

Teacher suspended for sharing video

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – A teacher from Holyoke High School North Campus is under investigation for an inappropriate video.

According to an email sent out by HHS Principal Lori McKenna, a student reported to school administrators that their teacher had linked an inappropriate video to the Google Classroom Space.

The school launched an immediate investigation into the incident following the report and has taken steps to prevent any further access to the video by students.

They are doing their best to ensure that HHS is a safe space for all.

The teacher is on leave as the investigation continues and the school is working with Holyoke Public Schools Human Resources Department as they move forward.

McKenna sent out an emailed communication to

See TEACHER, page 11

Gourde crowned Grand Colleen



Elizabeth Gourde the 2024 Grand Colleen sits with her Court Amelia George, Taryn Ryan, Hunter Edwards and Natalie Morris.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com



Elizabeth Gourde, 2024 Grand Colleen.

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – Elizabeth Gourde was crowned as the new Grand Colleen at the coronation ceremony on Saturday, Feb. 17.

During the ceremony each Colleen contestant (Gourde,

Natalie Morris, Hunter Edwards, Taryn Ryan and Amelia George) was presented on stage where they entered while their bios were read.

Following their presentation, each Colleen was asked to elaborate more on one of their experiences mentioned in their bio, and then they were

all asked the same question, in which their answers were judged by a panel of impartial judges.

The question this year was: given the rich traditions of Irish heritage and the evolving nature of community events, like the Holyoke St. Patrick's parade, how would you as the

Grand Colleen bridge the gap between the past with the present to engage and inspire both younger and older generations in our community?

The Colleens were then judged based on their poise and their answers to the question.

See COLLEEN, page 6

Challenges arise for balancing school budget

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – Superintendent/Receiver Anthony Soto and Executive Director of Finance Sean Mangano presented an update on the fiscal 2025 budget at the school committee meeting on Feb. 12.

For FY25, Holyoke Public Schools will no longer be receiving ESSER funds from the state. These funds were part of the American Rescue Plan Act and they were specifically meant to help schools and districts safely reopen following the pandemic.

“ESSER is going to be going away, which was a significant investment of federal dollars,” Soto said.

Thankfully, the district still has two more years of Student Opportunity Act increases before they begin to taper off as SOA is fully implemented.

Using ESSER funds in the last few years Holyoke has worked on investing in coaching, intervention and enrichment.

“We’ve had a strategy all

along of we are going to use these federal dollars to allow the Student Opportunity Act to catch up and hopefully we will be in a position where we can continue with a lot of the investments that we didn’t want to wait til year six of the SOA to add money for,” Soto said.

“Part of this budget year is going to be working on how we get at more inclusive practices without having all these extra positions that we had budgeted but couldn’t fill.”

- Anthony Soto

Without ESSER the momentum in these investments will pause until SOA is fully implemented.

“This upcoming budget season is going to be a lot tighter than we have experienced in

the past,” Soto said.

Currently, the budget is currently in a \$6 million deficit. However, that includes taking everything that was on ESSER and moving it to the general fund, which Soto does not anticipate will realistically occur.

“We have to work through the budget development process, which is a decentralized process, to make sure that we’re closing that gap and balancing the budget in a strategic way that will allow us to still meet the needs of our students and families,” Soto said.

The total expenses projected for the district in FY25 are \$134,797,886. However, Mangano anticipates that this number will go down as they continue through the budget process.

“Right now it’s a large number but as we go through the process that’ll come down,” Mangano said.

Additionally, Soto pointed out that HPS also has about 70 vacancies at the moment. He anticipates that many of these

See BUDGET, page 5

Council passes new rule to shorten meetings

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – The city council unanimously voted to pass a rule that prevents their regular council meetings from going past 10 p.m., unless a motion is made and passed by two thirds of the council to extend the time.

This was not the first time the council had discussed putting in a rule that would keep their meetings short.

In December, Councilor Kocayne Givner had filed an order to regulate the meetings to two and a half hours, with the council able to vote to extend the meeting by 15 minutes twice, capping overall at 180 minutes.

Givner had hoped that this would allow council meetings to move faster and prevent longer debates.

However, while other councilors agreed that the idea had merit, there were concerns about the exact

wording of the order.

Councilor Tessa Murphy-Romboletti had mentioned Springfield City Council’s own short meeting rule, which states that “no meeting of the city council shall go beyond 10 p.m. EST unless, upon a motion of any city councilor, the meeting is extended for a period of time stated in the motion.”

More councilors were open to such wording, as it allowed for more flexibility in the timing of the meeting, if it was declared to be necessary by the councilors’ vote.

At the time, Givner and Councilor Jose Maldonado-Velez both agreed that this rule was worth looking into.

Councilor Kevin Jourdain was also more open to this wording.

“Maybe just having a maximum cap of 10 or 10:30 and then you need permission of the body to continue on, I’m open

See MEETINGS, page 11

New veterans benefits counselor at HCC

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College recently welcomed Derick Santos, of Manchester, Conn., as its veterans benefits and financial aid counselor.

Originally from Lajas, Puerto Rico, Santos holds a bachelor's degree in computational mathematics from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach, Florida, where he also worked in the military and veterans services department for the university's

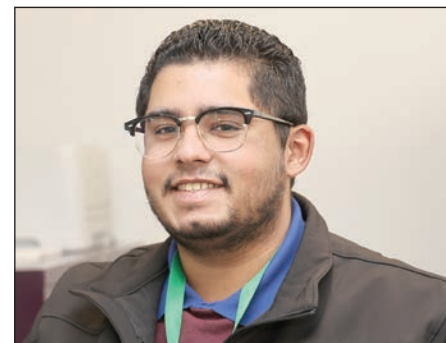
online campus. His father is an active-duty serviceman with the Puerto Rican National Guard.

Santos joined HCC on January 22.

As the veterans benefits and financial aid counselor, Santos is the school-certifying official and will process all benefits for U.S. veterans and military-affiliated students. He will also counsel prospective and returning students through the financial aid process

and serve as part of the counselor on-call rotation.

As such, he splits his office hours between The Bunker veterans resource center and study lounge in Donahue 105 (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday a.m.) and the Financial Aid office on the second floor of the Frost Building (Wednesday p.m., Thursday, Friday). The Bunker is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



Derick Santos is the new Veterans Counselor for HCC. Submitted Photo

Library presents Jim Armenti

HOLYOKE – On March 2 at 2 p.m. in the community room Jim Armenti will share with our community his poetry on reflections of life accompanied by songs, and a presentation of Dave Madeloni's beautiful photography.

Armenti has performed his unique work at libraries across Western Massachusetts such as Westhampton, Easthampton, Amherst, Northampton, and South Hadley. The Library is excited to announce Armenti is bringing his work to Holyoke Public Library.

Sensory-friendly egg hunt at Wistariahurst Museum

HOLYOKE – Join Wistariahurst Museum and hop in for a sensory-friendly egg hunt that focuses on gentle exploration and enjoyment. Designed for families with sensory sensitivities, this egg-ceptional event is tailored so every bunny feels comfortable and welcome. Weather permitting, the egg-stravaganza will take place in the gardens but will be relocated indoors in the event of inclement weather. Each child will be able to gather six eggs and choose from a selection of prizes ranging from candy to fidget toys. This event is the first of its kind at Wistariahurst, and staff members are

ready to crack open the fun.

"We saw an opportunity for the museum to offer this city tradition to kids who may not thrive at the large-scale egg hunt downtown. We wanted to be a space that could offer some more inclusion for this fun event," Megan Seiller, museum director, enthuses. "And we are thankful for the support from Holyoke's Parks and Recreation Department on this event."

Families can sign up for ten minute time slots between 10 and 11:30 a.m., and will be limited to two at a time. The egg hunt will continue until noon to allow children to explore at their

own pace and enjoy a stress free experience. Stay and search as long as the child wants, time slots are only meant to ensure a calm and seamless check-in process. If families would like to explore the museum and/or gardens ahead of the event, open hours are on Mondays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Tuesdays from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. and the gardens are open every day from dawn until dusk.

Please visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/sensory-friendly-egg-hunt-at-wistariahurst-museum-tickets-840159588947?aff=ebdsoporgprofile> to learn more about this event.

St. Patrick's parade on March 17

HOLYOKE – The St. Patrick's Committee of Holyoke is excited to announce the 71st annual Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade will be held on Sunday, March 17. The Parade will air live at noon on WWLP-22News and be live-streamed on WWLP.com.

"The St. Patrick's Committee is thrilled to host the 71st Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade on St. Patrick's Day this year" said 2024 Parade President, Hayley Dunn. "The Committee has been working hard all year to secure phenomenal talent and entertainment for all to enjoy on Parade Day. We can't wait to see you along the Parade Route!"

In order to arrive at Holyoke High

School in time for the noon broadcast, the Parade will step-off at approximately 11:10 a.m. from the former Kmart Plaza. The parade's website, www.holyokestpatricksparade.com, will provide all of the details regarding the parade route and parking information for spectators.

22News Anchors Rich Tetterer and Taylor Knight, along with Sheila Moreau from the Parade Committee, will serve as Parade hosts. Throughout the event, the 22News team will provide interviews from the Parade route with participants and bystanders throughout the coverage.

