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City takes step toward self-funded health insurance

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – At the finance committee meeting on Jan. 31, Treasurer Rory Casey presented on why the city should switch to a self-funded health insurance model.

Casey needed the finance committee to vote to adopt a state law that would allow the city to establish a health and dental trust so the city could move toward the self-funded health insurance model.

This discussion has been an ongoing conversation within the city, but with the finance committee's unanimous decision to recommend the approval of adopting the law to the city council, this plan took a crucial step forward.

"This is just one more step in a conversation that's been going on for the better part of 18 months," Casey said. "With the possibility of the city moving into a self-funded health insurance model, away from a fully funded health insurance model that we currently operate on."

The reason for the proposed shift in the health insurance model is because the city brokers found that switching to this model would save the city funding.

"If we had been in a self-insured model versus a fully insured model, the total costs incurred by the city, both the

See *INSURANCE*, page 11



Many people gathered at the Barry J. Farrell Funeral Home for Pharmacist's Mate Second Class Merle Hillman's memorial service on Jan. 27.

Turley Photo by Nick Boonstra

Local hero returns home

Pharmacist's Mate
2nd Class Merle Hillman
laid to rest in Holyoke

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – The remains of Holyoke Native Pharmacist's Mate 2nd Class Merle Hillman were located and buried in St. Jerome Cemetery, Holyoke, with full military honors.

Hillman died during the Dec. 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor while aboard the USS California.

His family was shocked and pleased to finally have this opportunity for closure, so many years after his death.

Hillman was buried on Jan. 27. During the funeral, Hillman was honored with the 21 gun salute and a performance of "Taps", all provided by the Navy.

"It was just wonderful for our whole family," Hillman's Niece Cheryl Quinn said. "We're just so grateful that it

happened and he's home and with his family."

They also went through the ceremony of folding the American flag and presenting it to Quinn's son.

Hillman had served as a pharmacist's assistant in the Navy, which is similar to an army medic. The morning of the attack on Pearl Harbor Hillman was in the galley of the USS California. While he was there, the ship was hit by two torpedoes.

Hillman had been tending to the people hit by the torpedoes when a bomb was dropped on the ship. Historians believe that this is when he died.

Hillman had enlisted in the Navy in 1937 and had served honorably until his death.

For years, his family had been unaware of the exact

details as to what happened to him.

According to Quinn, she believes her father, Donald Hillman and the rest of the family had originally been told that Merle Hillman was missing in action, until years later he was declared dead.

"They had no information," Quinn said. "His remains had been placed in an unmarked grave in Hawaii, and

it wasn't until 2018 that his remains and others around him had been exhumed to be identified.

"He was one of five out of the 20 (in the unmarked grave) that were able to be identified," Quinn said.

His family was thrilled to learn that his remains had been discovered, though they wish

it could have been even a bit sooner so Hillman's siblings could have gotten closure.

"I'm 73 and my cousin, who was the daughter of his sister, she's in her 80s, so when she was here for the funeral we were saying that we never imagined that we would get this closure," Quinn said. "The sad part of it was we just wish that it had happened when his sister and brother were still alive."

According to Quinn, in 2011 the Navy had contacted her and her cousin and asked them to send DNA samples. They didn't hear any more on the subject until the call in late 2023.

"After 12 years, to be honest with you, I completely forgot about it until I got the phone call," Quinn said. "We never imagined anything like this would happen in our lifetimes."

Thankfully, this ceremony was able to occur and the family was able to officially lay Hillman to rest.

See *HERO*, page 6

*"We're just so grateful
that it happened and
he's home and
with his family."*

- Cheryl Quinn
Hillman's Niece

Holyoke High School Theater Company performs comedy Noises Off



The cast and crew of Noises Off took their bows together, to the audience's roaring applause.

Turley photo by Quinn Suomala

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke High School Theater Company performed the comedy Noises Off by Michael Frayn on Jan. 31 and Feb. 1 and 2.

Noises Off portrays the story of a theater troupe attempting to put on the play Nothing On. It progresses over three acts.

Act One shows the troupe trying to push through an increasingly tense dress rehearsal, Act Two a chaotic opening night performance and Act Three another performance that completely falls apart at the seams.

With a love triangle, mis-

See *THEATER*, page 12

HCC professor awarded national fellowship

HOLYOKE – Laurel Carpenter, Holyoke Community College associate professor of environmental science, has been awarded a national fellowship focusing on STEM education at community colleges.

The fellowship, from the Community College Presidents' Initiative in STEM, is intended for community college faculty and administrators pursuing graduate degrees and conducting research related to STEM education and workforce development. STEM stands for science, technology, engineering, and math.

Carpenter is part of a cohort of just seven CCPI-STEM fellows for 2024-2025 and the only one from a college in the Northeast.

Fellows are selected from a national pool of applicants, who are evaluated based on their education, STEM experience, leadership potential, community engagement, and research.

"I'm very happy for Laurel," said Elizabeth Breton, interim dean of HCC's B-STEM division. "She is a gifted instructor and engages the students in community projects. I think she will use this opportunity to benefit not only herself but the college as well."

A 2012 graduate of HCC, Carpenter is a wildlife biologist, chair of the HCC Environmental Studies Dept., co-coordinator of the HCC STEM Scholars program, and a graduate student at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, where she is pursuing a doctorate in education.

"My research, very broadly, is looking at the retention of students in STEM programs at community colleges, and studying models of retention, because most of the retention models are based



Laurel Carpenter

on four-year college students and their needs and experiences as opposed to students at community colleges," said Carpenter, who lives in South Hadley.

CCPI-STEM fellows receive a \$5,000 honorarium each year for two years to support their graduate studies. They also participate in professional development activities and are paired with a professional mentor.

"I think what's most exciting is that this will allow me to network with other educators who are researching similar topics related to community colleges," Carpenter said.

Carpenter started taking classes at HCC in 2002 as a junior at South Hadley High School, but then transferred to Smith College for her bachelor's degree. From there, she went to UMass, where

she earned a master's in wildlife conservation before returning to Smith for a master's degree in secondary science education.

For more than 10 years, Carpenter worked as a wildlife technician, wildlife biologist, lead educator and environmental interpreter for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. While she was working, Carpenter returned to HCC to complete her associate degree in environmental science.

"I started in 2002 and finished in 2012," she said. "It's always kind of funny. How do I put that on my resume? I came back and finished my HCC degree after I had my master's degree. There were just some classes that I really wanted to take, like Spanish, site assessment, and aquatic ecology. Before I knew it, I only needed one more class, so I finished."

CCPI-STEM is based at Prince George's Community College in Largo, Maryland.

Demolition of Peck school building is completed

HOLYOKE – The City of Holyoke continues to move forward with the plan to build a new, 550-student middle school that meets the needs of a modern education.

Fontaine Bros. has been selected as the general contractor for the new middle school building. Fontaine Bros. was the lowest qualified bidder out of seven companies that were pre-qualified to bid. The bids were reviewed by the City of Holyoke, members of the School Building Committee, and the consultant team of Mount Vernon Group Architects and Anser Advisory. Construction will begin, on schedule, in late February.

The abatement, demolition, and site preparation have been completed by American Environmental Inc., a Holyoke Company. Thirty-six bricks from the old

Peck building have been saved to be used in a future fundraiser organized by school leaders or a parent organization.

"We are grateful for the opportunity to work with Fontaine Bros. in the construction of a new middle school in Holyoke. As the demolition work was underway, it was heartwarming to listen to the tales shared by former students and staff of Peck School," said Mayor Joshua A. Garcia. "In Holyoke, we understand that schools serve not just as educational institutions but also as hubs for community interaction and growth. I'm proud of the immense investment by our community in our Holyoke youth."

Fontaine Bros. has offices in Springfield and Worcester. Since their founding in 1933, they have built numerous

schools in the Pioneer Valley, including schools in Holyoke, Chicopee, Granby, and Springfield.

The Goodnow Elementary School in Marlborough was built by Fontaine Bros, from which Holyoke's middle school design is based as part of the Model School Program offered by the Massachusetts School Building Authority. Fontaine's most recent project in Holyoke was the expansion of the Holyoke Library.

The new middle school is an important component of Holyoke's efforts to strengthen learning opportunities and reimagine the middle school experience. The new middle school will replace the poorly designed, energy-inefficient Peck Middle School that no longer met the needs of a modern education.

"We are thankful that the project is running on schedule, as we look forward to welcoming students and staff to a brand new school building in the second half of 2025," said Superintendent Anthony Soto.

The \$85.5-million project was officially approved in June 2023 by the City of Holyoke and the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). Of the total \$85.5 million costs for demolishing Peck and building a new middle school, the City of Holyoke is responsible for paying approximately \$40 million and the MSBA will reimburse approximately \$46 million. Currently, the estimated project costs are under-budget.

