

# the HOLYOKE Sun

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## Local man sentenced for death of unborn child

HOLYOKE – Hampden District Attorney Anthony D. Gulluni has announced that John Luis Sanchez, 33, of Holyoke was sentenced on Sept. 17, following his conviction on charges stemming from an October 2023 shooting in Holyoke that resulted in the death of an unborn child.

On Sept. 10 a Hampden County jury found Sanchez guilty of Involuntary Manslaughter, Illegal Carrying of a Firearm, and Illegal Carrying of a Loaded Firearm.

Sanchez was sentenced to 18 to 20 years in state prison for Involuntary Manslaughter and four to five years in state prison for Illegal Possession of a Firearm, to be served concurrently. He was also sentenced to two and a half years in the House of Correction for Unlawful Possession of a Loaded Firearm, to be served on and after the sentence for Illegal Possession of a Firearm.

The charges stem from an October 4, 2023, shooting on Sargeant Street in Holyoke. Evidence presented at trial showed that Sanchez and Alejandro Ramos, 25, of Holyoke, were waiting outside a market for Kermith Alvarez-Vargas, 31, of Holyoke. When Alvarez-Vargas exited the market, Sanchez attacked him with a firearm. Alvarez-Vargas, who was also armed, responded, and gunfire was exchanged among the three men.

During the exchange of gunfire, a stray round struck a passing PVTA bus and hit Saszkiana “Selena” Santana, 32, of Holyoke, who was approximately eight months pregnant at the time. The gunshot resulted in the death of her unborn son, who was posthumously named Ezekiel.

At Sanchez’s sentencing, Santana delivered a victim impact statement describing the lasting impact of the shooting and the loss of her son.

See DEATH, page 10

## Study shows huge economic impact of St. Patrick’s celebration

By Gregory A. Scibelli  
gscibelli@turley.com

HOLYOKE – Cambridge Econometrics recently completed a study commissioned by the St. Patrick’s Committee of Holyoke.

The study was to gauge the impact of the activities related regionally to St. Patrick’s Day, culminated by the Holyoke St. Patrick’s Day Road Race and the St. Patrick’s Parade, held on the weekend usually nearest March 17.

The study showed the activities generated almost \$40 million in total economic output across Hampden and Hampshire Counties. It also helped support 275 jobs, \$10.6 million in local wages, and \$20.5 million in value added.

According to a press release by the St. Patrick’s Committee, the study provides a comprehensive analysis of the economic contribution of the region’s St. Patrick’s celebrations. The analysis builds on a previous economic impact study conducted by the UMass Donahue Institute and uses visitor survey data, Committee expenditures, business case studies and Cambridge Econometrics’ REACT input-output model to measure both the overall economic contribution of the events and the portion of activity that represents new economic activity for the region.

The study estimates that visitors to the Parade and Road Race spend



more than \$23.2 million in the region, while regional St. Patrick’s committees contribute approximately \$470,000 in annual spending in Hampden and Hampshire Counties. Together, these activities generate approximately \$23.7 million in direct spending in the two-county region. After accounting for spending that likely would have occurred in the region regardless of the events, Cambridge Econometrics estimates that the celebrations generate a \$23.4 million net economic impact in new sales, supporting 166 jobs, \$6.5 million in wages and \$12.5 million in value added.

Ann Ormsbee said the firm, which is based in Western Massachusetts, was the culmination of a lot of data collection.

“As a Western Massachusetts-based firm,

See STUDY, page 6



File photos

The various activities on St. Patrick’s weekend generates millions of dollars for the local economy. The festivities conclude with the St. Patrick’s Day Parade held in Holyoke.

## City Council approves grant

By Quinn Suomala  
Correspondent

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke City Council approved the Massachusetts Gaming Committee Mitigation Grant for \$75,000 at their Sept. 15 meeting.

The plan is for this grant to be used to improve the lighting in the historic district of Holyoke and for the funding to go towards more murals in the city.

City Councilor Michael Sullivan raised concerns about the planned usage of this grant.

“I question at this point in Holyoke’s evolution to be spending it on more murals and lighting with all of the other problems we have which are affecting the vibrancy of the city as well” he said. “I think there are other uses for a mitigation grant of this type that we should be thinking about.”

Other city councilors disagreed. They felt that the planned use of the grant would have a significant positive impact on the city.

“Lighting is a public safety preventative measure and murals are awesome, they bring vitality, vibrance and cultural relevance to the city,” Councilor Anne Thalheimer said. “These are all things that I think are vital.”

Councilor Juan Anderson-Burgos referenced a recent mural that went up in Holyoke, which portrays La Borinqueña, a Puerto-Rican superhero team.

“The mural that went up this Saturday means a lot to me and if it wasn’t for this grant, that mural would not have gone up,” he said. “That mural represents this community.”

The mural was put up by Commonwealth Murals, which is a non-profit organization.

See GRANT, page 10

## Citizens advocate for Clean Slate, TOPA resolutions

By Quinn Suomala  
Correspondent

HOLYOKE – Holyoke citizens came before the city council to ask they vote in support of the Clean Slate and Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act resolutions.

The Clean Slate resolution will support the automatic sealing of criminal records as soon as a person becomes eligible for the process.

The goal of this is to support those who were imprisoned and are working to fully reintegrate into general society.

“Past mistakes should not affect people’s ability to work or where they can live,” Ashley Morales said.

Those who came forward during citizen speak stated that Holyoke citizens who are working hard to move on from their mistakes should not continue to be punished for

them when they have done everything right.

Morales shared how after her husband was released he struggled for months to find employment, putting her family in economic jeopardy.

The goal of this resolution would be to prevent these kinds of struggles.

“Old criminal records should not become a barrier that follows someone for years,” Christian Cardo-Guzman said.

Caitlin Moran also emphasized that this would be particularly impactful for people who had been incarcerated as minors and tried as adults.

Moran felt minors tried as adults should not continue to struggle due to mistakes they made while young.

Overall, community members felt that Massachusetts was due to

See CITIZENS, page 10

## District Attorney’s Office to assist Dean Tech students

HOLYOKE – The Hampden District Attorney’s Office and Holyoke Public Schools have partnered on a new educational initiative that provides forfeited vehicles for high school students to work on in support of their hands-on learning.

The Hampden District

Attorney’s Office created the FUEL program (Forfeiture Used for Educational Learning) so that vehicles forfeited through criminal proceedings and no longer needed for law enforcement purposes can be transferred to educational partners. Holyoke Public Schools is

the first partner to receive cars under the program.

For Dean Tech students, this means there are 13 donated vehicles now on school grounds that they can begin working on soon. In prior years, Dean students had just a small number of vehicles to work on—and

some of those were deliberately damaged multiple times just so students could continue to practice their skills.

Thanks to the FUEL program, they now have access to a wide range of vehicles in varying conditions to work on this year.



Submitted photo

# City launches mini-grant program for open space

HOLYOKE – The City of Holyoke is pleased to announce the launch of the MVP 2.0 Open Space Activation Mini-Grant Program, a new funding opportunity made possible through the City’s Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) 2.0 grant award.

The mini-grant program invites community-based nonprofit organizations and their fiscal sponsors to apply for funding to design and implement creative, commu-

nity-centered projects that increase meaningful and sustainable use of open spaces in Holyoke’s Environmental Justice neighborhoods.

Open space activation projects may include, but are not limited to, community programming and events, physical improvements, cultural installations, community engagement initiatives, and other activities that bring residents together and breathe new life into underutilized open spaces.

