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Jadyn Christie crowned Grand Colleen

By **Brendan Rooney**
Correspondent

HOLYOKE – Last Saturday night, the Holyoke St. Patrick’s Day Committee named Jadyn Christie of South Hadley as the 2026 Grand Colleen.

What started as a sold-out evening dedicated to celebrating the long-standing and timeless traditions of Irish-American heritage within the Paper City quickly shaped into a historic moment, and one that all waited for, the official coronation of the 2026 Holyoke Grand Colleen.

As the evening carried on, and countless awards related to the testament of the St. Patrick’s Parade were celebrated, anticipation only continued to grow. And after the five finalists each had a chance to grace the stage, with each offering courage and providing a sense of confidence, it was clear one stood out among the pack, and it was with reverence and distinction that the title for 2026 Grand Colleen was bestowed upon Jadyn Christie, 19, of South Hadley.

The tone of the evening

shifted to one of remembrance and pride once Christie’s name was called, she was rushed to the stage where a moment of pride unfolded, where she held her composure, as a sense of achievement was quickly manifesting before her as a lifelong childhood dream soon became reality, as the ceremonial crystal crown and hand stitched cape was bestowed upon her, passing from the hands of her predecessor, 2025 Grand Colleen Moira C. Reardon to Christie, who then took



her throne, as her court assembled alongside her, ushering in a standing ovation from the sold-out room, all while 2026 Parade President Jim Wildman and



Jadyn Christie, (center) of South Hadley, is elated after learning she is the 2026 Grand Colleen. Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Grand Marshal Michael J. Moriarty came to the stage to congratulate Christie, solidifying the new Grand Colleen.

The rest of the 2026 Colleen court consists of Paige Brady Leahy, 19, of Holyoke; Bridie Bowler, 22, of Holyoke; Anna Mary Evans, 22, of Holyoke; and Olivia Rose Royland, 20, of Holyoke.

This was a moment she had been waiting for all her life.

“Honestly, I am speechless; this is just a shock to me,” Christie said. “But I also want to add that I’m so proud of all my fellow colleens, like let it be known we were all fantastic tonight, I love working with all these girls, they are such amazing people, and lastly it’s just an

honor to carry this for the next year, for when I pass this onto the next colleen.”

Christie also revealed that one moment she is looking forward to is interacting with the children in the community and creating a lasting and positive impact.

“I have always dreamt of this moment, and it’s reassuring that I’m going to be that person they look up to, and I

want to say that I really love my family and I wouldn’t be here without them,” Christie added.

In addition to Christie’s reign kicking off, right next to her throughout the entire process post-selection was Reardon, who took a moment to reflect on her reign, which officially drew to a close.

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Glasheen chosen as superintendent

By **Gregory A. Scibelli**
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HOLYOKE – Last Thursday night, it did not take long for the Holyoke School Committee to make their choice for the new superintendent of schools, and the first since the schools were returned to local control.

Local being a key theme, Assistant Superintendent Jacqueline Glasheen was selected by the committee. She was one of three finalists and is a resident of the city.

According to the Holyoke Public Schools, “A year-long search process for the next superintendent for Holyoke Public Schools ended Thursday night when the School Committee selected Assistant Superintendent Jackie Glasheen to be the next person to lead the district forward. With that decision made, the remaining step in the process is contract negotiations to finalize salary.

The other two finalists were Carmen Melendez Quintero, executive director of inclusive education at Boston City Schools,

and Annie Azarloza, interim superintendent of schools at Northumberland, Stratford & Stark Schools in New Hampshire.

“We had three excellent candidates,” said School Committee Chair Dr. Yadilette Rivera-Colón, noting that Glasheen “will hit the ground running.” “She knows the district. She knows where we are a strong and where we are not doing well. She knows where we need to focus so we can continue to improve.”

This July will mark the first time in more than a decade that HPS will be led by a superintendent who was selected by the Holyoke School Committee following an intensive search and interview process.

In April 2015, Massachusetts placed Holyoke Public Schools under state receivership and appointed Dr. Stephen Zrike as receiver to oversee the district. During the 10 years of receivership, HPS had three receivers, includ-



Jacqueline Glasheen

ing Anthony Soto who took on the role of interim superintendent in July 2025 when local governance was restored. Soto chose not to apply for the permanent superintendent position when it was posted in December 2025. He plans to remain at Holyoke Public Schools as chief of finance and operations.

Mayor Joshua Garcia, who is also the chair of the school committee, also issued a statement on the choice of Glasheen. He was very pleased with the choice is looking forward to working the new school leader.

“She’s local, a Holyoke High grad with bachelor’s and master’s degrees in education and administration. In her 30-plus years in the School District, she’s taught special ed at Lynch, was principal at Kelly and E.N. White, was Executive Director of School Leadership and — for the past nine months — assistant superintendent. Jackie is the total package.”

“As everyone knows, the Holyoke school system worked its way out of state receivership after nearly 10 years of state control. It was the achievement of a dream,” Garcia said, “a dream shared by the parents, teachers, School Committee, Superintendent’s office and my office. Now I have a new dream: that Holyoke’s public school will become the first choice for parents and families from West Holyoke to South Holyoke, and other communities within the Hampden and Hampshire region, and that the export of Holyoke students to surrounding towns will become a memory.”

Rivera-Colón noted that “during the interview process, it became quite evident that Glasheen is a deeply student-centered and compassionate leader whose calm, steady presence and inclusive heart have left a lasting impact on students, families, and educators. She has built strong community partnerships, empowered and supported teachers, and created thoughtful, sustainable change that helps every child feel known, supported, and valued.”

City now seeks administrator to carry out financial plans

HOLYOKE – In the wake of the Holyoke City Council’s approval last week of Mayor Joshua A. Garcia’s Financial Modernization Act, Garcia has launched the search for one of the key players in the City’s redesigned financial landscape — the Chief Administrative and Financial Officer, or CAFO.

“We’re looking for a dynamic, mission-driven leader,” Garcia said. “This newly created role offers a rare opportunity to help shape the future of City

government by strengthening day-to-day operations and modernizing how the City manages its finances. The CAFO will play a key leadership role in organizing separate financial offices into a centralized finance department, implementing consistent systems and controls, and driving citywide coordination across departments.”

At the Mayor’s direction, the CAFO will exercise oversight of all City departments and coordination of special projects and interdepartmental ini-

tiatives. The management responsibilities include budgeting, collective bargaining, and purchasing, as well as implementation of the Mayor’s policies and initiatives.

The CAFO will also serve as an advisor to the Mayor, City Council, and municipal departments and boards.

Candidates for the position, which pays between \$115,000 and \$160,000, must meet a high standard of education and professional achievement.

“This is an ideal

opportunity for a collaborative, solutions-oriented leader who thrives in complex environments and is excited to build new systems, improve processes, and deliver results that matter,” Garcia said. “If you thrive in complex environments, love improving systems, and want to make a lasting impact, Holyoke wants you.”

Those interested can apply on Indeed.com or send resume and cover letter to Personnel@holyoake.org. The application deadline is Mar. 31.

Ventilation work causes fire at mall

By **Gregory A. Scibelli**
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HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Mall was originally set to re-open for regular business on Thursday following a fire that took place late Tuesday night.

However, just prior to The Sun’s press time, mall officials released a statement saying common areas in the mall would remain closed for all of Thursday so remediation teams could complete their work. The statement was released

early Thursday morning after a previous statement said the mall’s common areas would re-open.

All anchor stories with exterior entrances such as Target, Best Buy, and Macy’s were open Thursday with no mall access.

The update is the latest new after a fire took place in the ventilation system of the basement level of the mall.