St. Patrick's Road Race will be held on Saturday, March 16.

St. Jerome's hosting 'Irish Night'

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.

Tickets available for Hibernian breakfast

HOLYOKE – In concert with the festivities surrounding the 2024 Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade the Ancient Order of Hibernians, James A. Curran, Division One of Hampden Hampshire Counties invites the public to attend the annual Communion Breakfast on Sunday March 10, at 8:00 a. m. A Memorial Mass at St. Jerome Church, followed by a Breakfast at 9:00 a.m. at the Wyckoff Country Club, 233 Easthampton Road, Holyoke.

The Hibernians will honor James P. Kelly, CEO of the Polish National Credit Union with the 2024 Hibernian Christian Charity Award.

The Guest speaker will be Erin Duffy Lacy, Irish National Dance Champion and Research Fellow at Harvard Medical School.

For reservations by March 8, call Atty. John J. Driscoll at 413-537-1573. Tickets are \$25.00 per person (Tables of 10).

Easter egg hunt set for March 23

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Parks and Recreation cordially invites the community to Holyoke's annual Spring Celebration and Easter Egg Hunt. This community event will take place on Saturday, March 23, from 10 am to noon at Holyoke Heritage State Park.

Enjoy unlimited free rides at the Holyoke Merry Go Round and take pictures with the Easter Bunny.

Music, spring crafts, pony rides and balloons will also be available.

Easter Egg Hunt Times: 10 a.m. -

Toddlers; 10:30 a.m. - 4-6-year-olds; 11 a.m. - 7-9-year-olds and 11:30 a.m. - 10 - 12-year-olds.

This event is free of charge and will occur rain or shine. In the event of rain, all activities will be moved inside the Holyoke Merry Go Round.

The Holyoke Children's Museum will also be open. Children are encouraged to bring their own baskets for egg collecting.

For more information visit our web site at www.holyoke.org or call the Parks & Recreation Department at (413) 322-5620.



HCC scholarship deadline March 3

HOLYOKE – The deadline to apply for scholarships from the Holyoke Community College Foundation for the 2024-2025 academic year is Sunday, March 3.

Each year, the HCC Foundation awards hundreds of scholarships worth more than \$300,000 to incoming, current, and transferring HCC students. Many students receive multiple scholarship awards.

Students must be currently enrolled at HCC or have been accepted for the upcoming academic year to be eligible for scholarships, which are awarded through the HCC Foundation, HCC's nonprofit fundraising corporation.

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 make the process of applying easier, HCC opened a Scholarship Resource Center in January on the first floor of the Donahue Building (Room 158). The center is open Mondays through Fridays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Those in need of assistance can drop in any time during office hours to ask questions or to use one of the center's three computer workstations. They can also schedule appointments to meet with center staffers.

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

Questions should be directed to Laura Freeman at 413-552-2613 or lfreeman@hcc.edu.

Scholarship and fellowships available

WESTFIELD – The Horace Smith Fund has scholarship and fellowship money available for graduates of Hampden County public and private high schools. Graduating high school seniors and students already in college may apply for Scholarships of \$12,000. Those in their final year of college and previous college graduates pursuing advanced degrees may apply for Fellowships of \$15,000. Applicants must maintain at least a B average in college and be enrolled as full-time students. Awards are made based on both academic achievement and financial need. Of great importance is a personal written account of why the student feels deserving of financial assistance and their goals in pursuing higher education.

Last year, \$316,000 was awarded to 30 individuals. Scholarships were given to 22 graduating seniors from nine Hampden County high schools. Three scholarships were also awarded

to current college students to assist them in completing their undergraduate degrees. Five fellowships were given to college graduates pursuing advanced degrees, who had graduated from Hampden County high schools. The Horace Smith Fund was established in 1899 by the successful and generous philanthropist named Horace Smith, co-founder of Smith & Wesson, established in Springfield. The scholarships and fellowships are named for Walter S. Barr, a West Springfield businessman, whose widow left the bulk of the family estate to The Horace Smith Fund in 1950. Completed applications must be received either electronically or by mail to The Horace Smith Fund at 16 Union Avenue, Suite 2K, Westfield, MA 01085 no later than March 15. Applications are available at local high school guidance offices, college financial aid offices, online at www.HoraceSmithFund.org or by phoning (413) 739-4222.

Miravista and Lasagna Love joins efforts to feed those in need

HOLYOKE – Employees at MiraVista Behavioral Health Center marked Valentine’s Day by “sharing a little Mira love” by partnering with the Massachusetts chapter of Lasagna Love to make and deliver homemade meals to families in the Greater Holyoke and Springfield area.

“Lasagna Love volunteers provide a meal to a family in need for whatever reason in their communities,” said Kimberley Lee, MiraVista’s chief of Creative Strategy and Development. “Our employees elected to partner with this nonprofit and, for those who were available to help, spent time on February 13 with Paula Dalzovo, MiraVista’s Food Service Director, making pans of lasagna that will be delivered to families who request such help from Lasagna Love.”

Lee added that Lasagna Love’s caring mission resonated with MiraVista’s staff who help adults and adolescents to live their best lives.

Lasagna Love began with the vision of Rhiannon Menn. A mom and an MIT Sloan graduate with Berkshire County ties, Menn wanted to comfort families struggling during the pandemic and, based on what she had on hand, decided to offer a hot lasagna to anyone who would like one through a neighborhood Facebook group.

Four years later, Lasagna Love is a nonprofit with chapters across the United States, as well as in Australia and Canada, and is estimated to have impacted 1.6 million lives through its network exceeding 48,000 volunteers.

“We are up to 31,000 lasagnas feeding a 120,000 people in the last three years in Massachusetts and still second to only California in the program’s reach,” said Andrea Scullin, Lasagna Love’s volunteer regional director for Massachusetts and the State of New York. “People love helping people and take food insecurity seriously when they read someone just had a baby and is experiencing postpartum depression or has lost their job or is dealing with being overwhelmed. We can put each other in those shoes because just as easily this could be us.”

The volunteers who make a meal deliver it to the doorstep of a recipient provided by Lasagna Love and usually do so without meeting the recipient but alerting them by text to its arrival.

“People are appreciative and the contactless delivery reduces any stigma of asking for help,” Scullin said.

The Lasagna Love volunteers are referred to as lasagna chefs and can sign up to make a meal once or on a more regular basis.

Scullin said any lasagna chef is much appreciated, but she noted that when an organization coordinates volunteers it helps a lot.

“In any given week we have 200 to 300 families on our waiting list in Massachusetts,” Scullin said. “Springfield-Holyoke is one of the areas where we can-

not help families immediately so the fact that MiraVista employees are raising their hand to help is going to help that area immensely.”

Scullin was an early chef for Lasagna Love in 2020 and then a local leader and then regional director who was recognized for her Lasagna Love volunteer work before thousands of baseball fans at Fenway Park in July.

“I can’t control war, inflation, poverty, but I can help in this way and that is where I get satisfaction,” Scullin said. “I can’t do a lot in solving the big picture problems but I can help folks get a meal on their table.”

To volunteer for Lasagna Love, request a meal, or learn more, visit <https://lasagnalove.org/>.

For more information about MiraVista Behavioral Health Center’s inpatient psychiatric treatment and outpatient substance use programming, visit <https://www.miravistabhc.care/>.

FEMA award Massachusetts for COVID School Testing Costs

BOSTON – The Federal Emergency Management Agency will be sending almost \$13.5 million to the state of Massachusetts to reimburse it for the cost of providing testing at public schools during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The \$13,450,826 Public Assistance grant will reimburse the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for contracting with Trans Med USA Inc. and Merrow Medical to provide test kits at schools between July 2022 and May 2023.

The department purchased and distributed 1,089,354 COVID-19 antigen tests to students, faculty and staff at schools statewide during that time period.

“FEMA is pleased to be able to assist Massachusetts with these costs,” said FEMA Region 1 Regional Administrator Lori Ehrlich.

“Reimbursing state, county, and municipal governments, as well as eligible non-profits and tribal entities, for the costs incurred during the COVID-19 pandemic is an important part of our nation’s ongoing recovery.”

FEMA’s Public Assistance program is an essential source of funding for states and communities recovering from a federally declared disaster or emergency.

So far, FEMA has provided nearly \$2.8 billion in Public Assistance grants to Massachusetts to reimburse the commonwealth for pandemic-related expenses.

Additional information about FEMA’s Public Assistance program is available at <https://www.fema.gov/public-assistance-local-state-tribal-and-non-profit>. To learn more about the COVID-19 response in Massachusetts, please visit <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4496>.

COLLEGE NOTES

UMASS announces fall Dean’s List

AMHERST – Below is a list of students from Holyoke who were named to the Dean’s List at the University of Massachusetts Amherst for the fall 2023 semester.

Jack Anderson; Samantha Antil; Maheen Begum; Isabella Krystyne Benoit; Jean Manuel Castro Colon; Rachael Aislin Cavanaugh; Logan Connor Cook; Shoshana Josephine Daniels; Hunter Rose Edwards; Jad El Aouji; Lily Margaret Flint; Matthew James Gourde; Robert Gourde; Patricia Anne Haradon; Melanie Joy Hurley; Jacqueline Angelina Jourdain; Evan Francis Kashinsky; Daniel Mainville; Desiree N Maldonado; Sasha Evelyn Middleton; Charlotte Elisabeth Olson; Ravi Bimal Patel; Connor Joseph Riopelli; Sarah Anne Roberts; Zelia Emerita Rodriguez; Eris Ruben Santiago Bigas; and Colin Shevlin.

