSET, from page 1

Massachusetts and New Hampshire to help thousands of students each year. The organization sets up free spaces inside schools where students can shop for clothing, toiletries, and other

essentials in a private, judgment-free setting. Its expansion into Western Massachusetts began in 2023, with the opening of its third Distribution Center in East Longmeadow.

“We are honored to partner with Holyoke Public Schools at such a piv-

otal time,” said Mickey Cockrell, CEO and co-founder of Catie's Closet. “Our valued partnership will give thousands of Holyoke students greater access to the essentials they need to thrive in school and in life.”



One of the hallmarks of the closet is providing toiletries and other needs for students.



Jennifer Rowe, program director for Catie's Closet, talks about the new closet at Peck.



Clothing is provided by donors and is gently used or better.

SPORTS

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Knights fall at home to Putnam

AT RIGHT: Cosmo Bond flies to get a layup.



Michael Medina goes around an opponent for a shot.



Nayan Tabin eyes the hoop for a shot.



Georlee Aponte fights to get a shot off.



Jackon Zorilla goes for the easy layup.



Brian Thomas reaches up for the rebound.

HOLYOKE – Last Thursday night, Holyoke High School boys basketball fell to 1-1 with a 56-48 loss against Putnam Vocational. In the loss, Michael Medina had 16 points to lead Holyoke. Georlee Aponte had 12 points and Julian Fasoli added 10 points. Holyoke hopes to rebound on Dec. 29 when the Knights face Chicopee Comprehensive at 5:30 p.m.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

AT RIGHT: Julian Fasoli gets around and opponent and drives to the hoop.



Adrian Gutierrez-Martin races in the freestyle event.



Ibrahim Salloum goes for the win in the individual medley.



Maeve Healy races in the 200 freestyle.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com



Steven Plotniak competes in the 200 freestyle.

Swim teams swept by Comp



Michael Goudreault goes for the win in the 100 fly.

CHICOPEE – Last Tuesday at Chicopee Comprehensive High School, Holyoke High School swimming, which co-ops with South Hadley and Granby, was swept by the home team. The girls were defeated 90-32 while the boys fell 124-34. In the girls meet, Maeve Healy did get a win in the 200 freestyle. Kiersten St. Lawrence won both the 100 freestyle and 50 freestyle. In the boys meet, Holyoke's only winner was Steven Plotniak in the 200 freestyle.

Offense start slow, Knights can't catch Renaissance

HOLYOKE – Last Friday evening, Holyoke High School girls basketball fell to Renaissance 62-46. The Knights got off to a slow start, falling behind 12-3 after one quarter. Holyoke played better in the second half, but the deficit was too great to come all the way back.

For Holyoke, Juliana Pirela led the Knights with 24 points, including four 3-pointers. The Knights also got seven points each from Genesis Rivera and Jaelyn Colon. Holyoke faced Comp earlier this week and next will host Agawam on Tuesday, Dec. 30 at 7 p.m.

T-Birds inch closer to .500 with win at Lehigh

ALLENTOWN, PA – The Springfield Thunderbirds (8-11-3-2) rode yet another phenomenal night of goaltending and special teams to a 3-1 win over the Lehigh Valley Phantoms (13-10-1-2) last Wednesday night inside PPL Center. In a first period devoid of scoring on 13 combined shots, Vadim Zherenko carried over momentum from

his phenomenal outing 10 nights earlier in Providence with eight first-period denials, including two on a Phantoms power play.

Newest T-Bird Troy Murray quickly warmed himself up to his teammates and fans, as the 28-year-old



dropped the gloves with Sawyer Boulton on the first shift of his AHL career following more than 200 professional games across three leagues before his T-Birds debut on Wednesday. Springfield's penalty kill, which has operated

better than any other road PK in the AHL, continued its remarkable run with a second-period clinic. The T-Birds killed off three disadvantages, and on the third of those, Chris Wagner added his second shorthanded goal of the season, as he circled Aleksei Kolosov's net and stuffed a wraparound home

See T-BIRDS, page 8

Offense gets going early in Railers win over Admirals

WORCESTER – Although they are very much alive in the ECCHL's North Division playoff race, they were — for one night anyway — the late Worcester Railers.

They beat the Norfolk Admirals 6-2 last Wednesday and scored a goal in the closing seconds of all three periods. Worcester got one with two seconds left in the first, 10 seconds go to in the second and 2.1 ticks remaining in the game.

Worcester's goals were all scored by different players. Ten different players had points. Parker Gahegan continued his wonderful play in net by stopping 31 shots. That included 16 of 17 in the second period when Norfolk desperately tried to get back into a game it trailed, 4-0, after 20 minutes.

That's right. The Railers had a 4-0 lead going into the second period. That had happened only once before in team history, on Jan. 26, 2019 here, in what became a 5-1 victory over Adirondack.

