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CPA question continues to stay off the ballot

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke City Council voted against putting the CPA question on an upcoming election ballot, but then made a motion to reconsider their actions at a future meeting.

This vote came about due to Attorney Kathleen Degnan's ruling that the council needed to vote to approve the reduction of CPA surcharge from 1.5% to 1% in order to put the question on the ballot.

"For this ballot question we have the reduction, we have to vote on the reduction..."

See QUESTION, page 11

City Council approves application for multiple school roof replacements

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer



Roof work is needed at Holyoke High School.

Turley photos by Quinn Suomala



Several school in the city need roof work and the school district is planning to apply to the Massachusetts School Building Authority for assistance.

HOLYOKE – Director of Maintenance for Holyoke Public Schools Whitney Anderson came to the city council to request their approval to file statements of interest to the Massachusetts School Building Authority's accelerated repair program.

This program has an annual application process. Anderson and the superintendent needed approval from the council to file these applications.

The hope is to be accepted into this program and to gain funds for potential roof replacements at Holyoke High, Dr. Marcella R. Kelly, Lt. Clayre P. Sullivan, Lt. Elmer J. McMahon and Maurice A. Donahue Schools.

"Hopefully we will be invited into the program, at which time we can study any

See ROOF, page 8

PLAYOFFS TAKE OFF



Shawn Rivera gets off his feet for the one-hander in Holyoke's first playoff game last week during the Western Mass. Class A Tournament. The Knights defeated Chicopee Comprehensive in the quarterfinals. The Knights would fall in the semifinals but moved into the state tournament earlier this week. See story and more photos on page 7.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

Bevan takes over as new YMCA CEO

By Quinn Suomala
Staff Writer

HOLYOKE – Conor Bevan has been selected as the new CEO of the Greater Holyoke YMCA.

Bevan will be succeeding Kathy Viens, who is retiring from the position.

Bevan has many years of experience in non-profit organizations. He was the CEO of Boys & Girls Clubs of Hartford for over two years, where he made a significant positive impact on their organization.

He also has worked at the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Holyoke, the Springfield Boys & Girls Clubs, Berkshire Health Systems, and as a civilian lead contractor for the Navy.

Bevan was inspired to work in non-profit organizations thanks to his experience at the Holyoke YMCA as a kid.

"My first introduction to any non-profit organization was the Greater Holyoke YMCA," Bevan said. "My grandparents would take me to the Y where a group of seniors there taught me how to play checkers. That was my first feeling of having a sense of belonging outside of my home."

The YMCA helped Bevan's family greatly when he was a child. He was able to take part in many of their programs and volunteer in the gym as he grew older.

These experiences propelled

him into the professional world of non-profit organizations.

Now he is delighted to be returning to the very place that inspired his career.

"It's something that I'll cherish forever, it truly is a gift," Bevan said. "The organization means the world to me. My hope is that I'll be able to give back what the organization gave to me."

"My grandparents would take me to the Y where a group of seniors there taught me how to play checkers. That was my first feeling of having a sense of belonging outside of my home."

- Conor Bevan

Bevan's main focus throughout his first year as CEO will be to begin laying the foundation for the strategic plan.

While working on this plan, he hopes to ensure that every stakeholder in the YMCA has a say in what the organization will look like moving forward.

"I hope to accomplish a robust strategic plan that is inclusive of every community stakeholder, and those stakeholders

are every kid, every teen, every non-profit partner, every public school district, every community-based organization and every social group," Bevan said.

He will work to be an active listener to what the community's wants and needs are, so he can ensure those are visible in the strategic planning effort.

This strategic plan is key to understanding where the YMCA wants to go as an organization, so Bevan does not want any stakeholders feeling as though their voices weren't heard during the planning process.

"I think it's absolutely critical that every single stakeholder in our organization understand where we want to go," Bevan said. "We need to paint that picture for our community...if we don't paint the picture with everyone involved, we can't possibly make progress."

Following the layout of a strategic plan, Bevan hopes to work toward a larger collective impact focused on building the YMCA to be an "epicenter of community wellness and family enrichment programming."

His long-term goal is to ensure that the YMCA is "the best place to work, the best place to volunteer and the epicenter for wellness in the Greater Holyoke Region."

Also during his work as the CEO, Bevan plans to continue

See BEVAN, page 8

HEDIC MakerLoan awarded to Raw Beauty Brand LLC

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Economic Development and Industrial Corporation awarded Raw Beauty Brand LLC its first HEDIC MakerLoan.

Raw Beauty Brand, 532 Main St., was awarded the maximum amount of \$25,000 at 0% interest at a 5-year term. This money will be used to expand and grow the business through the purchase of new equipment, wholesale ingredients for products, and working capital. The agreement was finalized Feb. 8.

HEDIC Vice Chair Callie Flanagan said “This loan program provides access to capital to small, early-stage and start-up maker businesses in Holyoke. With this loan, owner Crystal Headly will be able to increase her manufacturing capac-

ity, hire employees, and take her business to the next level. I am excited to welcome Raw Beauty Brand as a new addition to Holyoke’s vibrant maker community and look forward to witnessing Crystal’s success here in Holyoke.”

Raw Beauty Brand creates artisanal soaps and skincare with an emphasis on organic ingredients that are safe for sensitive skin. Crystal Headly, owner and founder started making her artisanal soaps to try and ease her children’s sensitive skin issues and allergies.

With time this small endeavor grew to a successful online shopping experience and Headly began bringing her products to sell at events all around the area. Averaging 20 events a month, Raw

Beauty began growing rapidly and was ready for the next step. Raw Beauty will be using the funds to purchase industrial equipment that will speed up production time, allowing the business to increase inventory and take on bigger contracts with stores.

Raw Beauty applied for the HEDIC MakerLoan program. This zero-interest loan program offers maker type businesses financing during the early stages of growth. A maker business is a business that creates a good that then goes to market. To qualify, applicants must be in business less than three years, be in Holyoke, be a maker, and not yet qualify for more traditional financing options. The mission of this program is to fill in

gaps financially that other lenders cannot take on due to higher risk, as well as enhance Holyoke’s rich tradition of manufacturing. Flanagan said “The key to a business’ success is having adequate access to business resources and capital. I am proud to live in a city that offers both: resources through EforAll/EparaTodos, our vibrant Chamber of Commerce, and our TDI District; and access to capital through HEDIC’s new maker loan program. It can be very difficult for a small, early-stage business to acquire financing. Unfortunately, without capital, it can be difficult for these businesses to grow or even start at all.”

To learn more about the program visit <https://www.holyoke.org/makerloan/>.

Jazz Festival this weekend

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.

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.



Luis Perdomo

UCCH to hold Community Meal

HOLYOKE – It’s almost St. Patrick’s Day, which means it’s almost time for corned beef and cabbage. It’s also almost time for the monthly Community Meal, which will be March 8 at 5 p.m. All Are Welcome to come join for a festive St. Patrick’s feast, complete with corned beef and cabbage. The meal will be followed up with a family movie at 6 p.m. Cost is absolutely free.