This funding opportunity is being made available as the result of Holyoke’s Municipal Vulnerability 2.0 (MVP 2.0) planning process, funded by the MA Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. Through interviews, focus groups, and surveys that gathered input from over 250 residents representing the populations most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, the city established a set of resilience priorities that will guide Holyoke’s

Department of Conservation and Sustainability for years to come.

The outreach was conducted largely by five community liaisons who made up part of the MVP 2.0 Core Team, and who significantly shaped this mini grant opportunity to address all eight of the resilience priorities identified.

A total of \$40,000 is available through this program, which will be distributed through an indeterminate

number of awards of up to \$9,999 each. Awards are one-time grants for projects to be implemented between Dec. 1, 2026 and June 30, 2027.

Through this program, the City is seeking partners with demonstrated experience actively collaborating with Environmental Justice communities in Holyoke and a commitment to creating welcoming, accessible, and sustainable opportunities for community members to connect with and enjoy local open spaces.

Completed applications must be submitted by: Friday, Oct. 9 at 5 p.m. Application materials, eligibility requirements, funding guidelines, and submission instructions are available in the MVP2 Open Space Activation Application & Funding Guidelines document at:

<https://www.holyoke.org/mvp-2-0-open-space-activation-mini-grant-program/>.



Submitted photo  
President George Timmons and members of the HCC Board of Trustees get ready to cut a cake marking the college’s 80th anniversary. From left to right: Estefany Duron Mejia, Student Government Association president; Trustee Aaron Vega; Trustee Patricia Samra; President George Timmons; and Vanessa Smith, chair of the Board of Trustees.

## HCC marks 80th anniversary

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College marked its 80th anniversary earlier this month with a cake-cutting celebration during the college’s annual Welcome Back Barbecue.

On Sept. 9, 1946, the Holyoke School Committee voted to establish the Holyoke Graduate School, the first incarnation of what is now HCC. Not quite to the day, but on Sept. 16, 2026, President George Timmons and members of the HCC Board of Trustees sliced up and served an 80th anniversary cake to students, faculty, and staff in the HCC Courtyard.

“For eight decades, HCC has been a place of opportunity, access, and transformation,” President Timmons said. “We have welcomed learners at every stage of life, supported their aspira-

tions, and helped strengthen the communities we serve throughout western Massachusetts and beyond. In celebrating this anniversary, we continue to honor the vision of our founders, the dedication of generations of faculty and staff, and the accomplishments of the many students and alumni whose lives have been shaped here.”

The anniversary coincided with HCC’s annual September barbecue welcoming students back for the fall semester and a new academic year. The 1946-1947 academic year was the college’s first. Now 80, HCC is the oldest community college in Massachusetts.

The anniversary cake – and platters full of anniversary cupcakes – were prepared by the Koffee Kup Bakery in Chicopee.

“We have representa-

tives from our whole community here today, including trustees, administrators, staff, and, most importantly, our students,” said Vanessa Smith, chair of the HCC board of trustees. “After all these years, HCC continues to thrive because of the community that we are and the community that supports us.”

Classes at Holyoke Graduate School were initially conducted in the evenings at the old Holyoke High School on Sargeant Street. The name was changed to Holyoke Junior College in 1947 and to Holyoke Community College in 1964 when it joined the Massachusetts community college system.

In 1968, a fire destroyed the main college building downtown. HCC opened at its present location on Homestead Avenue in 1974.

## Doors will ‘open’ in Holyoke once again

HOLYOKE – On Saturday, Oct. 17, Doors Open Holyoke will welcome local residents and visitors alike to a day filled with history, fun and exploration.

Now in its 6th year, Doors Open Holyoke gives the local community, history buffs and curiosity seekers a unique, behind-the-scenes perspective of the first planned industrial city in the United States. Modeled on similar events that started taking place in France in the early 1980’s as a way to inspire more interest in places of historical, cultural, and architectural significance, the upstart Holyoke initiative has been

growing steadily every season.

Enjoy a special day where all activities are free and open to everyone. Locations include tours of Holyoke City Hall’s Ballroom, Victory Theatre, an Open House at Holyoke Fire Department (High St location), Wistariahurst Museum, the Children’s Museum, Merry-Go-Round and the Volleyball Hall of Fame. Though scheduled activities take place between 10:00 AM and 3:00 PM, specific operating hours differ across participating sites. Please visit Explore Holyoke for complete information. Doors Open is free to attend

and is an all-ages function.

“For residents as well as visitors, Doors Open is an opportunity to discover Holyoke’s hidden gems,” Mayor Joshua A. Garcia said, “and learn about our history, and connect with the institutions and places that shaped our city.”

Doors Open Holyoke is brought to you by the Office of Planning and Economic Development (OPED), the Tourism Advisory Committee and funded by the MA Gaming Community Mitigation Grant.

Please contact Development Specialist Heather Kies at [kiesh@holyoke.org](mailto:kiesh@holyoke.org) to learn more.

## Beaudry joins Florence Bank as VP

FLORENCE – Florence Bank is pleased to announce it has hired a director of credit and commercial operations, and a commercial loan officer.

Liz Beaudry, of Holyoke, has joined the bank as vice president / director of credit and commercial operations, while Wayne Webster, of Hartford, Connecticut, has been named vice president / commercial loan officer.

Beaudry has 26 years of banking experience, and prior to joining Florence Bank, she held the positions of senior vice president chief credit officer, vice president senior credit officer, and portfolio manager. She is skilled in leadership, team collaboration, adaptability, and problem-solving.

In her new role, Beaudry will manage the Commercial Credit Department and oversee the Commercial Loan Administration Department. She will assist senior manage-

ment in the formulation of loan policy, strategic planning, budgeting, department structure, documentation, and maintaining the integrity of the loan portfolio.

Beaudry holds a bachelor’s degree in business from Bay Path University, Longmeadow. She is a youth soccer coach and has also been named a 40 Under 40 by BusinessWest.

Webster has 30 years of banking experience, including 23 years specializing in commercial lending, commercial real estate finance, and credit risk management. He is skilled in building and managing high-performing loan portfolios, structuring complex financing solutions, and driving sustained revenue growth across diverse market cycles.



Liz Beaudry

In his role, Webster will develop, manage and deepen client relationships while supporting the bank’s strategic growth goals.

Webster holds a bachelor’s degree in English from University of Hartford, Connecticut. He serves on the Board for Bay Path University, Faith Tabernacle, and Horace Smith Fund.

President and CEO Matt Garrity is pleased to welcome the bank’s newest team members. “Liz and Wayne come to us with a wealth of experience in banking. Their prior experience and exceptional skill-sets will be valuable additions to our commercial lending team, helping us strengthen commercial relationships and effectively managing loans for our customers,” said Garrity.

## OneHolyoke to host free Family Movie Night

HOLYOKE – OneHolyoke CDC has partnered with the Holyoke Community Preservation Act Committee (CPA), The Miracle League of Western Massachusetts and Holyoke Parks and Recreation to host a free, family-friendly Movie in the Park Night on Saturday, Sept. 26 at 7 p.m. at Kennedy Park, 84 Lincoln Street, Holyoke.

Please note: In the event of inclement weather, organizers will postpone this event to a later date.

The family-friendly event will feature an outdoor screening of the ani-

mated comedy, “Hotel Transylvania,” beginning at 7 p.m., and admission, snacks and drinks are all free. Families are encouraged to arrive early and bring blankets or lawn chairs for seating on the grass.

According to the partnering organizations, the event aims to be “an inclusive, welcoming night that brings neighbors of all ages and abilities together in one of the city’s signature public spaces.” The Miracle League Playground at Kennedy Park was completed in 2024 with funding from the Holyoke CPA and private donors. The

playground is fully accessible by wheelchair and has attracted families from all over the region.