According to the Holyoke Fire Department, officials were called to the mall, located at 50 Holyoke St., at approximately 11 p.m. Tuesday night. The fire department was alerted to a fire that was taking place on the roof of the building.

The fire department, which issued a short story on its Facebook page, said heavy smoke was coming from the roof and a fire was caused by a ventilation shaft cleaning. Workers doing the maintenance job, was cutting ductwork as part of the process sparked the fire.

Flames begin to spread throughout the system and out through the roof. Anyone passing by the building could have possibly seen the flames coming from the south side of the mall, near the south-side Target entrance just above the Hobby Lobby sign.

At first, firefighters had a hard time reaching the flames, but crews were able to open interior walls and accessed the ventilation system as the fire began to spread. The fire went from the basement food court through to the roof of the three-story mall.

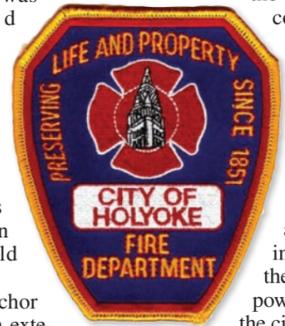
The incident required dozens of local firefighters to assist and mutual aid in order to cover the depleted manpower in the rest of the city.

Fire crews were on the scene until 3 a.m. Wednesday morning putting out the fire. There were no injuries to anyone involved with the mall or firefighters responding to the incident.

On Wednesday, mall staff worked to inspect the rest of the building and prepare it re-open.

The Holyoke Mall released a statement on Wednesday encouraging customers to contact desired stories to find out if they will be open and when.

For now, the fire is being ruled as accidental. The statement said professional remediation teams will remain on site and the formal investigation into the incident is ongoing. Tenants of the mall are encouraged to contact mall management for further assistance or guidance.



MiraVista expands access to inpatient mental health care

HOLYOKE – At a time when hospitals and emergency departments across Western Massachusetts continue to experience long waits for psychiatric care, MiraVista Behavioral Health Center is expanding access to inpatient treatment with the opening of 10 new adult psychiatric beds.

The expansion increases capacity for individuals experiencing a mental health crisis while strengthening MiraVista's direct admissions process, which allows people who need inpatient psychiatric care to be admitted without first going through an

emergency department. This approach helps reduce delays in care and eases pressure on already crowded ERs.

"This isn't a countdown — it's a count up," said Shelley Zimmerman, Chief Executive Officer and Hospital Administrator at MiraVista Behavioral Health Center. "With these additional beds, we're expanding access to care while helping people get the treatment they need faster."

MiraVista currently serves adolescents ages 13 and older and adults through inpatient psychiatric services, along with a continuum of

outpatient substance use treatment and recovery programs. Patients are treated by multidisciplinary teams that include psychiatrists, physicians, nurses, mental health technicians, and therapists.

The hospital's direct admission model allows referring providers to connect individuals to inpatient care more efficiently — often avoiding unnecessary emergency department visits and helping people reach appropriate treatment sooner.

MiraVista welcomes referrals from a wide range of community partners, including:

- Hospitals and emergency departments
- Primary care and pediatric practices
- Behavioral health and substance use treatment providers
- Schools and school-based clinicians
- Community health centers
- Law enforcement and first responders
- Social service agencies and nonprofits
- Families and individuals seeking help

To support collaboration and education, MiraVista is inviting community partners

to schedule:

- Lunch & learn sessions
- Program overview meetings
- Direct admission process walkthroughs

These sessions are designed to help providers understand how to access inpatient care quickly, identify appropriate referrals, and connect individuals to the right level of treatment.

At the same time, MiraVista has seen a strong response from clinicians and mental health professionals eager to join the hospital's growing team — a reflection of both the demand for services and

the mission-driven work taking place inside its walls.

"This expansion reflects the urgent need for timely, accessible mental health care in our region," Zimmerman added. "By growing our capacity and our team, we're making it easier for people to get the right care at the right time — and giving professionals a meaningful place to do that work."

For more information, to schedule a visit, or to arrange a lunch & learn, contact: Kim Lee, Chief of Creative Strategy & Development at 413-264-3042 or klee@miravistabhc.care.

Baroco Corporation expands essential day habilitation services with new program

HOLYOKE – Baroco Corporation, a provider of community-based support services, today announced the launch of its new program in Holyoke. This strategic expansion increases access to high-quality day habilitation and skill-building services across Western Mass., addressing an urgent need for person-centered support for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The new Holyoke site is designed to deliver innovative programming that fosters independence and social connection. By focusing on hands-on learning, vocational exploration, and inclusive

activities, the program creates new pathways for individuals to build practical life skills. The facility will serve as a hub for community engagement, offering participants opportunities to volunteer, form lasting relationships, and contribute meaningfully to the local area.

To celebrate this milestone, Baroco hosted a Grand Opening event on Feb. 18. The event featured a ribbon cutting ceremony with Mayor Garcia, complimentary refreshments, and the chance to meet the dedicated local staff. An open house followed, offering tours and opportunities for attendees to learn more about Baroco's innovative services.

"We are thrilled to open our new Holyoke program. This location marks an important step in expanding access to meaningful day habilitation services across Western Mass.," said Omar Abdullah, VP of Growth Initiatives at Baroco Corporation. "Our goal is not only to serve more individuals, but to deepen the quality of care, connection, and belonging in every community we enter."

Baroco distinguishes itself through a family-centered approach that prioritizes dignity and choice. Rather than simply providing services, the organization builds inclusive spaces where indi-

viduals are celebrated for their unique contributions. The Holyoke program reflects this philosophy, combining professional expertise with creative programming to bridge the gap between ability and opportunity.

Founded in 1983, Baroco has long advocated for the rights of individuals to make their own choices and be treated with respect. This latest expansion demonstrates the organization's ongoing commitment to evolving its services to meet the changing needs of the community while honoring cultural diversity and partnering closely with families.

UCCH hosting corned beef dinner

HOLYOKE – St. Patrick's Day is right around the corner, and what better way to celebrate than by indulging in some Corned Beef and Cabbage for a good cause? Well, now is your chance.

United Congregational Church of Holyoke is hosting a Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner Fundraiser on Saturday, March 14 at 6 p.m. Dinners will include dessert and coffee or tea and can be dine-in or take-out. Tickets are \$17 each and can be reserved by calling the church office at 413-532-1483.

All Proceeds will go to

the Outreach Community to continue their critical work in the community.

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.uccholyoke.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.

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 shar-

ing 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.

City Council president to hold talk at Wistariahurst

HOLYOKE – Wistariahurst Museum is hosting a talk with Holyoke's City Council President Tessa Murphy-Romboletti during Civic Learning week. Getting involved with your local city council is a way to engage with and be aware of what's happening in your city. Residents from Holyoke and beyond can take away information about civic engagement from Murphy-Romboletti's talk.

Tessa Murphy-Romboletti is entering her third term as an At-Large Holyoke City Councilor and is currently serving her second term as Council President and is the first woman in the city's history to hold the title. For seven years, Murphy-Romboletti

led EforAll/Para Todos Pioneer Valley, helping hundreds of local entrepreneurs—particularly women, immigrants, and under-represented founders—start and grow their small businesses. Before that, she guided the SPARK Holyoke initiative through its transition to EforAll and previously worked for the City of Holyoke in both the Planning & Economic Development Department and the Mayor's Office. Her dedication to community empowerment has been recognized repeatedly throughout her career.