More information is available on the district website: www.hps.holyoke.ma.us/page/new-middle-school.

Free financial seminar Feb. 15

WEST SPRINGFIELD – On Thursday, Feb. 15, Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity will host a free financial seminar for the community.

Sue Zielenski of Bank of America will present the topic: "Creating a Savings and Spending Plan" at the Bank of America Financial Center at 225 Memorial Ave. Class will be from 6 to 7:30 p.m. There is no cost to attend, but participants are required to sign up. Every registered guest is entered for a chance to win the door prize. To sign up, visit <https://bit.ly/3On4saZ>.

"With the ease of digital wallets and debit cards, it's easy to lose track of your spending," said Olga Callirgos, GSHFH Homeowner Programs coordinator. "I think it's really important to have a game plan every month to make sure you're on the right track towards your financial goals."

To keep up-to-date about future Habitat events, visit habitatspringfield.org/upcoming-events.

For more information, contact Olga Callirgos, Homeowner Programs coordinator, at callirgos@habitatspringfield.org or (413) 739-5503 x1003.



Monsoon Bistro recently opened in the Holyoke Mall.

Submitted photo

Welcome Monsoon Bistro to Holyoke

HOLYOKE – City and State leaders gathered this afternoon to welcome Holyoke Mall's newest restaurant, Monsoon Bistro, to Western Massachusetts' largest shopping destination.

"Monsoon Bistro is more than just a culinary venture, it's a testament to the vibrant spirit of our community and a celebration of the diverse flavors that make our city unique," said owner, Tommy Chang "We stand here today not only to inaugurate the new establishment but to reaffirm the sense of togetherness that defines our community."

The Grand Opening celebration featured a ribbon cutting, champagne toast, and menu sampling. Notable guest included Massachusetts State Rep. Patricia Duffy, Holyoke Mayor Joshua Garcia, Holyoke City Council

President Tessa Murphy-Romboletti, Holyoke City Councilor Juan Anderson-Burgos and Greater Holyoke Chamber Executive Director Jordan Hart.

The locally owned and operated bistro opened in January and celebrates Southeast Asian cuisine through their offerings like Dim Sum, Mongolian Beef, and Drunken Noodles.

"May this restaurant serve as a place where friendships are forged, memories are made, and community bonds grow stronger," said Chang.

Monsoon Bistro is located on the upper level near Macy's and is available for dine-in, take-out, or delivery via DoorDash, GrubHub and UberEats.

More information about Holyoke Mall stores, restaurants, and entertainment venues can be found at Holyokemall.com.

COLLEGE NOTES

Emmanuel College's fall 2023 Dean's List

BOSTON – Emmanuel College in Boston has named Julian Parent of Holyoke to the Dean's List for the Fall 2023 semester. To earn a spot on the Dean's List, Emmanuel students must achieve a grade point average of 3.5 or higher for a 16-credit semester.

Univ. of Hartford's fall 2023 Dean's List

WEST HARTFORD, CT – The University of Hartford is pleased to announce Natalie Ramos of Holyoke has been named to the Dean's List for fall 2023.

WNEU's fall 2023 President's List

SPRINGFIELD – Western New England University announces the students named to the President's List for the fall 2023 semester. The following students are from Holyoke.

Owen Pecia is majoring in General Business and Naressa Kempadoo is majoring in Health Sciences.

WNEU's Dean's List

SPRINGFIELD – Western New England University announces the students who have been named to the Dean's List for the fall 2023 semester. The following students are from Holyoke.

Alexus Perez is majoring in Law & Society, Connor Narey is majoring in Computer Science and James Keeler is majoring in Accounting.

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African Americans and the Arts highlighted in February

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College is celebrating Black History Month in February with a series of events highlighting this year’s national theme: “African Americans and the Arts.”

Events at HCC kick off Thursday, Feb. 8, at 11 a.m. with a presentation by HCC visual art professor Raishad J. Glover, of Northampton, whose artwork is now on display in the college’s Taber Art Gallery in a show titled “Geo-Spec: Cultural Introspection Wealth.” Glover’s talk, followed by a Q&A, will be held in Room 303 in HCC’s Kittredge Center for Business and Workforce Development.

On Wednesday, Feb 14, at 11 a.m., the college’s Black Student Alliance and Latinx Empowerment Association will

co-host an open mic and “Taste of the Diaspora” event on the second floor of the Campus Center, with live student performances accompanied by food representing cultures of people whose descendants came from Africa.

“Black History is made every day,” President George Timmons said last week in a message to HCC students, faculty, and staff. “Let’s explore, teach, and celebrate Black history in February and beyond. As part of my own celebrations, I pay tribute to the members of the Black community on our campus, and in particular to my colleagues and members of the student body. I am proud to work and learn alongside you.”

Black History Month events at HCC will continue on Wednesday, Feb. 21, at 11 a.m. with a performance by

the Amherst Area Gospel Choir in the Leslie Phillips Theater.

On Thursday, Feb. 22, at 11 a.m., in Room 224 of the Campus Center, performance poet, playwright, and pop culture critic Nicole Young-Martin, Ed.D., will lead a program titled “Write the Way,” during which Young-Martin will read from her own work and engage in a discussion with students about the importance of including marginalized voices in the literary canon.

Black History Month at HCC concludes on Wednesday, Feb. 28 at 11 a.m. with a “Phenomenal Black Women’s Panel” in Room 224 of the Campus Center. Julissa Colón, director of HCC’s El Centro program, will moderate a panel that includes Jada J. Waters, Ed.D., director of Equity,

Diversity and Inclusion at Middletown, Conn., public schools; Erika Slocumb, a Black history scholar and director of interpretation and visitor experience at the Harriet Beecher Stowe Center in Hartford, Conn.; Kandice E. Jones, a counselor from the Center for Human Development; and Qua’Nae Golston-Thomas, a student activist at Holyoke High School and podcast host of “Let’s Talk With Qua’Nae” on Holyoke Media.

“With this panel, we are creating an opportunity for our students to see their reflections mirrored, learning from the participants’ insights about what it means to aspire to our dreams and what it takes to live them,” Colón said.

To learn more about Black History Month months at HCC or to participate over Zoom, please go to: hcc.edu/bhm.

Irish Night on March 9

HOLYOKE – Our Lady of Guadalupe Community Center will host “Irish Night” fundraiser for St. Jerome parish on Saturday, March 9. The event will go from 7 to 9 p.m. with doors opening at 6 p.m. and will feature refreshments, a cash bar, and other beverages. Tickets can be purchased at the end of all weekend masses beginning Feb. 10 and 11. Tables of 8 may be reserved in advanced by contacting Jennie McGiverin at 413-250-2093 or John Kelley at 413-650-0493. Black Rose Academy of Irish Dance will perform at 6:30 p.m. Deirdre Reilly will be the headline performer following that.

150th commemorative book available to order

HOLYOKE – Holyoke’s Sesquicentennial celebrations lasted all 2023 and ended with an amazing 150th Masquerade Gala, the closing of the Holyoke Time Capsule, the return of the Rotary Club’s Eat, Drink & Be Holyoke event, as well as the annual Christmas Tree lighting and first night Jr celebrations at Heritage State Park.

Relive the events of 2023, read about our shared history, recognize the pride we all share in the Holyoke 150th Commemorative book.

With nearly 200 pages, written by the organizers, business owners,

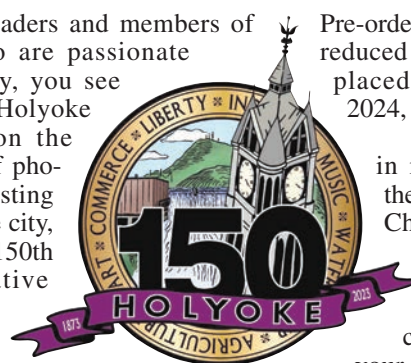
community leaders and members of Holyoke who are passionate about our city, you see the spirit of Holyoke come alive on the page. 100’s of photos and interesting facts about the city, the Holyoke 150th Commemorative book will be a keepsake for generations to come.

Only 1500 copies will be printed.

Pre-orders are available at a temporary reduced cost of \$40. Regular orders placed on or after January 29th, 2024, will be priced at \$50.

The book will be available in mid-February for pickup of the book at the Greater Holyoke Chamber and Artery or you can have the book mailed for an additional charge.

Visit ExploreHolyoke.com/150th page to preorder your book at <https://www.explore-holyoke.com/guide/preorder-the-holyoke-150th-commemorative-book/>.