OneHolyoke CDC is the only certified Community Development Corporation based in the City of Holyoke. Founded in 1971, OneHolyoke CDC has created over 160 new homes in the Flats, Churchill and South Holyoke neighborhoods, rehabilitated hundreds of apartments and provided thousands of home improvement grants to homeowners through the Neighborhood Improvement Program.

## Skeletal Secrets with the Skinner Specters Tour

HOLYOKE – Wistariahurst Museum is delighted to bring back one of our most beloved and frightfully fantastic tours of the year: Skeletal Secrets with the Skinner Specters on Oct. 23 at 5:30 p.m. Join a ghostly guide as former residents of this historic house manifest to speak of eerie events and strange happenings that occurred during their mortal lives. Wistariahurst’s volunteers portray the Skinner family and their servants in this immersive character tour. Their ghostly performanc-

es will reveal dark tales of death, loss, and the spirits that are said to still roam the museum’s halls.

This unique character tour of Wistariahurst Museum includes standing, walking, and transitioning between the first and second floors using our Grand Staircase in dim lighting. This tour may include loud noises, challenging subjects, and possible jump scares. Parents are advised to consider these factors before purchasing tickets. If any guest has a question about accessibility

and how to fully enjoy this immersive tour, email [info@wistariahurst.org](mailto:info@wistariahurst.org) or call (413)322-5660.

Join us for a memorable journey through the ghastly tales of Wistariahurst. Venture into where history intersects with the supernatural this fall with general admission tickets selling at \$18. Museum Members can use their discount for \$15 tickets. Our specialized character tours are beloved by our community and sell fast, so make sure you secure your tickets before they are gone.

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# Trailer Trash performs benefit concert for Harmony House

CHICOPEE – The popular local band Trailer Trash is performing a concert to benefit Harmony House of Western Massachusetts, a nonprofit home providing compassionate end-of-life care and companionship to hospice patients in need. The concert will be on Friday, Nov. 6 at the Portuguese American Club located at 149 Exchange Street in Chicopee. Tickets can be purchased in advance online for \$20 or at the door for \$25. Doors open at 6:15 p.m., with the concert commencing at 7 p.m. Known

for their high-energy performances, Trailer Trash will bring their modern country sound to the stage for an evening of music and dancing while raising funds to sustain the work of Harmony House. The event will also include raffles, food for purchase from Pizza Lino with a portion of proceeds being donated to Harmony House, and a cash bar.

The event is supported by local sponsors, including headlining sponsor Yankee Home. Additional sponsorship opportunities are available at [www.HarmonyHouseWMA.org/](http://www.HarmonyHouseWMA.org/)

[trailertrashconcert.org](http://trailertrashconcert.org) or by emailing [development@HarmonyHouseWMA.org](mailto:development@HarmonyHouseWMA.org).

Community members can also get involved with Harmony House by volunteering. If you might be interested in providing care and companionship to our residents, organizing special projects to engage our residents, or supporting our fundraising efforts, please email [admin@HarmonyHouseWMA.org](mailto:admin@HarmonyHouseWMA.org). To learn more, please visit [www.HarmonyHouseWMA.org](http://www.HarmonyHouseWMA.org).

# Darkened Hallways returning

H O L Y O K E – Wistariahurst Museum is delighted to welcome guests for our Darkened Hallways Tours this fall. Guests will be immersed in an evening of spine-tingling discovery and feel the lingering energy of past inhabitants and workers who once occupied the museum’s haunted halls. Our docent “ghost host” will lead visitors through the home by candlelight and will uncover stories of the Skinner family, the tragedy that moved their home and business to Holyoke, and other chilling

tales from the mansion’s history.

“These tours are a perfect opportunity to get to know the museum after dark,” Megan Seiler, Museum Director, comments.

This exclusive guided tour of Wistariahurst Museum includes standing, walking, and transitioning between the first and second floors using our Grand Staircase in dim lighting. If you are interested in our Darkened Hallways Tours and have any questions about accessibility, please reach out

to us at [info@wistariahurst.org](mailto:info@wistariahurst.org). This is a rare opportunity to experience a guided tour in the bewitching hours of the night.

Join us for an unforgettable exploration of the supernatural side of Wistariahurst. Unlock the secrets, embrace the mystery, and dare to tread where history meets the paranormal. Secure your spot for an evening that promises intrigue and spine-tingling excitement, these tickets sell fast so grab yours now! An additional tour may be added if the first tour sells out.

# Hibernians holding charity food drive

H O L Y O K E – The Hibernians of Hampden/Hampshire Counties, in partnership with the Polish National Credit Union, are conducting a food drive September-December 1for Providence Ministries.

The drop-off location is Rush Insurance [previously PNCU Insurance] at 270 Westfield Rd. in Holyoke.

The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts estimated that approximately 61,000 people are food insecure in Western Massachusetts. Providence Ministries needs food supplies as the winter months approaches. Suggested drop-off items include Chef Boyardee, pasta, mac and cheese, tuna, soup, rice baked

beans, and cereal.

In addition to the food drive efforts, every six weeks the Ladies Order of Hibernians and the Holy Cross Cursillo Group of Springfield make sandwiches for Kate’s Kitchen.

Anyone interested in supporting the sandwich program, may call Rosalie Pratt at 413-532-1677.

# Wistariahurst set to host cemetery tours

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

The tours will be held on Saturday, Oct. 10 with tours starting at 3 and 3:20 p.m. More time slots may open as tours fill up.

This tour will lead guests throughout the upper, paved level of the cemetery. A knowledgeable guide will share the meanings behind grave markers’ iconography and will lead guests to the graves of notable figures in Holyoke history. Wistariahurst volunteers portraying these historical figures will share information about their lives and deaths.

Cemetery Tours at Forestdale Cemetery include walking and standing on cement and gravel

walkways, with tours lasting around forty-five minutes to one hour. To fully enjoy this tour, we ask that guests wear comfortable shoes and weather-appropriate clothing. In the event of rain, the tours will be canceled, refunded, and not rescheduled. Wistariahurst Museum’s Cemetery Tours blend history, concepts of the afterlife, and local connections to create an unforgettable outing.

Tickets for this delightfully spooky and educational tour sell fast, so make sure to purchase your tickets before they’re gone. Additional time slots may be available if the current time slots sell out.



A lottery program is being offered for newly renovated apartments.



Applications are being accepted through Oct. 26.

Submitted photos

# OneHolyoke opens lottery applications for eight newly renovated apartments

H O L Y O K E – OneHolyoke CDC is accepting applications for a lottery for the Crafts Block Apartments, eight newly-renovated units located at 145 High Street in Downtown Holyoke. The historic mixed-use property features eight one- and two-bedroom units on the second and third floors of the building, with retail space on the ground level.

Lottery applicants will be assigned a unique number, to be drawn on Oct. 26. Each successful lottery applicant whose number is drawn will then receive a rental application following the lottery drawing.

The Crafts Block building consists of four one-bedroom and four two-bedroom units, and are affordable apartments for households earning at or below 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI), adjusted for family size. One-bedroom units range

from 620-786 square feet and cost \$1,384 per month; and two-bedroom units are 875-975 square feet, and are \$1,734 per month. More detailed information is available on the lottery application.

Online and downloadable applications are available online at [OneHolyoke.org/the-crafts-block](http://OneHolyoke.org/the-crafts-block) or at OneHolyoke CDC, 70 Lyman Street, Holyoke. Applications are due on October 26 and can be submitted via the online form; dropped off or mailed to OneHolyoke’s offices at 70 Lyman Street, Holyoke, MA 01040, or emailed to [georgianna.brown@one-holyoke.org](mailto:georgianna.brown@one-holyoke.org).