Tessa Murphy-Romboletti

Born and raised in Holyoke, Murphy-Romboletti is a proud graduate of the Holyoke Public Schools and earned her B.A. in history and sociology from the University of Delaware. She currently serves on the MassHire Holyoke Board of Directors and is an active member of the St. Patrick's Parade Committee of Holyoke.

Holyoke's City Council holds hearings, passes ordinances, financial orders, and resolutions, as well as oversees city finances. Councilors also address resident concerns. City Council

committees hold various duties including appointing municipal officers, approving municipal budgets, and approving laws. In her talk, Murphy-Romboletti will offer information on the functions of Holyoke's City Council and how residents can get involved.

If Not You, Who? Getting Involved in Local Government will occur Thursday, March 12 from 6 to 7 p.m. at Wistariahurst Museum during Civic Learning Week. This annual, nonpartisan awareness week brings 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.

She Decides Women Empowerment Brunch returns March 1 at Wyckoff

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 personal 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, mean-

ingful 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 corner-

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Day Brook to hold concert

HOLYOKE – Day Brook Village Senior Living, a locally owned, not-for-profit Continuing Care Retirement Community located in Holyoke, MA will be hosting a concert featuring The Earls and The Pearls on Thursday, Feb. 26 at 2 p.m. in the Sheldon Dining Room. This performance is free and open to the public. An RSVP is required; kindly call 413-561-7958.

Chamber hosting annual St. Pat's breakfast

HOLYOKE – The Greater Holyoke Chamber invites the entire community to its highly anticipated annual St. Patrick's Breakfast, proudly presented by Witman Properties, PeoplesBank, HG&E, BankESB, and Greenfield Cooperative Bank. The event will take place on Wednesday, Mar. 18 at 7:30 a.m. at The Log Cabin. This traditional gathering offers an opportunity for residents, business leaders, community leaders, and community members to reconnect, celebrate local

achievements, and honor this year's distinguished award recipients. The breakfast serves as a cornerstone event for the Greater Holyoke area, bringing together hundreds of individuals to celebrate the city's rich heritage and vibrant future. Building on a year filled with meaningful community engagement—including a successful Food Drive, numerous new business ribbon cuttings, and a host of collaborative initiatives—the Chamber is proud to continue fostering connections

that strengthen the fabric of Holyoke. This year, the Chamber aims to make the celebration the largest in recent memory, rallying the community to support business owners and civic leaders as awardees. All are welcome to join what promises to be a truly inspiring and festive morning. Award presentations will be complemented by a raffle featuring a variety of prizes. Businesses and individuals are encouraged to submit raffle prizes, further highlighting their com-

mitment to the community, while attendees are invited to purchase raffle tickets in advance or at the breakfast to support the Chamber's efforts. Businesses interested in maximizing their participation are invited to purchase tables, ensuring strong visibility for their teams and organizations. Register now at holyoke-chamber.com as a guest or as a sponsor, and secure your raffle tickets to be a part of this dynamic event. As an added highlight, crowd favorites Last

Night's Fun will return to perform, bringing atmosphere and entertainment to the breakfast and setting the stage for a memorable celebration. Attending the breakfast is an excellent way to show support for the Chamber's mission of fostering economic growth and goodwill. Whether you are a long-time resident or new to the area, this event provides the perfect setting to network, celebrate community leaders, and kick off the St. Patrick's season in style.

Hibernians to lead Irish flag raising on March 2

HOLYOKE – The Ancient Order of Hibernians, James A. Curran Division 1 and the Ladies Order of Hibernians Division 2 of Hampden/Hampshire Counties will celebrate Irish American Heritage Month with an Irish flag raising ceremony at Holyoke City Hall on Monday, Mar. 2, at 10 a.m. at Holyoke City Hall. The public is invited to attend.

Jim Wildman, Parade Grand Marshal Michael Moriarty, Ladies Order of Hibernians President Mary Kate O'Connor, President Sean Cahillane of the Irish Cultural Center of Western New England all plan to attend. Piper Matt O'Connor will play the pipes at the event and Sheila Moreau will sing the American and Irish Anthems. Holyoke Mayor Joshua A. Garcia and City officials will also attend. Some 31.5 million Americans claim Irish

Ancestry. The colors of the symbolic Irish Flag represent Green for Roman Catholics and Nationalism, Orange for the Protestant minority, and the White in between the two colors as hope for lasting peace between the two. The U.S. Congress designated March as Irish American Heritage Month in 1991 to recognize the contributions Irish Americans have made to the country. The Ancient Order of Hibernians was founded in New York City in 1836 and in 1880 in Holyoke.



Spring Concert Series set

HOLYOKE – If you missed our 2025 Fall concert series, you do not want to miss out on our Spring 2026 concert series. We will be kicking off our first concert of the Spring series on Sunday, March 1 at 2 p.m. in our Mother of Sorrows Chapel at Providence Place. Providence Place is located at 5 Gamelin Street in Holyoke, right behind the Holyoke Mall.

The March 1 concert will include a performance by the UMASS SIA Lambda Phi Chapter who will be presenting a variety of vocal and instrumental selections that features music throughout history – from the classical era onward. This event is free and open to the public with ample parking available, no RSVP is necessary. For more information on the concert or if you are interested in learning more about our retirement community, please contact Katelyn Bacon at 413-534-9700 or email kbacon@providenceplace.org.

St. Paul's to hold rummage sale

HOLYOKE – St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 485 Appleton Street, Holyoke will hold their Annual Rummage Sale on Saturday, Mar. 14 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the auditorium. There will be bargains for everyone: Clothing, housewares,

bedding, towels, books, toys, and holiday and craft supplies. Free ample parking is located behind the Church and all are welcome. For more information, please contact Trudy Monson 413-335-1145 or call the Church Office at 413-532-5060.

Irish Night next Saturday

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. 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.

First Lutheran presents Dan Kane Singers

HOLYOKE – First Lutheran is hosting a free concert that is open to all the community on March 29 (Palm Sunday) at 2 p.m. The concert will feature the popular group, Dan Kane and Friends. First Lutheran Church is located at 1810 Northampton St., Holyoke.

BRUNCH, from page 2

stone 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 seek-

ing 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>.

Learn about little-known abolitionists

HOLYOKE – On Saturday, Feb. 28 at 11 a.m. at Holyoke Public Library, join us for an hour of inspiring stories of commitment, courage, and resistance. Speakers Tom Weiner and Dr. Amilcar Shabazz will share from their recent book, "In Defiance: 20 Abolitionists you were never taught in school," which uncovers stories of individuals who risked their lives in the struggle to end enslavement. The event is free and open to the public and will be held in the Community Room. After their talk, the authors will be available for

questions and book signing. Authors Tom Weiner and Dr. Amilcar Shabazz will offer an engaging discussion of their recent book, *In Defiance*, which uncovers the stories of 20 individuals who risked their lives to fight enslavement and serves as a compelling call for justice and the preservation of history. The talk focuses on the lives and words of a few of these individuals, highlighting their courage, activism, and unwavering commitment to freedom. Amid ongoing efforts to erase history, these

stories serve as a powerful corrective—meant to challenge, inspire, and ignite action. Tom Weiner is a Northampton-based writer, educator, and anti-racist activist, and Dr. Amilcar Shabazz is professor of History and Africana Studies at UMass/Amherst and former president of the National Council for Black Studies. Sponsored by the Holyoke History Room. Recommended for middle school through adult. Light refreshments will be served.