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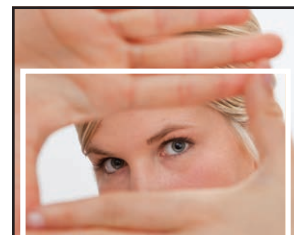
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FORMER HOLYOKE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS**

Please be advised that student’s Special Education (Chapter 766) records, with a withdrawal date within the year 2015/2016 will be destroyed on March 22, 2024. If you wish to obtain a copy of your records, please contact the:

Holyoke Public Schools, Special Education Department
57 Suffolk Street, Holyoke, MA 01040
Tel: 413-534-2000 Ext. 1209

This does not pertain to current Special Education Student’s records.

This notice does not pertain to student’s transcripts Which are dealt under 603 CMR 23.06

AVISO PUBLICO

PARA LOS EX-ESTUDIANTES DE EDUCACION ESPECIAL DE LAS ESCUELAS PÚBLICAS DE HOLYOKE

Favor informarse que los archivos de estudiantes de Educación Especial (Capítulo 766) con fecha de retiro dentro del año 2015/2016, serán destruidos el 22 de Marzo del 2024. Si desea obtener una copia de sus archivos, favor de comunicarse con las:

Escuelas Públicas de Holyoke,
Departamento de Educación Especial
Calle Suffolk # 57, Holyoke, MA 01040
Tel: 413-534-2000 ext. 1209

Este aviso no concierne los archivos actuales de Educación Especial. Este aviso no concierne las transcripciones del estudiante bajo 603 MCR 23.06



LEGAL NOTICE

The Annual Meeting of Corporators of Country Bank for Savings will be held on Monday, March 11, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. at 420 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA for the election of Corporators, Trustees and any other business as required by law or the Bylaws of Country Bank for Savings.

Dawn Piechota
Clerk of the Corporation

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2024 Cornelius J. Moriarty, Jr. Scholarship for Cadet Engineers

Pursuant to MGL Chapter 164, Sections 69B to 69F, applications for a cadet engineer scholarship will be received at the:

Office of the Manager
Holyoke Gas & Electric Department
99 Suffolk Street
Holyoke, MA 01040

Deadline: March 29, 2024

(Applications will only be considered if received on or before the deadline).

Application forms may be obtained from our website: www.hged.com or from high school guidance counselors. For further information, please contact the Office of the Manager, at (413)536-9313.

Applicants for the scholarship must be:

- 1) Residents of the City of Holyoke.
- 2) Graduates of a duly accredited senior secondary school (year 2024 or before).
- 3) Not less than seventeen (17) years old on their last birthday, nor more than twenty-five (25) years old.
- 4) Accepted for admission to, or already enrolled in, an accredited community college, college, or university having a course of study leading to a degree of Bachelor of Science in Engineering.



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Guest Column

SOCIAL SECURITY Matters
By Russell Gloor



Will my WEP reduction go away if I continue working?

Dear Rusty

I'm 63 years old and have not yet started my Social Security.

I now work for the State of Illinois and will draw a pension from that state's university system. I don't pay into Social Security from this position and, as a result, my Social Security payment will be reduced. But I have also worked elsewhere and contributed to Social Security for 26 years.

If I retire from the state university and begin drawing my reduced Social Security payment and then work in a different job, which does contribute to SS, will the reduction to my Social Security payment ever be eliminated? Or will I be permanently stuck with the smaller Social Security payment?

Signed Curious Educator

Dear Curious

A rule called the Windfall Elimination Provision will apply to your Social Security benefit because your Illinois state pension was earned without paying into the Social Security program. The basic rule is that anyone with a pension earned without contributing to Social Security and who is also entitled to Social Security benefits, is subject to WEP, which reduces that person's Social Security retirement benefit. It's a law enacted many years ago to equalize how SS benefits are paid to all Social Security beneficiaries.

However, the WEP rules also provide relief for those who have only a small non-covered pension and for those who have separately contributed to Social Security for a lot of years. For example:

The WEP reduction to your SS benefit cannot be more than 50% of your non-covered (IL) pension

The WEP reduction is smaller for each year over 20 years contributing to Social Security from substantial earnings

WEP does not apply to those who have at least 30 years contributing to SS from substantial earnings

Although you could retire at 63 and collect your pension from the university and also collect your WEP-reduced Social Security, you have something else to consider if you take another job, which pays into Social Security.

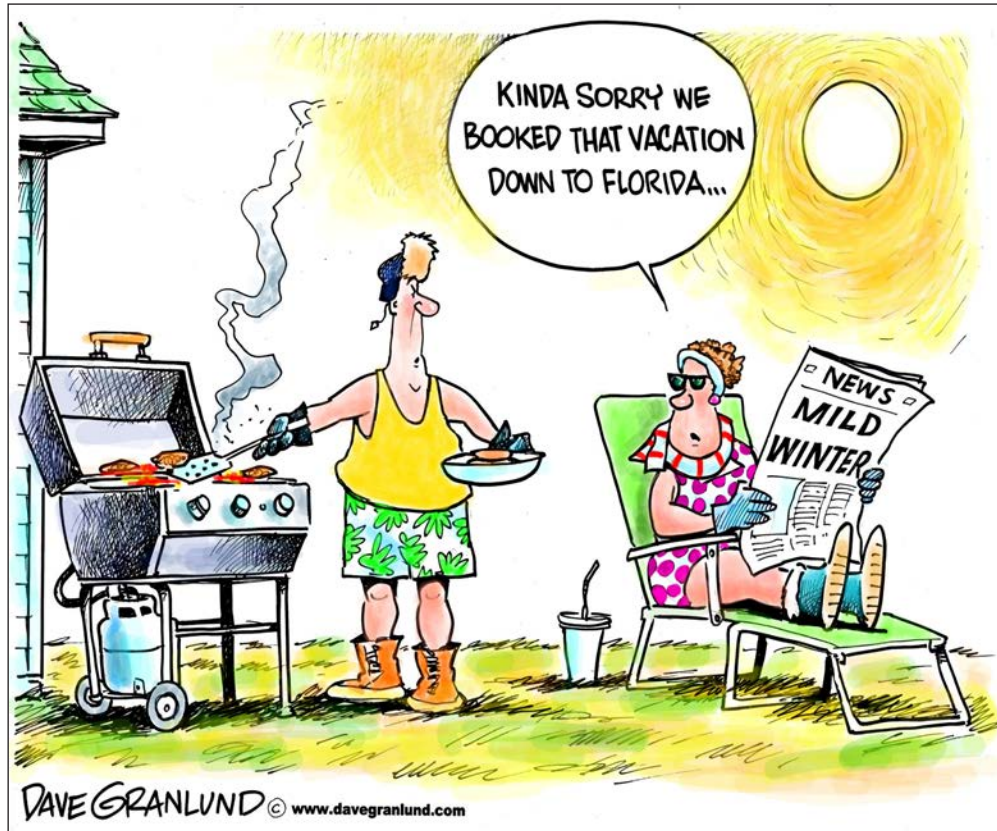
Social Security has an annual "earnings test" for those who collect benefits before their Full Retirement Age. The earnings test limits how much you can earn while collecting early SS before they take away some of your benefits. The earnings limit for 2024 is \$22,320 and, if that is exceeded, you will lose \$1 in benefits for every \$2 you are over the limit.

If your work earnings substantially exceed the earnings limit, you would likely be temporarily ineligible to receive Social Security benefits. FYI, the earnings test no longer applies once you reach your full retirement age, which for you is 67.

Without knowing your expected income from a new job, I can't say how much of your SS you would be able to receive, but you can use this as a guide: Social Security will take away benefits equal to half of what you exceed the annual earnings limit by and they typically recover by withholding future benefits.

If 12 months or more of benefits are withheld, you will be temporarily ineligible to receive benefits until your earnings are less or you reach your full retirement age, the earnings test no longer applies once you reach your FRA. So, depending on your expected annual work earnings, you may wish to defer

See SECURITY, page 11



Guest Column

Spare the vase this Valentine's Day

in the Garden
by Roberta McQuaid



My husband gave me a bouquet of roses on the first Valentine's Day we spent together.

They were beautiful in the vase, but I felt bad that he had spent the money he did for the gift. Being in the business, I told him how much roses are marked up because of the holiday.

It's a supply and demand thing mostly, and tradition to give them of course, but wouldn't it be nice if we received a gift that kept on giving? One solution would be to preorder your sweetheart a rose bush through a mail-order nursery.

What excitement it will bring when it arrives in springtime, and then imagine the delight when it blooms year after year. If your interest is piqued, then read on to learn about proper planting techniques and basic rose culture, so that you (or your sweetheart!) will be a successful rose grower.

Rose bushes will be shipped once it is deemed safe from freezing temperatures. In my experience, mail-order roses can arrive anywhere from the end of April through the end of May.

First off, unpack the rose and soak its roots in room temperature water for at least one hour (and up to twelve). This is necessary to rehydrate roots that may have dried out in the shipping process.

Once rehydrated, the rose is ready for a quick pruning. Carefully snip back any broken or crossing canes.