The Crafts Block units feature ultra high efficient heating and cooling systems; a washer and dryer in each unit; hardwood floors, slate tiles and large windows. The property is situated in a walkable and transit-friendly area with

access to local dining and entertainment. Access to the apartments is only available by stairs; there is no elevator in the building.

OneHolyoke CDC is managing the lottery process on behalf of Crafts Block, LLC, who owns the property, and Urbanist Development, property developer. The Crafts Block project is made possible by funding from TruNorth Bank and MassHousing.

OneHolyoke CDC is the only certified Community Development Corporation based in the City of Holyoke. Founded in 1971, OneHolyoke CDC has created over 160 new homes in the Flats, Churchill and South Holyoke neighborhoods, rehabilitated hundreds of apartments and provided thousands of home improvement grants to homeowners through the Neighborhood Improvement Program.

# St. Paul’s fall festival Sept. 26

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

There will be something for everyone: Gift basket

raffles, 50/50 raffle, vendors, plants, bake sale, and a Cafe’. Free ample parking is located behind the church and all are welcome.

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



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|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Saturday, Sept. 26</b><br><b>The Corner Boys</b><br>6-9pm | <b>Tuesday, Sept. 29</b><br><b>Musical Bingo</b><br>6:30-8:30pm | <b>Friday, Oct. 2</b><br><b>Eagle Eyes</b><br>6-9pm |
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Guest Column

SOCIAL SECURITY  
*Matters*  
By Russell Gloor



# I'm eevaluating my retirement plan; what are my options?

Dear Rusty:

I am 69 1/2 years old now and applied for Social Security at the end of June.

I am still working and was planning to begin my retirement in September. A couple of factors arose for me to question if I made a hasty decision by applying for SS.

The employer I have been working for the last 29 years has asked if I would stay on a little longer, which would be good because we have some debt I want to lose before I retire.

I was reading about suspending Social Security and continuing to work. If I understand it right, if I suspend my SS, no payback will be required, and I can continue to work until I'm ready to retire. No spousal benefits taken yet.

Signed: Reevaluating my Retirement

Dear Reevaluating Retirement:

I'm assuming you asked for your Social Security benefits to start in September (when you originally planned to retire), but that you won't be 70 years old until March 2027.

If that is correct, be aware that you will not immediately get all of your earned Delayed Retirement Credits when your benefits start in September – you will only initially get the DRCs you have earned through the end of 2025.

That's because Social Security usually applies DRCs in January of each year. So, what will happen is that your September benefit amount will lack the 5.3% DRCs you earned in 2026, until January 2027 when they will apply the DRCs earned in 2026 to your monthly payment amount.

Said simply, your initial September benefit will not include your full age 69.5 entitlement because it won't include the 5.3% extra you earned in 2026. That extra monthly amount will be awarded in January 2027.

FYI, if you were to, instead, claim for your SS benefits to start in the month you turn 70 (March 2027), you would get your full age 70 amount immediately (SS awards all earned DRCs if benefits are claimed to start in the month you turn 70).

Now, on to your question: Yes, if you take your benefits effective with September 2026 you can suspend your benefits, but you can only suspend them until the month you turn 70. And if you are suspending your benefits, you will not need to repay Social Security for any benefits you happen to receive

before you suspend.

As is obvious, you will not receive any SS payments while your benefits are suspended, and you will earn DRCs for the months your benefits are suspended, resulting in a higher monthly amount at age 70. Also, since you have already passed your SS Full Retirement Age, you can work and earn as much as you like, without your Social Security benefits being negatively affected.

Regarding your comment "No Spousal benefits taken yet." FYI, you cannot get spousal benefits while your benefits are suspended, nor can your wife get spousal benefits from you while you SS retirement benefits are suspended.

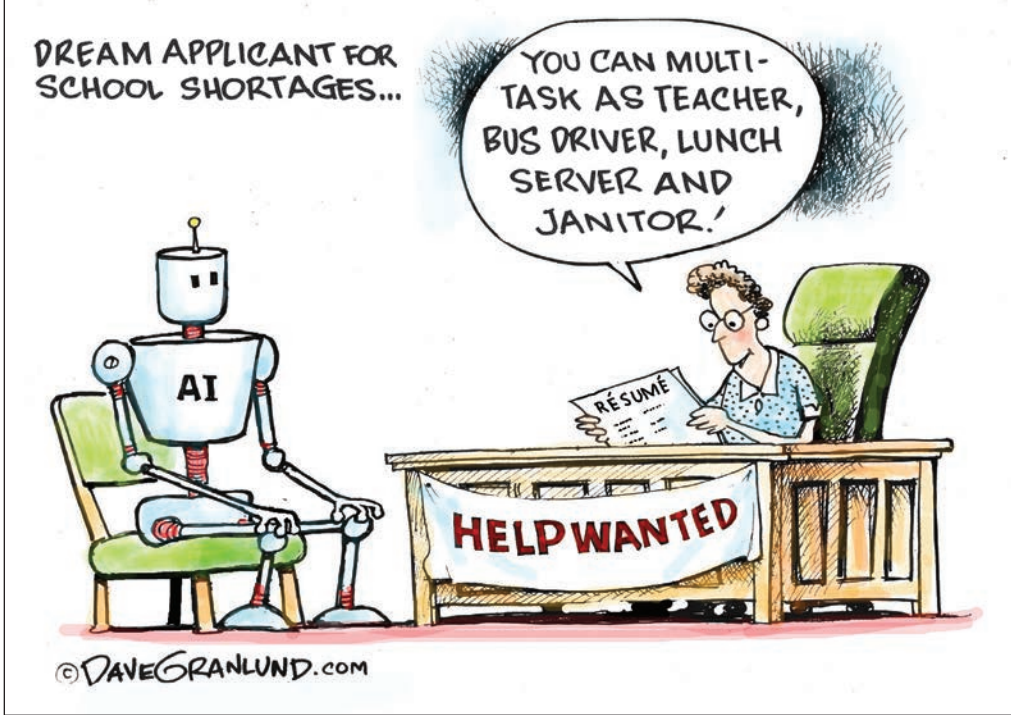
To be clear, spouse benefits are only paid when one spouse's benefit at their FRA is less than 50% of the other spouse's FRA benefit. Spouse benefits are always based upon FRA entitlements, not on the larger amounts which will result from waiting longer to claim.

In other words, your wife would only be eligible for a spousal benefit from you if her FRA entitlement was less than 50% of your FRA entitlement (not your age 70 SS entitlement). And she cannot get a spousal benefit while your benefits are suspended.

To recap: Yes, you can suspend receipt of your SS retirement benefits until the month you turn 70 and get credit for that delay (resulting in a higher benefit). And, yes, you can continue working as long as you wish and your benefits will not be negatively affected.

And just for added information, you can also ask Social Security to withdraw your current application for SS benefits and then reapply in January 2027 for your benefits to start in March 2027, the month you turn 70. You have both options.

*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 informational 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](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at [ssadviser@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadviser@amacfoundation.org). Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.*



Guest Column

## Raised beds? Why not!

I have to say that today I am having a hard time thinking of something to write about.

As I scan my mind of all the seasonal gardening topics, I come up blank. Winter squash? Done it. Mums? Ditto. Seed saving. Yup.

So, on this rainy Sunday, I give you all the luck of the draw. I will grab a gardening book off of my shelf, twirl the pages, and where my finger lands, I will expound on the subject. It may not be autumnal, but it will be interesting, I guarantee that.

Here we go... The book I grabbed from the shelf was "The Dirt Cheap Green Thumb," by Rhonda Massingham Hart. My finger landed on page 189, with the heading "Raise Your Beds, Not Your Expenses."