Emerson College Dean’s List fall 2023

BOSTON – Emerson College student Madison Parr from Holyoke, is named to the College’s Dean’s List for the fall 2023 semester. Parr is majoring in Media Arts Production and is a member of the Class of 2027.

Clark University’s fall Dean’s List

WORCESTER – Stephen J. Gibbons, of Holyoke, was named to second honors on the Clark University Dean’s List for the fall 2023 semester.

Donnelly graduates from Elms College

CHICOPEE – Shawn Donnelly of Holyoke graduated from Elms College with a Bachelor of Arts in Education Studies following the conclusion of the fall 2023 semester.

Lifeguard classes now available

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Parks and Recreation Department is offering a lifeguard Red Cross certification training course at the Holyoke Boys and Girls Club, 70 Nick Cosmos Way. Session 1 will take place April 20 and 21 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Session 2 will take place May 4 and 5 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Participants only need to attend one weekend session. Applicants must be 16 years of age. Strong swimmers are encouraged to apply. Participants must pass a pre-skills test at the start of class. \$175.00 for Holyoke residents and \$275.00 for non-residents.

Lifeguard Re-Certification Classes will also be offered on April 21 and May 5. Participants only need to attend one class. Classes will run from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Holyoke Boys and Girls Club. Update your skills while also extending your certification for another two years. \$125.00 for Holyoke residents and \$225.00 for non-residents.

Please register at the Holyoke Parks and Recreation Department, 413-322-5620.

Participants must register and be paid in full before attending the class. Limited space available.

Art festival coming to Agawam

AGAWAM – The Agawam Community Artists and Artisans will present Beat the Winter Blues Art Festival on Saturday March 2, with snow date of March 9. The art festival will take place at the Sacred Heart Parish Hall, 1061 Springfield St., from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

There will be food served from the

Sacred Heart Parish kitchen. Breakfast and lunch may be purchased. Artists and artisans will be selling framed original art, prints, pottery, fused glass, jewelry, stained glass, photography, wire art, wood craft, gourds, and more.

For further information please contact Ceil Rossi email at tocarefree2@hotmail.com or call (413) 207-1247



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Guest Column



Should I claim Social Security at 68 or wait until I'm 70?

Dear Rusty

I have a question regarding my SS benefits. I turned 68 this month and work part time.

I earned \$28,000 last year, but will probably gross \$36,000 to \$38,000 this year. My husband collects his SS and he earned \$25,000 last year. I was told by a financial planner that I should apply for my benefits now, instead of waiting until I'm 70. I would collect \$1,700 per month at 68 and \$1,944 per month if I wait. Which is the smarter move?

Signed: Seeking Answers

Dear Seeking

I'm sure your financial advisor would agree that your decision on when to claim your Social Security comes down to just a few basic things: 1) how badly you need the money, 2) your life expectancy and 3) whether you will receive a spousal boost from your husband when you claim.

Because you have already passed your Full Retirement Age of 66 years and 4 months, your work earnings won't negatively affect your monthly SS benefit amount. If you claim now, however, your work earnings will affect how much of your SS benefits will be subject to income tax. Assuming you file your income tax as "married/filing jointly," up to 85% of the Social Security benefits you receive during the tax year will become part of your income taxable by the IRS. If you do not urgently need the extra money that your SS will provide, then waiting longer to claim will also postpone paying income tax on your received benefits and that may be a consideration.

Your life expectancy is key in making your decision on when to claim. You already know that your benefit will be \$244 per month more if you wait until you are 70 to claim. If you claim at 68 (e.g., this month), you will collect about \$40,800 by the time you reach 70. If you, instead, wait until age 70 to get that extra \$244 per month benefit, it will take you about 14 years collecting at the higher rate to offset the \$40,800 you would have received had you claimed now (in other words, you would break even money wise at about age 84). If your life expectancy is longer, then waiting to claim may be the better choice. Of course, no one knows how long they will live but, for general guidance, average life expectancy for a woman your current age is about 87. Family history and your current health are obviously influencing factors as well. If you wish to get a more personal estimate of your life expectancy, I suggest using this tool:

www.socialsecurityreport.org/tools/life-expectancy-calculator/.

In the end, if you believe you will attain at least average life expectancy and you don't urgently need the money now, waiting longer will not only give you a higher monthly benefit in your later years, but also the most in cumulative lifetime benefits. If, however, you have reason to suspect you won't achieve at least average life expectancy or you need the SS money sooner, claiming before age 70 is likely the better move.

One other thing to consider: If your benefit as your husband's spouse will be more than your own earned maximum SS retirement benefit, then you should claim your SS benefit now. Your maximum benefit as a spouse would be 50% of your husband's full retirement age entitlement and, if that is more than your own benefit will be at age 70, then claiming now to get your maximum spousal benefit would be your best choice. To get a spousal benefit from your husband, your personal FRA entitlement (not your age 68 amount) would need to be less than half of his FRA entitlement. If that isn't the case, then you should make your

See SECURITY, page 5



Guest Column

More questions for the Garden Lady



Eleanor wrote in with this question for the Garden Lady regarding amaryllis bulbs: "I have three bulbs from last year that have been hibernating and now they are in the sun and have produced long green leaves but no buds. I read it somewhere that if you let them dry out, no more water, but keep them in the sun they will send out buds, but I cannot find where I read that. I hope it is true...so I can still get flowers this year before I have to repeat the whole process (by putting them back in dormant condition in August for a few weeks). I do have one more bulb from last year that did give me a flower...but these other three ones are not showing me any prospects. Can you help?"

Without seeing your bulbs and the foliage, my best guess would be that they will likely not flower this year. What leads me to that conclusion is that one other bulb you have already flowered.

If they were on the same timeline, then probably the other bulbs did not have enough strength to send up a flower stalk. I would not let them dry out, but continue to water and fertilize monthly so that the foliage will grow strong, and be able to make enough energy for blooms next year, after a period of dormancy in the fall.

I know this is upsetting after all of your hard work. Re-bloom is often an experiment.

Sadly, sometimes it happens and sometimes it doesn't. It may not be anything you did wrong – it could be that the one bulb that did flower was a bigger bulb to begin with or was from healthier stock initially.

Meredith, who gardens in Wilbraham, posed this question to the Garden Lady: "As I look at all of the seed packets strewn before me, what your best advice would be for starting seeds indoors?"

Ah-hah! I have been itching to talk about this, so your timing is perfect.

Although we are excited to get the season started, the biggest mistake people make is starting seeds too early. Always research the varieties you want to grow in a good seed catalog.

Johnny's Selected Seed and Fedco come to mind as having great advice on how many

See GARDEN, page 5

Big decisions and American history



By Lee Hamilton

Big decisions have shaped the United States: we wouldn't be who we are as a nation without the decisiveness shown by America's founders and by our leaders in times of crisis.

It's an essential quality of successful countries: the ability to make big, consequential decisions.

We can start at the beginning, when the colonists made the enormous decision to break away from Britain and form an independent nation. Then, 85 years later, U.S. leaders decided it was essential to preserve the Union against secession by the Southern states.

Another big decision came in the 1930s and 1940s when President Franklin D. Roosevelt persuaded Americans to abandon isolationism and engage with the world. U.S. participation in World War II and our leadership in creating security and economic institutions shaped the post-war international order.

This isn't an all-encompassing list of

big decisions. There are many others we could mention. But these decisions stand out for their influence on American history.

The colonists' decision to break with Britain wasn't inevitable, nor was it easy. It meant defying the most powerful empire in the world, and it put the colonists at severe risk.

Benjamin Franklin supposedly said, "We must all hang together or most assuredly we shall all hang separately."

Inspired by Enlightenment principles and prodded by British oppression, the Continental Congress voted to declare independence and ratified the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. Thomas Jefferson's idealistic words – "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights" – set a high bar.

The founding ideals were tested when divisions between North and South led to the Civil War. While Confederate leaders made it clear that protecting slavery was their primary objective, Abraham Lincoln framed the conflict as a battle to preserve the Union. Again, there was nothing preordained about this.

There were strong forces pulling the country apart.

Lincoln, celebrated as the Great

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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.

BUDGET, from page 1

positions, and some others, will be cut in FY25.

Many of these positions were added in HPS' inclusion effort. However, several were not filled and may need to be cut in the upcoming year.

"We wanted to have a special ed and an ELL teacher on every team but it's not feasible in this staffing market," Soto said. "Part of this budget year is going to be working on how we get at more inclusive practices without having all these extra positions that we had budgeted but

couldn't fill."

Another large number they will be looking into is district transportation. Recently, they have noticed an increase in "runs" of vehicles, despite there being no increase in the amount of students in schools.

Therefore, they hope to look into what is causing this increase in order to make this number go down and hopefully save some funds.

Additionally, not included in the budget is the reimbursement the city receives from the state for transportation. "McKinney-Vento right now is

probably over \$1 million, but the city gets 100% reimbursement this year for McKinney-Vento transportation," Soto said.