The Community Meal is hosted on the second Friday evening of each month at the church at 300 Appleton St. The

menu changes monthly. Parents must accompany their children.

The United Congregational Church of Holyoke is an Open and Affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ. We welcome all individuals, regardless of where they are on their journey. If individuals would like to learn more about UCCH, please visit the 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.

Library to hold Spanish language genealogy workshop March 5

HOLYOKE – On Tuesday, March 5, from 4 to 6 p.m. the Holyoke Public Library will host a Spanish language genealogy workshop hosted by Irisneri Alicea Flores. Many Latinos and Latinas hit early brick walls in their family history research because they are not familiar with Family Search online records.

Church Records, Census Records, Notarial Records, Immigration and Travel records can be found, but individuals need to know where to look. Flores will help participants learn to navigate FamilySearch and discover what they can find out about their ancestors.

Pre-register by calling the History Room at (413) 420-8107.

St. Patrick’s Committee announces March events

HOLYOKE – The Saint Patrick’s committee of Holyoke is excited to announce their March 2024 fundraising events. These events aim to enrich the community’s St. Patrick’s Parade experience and raise funds through exciting events. Upcoming events include:

Dobbin’s Tartan Party on Saturday, March 2, from 1 to 3 p.m., at the Holyoke Merry Go Round located at 221 Appleton St. The Saint Patrick’s Committee of Holyoke, through the generous sponsorship of Peoples Bank, aims to bring the spirit of parade weekend to the Merry-Go-Round. The event will feature unlimited carousel rides, face painting, hair braiding, a raffle for tartan rocking horse, photo booth, food, beer and wine. Admission is \$5 per person or \$10 per family.

Marshal Mania with “Unforgettable Fire” on Saturday, March 2, from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m., at Gateway City Arts located at 92 Race St. Tickets for the event are

\$20 per person.

Colleen Gathering on Sunday, March 3, from 2 to 5 p.m., at Wyckoff Country Club located at 233 Easthampton Road. Guests are welcome to meet the Holyoke and regional Colleens. Entertainment will be provided by Irish Thunder and the Black Rose Academy of Irish Dance. Tickets are \$20 per person.

There will be an Ireland ticket drawing. Join to find out who will be winning a trip to Ireland through the annual Past Presidents’ Raffle Drawing. Wednesday, March 13, from 5:30 - 8:00 p.m. at Wyckoff Country Club (downstairs). The winning ticket will be drawn at 7 p.m and the event is free to attend.

The 71st St. Patrick’s Parade will be held on Sunday, March 17 and the 47th St. Patrick’s Road Race will be held on Saturday, March 16.

For more information, please visit our website at www.holyokestpatricksparade.com.

HCC scholarship deadline extended

HOLYOKE – The deadline to apply for scholarships from the Holyoke Community College Foundation for the 2024-2025 academic year has been extended until midnight on Friday, March 8.

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 transfer-

ring 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 lffreeman@hcc.edu.

Winter Blues Art Festival on Saturday

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

Library to hold oral history workshop

HOLYOKE – On Saturday, March 2, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. the Holyoke Public Library will be hosting an oral history workshop.

Karen Chance and Andrea Lovett will guide patrons through the process of uncovering memories in their lives that deserve to be remembered. There is a limit of 20 participants. To reserve a place call 413-420-8101. This is supported by the Mass Cultural Council.

Holyoke City Councilor visits MiraVista

HOLYOKE – Among those joining U.S. Rep. Richard E. Neal on his Feb. 27 visit to MiraVista Behavioral Health Center was Juan C. Anderson-Burgos, Holyoke City Council member who also serves as Legislative Aide to State Representative Patricia A. Duffy whose 5th Hampden District includes Holyoke.

Neal, who serves the 1st District of Massachusetts that includes most of Hampden County, chairs the House Ways and Means Committee and has been instrumental in passing a number of legislative acts expanding access to behavioral health care. He toured

MiraVista's newly renovated 16-bed adolescent unit, calling this age group a population that can be treated successfully and the recently reopened unit "clearly a step in the right direction" for patients and family members. Hospital executives joining him on the tour included Dr. Negar Beheshti, MiraVista Chief Medical Officer who is certified in both general psychiatry and child and adolescent psychiatry.



U.S. Rep. Richard E. Neal and Juan C. Anderson-Burgos visited MiraVista on Feb. 27. Submitted Photo

Sensory-friendly egg hunt to be held 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=ebsdoporgprofile> to learn more about this event.

Lifeguard classes 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.

Easter Bunny arrives at Holyoke Mall

HOLYOKE – Western Massachusetts is hopping over to Holyoke Mall on March 1 to welcome the Easter Bunny back for the spring season.

Mr. Cottontail returns to his holiday home March 1 through March 30 on the lower level in JCPenney Court to bring in the new season with holiday photos and themed events.

This March, hundreds of families will celebrate their favorite Easter tradition at Holyoke Mall. Reservations are recommended and can be made by visiting whereisbunny.com. Guests who pre-book will receive a complimentary gift valued at \$20.

Easter Bunny Photo Hours:

Monday to Friday: 2 to 7 p.m., extends to 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. on March 18

Saturday: 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., extends to 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on March 23

Sunday: noon to 6 p.m., extends to 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on March 18

Capture the magic all season long at one of the center's Easter Bunny events:

Hoppin' Into Spring: March 9 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sensory-Friendly Event: March 10 from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Pet Nights: March 18 and 19 from 5 to 7 p.m.

All events will take place on the lower level outside of JCPenney.

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.

VOC starts 2024 tax assistance program

HOLYOKE – Valley Opportunity Council, which manages the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program providing free tax preparation to those of low- and moderate-income, has begun its 2024 tax preparations on Monday, Jan. 29.

VITA in-person tax preparation appointments are available from Jan 29 through May 15 at 35 Mt. Carmel Ave., Chicopee; 300 High Street, Holyoke; and new this year, 20 Lathrop Street in West Springfield.

To schedule an appointment, call (413) 612-0206. Those eligible for the VITA program must live in Massachusetts with an income of up to \$60,000. Appointments are available on weekdays, evenings and Sundays.

Certified volunteer tax professionals help qualified individuals prepare and file basic state and federal tax returns and prior year returns. VOC also offers free electronic filing (e-filing) of tax returns, allowing for individuals to receive their refunds much quicker than paper filings.

The core mission and goal of VITA is to assist low- to moderate-income taxpayers in satisfying their tax responsibilities and minimize financial hardships, in turn saving taxpayers thousands of dollars in filing fees.

In 2023, VOC helped 743 individuals file their state and federal tax returns through the VITA program. VOC has been providing the VITA program for 25 years in the communities of Chicopee, Holyoke, and more recently, Westfield.

