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An original art exhibit will enliven Holyoke City Hall with a reception being held on May 1 to welcome the artwork. Submitted photo

## Art exhibit to come alive at city hall

By Gregory A. Scibelli  
gscibelli@turley.com

HOLYOKE – On Tuesday afternoon, Mayor Joshua Garcia announced that an original art exhibit will be featured right at City Hall.

According to a press release from Garcia's office, "a reception and collaborative art exhibition featuring original paintings of Holyoke scenes will be held Friday, May 1, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the Mayor's Office at City Hall, 536 Dwight Street.

Works created by Natasha Colón Ortiz and

Lora McNeece Barrett will be on display. The theme is "Waterpower."

According to the artists, the strength of the City of Holyoke has long been in its canal system. Since the late 1800s, water has been harnessed to power industry. Three levels of canals not only help to contribute to the economy of Holyoke but have served as the muse for the work of Colón Ortiz and Barrett. The canals not only serve as a bridge between the past and the present, but have bridged the once student and teacher relationship of Natasha and Lora, but have been the catalyst

that has forged a new bond as mentor and student learn from each other, share ideas about art and commerce, and delight in the creation of art.

According to the press release, Garcia asked members of the community for ideas to enliven the Mayor's Office last summer.

The led to numerous people suggesting that Colón Ortiz and Barrett were the natural choices for this body of work as both have been noticed for their use of the canals as inspiration for their many paintings.

"When Natasha and Lora agreed to provide paintings, based on the

Holyoke canals, Mayor Garcia became, coincidentally, the recipient of an award by the Northeast Renewable Energy Coalition as Mayor of the Year, and the Holyoke Gas & Electric Department received the Utility of the Year Award. Garcia characterized the awards as "testament to the resilience and ingenuity of Holyoke's development strategy. He cited the growing interest of start-ups and entrepreneurs impressed by the city's vision of a clean energy economy."

Both artists bring an

See EXHIBIT, page 10

## Baez named Dean's outstanding student of the year

By Gregory A. Scibelli  
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HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Public Schools have announced a local student has been named a "Vocational Student of the Year."

Dean Technical High School senior Eriel Suarez Baez was recognized alongside top students from across the Commonwealth at the Massachusetts Association of Vocational Administrators (MAVA) Outstanding Vocational Technical Student Awards Ceremony in Worcester on Wednesday, April 16. This recognition highlights students who demonstrate exceptional skill, leadership, and commitment to their trade, representing the very best of Career and Technical Education across Massachusetts.



Eriel Suarez Baez

Career and Technical Education Director Joel McAuliffe reflected on Baez and the great effort he has put into his recent work. He said Baez is a glowing example to his classmates and asserted himself to become a top student.

"Baez's journey at Dean reflects perseverance, growth, and a deep commitment to both his craft and his community," said.

"After transferring into the carpentry program as a sophomore, he quickly distinguished himself through his work ethic and determination to master the trade. He consistently sought additional learning opportunities, staying after school and fully engaging in hands-on training to accelerate his development."

Baez's efforts paid off, as he has emerged as one of the program's top students and a leader among his peers. "He has become the kind of student others look to, both in the shop and throughout the school community," McAuliffe said, noting that Baez is widely recognized for his technical abilities and also his professionalism, compassion, and the respect he shows to those around him.

One of his instructors, David Montanez, said that Baez made his mark in his classroom.

"Baez is the kind of student you don't forget," said Montanez, a carpentry instructor. "I've had the opportunity to watch him grow not just in the trade, but as a young man. He came in willing to work, willing

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"He has become the kind of student others look to, both in the shop and throughout the school community,"

- Joel McAuliffe  
Career and Technical Education Director

Baez is completing his studies in the carpentry program at Dean Tech this spring.

According to a press release made by the Holyoke Public Schools, he plans to pursue a career in public service, with long-term aspirations of returning to education as a vocational instructor, giving back to future generations of students.

## Mayor Garcia provides status on city's finances, efforts to get books caught up

HOLYOKE – Mayor Joshua A. Garcia, joined by the City's Human Resources Director and Interim City Treasurer, provided the City Council's Finance Committee with a comprehensive update on the implementation of the Municipal Finance Modernization Act, as well as ongoing efforts to bring the City's financial audits fully up to date.

"Holyoke is doing the hard but necessary work to modernize how we manage public finances," said Mayor Garcia. "For too long, outdated systems, staffing gaps, and delayed reconciliations made it difficult



to provide the level of transparency and accountability our residents deserve. We are changing that, methodically and responsibly."

Human Resources Director Kelly Curran reported significant progress in recruiting for key leadership positions established under the Act. These roles are designed to strengthen internal controls, improve coordination across departments, and ensure long-term financial stability.

- Chief Administrative and Financial Officer (CAFO): 16 candidates screened; 2 finalists advanced to the mayor for interviews

- Comptroller: Sharon Bittner-Willis appointed; currently serving as interim Auditor

- Treasurer/Collector: Laura Wilson Shaw appointed; will assume the combined role upon appointment of a permanent Auditor

- Auditor: 13 candidates screened; 1 candidate advanced to the City Council for interview and vote

- Director of Technical Assistance: 6 applicants reviewed; 3 advanced to Screening Committee interviews

"I would like to thank the Councilors who have supported these efforts to modernize. For far too long, we have faced the same challenges and only provided band-aid solutions. I'm confident that the work being done now will set Holyoke up for financial success in the decades to come," Mayor Garcia added.

**Audit and Reconciliation Progress**

Fiscal Year 2023 reconciliation has been completed, and documentation has

See FINANCES, page 10

## Patriot's Day remembered with ceremony

By Ben Hernandez  
Correspondent

SOUTH HADLEY – A procession of flags, honor guards, boy scouts and Revolutionary War re-en-

actors, accompanied by a rendition of Yankee Doodle from the fife and drum corps, began the Patriot's Day Ceremony on April 18th in the Evergreen Cemetery. VFW National Sergeant

at Arms, American Legion Post Commander and National Honor Guard representative Brian Willette served as the primary speaker, leading the assembly through the Pledge of Allegiance and reflecting on South Hadley's past as well as its place in American history. In June of 1774, South Hadley was one of many growing communities to establish a Committee of Correspondents, which was an important step to remain informed on British movements within the region.

"This was a key to communicate with the other towns throughout Massachusetts of the actions of the British in preparation for what they pretty much knew was a coming fight," said Willette in his speech. In September 1774, South Hadley and Hampshire County began to organize militias, as well as stockpile weapons, ammunition, and gunpowder.

"War was coming," said Willette. The increased

See PATRIOTS, page 6



Turley photos by Ben Hernandez  
American Legion Post Commander Brian Willette served as lead speaker for the ceremony.

# OneHolyoke announces promotion of Rosa to COO

HOLYOKE – OneHolyoke Community Development Corporation (OneHolyoke CDC) has announced the promotion of Nayroby Rosa to Chief Operating Officer (COO), effective retroactively to March 9, 2026.

Executive Director Michael Moriarty and the OneHolyoke Board made the announcement.

Rosa, who has been at OneHolyoke since 2019, previously served as Director of Community Engagement and Resident Services. In that position, she played a critical role in advancing initia-

tives focused on affordable housing, neighborhood leadership, youth and family support, and community-centered development throughout Holyoke.

A longtime community leader and advocate, Rosa brings more than 15 years of experience in nonprofit leadership, community engagement, and organizational development. In her new role as COO, Rosa will oversee daily operations, strategic implementation, and



Nayroby Rosa

organizational systems, strengthening internal capacity while continuing to deepen community partnerships. Her promotion reflects OneHolyoke CDC's commitment to developing strong internal leadership and investing in leaders who are deeply rooted in the community.

According to Moriarty, "I have had the pleasure of working alongside Nayroby and watched her growth at OneHolyoke. At her core, she

is committed to the betterment of the community we serve and has the passion, compassion and smarts to do the job as chief operating officer."

"Nayroby's leadership, vision, and deep connection to the community make her uniquely positioned to take on this role," said Ivie Cordero, Chair of the OneHolyoke Board of Directors. "Her ability to build relationships, lead with intention, and center community voice has already had a significant impact on our work, and we are excited for what lies ahead."

Rosa has long been recognized for her leadership across

Holyoke's civic and nonprofit sectors, serving on numerous boards and advisory committees and working to strengthen partnerships between residents, institutions, and local government. Her leadership approach emphasizes transparency, collaboration, and community voice as key drivers of sustainable change.

"I am honored to step into this position of COO and continue working alongside our staff, residents, and partners to advance OneHolyoke's mission," said Rosa. "This opportunity allows me to build on the organization's strong foundation while continuing to pri-

oritize community-led development and long-term neighborhood stability."

OneHolyoke CDC remains dedicated to expanding opportunities for residents through housing, civic engagement, and community-driven initiatives that strengthen neighborhoods. It is the only certified Community Development Corporation based in Holyoke. It has created over 160 new homes in the Flats, Churchill and South Holyoke neighborhoods, rehabilitated hundreds of apartments and provided thousands of home improvement grants to homeowners.

## National Day of Prayer to be held at City Hall May 7

HOLYOKE – Mayor Joshua A. Garcia will host the 75th annual observance of the National Day of Prayer on Thursday, May 7, at noon outside City Hall. The mayor will be joined by faith leaders, congregations, and City Officials. The public is invited.

The idea of a National Day of Prayer came up in 1775, when the Continental Congress designated a time for prayer in forming a new nation. In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln called for such a day. In 1952,

Congress established the National Day of Prayer as an annual event. It was signed into law by President Truman. The National Day of Prayer was established as the first Thursday of May each year.

The 2026 National Day of Prayer theme is "Glorify God Among the Nations — Seeking Him in All Generations," based on 1 Chronicles 16. This 75th annual observance will focus on uniting generations in prayer on the 250th anniversary of the nation's founding.

