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Three finalists named for permanent superintendent position

By Gregory A. Scibelli
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HOLYOKE – This week, the Holyoke Public Schools announced that finalists for the superintendent position, the first permanent superintendent since the schools were returned to local control, will have interviews and meet and greets.

One of the finalists is local, as the current assistant superintendent, Jacqueline Glasheen, has made the final cut.

The following was submitted by the Holyoke Public Schools:

As the search process for a new superintendent for Holyoke Public Schools moves into the final phase,

community members will have two opportunities to learn more about the three finalists.

The biggest part for the public is an opportunity to interact with the candidates personal. There will be public meet-and-greet opportunities for brief informal conversations with the candidates will be held in the Holyoke

High School North cafeteria based on the schedule listed below. Following each meet and greet, the finalists will have interviews with the full School Committee, which will be held in the Holyoke High School North auditorium. The final interviews will be open to the public and will also be streamed online for those who prefer to watch

them remotely.

The schedule for the finalists are as follows:

- Feb. 10 at 5 p.m. meet-and-greet with Carmen Melendez Quintero, executive director of inclusive education at Boston City Schools, followed by 6:30 p.m. interview.
- Feb. 11 at 5 p.m. meet-and-greet with Jacqueline

Glasheen, assistant superintendent at Holyoke Public Schools, followed by 6:30 p.m. interview.

• Feb. 12 at 5 p.m. meet-and-greet with Annie Azarloza, interim superintendent of schools at Northumberland, Stratford & Stark Schools in New

See **FINALISTS**, page 7

Community seeks to pause school closing

By Gregory A. Scibelli
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HOLYOKE – In response to announcement made by Rev. Fr. Duy Le that Blessed Sacrament School was closing, calls are being made to pause the closing.

The Blessed Sacrament Parent Teacher Guild, along with families, parishioners of the church, and other supporters are asking leadership of the Diocese of Springfield to pause the closure process and engage in more dialogue and allow the existing development plan to continue so that Blessed Sacrament School can have the opportunity to demonstrate sustainability and remain open for the families it currently serves.

In a press statement submitted, it stated that while the continuing hardships of the church were well known to the families of students attending the school, there was a development plan formalized and underway. Families are asking leadership to allow that plan to come to fruition to see if the school can stay home.

The plan was developed by former Principal Susan Heavren, but she died in September, leaving the school under the leadership of an interim principal.

Families are also claiming Le held a schoolwide meeting in September 2025 and parents were told the school would be open for the 2026-2027 as part of the plan, which included a two-year window to demonstrate improvement.

The guild also stated numerous fundraisers were scheduled this spring along with raffles. A golf tournament was also scheduled for later this year, and more than \$100,000 had been raised for the school since September.

Two weeks ago, Le announced that the school would close in June, at the conclusion of this school year.

According to a letter sent from Le to families, the school has seen a sharp decline in enrollment since 2010. The school had an enrollment of 304 students in 2010. That number is not about a third of that in 2025 at 112.

“Over the past 15 years, enrollment has steadily declined, from more than 300 students to 112 students today,” Le said. “Following the sale of our former school building several years ago, the school’s maximum operating capacity is now 275 students. Even at this reduced capacity, we are operating at less than half of what is required to remain sustainable.”

He explained the school operates at a deficit of more

See **CLOSING**, page 7



Local families have a fun time skating at the new ice at Community Field on Sunday, Feb. 1. See more photos on page 10.

Ice-skating path opens at Community Field

HOLYOKE – Last weekend, winter fun was on full display at Community Field.

The city’s Parks and Recreation Department held a snowman building contest, skating on an ice-skating path, and sledding for local families.

The event featured cookies and hot chocolate for those who attended, and the event was provided by the city free of charge.



Left, Agustin Ortiz skates on the new ice at Community Field. Above, there is also sledding hills available at the site. Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Olympic Gold Medalist Boxer Katie Taylor to be honored

HOLYOKE – The St. Patrick’s Committee of Holyoke today announced that celebrated Irish professional boxer and Olympic gold medalist Katie Taylor has been selected as the 33rd Ambassador Award recipient. This prestigious honor is presented annually to an individual or group that has worked to strengthen the relationship between the people of Ireland and the people of the United States.

Born and raised in Bray, County Wicklow, Ireland, Taylor is widely regarded as one of the greatest female athletes of her generation. As an amateur boxer, she made history by winning multiple world and European championships and capturing Olympic gold at the London 2012 Games, the first-year women’s boxing was included in the Olympics.

Her professional career has further cemented her legacy, with Taylor becoming an undisputed world champion across multiple weight divisions and earning worldwide acclaim for her skill, resilience, and sportsmanship. Her achievements have propelled women’s boxing to new levels of global recognition and inspired countless athletes around the world.

The Ambassador Award — unique among St. Patrick’s Day celebrations in the United States — was established in collaboration with Ireland’s Ambassador to the U.S. and is presented during the annual parade festivities. The award recognizes individuals whose life and work promote goodwill, cultural exchange, and mutual respect between Ireland and America.

“We are profoundly proud to honor Katie Taylor as our 2026 Ambassador Award recipient,” said Jim Wildman, Parade President. “Katie’s remarkable journey — from a young girl in Bray pursuing her dream to a global sporting icon — epitomizes the resilience, dedication, and spirit that define the Irish and Irish-American experience. Her achievements have elevated women’s sport and strengthened the bonds of friendship and cultural pride between Ireland and the United States. Her legacy will inspire generations to come.”

“It is a tremendous honor to receive the 2026 Ambassador Award from the St. Patrick’s Committee of Holyoke,” said Katie Taylor. “The connection between Ireland and the Irish-American community is something I’ve always

See **TAYLOR**, page 7

Wistariahurst celebrates Civic Learning Week

HOLYOKE – From March 9 to 15, thousands of schools and organizations across the nation will celebrate Civic Learning Week, an annual nonpartisan awareness week bringing together students, educators, policymakers, and leaders in the public and private sectors to highlight and further energize the movement for civic education in states and communities across the nation.

Civic education is essential to ensuring each and every person across this country is equipped with the necessary tools to engage as members of our self-governing society. As we look ahead to the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence in 2026, we have an unparalleled opportunity to shine a light on the importance of civic education and the way in which it can sustain and strengthen

our “many voices, one nation” for the next 250 years and beyond.

“Wistariahurst Museum is excited to participate in Civic Learning Week, bringing several events to the museum along with sharing information on how to get involved with your local community,” says Emily Munsell, Wistariahurst Office Assistant.

We know that the best civic learning happens

both in and outside of the classroom, and is a lifelong endeavor touching every facet of society. In order to underscore the need to prioritize civic learning across the country, Civic Learning Week highlights the civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions that provide the foundation for an informed and engaged populace, sustaining and strengthening constitutional democracy in the United States.

HPL offers Victorian Puzzle Purse making

HOLYOKE – On Saturday, Feb. 7 from 12:30 to 2 p.m. at Holyoke Public Library, coming learn how to make a Victorian Puzzle Purse. In this free workshop, book arts specialist Kate Ouimette will guide participants as they make their first puzzle purse. Popular in the 18th and 19th centuries, paper puzzle purses reveal

designs, and messages, and even gifts to their recipients as they are unfolded. Once you learn the basics, there is no limit to how far you go. Materials will be provided. The program is for teens and adults and seats are limited. Please pre-register by calling the Holyoke History Room at (413) 420-8107.

Dad Daughter Dance Feb. 7

HOLYOKE – On Saturday, Feb. 7, Mater Dolorosa School in Holyoke will hold a Father Daughter Valentine Dance. This dance is for fathers/fathers at heart and daughters of all ages. Doors open at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$5 per person and may be purchased at Mater Dolorosa School, Nick’s Nest and Holyoke Sporting Goods. For more information, call 413-532-5661. No tickets will be sold at the door.

Holyoke Medical gets advanced spine surgery certification

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Medical Center announced that it is one of the first hospitals in Massachusetts to receive Advanced Spine Surgery Certification from DNV. This certification affirms excellence in the treatment of musculoskeletal spine and lower back problems at The Institute for Minimally Invasive Spine Surgery at Holyoke Medical Center, led by neurosurgeon Dr. Frederik

Pennings. The scope of the Advanced Spine Surgery Certification is inclusive of inpatient, outpatient, and same-day elective surgery, including minimally invasive spine surgery (MISS), procedures.

“We are proud to be one of the first hospitals in Massachusetts to achieve DNV’s Advanced Spine Surgery Certification. This is yet another example of the commitment we have

to providing our community with the best possible care,” says Spiros Hatiras, President and CEO of Holyoke Medical Center. “Achieving advanced certification validates all the effort we have put into this program since opening in April of 2023 to ensure the health and safety of our patients.”