A rose bush 8-12" tall at planting will start out nice and bushy. If you need to trim back canes that are longer than that, prune back to an out-facing bud, that way growth will be directed out and not towards the plant's center.

Consider placement carefully. To bloom their best, roses need, at the very least, six hours of sunshine.

Morning sun is preferred, so that dewy foliage will dry quickly, diminishing the chances of foliar disease such as black spot or powdery mildew. Soil should drain well and be rich in nutrients or amended to that end.

The planting hole should be prepared while the rose bush is soaking. Dig a hole about twice the diameter of the plant's roots, roughly one and a half feet by one and a half feet.

As long as the soil removed from the hole is decent, in other words, not all sand or

clay, 50% of it can be mixed with well-rotted manure (fresh will burn!) or cured compost, and used as back fill. First, take a small amount of the mixture and make a mound in the hole for the plant to sit on and the roots to spread down.

In our locale, and anywhere that temperatures dip below 0°F, the graft union (the bump at the plants base), if there is one, should be planted two inches below the soil surface. With that in mind, position the rose on the mound at the proper depth and begin to refill the hole with soil, a third of the hole at a time, firming as you go.

Once the rose bush has been planted, water it well at the base of the plant (a couple gallons at least). If you find that the water isn't sinking in, but running away, dam up a couple inches of soil about a foot away from the base of the plant to act like a basin.

Water is crucial at this stage; never let a newly planted rose dry out. A three inch layer of bark mulch or cocoa bean hulls can be applied around the rose to reduce moisture loss and discourage weed competition.

Avoid fertilizing until the rose has broken dormancy and is growing vigorously. Use half strength fertilizer and only do so until mid-July so that succulent growth will have a chance to harden before cold weather hits.

This way your rose will be less prone to winter kill. I do not provide any winter cover for my roses.

There will likely be a few branch tips that suffer winter kill regardless. Those I prune back in springtime when the roses start to leaf out.

I prune just past the damage, at a leaf bud. Besides that, and general shaping, the only other pruning I do is deadheading.

Spent blooms should be removed from rose bushes to direct energy away from seed production and back to flower production. Where the cut is made depends on the type of rose that you have.

Over the last decade, tremendous gains have been made in rose breeding, resulting rose bushes that blend well into landscape plantings and require less maintenance for the homeowner. I still enjoy my heirlooms, and grow the Rugosa to remind me of the beach.

Still others prefer climbers or hybrid teas. Whatever your sweetheart may fancy, indulge this Valentine's Day in a gift that will keep on giving!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 31 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.

the Sun TEAM



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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.

Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity embraces energy-savings initiatives

By **Brandice J. O'Brien**
Marketing and Communications Manager,
Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity

Energy savings and green products are all the rage right now. Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity, or GSHFH, is working tirelessly to provide their homeowners and prospective partner families with environmentally-friendly products that help them save on utility costs, while keeping expenses low. That's not an easy feat considering inflation and limited resources. Yet, the nonprofit organization is able to accomplish this achievement through fundraisers, donations and grants.

Sometimes, it's the small changes that make the biggest difference. GSHFH is now incorporating electric mini split heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems to avoid using fossil fuels. In some instances, based on location and home design, tankless water heaters or air-sourced water heaters are installed.

"Our goal is to provide our partner families with an energy-friendly home that will allow them to save money, while protecting their investment for many years to come," said Aimee Giroux, GSHFH executive director. "We want them to pass their home to the next generation of family members and provide them with a solid foundation for a better, more stable future."

Energy-friendly products range from solar panel installation, the use of Low-E glass windows, to a plant-based fiber insulation called HempWool; light-emitting diode (LED) fixtures, and the affiliate's first-ever insulated concrete form (ICF) home.

Solar panel installation can help a family significantly cut their electric bill and the use of Low-E glass windows lets

in natural light while reflecting inside heat back into the home during the winter months. During the summer, outside heat is reflected away from the home.

LED fixtures reduce energy usage and programmable thermostats provide heating and cooling only during the times it was most needed. Plus, Energy-Star appliances, which are rated for maximum energy efficiency and cost savings, are used.

HempWool is a US Department of Agriculture-certified bio-based insulation that is naturally mold and pest resistant. It's also resistant of volatile organic compounds and toxins. It's easy to install, doesn't sag, and like the Low-E glass, lowers the energy bills for heat in the winter, cooling in the summer, and general comfort.

"It's a lot less itchy to handle," said Tom Eisenman, GSHFH volunteer.

Additionally, new construction projects are built to meet the Specialized Opt-in Energy Code of Massachusetts Stretch Energy Code. The code sets significantly higher requirements for heating and cooling loads, which can be responsible for 60% of a building's energy use.

In November 2022, GSHFH began its most notable energy-efficient project yet: an ICF home. A dedication ceremony celebrating the completion of construction will be held at 11am on Wednesday, Feb. 14, at 360 Chestnut St. in Holyoke. The project is a collaboration between the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association and Habitat for Humanity International to build 50 ICF homes across the country.

The insulated concrete forms are hollow foam blocks that are stacked into the shape of exterior walls of a building, reinforced with steel rebar, and filled with concrete.



Dean student working with rebar at Chestnut. Submitted photos



WNEU Pharm Club putting in HempWool at Holyoke.

"Doing something different in construction is not easy," said Gregg Lewis, chief communications officer at NRMCA. "Construction is hard enough when you're doing the same thing day in and day out. Try to take on a new way of building and it's really a huge deal."

ICF combines one of the finest insulating materials – expanded polystyrene (EPS) with one of the strongest structural building materials – steel reinforced concrete. The result is a wall system of unmatched comfort, energy efficiency and noise reduction.

"The house will be quiet, even when it's windy and stormy outside and it'll stay nice and toasty inside," said Steve Bogle, an Integraspec local distributor.

Integraspec is the brand name of the foam blocks. Steve and his wife Cheryl, also an Integraspec distributor, worked with GSHFH in the early stages.

Unlike a traditional wood frame house with sheathing, an ICF home offers several additional benefits to the builder and homeowner. The foam panels are made from recycled material. ICF walls do not off-gas, whereas conventional walls sheathed with oriented strand board (OSB) off-gas through glues and resin. ICF walls are resistant to mold and rot, which provides a better living environment for those suffering from allergens or asthma. Also, due to the rising cost of lumber, this method significantly reduces the need for wood for framing and sheathing the exterior and less trees are cut down.

"We're excited to have built a more energy-efficient, affordable home for one of our Habitat families," Aimee said.

To see pictures from the construction phase of the ICF build, visit habitatspringfield.org/Holyoke.

Life Together

James Baldwin wrote: "I imagine the reason so many people cling to their hate, is because, if they had to let it go, they would have to deal with their pain."

February is Black History Month. For some when reminded they say, "been there done that, they had their chance." Some states erase Black History lest it offend others.

Hateful rhetoric and acts of violence are born in pain, a pain ignored, buried, not allowed to be processed or healed. This pain, this trauma, is not an excuse for bad behavior; we are held accountable.

But, if we could find a way to meet "the other" whom we fear or fail to understand, we might break through the violence which creates fear and division. If we could break through the pain, we might find we have a lot in common.

When such pain dominates the thinking and feeling of a person, they will look for a scapegoat to blame and eliminate.

People of color, Jews, people of various sexual orientation, mentally ill people, and many developmentally delayed youth, are victims of this abuse born in pain.

What pain have you had which may have moved you to fear, judgment of others, and hate? How are you dealing with your pain?

Some self-medicate and live with addiction, which fosters anger and abuse. Some refuse to acknowledge their pain so are unavailable for a relationship. Some just say it is what it is and do not control their anger.

Many damaged individuals will

find others with whom they can bond in their common pain and hate; remember the neo-Nazis in Charlottesville, Virginia, "Jews will not replace us".

Many young male school shooters are identified as disturbed, traumatized, and clearly dangerous, after-the-fact of the massacre. Again, he needs to be held accountable, and or his parents who aided him in preparation for such a violent act.

Yet, what if we could get to him before he acted out? One young man pleaded with his parents to get him a doctor and asked for help, and they laughed him off and said, "deal with it".

What pain are the parents failing to deal with that they would reject help for their son?