## Rotary Club announces 'Eat Drink, and Be Holyoke'

HOLYOKE – The Holyoke Rotary Club has announced the date of the 2026 Eat, Drink, & Be Holyoke, their premier tasting fundraiser and silent auction on Thursday, April 30, 2026. The event will take place at the Holyoke Council on Aging & Senior Center at 5:30pm and will include live music performed by The Earls & Pearls.

Eat, Drink, & Be Holyoke will feature food prepared by Amedeo's Restaurant & Pizzeria, Day Brook Village Senior Living, Holyoke Hummus, Sweet Baby Rae's Bakery, Rusty's Place, Choo Choo's, 110 Grill, Pic's Pub

& Pizzeria, Daruma BBQ & Sushi AYCE, and Hamel's Creative Catering and Summit View Banquets. Beverage tastings will be provided by Quality Beverage. Tasting samples will include craft beer, seltzers, and wine.

Tickets are \$50 and can be purchased at <https://edbh2026.eventbrite.com>.

Eat, Drink & Be Holyoke is generously sponsored by Holyoke Medical Center; anonymous donors; D & S Plating Co.; Marcotte Ford; Brunault, Proulx & McGuinness; Greenfield and Northampton Cooperative Bank; Meyers Brothers

Kalicka, P.C.; The Dowd Agencies, LLC; and The Greater Holyoke YMCA.

The Holyoke Rotary Club is still identifying additional event sponsors, as well as food vendors. Local businesses interested in supporting and collaborating together with the Holyoke Rotary Club for this event are encouraged to visit [www.holyokerotary.com](http://www.holyokerotary.com).

Proceeds will go towards supporting Rotary projects, mostly within the Holyoke Rotary district of Holyoke, South Hadley, and Granby, Mass. Ongoing Holyoke Rotary projects include providing several annual scholar-

ships, providing food for those in need through community collaborations, and fostering community engagement with free summer concerts, as well as funding international clean water initiatives.

Since 2008 the Holyoke Rotary Club has raised over \$150,000 to fund various projects, including the Miracle League of Western Massachusetts Inclusive Playground at Kennedy Field, the media room at the Holyoke Library, K-9 vests for the Holyoke Police Department, and literacy projects with Kelly School and Holyoke Boys' and Girls' Club, among others.

## HCC hosting 'Fresh Check Day' April 29

HOLYOKE – Holyoke Community College is hosting a day dedicated to promoting mental health and wellness on Wednesday, April 29.

"Fresh Check Day" will run from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the HCC Courtyard.

This innovative program, developed by the Connecticut-based Jordan Porco Foundation, is designed to bring together the campus community to "check in" on the mental health and wellness of college students. The event is free and open to all.

Organized by the Office of the Dean of Student Experience and HCC Student Engagement, with support from other campus partners and student clubs, Fresh Check Day will transform the HCC Courtyard into a vibrant expo-like setting with interactive exhibits, food prizes, giveaways – and friendly puppies.

"Student well-being is an essential part of the overall student experience at Holyoke Community College," said

Julissa Colón, HCC dean of student experience. "By increasing awareness of mental health resources and creating opportunities for connection, we remind students that they are supported not only academically but as whole people throughout their time here."

Highlights include interactive exhibits and activities designed to educate and engage students on mental health topics, such as stress management, anxiety, depression, and suicide prevention; community engagement opportunities where students can connect with their peers and to campus resources in a positive, community-focused environment; and prizes and giveaways.

The Jordan Porco Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit based in Wethersfield, Conn. It was founded in 2011 by Ernie and Marisa Porco after they lost their son Jordan to suicide when he was a

freshman in college.

The goal of Fresh Check Day is to create an approachable and hopeful environment for discussing mental health and supporting student wellness.

"Many of our students are navigating competing responsibilities and an increasingly complex world," said Colón. "Events like Fresh Check Day help strengthen a campus culture where students feel seen, valued, and encouraged to reach out."

In the event of rain, the event will be held inside, on the second floor of the HCC Campus Center.

For more details about Fresh Check Day at HCC, please contact Julissa Colón at 413-552-2508 or [jcolon@hcc.edu](mailto:jcolon@hcc.edu)

## Mother's Day Plant Sale at Wistariahurst

HOLYOKE – Wistariahurst Museum welcomes spring with the second annual Mother's Day Market being held Saturday, May 2nd, 10:00 am-1:00 pm. This event features a variety of vendors selling locally made products such as art, jewelry, and food. Vendors will be stationed indoors throughout the first floor of the museum. As guests shop and explore, the Brookline Trio will be playing live music for visitors to enjoy. Guests are also welcome inside the Carriage House as well, where they can shop our gift shop, take photos in the carriage, and view the frog circus.

During the event, visitors can also participate in a free hands-on clay experi-

ence and cup exchange with Pots on Wheels. The Pots on Wheels truck will be parked in Wistariahurst's driveway, ready for guests to come on board and get creative. Come make a cup and take a cup home! During the Mother's Day Market from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, Wistariahurst's gardeners will be hosting the first on-site plant sale of the season. Wistariahurst has an array of annuals and perennials to brighten up any garden. Best of all, visitors can take home one plant for free thanks to Bank ESB, who is sponsoring this event. There is a limited supply of free plants.

Wistariahurst Museum's Mother's Day Market offers something for everyone. From plans, to textile pieces and prints, vases, and home decor- you're bound to find something your parent will love. This event is admission-free and open to the public, so that all can celebrate their beloved maternal figures.

Registration for this event is encouraged. Register on Wistariahurst's Eventbrite page: [https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2026-mothers-day-market-and-plant-sale-tickets-1985448051569?aff=oddtcreator&keep\\_tld=true](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2026-mothers-day-market-and-plant-sale-tickets-1985448051569?aff=oddtcreator&keep_tld=true).



## St. Paul's Episcopal Church holding bingo fundraiser

HOLYOKE – St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 485 Appleton Street, Holyoke will host a Spring Bingo Fundraiser to Benefit Community Outreach on Saturday, May 9 from 1 to 4 p.m. (Doors open at 12 noon) A \$30

ticket includes, 10 bingo cards, 1 dauber, and 1 raffle ticket.

For more information or to reserve a table, contact Trudy Monson at [gertrudy\\_1011@yahoo.com](mailto:gertrudy_1011@yahoo.com), or Barbara Garriga at [BGarriga85@gmail.com](mailto:BGarriga85@gmail.com).

## Grinspoon awards banquet scheduled for next month

HOLYOKE – The Pioneer Valley Excellence in Teaching Awards will honor 90 teachers from over 20 Western Massachusetts school districts at celebratory banquets at the Log Cabin in Holyoke on May 6, 12 and 20.

The program will feature an awards presentation honoring the winners, who will each receive an engraved plaque and monetary award in recognition of their achievement, along with generous tuition incentives and scholar-

ships offered by the following colleges and universities in the region: American International College, Bay Path University, Elms College, Springfield College, Western New England University, Westfield State University, and the University of Massachusetts.

Winners also receive a 3-month membership to one of the six regional YMCAs and a 1-month membership to the Springfield Jewish Community Center.

The Pioneer

Valley Excellence in Teaching Awards program, now in its 23rd year, is made possible by the Harold Grinspoon Charitable Foundation in partnership with the Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation and supported by the American International College, Smith College, Arrha Credit Union a division of BrightBridge Credit Union, Country Bank, and Meyers Brothers Kalicka.

"Our teachers serve not only as educators, but also as

mentors, community leaders, and innovators. They play a fundamental role in supporting families and building communities. It is a great privilege to recognize outstanding teachers in the Pioneer Valley." Michelle Moon, Director, Excellence in Teaching Awards at the Harold Grinspoon Charitable Foundation.

For a complete list of the 2026 award winners, please visit the Harold Grinspoon Charitable Foundation website: [hgcf.org](http://hgcf.org).

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# Gerry's Music Shop marks huge milestone in business

**SOUTH HADLEY** – On April 20, 1946, Gerry's Music Shop first opened its doors to musicians in the City of Holyoke. Celebrating their 80th year helping and supporting music makers, Gerry's has been a cornerstone of South Hadley's Business community and beloved destination for musicians throughout the pioneer valley and beyond.

**Founded** by Gerry Lamothe, an accomplished trumpet player and longtime member of the Holyoke Musicians Union, Gerry's first opened its doors on Main St. in Holyoke and in 1994 moved to its current location, 80 Lamb Street in South Hadley.

At 14 years old, Normand Provost began working at the shop as a clerk and stock boy. What started as a part time job, eventually turned into a lifelong passion. At the age of 35, Norm and his wife Ann purchased the music shop in 1974.

Current owner Jim Provost followed a similar path, starting at the age of 8 sweeping the floors and washing windows. Shortly after turning 40, Jim and his wife Mandy purchased

the business. Together, the Provost family has built a musical legacy that supports musicians of all levels, ages and abilities. From the young beginner, to the seasoned Pro, Gerry's has become a destination for musicians throughout New England.

The history of Gerry's Music is intertwined with the cultural life of South Hadley and the surrounding region. Its continued mission is to build musicians one note at a time while providing its services at the highest levels.

Gerry's has received numerous awards and recognition throughout the retail music industry. They continue to work hard each day and are preparing for the next 80 years as they embark on a two-year renovation project of their facility which includes an Educational Learning Center, and an expanded instrument repair shop.

Joining Jim and Mandy in this musical journey and endeavour to continue the legacy are their son James, daughter Erin and nephew Sam Mullins.

The future is bright and the music will play on.



*Submitted photos*  
Gerry's Music Shop, which started on Main St. in Holyoke, then moved to Lamb St. in South Hadley, is celebrating its 80th anniversary.