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Favor informarse que los archivos de estudiantes de Educación Especial (Capítulo 766) con fecha de retiro dentro del año 2017/2018, serán destruidos el 18 de Marzo de 2026. Si desea obtener una copia de sus archivos, favor de comunicarse con las:

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Please be advised that student's Special Education (Chapter 766) records, with a withdrawal date within the year 2017/2018 will be destroyed on March 18, 2026. If you wish to obtain a copy of your records, please contact the:

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Guest Column

SOCIAL SECURITY Matters

By Russell Gloor



I'm still working; Why didn't my benefit amount increase

Dear Rusty:

I have been working somewhat consistently since commencing my Social Security benefit income. I've been collecting since my full benefit age of 66, approximately. I'm now 81 and customarily, in about October of each calendar year, Social Security notifies me of additional benefits from my additional work. Not this year.

I earned some \$18,000-\$19,000 in 2025. SS advised I did not meet some 35-year formula. I thought that formula just applied to the original benefit calculation. Otherwise, one seems cheated given the SS taxes paid on income received after applying for benefits without any consideration for that income. Please advise me.

Signed: Feeling Cheated

Dear Feeling Cheated:

For Your Information, your Social Security benefit is always based on the highest 35 years of your lifetime earnings with your early years' earnings automatically adjusted for inflation. And that formula continues even after you start receiving benefits. Social Security will look at your earnings each year to see if your recent earnings are among your highest. If so, they will automatically recalculate your benefit to give you a higher amount and pay you retroactively to the first of that year.

Apparently, in past years, your more recent earnings were among the highest over your lifetime, which is why you received those notifications in the fall of each previous year saying your benefit was adjusted based upon recent earnings. That you didn't get a similar notification this year, means that your earnings in 2024 were not among the highest over your lifetime, so no adjustment to your monthly benefit was appropriate.

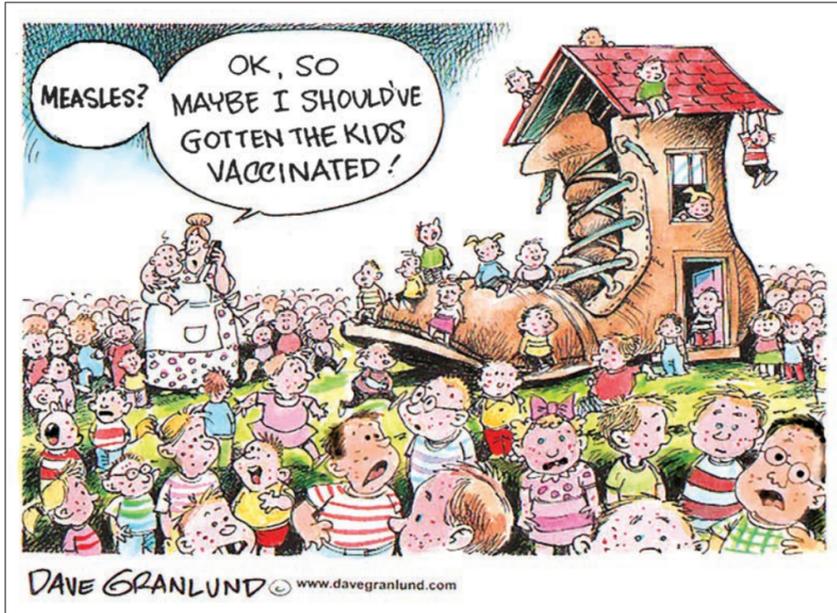
Now, to clarify, those annual notices you received in the past always referred to the preceding year – that is, if you received a notice in October 2024 of a higher SS benefit, that was a result of your 2023 earnings. If you got no such notice in October of 2025, that means that your 2024 income was not among the highest over your lifetime. And your 2025 earnings of \$18,000 - \$19,000 will likely not be among your lifetime highest either, so you probably won't get a notice next year either.

It's important to understand that your contributions to Social Security, i.e., the SS payroll taxes you pay while working, are not put into a separate account for you - rather, they are

used to help pay benefits to all beneficiaries.

In other words, just contributing to SS with payroll tax from your work earnings doesn't necessarily mean you get a higher benefit. Your SS benefit is always based upon the 35 years in which you earned the most, including recent years if you continue to work. So, you weren't "cheated" that is simply how the program works your SS benefit is always based on your highest 35 years of work earnings, including recent years, with earnings from the early years adjusted for inflation.

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.



DAVE GRANLUND © www.davegranlund.com

Guest Column

What are shallots, anyway?

Shortly after the two part column on growing onions, I received a question about shallots.

My friend was looking through a seed catalog and wanted to know the ins and outs of growing them. This topic was a fun one for me because it required some research.

Can you believe that the Garden Lady has never grown shallots before? There is an explanation why, with part of the reason being that I am not what you'd consider a fancy cook, and shallots have their place in fine dining.

The other rea-



by Roberta McQuaid



son is that admittedly I never understood the point of shallots – aren't they just small onions? Why would you buy something special for a recipe if you had a good fashioned onion in the pantry?

As all the cooks in the audience gasp, let me qualify that statement with the fact that

now I know better. Shallots are slightly different plants from onions scientifically. Whereas the onion goes by the name Allium cepa, shallots are what you would call a cousin, with the Latin name Allium cepa gr. Aggregatum.

Although the flavor hints of garlic (who is another more distant cousin), shallots are sweeter and more mild than onions, and are a staple in French and Asian cuisine where they can be used raw or cooked. Think delicate sauces or vinaigrettes.

I laugh when I picture all of the onion family members sitting around at a party. You'd have the gregarious onion, the boisterous garlic and then the cultured shallot, wearing a beret and speaking

See GARDEN, page 5

Guest Column



your health

By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN

Guest Column



It's usually good news when the doctor says you or a loved one can come home from the hospital. Sometimes, though, it's a mixed blessing.

Hospital discharge sometimes means that further hospital care won't improve someone's health condition, and the hospital is eager to get someone else in that bed. People are discharged faster these days, often with significant lingering health issues that have to be seen to.

In the hospital, there's a staff of nurses, nurse aides, therapists and others to care for you or a loved one. When you get home, though, it's just you and maybe a spouse or other family member. That's why the home health

industry is booming.

In 2020 (the most recent data available), approximately 3 million patients received home health care services in the U.S., often following a hospitalization or skilled nursing facility stay. They are being cared for by some 12,000 home health agencies, more than 80 percent of which are for-profit companies.

Home health is something patient advocates know a lot about – and there's a lot to know. Here are some of the things I've learned over my years as an RN and nurse advocate.

Prepare in advance if you can

A best-case scenario is that you know you'll need some help when you

Care at home after the hospital

get home. For every day you spend in a hospital, you lose a month of muscle tone and mobility, so depending on how long you've been hospitalized, you may need considerable help.

Will you need a walker or wheelchair? Shower chair? A first-floor sleeping arrangement? A bedside commode? These are all things that can be planned for if you know they're coming. Very often, hospitals have social workers who help patients navigate after-hospital care. Medicare has a thorough discharge planning guide on its website; search Medicare Publication No. 11376 in your browser.

Other things to think about are trip hazards like small pets and throw rugs and having some ready-made or frozen meals on hand.

Arrange for help in advance, too

A spouse may be standing by, but they may need help themselves. Adult children, friends or neighbors may be able to pitch in. If there's no one you can call on for help – and more than 50 million Americans over 50 are aging on their own – it's time to con-

tact a home health agency. A patient advocate, who is likely familiar with the home health landscape in your area, is a good resource and go-between.

The cardinal rule is: Ask for assistance when you need it to avoid further complications from falls, lack of nourishment or lapses in personal care.

Understand what Medicare covers

Home health care spending grew at an annual rate of more than 10% in 2024 and shows no signs of slowing down. A significant chunk of the spending in 2023 – \$148 billion – was by Medicare. But Medicare doesn't cover everything, so you may have out-of-pocket expenses.