The DNV Advanced Spine Surgery Certification require-

ments are informed by the ERAS® Society Lumbar Spinal Fusion and Orthopaedic guidelines, the guidelines of the North American Spine Society, and relevant requirements of the CMS Conditions of Participation for Hospitals. The certification also incorporates a Quality Management System to develop, implement, and maintain an ongoing system for measuring, mon-

itoring, and managing quality and patient safety to continually improve the care of patients.

“Achieving Advanced Spine Surgery Certification demonstrates a commitment to excellence,” says Kelly Proctor, President of DNV Healthcare USA Inc. “And, it helps demonstrate to your community that you are performing at the highest level.”

Pasta dinner being served at UCCH

HOLYOKE – Mangia, mangia! The United Congregational Church of Holyoke will be serving a pasta dinner with bread and salad at their February Community Meal on Friday, Feb. 13 at 5 p.m. A family movie follows at 6 p.m. All are welcome to attend.

The Community Meal is hosted on the second Friday evening of each

month at the church at 300 Appleton Street. All Are Welcome to attend, and the meal is completely free of charge. The menu changes monthly; past meals have featured Thanksgiving dinner, meatball stroganoff, hot dogs, sandwiches and more. Parents must accompany their children.

The United Congregational Church of Holyoke is an Open

and Affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ. We welcome all individuals, regardless of where they are on their journey. If you’d like to learn more about UCCH, please visit our website at www.ucchoolyoke.org, find us on Facebook or Instagram, or call our office at 413-532-1483 Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m..

HMC to offer diabetes education, support

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Medical Center will host an ongoing bilingual Diabetes Education and Support Group for community members with diabetes. Diabetes education will be provided at each meeting with a Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialist or member of the HMC Endocrinology & Diabetes Center team. The group will meet every Wednesday from 9am – 11am in the Holyoke

Medical Center Medical Office Building Conference Room located at 11 Hospital Drive, 3rd Floor, in Holyoke.

“Being educated and having a better understanding of diabetes enables people to be more successful in controlling or even reversing the progression of their disease. Support group members will be able to discuss struggles and solutions they have found while managing their

diabetes with others going through similar experiences,” said Corina Valvo, RN, BSN, CDCES, Diabetes Program Coordinator for HMC Endocrinology & Diabetes Center.

For more information or questions regarding the Diabetes Education and Support Group, please contact the HMC Endocrinology & Diabetes Center at 413.534.2820.

Chic Salon Beauty Bar Inc. celebrates new location

HOLYOKE – Chic Salon Beauty Bar Inc., led by husband-and-husband team José Ocaña and Josh Esteva, proudly announces the grand opening of their newest upscale salon concept at 250 Westfield Rd, Ste 3, Holyoke. This latest chapter builds on the company’s legacy as an inclusive beauty leader, following its success in Chicopee, MA. Before launching their first collaborative salon in 2018, José honed his craft at a former salon in Holyoke, making this

return a meaningful homecoming for both owners.

Designed as a refuge where every guest feels at home, Chic Salon Beauty Bar Inc. offers a quiet, comfortable environment welcoming to the LGBTQ+ community, trans clientele, and individuals on the autism spectrum. With a reputation as the “gayest salon in Western Massachusetts,” it’s more than just a destination for services—it’s a thriving community hub founded on acceptance and respect.

Holyoke Community College scholarship season open for 2026-2027

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Community College Foundation is now accepting scholarship applications for the 2026-2027 academic year.

The application deadline is Friday, March 13, 2026.

Last year, the HCC Foundation awarded 410 scholarships worth about \$364,000 to 379 incoming, current, and transferring HCC students. Some students received multiple scholarship awards. The average scholarship award is typically around \$900.

“The scholarship program is the flagship initiative of the HCC Foundation, and it reflects the incredible generosity of our donor community,” said Amanda Sbriscia, vice president of Institutional

Advancement and executive director of the HCC Foundation. “Every scholarship tells two stories – one of a donor who believes in the power of education, and one of a student whose path forward is made possible by that belief.”

Students must be currently enrolled at HCC or have been accepted for the upcoming academic year to be eligible for scholarships.

Applicants only need to fill out a single online form to be automatically matched with the scholarships they are most qualified to receive. There are scholarships for new students, current students and students transferring to other institutions, scholarships based on financial need,

scholarships for students in specific majors, scholarships for residents of certain communities, and scholarships that recognize academic achievement.

“Last year’s 410 scholarship awards represent 410 opportunities for students to focus on their studies rather than financial stress,” said Sbriscia. “We’re proud to continue this tradition of supporting HCC students as they work toward their goals.”

To view scholarship opportunities and begin the application process, please go to: www.hcc.edu/scholarships.

The HCC Scholarship Resource Center, on the first floor of the Donahue Building (Room 158), is open Monday

through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., to help current and incoming students navigate the process of applying for scholarships.

The HCC Foundation is a 501(c)(3) that works to advance the college’s mission, vision, and values. Founded in 1968 as the Friends of Holyoke Community College, in response to a devastating fire that forced the college to rebuild on a new campus, the Foundation now manages assets of more than \$20 million, the largest community college foundation endowment in Massachusetts.

Questions should be directed to the HCC Foundation office at 413-552-2182, or by email to scholarships@hcc.edu.

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Irish Night in Holyoke 2026

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Additional Entertainment by The Cassin School of Irish Dance & Matt O'Connor of The Springfield Kiltie Band

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“Tis the event of the season! Happy St. Patrick's Day to all!”

Presented by The Ancient Order of Hibernians, James A. Curran Division One and The Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians Division Two of Hampden/Hampshire Counties

City to observe Black History Month

HOLYOKE – February is Black History Month, a designation that will be observed in Holyoke with a flag-raising ceremony and a performance of Gospel music, both on Monday, Feb. 2. The public is invited.

The year 2026 marks a century of national commemorations of Black history.

The flag-raising will take place outside City Hall at 3:30 p.m. The Rev. Bernard Smith, pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church, will give an invocation. Willie Spradley Jr., chair of the church's Public Awareness Committee, will speak on the creation of the commemoration by Dr.

Carter Godwin Woodson, one of the founders, in 1915, of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. Holyoke Mayor Joshua A. Garcia will read a proclamation.

Later that evening, at 7 p.m., Bethlehem Baptist Community Church will host a choir performance

under the direction of Terrence Haynes, director of Voices of Praise, a Christian Gospel music choir. Spradley will deliver remarks on "100 Years of Empowerment." This event is free and open to the public.

Bethlehem Baptist is located at 304 Elm Street.

Fall 2025 Dean's List

SPRINGFIELD – Western New England University is proud to announce the outstanding academic achievements of nearly 800 students named to the Fall 2025 semester Dean's List including:

- Davonte Westbrooks of Holyoke, MA
- Jerel Alves of Holyoke, MA
- Matthew Dumoulin of Holyoke, MA
- Jack Loughrey of Holyoke, MA

Gallagher named to WPI Fall 2025 Dean's List

WORCESTER – Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) has announced that Holyoke, resident Christopher Gallagher, a member of the class of 2029 majoring in Mechanical Engineering, was named to the university's Dean's List for academic excellence for the fall 2025 semester.

The criteria for the WPI Dean's List differ from that of most other universities as WPI does not compute a grade point average (GPA). Instead, WPI students are named to the Dean's List based on the amount of work completed at the A level in courses and hands-on projects.

Stevenson named to Clark University's Dean's List

WORCESTER – Brendan R. Stevenson, of Holyoke, Mass., was named to first honors on the Clark University Dean's List. This selection marks outstanding academic achievement during the Fall 2025 semester.

Students must have a GPA of 3.8 or above for first honors or a GPA between 3.50 and 3.79 for second honors.

AIC announces Dean's List

SPRINGFIELD – American International College (AIC) in Springfield, MA, is proud to announce that 489 students have earned a place on the Dean's List for the fall 2025 semester. These full-time students have attained GPAs ranging from 3.3 to 4.0. AIC applauds the dedication and achievements of these enterprising students.

- Elyse Manzi of Holyoke
- Willie Lopez Morales of Holyoke
- Haley Curtis of Holyoke
- Keila Oquendo of Holyoke

Women artists wanted for exhibit

HOLYOKE – Wistariahurst Museum is seeking artist submissions for the Fourth Annual Women's History Month juried art showcase for the month of March. This year, the theme is women's labor and community.