## Jericho to hold fishing derby

**HOLYOKE** – The First Annual Fishing Derby at the pond at Jericho will be held on Saturday, May 2, at 537 Northampton St., Holyoke to benefit children and adults with disabilities.

Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. for all of those who wish to participate. The first cast will be at 10:30 a.m.

There will be fishing

poles and tackle available for sale or rental on a first come, first serve basis. There will also be a raffle, and food and drinks available for purchase.

Derby prizes will be given for first fish, largest fish, most fish, and tagged fish.

The price per participant is \$10. All children must be accompanied by

an adult. All participants of any age or ability are welcome. There will be experienced fishermen to help those first timers or to assist anyone in need of help.

Come enjoy a day of fishing fun at Jericho.

For more information contact Jericho at 413-538-7450 or visit the website at [www.jerichobeca.org](http://www.jerichobeca.org)

## Annual 'Mini Golf and Games at the Library' set for May 2

**HOLYOKE** – We are pleased to announce plans for the annual "Mini Golf and Games at the Library!" on Saturday, May 2 – a series of fun events inside and outside of the Holyoke Public Library at 250 Chestnut St, Holyoke.

• Mini Golf and Games at the Library, free of charge for all players, Saturday May 2, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., 18 holes of miniature golf for people of all ages.

• Games outside in Library Park, 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., There will be outdoor activities for all ages including a chalk artist!

• Also- Vote for your Favorite decorated Hole. We will post the top three Holes chosen by the public. You don't have to play Mini golf to vote.

Since 2016, "Mini Golf

in the Library!" has been an important fundraiser for our Library.

The library will be open for regular business while this fun community event is going on. The mini golf holes will be on every floor of the library and wind its way through the stacks and down the stairs. You can see pictures from our

2024 event here: <https://ward.smugmug.com/Libraries/Holyoke-Public-Library/Mini-Golf-and-Games-2024>

Proceeds will be used to augment library services, summer reading, year-round literacy programs, and more. We have set a goal of raising \$15,000 via sponsorships, ticket sales, and auc-

tion proceeds. We are happy to announce PeoplesBank as our Top Sponsor. Thank you to PeoplesBank, Orion Protective Services, Conklin Office and all of our Sponsors.

We invite everyone to join this fun community event, and support this fundraiser at the Holyoke Public Library. Even if people can't attend, we encourage you to donate to support this great cause at <https://www.holyokelibrary.org/Pages/Index/227232/how-to-donate-to-the-library> or at the library.

For more information, volunteer link, or flyers, contact Nancy Kocsmiersky, HPL Development Office (413-420-8109) [nancy@hol yokelibrary.org](mailto:nancy@hol yokelibrary.org) or visit <https://www.holyokelibrary.org/Pages/Index/227230/library-mini-golf-and-games>.



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Guest Column



## Must I set up a Social Security account to enroll in Medicare?

Dear Rusty:

I turn 65 this November 2026. Someone told me I need to set up a Social Security account at least three months ahead of time before applying for Medicare for the first time. I do not intend to take any Social Security benefits until, perhaps, age 67 or later. Please advise and thank you.

Signed: Looking Ahead

Dear Looking Ahead:

You don't technically need to "set up" an online SSA account to enroll in Medicare, but it would be more efficient to do so. We always recommend creating your online "my Social Security" account at [www.ssa.gov/myaccount](http://www.ssa.gov/myaccount) well before you are ready to claim your Social Security benefits. That's because you can monitor your projected Social Security benefits to help you decide when to claim, but it also facilitates other things you might need to do at the Social Security Administration such as claiming your SS retirement benefits online and enrolling in Medicare online.

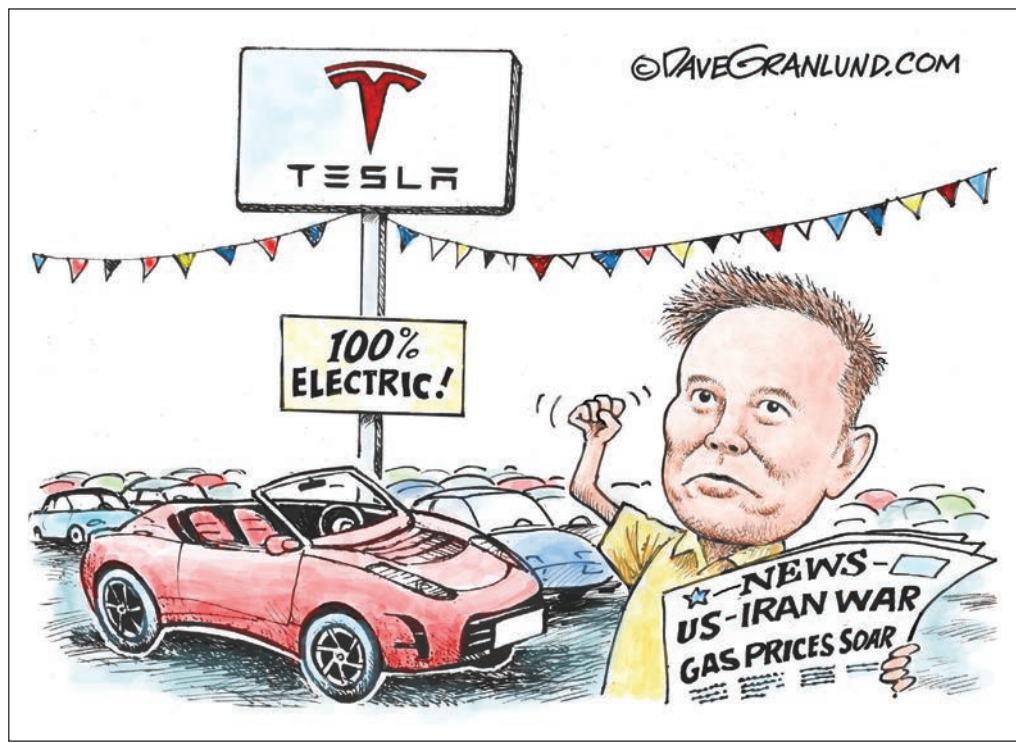
As for Medicare, you can enroll in Medicare up to three months before the month you turn 65, and you can contact the Social Security Administration by phone up to three months prior in order to schedule an appointment to enroll over the phone (call 1-800-772-1213 to make the appointment). You can enroll via telephone, even if you don't have your "my Social Security" online account set up.

However, an advantage to creating your personal online Social Security account is that you could then enroll in Medicare online as described at this link: [www.ssa.gov/medicare/sign-up](http://www.ssa.gov/medicare/sign-up). And you can, as you wish to do, enroll only in Medicare without also taking your Social Security benefits at this time.

I want to also make you aware that if you are still working and have "creditable" healthcare coverage from your employer ("creditable" is an employer group plan with at least 20 participants), then you can delay enrolling in Medicare until your employer coverage ends (thus saving the usual Medicare Part B monthly premium). When your employer's healthcare coverage ends, you will enter a Special Enrollment Period during which you can enroll in Medicare without incurring a Late Enrollment Penalty.

Finally, please be aware that whenever you claim your Social Security benefits, you will be automatically enrolled in Medicare Part A (inpatient hospitalization coverage) and Part B (coverage for outpatient medical services). Since there is a monthly premium associated with Medicare Part B (but not with Part A), you can choose to decline Part B if you are still working and covered by your employer's creditable healthcare plan, until your employer's healthcare coverage ends.

*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](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at [ssadvisory@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadvisory@amacfoundation.org). Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.*



Guest Column

## In honor of Mother Earth

This week, we celebrate Earth Day. Lots of towns host bulk waste days or a town-wide clean up as ways to note the day.

While most of us garden with great intentions such as beautifying our yards or producing home grown vegetables, it is important to note that the gardening/greenhouse industry hasn't always been what you'd call "earth-friendly." From mountains of plastic pots not rotting away in our landfills to story after story of chemical misuse, we inadvertently hurt the very source of our pleasure.

So, in honor of Earth Day, read from the archives eight easy things we can do as gardeners to tread a bit more lightly on 'ole Mother.



by Roberta McQuaid

organic matter.

No matter how you garden, be it vegetables, flowers, herbs, fruits or even shrubs, each benefit from a yearly top dressing of "black gold."

**Make compost tea.** Are your transplants looking a little pale? Rather than sprinkling them with "blue water," perk them up with home-brewed compost tea.

Mix one part well-rotted compost or manure to five parts water and allow it to sit for a week or more. Strain before foliar feeding your plants.

**Shop Mom and Pop.** Buying local, directly from the grower usually means a knowledgeable sales team! Form relationships and learn from their expertise.

Ask them to carry organic seeds, potting soils and pest control options.

See GARDEN page 5



By Ellenor Downer



Red-breasted nuthatch

Last Wednesday, April 8 while waiting at the bus stop for my grandson, I saw two red-breasted nuthatches in a small grove of pine trees near the road.

They were going up and down several pine trees most likely in search of insects. The red-breasted nuthatch is about 4.3 to 4.7 inches long and exhibits

the typical head-down nuthatch behavior of its larger cousin, the white-breasted nuthatch. Male and females are similar with a black eye stripe, white eyebrow and buff orange underparts. It has a blue-gray back.

They inhabit conifer forests and in winter may be found in other trees. They nest mostly in conifers such as spruce, fir, hemlock.

Both sexes excavate a

nest cavity in a rotten stub or snag, usually five to 40 feet about the ground. Sticky pitch is smeared around the entrance of the nest hole possibly to prevent other creatures from entering. Adults avoid getting stuck in the pitch by flying straight into the hole. Sometimes they are seen with pitch on their feathers.

The female lays five to six white, spotted eggs. The female incubates the eggs and the male brings food to her. Both parents feed the nestlings. Young nuthatches leave the nest about two to three weeks after hatching.

They have a soft, musical song used especially in courtship by the male. These nuthatches eat insects, spiders and seeds in summer. In winter they eat many seeds especially those of conifers.