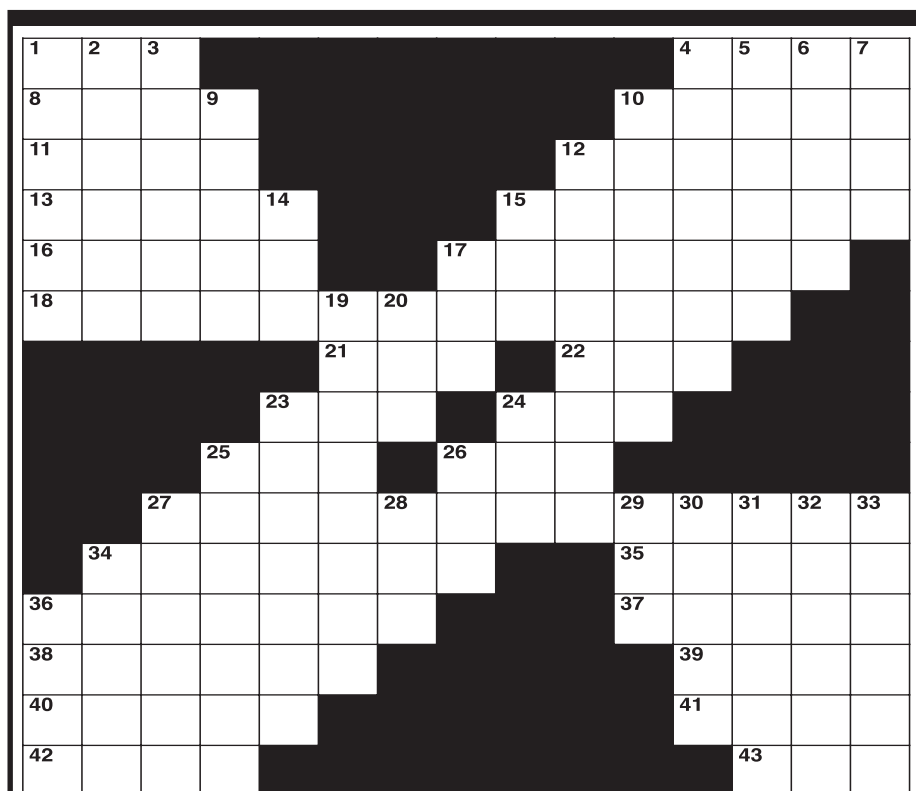
We cannot erase our common history; black or white, or whatever ethnic context. The beginning of change, renewal, and transformation, begins with me, with you, dealing with our pain, so we do not project it on others and hate or hurt them.

Black History Month is an opportunity to face history and ourselves.

I too imagine the reason many cling to our, their, hate, is because, if they let it go, they would have to deal with our, their, pain.

Rev. Dr. Randy Wilburn
Minister, Therapist, Consultant

Life Together is written by Rev. Dr. Randall K. Wilburn. With over 54 years as a parish minister, Wilburn is also an experienced marriage and family counselor. Life Together will deal with topics such as stress, grief, anxiety, healing and hope.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. One point south of due east
- 4. Coagulated blood
- 8. Fortifying ditch
- 10. Devotee of Hinduism
- 11. Trunk of a tree
- 12. Bank note
- 13. Capital of Guam
- 15. Study again
- 16. Covered with hoarfrost
- 17. Opening
- 18. Legendary Rolling Stone
- 21. Stray
- 22. Computer storing system
- 23. Signal
- 24. Pitching

CLUES DOWN

- 25. Human being
- 26. Malaysian isthmus
- 27. The "Blonde Bombshell"
- 34. A gland
- 35. Bluish greens
- 36. Endangered
- 37. Three-dimensional
- 38. In a way, precipitated
- 39. God associated with dissolution
- 40. Blemished
- 41. Flow or leak slowly
- 42. Disco legends The Bee ___
- 43. Midway between south and southeast

CLUES DOWN

- 1. A way to board
- 2. Get down
- 3. Highly seasoned sausage
- 4. First day of month
- 5. Eurasian shrubs
- 6. The organ that bears the ovules of a flower
- 7. Small lake
- 9. Belief
- 10. Sunrooms
- 12. Metric weight unit
- 14. Vasopressin
- 15. Bravo! Bravo!
- 17. One-time family room staple
- 19. Got back

CLUES DOWN

- 20. Anger
- 23. Sang merrily
- 24. Sea eagle
- 25. Military men
- 26. Kilo yard (abbr.)
- 27. Found in the sea
- 28. Protects from weather
- 29. Type of medicine
- 30. City along the Rhine
- 31. Animal disease
- 32. Martini ingredients
- 33. Get away
- 34. Lack of disunity
- 36. One-time European Commission officer

HERO, from page 1

Many younger members of the family, according to Quinn, were also able to connect with the story of their lost relative in a new way.

“With all the stories and stuff they [the children] have shown so much more interest in learning more about

their uncle and that time period,” Quinn said. “It just makes him more real in their lives.”

The whole family takes pride in the service Hillman had provided to the country.

“We always knew that we had an uncle that was a hero and died in service to his country,” Quinn said.

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A tribute to Pharmacist's Mate Second Class Merle Hillman and his family.

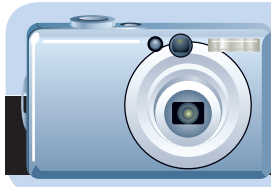


Newspaper clippings about Pearl Harbor and Hillman.



Sister Catherine Ormond gives committal honors with a naval detail present.

Turley Photos by Nick Boonstra



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USDA INSP. FRESH BONE-IN COUNTRY STYLE PORK RIBS.....	\$2.19 lb	USDA INSP. FROZEN IQF CHICKEN PARTY WINGS 4 LB BAG.....	\$7.99 lb
USDA INSP. FROZEN FULLY COOKED MEATBALLS 5 LB BAG.....	\$12.99 lb	USDA INSP. FROZEN BREADED PRE-BROWNEED CHICKEN TENDERS 5 LB BAG.....	\$13.99 lb
Lenten Specials		12 CT KING'S HAWAIIAN ROLLS.....	\$3.99 ea
USDA INSP. FROZEN 16/20 COUNT SHRIMP 1 LB BAG.....	\$6.88 ea	USDA INSP. FRESH HILLSHIRE FARMS BEEF KIELBASA 12 OZ.....	\$4.99 lb
USDA INSP. FRESH OCEAN GOURMET STUFFED CLAMS.....	\$6.99 lb	USDA INSP. FRESH SUPERIOR MINI ECLAIRS 5 CT..	\$2.99 lb
SLICED IN OUR DELI TGI FRIDAY'S STUFFED JALAPENO PEPPERS 8 OZ....	\$3.49 lb	USDA INSP. FRESH BONELESS & SKINLESS CHICKEN BREAST	\$1.77 10 LB BAG

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Knights back on track

HOLYOKE – After losing four out of five games for a stretch, Holyoke boys basketball is back on track with three straight wins, including a defeat of Northampton 76-66 last Friday night.

In the win, Aden Cabrera had a massive game with 29 points.

Jamil Rodriguez scored 18 points and Davian Diaz had 14 points. The Knights are now 10-6 and are headed for the state tournament.

Their Western Mass. tournament fate is still to be decided though they are likely to make it in the eight-team field in Class A.



Dylan Rohan attempts to shoot over an opponent.



Shawn Rivera drives for the hoop. *Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com*



Aden Cabrera takes a free throw.



Davian Diaz navigates the paint and looks to get the layup.



Luis Figueroa sends a shot away.



The Holyoke boys basketball team surrounds teammate Jamil Rodriguez following his 1,000th career point milestone achievement. *Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com*



Jamil Rodriguez performs in last Friday night's game against Northampton.

Rodriguez achieves milestone

HOLYOKE – Last Friday night in a win over Northampton, Jamil Rodriguez scored 18 points to help the Knights to a win. During the second half, he achieved the 1,000-career point milestone with a basket later in the game. Rodriguez was celebrated following the achievement, including a commemorative basketball.

Knights fall to Blue Devils

HOLYOKE – Last Monday night, Holyoke girls basketball was defeated by Northampton 59-31. The Knights got a big performance from Amilyan Treadwell-Mercedes, as she scored 18 points, which led all scorers in the game.

The Knights are just 4-11 this season and are on the outside of the top 32 in the Division 2 Power Rankings. However, a few wins could get Holyoke in the state tournament despite a sub-.500 record.

The Knights will also have the opportunity to play a pair of non-playoff games during the Western Mass. tournament.



Evangeline Cauley looks to make an inbound pass.



Jaylaness Santiago calls out a play as she heads down the court.



Amilyan Treadwell-Mercedes goes for a put-back.



Xenedy Jacobs changes directions as she looks for a path to the hoop. *Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli*

Modifieds champion plans lengthy 2024 schedule

CHELMSFORD – Modified champion Jon McKennedy announced today that he will drive in over 15 Tour-Type Modified races across the New England region in 2024.

Competing for his own team, McKennedy will mix between Outlaw Open Modified Series races at Thompson Speedway, Open Modified races at Stafford Motor Speedway, select NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour events and a few Monaco Modified Tri-Track Series races to make out a robust calendar for 2024.