The Valley Opportunity Council is the largest and most diverse Community Action Agency in Western Massachusetts with an annual budget of \$45 million. With this Federal designation, the VOC has established a powerful network of support and collaborative services intended to encourage community members to actively achieve self-sufficiency for themselves and their families. VOC employs over 250 staff members and has 150 local vendors, providing a significant economic investment in the community.

The Holyoke Sun OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

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

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

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

PUBLIC NOTICE TO FORMER HOLYOKE PUBLIC SCHOOLS SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

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

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

This does not pertain to current Special Education Student's records. This notice does not pertain to student's transcripts Which are dealt under 603 CMR 23.06

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

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

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

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

Guest Column



Comments on CONGRESS

By Lee Hamilton

Foreign policy rises in public attention

Americans seem to be more interested in foreign policy than usual. Four in 10 U.S. adults named it as an important issue to address in 2024, according to a recent poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs. That's twice as many as a year earlier.

That sounds right to me. From what I can tell, Americans are paying closer attention to foreign policy than they have for some time.

Part of it, no doubt, is driven by media coverage of the wars in the Middle East and Ukraine. When the media pay attention to a topic, the public pays attention; and when the public pays attention, the media pay attention.

It works both ways.

Of course, what really captures the public eye is the prospect of U.S. casualties, as we saw in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, which killed thousands of Americans. There's been nothing like that yet in the current conflicts, although about 30 U.S. citizens were killed in Hamas' Oct. 7 attack on Israel and an estimated 300 Americans were stranded in Gaza by the fighting.

In the AP-NORC poll, 20% of respondents said they were concerned about U.S. involvement overseas, up from 5% a year earlier. That's a significant increase, and it's reflected by debates in Congress over helping fund the wars.

But whether foreign policy has much of an impact on the 2024 elections is an open question.

Even if Americans follow foreign policy, I don't have the sense that they vote on those issues. Problems at home are more meaningful to most voters, by far.

They're worried about inflation, affordable health care, gas prices and the cost of housing and food. They are concerned about crime and public safety. They pay attention to interest rates, jobs and other economic indicators.

Many Americans are deeply concerned about immigration, especially at the southern border. Immigration is a domestic matter, but it's entwined with foreign policy.

Immigrants and refugees often are fleeing dire conditions in their home countries. We need to work with those regions to address the issue.

I learned early in my time in Congress that foreign policy wasn't something most constituents were eager to discuss. I rarely spoke about foreign policy on visits to the district, where people were more likely to want to know about a local dam project or government actions that directly affected them.

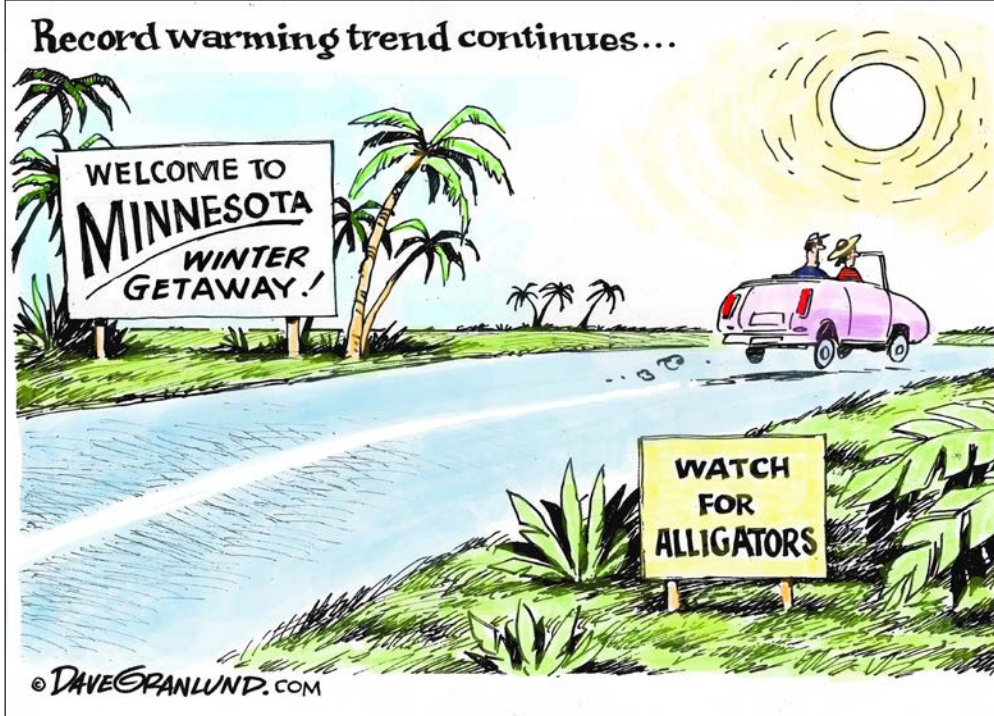
Interestingly, I was most likely to get questions about foreign policy when I spoke at high schools. High school students were well prepared for my visits, and they would zero in on foreign policy issues.

With current issues, most Americans were outraged by Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 and inspired by Ukraine's brave resistance. But, as the war dragged on, it receded from the headlines, and interest in the U.S. has flagged.

Recently, center stage has gone to Hamas' attack on Israel, which killed 1,200 people, and Israel's response, which has reportedly killed 25,000 people in Gaza. The Middle East is almost in a category by itself for public attention.

Many Americans feel strongly about Israel's importance in U.S. foreign policy. Conflicts in the Middle East, and relations between Israel and its neighbors, get more coverage in U.S. news media than news from Asia, Africa or even from Europe.

See CONGRESS, page 5



Guest Column

Get a head start the old-fashioned way



Just about a week ago I was presenting a Seed Starting Workshop for members at Old Sturbridge Village, and someone asked a question about how seedlings would have been pre-started in the mid-1800s.

It was a logical question considering we have heat cables, supplemental light and greenhouses at our disposal these days. We can grow any number of plants pretty much any time of the year.

How then, did innovative gardeners of old get a head start? Cold frames and hot beds, of course! These season extenders continue to be useful today.

Read on to learn how these are constructed and used successfully.

The easiest way to describe a cold frame is this: a rectangular box fitted with a window sash. It can be as simple as an old storm window on top of hay bales.

Better yet would be to construct your cold frame to capture as much passive solar energy as possible. We achieve this by angling the window sash 35 to 45 degrees to catch the sun.

The window sash you obtain will determine the size of the frame. Keep in mind that you have to be able to reach inside to work; therefore, it is recommended that you make the box no deeper than three feet.

Construct the frame using rot resistant woods like cedar or redwood. Pine is an inexpensive and readily available option, but should be painted with exterior paint prior to assembly to ensure years of use.

White paint will not only make an attractive cold frame, but one that will reflect light to the plants growing in it. The walls should be at least an inch thick, preferably two inches, to further insulate the plants growing inside.