**Nesting bluebirds**

On Saturday, April 11 I received an email from a Hampden resident. She said, "Our bluebirds are back and have completed their nest. We are awaiting the first egg. I'm surprised they use mostly pine needles constructing the nest."

**Brimfield birds**

A Brimfield resident said he saw a female brown-headed cowbird

in his yard. He said it was unusual as he usually sees the male before the female.

He said, "On Sunday I did a tour of local ponds. There was a pair of ring-necked ducks on Sherman Pond in Brimfield and several on a pond in Warren. Also in Warren I saw an osprey at the pond where they have nested for several years. I've been checking the pond since early March and this is the first sighting of an osprey this year. I hope its partner shows up soon."

He also said, in Warren, there was a bald eagle at a pond on New Reed Street. There has been one or two there frequently during March. A pair of eastern bluebirds was seen perched on two different trees with holes possibly suitable for a nest. I often see bluebirds using nesting boxes, but have never seen them using a natural cavity. I'll keep checking to see if they nest in either tree."

**Non-bird sighting**

The Brimfield resident reported a non-bird sighting. He said "while driving out of the driveway yesterday I saw a small frog hopping off of the driveway."

See BIRDS, page 5

## The Holyoke Sun welcomes election letters to the editor

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

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

For more information, call 413-283-8393.

**Campaign news**

As part of its election coverage, the newspa-

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

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

the Holyoke Sun

We Want to Hear From You

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## Letters to the Editor Policy

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.

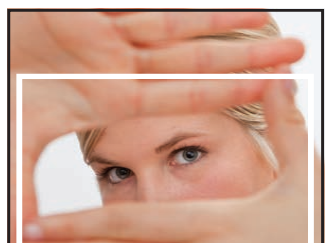
We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions. Libelous, unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks or defamation of character are not allowed.

Deadline for submissions is Wednesday at noon.

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

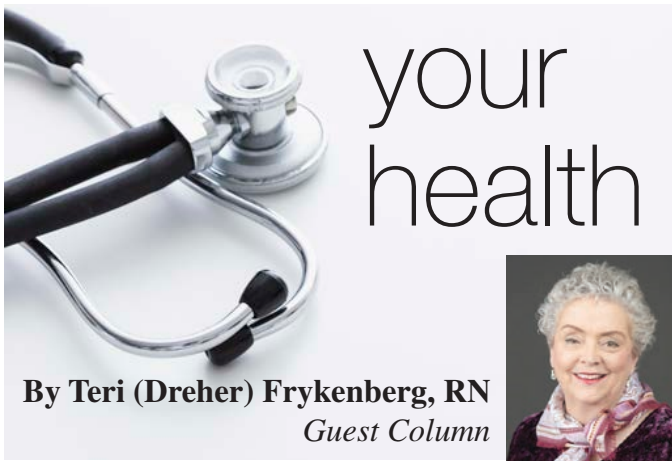
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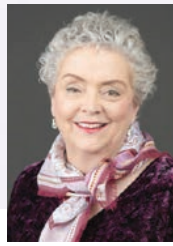


think OUTSIDE of the BIG BOX SUPPORT COMMUNITY BUSINESSES

# Nurse warns COVID isn't done with us yet



By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN  
Guest Column



predominated over the last two years.

Most people are either vaccinated or have had COVID, so there's a fair amount of immunity out there. Cicada may be able to evade current immunity; however, public health officials say that the vaccine in current use, which was based on JN.1, will very likely keep you out of the hospital with a serious illness even if you do get COVID.

Other people who should consider a vaccine, according to public health experts, are health-care workers, caregivers, those in high-contact environments (teachers, college students) and pregnant women. Of course, you should go with your doctor's recommendations.

The symptoms are what we've come to expect:

- Joint and muscle aches
- Fever
- Coughing
- Sore throat

COVID tests on the market are considered high-

ly effective at detecting the virus, even Cicada, especially if you take it within 24 to 48 hours of noticing symptoms. If you do have COVID, you'll want to steer clear of those who are unvaccinated or who have underlying medical conditions.

While COVID is no longer as serious as it was during the pandemic's heyday, it nonetheless caused an estimated 390,000 to 550,000 hospitalizations and 45,000 to 64,000 deaths during the 2024-2025 respiratory virus season, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. So, it's nothing to be trifled with.

Cases are not overwhelming right now, but they are surging in parts of the country. How do officials know this?

Poop. The viruses that cause COVID and other infectious diseases are shed through a person's stool. Public wastewater treatment facilities actively monitor wastewater for signs of not

just COVID but also RSV, flu and measles. The purpose is to keep health officials informed of disease trends; help determine testing and treatment plans; decide locations of vaccination clinics or testing locations; and help hospitals plan for possible surges in admissions.

CDC's wastewater monitoring program, also known as the National Wastewater Surveillance System (NWSS), monitors infectious diseases through wastewater across the country at more than 1,200 sites. There's even an online dashboard, WasteWaterSCAN, which was started by Stanford University (wastewaterscan.org).

Through wastewater, CDC tracked the presence of Cicada in 25 states, including Massachusetts.

In Massachusetts, the Department of Public Health collects COVID data from more than 20 wastewater treatment plants around the state.

These folks work hard to help improve the health of our communities and our fellow citizens.

We can help their effort by getting a COVID vaccine if our doctor recommends it and staying alert to the symptoms to avoid spreading it.

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

Here we go again! A new, "highly mutated" COVID strain is quickly gaining ground around the country, according to new data. This time, unlike in 2020, it's barely causing a ripple in the headlines - and that's a good thing.

Still, it pays to be aware of it if you're in one of the vulnerable populations - over 65, immunocompromised, underlying health conditions such as diabetes or heart disease. If it's been six months or more since your last immunization, roll up your

sleeve again for your 412th COVID shot. (An exaggeration, but isn't that what it feels like?)

This variant, BA.3.2, is nicknamed "Cicada" because, like the rarely emerging insect, it has largely remained undetected or "underground" since its discovery. Dr. Robert H. Hopkins Jr., medical director of the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases, told USA Today.

It's considered highly mutated because its 70 or so mutations distinguish it from the JN.1 strain, which has

dies to fight garden maladies is numerous and not always a stretch of the imagination. If you must choose a chemical option follow the manufacturer's recommendations. Assuming that more is better is outdated and dangerous thinking!

**Conserve water.** We all know that watering during the heat of the day results in lots of moisture lost to evaporation while watering in the evening can make plants more prone to disease. What to do?

For happy, hydrated plants water in the early morning hours instead. Hand watering at the base of each plant or using soaker hoses or drip irrigation is far better than overhead sprinklers when it comes to conservation and disease prevention.

**Extend the harvest.** Do you know how far most fruits and vegetables have to travel to reach the local supermarket? Probably far more than

the average American travels in a year's time. Frustrated? Then read up on various methods of extending the use of your own garden bounty past the growing season.

This could mean growing a few veggies like winter squash, onions or garlic - all of which store well. It could also mean trying your hand at freezing or drying some of your produce for use in the offseason.

Few of us can feed ourselves entirely, but whatever we can grow offsets the rest.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 34 years, she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to [pouimette@turley.com](mailto:pouimette@turley.com) with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.

## BIRDS, from page 4

Probably a spring peeper. I'll have to check a nearby small pond in the woods to see if there are peepers there. The frog could have been a pickerel frog, we see those every year in the yard. They come in three sizes; small, medium and large. I try to be careful when I mow or weed whack to avoid them."

### Raven

My granddaughter while walking her dogs on

Saturday, April 11 heard the croaking sound of a raven. It startled both the dogs and her.

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by emailing [mybackyard88@aol.com](mailto:mybackyard88@aol.com) or [edowner@turley.com](mailto:edowner@turley.com) or mailing to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005. The Palmer office has a new phone system and I will be getting an extension where messages may be left. I will publish the number as soon as it is set up.



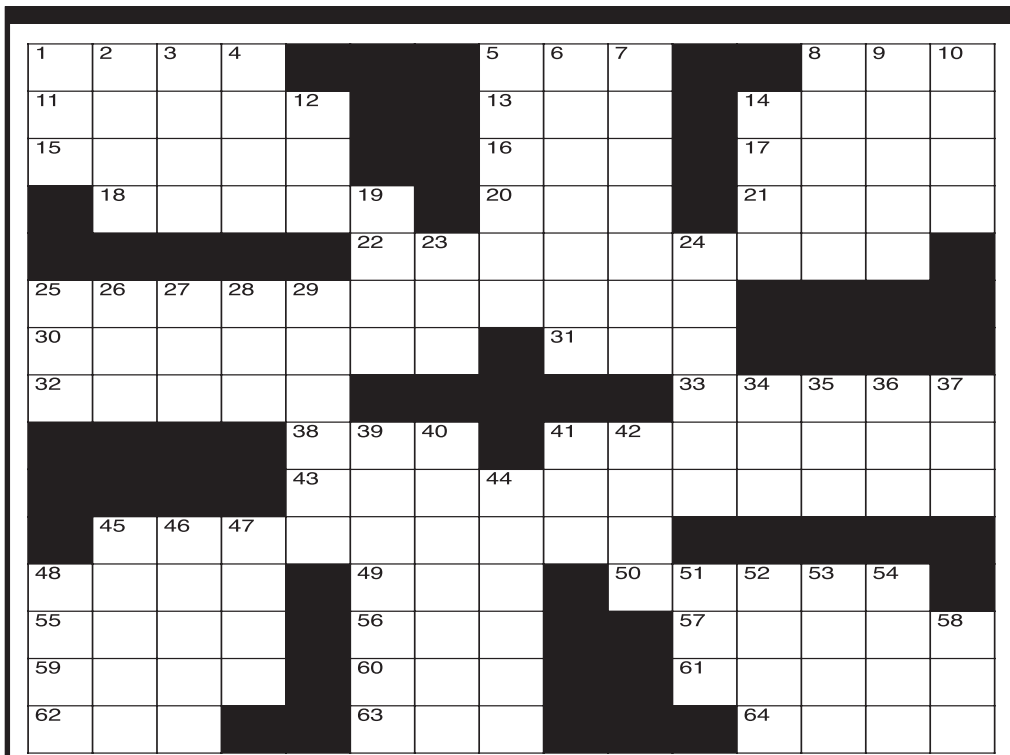
Raven

## GARDEN, from page 4

**Reduce, reuse, recycle!** I first became familiar with this catch phrase back in 1990, when Earth Day celebrations went global. In the context of plastic pots and other containers used to grow or move plants, I'd like to think that the local Mom and Pop shop would take back the pots you bought their plants in and use them to grow next years crop.