So once the year closes out the school will submit to the state the amount they spent on McKinney-Vento transportation and the city will give them a check back for that amount of money.

For FY25 they are unsure of the exact reimbursement percentage, but it should be around 93%.

There is also movement at the state level to work on relieving some of the financial burden in the schools for spe-

cial education.

This budget will be in process for the next several months, as HPS both smooths it out at the local level and they wait to hear about the state's budget for FY25.

Soto plans to finalize the school budget proposal for June of this year, for the city council to then discuss. The final state budget is anticipated to be completed in early July.

The first budget subcommittee meeting for Mar. 8, where the school committee will be able to discuss further details of the budget breakdown.

GARDEN, from page 4

weeks prior to the last frost seeds should be sown. For example, tomato seeds should be planted indoors the last week of March or first week of April.

Although that seems late (we want to do it now), we don't want root bound transplants come May.

While average household temps will still result in seeds sprouting, bottom heat by use of heat mats will aid in germination because it will keep the seed bed a constant temperature.

Plants usually suffer without enough light – placing seedlings in the window usually results in seedlings that stretch to the sun. A simple shop light with fluorescent bulbs set a couple of inches above growing plants works out great.

Think about the soil you are using, too.

A soilless mix is far superior to regular potting soil or garden soil. It's milled a little finer, and is made to be well-drained weed and pathogen free.

Moistening it to the consistency of a wrung out sponge before use is perfect. Don't bury small seeds too deep. Tiny seed should simply be pushed into the soil surface and not covered.

Hardening off the seedlings you

grew before planting them in the ground is very important. Start acclimatizing them to the great outdoors slowly, first by putting them in the shade for a few hours, working up to full sun over the course of a week's time.

By taking my advice into account, you will be well on your way to growing healthy seedlings indoors.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 33 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.



SECURITY, from page 4

decision based only on your own Social Security entitlement, as described above.

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.

CONGRESS, from page 4

Emancipator, insisted his duty was to maintain the Union, not to end slavery. In 1862, he declared: "If I could save the union without freeing any slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that."

Preserving the Union was a big, costly decision.

By the time the Civil War ended, 617,000 Americans had died. Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation to free Southern slaves in 1863 and slavery was, in fact, abolished with the 13th Amendment.

Over 100,000 more Americans died in World War I. When Franklin Roosevelt took office in 1933, the country was exhausted by war and suspicious of foreign entanglements.

Isolationism was at a high level. Roosevelt spoke forcefully about freedom and democracy, but his foreign policy was cautious, deferring to popular sentiment.

But when World War II broke out, the president pushed America to support our allies. Pulled into the conflict by Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, the

U.S. played a leading role in fighting and, later, in creating the institutions that would rebuild Europe and Asia and restore peace and security.

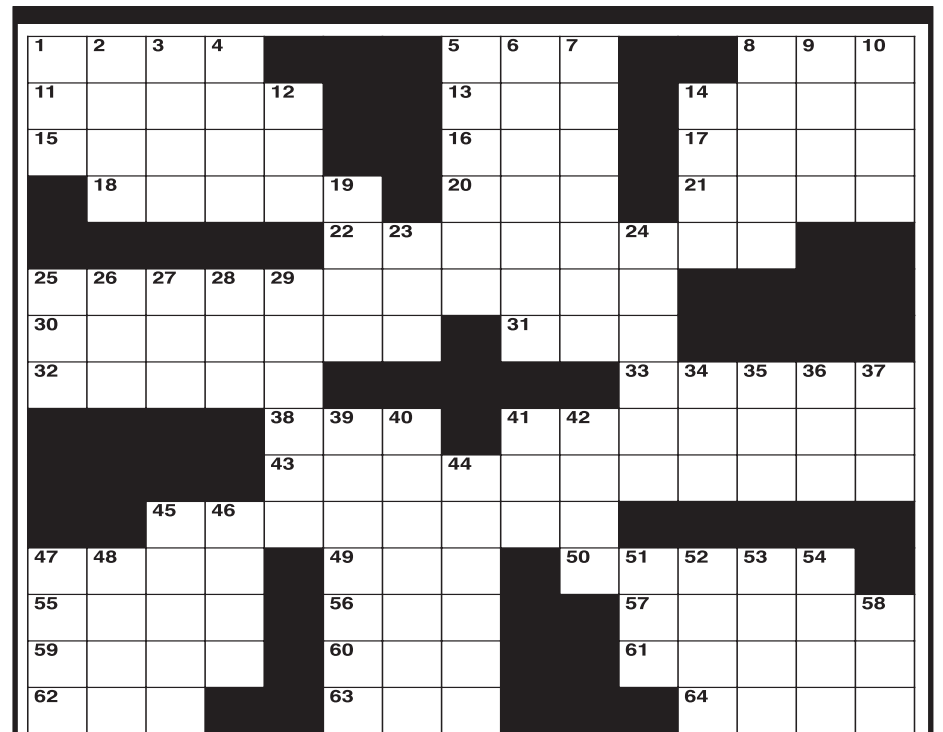
The postwar world order owes much to FDR's decision to engage assertively with the world.

What big decisions does America face today? It's an open question, but issues that called for tough decisions in the past are still with us.

With the nation deeply divided, can we unite and preserve the Union? With many Americans increasingly skeptical of involvement in international conflicts, will we engage with the world or return to the "America First" attitudes of the 1930s.

Successful countries must make big decisions, even when they involve risk and controversy. Our well-being and that of the world depend on our ability to make these decisions when necessary.

Lee Hamilton is a Senior Advisor for the Indiana University Center on Representative Government; a Distinguished Scholar at the IU Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies; and a Professor of Practice at the IU O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Golf scores
- 5. Shock therapy
- 8. Ballplayer's tool
- 11. Quench one's thirst
- 13. Female relatives of American war vets (abbr.)
- 14. Every one of two or more things
- 15. Member of Muslim people
- 16. Play
- 17. Type of cheese
- 18. Type of lounge chair
- 20. ___ King Cole, musician
- 21. Fellows
- 22. North, Central and South
- 25. In an early way
- 30. Foes
- 31. Georgia rockers
- 32. Cryptocurrency
- 33. Narrow path

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Pacific Standard Time
- 2. Protruding ridge on

- along a slope
- 3. Indian king
- 4. Type of milk
- 5. One who brings home the bacon
- 6. More comprehensible
- 7. Connected with sense of touch
- 8. Red mineral
- 9. Breezed through
- 10. Therefore
- 12. Supplement with difficulty
- 14. Early kingdom of Syria
- 19. Satisfy
- 23. They confuse doctors (abbr.)
- 24. Brass instrument
- 25. Domesticated animal
- 26. Ribonucleic acid
- 27. Snake-like fish
- 28. Woman (French)
- 29. Economically-minded aircraft
- 34. When you hope to get somewhere
- 35. Tease
- 36. Actress Gretchen
- 37. Midway between northeast and east
- 39. Inoffensive
- 40. Yellowish cotton cloth
- 41. Consume
- 42. Does not tell the truth
- 44. Improved something
- 45. Spiritual leader
- 46. Abba __, Israeli politician
- 47. Fix
- 48. Evergreen tree genus
- 51. Swiss river
- 52. Prejudice
- 53. Major C. European river
- 54. Long, narrow strap
- 58. Male parent

CROSSWORD ANSWER on page 11

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Elizabeth Gourde 2024 Grand Colleen stands with some of the past Grand Colleens.



2024 Grand Colleen Elizabeth Gourde with this year's award winners.



Kelsey Lecca and Karen Casey.



Ward 6 Councilor Juan Anderson-Burgos and City Council Administrative Assistant Jeffery Anderson-Burgos.



Erin Bissonnette and Heather Kies.



Kathy and George Dulchinos.

COLLEEN, from page 1

Gourde is a Holyoke native who graduated from Pope Francis Preparatory School in 2019. She then attended The College of Our Lady of the Elms and graduated in 2023 with a Bachelors in English.

In January of 2023 Gourde volunteered to rebuild homes with the Saint



The 2023 Grand Colleen Abby Glasheen delivers her closing remarks.

Bernard Project in Puerto Rico and in March of 2023 she went to El Paso, Texas where she cooked and cleaned in a refugee shelter.

Currently she is applying to Boston University where she hopes to get a master of arts in poetry or prose.

She was blown away by the fact that she was the one chosen out of the five Colleens to become the Grand Colleen.

"I was shocked," Gourde said. "I don't think it's a unique answer at all to say that it's something I've been dreaming of since I was a little girl...but I also feel a level of undeserving."

Gourde is close with her fellow Colleens and she feels each one of them are incredible people who deserved to wear the Grand Colleen crown.

"I love them all," Gourde said. "One of them I've been lucky enough to grow up with my entire life but the other three are new friends and I'm so excited to spend the parade season with them. They are incredible, inside and out."

Gourde has long wanted to be a part of the Colleen court. She was always inspired when the Colleens visited her school when she was younger and she hopes to be able to inspire new generations during her time as Grand Colleen.

She is also proud to be able to honor her family. Her great aunt is the "matri-

arch" of her Irish heritage and part of the reason she is so connected to her Irish roots.

"I gave her a call and asked her some questions about my heritage," Gourde said. "She told me very tearfully, 'if only Art could see you now,' who's my grandfather and he is the pillar of all my Irish heritage. So to get to make him proud and all of my family proud...that's what's most important to me."