Locate your cold frame in full sun, facing south or southeast. The soil under the cold frame is a "mini plot" that should be enriched as I would any other part of the garden by incorporating an inch or two of compost and a sprinkling of lime and balanced organic fertilizer into the soil prior to use.

The window sash will likely stay shut on overcast days. On sunny days, however, be sure to prop open the window to ventilate the space – it can get quite hot inside and young seedlings could easily be harmed.

The sash can be opened completely (or removed altogether) on very warm days. Don't forget to provide water within the frame – if it is covered it is exempt from the rain.

See GARDEN, page 5

About Medicare's dreaded 'IRMAA' provision



Dear Rusty

My wife is on Medicare and receiving Social Security benefits each month. We built a house and used money from our investments to pay for it. We knew we would pay taxes on that withdrawal, but my wife got a letter from Social Security saying that because the money we withdrew was listed as income, her 2024 Medicare premium went up over \$500. And since Medicare is taken out of her Social Security, that results in a \$6,000 loss to our budget.

Is there anything that can be done about this situation? We sent a letter to Social Security, but they responded that unless her situation was one of only a few categories (loss of house, divorce, etc.) nothing could be done for the year.

The money was used strictly on another investment, our new house. It wasn't like we took it out and spent it wildly. Can you please advise?

Signed: Frustrated Homeowner

Dear Frustrated

Unfortunately, it sounds like your wife is a victim of the Medicare provision known as "Income Related Monthly Adjustment Amount." Each person's Medicare Part B premium, coverage for outpatient healthcare, is determined yearly from their income from all sources as reported to the IRS two years prior. IRMAA sets income thresholds, depending on your IRS filing status and if those thresholds are exceeded you must pay a higher Medicare Part B premium and also a higher Part D premium if you have prescription drug coverage.

Assuming you file your taxes as "married/jointly," if your combined 2022 income as a couple was between \$206,000 and \$258,000 your wife's 2024 Part B premium is \$244.60, instead of the standard \$174.70; if your combined 2022 income was between \$258,000 and \$322,000 then your wife's Part B premium for 2024 is \$349.40; if your combined in 2022 was between \$322,000 and \$386,000, her Part B premium is \$454.20; if your combined 2022 income as a married couple was between \$386,000 to \$750,000 then your wife's 2024 Part B pre-

See SECURITY, page 5

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the 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.

BBB Scam Alert: Shoppers beware of Facebook Marketplace cons

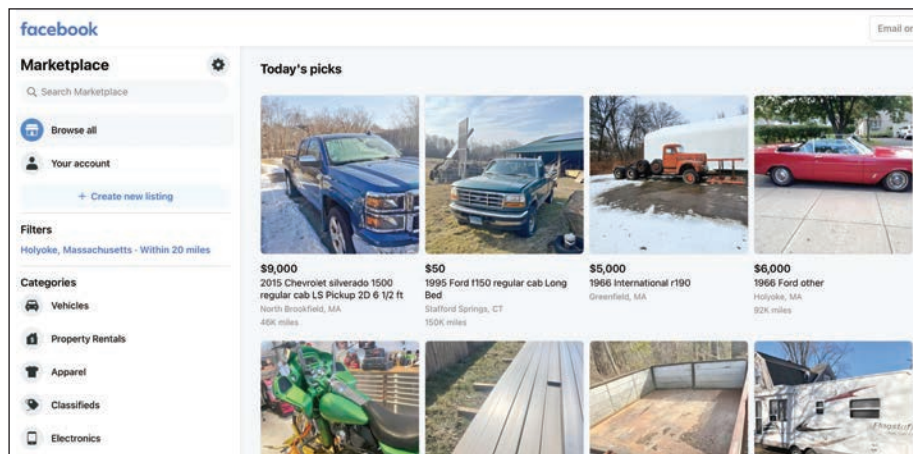
By Paula Fleming
pfleming@boston.bbb.org

Facebook Marketplace can be a great place to find deals on items for sale in your neighborhood. But like any online classified site, watch out for warning signs before handing over money. BBB is seeing reports of Facebook Marketplace scams in BBB Scam Tracker, especially for big-ticket items like used cars and RVs.

How the scam works

You are shopping on Facebook Marketplace and spot a listing that looks like a good deal, so you contact the seller. The seller replies by saying that she or he is out of the country, in the military, or otherwise unavailable. Instead, the person tells you they are using eBay, Amazon, or another reputable third-party company to sell and ship the item.

The seller assures you that you will have a chance to see and test drive the vehicle before committing to a purchase. However, you must first wire money or



send funds via pre-paid debit card to “Amazon” or “eBay.” They will act as an escrow service. If you are unhappy with your purchase, you can simply return it for a full refund. Since you have confidence in the site being used for escrow, you agree.

Unfortunately, both the third-party service and the seller are a con. The car or other item doesn’t exist. Some scam-

mers have even gone as far as creating fake invoices from “Amazon” or “eBay,” stealing their logos to make the invoices look real.

How to avoid scams on Facebook Marketplace:

- Always meet the seller and see the item for sale before purchasing. This will help you avoid most scams on Facebook

Marketplace. This is also true for housing rentals. If you can’t tour the house or apartment before renting it, it’s likely not available.

- Avoid deals involving shipping or escrow services. This scam is only one take on this trend. Avoid them by purchasing directly from the seller.

- Report scams to Facebook. If you’ve encountered a scam on Facebook Marketplace, report them to Facebook.

- Check BBB Tips: Many sales scams use similar techniques. Check out tips on BBB.org/scamtips to learn more.

For more information

For more ways to protect yourself from social media shopping scams, see BBB’s tips for smart shopping online. You can also find more general tips at 10 Steps to avoid scams.

If you’ve been the victim of a social media ad scam, share your experience at BBB Scam Tracker. Your report could help other consumers avoid falling victim to similar scams.

Note: eBay and Amazon are BBB Accredited Businesses.

GARDEN, from page 4

The cold frame is a great place to start spring greens. There are other uses as well.

Some plants prefer to germinate at cool temperatures and simply won’t grow well inside the house, even off the heat cables. Try growing flats of cole crops like kale, broccoli, cabbage and cauliflower right in the cold frame – they’ll be the sturdiest plants you ever grew!

Likewise, start small pots of sweet peas, pansies, forget-me-nots and bachelor’s buttons inside of it; they germinate better in cool soil. Many native perennials need to chill for a month before they are able to germinate- “stratify” these seeds in the cold frame and then move them to the border once they are off and growing.

You can also harden off plants that were started indoors inside the cold frame.

What about getting a head start with heat-loving vegetables, such as tomatoes or peppers? Or even herbs like basil or flowers such as celosia, marigold or amaranths? Here is where the hot bed comes in.

If you have access to free, fresh manure, you are all set. The general idea is to build a mound about two feet tall of manure and bedding materials not older than six weeks and top it with soil you will be growing your seedling in, then top that with one of the frame set-ups described above.

The heat generated from the manure will warm the soil and the surrounding air. Seeds should germinate easily and readily.