Medicare-covered home health services include skilled nursing care, physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech-language pathology services when ordered by a doctor. Part-time or intermittent home health aide care is covered only if you're also getting those services at home.

Skilled nursing care can include wound care, injec-

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.

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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GSHFH Pickleball Tournament returns to benefit Habitat for Humanity

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

WESTFIELD – It's back and it's on! Get your team together and register for Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity's (GSHFH) Pickleball Tournament on Sunday, March 29. The all-day event held at The Picklr in Westfield is sure to serve up kitchen-legal levels of fun.

That's right, we're down with the lingo and we mean this Habitat fundraiser will be all good. How could it not? The round-robin-style event features two-player teams. Play time will be divided into timed sections by skill level to ensure everyone gets worthwhile matchups and court time.

"The game itself is a fun way to get your body moving and is not as intimidating as tennis," said Olga Callirgos, GSHFH Homeowner Services manager, who played her first match at last year's tournament. "Players are super welcoming to newbies who don't know what they're doing. It's definitely a community that looks out for one another. I'm still slowly learning the rules, though, because when I played, I just knew I had to hit the ball but not to hit it out of bounds."

We'll start the day at 8 a.m. with beginners on the courts, roll into intermediate play, and finish strong with advanced matches. Tickets are \$50 per person and pre-registration is required. Snacks will be available and bragging rights are up for grabs. Plus,

raffle tickets and merchandise are on hand for purchase.

"Pickleball has a way of bringing people together across ages and experience levels," said Bree D'Amours, a member of GSHFH's Board of Directors who's also part of the planning committee. "I love the idea of being a part of an event that's genuinely fun while still promoting Habitat in a meaningful way. If people leave feeling energized, informed, and more connected to Habitat's network, then we've done well."

Greater Springfield Habitat's first pickleball tournament held in July 2025, attracted nearly 50 people, including children and Springfield Thunderbirds mascot Boomer. Among the raffle prizes were a tabletop charcoal grill, gift baskets,

pickleball swag, and Funko POP dolls.

"I had some fun and met some great people," said Andy Szalai via a Facebook comment after last year's tournament. "I'm looking forward to this being a tradition."

GSHFH is a housing ministry dedicated to strengthening communities by empowering low-income families to change their lives and the lives of future generations through homeownership and home repair opportunities. This is accomplished by working in partnership with diverse people, from all walks of life, to build and repair simple, decent, affordable housing. Habitat's mission to provide homeownership opportunities to low-income families is unique as it requires partner families to



Expert players participate in a volley during Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity's first-ever Pickleball Tournament at the Picklr last year.

Submitted photo

work alongside the community that is reaching out to help them. GSHFH has helped roughly 100 local families realize their dream of home-

ownership over the last 39 years.

For more information or to register, visit habitatspringfield.org/pickleball.

GARDEN, from page 4

with a French accent.

I'm not sure why my mind went there, but it was a fun digression.

In terms of culture, shallots are similar to onions in that they can be grown from both sets or seeds. Seeds would be started indoors anytime now through March. Transplants or sets are best planted in the garden as soon as the ground can be worked, usually early April.

Although shallots mature smaller than onions, spacing should still be four-six inches apart so that they can size up to their full potential. They are shallow rooted, so supplemental watering is a must.

When foliage reaches 12 inches, apply a mulch around the base of each plant to help conserve moisture and cut down on weed competition. Until that point, cultivate carefully by hand or pull individual weeds as they pop up.

Like onions, scallions begin to "bulb up" around the time of the summer equinox. Top dressing with fertilizer at that time is a smart idea.

As summer draws to a close, shallots will exhibit similar die back as onions, whereby the tops begin to fall over, indicating they are ready for harvest. If the weather cooperates, sun cure on the ground or garden path for a few days, then move indoors to a spot with good air movement to finish the curing process.

Once necks have shrunk and dried, cut the tops off to about one inch above the bulb and store in mesh bags as close as you can to the freezing mark with ample humidity. One interesting fact I learned from Fedco Seeds (www.fedcoseeds.com) is that if you don't have a room that cold, humidity can be adjusted to make up the difference for proper storage.

For example, best case scenario dictates that shallots need 34 degrees at 66 percent

humidity. Say the coldest you can get your storage spot is 55 degrees, well then they would like 45 percent humidity. The closest you can get it to add up to 100 the better.

I wonder if this theory holds true for other crops in storage. My squash and pumpkin aren't the happiest this year, so maybe I will look into how to manipulate the environment to avoid some of the shriveling I am seeing.

Anyhow, I hope you had a few chuckles reading this column and that you might feel inclined to give shallots, that cultured onion cousin, a try this gardening season.

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.

HEALTH, from page 4

tions, nutrition services and monitoring unstable health conditions. Medicare also covers durable medical equipment when prescribed by a doctor, such as beds, walkers, wheelchairs, pumps and oxygen.

Medicare doesn't pay for 24-hour a day care, meal delivery, homemaker services or personal care services that help with bathing, dressing, grooming, etc.

Questions to ask a home health agency

There are a zillion questions you could ask, but I think these are among the most important:

- How long has this agency been in business and is it licensed to perform home health care?
- Can you provide references, or can I speak with

previous clients?

- Do you accept long-term care insurance, Medicare or Medicaid? If so, do you bill insurance, or do clients pay you and then file for reimbursement?

- How do you recruit and select caregivers, and do you perform background checks?

- Are your caregivers employees or contractors? Are they bonded?

- Can I meet caregiver candidates and select the ones I want?

- What should I do if my caregiver doesn't show up as scheduled?

- How often is the care plan reviewed?

- How do I communicate concerns and questions to you?

Research has found that patients who recover at home have better outcomes,

which is why the hospital-at-home movement is growing. So if you're going to be recuperating at your place, don't go it alone.

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

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CLUES ACROSS

- Cut quickly
- A way to state clearly
- River in NE Scotland
- Expansive
- Lacking social polish
- Amount of time
- Frame
- Automobile
- Toadstools
- High school dances
- Utilize
- Experimented with
- One-sided
- Acquisitive
- Potted plants
- Everyone has one
- Kalahari Desert lake
- Unidentified flying object

CLUES DOWN

- Brushed
- Small water spirit (Germ.)
- Heroes
- Monetary units
- Some don't want to share theirs
- Free-swimming invertebrate
- Litigates
- Outer
- Parallelograms
- Uneasy feelings
- Cross
- A way to remove
- Pages can be dog-__
- Ukrainian city
- A citizen of Denmark
- Month
- Hindu queens
- Group of chemicals
- Rider of Rohan

CLUES DOWN

- Wet dirt
- Southwestern Russia city
- Observed
- Angry
- Drivers' licenses
- Musical composition
- Auction
- They __
- Women
- Be filled with love for
- Thick-soled sock
- Appears
- Old World lizard
- The leading performer
- Protein
- "Gunga Din" script writer
- Art __, around 1920
- __ Blyton, children's author
- Abnormal breathing
- A place to rest

CROSSWORD ANSWER on page 11

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The Grand Colleen sits on the throne surrounded by her court.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com



Jadyn Christie is cheered after the announcement.



Court member Olivia Royland.



Court member Paige Leahy.



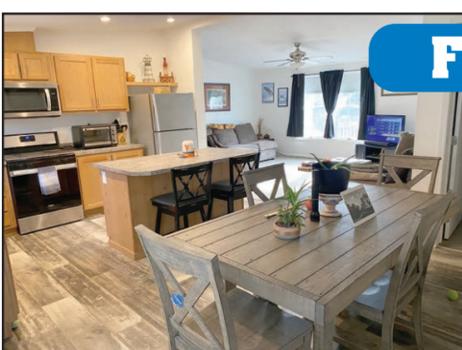
Court member Birdie Bowler.