If not, maybe you could reuse them to start some homegrown seedlings and recycle the rest. An even better solution for earth conscious growers would be to replace plastic with fiber (stronger than peat and made from recycled materials to boot).

**Use least toxic measures to control bugs and other garden thugs.** Beer to trap slugs, and baking soda for black spot - the list of reme-



### CLUES ACROSS

1. Egyptian bull-god
5. Romanian monetary unit
8. Will Ferrell holiday film
11. "It Ain't Half Hot Mum" actor
13. Error-related negativity
14. Volcanic crater
15. Boston Herald columnist Margery
16. True market value
17. Italian term for exchange rate
18. Informal loan clubs
20. Men's fashion accessory
21. Children's craft supply
22. Extra benefits
25. In an early way
30. A judge has one
31. Soviet Socialist Republic

32. Tractor unit
33. Defunct supercomputer developer
38. Promotional materials
41. A forgetful state
43. One who beheads
45. Photographers
48. Small, rich sponge cake
49. Clergy's vestment
50. Expressed pleasure
55. Abba \_\_, Israeli politician
56. Zero
57. Ancient Greek word for "earless"
59. Nigerian governmental area
60. Mild expression of surprise
61. Places to hang things
62. Keyboard key
63. Make a mistake

64. One-time president of Republic of Korea

### CLUES DOWN

1. Bridge building degree
2. Expression of sorrow or pity
3. Large, stocky lizard
4. Romanian river
5. Communication
6. Stoats
7. Showcases
8. Bird of prey
9. King of Thebes
10. Cleaving tool
12. Large African antelope
14. Three are particularly notable
19. Meet one's needs
23. C. European river
24. Dictator
25. Indicates how much out of 100 (abbr.)
26. The 17th letter of the Greek alphabet
27. Consume food
28. Woman (French)
29. Scrape a surface
34. Green vegetable
35. Pacific Standard Time
36. Capital of Brazilian city
37. Paddle
39. Cause to become insane
40. Drier and flakier
41. Mimic
42. ESPN personality
44. One who moves slowly
45. Secret political clique
46. Behind the stern of a ship
47. Supernatural force
48. Sanctuary
51. Swiss river
52. Grayish white
53. Engrave by coating
54. North Carolina university
58. Midway between south and southeast

CROSSWORD ANSWER on page 8

## CHURCH DIRECTORY



## Your Community Church

### Blessed Sacrament Parish

Rev. Duy Le  
[frduyle@blessedsacramentholyoke.org](mailto:frduyle@blessedsacramentholyoke.org)  
1945 Northampton St., Holyoke  
PARISH RECTORY: 413-532-0713  
OFFICE HOURS:  
Monday - Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Friday 8:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
WEEKEND MASSES:  
Saturday 4 p.m.  
Sunday 8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.  
DAILY MASS AND ROSARY  
Monday - Friday: ROSARY 6:15 a.m.  
Monday - Friday: MASS 6:45 a.m.  
Legal Holidays: ROSARY 7:30 a.m.  
Legal Holidays: MASS 8 a.m.  
ROSARY AND MEDITATION  
Monday Evening: 6 p.m.  
[www.blessedsacramentholyoke.org](http://www.blessedsacramentholyoke.org)  
Facebook: @bspholyokema

### First Baptist Church

Pastor Theresa Temple  
1976 Northampton St., Holyoke  
(413) 533-7728  
[firstbaptistchurchholyokeye@comcast.net](mailto:firstbaptistchurchholyokeye@comcast.net)  
Facebook: First Baptist Church of Holyoke, MA  
HOURS: Sunday worship service (winter hours) at 10:30 a.m. (summer hours) at 10 a.m.  
Wednesday Bible Studies, one at 11 a.m. and one at 5:30 p.m.

### Our Lady of the Cross Catholic Parish

Pastor: Fr. Albert Scherer, OFM Conv.  
Email: [pastor@ourladyofthecross.com](mailto:pastor@ourladyofthecross.com)  
Holy Cross Ave., Holyoke  
Parish Offices are located at: 15 Maple Street, Holyoke (413) 532-5661  
[parish@ourladyofthecross.com](mailto:parish@ourladyofthecross.com)  
OFFICE HOURS:  
Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.  
Saturday 4 p.m.  
Sunday 7:30 a.m., 9 a.m. (Polish), and 10:30 a.m.  
DAILY MASS:  
Monday - Saturday 8:30 a.m.  
Legal Holidays Mass 9 a.m.  
Reconciliation (Confession) Monday - Saturday 8 a.m.  
Saturday 3:15pm  
Anytime by Appointment  
DEVOTIONS  
Monday - Saturday  
Divine Mercy Chaplet - 7:50 a.m.  
ROSARY 8:05 a.m.  
[www.ourladyofthecross.com](http://www.ourladyofthecross.com)

### St. Peter's Lutheran Church

Rev. Debora Stein  
34 Jarvis Ave., Holyoke  
Office: (413) 536-3369  
[stpetersholyokeye@gmail.com](mailto:stpetersholyokeye@gmail.com)  
Pastor: [revdebma@gmail.com](mailto:revdebma@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.stpetersholyokeye.org](http://www.stpetersholyokeye.org)  
Social media: [facebook.com/stpetersholyokeye](https://facebook.com/stpetersholyokeye)  
OFFICE HOURS:  
Monday and Thursday, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.  
Friday, 12:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
WORSHIP:  
Sundays at 9:30 a.m. (also on Facebook Live) & Thursdays at 6:30 p.m.  
Other: Prayers with Pastor - Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. - on Facebook Live.

### St. Paul's Episcopal Church

The Rev. Canon Joel Martinez  
485 Appleton St., Holyoke  
413-532-5060  
[Office@StPaulsholyoke.org](mailto:Office@StPaulsholyoke.org)  
[StPaulsholyoke.org](https://StPaulsholyoke.org)  
Instagram: [stpaulsepiscopalchurch\\_holyoke](https://stpaulsepiscopalchurch_holyoke)  
OFFICE HOURS:  
Tuesday - Friday 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Days and Hours of Services:  
Sunday: 8 a.m.  
Sunday: 10 a.m.  
Sunday: 5 p.m. (Spanish)

### First Lutheran Church

1810 Northampton St.  
Holyoke, MA 01040  
Every Sunday at 9 a.m.

# Former State Sen. Linda Melconian unveils new book

By Christina Gioscia  
Correspondent

AGAWAM – On April 17, the Agawam Public Library hosted a reading done by Former Massachusetts State Senator Linda Melconian. During Melconian's time as senator, she focused on issues involving anti-discrimination in genetic testing, Route 57, and education.

On Thursday evening, she presented, "Ella Grasso: The First of the Firsts". Grasso was the first female state governor elected on her own. Melconian states Grasso encouraged her to pursue a career in politics, this led to Melconian becoming the first female senate majority leader in Massachusetts. Copies of Melconian's book were sold at the event; and she donated all proceeds from the event to Friends of the Agawam Public Library.

Melconian shares how Grasso inspired her.

"I try to emulate her in a sense of being everywhere," Melconian said. "She was all things to all people." Melconian called Grasso a "change agent" and "ray of sunshine." "She was always there for people," Melconian says. "I didn't care about appearance. I want to radiate sunshine. I worked hard for my constituency."

Agawam Public Library Adult Services Library Associate Kristen Frost talked about the organization of the event.

"Linda first contacted me last September to let me know about her new biography of Ella Grasso and to express her interest in com-



Linda Melconian

ing to talk about the book." Frost said. "Although I was still fairly new here at the library, I knew from my supervisor, Cher, that Linda had presented here before on a previous book she wrote about Congressman Tip O'Neill. When I

met with her, she expressed her desire to not only share information about the book in her presentation but to also donate the full proceeds of any books sold back to the Friends of the Agawam Public Library group. I was certainly touched by her generosity, and I was also excited to have a former state senator appear at our library."

Melconian's book perfectly encapsulates how important strong role models are for women. Grasso and Melconian herself, paved



the way for more women to pursue higher education and work hard in their respected careers.

Frost highlights the role Mount Holyoke College had in the paths of Melconian, Grasso and so many more women, "Reading the book, you immediately understand that Senator Melconian is championing women who

have made important changes in our world and who have impacted women in future generations. It is special that the book presents several women who have ties to Mount Holyoke College, demonstrating their connectedness and drive for excellence in their various fields. Each woman profiled in the book, from Mary Lyon to Ella Grasso made some kind of significant impact on society, as did the author of the book. I think it is terrific that the book not only highlights the outstanding career of Ella Grasso but also puts Mount Holyoke College front and center in the development and success of each of the women profiled, showing what a gem the college is here in the Western Massachusetts area. I'm proud that our library was able to highlight this book and the important role Ella Grasso played in politics. As evidenced from some of the

comments in the crowd last night, in light of politics in the country currently, it is important to have women represent constituents and do the necessary work to help improve life in our country. It is also notable that Linda Melconian was herself a Mount Holyoke College graduate and a First of the Firsts here in Massachusetts."