Gourde looks forward to the events of the next month, where she hopes to meet new people, connect more with her Irish heritage and have some fun.

"I've seen the joy these festivities can bring to our area, for not just Irish people but the entirety of Western Massachusetts, it's such a unique celebration to our area and I can't wait to partake and to be a figurehead," Gourde said.

Gourde was not the only person honored at these festivities. There were four award winners of the evening.

Bill Harbilas, a Holyoke native, was honored with the Citizenship Award. This award is given to a person of non-Irish descent that substantially contributes to the parade and the association.

Harbilas was honored to be selected for this award.

"It's such an honor," Harbilas said.

"I'm humbled. There are so many people who came before me, and the people on that list I have so much respect and admiration for and the fact that they would even consider putting me on that list is just a true honor."

Stephanie Joyce was the recipient of the Thomas F. Rohan award, which is given to a long-standing member of the Parade Committee who made significant contributions to parade and association.

Joyce was beyond grateful that she was the person honored with this award.

"I'm very excited that all of my hard work is being honored this year," Joyce said.

The George E. O'Connell award, given to a person who contributes greatly to the fundraising efforts of the parade and parade association, was given to Johnny Driscoll.

Susie Howard was presented with the Daniel J. Gallivan Award. This award is given to a long-standing member of the parade association who is not a resident of Holyoke, but who has been crucial to the success of the parade or association.

"Being selected as the 2024 Daniel J. Gallivan Award Recipient is a tremendous honor," Howard said. "Thank you to the past recipients of this award for choosing me to be amongst you."

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Knights defeat Marblehead

HOLYOKE – Last Sunday afternoon, the Holyoke High School boys basketball welcomed Marblehead from Eastern Mass.

The Knights offense took care of business with an 88-62 win.

Davian Diaz had a big game with 25 points, including four treys.

Jordan King-Perilli had 15 points, Shawn Rivera scored 14 points, and Aden Cabrera added 10 points.

The Knights finished the season 12-6 and won its Western Mass. quarterfinal game against Chicopee Comprehensive.

The Knights advanced in the section and await the state tournament next week.



Aden Cabrera stares at an opponent before making a move to the hoop.



Davian Diaz fakes then passes.



Luis Figueroa drives to the hoop.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com



Jordan King-Perilli flies for the layup.



Shawn Rivera goes off-balance as he drives to the hoop.



Jamil Rodriguez takes a long shot.



Dylan Rohan makes a three-point attempt.

Girls basketball loses at home

HOLYOKE – Last Sunday morning, Holyoke girls basketball lost at home to Marblehead High School.

Amilyan Treadwell-Mercedes scored 17 points to lead the Knights.

Holyoke finished the regular season 5-13 and entered the Western Mass. tournament earlier this week.

The Knights are unlikely to qualify for the state tournament.



Jaylaness Santiago shoots inside the arc.



Kiara Perez goes for a long layup.



Amilyan Treadwell-Mercedes gets the left-hand layup.

COLLEGE NOTES

Pond scores 13 in big WSU win

WESTFIELD – Octaviana Williams (Springfield, Mass.) and Hannah Sheldon (Taunton, Mass.) combined for 30 points to lead Westfield State the 95-67 Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference (MASCAC) victory over Salem State this Saturday afternoon at Twohig Gymnasium in Salem, Mass.

The Owls improved their record to 16-9, 9-3 in the conference, while the Vikings finished the regular season with a record of 12-13 and 5-7 in MASAC action.

Westfield will be the #3 seed in next week's conference

See POND, page 8

Miracle League of Western MA to receive Doyle Award

SPRINGFIELD – The Miracle League of Western Massachusetts, a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing inclusive baseball opportunities for individuals with disabilities, have been selected as the recipient of the Ryan Doyle Courage Award by the Western Mass Baseball Hall of Fame.

The Ryan Doyle Courage Award, named in honor of the late Ryan Doyle, a courageous young athlete who battled cancer, recognizes individuals or organizations that demonstrate exceptional courage, resilience, and dedication to the sport of baseball in Western Massachusetts. The Miracle League of Western Massachusetts was chosen for their

unwavering commitment to creating an inclusive environment where all individuals, regardless of ability, can experience the joy of playing baseball.

Founded in 2015, the Miracle League of Western Massachusetts has been providing accessible baseball programs for children and adults with disabilities. Through their adaptive facilities and volunteer support, they ensure that every player has the opportuni-



ty to participate in America's favorite pastime. The organization has positively impacted the lives of countless individuals, fostering camaraderie, self-confidence, and a sense of belonging within the community.

The Miracle League of Western Massachusetts will be formally presented with the Ryan Doyle Courage Award at the Western Mass Baseball Hall of Fame induction ceremony on March 7th 6pm at Twin Hills Country Club in Longmeadow. This event brings together Western Mass base-

ball legends, enthusiasts, community leaders, and former MLB players to celebrate the accomplishments of the inductees.

For more information about the Miracle League of Western Massachusetts, their inclusive baseball programs and to volunteer, please visit <https://miracleleaguwestma.com/> or contact Brian Feeley at brian@miracleleaguwestma.com.

To Learn more about Ryan's story: Please visit the Ryan Doyle Foundation at <https://rd26.org/>.

For tickets to attend the induction dinner on March 7th please go to www.valleybluesox.com or email WMassHOF@valleybluesox.com.

Worcester Railers fall in shutout to Orlando Solar Bears

ORLANDO, FL – The Worcester Railers HC (21-20-4-2, 48pts) got shut-out by the Orlando Solar Bears (24-16-6-2, 56pts), on Thursday night by the final score of 4-0 in front of 5,684 fans at the Kia Center.

Orlando struck first with two quick goals late in the first period from Mitchell Hoelscher (1-1-2) and Alex Frye (1-0-1). Tanner Schachle (1-0-1) added one more in the second to push Orlando ahead 3-0 going into the third. Jimmy Mazza (1-0-1) ripped a shot down-ice off of the draw in the third period into an empty net to give Orlando the final goal of the game and a 4-0 victory over Worcester.

The Railers started off the first period strong. During the first ten minutes, the Railers utilized a two-man forecheck which led to some great chances down low and keeping both the puck in their offensive zone and the tired Solar Bear players on the ice. Despite their efforts early, the Solar Bears would light the lamp first. A shot from the point by defenseman Zachary Massicotte was initially blocked out in front but found its way to an open Mitchell Hoelscher (22nd) who was sitting on the doorstep. The Solar Bears piled on the goal scoring just two minutes later with a 2-on-1 rush. Hoelscher would drag Railers defenseman Ryan Dickinson to the far side boards to allow Forward Alex Frye (10th) to capitalize on the doorstep with a backhand shot to beat the outstretched John Muse. The Solar Bears outshot the Railers, 12-6.

The second period was a quiet one for the Railers. They would lead the period with shots on goal but none would result in a goal. The Railers had some great opportunities on their first power play of the game late in the period and built some strong momentum for them to carry into the third. However, the Solar Bears would continue to deal damage to the Railers with another late-period goal. Solar Bear forward Tyler Bird would enter the Railers defensive zone from the far side and send a quick pass to the high slot. The puck bounced to forward Tanner Schachle (2nd) who picked up the loose puck and backhanded a shot through Muse. The Railers led the period and game with shots on goal 14-5 and 20-17.

The third period provided a mix of chances and physicality from both sides. John Muse did a great job shutting down an odd-man rush and breakaway opportunity just a few minutes into the period. Shortly after, the Railers would get their chances on net during their powerplay chance. Tension throughout the game built up to the point where Railers Forward Jack Quinlivan dropped the gloves against Solar Bear Defenseman Jérémie Biakabutuka. The game was capped off with an empty net goal scored by Solar Bear Defenseman Jimmy Mazza with a final score of 4-0 in favor of Orlando. The Railers outshot the Solar Bears in the third and in the game, 16-8 and 36-25.

Checkers get best of T-Birds

CHARLOTTE, NC – The Springfield Thunderbirds (23-20-3-2) were unable to complete a third-period comeback attempt, as they fell by a final score of 5-3 against the Charlotte Checkers (24-20-5-0) on Sunday inside Bojangles' Coliseum.

The Checkers carried much of the offensive play in the opening 10 minutes, making Malcolm Subban work a lot in the first period. Moments after a Springfield delay-of-game penalty ended, Charlotte maintained offensive pressure and got on the board as Gerry Mayhew found open ice in the low slot and one-touched a pass from Casey Fitzgerald through Subban at 9:22. The Checkers hit two other posts in the period on their way to outshooting Springfield 17-7 in the first frame.

Springfield had its own chance clip iron in the early stages, as Jakub Vrana narrowly missed giving the T-Birds a 1-0 edge when he one-timed a Ryan Suzuki saucer pass off the pipe behind Spencer Knight. Despite the disparity in shot attempts, the T-Birds still found a way to get the game evened up when Zach Dean deflected a Leo Loof shot from the left circle all the way to the crease and through Knight's legs with just 1:09 left in the first, tying the game, 1-1.