Court member Anna Evans.



2026 Grand Colleen Jadyn Christie receives her robe from her predecessor Moira Reardon.



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Moiria Reardon, the 2025 Grand Colleen, gives her farewell address.



Gallivan Award winner James Menard.



Jadyn Christie stands with past Grand Colleens.



O'Connell Award winner DJ O'Connor presented plaque by Parade President Jim Wildman

COLLEEN, from page 1

"It's a little bittersweet, but the year honestly just flew by, and this has been just a fantastic experience, and now being able to see the other side of the sisterhood and handing off the crown to Jadyn (Christie) is just a special experience, and I'm so happy for her and her court," Reardon said. She also offered a point of praise towards the rest of the 2026 court, congratulating them on their success.

"Everyone did such a phenomenal job, and they should all be proud of them-

selves, and I just hope everyone has a blessed and happy green season," Reardon said.

Now that the Colleen and her court have been assembled and chosen, the parade committee and the city now turn their focus toward the big day, as fast approaching is the 49th Holyoke St. Patrick's Road Race which kicks off on Saturday, March 21, 2026, and closing out the holiday weekend is the 73rd Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade on Sunday, March 22, 2026. And next up on the calendar is an Irish flag-raising ceremony at the JFK Memorial on March 1.



Candice Clark (1992 Grand Colleen), Trina Laponte, Caroline Danlo, Michael and Heather Kies (1993 Grand Colleen), and Aggie Warren.



Grand Colleens Heather Kies (1993) and Candice Clark (1992).



Pageant coordinators Kathy Dulchinos and daughter Nicholle Harrison.



Rohan Award winner City Council President Tessa Murphy-Romboletti posed for a photo with Jim Wildman.

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Knights grab third straight win

FISKDALE – After some struggles throughout the season, Holyoke High School boys basketball grabbed some momentum last week, winning three straight games, including against Tantasqua Regional 60-48 last Thursday night. The Knights would get to enter the Western Mass. Tournament, facing Pope Francis in the quarterfinals.



Geo Apontee rushes for the hoop.



Julian Fasoli heads for the layup.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli



Michael Medina heads for the arc.



Gian Cora makes a long inbound pass.



Jordan King makes a line down the court.

Girls fall to Southwick

HOLYOKE – Last Monday evening, Holyoke High School girls basketball got into an early hole and could not climb out, falling to visiting Southwick 64-33 in independent action. Julianna Pirela scored 20 points to lead Holyoke. The Knights entered nonplayoff action following the defeat.



Janessa Torres takes possession of a rebound.



Ishanellys Rivera makes a rebound on defense.



Genesis Rivera looks for a path to the hoop.



Julianna Pirela enters the offensive side of the court.

HCC Women defeat Bristol

HOLYOKE – Women's basketball continues to roll, extending their winning streak to six straight games on Tuesday evening. The Lady Cougars hosted Bristol CC in a matchup that would likely decide who finishes the regular season in second place in the New England (Region XXI) standings. Holyoke came out strong on their way to a 62-36 victory, and with two regular season games remaining they hold the second-place spot.

Johany's Andrades (Springfield, MA / Putnam Vocational Technical HS) achieved an impressive feat in the win, registering a triple-double. Andrades led the Cougars in rebounds with 15 and assists with 11 and scored ten points to earn the rare accomplishment. Vivian Timmons (West Springfield, MA / Guilderland HS) tallied a double-double in the victory, leading Holyoke in points with 17 while grabbing 11 rebounds. Timmons sank four three-pointers on Tuesday and now has hit 35 from long range this season.

Women's basketball has an 11-3 regional record and a 13-7 overall record. They will travel for their next game before their regular season finale at home on Friday, Feb. 20. The Lady Cougars will host Bunker Hill CC at 5:30 p.m. for that finale, which will also be Holyoke's sophomore night.



The Knights offense sets up on defense.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli



Sujelyz Peralta heads around the perimeter.

Springfield Thunderbirds outslug Iowa Wild on road

DES MOINES, IA - The Springfield Thunderbirds (18-24-4-2) once again posted a prolific offensive showing, outpacing the Iowa Wild (13-28-4-1) for a roller-coaster 8-6 victory on Saturday night inside Casey's Center in Des Moines.

The opening 20 minutes were a roller coaster of emotions for both teams and their fans. Operating a man down in the opening minutes, the T-Birds still managed to break the ice, as Otto Stenberg beat Cal Petersen with a wrist from the left circle at 1:20 of the period, making it 1-0.

Normally a very disciplined team, Springfield

succumbed to another penalty two minutes later, and Iowa made them pay as Tyler Pitlick jabbed a backhand rebound over Georgi Romanov to tie the game, 1-1, at 3:53.

Springfield quickly countered at 6:36, as Quinton Burns flipped a wrist that glanced off Zach Dean's blade, skipping through Petersen to make it a 2-1 game in the T-Birds' favor. Jakub Stancl followed up 3:10 later with his second goal in as many days, finishing off a 2-on-1 pass from Hugh McGing to extend Springfield's lead to 3-1.

Like an evening ago, though, the Wild refused to go away, and Pitlick cashed

in on his second of the period off a 2-on-1 setup by Hunter Haight to make it a 3-2 game at 15:14.

The one-goal deficit was short-lived for the Wild, as Thomas Bordeleau stripped the puck from an Iowa defender and rifled home a perfect shot past Petersen's blocker at 15:43 to make it 4-2. The goal was Bordeleau's first in a T-Birds uniform.

With just precious seconds remaining in the period, the Wild again responded in kind, as Nic Aube-Kubel set up Jack Peart in the left circle for a buzzer-beating tally in the midst of a delayed Springfield penalty, sending Iowa into the break trailing

by just a goal at 4-3.

Yet, despite the potential momentum changer from Peart, Springfield quickly responded to begin the middle frame, as Chris Wagner went to a knee to guide a power play feed from Matt Luff in behind Petersen at 1:32 of the second, making it 5-3.

The T-Birds' defense stabilized after the chaos of the first, and the offense continued its confident weekend, as Theo Lindstein cashed in for the second time in two games, punching a shot through Petersen's glove side at 9:15 off another Luff assist to push the lead to 6-3.

Springfield's power play added to their tally when

Michael Buchinger whistled a shot through the legs of William Rousseau, who entered the net in place of Petersen to begin the third. Buchinger's fifth of the season gave the T-Birds a 7-3 advantage.

Even facing a huge deficit, the Wild continued to scratch and claw. A pair of Springfield penalties opened the door for Iowa, and the home side took full advantage as Dylan Gambrell cashed in on a rebound to the right of Romanov at 8:04 to make it 7-4.

David Jiricek followed with a slap shot from the blue line that caromed in behind Romanov at 12:47, and the Springfield lead

shrank to 7-5.

Things got even hairier for the T-Birds when Caedan Bankier got to his own rebound at 16:32 to beat Romanov along the near side, and Iowa incredibly got the lead shaved down to a single goal, 7-6.

In the end, though, Iowa's miraculous comeback attempt came up one tally short, as Luff delivered a much-needed empty net goal with 26 seconds remaining to seal the win. Luff and Stancl each finished their evenings with a goal and two assists, and Springfield's eight goals from eight different players set a club record for most goals in a game on the road.

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 determined 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.