"The library is grateful to Linda for coming out to present her work and for donating the proceeds of the book sales to our friends' group." Says Frost.

By Melconian writing her book about Ella Grasso and doing so much to promote it and share it in communities throughout Massachusetts, she continues Grasso's legacy. Grasso's story is so important and relevant today; Melconian knows this and is working hard to ensure her story continues to inspire people.

# Connecticut River Conservancy hosting art exhibition reception

SOUTH HADLEY – The Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC), in partnership with Connecticut-based painter John H. Sargent, is pleased to present a community celebration through art to coincide with fish migration season in the Connecticut River watershed. This exhibition of 2-dimensional works will tell stories of our connection to rivers and to the fish, birds, and other wildlife that live here, as well as to our

creativity, curiosity, and interconnectedness with the natural world. The exhibit aims to explore our deeper sense of place and belonging in a watershed teeming with life and movement. Migratory fish exemplify the dynamic nature of the connections between land, river, and ocean. Their presence (and absence) speak to the ability of human societies to be shaped by, and in turn to shape our waterways.

The show features two

large riverscape paintings, The Source and The Estuary, by Connecticut-based artist, John H. Sargent. Each of his central paintings are bordered by a series of smaller panels portraying the flora and fauna of each region of the watershed, created by the following artists: Mark Lewchik, Emma Yount, and Gretchen Saverson, Morgan Allen, Melia Pisano, Finn Kellert, and Jade Johnson. At the conclusion of the South Hadley

exhibition, these two collaborative paintings will permanently hang in the Connecticut River Conservancy's office in Greenfield, MA.

Additional artists invited to share their work in this exhibition are: Abena Songbird, Deborah Savage, Julie Kumble, Samuel Swap, Sophie Faulks, and Susan B. Mulholland.

All works are for sale, unless otherwise listed. Please direct any inquiries to

Stacey Lennard, CRC Events Manager, slennard@ctriver.org, slennard@ctriver.org 413-325-5995.

On May 7, CRC will kick-off the day with a Children's Program at 4 p.m., where kids will learn about fish migrating in the river through interactive games, listen to fishy stories, and paint their own fish, which they will then "migrate" through the library, inviting patrons to join them in the Community

Room at South Hadley Public Library, 2 Canal St., for a reception from 5 to 7 p.m. The Reception will begin with snacks and live music by Josh Ballard and Greg Reilly, followed by a short program introducing CRC's work, understanding the role and importance of migratory fish, and a chance to ask questions of the artists. For more information, visit <https://www.ctriver.org/event-details/migratory-moments>.



Turley photos by Ben Hernandez  
Above, Historical flags decorated the event, all of which played key symbolic roles in the foundation of this country. Left, a march through the Evergreen Cemetery began the Patriot's Day ceremony that took place on April 18th.

## PATRIOTS, from page 1

friction between British forces and local armed militias resulted in outright conflict on April 19, 1775 in Lexington and Concord. A day later and South Hadley joined the fight for independence. The speech spotlighted several well-known moments in history, including the establishment of the Continental Army on June 14, 1775, the appointment of George Washington as the nation's first commander in chief, his arrival in Cambridge on July 3, and the declaration of the "United Provinces of North America" on July 4.

However, the speech focused on lesser-known local figures that etched their names in history. The speech honored Caesar Cambridge, a slave from South Hadley who enlisted in the Continental Navy, bought his freedom through his naval stipend, then went on to sign up for service in the Continental Army to rejoin the fight for independence.

Maureen Richardson, a representative of the Revolutionary War re-enactment troupe the 25th Continental, recalled the life of Deborah Sampson. The nicknamed 'Heroine of Massachusetts' enlisted in the Continental Army, then created a service record so impressive and undeniable that she was granted an honorable exception by John Hancock, as it was illegal for women to serve at the time. She went on to be granted an honor by General Henry Knox, which allowed her to successfully retire.

Massachusetts state representative Homar Gómez then took the stand. He spoke about the nation's founding, the importance of a free democracy, and surprised the lead speaker with an award honoring his service and his wider dedication towards the local community.

The proceedings included multiple speeches from South Hadley's historical societies, a commemorative plaque honoring South

Hadley residents that contributed towards the war effort, a plaque replacement ceremony honoring French and Indian War and Revolutionary War veteran John Frink Sr., a reading of lost veteran's names, an extensive exhibition of flags utilized throughout the Revolutionary War and the nation's founding, and a fife and drum presentation. The presentation was punctuated by a three-musket salute performed by the reenactment society.

The ceremony concluded with a changing of the flags at veteran's graves, the replacements of which were provided by American Legion Post 260 and switched out by South Hadley residents. It was a reminder that history is not only an echo of the past, but a present reminder of the people that make it daily.

"There are many voices," said Bob Delisle, a local war reenactment troop member in attendance. "It's the idea of keeping history alive and trying to give the correct history."

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# SPORTS

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SENIOR SEASONS

www.sports.turley.com

## Knights grab pair of wins

HOLYOKE – After a tough start, Holyoke has won three of four games, defeating Westfield Tech, Smith Vocational, and Mt. Everett during the past week. The Knights came from behind to beat

Smith Vocational 10-9 last Wednesday, then had a wild matchup on the road, getting a win 29-15 over Mt. Everett. The Knights have a rematch with Westfield Tech on Monday, Apr. 27 at 5 p.m.



Lily Tapion sends a pitch away.



Zomaris Robles sends a throw to first.



Grace Phillips sends the ball back to the infield.



Nyevielz De Jesus Sanabria picks up a ground ball.

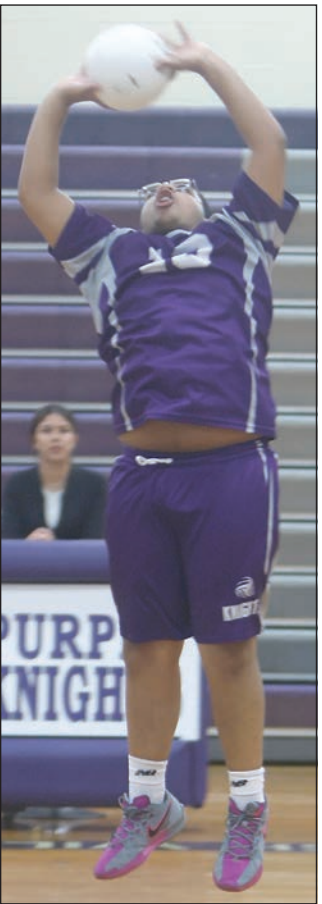


Kierstin St. Laawrence swings and makes solid contact.



Jessayra Maldonado tries to get the short-hop.

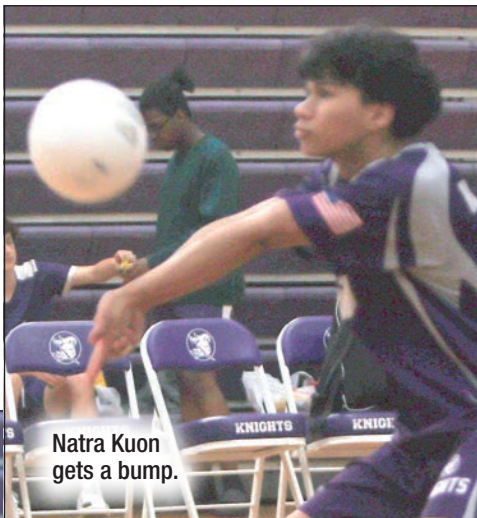
Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com



Tason Dennis gets a set.



Xavier Mattows keeps the play going with a hit on the run.



Natra Kuon gets a bump.



Alexander Laury grabs a low hit.

## Holyoke swept by Chicopee

HOLYOKE – Last Friday evening, Holyoke High School boys volleyball took another tough loss. The Knights were swept by visiting Chicopee High School 3-0. Holyoke has fallen to 0-7 on the season.



Cosmo Bond goes for a spike.

Turley photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

## Cougars earn regional home win

HOLYOKE – Cougars baseball chalked up a home victory on Thursday afternoon, defeating regional opponent Bunker Hill CC in a full nine-inning game. Holyoke's bats led the way as the Cougars racked up runs on their way to an 11-9 win.

Xavion Maldonado (Chicopee, MA / Chicopee HS) was stellar at the plate, hitting a home run and a double while knocking in four RBIs. Nathan Kaczuwka (Ware, MA / Ware HS) tallied three hits. Matt Drobiak (Holyoke, MA / South Hadley HS) earned the win from the mound and Zack Oldenburg (Chicopee, MA / Chicopee HS) entered in relief to earn the save.

Men's baseball has a 4-6 regional record and a 6-16 overall record. They travel for their next three contests before hosting a home doubleheader on Saturday, Apr. 25 beginning at 1 p.m. against Massasoit CC.

### How to contact the Sports Editor

Have the scoop on a local sports story? Please send all sports-related press releases and information to Sports Editor Greg Scibelli at: sports@turley.com or call, 1-413-283-8393.

# Worcester Railers get win in penultimate game

WORCESTER – For the Railers’ loyal fans, the 2025-26 hockey season has gone from being “wait till next year” to “we can’t wait for next year.”

The home team increased its winning streak to five games with a wonderful 3-2 overtime victory over the Adirondack Thunder Saturday night. Drew Callin, assisted by Anthony, got the winner at 4:05 of OT.

The game went into extra minutes thanks to a late goal by the Thunder.

Adirondack, though, carried no momentum into overtime. The Railers out-shot the visitors, 4-0, in the fourth period. At times it looked like Worcester was playing with a two-man

advantage.

The winning goal came via a short pass from Anthony to Drew in close. The older Callin had a tap-in, although a minute earlier he had missed what looked like a gimme from in close on a similar play.

The goal was Drew Callin’s 25th of the season. He is merely the fifth Railers player to reach that plateau and has two of Worcester’s eight overtime goals this year.