The tying marker, however, proved to do little to quell Charlotte's offensive mojo in the second period. Another lengthy defensive zone sequence for the T-Birds ended in a Ryan McAllister one-time goal at 2:13 of the middle frame. Springfield's penalty kill then got dented for the first time in the season series at 10:49 when Zac Dalpe found a loose puck deep in the blue paint before Subban

and the defense could clear it away. The Checker captain's 12th goal of the season upped the lead to 3-1, which would stand through the end of the second. Charlotte outshot Springfield 33-12 through 40 minutes.

Springfield threatened another third period comeback just 41 seconds into the third as Joey Duszak wristed a shot over Knight's blocker to make it a 3-2 game off assists from Matthew Peca and Adam Gaudette. Despite a heavy presence in the Charlotte zone in the opening half of the final frame, the score stayed 3-2 until Justin Sourdif guided a Mayhew centering pass through Subban to restore the two-goal cushion for the Checkers at 12:04.

Still undeterred, Peca and the T-Birds responded in kind just 48 seconds later, as the captain circled the offensive zone before elevating a wrist shot through traffic and over Knight's glove to cut it down to a 4-3 score.

With 2:51 remaining, the Springfield power play was given a grand opportunity following a tripping penalty on Sourdif, but the Charlotte penalty killers answered the call, and another Springfield minor penalty nullified the power play and spoiled any chances of a tying goal. Mayhew finished his three-point night, finding the empty net with just over 30 seconds to play.

It marked Charlotte's first win in four tries this season against the Thunderbirds. Springfield returns home to begin a three-game weekend on Friday as the I-91 rival Hartford Wolf Pack comes to town. Puck drop is set for 7:05 p.m. at the MassMutual Center this Friday night.

Team Mass. holding tryouts for AAU season

STURBRIDGE – Why play for Team Mass? Affordable/competitive AAU Basketball program. Teams could potentially travel to tournaments in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Maine or New York (coach dependent). Program is run on principle to teach the kids to be respectful on and off the court, and to learn the game of basketball with skills needed to be competitive while still having fun. Any questions, contact Chris Siniscalchi 413-539-1548 Email: teammassbasketball@gmail.com

Boys tryouts: Saturday, March 2 (Tantasqua Junior High School)

Grades 4/5/6: 8 to 9:25 a.m. and grades 7/8: 9:25-10:50 a.m.

Grades 9/10/11: 10:50 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. *Grades 9/10 and 11 if in

districts, just sign up

Girls tryouts: Saturday, March 2 (Tantasqua Junior High School)

Grades 4/5/6: 12:15 to 1:40 p.m. Grades 7/8: 1:40 to 3 p.m. Grades 9/10/11: 1:40 to 3 p.m. Grades 9/10 and 11, if in districts just sign up

Players only need to make one tryout, but try to make both as it gives coaches a better look.

Tantasqua Junior High School is located at 320 Brookfield Rd., Fiskdale.

There is a \$20 tryout fee (covers all tryout dates). Please arrive 15 minutes early for registration. Please bring copy of birth certificate (needed for age/grade verification). Must be accompanied by parent/guardian to fill out and sign registration form.

POND, from page 7

tournament, hosting #6 Fitchburg State in a first-round matchup on Tuesday, February 20 at the Woodward Center. Tip off time will be 5:30 p.m.

The Owls had six players, including all five starters notch double-digits en route to their victory with Sheldon and Williams leading the way with 15 points apiece followed by Jordan Grant (Gray, Maine) and Maddie Pond (Holyoke, Mass.) who had 14 and 13 points, respectively.

Meanwhile, Salem State's Ernidia Goncalves (Everett, Mass.) and Abuk Teng (Manchester, N.H.) both recorded double-doubles, with Goncalves grabbing 12 rebounds to go along with 18 points, and Teng notching 10 rebounds and 21 points in the effort.

The Vikings opened the game on a 7-2 run before a Sheldon triple halted their momentum with just under six minutes to play in the opening stanza. Two minutes later, a three-point play from Teng would put the Vikings ahead 12-5 but the Owls would hang around and find

themselves behind by three points (18-15) to enter the second quarter.

Just two and a half minutes into the second the Owls took their first lead of the game (23-22) and then continued with a 9-0 run to take the 32-22 edge with 5:44 to play in the half. With three minutes remaining the Vikings would find themselves within eight points before an 11-0 Owls' run would put them behind 49-30 at the break.

The Owls wasted no time building on their lead as they drained a deep ball from Jordyn Lummus (Pittsfield, Mass.) out of the gates to give them the 22-point lead (52-30). A Teng layup would bring the Vikings within 17 points (54-37) at the eight-minute mark but three more triples from the Owls over the remainder of the third would guide them the commanding 77-48 lead to head into the final 10 minutes of action.

With under five minutes to play in the fourth the Vikings went on a 9-0 run, behind four points from Nicolette D'Itria (Revere, Mass.), but their deficit proved to be too much as the Owls went on to secure the 95-67 victory over the Vikings.

Hubbard Memorial Library honored with MiraVista award

LUDLOW – Hubbard Memorial Library, 24 Center St., will be honored as the first recipient in 2024 of MiraVista Behavioral Health Center's You-Have-Our adMIRation Award on Thursday, Feb. 22, at noon. The ceremony will take place in the library's Program Room.

The public library, housed in a building gifted to the town in 1888 by the Hubbard family in memory of Charles T. Hubbard, founder of the Ludlow Manufacturing Company, is being honored in particular for its programs that serve the town's children under July Siebecker, head of Youth Services at Hubbard Memorial and a 27-year staff member there.

"July has introduced and facilitated innovative programs that go beyond traditional reading activities," said Kimberley Lee, chief of Creative Strategy and Development at MiraVista Behavioral Health Center in Holyoke. "From storytelling sessions that explore themes of empathy and resilience to

arts and crafts activities that encourage self-expression, she has curated a diverse range of activities that address the holistic well-being of our young community members."

The psychiatric hospital, which treats mental and behavioral health conditions in adults and children 13 through 17 and has just renovated its adolescent unit, created its adMIRation Award to honor organizations and individuals that help foster connecting with community in their cities and towns.

Lee added libraries can be where young people discover life-long interests and the possibility of career pursuits.

"This type of engagement is particularly important as addressing the mental health needs of our young people in the wake of their isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic has been a number one priority across the country," said Lee, adding the award ceremony will include brief remarks by library staff, civic leaders, and youth volun-

teers. "The activities offered at Hubbard Memorial connect young people to each other, their community and learning in a supportive environment."

Hubbard Memorial Library interim Director, Melissa Rickson said she is very pleased for the library to be so honored.

"I think sometimes that people do not realize that libraries are more than books, and this award highlights how the services we provide impact people," Rickson said.

"It is wonderful to see children and teens come into the library," she said. "It goes beyond them finding a book. They get an important social connection to an adult community member who is outside their household, who often serves as a mentor."

Rickson's words were echoed by Siebecker in her work with the library's young patrons who are offered programs ranging from book clubs to Gaming clubs to a youth volunteer program that allows middle and high schoolers

to work one hour a week in the Youth Room.

"I am looking in what we offer for kids to say 'my library, our library, what do we do here,'" said Siebecker who runs upwards of a dozen programs each month that collectively draw several dozen participants. "I want them to feel they own this library and through its programs they are connected to others and this is their library. I feel the award recognizes this value at the library."

Previous recipients of the award include William N. DeBerry Elementary School in Springfield; Sober Chef owner Chris Bland and Western Massachusetts college student and picture book author Isabella "Izy" Hess.

Interested in suggesting an organization or individual for the award? Write up a short description of why they should be recognized, include your phone contact and contact information for the nominee and email the nomination to Kim Lee at klee@miravistabhcare.

Zonta to celebrate 'Women Making a Difference' March 11

Dr. Royal among women being honored by ZONTA Club

LUDLOW – On March 11 at the Ludlow Country Club, Zonta Club of the Quaboag Valley will celebrate Women Making a Difference in honor of International Women's Day.

Each year in March, the global community recognizes women for their achievements regardless of national, ethnic, linguistic, economic or political divisions. The Zonta International community also celebrates Zonta Rose Day, a time to reflect and give tribute to the women who have empowered us.

In this spirit, the Zonta Club of Quaboag Valley proudly announces its Women Making a Difference Award dinner on March 11 at the Ludlow Country Club. A reception will begin at 5:30 p.m., dinner at 6 p.m., with the program to follow. Pay at the door for the buffet (\$28) or pay online. Details at www.zontaqv.org/women

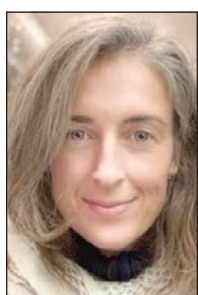
As the theme of this year's



Dr. Christina Royal



Lisa Bakowski



Andrea Bordenca



Charlotte Chartier Cote



Roxanna Harper

International Women's celebration is Inspire Inclusion, the club has chosen a keynote speaker who has spearheaded numerous initiatives to address the inequities experienced by many populations in western Massachusetts, and four women leaders in the community deserving of recognition for exemplifying the ideals of Zonta and inspiring inclusion in their day-to-day work and volunteer efforts.

Keynote speaker is Dr. Christina Royal - Zonta's 2023 Women of the Year for her commitment to equity and

equality. She will be awarded the Zonta Club of Quaboag Valley's first Honorary Member status.