I have some experience with raised beds. In my home garden I have four rock-edged beds. Prior to that I had beds edged in pine slabs.



My friend uses hemlock edged beds and is happy with them. I envy how neat and orderly they are. Another friend is using galvanized metal beds this year. They seem to be all the rage.

Her tomatoes and peppers continue to produce like gangbusters even late in the season. She has just gotten back into gardening after a two year hiatus and I am proud of her and happy she has been so successful.

Let's begin our chat with some of the advantages of raised bed gardening.

The first one that comes to mind is that you can be

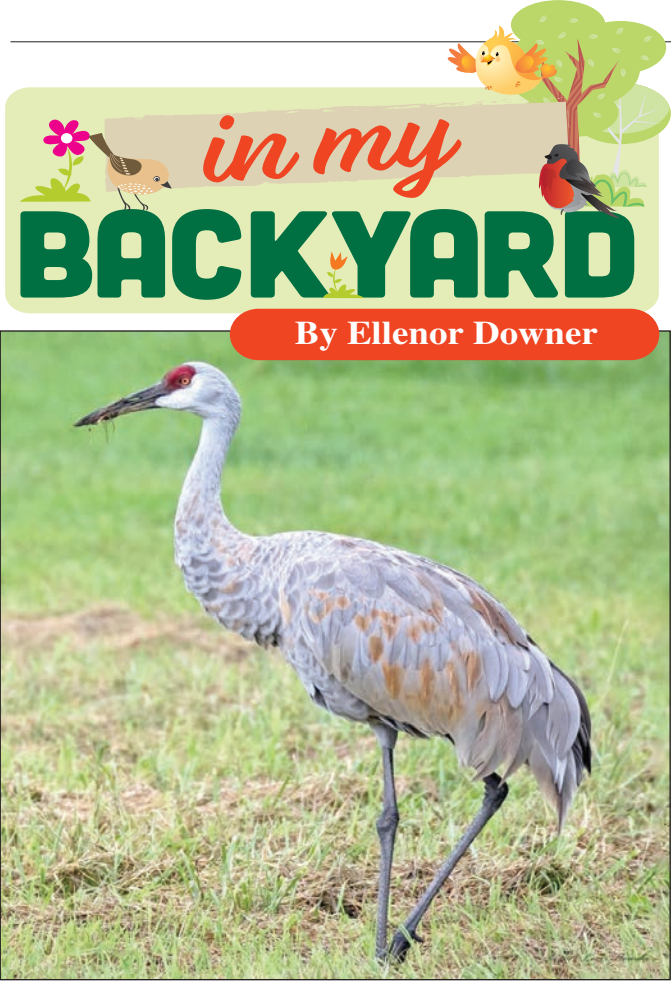
selective about the soil you fill it with. I've enjoyed using the Coast of Maine Raised Bed Mix.

Blending loam and aged manure or compost at a 2 to 1 ratio is another option. Additionally, raised beds make it easy to concentrate fertilizers where they are needed.

In large garden plots we often broadcast fertilizers and other amendments throughout the bed. Some inevitably gets wasted in walkways or around hills of plants.

Raised beds can be constructed to suit your needs.

See GARDEN, page 5



Sandhill crane

Someone reported hearing as sandhill crane calling in New Braintree, but did not see it. Recently, someone saw a pair of sandhill cranes in a field on Pleasant Street in Barre. The cranes stayed about a week and then left.

Sandhill Cranes are

large birds that live in open habitats, so they're fairly easy to spot. They are gray overall, have red foreheads, white cheeks, a long dark bill and dark legs.

Immature birds have reddish-brown upper parts and gray underparts and lack the red foreheads. This

makes it easy to pick out the parents from the youngsters even when they are the same height.

Sandhill cranes make a loud trumpeting call that can be heard for long distances. They are mainly herbivores, but feed on other foods depending on availability. They will feed on berries, small mammals, insects, snails, reptiles and amphibians.

These cranes raise one brood per year. The female lays one to three brownish eggs. Both sexes build the nest using plant material and both incubate and feed the young.

In summer cranes are often seen in small bogs, marshes and prairies across northern North America and the southeastern United States. In winter they form immense flocks in places like Bosque del Apache, New Mexico and Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge, Texas.

Sandhill crane's call is a loud, rolling, trumpeting sound whose unique tone is a product of anatomy. They have long tracheas that coil into the sternum and help the sound develop a lower pitch and harmonics that add richness.

Sandhill cranes are also

See BIRDS, page 5

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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.

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## The Holyoke Sun welcomes election letters to the editor

The Holyoke Sun welcomes readers to participate in this year's election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to *The Holyoke Sun*, care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to [thesun@turley.com](mailto:thesun@turley.com). Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by noon Monday to be considered for that Friday's

newspaper. No attack letters will be printed. No letters written by candidates supporting their own candidacy will be printed. If the volume of letters received is larger than the space available in the newspaper, or if the letters become repetitive, the newspaper reserves the right to print a representative sample. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last edition before the election.

For more information, call 413-283-8393.

### Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the newspa-

per plans to print stories about contested races for Congress, state Senate, state House, district attorney and Governor's Council during the weeks leading up to the election, as well as a question-and-answer voters guide. In order to ensure fairness to all candidates, no political press releases will be printed, nor will reporters cover political rallies or fundraisers.

Candidates who wish to further publicize their candidacy, beliefs and events may contact advertising, 413-283-8393 about paid advertising in *The Holyoke Sun*.

Spotlighting the kindness of Dr. Roland and Claire Stebbins

There are so many wonderful things about this couple, Dr. Roland and Claire Stebbins. They both have jovial personalities with him joking that after celebrating 69 years of marriage this past May, they still liked each other and even enjoy doing nothing together! They’ve lived very full and productive lives, he as a Pediatrician and she as a Lab Technician. That is of course besides raising three sons and a daughter. Their four children have blessed them with nine grandchildren and Roland kidded, the family’s growing with 11 and three quarters great-grandchildren, the newest addition arriving in November. Claire also worked at Holyoke Hospital; her expertise was with pediatric patients and was often called to draw a baby’s blood. She explained that Roland has what’s referred to as “rolling veins” which can be difficult to draw blood from. She chuckled saying

when they went for their blood tests to get married, she offered to take his blood, being a professional. The “rolling veins” threw her a curve so had to have the specialist do it after all, but has since become an expert. After raising their four children, Claire went back to Holyoke Hospital but as a volunteer in their gift shop. Her eyes lit up as she explained how much she enjoyed doing that. It entailed not only helping the store customers but also visiting patient rooms. Roland and Claire lived pretty sparsely in the beginning as she became pregnant when he was still in medical school. Luckily, she enjoyed cooking which helped with costs, boasting that she made a delicious spaghetti sauce. Roland shared some of his experiences, one being his first disastrous speaking engagement at Mt. Marie in Holyoke. They were supposed to supply the movie with him answering questions after the viewing. He got there, they

thought he was bringing the movie so instead, after giving a 10-minute lesson to a totally nonengaged audience, he had one of the nuns ask him some prepared questions which still brought no participation. He considered this his worst teaching moment. Two other pediatricians joined Roland when creating the Holyoke Pediatrics practice. Every three weeks the doctors volunteered at the “Milk Station” in Holyoke’s most needy community. He reminisced fondly about the dedication of all the nurses and staff, making sure the children and families were helped with not only their medical necessities, but offered help wherever needed. Their practice wound up with four doctors, but now has about a dozen. Roland was also involved with the Western New England Golden Gloves boxing tournaments by volunteering with preflight exams and sometimes staying during the fights as there always had to be a physician present. Most boxers he passed through

but remembered one young man devastated when he had to reject him due to a ruptured ear drum and didn’t want to take the chance of further injury. In order to play high school sports, students needed a yearly physical exam prior to participating. Needless to say, the coaches were very appreciative as they had two pediatricians from his practice doing free exams for three nights so the kids who didn’t have a regular doctor could still play. Roland accepted a volunteer position and served for 15 years on the Holyoke Board of Health along with other medical professionals. He said here he learned more about public health than he had in medical school. His working years were when house calls happened and there were no cell phones, so had to find a landline for all communication. When on call for the Emergency Room, with no modern technology, you just always had to show up. Both Roland and Claire