"Liberty and Labor" is an exhibit that corresponds with Massachusetts' 250th anniversary and Liberty and the Learning initiative. This exhibit urges artists to consider the efforts women have made throughout history through labor and community building. Historically, Women's labor has been undervalued and overlooked. Oftentimes, the work women have done in

areas such as homemaking, community building, and parenting, has not even been viewed as work. "Liberty and Labor" aims to highlight these efforts, and others, that showcase the hard work and dedication of women throughout history.

All mediums are welcome for submission. Submissions are open to anyone who identifies as a woman and non-binary artists of any age. Artists are welcome to submit 3-4 pieces, with high-quality images. Artists can submit their work through the online submission form linked below. Submissions are being accepted through Feb. 10.

Wistariahurst is an

artist-friendly space that encourages creativity and supports the growth of this region's artists. All questions are welcome and encouraged. Up to five artists will be selected as featured artists and will be awarded a \$100 stipend. This program is funded in part by a grant from the Holyoke Local Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Submissions are accepted through the submission form: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLS-fjaHj4eiWOEXmRZnC-d_23WGA8WQAW-6otMFLYCFXzH5BUNew/view-form?usp=publish-editor

Irish Night on Feb. 28

HOLYOKE – The Hibernians of Hampden/Hampshire Counties and Ladies Order invite the public to attend Irish Night in Holyoke 2026 on Feb. 28 at the Log Cabin 500 Easthampton Rd. Holyoke, Mass. Doors open at 5 p.m. and dinner is at 6:30 p.m.

The night will feature the Keohane and Kenneally Irish-American band and a corned beef and cabbage dinner with ribs. The price is \$50 per person and valet parking services will be available.

For reservations by Feb. 24 call Joe O'Connor at 413-627-7148, or Fran Hennessey at 413-785-5687 or online at eventbrite.com.

Additional entertainment by the Cassin School of Irish Dance and Piper Matt O'Connor. The night is in memory of Hibernian Daniel P. Curran and will benefit the Maurice A. Donahue Memorial Scholarship.

The Hibernians wish a Happy St. Patrick's Day to all.

Visit history room for Valentine workshop

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke History Room is hosting a free folded Valentine workshop for teens to adults on Saturday, Feb. 7 at 12:30 p.m. in the Holyoke Public Library Community Room (250 Chestnut St.). Led by book arts specialist Kate Ouimette and Eileen Crosby, the workshop will guide participants through the making of a "puzzle-purse."

Originating in medieval Japan, puzzle purses became a popular paper-folding craft in 18th and 19th-century America. They fold to a small square and unfold to reveal artwork and messages. They can even contain small gifts for their recipients. Participants will learn with plain paper and printed templates. Each can then make additional unique folded Valentines to embel-

lish and decorate with materials supplied at the workshop. Refreshments will be served. Pre-registration recommended (413-420-8107).

A selection of historic paper Valentines from the History Room's collection will also be on display.

The event is made possible by a grant from the Holyoke Local Cultural Council.

NOTICE
 ERRORS: Each advertiser is requested to check their advertisement the first time it appears. This paper will not be responsible for more than one corrected insertion, nor will be liable for any error in an advertisement to a greater extent than the cost of the space occupied by the item in the advertisement.

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The Holyoke Sun
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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 (with a word limit of up to 500 words) 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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Am I entitled to more Social Security as a Veteran?

Dear Rusty:

I served in the U.S. Army from July 1964 to July 1967. Am I eligible for a higher Social Security payment?

Thank you.

Signed:
Vietnam Era Army Vet

Dear Army Vet:

Please accept my sincere thanks for your military service. I believe you are referring to the "Special Extra Credit for Military Service," which has been the subject of many published articles. That refers to a special Social Security accommodation available only to those who served in the military during specific periods of time, but it does not add to your monthly Social Security payment. Rather, it adds to your military earnings record for the years you served, which may or may not result in a higher Social Security benefit when you later claim Social Security.

Here's how it works in your case:

Serving between 1964 and 1967, if you told Social Security of your military service when you applied for Social Security benefits or gave them a copy of your DD-214, they would have added up to \$1,200 per year to your military pay record. FYI, those who served after 1966 were automatically given earnings credit for their military service years. However, whether those special extra credits would affect your monthly Social Security benefit depends on your lifetime earnings record when you later claimed Social Security.

When you applied for benefits, Social Security reviewed your lifetime earnings and used the highest earning 35 years of earnings over your lifetime (adjusted for inflation) to calculate your "Primary Insurance Amount" or "PIA," which is what you get if you claim benefits to start at your Social Security full retirement age. If, after your military service, you had 35 or more years of earnings which were higher than your earnings while serving in the military, Social Security would have used your later higher earning years to calculate your benefit, and your military earnings would not have had an effect on your Social Security benefit. However, if any of your military earnings including the "special extra credits" were among the highest over your lifetime, then those higher military earnings would be included when calculating your Social Security benefit.

So, whether you would benefit from these "special extra credits for military service" depends largely on your earnings history after

you were discharged from active duty. If your military earnings were among the highest earning years over your lifetime, and you provided SSA with a copy of your DD-214 when you applied for Social Security, then your current SS benefit already includes consideration of your military service. FYI, Social Security should have asked about your military service when you applied. If you didn't tell SS about your military service when you applied for Social Security, or if you aren't sure, you should contact the SSA at 1.800-772-1213 and ask if you were given those "special extra credits for military service" for your 1960s military service years when you applied for Social Security. But if you had at least 35 years of higher earnings after you left military service, your current SS benefit is already based on those later higher earning years, and you will not get any additional Social Security benefit because of the "special extra credits" for your military service years.

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



Onion culture, continued

This morning, after reading last week's column, my mom commented, "Boy, I didn't realize onions are so challenging to grow."

Oh no, I truly hope that the column did not convey that message. I've been growing onions for years, and find them no more challenging than any other vegetable that you start indoors.

I hope I didn't discourage anyone. In fact, I hope just the opposite happened, whereby everyone purchased some seed to give growing onions a whirl.

Read on to learn more from where we left off last week.

Growing on

How does one achieve lots of top growth so that by seasons' end a big bulb will result? Provide sufficient moisture and nitrogen, and lots of it, but only early in the gardening season.

Amend a 100 square foot area with a bushel of aged manure or finished compost prior to planting, then top dress when plants are six-eight inches high and again for the last time three weeks later. Fish emulsion is a great foliar fertilizer for this purpose.

Because onions have

limited top growth and are relatively shallow rooted, it makes it hard for them to compete with more aggressive plants for moisture and nutrients. For that reason, be sure to address enemy #1: weeds!

I have found that a hand held circle hoe is great for getting into the narrow space between plants as well as within the rows. Perform this task once or twice a week and you will be weed-free all summer.

You can also apply grass clippings or chopped up leaves as mulch. It will reduce weeds and conserve moisture, and, as it breaks down add valuable organic matter to the soil.

As the summer solstice draws near, the need for nitrogen drops as the bulb switches from top growth to bulbing up. From this point on, no additional fertilizer is necessary and watering can be cut back some.

Harvesting

In early fall your onion

tops will begin to yellow and bend at the necks.

As mentioned earlier, reduced daylight has signaled the plant to go into dormancy.

When half have bent, bend them rest and allow them to remain in the garden just a few more days. If no rain is in the forecast, pull them up and lay them on edge in place, turning on occasion. This will begin the curing process.

Should rain threaten, they can easily be protected with a tarp or moved under cover.

After three days to a week of sunshine it is time to move them to an airy, dry location such as a shed to cure for an additional two-three weeks. Should this time frame include lots of rain or humidity, sometimes a household fan can help the drying process along.

Dry onions will definitely be the best for long term storage.

Storage

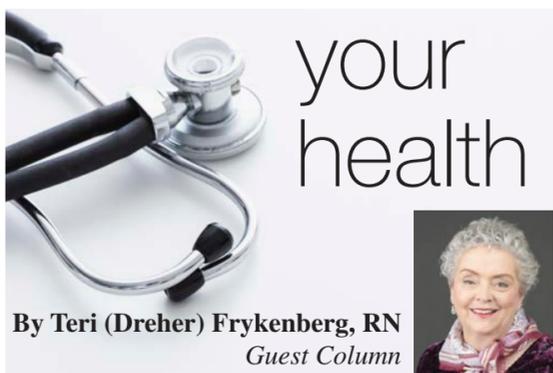
You have a good idea that your onions are ready for storage when the necks have withered away and the outer skin is dry and starts to slip. Nineteenth century gardeners would have braided and hung them in the root cellar, where cool and dry conditions

See GARDEN, page 5



by Roberta McQuaid

Have a heart: Patient advocate offers tips for Valentine's Day



By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN
Guest Column

We seem to love Valentine's Day. Americans are expected to spend \$27.7 billion on Valentine's Day this year, a tad more than last year, according to Capital One Shopping. The statistic I find most interesting is that 34% of that spending – \$9.5

billion – will be for gifts that are ultimately unwanted by their recipients.