It’s important not to set up your hot bed too early – mid April to early May is perfect because you will still need to be past the frost free date before planting the seedlings you’ve grown into the garden. Hot beds take a little trial and error, but are worth the experiment.

When we used them at OSV, the seedlings grown within were always greener and sturdier than those I provided from our fancy greenhouse!

It was fun to think about getting a head start. Soon enough, soon enough!

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

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

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For 31 years she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with “Gardening Question” in the subject line.

CONGRESS, from page 4

Wars and conflicts draw news coverage, but other foreign policy issues also matter a lot. Our relationship with China is the most important bilateral relationship in the world, and problems there can have a global impact.

Climate change is an existential issue that transcends national borders. Trade, terrorism, cybersecurity and global migration require multinational cooperation.

Foreign policy issues may not rise to the top of the public’s concerns, but voters – and politicians – should pay attention to them in this election year.

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.

SECURITY, from page 4

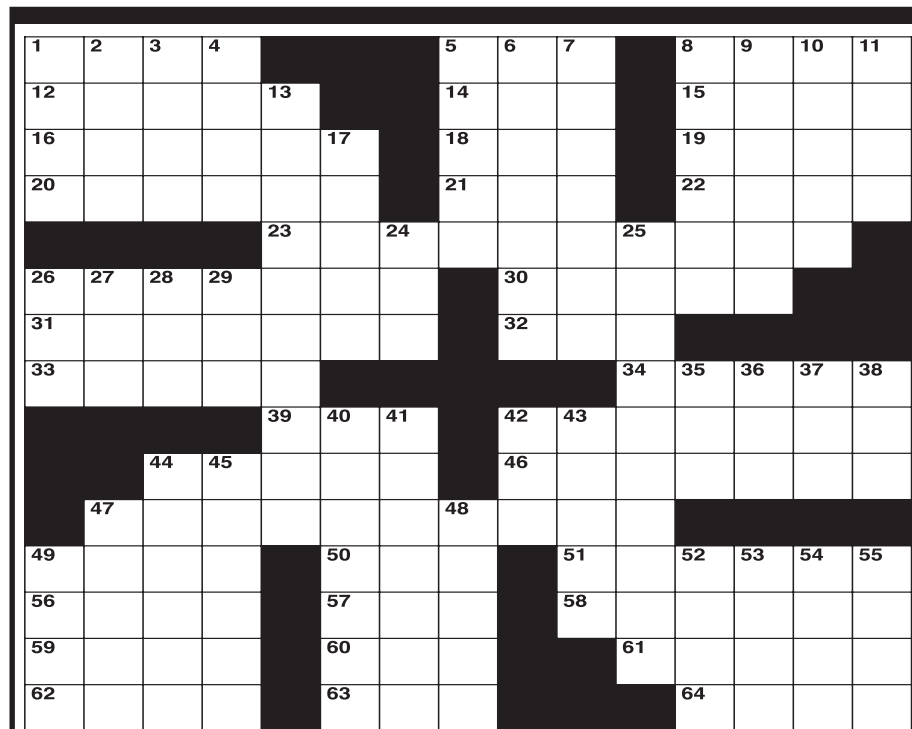
mium is \$559 and if your 2022 income as a married couple was over \$750,000 your wife’s Part B premium is \$594. If your wife also has private Part D prescription drug coverage, IRMAA also increases those premiums. Note that the IRMAA thresholds are different for other income tax filing statuses.

As the Social Security office has already explained, you could appeal your wife’s IRMAA premium increase if she had a “life changing event,” but the list of acceptable life changing events is quite small (see form SSA-44). The only good news is that your wife’s Medicare premium will be calculated anew for next year, so her Medicare premium for 2025 will, if your 2023 joint income is less than the first IRMAA threshold, revert to the standard 2025 premium.

For Your Information, it doesn’t matter what you used the money for. Your withdrawal was reported to the

IRS as taxable income, which is what caused IRMAA to apply to your wife’s Medicare premium for 2024. Many people don’t realize that Medicare premiums are higher for those with a higher income, but since your withdrawal was a one-time event, your wife’s Medicare Part B premium next year should be much less and her Social Security benefit correspondingly higher.

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.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Home of Iowa State University
5. ___-fi (slang)
8. Mottled green and yellow fruit
12. Capable of thinking and expressing oneself clearly
14. Sports broadcaster Eagle
15. Middy
16. Kinsmen
18. Cable network
19. Simpleton
20. Brunch beverage
21. Fed
22. European capital
23. Native inhabitants
26. Mechanical device
30. Rare geese native to Hawaii
31. Bedroom furnishing
32. The products of human creativity

CLUES DOWN

33. Mass transit option
34. Made a mistake
39. Sacred sound symbol
42. Large N. American reindeer
44. Dull and flat
46. Partner to huffing
47. Written works
49. Monetary unit of Serbia
50. Midway between east and southeast
51. Peninsula of southwestern Asia
56. Widely used multiuser OS
57. Aggressive dog
58. Varnished
59. Hindu queen
60. Time units, abbr.
61. Farm animals
62. Capital of Latvia
63. Where golfers begin
64. Takes to civil court

CLUES DOWN

28. “Kill Bill” actress Thurman
29. Hawaiian dish
35. Moroccan coastal region
36. Baseball statistic
37. Long period of time
38. Moved earth
40. Central Netherlands city
41. Take stock of
42. Central processing unit
43. Distinctive qualities one generates
44. Getting stuck
45. Loss of bodily movements
47. Veranda
48. Abrupt
49. What cats do
52. Expresses pleasure
53. Type of cheese
54. Professional STEM organization
55. Automatic data processing systems

CROSSWORD ANSWER on page 11

Dakin brings back 'Run for Cookies' event

SPRINGFIELD – Dakin Humane Society will hold its third annual Will Run for Cookies 5k Run/2k Walk to benefit the organization's services and programs on Saturday, May 18 in Westfield's Stanley Park. Registrants will be invited to bring their dogs (on non-retractable leashes) to take part in the event.

Event day registration/check-in will take place at 9 a.m., and the race begins at 10:30 a.m. Online pre-registrations are being accepted now through May 16 at <https://racewire.com/register.php?id=13823>. The event will be held rain or shine. Refunds are not available.

Free race t-shirts, and one cookie per person and dog participant will be given to those who pre-register during the Early Bird Registration period, which will end on April 1. The Early Bird Registration fees are as follows; \$20 for 12 years and younger and \$30 for adult registration.

The adult registration fee will increase to \$35 April 2 through May 16, and to \$40 on the day of the event. The 12 years and younger fee will remain the same. General pre-registration and race day registration includes a cookie for human and dog participants, but a race shirt is not guaranteed.

Dakin's Director of Development and Marketing Stacey Price stated, "This is our third year celebrating the person/pet bond at our Cookie Run event. We're very happy to return to Westfield's Stanley Park, which is



Participants in last year's Will Run for Cookies 5K.