“We’re excited to get the ball rolling in our FURY race cars and go chase some trophies,” McKennedy said. “I feel this is a great opportunity for me to go out there and continue to show we can win races. We did have some other opportunities for rides, but felt this was the best route for this season. We have picked some of the higher profile events at my favorite tracks for the 2024 season and feel the competition is going to be stout at all of them.”

A full sponsor lineup for the car and paint scheme will be released in the near future.

McKennedy’s season will begin at Thompson Speedway with the Monaco Modified Tri-Track Series during Icebreaker weekend on Saturday, April 7, followed by the Open Modified event

at New Hampshire Motor Speedway’s Northeast Classic on April 13.

He will follow that up with seven more Thompson events during the 2024 season (May 27 - Outlaw Mods, June 13 - Outlaw Mods, June 27 - Outlaw Mods, July 25 - Outlaw Mods, August 7 - Outlaw Mods, August 14 - NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour and October 12 - Outlaw Mods). Thompson Speedway will continue to be operated by the American-Canadian Tour and Pro All Star Series for 2024, keeping short track racing alive at the Connecticut oval.

McKennedy will compete at Stafford Motor Speedway for the NAPA Spring Sizzler (April 27-28), Open Modified Mountain Masters (July 17) and the Fall Final with the Monaco Modified Tri-Track Series on Sept. 28.

His NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour starts will take place at Monadnock Speedway (May 4 and July 20), Seekonk Speedway (June 1) and New Hampshire Motor Speedway (June 22). McKennedy will compete in the Monaco Modified Tri-Track Series at Thompson (April 7), White Mountain Motorsports Park (July 27) and Star Speedway (Sept. 15).

The 2022 NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour champion, McKennedy is no stranger to winning races and championships. On top of the 2022 title, McKennedy fin-

ished second in the 2020 Tour standings driving for Tommy Baldwin Racing. He also picked up his first career NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour win at Myrtle Beach Speedway in 2018, and has another victory at Claremont Motorsports Park in 2022, which helped lead to his title.

McKennedy is a former ISMA Supermodified champion, 4-time ISMA Star Classic winner, 4-time ISMA Ollie Silva Memorial winner and 4-time Modified Racing Series champion. He has multiple Star Speedway championships to his resume, a North-South Shootout with Tommy Baldwin Racing (2018) and a championship in the Monaco Modified Tri-Track Series (2014), along with many karting titles in his early years and additional race wins in multiple divisions. McKennedy was also named the 2016 North East Touring Series driver of the year.

For a full tentative schedule for Jon McKennedy’s 2024 season, see below.

2024 Schedule

Subject To Change

- April 7 - Thompson Speedway - Monaco Modified Tri-Track Series
- April 13 - New Hampshire Motor Speedway - Open Modifieds
- April 27-28 - Stafford Speedway - NAPA Spring Sizzler

- May 4 - Monadnock Speedway - NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour
- May 27 - Thompson Speedway - Outlaw Open Modified Series
- June 1 - Seekonk Speedway - NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour
- June 13 - Thompson Speedway - Outlaw Open Modified Series
- June 22 - New Hampshire Motor Speedway - NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour
- June 27 - Thompson Speedway - Outlaw Open Modified Series
- July 17 - Stafford Speedway - Open Modified Mountain Masters
- July 20 - Monadnock Speedway - NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour
- July 25 - Thompson Speedway - Outlaw Open Modified Series
- July 27 - White Mountain Motorsports Park - Monaco Modified Tri-Track Series
- Aug. 7 - Thompson Speedway - Outlaw Open Modified Series
- Aug. 14 - Thompson Speedway - NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour
- Sept. 15 - Star Speedway - Monaco Modified Tri-Track Series
- Sept. 28 - Stafford Speedway - Monaco Modified Tri-Track NAPA Fall Final
- Oct. 12 - Thompson Speedway - Outlaw Open Modified Series

Disciplined game nets win for T-Birds

HARTFORD, CT – The Springfield Thunderbirds (21-19-3-2) went on two separate runs of three straight goals to defeat the Hartford Wolf Pack (23-13-5-0) by a final score of 6-3 on Saturday night inside the XL Center.

While the scuffling Springfield power play would not get the credit for the game’s opening goal, they were responsible for the offensive possession that led to it. Jakub Vrana found his way to a soft space at the top of the right circle, where Hugh McGing located him for a one-time blast past Dylan Garand’s glove at 9:05. Vrana’s seventh goal of the season made it 1-0, and the T-Birds offense was far from finished.

Just 1:54 after Vrana’s tally, a mis-play of the puck in neutral ice sprung Ryan Suzuki on a clean breakaway. Suzuki perfectly picked the lower corner over Garand’s blocker, making it 2-0 at 10:59.

Then it was Vrana’s turn to join the breakaway game, as he, too, beat Garand on the stick side off a stretch pass from Mikhail Abramov, making it 3-0 at 13:59.

Brennan Othmann took it upon himself to give his team a spark, as the Wolf Pack rookie dropped the mitts with ex-Hartford blueliner Wyatt Kalynuk at 16:40 of the first. Kalynuk, unfortunately, received a game misconduct for removing his elbow pads prior to the fight. Just 24 seconds later, the scrap paid dividends for the Pack as Alex Belzile crashed the paint and cashed in with a backhand poke through Malcolm Subban to make it a 3-1 score after 20 minutes. Subban was flawless in turning aside 14 of 15 Wolf Pack shots in the first.

As the second began, it became evident that Othmann’s fight lit a spark in the Hartford bench. Just 55 seconds into

period two, Ryder Korczak found a loose puck in a four-man scrum outside the blue paint and found Brandon Scanlin for a one-time shot through Subban to make it a 3-2 game.

Then at 2:46, Korczak was in the middle of things again, driving a puck to the net, where towering Matt Rempel rammed home the rebound, getting Hartford back to even in not even six minutes of game action.

Springfield utilized its timeout and was able to stabilize defensively. With just under seven minutes left in the period, rookie Zach Dean came up with his signature play of the season. The rookie centerman beautifully toe-dragged the puck from the left circle to walk around a defender before elevating a backhand shot over Garand’s glove at 13:47, giving Springfield the lead back at 4-3 on his first goal in 13 games.

Springfield’s well-disciplined night carried through all 60 minutes, as the T-Birds did not allow Hartford’s fourth-ranked power play any chances all evening. At 7:54 of the third period, captain Matthew Peca added to the lead again with a wrist shot that ricocheted off Garand high into the air and bounced over the goal line to make it 5-3.

The insurance goal proved to be more than enough, as the Wolf Pack could not find a way to get one through Subban and the defensive front of the T-Birds. Will Bitten added his 10th of the season into an empty net at 18:08 with McGing tallying a third assist on the game’s final goal.

The T-Birds get the All-Star break to get rest before their next contest on Saturday, Feb. 10 for Ice-O-Topes Night at the MassMutual Center against the Hershey Bears. Puck drop is set for 7:05 p.m.

Railers score win over Lions

TROIS-RIVIÈRES, QC – The Worcester Railers HC (20-18-3-2, 45pts) took down the Trois-Rivières Lions (19-22-2-2, 42pts) on Saturday night by the final score of 6-4 in front of a crowd of 1,819 at the Colisée Vidéotron. The Railers are back at the DCU Center against the Maine Mariners on Friday, February 9th at 7:05pm.

Blade Jenkins (3-2-5) struck first tonight for Worcester, as he put the Railers ahead immediately following the power play. The Railers followed up with three more in the second from Anthony Callin (1-1-2), Trevor Cosgrove (1-2-3), and Jenkins’ second of the night. Trois-Rivières were good for two in the second as Justin Ducharme (1-1-2) and Cedric Montminy (1-0-1) each scored goals to make it a 4-2 game heading into the third. There were four goals in the third, including two straight to open the period for Trois-Rivières from Nicolas Guay (1-1-2) and Alex-Olivier Voyer (1-1-2) to tie the game 4-4. Jack Quinlivan (1-0-1) scored the game-winner after coming out of the penalty box before Blade Jenkins secured the win with his third goal of the night and second straight hat trick in as many nights.

Like Friday’s game, it was another dominant first period from Worcester. The Railers outshot the Lions 16-7 through the first 20 minutes, highlighted by Blade Jenkins’ (18th) fourth goal of the weekend. Neither team scored the rest of the frame as the Railers went into the second period with a 1-0 lead.

Scoring opened wide in the second period with five goals combined between the two teams. First it was Anthony Callin (8th) with a loose puck

in front supplied by Blade Jenkins to grow Worcester’s lead to 2-0. The Lions cut back into their deficit with Justin Ducharme’s (12th) tally as he swept up a rebound from in front of Muse and tucked it along the far post. The Railers responded midway through the period with a pair of goals back-to-back. Trevor Cosgrove let one go from the blueline that Vrbetic never saw to make it 3-1 Worcester. Jenkins followed up with his second of the afternoon on a break down the left wing to give Worcester their largest advantage of the night at 4-1. The Lions got one back just before the end of the period when Cedric Montminy scored to make it 4-2 heading into the third.