Honorees include Lisa Bakowski-Raising the bar for self-advocacy, self-awareness and self-empowerment of women and children; Andrea Bordenca, working with organizations committed to equity, engagement and positive mental health; Charlotte Chartier Cote, creating positive change in dental practices and owner of Cote Cattle Company; and Roxanna Harper RN, MSN, empowering staff and fami-

lies to provide exceptional home health, hospice and palliative care.

A donation of \$500 will be made by Zonta in each honoree's name to a cause of their choice.

The public is invited to join Zonta in celebrating these women. Please RSVP by March 7 by emailing info@ZontaQV.org.

About Zonta Club

Since 1919, Zonta has been working to create a more equitable future for women and girls. Members believe that fostering a diverse and inclusive global community is a powerful platform to bring about the social change needed to make our vision for gender equality a reality.

For more information visit Zonta.org or email info@zontaqv.org. Join them in building a better world for women and girls.

HCC Jazz Festival set for March 1

HOLYOKE – Hot off a win for Best Latin Jazz Album at the 66th annual Grammy awards, pianist, composer, and band leader Luis Perdomo will be the featured guest artist at the 25th anniversary Holyoke Community College Jazz Festival, March 1 and March 2.



Luis Perdomo

The two-day festival opens on Friday, March 1, with an 8 p.m. concert with Perdomo performing with the Amherst Jazz Orchestra under the direction of David Sporny on the stage of the Leslie Phillips Theater in the HCC Fine & Performing Arts building.

The Friday night concert is free for HCC students, faculty and staff, and \$10 for the general public

"Luis is a great musician, a great teacher, and a great guy," said festival organizer and HCC music professor Bob Ferrier. "I know him from the Jazz in July program at UMass, where we teach together. He just won a Grammy for the number one Latin Jazz Album, so that's special. We're very happy to have him here at HCC for our 25th anniversary festival."

The festival will continue on Sat., March 2, in the Leslie Phillips Theater with jazz combo performances. Jazz

clinics, workshops and jam sessions will be held throughout the day in the HCC Recital Hall.

Perdomo will conduct two music clinics, one at 11 a.m. and another at 1 p.m.

A concluding concert will be held in the theater Saturday afternoon featuring Perdomo with HCC students and festival faculty.

In addition to his work as a performer, Perdomo is a composer, bandleader, and teacher. He began performing in his native Venezuela as a teenager and now makes his home in New York City. He is also an associate professor of music at Berklee in Boston.

A prolific sideman, he has appeared on more than 200 records, playing with the likes of artists such as David Sanchez and David Gilmore as well as recording seven albums as a bandleader. He was a member of Ravi Coltrane's Quartet for 10 years and is a founding member of the Miguel Zenon Quartet.

The Amherst Jazz Orchestra, led by trombonist David Sporny, has been a mainstay of the HCC Jazz Festival since the first one in 1998. The HCC Jazz Festival has been held every except for 2020 and 2021 when it was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

HCC seeking Junior College alumni for special reunion

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College is putting out a call to all alumni who graduated from Holyoke Junior College between 1947 and 1964 to attend a special reunion celebration later this spring at the HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute.

The first-ever reunion event for graduates of Holyoke Junior College, the predecessor of HCC, will be held Wednesday, June 5, from 3-6 p.m., at the culinary arts institute on Race Street.

Founded in 1946, Holyoke Graduate School changed its name to Holyoke Junior College in April 1947. After HJC joined the state's community college system in 1964, the name was changed yet again to Holyoke Community College, which was then located downtown on Sergeant Street and Pine Street in the former Holyoke High School building, which burned down in 1968.

"This is a time for our oldest alumni to meet our new leader, President George Timmons, catch up with classmates, and reminisce about the good old days," said Julie Phillips, HCC director of development.

Reunion guests will be able to tour the culinary arts facility and also enjoy a dinner prepared by HCC culinary arts students and faculty.

"I'm getting older, and there are people I miss because they live far away," said Angela Wright, a graduate of Holyoke Junior College from the Class of 1954 and a member of the reunion planning committee. "You don't often have a chance to catch up with classmates from your school. I don't know how many of us are left. I'd be thrilled to see them and just chat."

Also on the reunion planning committee are alumni Maurice Ferriter '52, Frances Kane '56, Carl Iger '56, Pat Bresnahan '57, Peg Wendlandt '58, Jim Izatt '59, and Richie Sobon '64.

"Holyoke Junior College was very good to me," Kane said recently at a reunion planning meeting. "I was young. Coming out of high school, I didn't know where I was going to go. I went to Holyoke Junior College, which set me on my pace. I came back to the college in the early '70s to serve on the Board of Trustees under President David Bartley, and later on the HCC Foundation board of directors. It's been wonderful to me. I've made a lot of friends, and I'd like to see who's left from my class."

For more information about the event or to secure your spot for the reunion, please contact John Sieracki at jsieracki@hcc.edu / 413-687-0322.

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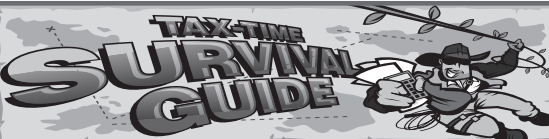
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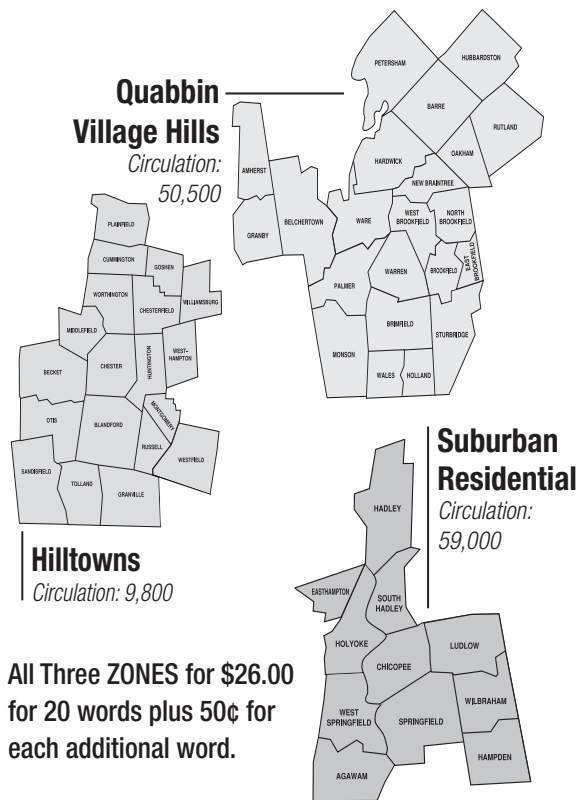
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PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Holyoke Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Thursday, March 7, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. via Zoom.com**; ID: 878 0431 1703 CALL IN *67 646 558 8656 to hear the petition of Volta Charging, LLC who is requesting a variance from Section 6.4.3.6 (Electric Signs) and Section 6.4.6.8 (a) (off-Premises Signs) for the property located at 28 Lincoln Street, Holyoke, MA. (073-00-034).

For a complete copy of the application contact Planning at 413-322-5575.

APPLICANT:
Volta Charging, LLC.
BOA: Josh Knox
02/16, 02/23/2024

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Holyoke Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Tuesday, March 12, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.com**; ID: 83639398493; CALL IN 1 646 558 8656 to hear, pursuant to the Holyoke Zoning Ordinance, a Special Permit for a Parking Reduction (Sec 6.1.7) and Special Permit for Dimensional Reg in a DR

District (Section 8.8.4), submitted by OneHolyoke CDC, for 800 Dwight St, (062-03-019).

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

APPLICANT: Michael Moriarty
PLANNING BOARD: Mimi Panitch
02/23/24, 03/01/24

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

APPLICANT: Michael Moriarty
PLANNING BOARD: Mimi Panitch
02/23/24, 03/01/24

THE COMMONWEALTH

OF MASSACHUSETTS MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION NOTICE OF A PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING

Project File No. 613320
Public Informational Meetings (PIMs) will be held by MassDOT to discuss the proposed Corridor Improvements on High and Maple Streets project in Holyoke, MA. For convenience, the following two meeting venues, with similar contents, are offered:

IN-PERSON:
WHERE: Holyoke Public Library
250 Chestnut Street
Holyoke, MA 01040
WHEN: **Wednesday, February 28, 2024 @ 5:30 PM**

VIRTUAL:
WHERE: <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events>

WHEN: **Wednesday, March 6, 2024 @ 5:30 PM**

PURPOSE: The purpose of these meetings is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully

acquainted with the proposed Corridor Improvements on High and Maple Streets project and solicit input. All views and comments made at the meeting will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent practical.

PROPOSAL: The proposed project consists of transportation safety and mobility improvements along the High Street and Maple Street corridors from South Street to Lyman Street in Downtown Holyoke. The project is still in the preliminary design phase. At the project meeting, MassDOT and their team will present the project scope, discuss the existing conditions, and solicit feedback from the community with respect to current concerns and challenges on High Street and Maple Street from a transportation safety and mobility perspective that will help to inform the development of future design concepts. Safe and accessible conditions for all modes of transportation including walking, biking, transit (bus), and driving will be considered in accordance with applicable design guidelines.