Prior to this game Worcester had spent most of its first periods in survival mode, especially at the DCU

Center.

"I think we really tried to channel our road type of mentality," coach Nick Tuzzolino said. "When you get into this amount of games you start pre-scouting yourself and I was pre-scouting us I'd probably say 'pounce on 'em in the first period. "That seems to be their weakness."

Riley Ginnell, Drew Callin, Anthony Repaci and Michael Suda scored the first period goals. Matt DeMelis got one in the second period, Gleb Veremyev in the third.

Drew Callin was 1-2-3. Suda was and Repaci were both 1-1-2 and Anthony Callin had two assists.

Jack O'Leary scored both Norfolk goals. The Railers did something unusual to achieve the triumph. They beat Norfolk goaltender Isaac Poulter, a very good one just down from the American Hockey League. Prior to Friday night Poulter had put together a streak during which he allowed the Railers to score just two goals in three full games.

The first period goals were scored by, in order, Ginnell, Drew Callin, Repaci

and Suda.

Ginnell converted a 2 on 1 break with a short side wrist shot from the left circle at 5:39. Drew Callin deflected home a shot by his brother at 10:11, Repaci took advantage of a Norfolk turnover and sizzled a wrist shot past Poulter at 12:26, then Suda blasted a low shot home from 55 feet away with just two seconds left in the period.

Norfolk got one back at 8:10 of the second period as the teams traded 2 on 1 breaks. Worcester's came first and when Ross Mitton came down the right side missed to the far post on a wrist shot, that set up the Admirals' 2 on 1. O'Leary scored at 8:10.

The Admirals were all over the Railers for most of the period. Just when it looked like Worcester would escape with the 4-1 lead, DeMelis extended his goals streak to four by putting a 20-footer past Poulter at 19:50 and the Railers were up by four again.

Both teams had someone in the penalty box so it was a 4 on 4 goal.

T-BIRDS, from page 7

at 15:57 of the middle period, making it a 1-0 game heading into the final frame.

Zherenko kept up his end of the bargain with nine more stops in the second to make it a two-period total of 17 denials against the Phantom attack.

The Phantoms did not stay quiet forever, though, as Alex Bump ripped a perfectly placed shot over Zherenko's glove hand at 3:19 of the third, tying the score, 1-1.

However, the Thunderbirds once again proved they were not ruffled, and just 1:58 later, moments after Garrett Wilson committed a delay of game minor for clearing the puck over the glass, Alek Kaskimaki shuffled a rebound past Kolosov following an initial try by Calle Rosen. The second-year Finn's fifth goal of the season restored the Springfield lead, 2-1.

The penalty killers stiffened one more time, completing a perfect 5-for-5 night with a man down,

and with the Phantoms' net empty in the final minute, Michael Buchinger lobbed a clear all the way down and into the yawning cage to put the nail in the coffin.

Zherenko completed another magnificent performance with 23 stops to secure the victory. Springfield has now earned points in nine of the last 10 games, and the club has begun this five-game road trip with three consecutive triumphs.



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.
HD23P2086PM
In the Interests of:
Janat D Langevin
Of: Holyoke, MA
RESPONDENT
Incapacitated Person/
Protected Person
CITATION GIVING NOTICE
OF PETITION TO EXPAND
THE POWERS OF
A CONSERVATOR**

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by **Roger Langevin** of Holyoke, MA in the above captioned matter requesting that the court:

Expand the powers of a

Conservator of the Respondent.

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

You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 a.m. on the return date of **01/16/2026**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your

objection within 30 days after the return date.

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

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara M. Hyland, First Justice of this Court.
Date: December 16, 2025
Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
12/26/2025

Rogers recognized by MIAA

FRANKLIN – The MIAA recognized 21 game officials from across the state as the 2024-2025 Game Officials of the Year during a celebratory banquet held Monday, Dec. 15 at the Doubletree Milford.

The MIAA annually recognizes the best game officials from the over 5,000 officials in Massachusetts as nominated by their peers. The following individuals were nominated and ultimately selected as the best in their craft:

Among those recognized was longtime umpire Andrew Rogers from South Hadley. Rogers is also the umpire assignor for Western Mass. high school baseball and multiple adult leagues as well as American Legion summer baseball.

New Year Celebration Dinner at RiverMills Center

CHICOPEE - The Council on Aging will host a New Year Celebration Dinner on Thursday, Jan. 8 at 5 p.m. at RiverMills Center, located at 5 W. Main Street.

Join your friends at RiverMills to celebrate the new year! Enjoy a delicious Pot Roast dinner while listening to a performance by Michelle Brooks-Thompson, Grammy nominated performer and finalist on NBC's "The Voice" Beer, wine and non-alcoholic beverages will be available for purchase. Registration for this event is now open. You must purchase tickets in advance and RiverMills Center.