Railers fall at home against Lions

WORCESTER - Worcester suffered a 4-1 loss to the defending Kelly Cup champions Sunday afternoon. The Railers earned just one point of a possible six for the series. They went into the weekend with 12 of a possible 14 points in their seven previous games.

They netted only three goals for the weekend and have 12 in their last seven games. Their power play betrayed them Sunday as they were just one for seven. That included a wasted four-minute man advantage on a high sticking double minor to Mathias Laferriere at 7:02 of the second period.

Worcester put only three shots in the direction of the net in those four minutes.

It was 1-1 going into the third period but the Railers could not beat Hunter Jones,

who stopped 29 shots for the game. With the victory, Jones became the first opposing goaltender to beat Worcester in every game of a 3 in 3 series.

The Railers had five power plays in the first period and scored on one of them.

Lincoln Hatten got his 12th goal of the season at 17:03. It was his fifth on the power play and first of any kind since Jan. 24. Jesse Pulkkinen set up Anthony Repaci at the right point and the captain put a shot on net.

There was traffic, a good thing for Hatten, and he popped a rebound home from in close.

After the Railers failed to take advantage of their power play time early in the second period, Trois-Rivieres began to dominate the action.

The Lions finally tied it at 12:15 on Joe Dunlap's goal. He scored on a rebound from the bottom of the left circle.

In the third period, Trois-Rivieres took a 2-1 lead at 2:17, then made it 3-1 at 8:44. Both were doorstep goals. Isaac Dufort had the first one, Cedric Desruisseaux the next one.

Morgan Moisan-Adams, who had a killer series, got the fourth visitors goal at 10:54 on a penalty shot after being hauled down on a breakaway.

While the Lions arrived in town as a sixth place team, not resembling the ECHL defending champion, they are an entirely different team with Jones in goal. Trois-Rivieres improved to 13-5-0 with him as the goaltender of record. The Lions are 21-20-4 overall.



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The Town of North Brookfield is looking for a **PART-TIME PROGRAM ASSISTANT** for the Senior Center. Please submit a resume with a letter of interest to the **Selectmen's Office, 215 North Main St., North Brookfield, MA 01535**, or by email to: selectmen@northbrookfield.net.

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**Invitation to Bid
IFB 2026-33
ANNEX FLOORS**

The city of Holyoke is looking for qualified contractors to perform floor repairs, sanding & refinishing of Hardwood Floors and installation of Carpet Tile in Approx 4,300 Square Feet of Office Space located at the City Hall Annex Building 4th Floor, 20 Korean Veterans Plaza, Holyoke, MA 01040. **A NON-MANDATORY BUT HIGHLY RECOMMENDED PRE-BID WALKTHROUGH WILL BE HELD ON 2/24/2026 @ 10AM at the 4th Floor of the City Hall Annex.** Potential respondents are recommended to attend the walkthrough as there are various finishings for this project. **DOCUMENTS will be available starting on 2/18/2026 @ 10AM by requesting electronically from morrowj@holyoke.org**

Bids will be received ELECTRONICALLY by submitting to morrowj@holyoke.org **NOLATER THAN 3/6/2026 @ 2PM.** PLEASE REFERENCE "BID SUBMISSION IFB 2026-33 ANNEX FLOORS" in the subject line. The digital timestamp will be the recorded submission time. This project may be funded in part or in whole using Federal Funds. Respondents will be verified for their eligibility to receive Federal Funds and must comply with all Federal Regulations. The city reserves the right to reject any and all bids if in the city's best interest. This bid is being bid out in compliance with Ch. 30B, Ch.149 and all other applicable public bidding standards. 02/20/2026

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No.
HD12P1547EA
Estate of:**

**Cornelius Patrick Bresnahan
Date of Death: 07/14/1990
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION**

To all interested persons:
A Petition for S/A - Formal Probate of Will has been filed by Robert R Blakeslee 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 Robert R Blakeslee of Springfield, MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve 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 03/20/2026. 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
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. Claudine T. Stoudemire, First Justice of this Court.

Date: February 17, 2026
Rosemary A Saccomani,
Register of Probate
02/20/2026

**Invitation to Bid
IFB 2026-33
COMPLIANCE
CONTRACTOR REBID**

The city of Holyoke is seeking to collaborate with a contractor/contractors that work to bring properties into compliance with state laws and local city ordinance. Those awarded the contract to be the compliance contractor of the city must be able to work in conditions and be able to assist the Board of Health and Building Department in remedying overgrown vegetation, removal of trees & litter, graffiti removal, boarding & securing properties utilizing U.S. Fire Administration National Arson Prevention Initiative Board Up Procedures, monitoring properties, coordinate with PD & Fire when necessary, securing properties. Documents will be available starting on 2/18/26 @ 10AM by requesting from morrowj@holyoke.org. Bids will be accepted ELECTRONICALLY NO LATER THAN 3/17/2026 @ 2PM. Please reference "IFB 2026-33 Compliance Bid Submission" in the subject line. The digital timestamp will be the recorded submission time. **LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** The estimated contract value for year 1 is up to \$100,000.00. The city reserves the right to renew the contract for up to 2 additional years based on contractor performance and city appropriations. More than one contractor may be selected. The city reserves the right to reject any and all bids if in the city's best interest to do so. This bid is being bid out in compliance with Ch. 30B, Ch.149 and all other applicable public bidding standards 02/20/2026

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No.
HD25P0227EA
Estate of:**

**Irene Mary Downie
Date of Death: 01/12/2025
CITATION ON PETITION FOR ORDER OF COMPLETE SETTLEMENT**

A Petition for Order of Complete Settlement has been filed by Shawn Prince of Chicopee, MA requesting that the court enter a formal Decree of Complete Settlement including the allowance of a final account, the allowance of a proposed distribution, Holyoke Sun 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 03/24/2026.

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

Date: February 17, 2026
Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
02/20/2026

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Furniture, Appliances, TVs and other items
Lot#(name)#(of Pallets):
13689 (S. Lemieux)(4);15696 (D. Mendez)(2); 15750 (C. Payne)(6); 15833 (J. Wilson)(3); 15901 (Z. Rodriguez-Delgado)(1); 15935 (E. Santana)(1);16118 (N.Reyes)(1);16119(J.Pelkey)(3); 16127 (J. Rivera)(2); 16153 (A. Taylor)(1); 16163 (J.Jackson)(6); 16172 (C. Acevedo)(1); 16177 (C. Pacheco)(1); 16182(J.Pizaro)(2); 16221 (J. Cartagena)(6); 16229 (L. Girard)(3); 16243 (K. Greenleaf)(13); 16255 (M.;Rodriguez-Hernandez)(1); 16261 (T. Rodriguez)(1); 16279 (L. St Marie)(1); 16297 (A. Musiak)(4); 16301 (J. Healy)(3); 16303 (E. Nunez)(2); 16314 (J. Perez)(4); 16319(C. Wojcik)(1);16320(R. Gould)(1);16321 (R. Gould)(1); 16325 (K. Maxwell)(1); 16332 (R.Webster)(1); 16339 (M.;Rivera)(2); 16370 (A. Perez)(2); 16371 (J. Doe)(1); 16372(R. Tolisano)(1); 16381 (S. Howe)(8); 16390 (M. Corbin)(1); 16392 (S.Bostock)(1); 16394 (E. Pike)(2); 16395 (T. Brunelle)(8); 16427 (L. Kielson)(2); 16430 (I. Marin)(3); 16465 (S. Cibelli)(7); 16480 (L. Jones)(4); 16487 (R. Timmons)(2); 16490 (J. Torres)(1); 16495 (W. Turner)(9); 16503 (C. Kellett)(3); 16504 (E. Emerling)(2); 16506 (C. Porter)(3); 16535 (T. Paradise)(2); 16542 (J. Moon)(1); 16545 (I. Robinson)(6); 16547 (C. Bourelle)(3); 16551 (C. Hardy)(1); 16559 (D. Singleary)(4); 16566 (B. Madewell)(1); 16569 (L. Stamatiou)(2); 16575 (G. Germaine)(2); 16577 (J. Peltier)(3); 16581 (K. Lane)(6); 16585 (A. Eggleston)(1); 16598 (S. Tyson)(6); 16601 (V. Provost)(1); 16608 (C. Tene-rowicz)(1); 16609 (M. Rodriguez)(1); 16613 (C. Doucette)(3); 16615(D. Beths at Grafton Street)(1); 16623 (M. Torres)(1); 16627 (B. Merchant)(3)
02/20, 02/27/2026