So today, I will propose some Valentine's Day ideas that cost nothing and may well be more meaningful than candy, flowers or sappy cards. Have a heart, and try one of these "gifts" for your-

self or a loved one.

Volunteer: Volunteering contributes to your community and to your own well-being. Research has found that giving of yourself reduces stress and blood pressure; promotes physical activity; helps cultivate emotional well-being; and promotes mindfulness and an attitude of gratitude.

You get as much as you give, in other words. Find opportunities near you at idealists.org or search "volunteer opportunities near me" on your web browser.

Listen: Research shows that two out of every five people who have had a major cardiac episode experience symptoms of clinical depression, according to Northwestern University Medicine. The American Heart Association says 33%

of patients who have had a heart attack experience depression.

The combination of depression and cardiac disease can lead to poor outcomes. If a friend or loved one is diagnosed with heart disease or has a heart attack, one of the kindest things you can do is listen carefully to them. If you detect signs of depression, you can suggest – gently – that they consider being screened by their doctor.

Learn hands-only CPR: Especially since the pandemic, people are hesitant to share germs with a stranger, and I can't blame them. The good news is that compression-only CPR – or hands-only CPR – is the preferred form of cardiopulmo-

See HEALTH, page 5

The Holyoke Sun welcomes election letters to the editor

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

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

For more information, call 413-283-8393.

Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the newspa-

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

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

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Letters to the Editor have a maximum of 350 words. We require writers to include their name, address and phone number in order for our office to authenticate authorship prior to publication. Addresses and phone numbers are not published.

Unsigned or anonymous letters will NOT be published.

We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions. Libelous, unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks or defamation of character are not allowed.

Deadline for submissions is Wednesday at noon.

Please email (preferred) letters to thesun@turley.com. Mailed letters can be sent to The Sun, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069.



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Women empowerment brunch returns March 1

HOLYOKE – At a time when women are balancing rising economic pressure, caregiving responsibilities, and increasing burnout, The Becoming Initiative is bringing women together for something many say they rarely experience. A moment to pause, reconnect, and be supported.

On Sunday, March 1, The Becoming Initiative will host the She Decides Women's Empowerment Brunch at Wyckoff Country Club in Holyoke. The event is expected to serve more than 200 women from across Western Massachusetts and will launch a yearlong series of empowerment and per-

sonal development programming.

She Decides was created in response to what organizers describe as a growing need for spaces that support women beyond the workplace. Many women are leading families, contributing to the workforce, and holding communities together while quietly carrying emotional, financial, and personal burdens. The brunch creates a space where women can be seen, supported, and reminded of their value.

Last year's event sold out within two weeks. Attendees shared stories of renewed confidence, meaningful connection, and a

sense of clarity they had been missing. The response revealed a clear demand for continued programming focused on growth, leadership, and wellness.

This year's event will serve as a cornerstone fundraiser for The Becoming Initiative, a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing skill-based training, personal development, and transformational experiences for individuals at all stages of life. Funds raised will directly support workshops, community gatherings, and leadership focused initiatives throughout the year.

Women attending the brunch will participate in

guided conversation, storytelling, and moments of reflection designed to encourage personal growth and connection. Organizers say the goal is not just inspiration, but impact that extends long after the event ends.

"We created She Decides because women are constantly giving to everyone else and rarely have space to be poured into," said Nicole Polite, Founder and Executive Director of The Becoming Initiative. "This brunch is a reminder that women matter, their stories matter, and when women are supported, entire communities are strengthened."

The Becoming Initiative is currently seeking community partners, sponsors, and supporters who want to invest in women and help expand access to these experiences. Sponsorships help offset the cost for women who may not otherwise be able to attend and ensure the organization can continue its programming throughout the year.

Tickets and sponsorship opportunities are now available.

For more information about the She Decides Women's Empowerment Brunch or partnership opportunities, visit: <https://www.thebecominginitiative.org/events>.

Who will wear the 2026 crown

The Ms. Massachusetts Senior America Pageant Club is looking for their next queen. The pageant is open to women 60 years of age or older that may be interested in becoming a contestant in the next pageant. The pageant will be on Sunday, June 28, 2026 at Holyoke High School.

There will be a contestant orientation meeting on Friday, Feb. 20, 2026 at 1 p.m. in the wellness room, 2nd floor of the Holyoke Senior Center located at 291 Pine St.

HEALTH, from page 4

nary resuscitation.

While someone dials 911, bystanders can perform quick, strong compressions in the center of the chest to the rhythm of "Stayin' Alive," the BeeGees song, until first responders can arrive.

If started immediately, hands-only CPR has been shown to double or even triple a person's chance of survival. CPR classes are widely offered by the Red Cross and American Heart Association, as well as at YMCAs and recreation centers.

Take part in a clinical trial: This is a different form of volunteerism. Clinical trials offer an opportunity to help researchers find better ways of preventing and treating diseases, improving health for all. Without clinical trial volunteers, many of the medicines and scientific discoveries we enjoy today wouldn't exist.

At any given time, there are tens of thousands clinical trials taking place around the country and virtually. WGC CenterWatch (centerwatch.com) lets you browse study topics and find clinical trials near you.

Celebrate friendship:

I've written before about the importance of social relationships, and friendships in particular, in keeping our spirits up, our hearts full and our brains working.

So whether or not you have a special someone to celebrate Valentine's Day with this year, take time for alternate observances, such as Galentine's Day or its gender-neutral variation, Palentine's Day. They fall, technically, on February 13 – but you can pick any day in February to celebrate friendships, check up on each other's health and well-being, share healthful recipes and swap health and fitness tips. Maybe share a glass of wine, too.

Thank a nurse: Nursing is my life's work, formerly as a critical care nurse and now as a patient advocate who trains nurses to become advocates. I know how critical nursing is to good patient outcomes. According to the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, though, more than 138,000 nurses have left the workforce since 2022 and almost 40% intend to leave by 2029.

Health-care consumers may not be able to do much about working conditions, pay and administrative

problems, but we can help to make nurses' lives better. When you're in the hospital or doctor's office, thank your nurses for their time and care. You can also show your appreciation by nominating a nurse for the DAISY Award, a program that celebrates and recognizes nurses by collecting nominations from patients, families and co-workers. Learn more at daisyfoundation.org.

Valentine's Day began as a saint's feast day and now celebrates all forms of relationships. Make it yours.

Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, R.N., a registered nurse and board-certified patient advocate, is the founder of www.NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com, which trains medical professionals to become successful private patient advocates. A Monson, MA resident, she is the author of "How to Be a Healthcare Advocate for Yourself & Your Loved Ones" and her new book, "Advocating Well: Strategies for Finding Strength and Understanding in Health Care," available at Amazon.com. Contact her at Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com to set up a free phone consultation.

GARDEN, from page 4

would, fingers crossed, keep them fit for use as needed into the spring months.

Onion braids have modern day appeal – they look pretty and it is easy to simply tug the perfect size onion from the braid as you need it. The key to success is to attach twine or string to at least one of the braiding strands – this will give your braid strength, not to mention a way of hanging it up.

We can also store onions in mesh bags or old hosiery in a household location that remains close to freezing and relatively dry. My unheated mudroom works great.

Here simply cut the tops to one inch prior to bagging up. When you are going through them to cut, or braid, be sure to separate out those with double bulbs, as well as those whose necks remain thick; neither will be good keepers and should be

used first.

This is also a great time to think about good traits and the prospect of saving some of your best onions for seed production.

Save the seeds

Saving the seeds of your open-pollinated, non-hybrid onions is the next frontier for allium aficionados. In the north, we employ what is called the "bulb to seed" method.

Our bulbs are harvested normally and stored over the winter, and when the ground is ready for planting, three or four of your best onions are replanted three inches apart. Soon a flower stalk will form. It can get quite tall (three-five feet!) so place a stake for support early on and tie it off as you need to.