By Barb Turcotte

were co-chairs along with Jim and Rosalie Hobert for Holyoke’s 200th anniversary festivities. Laughingly Roland said he really only did about 10% of the work, that it was really Claire who was on the committee to organize five different venues at various locations throughout the city that included excellent food, ballroom dances and fun for all. He revealed they agreed no drinking otherwise by the fifth site they wouldn’t be standing! Roland shared when he started his practice, an Irish couple came in with the baby who had meningitis. It was touch and go, then several months later they brought in the healthy baby along with a treasured authentic Irish stein as a thank you.

He fondly reminisced while vacationing in Jamaica, they stopped by a Catholic Church unknowingly that it was a children’s communion service. They were so excited to witness this, giving each child a congratulatory dollar bill and described how much fun it was to watch them giggle with acceptance. I would have loved to have him as my son’s pediatrician, how about you or maybe he was yours! If you’d like to share a Random Act of Kindness story or if this one has touched you, please contact me at bdt514@aol.com or 413-575-9385. Who knows, you might see your story, “just ‘cause” you witnessed, you did or were the recipient of a kind gesture. See you soon with another Random Act of Kindness.

GARDEN, from page 4

I wanted to be able to reach into the middle of my beds from either side, so they are about four feet wide. Some gardeners construct them 36 inches wide so there is less of a stretch. In my four beds, I have a pretty good crop rotation system going. Each crop does a slide to the next bed each year. That way it is four years before onions are grown in the same space. Another interesting thing I have set up is that onions, for example, follow melons in my rotation. I grow the melons on black plastic. All season long the black plastic is limiting weeds from germinating, so that hopefully next year, the onions, who hate weeds, will see less weed pressure. Raised beds warm up quicker in the spring, and stay warmer later into the fall. Sometimes the edging material helps with that. My rock beds, for example, hold heat. So does the metal to some degree. In mid spring, prior to the frost-free date, raised beds can be easily fitted with hoops on which plastic or polyester row covers can be draped to offer even



Submitted Photo by Dawn Rudnansky

more frost protection. They can also be covered with the black plastic I mentioned to grow crops like melons or peppers, who appreciate the heat. With raised beds you will likely never need your rototiller. Beds can effortlessly be turned over by hand from either side. Typically, unless you walk all over them, the soil in the raised beds stays nice and friable, as well. If I need to get into my beds, say to separate crops, sometimes I will position a plank across the width of the bed, and step on that to

disperse my weight, therefore avoiding compaction. Plants always grow better in loose soil. I almost forgot the obvious! Raised beds are easier to work with. Beds are typically a foot or so tall, sometimes a bit taller. Bring out a short stool to the garden and you can comfortably sit and work in the beds. No more long periods of stooping or crouching. Well, I hope you enjoyed reading this luck of the draw column as much as I did writing it! And if you haven’t gardened in a couple of

years, give raised beds a try and maybe you will be as fortunate as my friend, with six foot tomato plants still going strong at the end of September! Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 34 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.

BIRDS, from page 4

known for their dancing skills. Courting cranes stretch their wings, pump their heads, bow, and leap into the air in a graceful and energetic dance. Many years ago, a Barre resident saw a pair dancing in a field. He said it was a “sight to behold.” Although some start breeding at two years of age, Sandhill cranes may reach the age of seven before breeding. They mate for life, which can mean two decades or more and stay with their mates year-round. Juveniles stick close by their parents for nine or ten months after hatching. Sandhill crane chicks can leave the nest within 8 hours of hatching and are even capable of swimming. The oldest sandhill crane on record was at least 37 years, 3 months old. Originally banded in Florida in 1982, it was found in Wisconsin in 2019.

**Scarcity of birds**  
I received an email from a woman who lives on Lake Lashaway. She said, “Since Sunday, Aug. 30, they had most days without birds...any type, large or small at our feeders or just in the shrubs or anywhere. All my neighbors have noticed their feeders are full too.” One neighbor said he has seen a falcon. She wonders if the falcon has anything to do with the lack of birds. Several people at the Oakham Senior Center reported, they see only a few birds and the feeders remain full of seeds. **Massachusetts Audubon sighting**  
This report to the Massachusetts Audubon Society supports the lack of birds. Someone stated, “On Sept. 11 we birded around Hardwick and on Sept. 12 we birded around Warren. Both days were very poor for passerine migration.” They also stated, “On both days we only saw 1 species of war-

bler: common yellowthroat. In general, song birds were in very low numbers and poor variety. And we went to spots that had proven good for migrants in years past. We really worked hard to turn up migrant warblers, and it just was not happening, at least where we were.” **Migrating hawks**  
The Massachusetts Audubon Society listed migrating hawks spotted on Friday, Sept. 11 at Mt. Watatic in Ashburnham. They included 3 osprey, seven bald eagles, ten sharp-shinned hawks, 131 broad-winged hawks and one mer-

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firstbaptistchurchholyokey@comcast.net  
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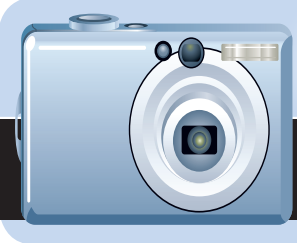


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# Registration, volunteer signups open for Run Stanley 5K

WESTFIELD – Stanley Park is excited to announce that registration is now open for the 14th Annual Run Stanley 5K, taking place on Sunday, October 4, 2026. Participants and volunteers can sign up online at <https://runsignup.com/Race/MA/Westfield/RunStanley>.

Run Stanley is a beloved

community tradition that brings together runners, walkers, families, students, and their four-legged companions for a morning of fitness, fun, and support for Stanley Park. The event welcomes participants of all ages and abilities through a variety of race divisions, including the 5K Trail Run/

Walk, K9 Division, 1-Mile Stroll & Roll, and the ¾-Mile Munchkin Run for elementary school students. Elementary schools are also encouraged to participate in the School Spirit Challenge. The elementary school with the most registered participants will take home the coveted Run

Stanley School Spirit Trophy. In addition to participants, Stanley Park is seeking volunteers to help make the event a success. Volunteers are needed for a variety of roles, including registration, course marshaling, water stations, finish line support, and event setup and cleanup. Community

members, service groups, students, and local organizations are encouraged to get involved. As a private nonprofit organization, Stanley Park relies on the support of events like Run Stanley to help maintain its nearly 300 acres of gardens, trails, wildlife sanctuary, and rec-

reational spaces, which are enjoyed by more than 400,000 visitors annually. The park remains free and open to the public year-round. To register for the race or sign up to volunteer, visit:<https://runsignup.com/Race/MA/Westfield/RunStanley>

## STUDY, from page 1

Cambridge Econometrics is particularly proud to provide this updated, data-driven analysis of the Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade, Road Race, and related events, which have long been important cultural and economic assets for our region," said Ormsbee, Managing Economist at Cambridge Econometrics. "Applying our REACT economic impact model, the new study quantifies the significant economic activity generated by a tradition that continues to be an important driver of visitation, local spending, and regional economic vitality."