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
Docket No.
HD26P0200GD**

**In the interests of
Payton J.A. Davis
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 01/30/2026 by Errol A Rodney-Febles of Worcester, MA will be held 03/04/2026 08:30 AM Guardianship of Minor Hearing. Located: 50 State St. 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 30, 2026
Rosemary A. Saccomani
Register of Probate
02/20/2026

**THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION
NOTICE OF A DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING**

**Project Description:
Westfield – Intersection Improvements at Southampton Road (Route 10/202), Servistar Industrial Way, and Barnes Airport Drive.**

Project File No. 612600
Design Public Hearing will be held to present the design for the proposed project in Westfield, MA.

**WHERE: Westfield City Hall
City Council Chambers
Second Floor
59 Court Street
Westfield, MA 01085**

**WHEN: Wednesday,
February 25, 2026 @ 7:00pm**

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed project. All views and comments submitted in response to the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

PROPOSAL: The proposed project consists of intersection improvements at Southampton Road (Route 10/202), Servistar Industrial Way, and Barnes Airport Drive. The intersection is proposed to be reconstructed as a roundabout. Bicyclists and pedestrians will be accommodated with an 8-foot wide shared-use path around the outside of the roundabout in accordance with applicable design guides.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The State is responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands. MassDOT's policy concerning land acquisitions will be presented in the hearing.

Project inquiries, written statements and other exhibits regarding the proposed undertaking may be submitted to Carrie E. Lavallee, P.E., Chief Engineer, via e-mail to MassDOTProjectManagement@dot.state.ma.us or via US Mail to Suite 7550, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Project Management, **Project File No. 612600.** State-

ments and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be emailed or postmarked no later than ten (10) business days (14 calendar days) after the hearing is hosted on the MassDOT website listed below.

This hearing is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (e.g interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, live captioning, videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), TTD/TTY at (857) 266-0603, fax (857) 368-0602 or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible and prior to the hearing, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten business days before the hearing.

In case of inclement weather, a cancellation announcement will be posted on the internet at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events>.

JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR
CARRIE E. LAVALLEE, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER
02/13, 02/20/2026

**City of Holyoke
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

The Holyoke Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, March 10, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.** via Zoom.com ID: 825 8639 3209; Call in *67 646 558 8656 to hear applications submitted by ISO New England, Inc, for the property located at 115 Whiting Farms Road (115-00-002) pursuant to the Holyoke Zoning Ordinance, Section 10.0, a **Major Site Plan Review** (File #170); pursuant to Section 4.6.3.2, a Special Permit for an Exceed Fence Height (2026-2); and pursuant to Section 5.4.1, a Special Permit for the **Multiple Principal Structures** (2026-3).

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

APPLICANT:
ISO New England, Inc.
PLANNING BOARD:
Lauren Niles, Chairperson
02/20, 02/27/2026

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758
Docket No.
HD25P1689EA
In the matter of:
Terry Lee Noes
TRUST CITATION**

To all interested persons:
A Petition has been filed by: **Michael L. Noes of Westfield, MA** requesting Confirm that the 999 North Street Extension Trust is valid and that a copy is sufficient. Confirm that Michael Lee Noes is the Successor Trustee and sole Beneficiary of said Trust and has the authority to direct the sale of the property. All as more fully set forth in said petition.

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 03/09/2026.

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 date, action may be taken without further notice to you.

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

Date: February 09, 2026
Rosemary A Saccomani,
Register of Probate
02/20/2026

**Tuesday Night 6pm
Pitch Night
\$5 per person**

**Wednesday Night 6:30pm
Bar Bingo**

**Thursday Night 7-10 pm
Karaoke by
New England Disc Jockeys**

**Friday Night starts at 7:30 pm
Trivia Night \$5 per person**

**7 Days A Week
Queen of Hearts Raffle
\$1 per ticket - unlimited tickets
Drawing Wednesdays at 5 pm**

**February 21st 7-10pm
Live Music by Kitchen Jam**

**AMERICAN LEGION POST 325
22 Sycamore Street, Holyoke, MA**
Find us on Facebook Paper City Post 325

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You must be a self-starter with excellent communication and organizational skills. Basic computer skills are required. Previous print sales experience is preferred but we will train the right candidate.

We are a locally owned family business, offers a competitive commission structure, 401k, and health plan.

Send resume & cover letter to:
Jamie Joslyn
24 Water Street
Palmer, MA 01069
Email: jamie@turley.com

Turley Publications, Inc.

The Holyoke Sun

OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

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

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

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

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U.S. Navy Concert Band coming to Symphony Hall

SPRINGFIELD – The U. S. Navy Concert Band is bringing their Northeast Tour to Springfield Symphony Hall on Sunday, Mar. 1 at 2 p.m.

The free concert, presented by the Spirit of Springfield and sponsored by Yellowstone Landscape, is celebrating the 250th anniversary of the United States with a family-friendly concert. It features a broad selection of musical works, from American classics to contemporary pieces. Selections include works from John Philip Sousa's "Washington Post March," The Wizard of Oz's "Somewhere Over the Rainbow," Aaron Copland's "Buckaroo Holiday," John Williams' "Liberty Fanfare," "America the Beautiful," "Armed Forces on Parade," and so much more!

"Touring the nation and performing concerts means connecting with communities and telling the great stories of

our Sailors working around the globe to keep us safe and free," stated Captain Robert "Seph" Coats, commanding officer of the U.S. Navy Band.

The U. S. Navy Band consists of 50 talented musicians and vocalists, plus a highly-skilled production team. They are accomplished musicians. Almost all of the Sailors in the band have undergraduate degrees in music and most have graduate degrees. Their last Springfield concert was in 2016.

"It is an honor to host the U. S. Navy's premier band in Springfield Symphony Hall," said Spirit of Springfield President Judy Matt. "The performers love the acoustics, historic architecture, and the enthusiastic audience."

Tickets are available at Pride Stores, Springfield Visitor Center at 1319 Main Street, and the Security Desk at One Financial Plaza at 1350 Main Street



in Springfield. They can also be obtained by mailing a self-addressed stamped envelope to the Spirit of Springfield at 1350 Main Street, Suite 1004, Springfield, MA 01103. Those without tickets can still attend. They will be seated 10 minutes before the start of the performance.

Free parking for the concert will be available in the I-91 South Garage courtesy of the Springfield Parking Authority.

In addition to Yellowstone Landscape, the free concert is supported by PIP Printing, Pride Stores, Comcast, MassLive, Rock 102, The Republican, Western Mass News, NAI Plotkin, Springfield Business Improvement District, Springfield Parking Authority, and Springfield Symphony Hall. For more information, visit spiritofspringfield.org or call 413-733-3800.

Smith Scholarship applications available

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 financial 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.

HCC 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.

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.

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.

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

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