After the flower head has formed be on watch for the black seeds to ripen and loosen up – you want to catch them before they shatter. This can be accomplished by clipping a few sections of

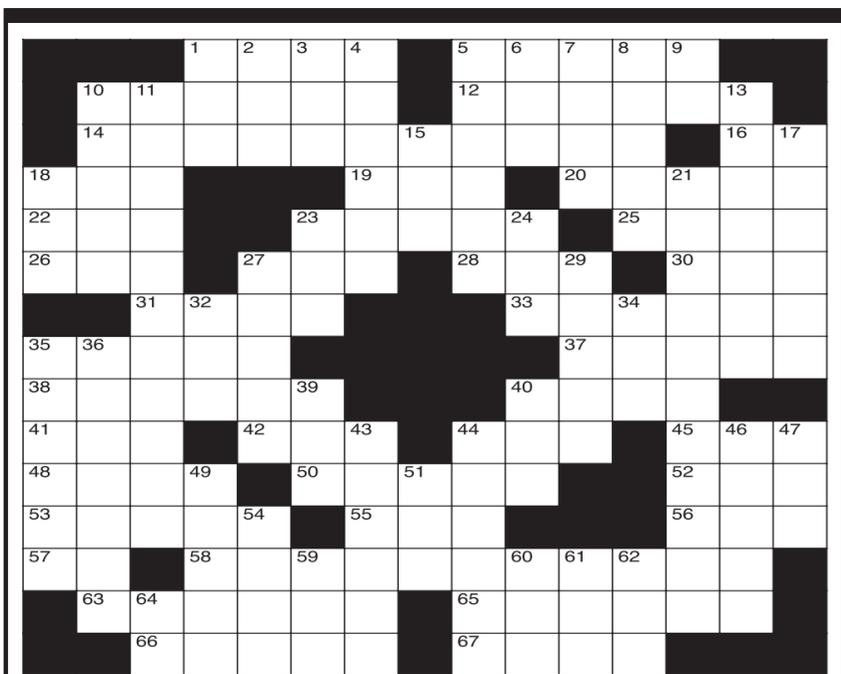
the head at a time.

Dry in an airy spot for a few days before storing in paper envelopes in a cool, dry location for use the following spring. Be advised that to avoid cross pollination, only one variety of onion can be in flower at a time; it is fine, however, to have first year onions in the garden.

Onion seeds are viable for one-two years.

Now that you know the ins and outs of onion culture, embrace the challenge and try growing onions from seed this year.

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.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Native American group of N. California
5. Geological times (Brit. sp.)
10. Tool to remove
12. Rods
14. One who renews
16. They precede C
18. Chatter incessantly
19. ___ King Cole, musician
20. Insect parts
22. One from Utah
23. The world of the dead
25. Singer Redding
26. NBA legend Nelson
27. Indicates wrongly
28. Unhappy
30. Anger
31. Dark brown
33. Some are in kitchens
35. Made a mistake

CLUES DOWN

37. Damp
38. Type of fuel
40. Actor Damon
41. What thespians do
42. One's mother
44. Disallow
45. Swiss river
48. A banana has one
50. Philippines lake and volcano are two
52. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
53. Agave
55. Journalist Tarbell
56. One-time tech giant
57. Indicates upon
58. Intestinal bacteria
63. Loose sheaths around the spinal cord
65. It goes with nook
66. A fashion
67. Very eager to hear or see

CLUES DOWN

1. Witch
2. Utilize
3. Writing utensil
4. Where rockers go to work
5. Subsides
6. Consume
7. Greek mythological figures
8. California mountain town
9. Tin
10. Muse of lyric and love poetry
11. Animates anew
13. Humorous criticisms
15. Cool!
17. Worst
18. Wet dirt
21. Designed to be useful
23. Hebrew unit of liquid capacity
24. High schoolers' test

CLUES DOWN

27. Computer device
29. Indian territory ___ and Diu
32. A place to sleep
34. Al tool
35. Pass or go by
36. Indicates a purchase
39. A digital tape recording of sound
40. More (Spanish)
43. Disfigured
44. White (Spanish)
46. Church building
47. Georgia rockers
49. Type of surgery
51. Much ___ about nothing
54. Make by braiding
59. Local area network
60. Unit of work or energy
61. Member of indigenous people of Thailand
62. Liquefied natural gas
64. Distance to top

CROSSWORD ANSWER on page 9

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frduyle@blessedsacramentholyoke.org
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 Facebook: First Baptist Church of Holyoke, MA
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 Email: pastor@ourladyofthecross.com
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parish@ourladyofthecross.com
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 Saturday 3:15pm
 Anytime by Appointment
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Jordan King gets the easy layup.

Knights pull away from Brownies

AGAWAM – The Holyoke High School boys basketball team was able to pull away late, defeating host Agawam 65-52 last Friday night.

The Brownies and Knights played a fast-paced physical game, and while Agawam kept scoring late,

Holyoke did not stop scoring either, and the Knights were able to hold to their double-digit lead.

Agawam lost its third straight, and fell to 7-8 on the season.

Holyoke picked up just its third win of the year, and the Knights are 3-9 now.



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli Above, Cosmo Bond tries to snag a rebound. Left, Holyoke's offense starts a play.



Julian Fasoli makes a bounce pass to a teammate.



Gian Cora tries to get away from an opponent.



Holyoke loses to SICS

HOLYOKE – Last Friday night, Holyoke High School girls basketball continued to struggle on offense, losing to SICS 53-31. Michaela Guzman and Juliana Pirela had nine points each in the defeat. Holyoke is just 3-13 on the season.



Janessa Torres makes an easy shot.



Julianna Pirela heads for the basket.



Sujelyz Peralta shoots in traffic.



Michaela Guzman takes a free throw.



Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com Kyra Lippman hustles into the paint.



Genesis Rivera looks down the court as a play sets up.



Leah Robert heads for a layup.

Cougars get first win of the season

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College men's basketball has played well during the second half of their campaign and notched their first victory of the season last Thursday night after coming very close in recent games. The Cougars earned an 84-74 road win over local rival Springfield Technical CC. Holyoke trailed by three at halftime before outscoring their opposition 48-35 in the second half to secure the victory.

Dylan Rohan (Holyoke, MA / Holyoke HS) spearheaded the offense in the win, scoring 30 points which included three three-pointers. Kerteek Cheema (Morgan Hill CA / American HS) and Gabriel Ibekilo (Belchertown, MA / Belchertown HS) put forth stellar performances, each registering a double-double in the contest. Cheema scored 14 points and led the Cougars in assists with ten. He shot 4 for 4 from the free throw line and sank a pair of three pointers. Ibekilo led Holyoke with 11 rebounds and scored ten points. As a center, he rarely attempts three-pointers but drained his first of the season in the win. James Fitzgibbons (Hadley, MA / Hopkins Academy) scored 20 points while shooting 6 of 7 from the free throw line.

Men's basketball improves their regional record to 1-14 and their overall record to 1-18.

Worcester Railers score weekend sweep over Wheeling Nailers

WORCESTER – The Railers are two points richer today thanks to a generous donation by Parker Gahagen.

He turned in one of the best goaltending performances in team history Sunday. Gahagen stopped 34 shots to blank the Wheeling Nailers, 1-0. The victory allowed Worcester to sweep a 3 in 3 weekend against the team with the best record in the North Division.

The Railers have won five straight games overall. It is their longest winning streak since they won the first nine games of the 2022-23 season.

The game's only goal was scored by Anthony Callin at 12:05 of the first period. He was set up nice-

ly right in front by Riley Ginnell, who slid a pass to him from behind the goal line. All things considered, there seemed to be no way that 1-0 score would stand up for about 48 more minutes.

In fact, Wheeling dominated play for the next half hour. The Nailers had a 12-5 edge in shots after one period, then outshot the home team by 15-2 in the second period. Gahagen's goaltending allowed Worcester to survive that onslaught.

It was his first Railers shutout during this season by a Worcester goaltender. It was just the fourth Railers 1-0 victory of all time, the second ever at the DCU Center, the first here since Mitch Gillam beat Reading

on Dec. 17, 2017.

Gahagen was in net for his team's 6-3 victory on Friday night, a match with an entirely different feel to it. Score almost doesn't matter, Gahagen said, although the shutout was very nice.

"My mindset is to keep them wherever they are, whether it's zero or two," he added. "Keep them there and keep the momentum in our favor."

The whitewash was his 14th pro shutout covering three leagues, the AHL, ECHL and SPHL. They don't count for any more points than a 6-5 game, but they are relatively unique.

"It doesn't happen that often," Gahagen said. "A lot of factors, a lot of pieces

have to fall into place. So it is a little more special when it happens because it doesn't happen that often."

Gahagen has been good wherever he has played but there seems to be something about the DCU Center. He is perfect in seven starts here including six wins with the Railers and one against the Railers, with Reading in October of 2024.

"It takes a lot of patience and confidence in their game," coach Nick Tuzzolino said of the triumph, "and also understanding that their defense can win the game. I think that was the big lesson. I said to them after the game — did we have our best stuff all night, and the

answer was no.

"That's not gonna happen with a 3 in 3. But when it came to crunch time we were able to make the right plays and be smart and that's what we were able to do."