The Railers killed off a Jack Quinlivan high-sticking penalty to start the third before Ryan Verrier was sent to the penalty box for a delay-of-game call. From there, Trois-Rivières kept their foot on the pedal. Nicolas Guay (2nd) scored on the power-play followed by Alex-Olivier Voyer (12th) to complete the Lions comeback and tie the game 4-4. With the game tied heading into the final five minutes of the third, Quinlivan (2nd) was sprung out of the penalty box and muscled his way around a Lions defender to beat Vrbetic and put Worcester ahead for good, 5-4. With the net empty and the Lions looking to tie the game, Blade Jenkins (18th) was given the puck in the neutral zone by Anthony Repaci, where he strode into the attacking end and scored his third goal of the game. Jenkins is the first player in Worcester Professional Hockey history to score hat tricks in back-to-back games, scoring one on Friday night, Worcester’s first of the season.

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**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
Docket No. HD23P1982GD
In the interests of
Anaira A. Rodriguez
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 09/22/2023 by **Widalis Rodriguez** of Holyoke, MA will be held **04/09/2024 08:30 AM Review Hearing**. Located: **Hampden Probate & Family Court, 50 State Street, 4th Floor, 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 9, 2024

Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
02/09/2024

Notice of Public Hearing
The Ordinance Committee of the Holyoke City Council will hold a public hearing on **Wednesday, February 28, 2024 at 6:30pm** to hear a special permit application extension ACMJ Inc to build and operate a marijuana cultivation and processing establishment at 532 Main St (026-03-012) Meeting will take

place at Holyoke City Hall 536 Dwight St and can be accessed remotely via www.zoom.us Meeting ID 838 4251 5233 Meeting Passcode 202874 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 with same Meeting ID and Passcode. For an electronic copy of this application or to provide comments for the public hearing, please contact City Council Admin Asst Jeffery Anderson-Burgos at Anderson-BurgosJ@holyoke.org or by phone 413-322-5525.

Ordinance Chair
Israel Rivera
02/09, 02/16/2024

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No. HD23P0278EA
Estate of:
Christopher Thomas
Brayley**

**Date of Death: 12/28/2022
CITATION ON
PETITION FOR
ORDER OF COMPLETE
SETTLEMENT**

A Petition for Order of Complete Settlement has been filed by **Edward Brayley** of Chicopee, MA requesting that the court enter a formal Decree of Complete Settlement including the allowance of a final account, a determination of testacy and heirs at law and other such relief as may be requested in the Petition.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 03/15/2024.**

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara M. Hyland, First Justice of this Court.
Date: February 02, 2024
Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
02/09/2024

**CITY OF HOLYOKE
REQUEST FOR
QUALIFICATIONS
RFQ #2024-38E
Central Fueling Station
Replacement Design
and Feasibility**

The City of Holyoke (City) is requesting qualifications from firms to provide professional engineering services relating to the replacement of the existing Central Fueling Station in Holyoke, Massachusetts. The firm selected for this project shall have a demonstrated ability to execute this type of project and provide the City with the technical assistance required to make informed choices in developing and implementing this project. The city is looking for the design to be substantially complete by June 30th, 2024, with a full completion date no later than September 30th, 2024. Construction will need to be completed no later than June 30th, 2026.

This project is funded with Federal Funds. Respondents will be verified for eligibility to receive Federal Funds and must comply with all Federal Requirements including Part 200.

RFQ documents can be obtained electronically through the City of Holyoke's Purchasing Department by submitting an email request. Responses will also be submitted by email. RFQ documents will be available from tomorrow@holyoke.org or sweeney@holyoke.org on Monday, February 5, 2024 at 12:00 AM (local time).

Proposals shall be submitted in person to the Office of Purchasing and are due on Thursday February 29, 2024 by 2:00 PM. Late applications will not be accepted.

The City reserves the right to reject any and all submissions, to waive any minor informalities & technicalities, or to cancel the bid if it is in the public interest to do so. **PLEASE NOTE THE CITY WILL NOT BE DOING A WALK THROUGH OF THE FUELING STATION.**
02/09/2024

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No. HD24C0030CA
In the matter of:
Malachi Joseph Bodkin
CITATION ON PETITION
TO CHANGE NAME**

A Petition to Change Name of Minor has been filed by **Malachi Joseph Bodkin** of Holyoke, MA requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to:
Malachi Joseph Guiteau-Bodkin
IMPORTANT NOTICE

Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: **Hampden Probate and Family Court** before

10:00 a.m. on the return day of 02/22/2024.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: January 25, 2024

Rosemary A Saccomani,
Register of Probate
02/09/2024

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
Docket No. HD23D1052DR
Elaine Madera Miro vs.
Edwin Campos Ramos
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 negatively impact the current financial status of either party. **SEE Supplemental Probate Court Rule 411.**

You are hereby summoned and required to serve upon:

Elaine Madera Miro
91 Tokeneke
Holyoke, MA 01040

your answer, if any, on or before **04/09/2024**. 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. **Barbara M. Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: January 8, 2024

Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
02/09/2024

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
Docket No. HD24P0193GD
In the matter of:
Jessica Marcial
Of: Holyoke, MA
RESPONDENT
Alleged Incapacitated
Person
CITATION GIVING
NOTICE OF PETITION
FOR APPOINTMENT OF
GUARDIAN FOR
INCAPACITATED
PERSON PURSUANT TO**

G.L. c. 190B, §5-304
To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by **Valley Springs Behavioral Health H of Holyoke, MA** in the above captioned matter alleging that **Jessica Marcial** is in need of a Guardian and requesting that (or some other suitable person) be appointed as Guardian to serve **Without Surety** on the bond.

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

You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 a.m. on the return date of **02/28/2024**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition.

If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

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

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M. Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: January 30, 2024
Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
02/09/2024

and read.
Additional information may be obtained from:
Chi Wong
Holyoke Gas & Electric Dept
99 Suffolk St.
Holyoke, MA 01040
(413) 536-9308
cwong@hged.com

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

Please mark sealed envelopes "Bid for Utility Line Material - 1894 Line Structures" and address them to:

James M. Lavelle, Manager
Holyoke Gas & Electric Dept.
99 Suffolk St.
Holyoke, MA 01040
02/09/2024

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No. HD24C0029CA
In the matter of:
Gabrielle Moriah Bodkin
CITATION ON PETITION
TO CHANGE NAME**

A Petition to Change Name of Minor has been filed by **Gabrielle Moriah Bodkin** of Holyoke, MA requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to:
Gabrielle Moriah Guiteau-Bodkin
IMPORTANT NOTICE

Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: **Hampden Probate and Family Court** before **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 02/22/2024.**

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: January 25, 2024

Rosemary A Saccomani,
Register of Probate
02/09/2024

**LEGAL NOTICE
CITY OF HOLYOKE
GAS & ELECTRIC
DEPARTMENT
UTILITY LINE
MATERIAL -
1894 LINE STRUCTURES**

Sealed bids for furnishing the above material will be received by Holyoke Gas & Electric Dept. until **2:00 p.m. February 29, 2024**, at the Office of the Manager, 99 Suffolk St., Holyoke, MA 01040, at which time proposals will be publicly opened

and read.
Additional information may be obtained from:
Chi Wong
Holyoke Gas & Electric Dept
99 Suffolk St.
Holyoke, MA 01040
(413) 536-9308
cwong@hged.com

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

Please mark sealed envelopes "Bid for Utility Line Material - 1894 Line Structures" and address them to:

James M. Lavelle, Manager
Holyoke Gas & Electric Dept.
99 Suffolk St.
Holyoke, MA 01040
02/09/2024

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No. HD24C0029CA
In the matter of:
Gabrielle Moriah Bodkin
CITATION ON PETITION
TO CHANGE NAME**

A Petition to Change Name of Minor has been filed by **Gabrielle Moriah Bodkin** of Holyoke, MA requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to:
Gabrielle Moriah Guiteau-Bodkin
IMPORTANT NOTICE

Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: **Hampden Probate and Family Court** before **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 02/22/2024.**

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.
Date: January 25, 2024

Rosemary A Saccomani,
Register of Probate
02/09/2024

**LEGAL NOTICE
CITY OF HOLYOKE
GAS & ELECTRIC
DEPARTMENT
UTILITY LINE
MATERIAL -
1894 LINE STRUCTURES**

Sealed bids for furnishing the above material will be received by Holyoke Gas & Electric Dept. until **2:00 p.m. February 29, 2024**, at the Office of the Manager, 99 Suffolk St., Holyoke, MA 01040, at which time proposals will be publicly opened

See NOTICES, page 11

The Holyoke Sun
OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

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

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$225, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