“We love that OT,” he said, adding, “We came into the weekend knowing it was the last weekend and we wanted to go out the right way. We wanted to get the first one and do it again (Sunday).”

MacAuley Carson and Max Dorrington had the other Railers goals, both in the first period.

Dylan Wendt and Grant Loven scored for the Thunder. Loven’s goal came with only 2:09 left in regulation and just six seconds after a delay of game penalty on Adam Samuelsson had expired.

Parker Gahagen was the winning goaltender with another great performance. He made 23 saves to improve his record to 20-11-1. Gahagen is only the sec-

ond individual Railers goalie with a 20-win season. Mitch Gillam won 20-plus in the team’s first

two years as members of the ECHL.

It is Gahagen’s second personal 20-win year as pro, at least with the same team. He was 20-10-3 with the Florida Everblades when they won the Kelly Cup in 21-22. Gahagen has been beyond good at the DCU Center. He is 10-4-0 at home with a 1.96 goals-against average and .930 saves percentage.

The Railers got ahead early on Carson’s goal at 4:41 of the first period. He received a neat pass from Riley Piercey along the left boards and beat Thunder goaltender Tyler Brennan along the ice from about 20 feet out. It was Carson’s seventh goal of the season and third in the last five games after he endured an 11-game drought.

Worcester retained its 1-0 lead for about 14 minutes. Dorrington made it a 2-0 game at 18:26 His goal came on a bad angle shot from the right of the net with Gleb Veremyev and Adam Samuelsson picking up assists. The goal was Dorrington’s seventh and he has four in

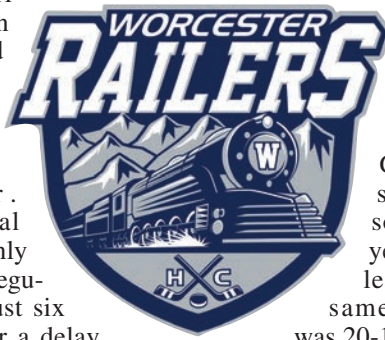
the last five games.

The Railers kept Adirondack off the scoreboard for more than half of the second period but Wendt got his team a goal at 10:41. It was a very nice play all around as Thunder defenseman Connor Hutchison slid a diagonal pass from the left point to Wendt between the circles.

He re-directed it over Gahagen’s glove into the top corner.

Worcester nearly regained its two-goal lead shortly after that as Lincoln Hatten had the puck and some space about 25 feet out but was denied by Brennan.

Adirondack’s tying goal came from in close, set up by a shot from Kevin O’Neil.



# Thunderbirds defeat Wolf Pack, await playoff opponent

SPRINGFIELD - The Springfield Thunderbirds (32-32-6-2) overcame another hard charge from the Hartford Wolf Pack (26-38-5-3) to emerge with a 4-3 win on Saturday night before a sellout crowd of 6,793 inside the MassMutual Center.

After a disheartening third period on Friday, the T-Birds came out with a clear purpose to their game in the opening 20 minutes, out-pacing Hartford on the shot board, 18-4. Despite that disparity, it took until the 14:14 mark and the club’s 16th shot of the period to find the back of the net. Dillon Dube did just that, deflecting an Alek

Kaskimaki shot past Callum Tung’s glove to make it a 1-0 lead for Springfield.

Dube’s work was not done, either, as the veteran forward cranked a one-timer through Tung at 19:07 off a pass into the high slot from Calle Rosen, giving him 20 goals in just 46 games this season and joining Chris Wagner and Kaskimaki as 20-goal scorers for this season’s T-Birds squad.

Juraj Pekarcik helped buoy the lead further when he stole a puck from two defenders and quickly chipped a forehand shot past Tung at 5:45 of the second to make it a 3-0 lead for the home team.

However, for a second straight night, the Wolf Pack refused to go away quietly, as Brendan Brisson’s second goal in two nights got Hartford on the board at 7:56 of the second.

Then Aidan Thompson stole a puck off the right wing wall and quickly funneled a forehand shot through Will Cranley on the stick side to cut it to 3-2 at 12:48 of the period.

From there on, though, the T-Birds’ rookie netminder was monstrous, as Cranley

would make 37 saves by the time his night was done.

Just 33 seconds after Thompson’s goal, Springfield got a much-needed response when Hugh McGing put a shot off a defenseman’s stick and past Tung’s shoulder, giving the T-Birds a two-goal cushion heading into the third.

Controversy made an appearance 3:46 into the third when Brisson poked a puck, along with Cranley’s

pad, across the line on a power play to make it a 4-3 game. The T-Birds argued heavily, but the officials stayed with the goal call on the ice, and the margin was down to one heading down the stretch.

McGing appeared to have Springfield’s fifth goal of the night moments later, but after video replay, he was deemed to have kicked the puck over the line, so the 4-3 score was upheld.

Despite a furious push of 36 shots over the final 40 minutes of play, the Wolf Pack wound up finishing one goal short.

By virtue of their win and Hershey’s regulation loss

to the Islanders, Springfield now awaits the final outcome of the Bears’ Sunday contest with the Rochester Americans to determine who their first-round opponent will be.

If Rochester defeats the Bears, Springfield will secure the 5-seed and face the Bridgeport Islanders, who locked in the 4-seed with their win over Hershey on Saturday.

If the Bears defeat the Americans, Springfield will be the 6-seed and face the Charlotte Checkers, the 3-seed who would host all three games of the best-of-three series.

By virtue of their win and Hershey’s regulation loss

## Public Notices

**City of Holyoke  
Office of Purchasing  
Attention Contractors:  
Invitation to Bid  
IFB 2026-42 Morgan  
Playground Installation  
& Site Work**

The City of Holyoke invites sealed bids from qualified individuals or firms for the Holyoke Public Schools for: Exterior site work and play structure assembly at Morgan School 596 South Bridge Street, Holyoke in accordance with contract documents and specifications prepared by the City of Holyoke.

Bidding procedures shall be in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 149, Sections 44A-44J and minimum wage rates as required by M.G.L. Chapter 149, Section 26-27H, inclusive as amended. It shall be the responsibility of each supplier to assure compliance with any OSHA, EPA, CORI, DEP, and/or FEDERAL, STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS rules, regulations or other requirements, as each may apply.

Sealed bids for this project shall be received by the City of Holyoke from responsible, responsive & qualified bidders submitted on forms furnished by the City and clearly identified on the outside of the bid with the name and address of the bidder, and the name and Bid Number of the project, and submitted to:

City of Holyoke Purchasing  
536 Dwight Street  
Holyoke, MA 01040  
Bids will be received un-

til 2:00 PM on May 21, 2026. Email submissions will not be accepted.

Every Bid shall be accompanied by a bid deposit, in an amount not less than five percent (5%) of the bid amount, in the form of a bid bond; or a certified check; or a treasurer’s check; or by cashier’s check issued by a responsible bank or trust company, made payable to the City of Holyoke.

Beginning on April 22, 2026 bid documents will be available by email request after 10:00 AM to [morrowj@holyoke.org](mailto:morrowj@holyoke.org) Submit requests between the hours of 8:30 AM until 4:00 PM and include firm name and address, contact name and title, email address, and telephone number. Please provide 1 original and 1 copy of your submittal.

A non-mandatory **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** pre-bid site visit will be held on Friday, May 1, 2026 at 10AM at the site Morgan School, 596 South Bridge Street, Holyoke MA, 01040.

This project is being funded using Federal Funds. Respondents will be verified for their eligibility to receive Federal Funds and MUST be registered with SAM.GOV.

The city reserves the right to reject any and all bids if in the city’s best interest.  
04/24/2026

**Commonwealth of  
Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court**

**Hampden Probate and  
Family Court  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103**

**Docket No.  
HD26P0826GD  
In the matter of:  
Elba Rosario  
Of: Holyoke, MA  
RESPONDENT**

**Alleged Incapacitated Person  
CITATION GIVING NOTICE  
OF PETITION FOR  
APPOINTMENT OF  
GUARDIAN FOR  
INCAPACITATED  
PERSON PURSUANT TO  
G.L. c. 190B, §5-304**

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by **CareOne Holyoke** of Holyoke, MA in the above captioned matter alleging that **Elba Rosario** is in need of a Guardian and requesting that **Nancy Godbout of Granby, MA** (or some other suitable person) be appointed as Guardian to serve **Without Surety** on the bond.

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

**You have the right to object to this proceeding.** If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 a.m. on the return date of **05/15/2026**.

This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

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

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

Date: April 16, 2026  
**Rosemary A. Saccomani**  
Register of Probate  
04/24/2026

**City of Holyoke  
License Board**

**Notice of Public Hearing**  
The Holyoke License Board will be holding a Public Hearing on Wednesday, May 6, 2026, at 5:15 pm. You can join via Zoom. com; ID **83974921923**; CALL

IN: \*67 646 558 8656 or in person at City Hall, 536 Dwight St. in the Old Tax Collector Office Room 6, regarding the application for a **Transfer of an Annual All Alcohol Off-premises License from LFFHO Inc. DBA Liquors 44 Holyoke, 44 Lincoln Street to Holyoke 44 Corporation DBA Holyoke 44, 44 Lincoln Street.** pursuant to M.G.L. Ch.138.