This was the third straight game in which the Railers scored first and they never trailed throughout the entire 180 — make that 182-plus — minutes of hockey. They got off to a strong start Sunday and given how tired both teams were, a wide-open game was a definite possibility.

Callin never thought his early one would be the only goal.

"I was hoping we'd get more of the same," he said. Wheeling goal-

der Taylor Gauthier was not as busy as Gahagen but as the Railers regained the momentum in the third period, Gauthier same excellent saves. He wound up with 17 for the day.

This a major step for the Railers in their push for a playoff berth but they are in a pack of teams that are in contention.

"It definitely makes us feel good," Tuzzolino said of the sweep, "but it is kind of short lived. If you look at our division, everybody's winning."

If they keep getting the goaltending they've been getting from Gahagen and Tristan Lennox, the Railers may not win every game, but they will have a chance to.

Registration now underway for QVBL

SOUTH HADLEY – Registration has opened for the Quabbin Valley Baseball League, an over-28 recreational league, held its first meeting of 2026 to prepare for the upcoming season.

For the 2026 season, the cost will be \$215 and will include a 16th game added to the regular season schedule.

During the 2025 season, the league experimented with playing on Mother's Day Saturday as well as a weeknight game to allow players an opportunity to play under the lights. While the night games were very successful, the Mother's Day Saturday games were rained out.

Those elements will return along with a 16th

game with an opponent to be determine as the league's board explores possibilities for interleague matchups with another league in the region.

For returning players to the league, the deadline is Mar. 22 at 12 noon to be registered for the 2026 season in order to be guaranteed a roster spot. There will be open practices for all players but specifically targeted at new players scheduled for March 29 and April 4 at times and locations to be announced. The draft is currently scheduled to take place on April 4 following that practice.

The season is currently slated to start on Sunday, April 19 and following the success of the six-team fall

league last year, the league will also have a fall league in September and October this season.

The registration is live at www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org. Players must register and then pay the league dues via Venmo or contact the league leadership if an alternate form of payment is needed.

Aside from the weeknight and Mother's Day games, other games take place Sundays at 10 a.m. outside of Mother's Day, Memorial Day and July 4 weekends. Playoffs will be in August.

This is the 30th season for the league and league officials are looking to celebrate the anniversary with a couple of events.

Thunderbirds get better of Wolf Pack

SPRINGFIELD – The Springfield Thunderbirds (16-20-4-2) muscled their way past their I-91 rivals, the Hartford Wolf Pack (16-21-4-1), capturing a 4-1 win on Saturday night before a sellout crowd of 6,793 inside the MassMutual Center.

For a second straight night, Steve Ott's team got off to a quick start as Marc-Andre Gaudet jumped up through the slot area, received a drop feed from Matthew Peca, and picked the glove side on Dylan Garand to give Springfield the 1-0 jump at 6:55 of the first.

After a 2-for-3 night on the power play on Friday, the T-Birds man advantage did not get

off to a strong beginning on Saturday, as back-to-back penalties brought an early end to a Springfield advantage and, instead, handed Hartford a 5-on-3. Brendan Brisson cashed in from there, one-timing a Justin Dowling pass through the wickets of Georgi Romanov at 13:20, equalizing the score, 1-1.

The T-Birds settled into the game as the second period began and, once again, a blueliner had the tone-setting goal for Springfield as Hunter Skinner glided down the left circle and snapped a bar-down wristler over Garand's glove at 3:38 of the second, restoring the T-Birds lead, 2-1.

Just over four minutes later, Otto Stenberg made a savvy play, sneaking behind the net to steal a drop pass from Garand and setting up Dillon Dube for a wide-open net at the edge of the crease, extending Springfield's advantage to 3-1 at 8:13 of the period.

Like Friday night, the Springfield defense and goaltending locked things down in the final period, as the penalty kill successfully thwarted a pair of Hartford advantages, and Chris Wagner added his fourth goal in as many games played into an empty net with 3:00 remaining to seal the T-Birds' second straight win.

In The News

Horace Smith Scholarship applications now being accepted for eligible students

WESTFIELD – The Horace Smith Fund will be awarding \$317,000 in scholarships and fellowships to residents of Hampden County, who have also graduated from an eligible high school or private school. This year 21 scholarships, four fellowships and one William R. Rooney

Award for students with special needs will be presented to recipients at the June 18 Awards Night ceremony at Storowton Carriage House in West Springfield.

Scholarships are offered not only to graduating high school seniors but also to students already in college

or those wishing to return to college. Scholarships of \$12,000 are distributed as \$3,000 annually and renewable each year until graduation. Fellowship awards of \$15,000 are distributed as \$7,500 annually and renewable for one additional year to students pursuing a full-time

graduate degree. Students must maintain at least a B average to renew.

Recipients are selected on a variety of criteria, including academic records, merit, and financial need. Of great importance is a personal written account of why the student feels deserving of finan-

cial assistance. Applicants must submit their transcripts and, if applicable, college entrance exam scores or graduate degree specific tests, and three letters of recommendation.

Completed applications must be received either electronically or be mailed to

The Horace Smith Fund at 16 Union Avenue, Suite 2K, Westfield, MA 01085 no later than March 15, 2026. Applications are available at local high school guidance offices, college financial aid offices, and on-line at www.HoraceSmithFund.org or by phoning (413) 739-4222.

CLOSING, from page 1

than \$275,000 each year.

"Despite years of parish subsidies, fundraising efforts, and cost controls, the gap has continued to grow," Le said. "To sustain the school with our current enrollment, tuition would have need to rise to well over \$9,000 per student. I do not believe this is

reasonable for families, nor would it realistically address the enrollment challenge."

Le said multiple options were considered in an effort to keep the school open, including grade reconfiguration, staffing structures, and financial assumptions. No matter which scenario explored, there were significant financial challenges and would cost families more to send their students to the school.



Invitation to contribute to Wheels of Hope Car Show Fundraiser

The Wheels for Hope 3rd Annual Car Show Cancer Fundraiser would like to extend a heartfelt invitation to join them in supporting this important cause.

As you may already know, cancer affects the lives of millions of people around the world, touching families and communities in a profound way. They are dedicated to making a difference in the fight against cancer and believe that together we can make an impact.

The car show fundraiser

will not only be a celebration of automotive culture but also an opportunity to raise funds for cancer research, treatment, and support programs. The event will bring together car enthusiasts and community members and supporters of the cause for a day of fun, entertainment, and meaningful connections.

Individuals and businesses who share the passion for making a positive difference in the lives of those affected by cancer are urged to join. Support will

help make this event a success and contribute to the work being done to fight this disease. (Please note that any donations are tax deductible under Wheels of Hope Corporation EIN: 33-4653136)

Here are some ways you can get involved and show support:

1. Monetary donations: Your generous contribution will directly support cancer research, patient care, and support services.
2. Sponsorship

Opportunities: become an official sponsor of the event and receive recognition and promotional benefits in return for your support.

3. In-Kind donations: donate goods or services that can be used for the event activities, raffles.

4. Attend the event: June 27, 2026 High and Cabot St. Holyoke from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Carmen Rodriguez (413) 210-8896 or email at cnrodriuez1967@gmail.com.

FINALISTS, from page 1

Hampshire, followed by 6:30 p.m. interview.

The Holyoke Public Schools stated that for those who wish to watch the interviews online, they will be streamed to the School Committee page of the district website. The livestream videos will become visible on the page just below the list of School Committee meeting dates when the interviews begin. The recordings of all three interviews will be posted on the School Committee page on Friday, Feb. 13 for anyone who wishes to watch them at a later date.

School Committee

members will also visit each candidate's current school district and will meet with some of their colleagues as they seek to gain deeper insights into each candidate's background and experiences.

Candidates will also spend time touring HPS and meeting with small groups of staff members and students while they are on site for their in-person meet-and-greets and formal interviews with the School Committee.

The three finalists were selected from among nine applications received in December, following a screening process led by 12 volunteers who served on the Superintendent Search

Screening Committee. The committee reviewed all nine applications that had been received and selected five candidates for confidential semi-finalist interviews in January. The Screening Committee shared their recommendations for finalist candidates during the School Committee meeting on January 26. The School Committee is expected to make their decision later this winter.

Anthony Soto is the current assistant superintendent and chose not to seek the position. He was also the final receiver/superintendent appointed by the state to serve the district before it was turned back over to the city.

TAYLOR, from page 1

felt deeply, and I'm grateful that my journey in sport has played even a small role in celebrating that shared pride. I look forward to joining the festivities in Holyoke and celebrating the spirit, resilience, and heart that define our Irish story."