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

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1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20
21	Base Price \$26.50	Base Price \$27.00	Base Price \$27.50
22	Base Price \$27.50	Base Price \$28.00	Base Price \$28.50
23	Base Price \$28.50	Base Price \$29.00	Base Price \$29.50
24	Base Price \$29.50	Base Price \$30.00	Base Price \$30.50
25	Base Price \$30.50	Base Price \$31.00	Base Price \$31.50
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40	Base Price \$38.00	Base Price \$38.50	Base Price \$39.00

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HELP WANTED

ASSISTANT TOWN ACCOUNTANT

The Town of Palmer is seeking applicants for the full-time position of Assistant Town Accountant. The applicant should have a working knowledge of accounting theory and accrual concepts along with strong organizational, interpersonal, and analytical skills as well as experience with Microsoft Office. Previous experience using MUNIS accounting software is a plus. Complete job description can be found at <https://townofpalmer.com/jobs>. Please e-mail a cover letter and resume to gpotter@townofpalmer.com or via mail to the Town Accountant's Office at 4417 Main Street, Palmer, MA 01069. This position will remain open until filled. *The Town of Palmer is an EOE/AA employer.*

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The Norcross Wildlife Foundation in Wales is looking for a part-time (16 hours/week) **Administrative Assistant** to assist with operations and office management duties. For a full job description, please visit www.norcrosswildlife.org or email dgugliotti@norcrosswildlife.org.

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SECURITY, from page 4

claiming your Social Security until you either earn less or reach 67 years of age.

If you already have 26 years contributing to Social Security from "substantial earnings," your WEP reduction will already be mitigated and any additional years of substantial earnings from which SS payroll taxes are deducted will result in an even smaller WEP reduction.

If you can achieve 30 years of SS contributions from substantial work earnings, WEP will no longer apply. So, you may not be "stuck with" the WEP reduction permanently, but you will need to contact Social Security to request that your WEP reduction amount be reviewed in light of any addi-

tional years of SS-covered earnings. This should be done after you submit your income taxes each year you have additional SS-covered earnings.

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

INSURANCE, from page 1

employer and the employees would have been significantly less than what we had actually paid out," Casey said.

Based on an analysis done, the total costs incurred by the city between fiscal year 2020 and FY22 would have been \$2.4 million less had it had a self-funded health insurance model.

If the city had kept these savings, they would have lived within the trust for the health insurance. The benefit of a trust for health insurance would be to create savings for years where health insurance costs increased, to potentially keep that cost lower.

"It would help ensure that those years that are really good, great, and those years where we have seen double digit increases in premium costs, we would have enough money to potentially tamp that down," Casey said.

According to Casey, this self-funded healthcare system would be similar to the way the city's retirement fund works.

With the finance committee's recommendation to the council of adopting the state law to create the necessary trust, this process is able to move forward. Casey hopes to receive the city council's

approval at one of their February meetings.

However, even once the city council approves the adopting of the state law, that does not guarantee that the self-funded system would immediately be adopted.

"If this were to move forward and the council were to adopt this it is not going to happen overnight," Casey said. "There's still other things to be done and there would be other opportunities for the council to have input."

For one, Casey and others working on this project would need to find trustees for the trust. They also have to create a trust document.

There would also need to be appropriations made.

Additionally, the decision would require agreement from the Section 19 Committee.

The Section 19 Committee is also known as the Public Employee Committee. It is made up of the water

NOTICES, from page 9

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No. HD24P0244EA

Estate of:
Edward John Topor
Also known as:
Edward J Topor
Date of Death: 03/30/2023
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

To all interested persons:
A Petition for Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Christine H. Bednarski of Springfield, MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: **Christine H. Bednarski of Springfield, MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 03/04/2024.**

This is **NOT** a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection

followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

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

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland, First Justice** of this Court.
Date: February 05, 2024

Rosemary A. Saccamari
Register of Probate
02/09/2024

Notice of Public Hearing

The Ordinance Committee of the Holyoke City Council and the Planning Board will hold separate public hearings to hear a zoning ordinance change proposal to allow cannabis businesses beyond the IG zone and allow priority for social equity applicants and those negatively impacted by war on drugs. Ordinance Committee meeting will take place on **Wednesday, February 28, 2024 at 6:30 pm** at Holyoke City Hall 536 Dwight St and can be accessed remotely via www.zoom.us Meeting ID 838 4251 5233 Meeting

Public Notices

Passcode 202874 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 with same Meeting ID and Passcode. Planning Board meeting will take place on **Tuesday, February 27, 2024 at 5:30 pm** at City Hall Annex, 20 Korean Veterans Plaza, Room 403, and can be accessed remotely via ww.zoom.us Meeting ID: 836 3939 8493 or by call in at 1-646-558-8656 with same meeting ID. 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. To provide comments to the Planning Board, please contact Jeff Burkott at JBurkott@holyoke.org

Ordinance Chair
Israel Rivera
Planning Chair
Mimi Panitch
02/09, 02/16/2024

City of Holyoke PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Holyoke Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, February 27, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.com**; ID: 836 3939 8493 CALL IN *646 558 8656 to hear, pursuant to the Holyoke Zoning Ordinance Sec 6.1.9, a Special Permit to allow for a common driveway located on 525-527 Pleasant Street (091-00-073).

For a complete copy of the application contact Planning at 322-5575.

APPLICANT:
Alex Vilkhovoy
PLANNING BOARD:
Mimi Panitch
02/09, 02/16/2024

Frozen Polish Food Sale on Feb. 10

INDIAN ORCHARD – A Frozen Polish Food Sale, featuring Pierogi, Golabki and Kapusta, will be held at Immaculate Conception Church Hall at 25 Parker St. in Indian Orchard on Saturday, Feb. 10 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

All are welcome to come and purchase.



department, the gas and electric, the school department and the city of holyoke proper.

"All of the collective bargaining units in the city come together and they bargain as one unit when it relates to benefits and health insurance," Casey said.

Therefore this committee would also need to agree to the idea of self-funded insurance.

Casey also mentioned that they would look into the renewal rates for both health insurance models to ensure that the numbers remained consistent before committing one way or another.

"We would be able to request both renewal rates for a fully-insured plan and a self-insured plan and we would be able to review them and decide," Casey said. "If we get the numbers and it's looking like this isn't going to be as beneficial as we had hoped or thought based on the renewal rates, it's a non-starter, we're not moving any further."

Moving forward, Casey hopes to nail down a plan of action during March and early April, so that they would be ready for open renewal in mid to late May.

This would allow everyone to be enrolled and "ready to go" for July 1, which would be the start date for the new insurance model, should it go to plan.

The finance committee unanimously agreed that the city should continue to explore this option, as it could be greatly beneficial for the city.

Additionally, Holyoke would not be the only city to have this health insurance model. In fact, self-funded health insurance has grown increasingly popular around the country.

"I'm generally warm to doing it because most large employers now often use self-funded," City Councilor Kevin Jourdain said. "In fact in Massachusetts it's about two thirds self-funded and one third fully funded and in many states, Connecticut for example, it's like 85% of employer groups are self-funded and most government structures are self-funded."

With the unanimous support from the finance committee, this topic will go to the city council for them to discuss at an upcoming meeting.



In Act One of *Noises Off*, the cast portrayed a theater troupe's tense dress rehearsal before opening night.



The second act of *Noises Off* begins. The play was presented last week at Holyoke High School.



Fynn Maldonado performed as Poppy, the assistant stage manager in *Noises Off*.

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The actors of *Noises Off*, peaked out the variety of doors on the set before preparing for bows.
Turley photo by Quinn Suomala

THEATER, from page 1

communication, jealousy and a character list of eclectic actors, *Noises Off* kept everyone watching following along with this humorous tale.

The audience was highly entertained by this play filled with quick lines, perfectly planned timing and well-practiced

physical comedy.

All the actors performed excellently, keeping the audience laughing as the night went on. It was the perfect play for community members to attend and have a chance to relax, have fun and unwind.

This performance was directed by Theater and Media teacher Bevan Brunelle.

HOW VETERANS BENEFITS CAN COVER THE COST OF SENIOR LIVING

Wednesday, February 14th • 9:30 – 11:30 AM

PRESENTED BY:

Patty Servaes, Elder Resource Benefits Consulting

Discover benefits up to \$2,727 per month available to Veterans, spouses and surviving spouses. We will be de-mystifying VA Pension with Aid and Attendance for those:

- who wish to live in independent OR assistance in living
- who never served overseas
- who still own their own home
- who were not wounded in service

Lavish refreshments will be served, and tours will be offered following the presentation.

ERBC is not affiliated with the Department of Veterans Affairs



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RSVP by February 12th to 413-420-5145, visit RSVPDayBrookVillage.org or scan the QR code.



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