Submitted Photo

especially beautiful in May, and provides an ideal setting for everyone to enjoy a day outdoors with their friends and dogs. Dakin's services exist to strengthen the bond between people and pets, and everyone who participates in our event is lending a hand to animals in need, and the people who love them, right here in the Pioneer Valley."

Participants are encouraged to fundraise to help give animals the food, shelter, and medical treatment they need. Every dollar raised goes towards

creating happier and healthier lives for animals both at Dakin, and those in homes that need the organization's services.

As a fundraiser incentive, every individual who raises \$100 will receive a blue beanie hat. The beanie hat was chosen by Dakin to honor a kitten named Beanie who had been rescued in frigid weather in 2020. She was part of a litter living outdoors that was humanely trapped and brought to Dakin for care by Dakin's Kitten Street Team. The KST is an all-volunteer

group that responds to calls reporting sightings of cats, especially kittens, living outdoors. Beanie is one of the more than 1,500 felines helped by the Kitten Street Team since it was launched four years ago.

Participants are also encouraged to form teams to support each other, fundraiser together, and come up with creative team names. For more information, visit www.dakinhumane.org.



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Knights win quarterfinal

CHICOPEE – Despite a very strong regular season, Chicopee Comprehensive found itself on the losing end in the quarterfinals of the Western Mass. Class A Tournament. In a high-scoring affair, Holyoke defeated Comp 88-78. The Knights got 31 points from Shawn Rivera, 14 points each from Jordan King-Perilli and Jamil Rodriguez, and 13 points from Aden Cabrera. Comp's Tineus McCluster had a huge night with 34 points while Xavier Kleps contributed 13 points.

Both teams were scheduled to participate in the State Division 2 Tournament which started this week.



Jordan King-Perilli gets an off-balance shot.



Aden Cabrera takes the layup.



Shawn Rivera makes his way across the court in Holyoke's first playoff game.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com



Jamil Rodriguez shoots in a lot of traffic.



Davian Diaz heads into the paint to go for a layup.

Holyoke girls fall in first playoff game

HOLYOKE – Holyoke girls basketball is not making the state tournament, but their strength of schedule locally got them into the Western Mass. tournament last week.

The Knights lost at Minnechaug 53-29

last Monday evening in the quarterfinals. Kiara Perez had 13 points to lead the team and Amilyan Treadwell-Mercedes had 11 points. Holyoke dropped to 6-13 and was outside the top 32 in the power rankings for the state tournament.



Kiara Perez makes a long three-point attempt.



Evangeline Cauley passes on the run.



Nayshalee Torres drives into the paint.

Turley photos by Sofia DiGrande



Jaylaness Santiago angles around a Minnechaug guard.

Genesis Rivera heads into the offensive end of the court.

Registration now open for Quabbin Valley baseball

The Quabbin Valley Over-28 Baseball League is looking to infuse new talent into its league for the 2024 season.

Registration for the 2024 season is now open and any interested players can go to www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org to get registered, or to seek more information or make inquiries about the league. The league website will also be updated over the next month with information

about the upcoming season.

There are many open roster spots available in the league for the 2024 season, which is tentatively scheduled to begin on Sunday, April 21. The league plays most Sunday from late April through late August with playoffs following that. The league plays a 15-game schedule and typically fields six teams each year. Games are usually played at 10 a.m. with fields in Easthampton and

South Hadley normally used.

The Quabbin Valley league is an all-abilities league and all are welcome to join. Eligibility is players who are age 28 and over. You must be 30 to be eligible to pitch in the league. Your age for eligibility is whatever age you will turn in 2024. The league is also able to entertaining taking in an entire group as a team to add to the league. Please email the league board for to inquire

about entering a team.

The league is currently in the process of preparing for the 2024 season and held a meeting on Feb. 18 to discussion plans for the upcoming season. The next meeting is scheduled for Sunday March 24 at 11:40 a.m. at the Hangar Pub & Grill in South Hadley. All are welcome to attend the meeting, ask questions and express interest in joining.

Worcester Railers wraps up road trip with loss to Florida

ESTERO, FL – The Worcester Railers HC (22-22-4-2, 50pts) lost to the Florida Everblades (27-15-7-2, 63pts) on Saturday night by the final score of 5-3 in front of a crowd of 7,650 at Hertz Arena. The Railers have wrapped up their six-game southern road trip and return to the DCU Center against the Trois-Rivieres Lions on Saturday, March 2nd at 7:05pm.

The Everblades opened the scoring with goals from Sean Josling (1-2-3) and Joe Pendenza (1-1-2) just 2:43 apart to grab a 2-0 lead. Worcester responded 27 seconds later as Jack Quinlivan (1-0-1) wrapped a backhand behind the net past Johnson to make it 2-1 going into the second. Worcester kept the pressure on the Everblades in the second as they added on two more from Zsombor Garat (1-1-2) and Andrei Bakanov (1-0-1) to take their first lead of the night going into the third at 3-2. Florida took the lead in the third thanks to goals from Will Reilly (1-0-1), Mark Senden (1-0-1) and an empty netter from Brett Davis (1-0-1) to take the game 5-3.

Florida controlled the pace of play across the first fourteen minutes in the first, culminating in the game's first goal. Sean Josling (14th) received a backdoor pass from Oliver Chau who received the puck from Pendenza below the goal line to bury it past Cole Ceci in net for Worcester to put the Everblades ahead 1-0. With Florida on

the power play 2:43 later in the period, Joe Pendenza turned on a one-timer and sent it past Ceci as Florida led 2-0 late in the period. Jack Quinlivan (4th) responded for Worcester just 27 seconds later. He took the puck off the stick of Zsombor Garat and wrapped it with his backhand inside the near post from beneath the net to get Worcester to within one heading into the second.

Worcester picked up the only goals in the second. Zsombor Garat (1st) hammered a heavy one-timer on the power-play from Trevor Cosgrove for his first professional North American goal. His marker tied the game at the 7:29 mark of the second. Later in the period with 4:51 left in the second, Andrei Bakanov (7th) ripped a wrister past the blocker of Cam Johnson following a perfect drop pass from Anthony Callin to give Worcester the 3-2 lead entering the third.

The Everblades would be the only team to score in the third period. First it was Will Reilly (6th) on a wrister from the point that beat Ceci blocker side to tie the game 3-3 just 7:49 into the frame. From there, Mark Senden (9th) found the puck barreling down the left wing and buried it through the legs of Ceci to make it 4-3 Florida. Brett Davis (3rd) sealed the deal for Florida with an empty netter with just 1:31 remaining in the game to give Florida the win and the final score of 5-3.

T-Birds suffer loss at Bridgeport

BRIDGEPORT, CT – The Springfield Thunderbirds (24-22-3-2) fell to the Bridgeport Islanders (16-28-6-1) on Sunday afternoon at Total Mortgage Arena by a final score of 5-3.