Baystate Wing Hospital recognized on national Forbes' Top Hospitals list

PALMER - Baystate Health is proud to announce that Baystate Wing Hospital has been named to the inaugural Forbes' Top Hospitals 2026 list, earning national recognition and a four-star ranking for delivering compassionate, quality, accessible care to our communities.

"It is an honor for Baystate Wing Hospital to be included on the Forbes Top Hospitals list," said Scott Lichtenberger, MD, Chief Operating Officer, Baystate Health. "This achievement reflects the remarkable dedication and hard work of our caregivers at Baystate Wing Hospital and our unwavering commitment to advancing the health of the communities."

Forbes developed its first-ever Top Hospitals list to provide patients, families, and communities with a clear, evidence-based resource for evaluating hospital performance across the United States. The list identifies general acute care hospitals that demonstrate sustained excellence in clinical outcomes, operational best practices, value, and patient experience.

A central part of the methodology is its strong focus on clinical outcomes - including mortality, survival, infection, and readmission rates - while accounting for social drivers of health to ensure fair comparisons across regions and populations.

Of the 5,400 acute-care hospitals eligible for consideration, less than 15% received a rating of 4 stars or above, placing Baystate Wing Hospital among the top-performing hospitals in the country.

"This recognition affirms the strength of our team and the culture of caring that defines Baystate Wing Hospital," said Karli Barrett, President and Chief Operating Officer, Baystate Wing Hospital. "Every day, our caregivers go above and beyond to ensure our patients receive quality, compassionate care close to home. Being named to this inaugural national list is a meaningful honor and a testament to their unwavering commitment to those we serve."

The Forbes Top Hospitals list was developed in partnership with an advisory panel of clinicians, researchers, health policy leaders, and patient advocates, along with Inovalon, a healthcare data and analytics firm. The methodology emphasizes nationally recognized standards and prioritizes measurable patient outcomes to support consumers in making informed decisions about where to seek care.

Baystate Wing Hospital's inclusion on this inaugural list reinforces Baystate Health's ongoing commitment to advancing the health of the communities it serves.

Powerback Rehab To-You at RiverMills Center

CHICOPEE - The Council on Aging will host Powerback Rehab for Physical Therapy appointment every Monday starting Jan. 5 at 10 a.m. at RiverMills Center, located at 5 W. Main Street.

Powerback Rehab To-You is a mobile therapy program that brings care directly to you! Powerback Rehab will be at RiverMills

Center for appointments to help your recovery whether dealing with a recent injury chronic pain or seeking performance enhancement. These appointments are free. This program is open to members 55 and older. There are limited appointments, so you must register in advance at RiverMills or by calling 534-3698.

EARLY DEADLINES FOR ADS & LEGAL NOTICES

New Year's will bring early deadlines for all ads & legal notices to run in **TURLEY PUBLICATIONS** the week of Dec. 29, 2025 - Jan. 2, 2026:

- Friday, December 26 at 2 PM for January 1 issue**
 - Country Journal • The Register • Wilbraham-Hampden Times • Agawam Advertiser News
- Monday, December 29 at 2 PM for January 1 issue**
 - Sentinel • The Journal Register • Ware River News • Barre Gazette
- Tuesday, December 30 at 2 PM for January 2 issue**
 - Quaboag Current • Town Reminder • The Holyoke Sun • Chicopee Register

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24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069
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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.

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PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

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

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

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

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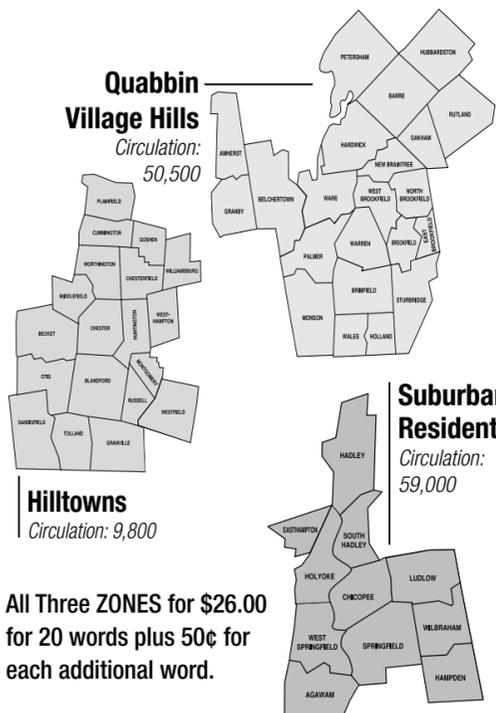
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Brian Whitacre lays down a wreath at a grave.



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Sgt. Mauricio Garcia-Garzon lays a wreath at the Veterans Memorial Cemetery.



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Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

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