The study estimates that the annual Parade attracts approximately 350,000 spectators, while the Road Race draws approximately 56,000 participants and spectators, including 6,000 runners. Of the estimated Parade attendance, approximately 88,000 visitors come from outside Hampden and Hampshire Counties, while the Road Race attracts an additional 9,000 visitors from outside the region.

Those visitors spend money throughout the region, benefiting businesses in food and beverage, retail, transportation, entertainment and accommodations. Parade visitors account for more than \$19 million in direct spending, while Road Race visitors contribute nearly \$4 million.

The study showed \$2.3 million in tax revenue was generated for the state, with \$86,000 in revenue generated for the city.

Interestingly, the study also shows that the value of the work performed by more than 200 volunteers is valued at about \$970,000.



The parade brings out a huge crowd, helping the local economy.

File photos



The St. Patrick's Committee recently shared results of an economic study.



The parade and road race, among other events, draws many people to Western Mass.

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For full job description visit [www.townofhadwick.com](http://www.townofhadwick.com).

#### TOWN OF HADWICK

HELP WANTED

The town of Hadwick is seeking qualified candidates to perform high-level seasonal, clerical, and administrative work assisting the Town Administrator and Select Board.

This is a part-time 10 hours per week position. For full job description, go to [www.townofhadwick.com](http://www.townofhadwick.com).

Qualified applicants should send a letter and resume to [admin@TownofHadwick.com](mailto:admin@TownofHadwick.com) or send to PO Box 575 Gilberville, MA 01031.

#### Health Director

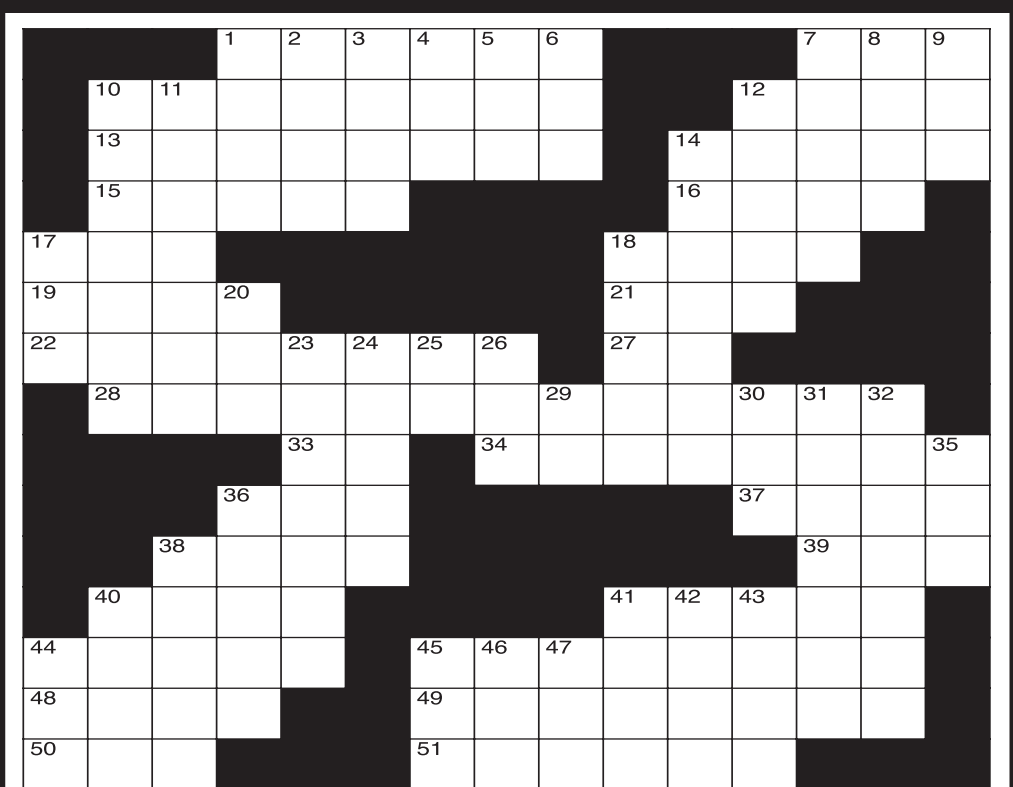
Full-Time

The town of Hadwick is seeking applications for the position of Health Director. The position is a full-time position and requires a Master's degree in Public Health or a related field. The position is a full-time position and requires a Master's degree in Public Health or a related field. The position is a full-time position and requires a Master's degree in Public Health or a related field.

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### CLUES ACROSS

1. A place for worship
7. Referee declaration
10. Torsos
12. Used to introduce something
13. Healing method
14. Takes to the sea
15. Make law
16. French coastal city
17. Hawaiian dish
18. Young of domestic cattle
19. Women's undergarments
21. 60-minute intervals (abbr.)
22. One after another
27. It's a hot topic these days
28. Folk band frontman

### CLUES DOWN

33. They precede C
34. Heavenly
36. Fiddler crabs
37. Major Hindu deity
38. Hebrew given name
39. Cost per mile
40. \_\_\_ Romeo, car
41. Rural municipality in Manitoba
44. Narratives
45. "A tragedy had \_\_\_ him"
48. Iranian city
49. Praises publicly
50. Founding Father Franklin
51. Herbal tea

2. "Tears in Heaven" singer Clapton
3. Part of a sailing vessel
4. Part of (abbr.)
5. Polynesian garland of flowers
6. Keyboard key
7. One who steals
8. Large oven
9. Former CIA
11. Solomon Islands capital
12. Afrikaans
14. Remove thatch
17. Television network
18. Jalen Brunson is one
20. Title of respect
23. Flowering trees

24. Occurring in a tube
25. Exists
26. Woman (French)
29. Expression of doubt
30. NHL legend Bobby
31. Accomplished
32. Makes slightly wet
35. National Assn. of Manufacturers
36. Not sated
38. Poe's middle name
40. Swiss river
41. Rhythmic pattern in Indian music
42. "Shane" actor Ladd
43. Popular whodunit board game
44. Bar bill
45. Ballplayer's tool
46. Indicates near
47. Feet per second

CROSSWORD ANSWER on page ????????

Heriberto Morales tries to settle the ball on defense.

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Isiah Frazer makes a stop and starts up the field.

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## Knights battle to pair of draws

HOLYOKE – After suffering a pair of losses to start the season, Holyoke High School boys soccer earned a pair of ties during the past week. The Knights tied Pathfinder last Tuesday afternoon 1-1 in a very

physical battle. Last Friday afternoon, the Knights traveled to Smith Vocational in Northampton and fought to a 2-2 tie. The Knights are back in action on Monday, Sept. 28 at home against Ware at 4 p.m.



Goalie Rikendy Jean winds up to punt the ball away.



Lydersen Albert goes for a header.



Patrick Smith O'Connor tries to make a stop.



James Ezold tries to turn play around.

## T-Birds begin new season

SPRINGFIELD – On the heels of their remarkable run to within one game of the Eastern Conference Finals, the Springfield Thunderbirds have reason to believe the carryover effect from their postseason success is very real heading into the 2026-27 campaign.

Here are five things to watch at Opening Night inside the Thunderdome.

**1: The Effect of Steve Ott for a Full Season.** It is undeniable the impact that Steve Ott had on his team when he arrived in mid-January. A brand new leading voice in a dressing room does not always guarantee a turnaround in a team's fortunes, but it was clear that Ott's confidence in

See T-BIRDS, page 9

## Lavallee named first 'Order of the KnightHawk'

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Public Schools Athletic Hall of Fame announced today that Tony Lavallee, a Dean Technical Class of 1996 graduate, has been named the first recipient of the "Order of the KnightHawk" Award.