Things appeared to be starting well for the T-Birds on this day, as Sam Bitten cashed in for his first career AHL goal at the 8:19 mark of the first period when he arrived at the top of the crease and jammed a Drew Callin centering pass through Henrik Tikkanen's legs to make it 1-0 for the visitors.

Springfield increased the lead to 2-0 at 12:54 when Ryan Suzuki sent an alley-oop through the neutral zone that landed inside the Islander blue line. Jakub Vrana accelerated to beat the Bridgeport defender to the puck and then slid a backhand shot through Tikkanen to extend the lead on his ninth goal of the season.

55 seconds after the Vrana tally, though, the Islanders made their way to the scoresheet as Tyce Thompson got a step behind the defense and lifted a perfect backhand shot over Colten Ellis to cut the lead to 2-1 heading into the first intermission.

The second period began uneventfully, but Suzuki changed matters when he powered down the right wing, protecting the puck before elevating a forehand chip shot over Tikkanen to make it a 3-1 game at 6:34 of the period.

Ellis remained busy but strong as the period entered its final three min-

utes en route to a career-high 49 saves. Unfortunately for the T-Birds, Bridgeport All-Star Ruslan Iskhakov snapped a goal drought dating back to Jan. 15 to single-handedly pull the Isles even. First, the crafty centerman made his way to the edge of the crease near the right circle, beating Ellis on a second chance after the T-Bird goalie made a strong reactionary save on the first attempt. That tally cut the score to 3-2 at 17:08.

Not even two minutes later, now with under a minute to go in the period, Iskhakov delivered the equalizer with a one-time rocket off a circle-to-circle pass from Matt Maggio, and Bridgeport headed into the dressing room with new life in the 3-3 game.

The Islanders were relentless in the final 20 minutes, managing 22 shots on the T-Birds net. Ellis and the Springfield defense held the fort as long as they could before a Sam Bolduc point wrister glanced off traffic and skipped past Ellis to give Bridgeport the lead for good at 11:34 of the third. Hudson Fasching rounded out the scoring with a power-play marker into an empty net in the closing seconds.

The T-Birds' busy stretch continues next Friday in Providence as they tangle with the Bruins at Amica Mutual Pavilion. Springfield returns home on Saturday when they host the Laval Rocket at 7:05 p.m. at the MassMutual Center.

Pioneers 2024 schedule released

LUDLOW – Earlier this week, the Western Mass. Pioneers have released their 2024 schedule. It includes potential participation in the U.S. Open Cup, which begins on March 19. The Pioneers have won an Open Cup match in the past. Later, the Pioneers have their "friendly" exhibition game scheduled for May 10.

They will face 3rd Eye FC prior to the start of their USL-2 League schedule. Their opener for the regular season is against the Boston Bolts on the road May 14. Their home opener is scheduled for May 18 against Pathfinder FC of New York. The schedule continues through July 13 and includes a total of 14 games.



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► In The News

ROOF, from page 1

of the total opportunities before us, depending upon what they allow to be considered, and then the costs therefore," Anderson said.

The council's approval on this matter did not guarantee that the city will be accepted into the MSBA program, nor does it mean that any city funds have been spent toward this project. It was just to begin the process of applying for the program.

If the schools are accepted into the program, then city discussions will begin on how they want to go about doing the project and how they hope to allocate funding.

Anderson emphasized the importance of continually applying for the MSBA's support in school projects.

"It's always in our best interests to make as many applications as we can to see if they will be invited into their program," Anderson said.

Last year the program ceased, so it was unavailable to the community to apply to. Thankfully, this year it has returned and Holyoke hopes to receive benefits from it.

The MSBA accelerated repair program is an 80% reimbursement program, meaning the city can get up to 80% reimbursement from the program for the project work.

"It's a very hefty advantage to the

city to take advantage of this opportunity," Anderson said.

Anderson had carefully selected which of Holyoke's schools would be most in need of roof repair. He settled on the five mentioned above based on his analysis.

"I have determined which of the schools [to apply] based on the age and the components we're speaking of, which is roofing this evening," Anderson said. "They are all eligible for this reimbursement."

The MSBA accelerated repair programs are specific to windows, exterior doors and roofs, all of which are able to be reimbursed 80% by the state.

In the past, this program has also

supported boiler repairs or replacements. However the MSBA excluded boilers this year.

Thankfully, Holyoke High School Dean Campus was able to get approval to fix their boiler a year and a half ago, before they were cut from the program. Their boiler will be fixed this summer.

The council looks forward to supporting action being taken to help fix the roofing issues at these five schools.

"These are ongoing problems in the city for many years from what I can understand," Councilor Howard Greaney said.

With this in mind, the council voted unanimously to support approval for this application.

BEVAN, from page 1

and expand upon the community environment that the YMCA is known for.

"People come to the YMCA for other people, it's a people-centric model and our team is at the heart of it...that's what sets the YMCA apart from any other health and wellness and any other non-profit organization," Bevan said. "It's the people that truly drive the program

and the impact."

One way Bevan hopes to work toward this goal is by bringing in other aspirations in other parts of his life.

"One thing I want to be known for in life is for being a great husband, a great partner, a great parent and a great community member and my hope is that those aspirations will carry into the day to day work of the Greater Holyoke YMCA," Bevan said.

Bevan feels that if he can help to

bring a welcoming environment to those around him, then it will carry forward into his work at the YMCA.

It was the YMCA community that made Bevan feel welcome as a young child, and it is that community that he hopes to give to anyone else who walks through the YMCA doors.

More than anything, Bevan is grateful for the opportunity to work for the YMCA.

"Every minute of every day will be a gift and I will cherish being able to further

the mission," Bevan said.

To learn more about the YMCA, go to <https://holyokeymca.org/>.

One event coming up soon is the "Sneaker Peak". This event will be on Saturday, Apr. 6 from 5:30-8:30 p.m.

This event will honor the 2024 Oldershaw Community Service Recipient and Distinguished Service Awardees.

All are welcome to attend this free event. To register, email jchartier@holyokeymca.org or call 413-534-5631.



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QUESTION, from page 1

Degnan decided upon this as that was the procedure the council had gone through to initially put the CPA question on the ballot, and the council has to follow the same procedure to put the question back on the ballot.

Councilor Kevin Jourdain felt having to approve the reduction as a council in order to put the question on the ballot was worth it in order to allow the public to vote on the issue.

“Without this step the citizens would not be allowed to vote and they should be allowed to vote,” Jourdain said.

However, other councilors were hesitant to vote to approve the reduction, as they did not want the public to believe that that was their opinion as a city council.

Other councilors felt that this vote did not have to reflect personal opinions about the CPA reduction, but was really more a matter of allowing the question to be on the ballot.

They argued that they could put the language in the ballot summary to clarify that the council’s vote did not mean they were officially taking a position on the matter, but rather doing a procedural step to get the question on the ballot.