"Winning a gold medal for Ireland at the 2012 London Olympics, Katie Taylor became the undisputed and undefeated lightweight world champion in 2019 and is considered by many to be the greatest female boxer of all time," said Síghle FitzGerald, Consul General of Ireland in Boston. "Sport provides the world with a window into Ireland and the Irish people, while also giving Irish people at home and abroad a power-

ful means of expressing our identity on the international stage."

Consul General FitzGerald added: "Katie Taylor is a true exemplar of the modern Irish woman and a superb role model for young women around the globe. She has demonstrated her commitment to her sport, represented her country with distinction internationally, and continues to play a vital role in her own community through the charities she supports. I welcome the decision of the Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade Committee to honor Katie with the 2026 Ambassador Award and look forward to supporting the upcoming Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade programming during Irish American Heritage Month."

Katie Taylor will be



Katie Taylor

honored at the Ambassador Award Breakfast on Sunday, March 22, the morning of the parade, at the Wyckoff Country Club in Holyoke. For details and ticket information, please visit the Parade Committee's website.

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HELP WANTED

The Resident Care Facility at Saint Joseph's Abbey, 167 North Spencer Road, Spencer, MA has an opening for a **PART TIME FACILITY COOK.** Hourly wage negotiable depending on experience and related skills. Requirements: High School Diploma or GED. Ability to speak and read English required. Must be able to understand written policies and procedures. Must be able to work unsupervised while following food safety protocols.

For more information and to apply, contact **Wally Connor, Facility/HR Manager** at **(508) 885-8700 Ext. 550** or by email: wally@spencerabbey.org

The Town of Huntington is seeking a part-time Town Hall **Floater/Selectboard Administrative Assistant/Assistant Town Clerk.** \$20-\$22 per hour based on experience. 15 hours per week. Application and complete job description are available online at www.huntingtonma.us or by emailing admin@huntingtonma.us. Position is open until filled. Town of Huntington is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Wilbraham United Church is hiring a part-time, experienced **ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT/BOOKKEEPER.** Apply to **Wilbraham United Church, Attention: Alesia; 500 Main Street; Wilbraham, MA 01095.** More information at www.wilbrahamunitedchurch.org/about-us-2/

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All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status (number of children and or pregnancy), national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, or any intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination. This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertising in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain about discrimination call The Department of Housing and Urban Development "HUD" toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. For the N.E. area, call HUD at 617-565-5308. The toll free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

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Public Notices

LEGAL NOTICE

HOLYOKE GAS & ELECTRIC

ELECTRIC LINE

CONTRACTOR – 15KV Spacer Cable Installation 2.0

Sealed proposals for the above contract will be received by Holyoke Gas & Electric until **2:30 p.m., March 3, 2026** at the office of the Manager, 99 Suffolk Street, Holyoke, MA 01040, at which time proposals will be publicly opened and read.

Prevailing Wage Rates

Rates which apply to the work shall be paid to all people engaged in work under this contract.

Bid Deposit

A Bid Deposit equal to 5% of bid must accompany all bids and may be in the form of a certified, treasurer's, or cashier's check payable to HG&E from a responsible bank or trust company; cash; or a bid bond from a licensed surety payable to HG&E. Additional information may be obtained from:

Chi Wong

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

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

Please mark SEALED envelopes "Bid for Electric Line Contractor – 15KV Spacer Cable Installation 2.0" and address them to:

James M. Lavelle

Holyoke Gas & Electric
99 Suffolk Street
Holyoke, MA 01040
02/06/2026

LEGAL NOTICE

HOLYOKE GAS & ELECTRIC

Restoration of Manhole No. 28

Sealed bids for the above contract will be received by Holyoke Gas & Electric until **2:00 p.m. March 3, 2026** at the office of the Manager, 99 Suffolk Street, Holyoke, MA 01040, at which time proposals will be publicly opened and read.

Bid Deposit

A Bid Deposit equal to 5% of the total value of the bid must accompany all bids and may be in the form of a certified, treasurer's, or cashier's check payable to HG&E from a responsible bank or trust company; cash; or a bid bond from a licensed surety payable to HG&E.

Prevailing Wage Rates

Rates, which are to apply to the work, are set by the MA Department of Labor and Industries.

Additional information may be obtained from:

Chi Wong

99 Suffolk Street
Holyoke, MA 01040
413.536.9308
cwong@hged.com

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

Please mark SEALED envelopes "Bid for Restoration of Manhole No. 28" and address them to:

James M. Lavelle, Manager

Holyoke Gas & Electric Dept
99 Suffolk St
Holyoke, MA 01040
02/06/2026

City of Holyoke

Notice of Public Hearing

The DGR Committee of the Holyoke City Council will hold a public hearing to hear a Special permit for home occupation of Mustafa Ibic at 60 Westfield Road (122-00-017) for Custom Tailor tailor shop per 4.8.2. Hearing will take place on **Monday, February 23, 2026 at 6:30 pm** at Holyoke City Hall 536 Dwight St and can be accessed remotely via www.zoom.us Meeting ID 868 5829 9033 Meeting Passcode 872395 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 with same Meeting ID and Passcode. For a copy of the application or to provide comments, please contact City Council Admin Asst Jeffery Anderson-Burgos at Anderson-BurgosJ@holyoke.org or by phone 413-322-5525. 02/06, 02/13/2026

City of Holyoke

Notice of Public Hearing

The Ordinance Committee of the Holyoke City Council as well as the Holyoke Planning Board will hold separate public

hearings to hear a zoning ordinance text change proposal to make the necessary changes to clarify parking on residential properties and create an enforcement structure. Planning Board public hearing will be held on **Tuesday, February 24th, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. via www.zoom.us** Meeting ID: 870 5374 1582 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 with same meeting ID. Ordinance Committee public hearing will be held on Tuesday, February 24th at 6:30pm at Holyoke City Hall 536 Dwight St and can be accessed remotely via www.zoom.us Meeting ID 829 8811 9233 Meeting Passcode 749060 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 with same Meeting ID and Passcode. To provide comments to the Planning Board, please contact Brianna Tejada at tejadab@holyoke.org. To provide comments to the Ordinance Committee, please contact City Council Admin Asst Jeffery Anderson-Burgos at Anderson-BurgosJ@holyoke.org or by phone 413-322-5525.

Planning Board Chair
Lauren Nile,
Ordinance Chair
Meg Magrath-Smith
02/06, 02/13/2026

City of Holyoke

Notice of Public Hearing

The Ordinance Committee of the Holyoke City Council as well as the Holyoke Planning Board will hold separate public hearings to hear a zoning ordinance text change proposal to add a definition of "Data Centers" as a use, and to clarify that this use is not allowable in any zoning district in the city. Planning Board public hearing will be held on **Tuesday, February 24th, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. via www.zoom.us** Meeting ID: 870 5374 1582 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 with same meeting ID. Ordinance Committee public hearing will be held on Tuesday, February 24th at 6:30pm at Holyoke City Hall 536 Dwight St and can be accessed remotely via www.zoom.us Meeting ID 829 8811 9233 Meeting Passcode 749060 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 with same Meeting ID and Passcode. To provide comments to the Planning Board, please contact Brianna Tejada at tejadab@holyoke.org. To provide comments to the Ordinance Committee, please contact City Council Admin Asst Jeffery Anderson-Burgos at Anderson-BurgosJ@holyoke.org or by phone 413-322-5525.

Planning Board Chair
Lauren Niles
Ordinance Chair
Meg Magrath-Smith
02/06, 02/13/2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

The Trial Court

Probate and Family Court

Hampden Probate and Family Court

50 State Street

Springfield, MA 01103

Docket No.

HD25P1421GD

In the interests of

D'Anthony Omar Fermaint of Holyoke, MA

Minor

NOTICE AND ORDER:

Petition for Appointment of Guardian of a Minor

NOTICE TO ALL

INTERESTED PARTIES

1. Hearing Date/Time: A hearing on a Petition for Appointment of Guardian of a Minor filed on **07/08/2025** by **William W Vazquez** of Holyoke, MA will be held **02/17/2026 08:30 AM Motion**. Located: **Probate and Family Court, 4th Floor, 50 State Street, Springfield, MA 01103.**

2. Response to Petition: You may respond by filing a written response to the Petition or by appearing in person at the hearing. If you choose to file a written response, you need to:

File the original with the Court; and

Mail a copy to all interested parties at least five (5) business days before the hearing.

3. Counsel for the Minor: The minor (or an adult on behalf of the minor) has the right to request that counsel be appointed for the minor.