Lavallee, a member of the Golden Hawks wrestling team, will be honored alongside the Hall of Fame inductees on Saturday, Nov. 14, as part of the Induction Celebration weekend.

The "Order of the KnightHawk" was created to recognize individuals or teams whose singular accomplishments were so significant that they provided inspiration, helped open doors or served as role models for so many who followed. The perseverance and dedication of Tony Lavallee did just that.

Lavallee was a member of the Dean Tech wrestling team for less than two seasons. He tried to join the team as a freshman and

sophomore but could not get a doctor's permission. Permission was initially withheld again during his junior year, but after Lavallee's continued insistence and the support of his family, the doctor relented.

Lavallee did not win a match at Dean, but he competed as a junior and throughout his senior year. What is significant is that Tony was born with cerebral palsy and had a lack of gross motor skills and strength in his legs. His purpose in competing was to prove a point to himself and to those who doubted him, and his actions served as a tremendous inspiration to the team and to others with disabilities.

Lavallee also competed in track and field events at para meets against other athletes with disabilities. But on the wrestling mats, he was given no quarter and asked for none. He was a wres-

HOLYOKE PUBLIC SCHOOLS



tlar, competing against other wrestlers, and in doing so, he proved that disabilities can be overcome.

The annual Induction Celebration Dinner will be held Saturday, Nov. 14, at Pic's Pub & Restaurant in Holyoke.

Lavallee will be joined at the dinner by the Induction Class of 2026, which includes Don Genereux (Holyoke Trade '74), Jack Gilligan (HHS '80), Nick Grass (HHS '01), Brigid McKenna (HHS '01), Tom Sleboda (HHS '80),

Debbie Sweeney DeVito (HHS '86), Coach Bill Lawson (HHS swimming), legends Alan Hurlburt (HHS '58) and Ned O'Meara (HHS '68), and the 1985 HHS boys tennis and 1990 HHS football teams. Former longtime HHS band leader Tom Tisdell will be inducted as a contributor.

The Holyoke Public Schools Athletic Hall of Fame was created in 2017 to acknowledge the achievements of Holyoke's elite athletes, coaches, teams, contributors and legends, and to recognize past Holyoke athletic role models for future generations to admire and emulate.

The Induction weekend festivities will include the inductees being introduced during halftime ceremonies at Friday night's Holyoke football game, followed by the annual Hall of Fame Induction Banquet on Saturday.

## Girls start out with 1-3 record

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke High School girls soccer team is 1-3 to start the regular season. The Knights split their first two games, losing to Easthampton, then handily defeating Greenfield.

But the Knights lost big to Hopkins Academy and then against to Chicopee.

In their only win of the season, an 8-2 triumph over Greenfield on Sept. 14, Leilany Figueroa had a huge game with four goals plus an assist. Kyra Lippman would also have five points, scoring three goals and having two assists. Selina Alicea had the eighth goal for the Knights to complete their big scoring game.

Coming up, the Knights are scheduled to host Palmer on Friday, Sept. 25 at 4 p.m. They then had back on the road for a rematch against Easthampton on Tuesday, Sept. 29 at 5 p.m.

## Westfield State University Owls football team gets first win over Dean College

WESTFIELD – Westfield State University football rolled up 463 yards of offense and got a pair of long TD receptions from electric first-year receiver Malachi Hymes (E. Hartford, Conn./East Hartford) as the Owls downed Dean College, 26-8 at Alumni Field on Westfield State's Family and Champions Weekend.

Westfield improves its record to 1-2 overall and 1-1 in the Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference, while Dean is

now 0-3 and 0-2 MASCAC.

Hymes finished with four catches for 166 yards and touchdowns of 61 and 46 yards. His day could have been bigger as a reverse that looked like a 89-yard score was called back by a penalty, and later he stepped out of bounds while avoiding a tackle on 53-yard reception that initially looked like a 73-yard score.

Westfield opened the scoring with a 1-yard TD plunge from QB Quinn Sumner (Dayville, Conn./

Killingly), who finished 6-11 passing for 180 yards and the two TD tosses to Hymes.

Hymes caught a go route down the left side for the 61 yarder, out sprinting the full defense, then out-leaped his defender around the five-yard line to with the ball on the 46-yard grab before waltzing into the endzone.

Westfield set up the big passing plays with the run as sophomore fullback Manny Mengata (Tewksbury, Mass.) battered the Bulldogs for 136 yards on 18 carries, and Cole

Ingham (Agawam, Mass.) added 69 yards on five carries.

Westfield senior PK Andrew Currier (Attleboro, Mass./Foxboro HS) booted a pair of 33-yard field goals and a pair of extra points to account for the final score.

Dean's lone TD of the game came midway through the second quarter on a 12-yard touchdown pass from Chris Donahue to Yasir Moses. The Bulldogs tried to feature a short passing attack with Donahue connecting on 32 of 45 attempts for 186

yards with one TD and one INT. His longest completion of the day went for 12 yards.

The Bulldogs totaled just 33 yards rushing. Tay Scholtz finished with nine catches for 75 yards and seven catches for 62 yards.

Westfield's defense bent but rarely broke, allowing 219 total yards on the day. The Owls sacked Donahue eight times for a loss of 61 yards.

LB Aydan Verba (Albany, NY/Colonie Central) led the Owls with eight tackles and 2.5 sacks. Tedi Hunt

(Littleton, Mass.) made eight stops and had 2.5 TFLs. Eight different players had a hand in the sack column. First-year Caedan Burns (N. Grafton, Mass.) picked off the Bulldogs late to help seal the win.

Colin Brady and Herman Esquivel Menzdez led the Bulldogs with eight stops each.

Westfield State will travel to Worcester State for a conference matchup next Saturday, Sept. 26 with a 1 p.m. kickoff at Alumni Field.

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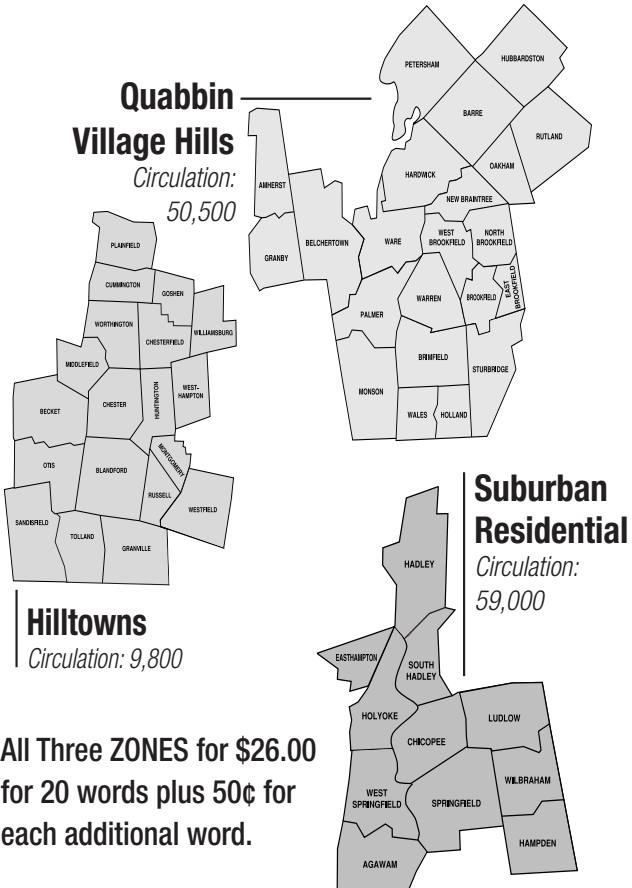
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