“None of us have said we have to take a position on it...it would be changing it from 1.5 to 1 and we’re not taking a position as a city council on it, however we take the vote,” Councilor Linda Vacon said.

Additionally, councilors wanted to ensure that the public was fully informed on what reducing the surcharge from 1.5% to 1% would do.

They felt that misinformation had been spread regarding the CPA surcharge and how much it costs the city, and they did not want that information to sway voters inaccurately.

Therefore, some proposed publishing further information on the CPA for people to access. Councilor Meagan Magrath-Smith also proposed adding clarifying

language to the ballot question summary for people to read over before voting.

“I wonder if the body would be interested in amending the language to allow more clarity in terms of the outcome of the vote,” Magrath-Smith said. “Would it make sense to include language that would name for the voter what the outcome would be?”

Reducing the surcharge from 1.5% to 1% would only reduce the tax for the average single-family home by \$12.78. In 2023 the average single-family home paid \$38.34, this reduction would take it down to \$25.56.

Magrath-Smith also wanted to ensure that the benefits of the CPA fund were well-known.

The CPA has been greatly beneficial to building structures in the city, such as the Miracle League playground which opened this past fall.

Other councilors felt the public was capable of doing the research on their own to learn about the CPA and what impacts reducing the surcharge would have.

The council wound up voting 7-6 to approve the rate reduction and put it on the ballot, with councilors Divine, Givner, Magrath-Smith, Murphy-Romboletti, Israel Rivera, Jenny Rivera and Anderson-Burgos voting against it.

Those who voted against this are not necessarily against putting the question on the ballot, but rather do not want the public to believe that it is the council’s opinion that the surcharge should be reduced.

They want the public to go in without an opinion from the council, one way or another, on the matter.

“They should vote on this, absolutely, it’s their money,” Councilor Juan Anderson-Burgos. “I want this to get on the ballot, I want to be clear.”

Jourdain then made a motion to reconsider the council’s actions and table the discussion for another meeting. Therefore, the council will discuss this again in the future.

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

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 808 Dwight St, (062-03-018).

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

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampden Division
Docket No. HD24P0279EA

Estate of:
Richard Allen Jalbert
Also Known As:
Richard A Jalbert
Date of Death:
Dec 31, 2023

INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner Thomas J Jalbert of Chicopee MA

has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve without surety on the bond.

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

03/01/2024

CITY OF HOLYOKE Office of Purchasing REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR MANAGEMENT SERVICES RFP 2024-40P&R

The City of Holyoke is soliciting proposals for management services to operate the Jones Ferry River Access Center. Services required range from facility maintenance and security to water based recreational programming. Applicants should demonstrate a record of successful experience with contracts of this magnitude, more importantly with projects of similar nature in Massachusetts in the recent past. Requests for Proposals are available from the City of Holyoke through its Purchasing Department at the address below.

Proposals are to be submitted on or before March 20, 2024, at 2PM to:

Ms. Jaime Morrow
Chief Procurement Officer
Purchasing Department
Room 3,
City Hall Holyoke, MA
01040
(413) 322-5650

No Electronic Submissions allowed. The City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.
03/01/2024

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

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758

Docket No. HD24C0061CA
In the matter of:
Cynthia Velazquez
CITATION ON
PETITION TO CHANGE NAME

A Petition to Change Name of Adult has been filed by: Cynthia Velazquez of Holyoke, MA

requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to: Cynthia Morales

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Hampden Probate and Family Court before 10:00a.m. on the return day of 03/26/2024. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara M Hyland, First Justice of this Court.
Date: February 23, 2024

Rosemary A Saccamani
Register of Probate
03/01/24

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Hampshire Probate and Family Court
15 Atwood Drive
Northampton, MA 01060
(413)586-8500

Docket No. HS24P0110PO
In the matter of:
Zabik Irrevocable Real Estate Trust
TRUST CITATION

To all interested persons:
A Petition has been filed by: Alexandria Zabik-Maki of Southwick, MA

requesting Removal of a Trustee and Appointment of a Successor Trustee.

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 03/27/2024.

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

WITNESS, Hon. Diana S. Velez Harris, First Justice of this Court.
Date: February 23, 2024

Michael J. Carey
Register of Probate
03/01/2024

Word search grid with words: AMES, LUCID, UNCLE, MIMOSA, CUPLE, ARMOR, TRAIN, MATTE, LITERATURE, PARA, UNIX, RANI, RIGA, SCI, IAN, TATE, BORIGINES, NENES, ART, ERRRED, CARIBOU, PUFFING, ARA, ABIA, SE, SEALED, HRS, SHEEP, TEE, SUES.

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St. Jerome's to host 'Irish Night' fundraiser

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.

Shuttle schedule for St. Pat's 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 St. 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-](https://www.exploreholyokey.com/event/free-shuttle-service-from-mgm-casino-to-holyoke-city-hall-during-2024-st-patricks-celebrations-in-holyoke/)

[casino-to-holyoke-city-hall-during-2024-st-patricks-celebrations-in-holyoke/](https://www.exploreholyokey.com/event/free-shuttle-service-from-mgm-casino-to-holyoke-city-hall-during-2024-st-patricks-celebrations-in-holyoke/).

On Road Race day, March 16 and Parade Day March 17, The bus will run on loop at the following times:

10 a.m. leave MGM to City Hall
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11 a.m. MGM to City Hall
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Noon MGM to City Hall
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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, email vegaa@holyokey.org or visit online at brazeaum@holyokey.org.

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).

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 Sunday, March 10, 2024 at 8 a.m.

Memorial Mass at St Jerome Church followed by **Breakfast at 9 a.m. at the Wyckoff Country Club, 233 Easthampton Rd, Holyoke**
Honoring James P. Kelly, CEO of the Polish National Credit Union with the 2024 Hibernian Christian Charity Award Guest Speaker will be Erin Duffy Lacy, Irish National Dance Champion and Research Fellow at Harvard Medical School.

For reservations by March 8, 2024 contact Atty. John J. Driscoll at 413-537-1573.
Tickets are \$25 per person (Tables of 10).

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St. Patrick's parade to be 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.holyokest-patricksparade.com, will provide all of the details regarding the parade route and parking information for spectators.

22News Anchors Rich Tetteimer 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.



JOIN DAY BROOK VILLAGE FOR A Senior Moving Seminar

Thursday, March 14th • 9:30 – 11:30 AM

There's never been a better time to sell your house and consider a move. Not sure where to start? Join us for a senior moving seminar and have all of your questions answered. Refreshments will be served.

THE UPSIDE OF DOWNSIZING
Presented by Barbara Perman, PhD., Founder and President, Moving Mentor

SELLING YOUR HOME IN TODAY'S MARKET
Presented by Donna Coleman, S.R.E.S. National Association of Realtors®, Taylor Real Estate

Tours will be offered following the event. Please use the Sheldon Entrance.

An RSVP is required. Please visit RSVPDayBrookVillage.org, scan the QR code, or call 413-420-5145.



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