4. Counsel for Parents: If you are a parent of the minor child who is the subject of this proceeding you have a right to be represented by an attorney. If you want an attorney and cannot afford to pay for one and if you give proof that you are indigent, an attorney will be assigned to you. Your request for an attorney should be made immediately by filling out the Application of Appointment of Counsel form. Submit the application form in person or by mail at the court location where your case is going to be heard.

5. Presence of the Minor at Hearing: A minor over age 14 has the right to be present at any hearing, unless the Court finds that it is not in the minor's best interests.

Date: January 20, 2026

Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
02/06/2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

The Trial Court

Probate and Family Court

Hampden Division

Docket No.

HD22P2487EA

Estate of:

Daniel Francis Griffin

Date of Death:

August 19, 2022

INFORMAL PROBATE

PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Maureen A. O'Driscoll of Holyoke, MA.**

Maureen A. O'Driscoll of Holyoke, MA has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve **without surety** on the bond.

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

02/06/2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

The Trial Court

Probate and Family Court

Hampden Probate and Family Court

50 State Street

Springfield, MA 01103

Docket No.

HD25D1041DR

Christian J Lorenzo vs.

Elsa M Lorenzo

DIVORCE SUMMONS

BY PUBLICATION

AND MAILING

To the Defendant:
The Plaintiff has filed a Complaint for Divorce requesting that the Court grant a divorce for Irretrievable Breakdown.

The Complaint is on file at the Court.

An Automatic Restraining Order has been entered in this matter preventing you from taking any action which would neg-

atively impact the current financial status of either party. **SEE Supplemental Probate Court Rule 411.**

You are hereby summoned and required to serve upon:

Christian J Lorenzo
Comorant 627 Randall Rd
Ludlow, MA 01056

your answer, if any, on or before **03/25/2026**. If you fail to do so, the court will proceed to the hearing and adjudication of this action. You are also required to file a copy of your answer, if any, in the office of the Register of this Court

WITNESS, Hon. Claudine T. Stoudemire, First Justice of this Court.

Date: January 30, 2026

Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
02/06/2026

City of Holyoke

Office of Purchasing

Invitation to Bid

IFB 2026-22 DPW

Main Street

Intersection Improvements:

Local Bottleneck Reduction

Program

Sealed bids for Main Street Intersection Improvements: Local Bottleneck Reduction Program, Holyoke, MA will be received on March 3, 2026 at the City of Holyoke Office of Procurement, 536 Dwight Street, Room 3, Holyoke, Massachusetts 01040, Attn: Jaime Morrow, Chief Procurement Officer until 2 PM prevailing time, at which said Bids will be publicly opened and read aloud. All bids shall be submitted within a sealed envelope addressed to the "City of Holyoke Office of Procurement, 536 Dwight Street, Room 3, Holyoke, Massachusetts 01040, Attn: Jaime Morrow, Chief Procurement Officer" and titled "Main Street Intersection Improvements: Local Bottleneck Reduction Program, Bid#2026-22DPW". The work under this contract shall include furnishing the necessary labor, transportation, tools, equipment, materials, and appurtenances to make traffic signal improvements on Main Street in Holyoke between the intersections of Berkshire St and Sargeant St, including replacement of signage and pavement markings as well other incidental work. Bidding procedures shall be in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 30, Section 39 M as amended. Attention is called to the minimum wage rates required to be paid for all labor on this project. Wage rates are established in schedules issued by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, in accordance with Section 26A - 27D, or Chapter 149 of the M.G.L., as amended. **Beginning at 10 AM on February 4, 2026, all project documents will be**

distributed and supplied by the City of Holyoke's in electronic format only. Submit requests for documents to Jaime Morrow, Chief Procurement Officer, at morrowj@holyoke.org between the hours of 8:30 AM and 4:30 PM. Requests shall include firm name and address, contact name and title, email address, and telephone number. **The estimated value of this contract, including all bid alternates, is \$373,163.00. The bidder Contractor shall also be MassDOT, Highways Division, Prequalified in the class of work "HIGHWAY - CONSTRUCTION" or "TRAFFIC SIGNALS". An award will not be made to a Contractor who is not pre-qualified with the MassDOT Highway Division prior to the opening of proposals.** The bidder agrees that its bid shall be good and may not be withdrawn for a period of 45 days, Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays excluded, after the opening of the bids. The Awarding Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids, and/or waive any informality, if it is deemed to be in the public interest to do so. No electronic submissions allowed. 02/06/2026

City of Holyoke

PUBLIC HEARINGS

The Ordinance Committee of the **Holyoke City Council** as well as the **Holyoke Planning Board** will hold separate public hearings to hear a zoning ordinance text change proposal to review potential changes to operating times of cannabis dispensaries. **Planning Board public hearing will be held on Tuesday, February 10, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. via www.zoom.us** Meeting ID: 870 5374 1582 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 with same meeting ID. **Ordinance Committee public hearing will be held on Wednesday, March 4, 2026 at 6:30pm at Holyoke City Hall 536 Dwight St and can be accessed remotely via zoom.** us Meeting ID 873 9001 6319 Meeting Passcode 613009 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 with same Meeting ID and Passcode.

To provide comments to the Planning Board, please contact Brianna Tejada at tejadab@holyoke.org. To provide comments to the Ordinance Committee, please contact City Council Admin Asst Jeffery Anderson-Burgos at Anderson-BurgosJ@holyoke.org or by phone 413-322-5525.

Planning Board Chair,
Lauren Niles
Ordinance Chair,
Meg Magrath-Smith
01/23, 01/30, 02/06/2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

The Trial Court

Probate and Family Court

Hampden Probate and Family Court

50 State Street

Springfield, MA 01103

Docket No.

HD25D1041DR

Christian J Lorenzo vs.

Elsa M Lorenzo

DIVORCE SUMMONS

BY PUBLICATION

AND MAILING

To the Defendant:
The Plaintiff has filed a Complaint for Divorce requesting that the Court grant a divorce for Irretrievable Breakdown.

The Complaint is on file at the Court.

An Automatic Restraining Order has been entered in this matter preventing you from taking any action which would neg-

Probate and Family Court

Hampden Probate and Family Court

50 State Street

Springfield, MA 01103

Docket No.

HD10P0727PM

In the matter of:

Elba Rosario

of Holyoke, MA

Protected Person/

Disabled Person/Respondent

CITATION GIVING

NOTICE OF

CONSERVATOR'S

ACCOUNT

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, you are hereby notified pursuant to Rule 72 of the Supplemental Rules of the Probate & Family Court, that the **first and second and final account(s) of Kari Nykorchuk of Northampton, MA** as Conservator of the property of said Respondent has or have been presented to the Court for allowance.

You have the right to object to the account(s). If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this court on or before **02/24/2026**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to object to the account(s). If you fail to file the written appearance and objection by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you, including the allowance of the account(s).

Additionally, within thirty days after said return day (or within such other time as the Court upon motion may order), you must file a written affidavit of objections stating the specific facts and grounds upon which each objection is based and a copy shall be served upon the Conservator pursuant to Rule 3 of the Supplemental Rules of the Probate & Family Court.

You have the right to send to the Conservator, by registered or certified mail, a written request to receive a copy of the Petition and account(s) at no cost to you.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

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

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

Date: January 15, 2026

Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate

02/06/2026



FIVE ISLANDS

Georgetown, Maine
2 Bedrooms, 2 Bathroom
Washer/Dryer, Fully Equipped

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Skating by...



Hector Rodriguez holds hands and skates with his daughter, Alina.



Isabelle Gonzalez and Brittany Rodriguez carefully navigate the ice.



Mayor Joshua Garcia tries out the new attraction.



At-Large City Councilor Michael Sullivan joins in the fun.



Vaida Garcia keeps her balance on the ice.



Khaleesidh Prophet is focused as he speeds along the trail.



Genesis Kelly enjoys her time on ice skates.
Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

WELCOME
WE ARE
OPEN
PLEASE COME IN

DON'T MISS OUT!

THE HOLYOKE SUN,
TOWN REMINDER, &
CHICOPEE REGISTER

is offering our local businesses an **AMAZING** opportunity to advertise at a **reduced rate!**

ONLY \$275!

this special section will run in **ALL 3 PAPERS** February 27 issue *The Holyoke Sun, Town Reminder, AND Chicopee Register!!!*

Ad Deadline: FEBRUARY 18, 2026

Quarter page ad (5.25" x 9.6") \$275
Half page ad (10.75" x 9.6") \$460
Full page ad (10.75" x 19.5") \$650

\$50 SPOT COLOR/\$100 FULL COLOR

Dining, Entertainment,
Shopping & More!

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(413) 532-3600
thevillagecommons.com

Contact Wendy Delcamp to reserve your space today
413-237-4245 or wdelcamp@turley.com

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thesun@turley.com