This location is accessible to people with disabilities.

MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (including but not limited to interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, open or closed captioning for videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats, such as audio tapes, Braille and large print), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), fax (857-368-0602), TTD/TTY (857-368-0603) or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible prior to the meeting, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten (10) business days before the meeting. **If special accommodation is requested, please indicate whether it is for the in-person meeting on Feb 28th or the virtual meeting on March 6th.**

In the event 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
CHIEF ENGINEER
02/16, 02/23/2024

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Holyoke License Board will be holding a Public Hearing on Wednesday, March 6, 2024, at 5:15 pm. You can join via Zoom.com; ID **86073263075**; CALL IN: ***67 646 558 8656** or in person at City Hall Annex 20 Korean Veterans Plaza Room 403, regarding the application for a **Change of Location of an All Alcohol Liquor License (Off-Premises) from Rani Corporation DBA Jubinville Package Store, 370 Main Street transferring to Rani Corporation DBA Jubinville Package Store, 392 Main Street.**, pursuant to M.G.L. Ch.138.

Applicant: Rani Corporation
License Board:
Anthony Luciano, Chairman
02/23/24, 03/01/24

MEETINGS, from page 1

to that," Jourdain had said. "I try to keep an open mind on that. I think we should use language more like what Springfield wrote."

At a recent charter and rules committee meeting, they had decided to change the motion to mirror Springfield's language.

The motion included that all councilors should be in the council room or join virtually by 6:45, 15 minutes before the scheduled meeting start time of 7 p.m.

It had also initially said that the council needed a unanimous vote in order to extend the meeting past 10 p.m. The charter and rules committee recommended to amend that to it only needing a two thirds majority.

"The main shift here was not wanting one person to have the ability to stop a meeting and prevent it from going forward but to instead shift it to a 2/3 majority vote being required to amend it instead of a unanimous vote," Murphy-Romboletti said.

The council unanimously agreed to this amendment and to pass the motion. The rule will be implemented at their next meeting.

This rule will only apply to regular city council meetings, not to committee meetings. Additionally, should a meeting end before all agenda items are covered, the remaining items from that meeting will go at the beginning of the agenda for the next meeting.

Reminders of this motion will be posted on council agendas so the council will be in compliance with the open meeting laws.

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TEACHER, from page 1

all staff and families of HHS, in both English and Spanish following the incident.

No further details are available

on the subject at this time, however McKenna encourages families to reach out if they have relevant information or need support.

McKenna can be reached at lmckenna@hps.holyoke.ma.us or by calling (413) 534-2020/21.

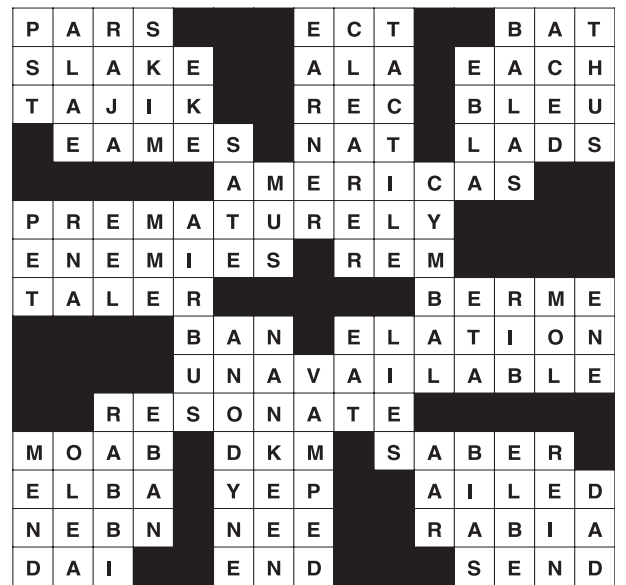
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visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

In The News

Catherine B. Shannon announced recipient of Ambassador Award

HOLYOKE – The St. Patrick’s Committee of Holyoke is thrilled to announce Catherine B. Shannon as the 33rd recipient of the Ambassador Award. The Ambassador Award is presented to a person or group who has worked to promote the relationship between the people of Ireland and the people of the United States. The 2023 recipient was the United States Ambassador to Ireland, Claire Cronin.

Shannon is a graduate of St. Michael’s College in the University of Toronto, Canada, and then earned her Master of Arts degree from the University College in Dublin, Ireland, followed by a PhD in Irish and British History from the University of Massachusetts. Following her education, she was a Professor Emerita of History at Westfield State University where she taught courses in Irish, British, Medieval and Women’s History and also spent time teaching Irish history at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. During her time at Westfield

State University, Shannon directed a \$40,000 U.S. Department of Education grant to integrate Irish studies into Westfield State’s arts and humanities curriculum and to engage local Irish-Americans in public programs on Irish history and culture.

Most recently Shannon was the consulting historian for the New Bedford Whaling Museum’s exhibit “Famine, Friends and Fenians” in 2016, and the Massachusetts Historical Society’s exhibit “The Irish Atlantic” in 2017. Her recent publications have focused on the role of Boston and New England in providing relief to Ireland during An Gorta Mor of the 1840s and the Forgotten Famine of 1879-1882.

Shannon has received awards from the Irish Voice, the Irish Immigration Center of Boston, the Irish American Partnership, the Eire Society of Boston,



Catherine B. Shannon

the Charitable Irish Society, the South Shore Irish Heritage Trail, and an honorary doctorate of sacred letters from the University of Saint Michael’s College in the University of Toronto.

“Having been familiar with Holyoke’s annual celebrations of St. Patrick’s Day when I taught at Westfield State College, I am delighted and greatly honored to be nominated for the 2024 Ambassador Award” said Shannon. “Holyoke has a long and distinguished tradition of celebrating Ireland’s cultural heritage going back to hosting the Irish Fortnight of the Irish American Cultural Institute whose Eoin McKiernan was an early recipient of the Ambassador Award. To join the ranks of previous Ambassadors such as Congressman Richard E. Neal, Kathleen M. O’Toole, Professors Thomas Moriarty, Christine Kinealy, Mary Kelly, Robert O’Neill

and Turlough McConnell is very special since we were colleagues in various initiatives to strengthen the bonds between Ireland and Irish America. I am especially pleased that this award comes with the endorsement of the government of the Republic of Ireland given my Irish citizenship and the many happy years I resided in Ireland as both a student and historical researcher. I am confident that under the leadership of the Holyoke St. Patrick’s Day Committee and the other Irish organizations in the area, the strong cultural, political and economic links between Ireland and the Pioneer Valley will continue to grow and thrive.”

Shannon will be honored at the St. Patrick’s Committee of Holyoke’s Ambassador’s Award Breakfast on Sunday, March 17, at the Wyckoff Country Club. For more details, sponsorship opportunities, or to purchase tickets to this event, please visit: <https://holyokestpatricksparade.com/events/ambassadors-award-breakfast>.

Shuttle schedule available for St. Patrick’s Day weekend

HOLYOKE – The City of Holyoke and the Tourism Advisory Committee are pleased to announce the details of the Road Race and St. Patrick’s Day Shuttle bus services. Thanks to funding from the Mass Gaming Mitigation Grant, the OPED team and Tourism Advisory Committee is pleased to announce shuttle services for the Road Race and St. Patrick’s Day Parade. The Shuttle will run hourly from the MGM Casino to City Hall in Holyoke. The MGM Casino offers free parking so just park your car

and enjoy a safe ride to the festivities in Holyoke. Pick up will be at MGM Springfield at MGM Way in front of South End Market. and drop off will be at the Holyoke City Hall parking deck on Dwight Street. Shuttle Services will be provided by Michaels Limo. The shuttle will be a 14 passenger ADA minibus. Shuttle Bus details are available via <https://www.exploreholyokey.com/event/free-shuttle-service-from-mgm-casino-to-holyoke-city-hall-during-2024-st-patricks-celebrations-in-holyoke/>.

March 16, 17 and parade day the bus will run on loop at the following times:
 10 a.m. leave MGM to Holyoke City Hall
 10:30 a.m. leave Holyoke City Hall to MGM
 11 a.m. MGM to City Hall
 11:30 a.m. leave City Hall to MGM
 Noon MGM to City Hall
 12:30 p.m. leave City Hall to MGM
 1 p.m. MGM to City Hall

1:30 p.m. leave City Hall to MGM
 2 p.m. MGM to City Hall
 2:30 p.m. leave City Hall to MGM
 3 p.m. MGM to City Hall
 3:30 p.m. leave City Hall to MGM - last shuttle

For more information, please contact the Office of Planning and Economic Development at (413) 322-5655 or email brazeaum@holyokey.org or visit online vegaa@holyokey.org.

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#2 One Large 1 Topping Pizza, 10 Buffalo Wings & 2 Liter Soda \$30.50 +Tax	#13 Two 16" Grinders with Bag of Chips & Can of Soda \$22.95 +Tax
#4 One Party Size Cheese Pizza, 20 Buffalo Wings & 2 Liter Soda \$41.50 +Tax	#16 Large 1 Topping Pizza, Small Cheese Calzone, 2 Liter Soda & 10 Wings \$40.50 +Tax FAMILY SPECIAL

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Any 16" Grinder with French Fries & a Can of Soda	\$13.99
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