Applicant:  
**Holyoke 44 Corporation**  
License Board:  
Jose Correa, Chairma  
04/24, 05/01/2026

**Commonwealth of  
Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court  
Hampden Probate and  
Family Court  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103**

**Docket No.  
HD26P0858GD  
In the interests of  
Leilani Lamore  
of Holyoke, MA  
Minor**

**NOTICE AND ORDER:  
Petition for Appointment  
of Guardian of a Minor  
NOTICE TO ALL  
INTERESTED PARTIES**

**1. Hearing Date/Time:**  
A hearing on a Petition for Appointment of Guardian of a Minor filed on **04/21/2026** by **Rita Padilla** of Holyoke, MA will be held **05/22/2026 08:30 AM Guardianship of Minor Hearing.** Located: **Hampden Probate & Family Court,**

**50 State Street, 4th Floor,  
Springfield, MA 01103.**

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

File the original with the Court; and

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

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

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

**5. Presence of the Minor at Hearing:** A minor over age 14 has the right to be present at any hearing, unless the Court finds that it is not in the minor’s best interests.  
Date: April 21, 2026

**Rosemary A. Saccomani**  
Register of Probate  
04/24/2026

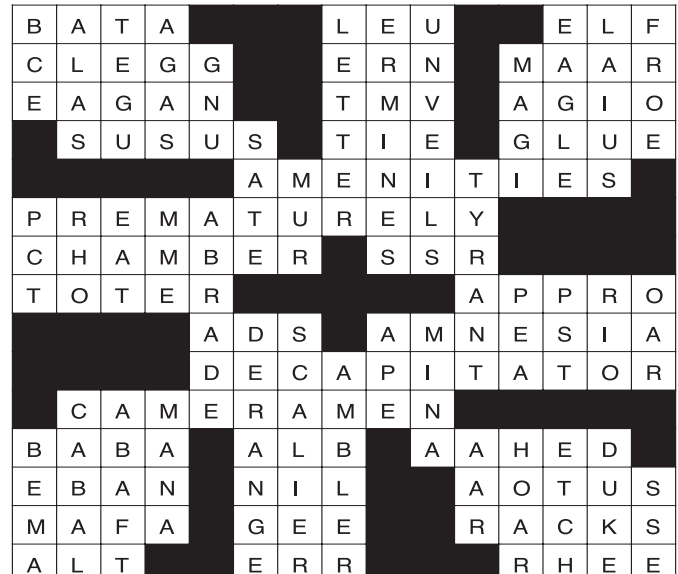
*The Holyoke Sun*  
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*Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.*



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FRIDAY AT NOON

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The Town Oakham is seeking an experienced **LABORER/TRUCK DRIVER** to join the Highway department. Pay rate is \$26.26 - \$28.28/hr depending on experience.

For a full job description and job application please visit: [ma-oakham.civicplus.com/216/Highway-Department](http://ma-oakham.civicplus.com/216/Highway-Department) or email [admin@oakham-ma.gov](mailto:admin@oakham-ma.gov)

## REAL ESTATE

### FOR RENT



EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

**ALL REAL ESTATE** advertised herein is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act, which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation, or discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, or intention to make any such preference, limitation, or discrimination." We will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. All persons are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised are available on an equal opportunity basis.

## FOR RENT



All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status (number of children and or pregnancy), national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, or any intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination.

This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertising in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain about discrimination call The Department of Housing and Urban Development "HUD" toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. For the N.E. area, call HUD at 617-565-5308. The toll free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

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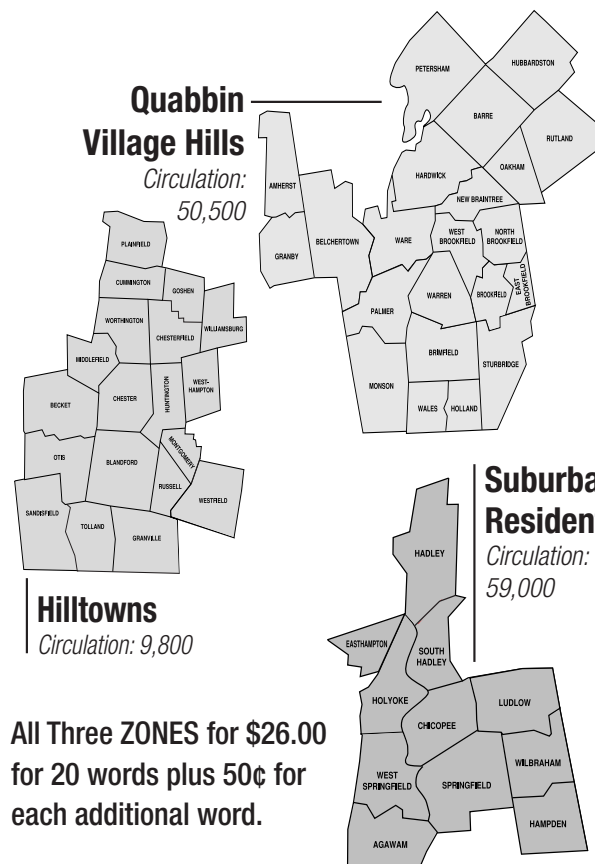
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DEADLINES: FRIDAY AT NOON

CATEGORY:			
1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20
21	Base Price \$26.50	22	Base Price \$27.00
23	Base Price \$27.50	24	Base Price \$28.00
25	Base Price \$28.50	26	Base Price \$29.00
27	Base Price \$29.50	28	Base Price \$30.00
29	Base Price \$30.50	30	Base Price \$31.00
31	Base Price \$31.50	32	Base Price \$32.00
33	Base Price \$32.50	34	Base Price \$33.00
35	Base Price \$33.50	36	Base Price \$34.00
37	Base Price \$34.50	38	Base Price \$35.00
39	Base Price \$35.50	40	Base Price \$36.00

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of Weeks: \_\_\_\_\_ X per week rate = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Credit Card:  MasterCard  VISA  Discover  Cash  Check# \_\_\_\_\_  
Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ CVV \_\_\_\_\_  
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ALL 3 ZONES NOW FOR THE PRICE OF ONE!

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## HCC opens registration

**H O L Y O K E** – Registration is now open for summer and fall classes at Holyoke Community College.

Summer classes at HCC begin Tuesday, May 26. Full-term summer classes run for 14 weeks, from May 26 to Aug. 28. Half-term summer classes run in consecutive seven-week sessions: Summer Session I (May 26-July 10) and Summer Session II (July 13-Aug. 28).

The fall 2026 semester starts Tuesday, Sept. 8. In addition to traditional 15-week semester classes, HCC will run three accelerated fall flex start sessions: Flex Start I classes also

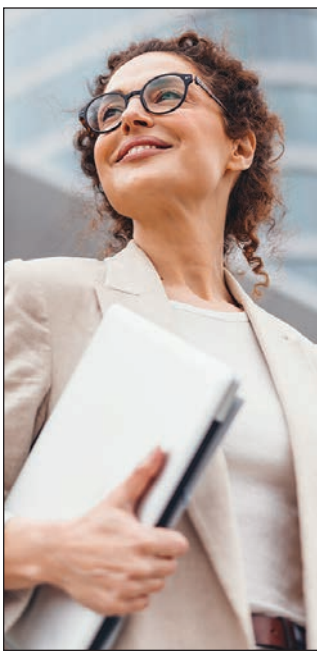
begin Sept. 8 but run for seven weeks until Oct. 27; Flex Start II classes begin Monday, Sept. 21, and run for 12 weeks; Flex Start III classes begin Monday, Nov. 2, and run for seven weeks. All fall classes conclude by Dec. 22.

To view course offerings for summer, please visit [hcc.edu/summer-2026](http://hcc.edu/summer-2026) or [hcc.edu/fall-2026](http://hcc.edu/fall-2026) for fall.

Anyone interested in starting this summer or fall can find more information at [hcc.edu/admission](http://hcc.edu/admission) or by calling 413-552-2321.

To arrange a campus tour, please contact the HCC Admissions office at [admissions@hcc.edu](mailto:admissions@hcc.edu).

## Cooper's accepting professional attire donations



**AGAWAM** – For a limited time, Cooper's Gifts, Apparel, Home of Agawam, Mass., is accepting professional attire donations for Dress for Success of Western Massachusetts and Suit Up Springfield.

Both causes request interview-appropriate women's and men's clothing, shoes and accessories. Items will be collected at Cooper's now through April 30. "We invite everyone to spring clean their closets and change a life," said Kate Gourde, owner of Cooper's Gifts, Apparel, Home.

Donations must be like new, clean and on hangers. All professional attire is welcome, but casual clothing will not be accepted. "Just ask yourself 'Would I wear this to an interview?' If the answer is 'yes,' Dress for Success and Suit Up Springfield can put it to good use," Gourde said.

The mission of Dress for Success (DFS) is to empower women to achieve economic independence by providing a network of support, profes-

sional attire and development tools to help them thrive in work and in life. They provide each client with professional attire to secure employment, but they are about much more than simply a new outfit. Besides physically equipping the client with apparel and accessories, their programs furnish her with a confidence that she carries forever and the knowledge that she can actively define her life, the direction she takes and what success means to her.

Suit Up Springfield (SUS) is a community organization focused on providing the men of Springfield with professional attire. Their goal is to help everyone find a suit that will give them the confidence, knowledge and tools to help them become a successful member of our community. Both organizations have boutiques in downtown Springfield.

"We have held clothing drives for years; our customers consider it a convenience. Especially for people west of the river, it's easier to bring

donations here, and we are open 7 days a week," Gourde said. Items may be brought to the shop anytime during the month of April. Cooper's is located at 161 Main St., Agawam, Mass., and is open daily 10am-5pm, Saturdays 10am-4pm and Sundays 12-4pm.

"This drive coincides with Dress for Success as our April Round-Up charity; so, it's the perfect time to spread the word about their mission and really help them out," Gourde said. Each month Gourde chooses a local charity to receive the profits of the store's Round-Up Program through which customers are invited to round up their purchase total to the nearest dollar amount. Gourde will then match 50% of the total collected. The program has donated more than \$67,000 to local organizations since its inception in 2014. More information on the Round Up program and how to nominate a charity may be found on Cooper's website [www.coopersgifts.com/round-up/](http://www.coopersgifts.com/round-up/).

### EXHIBIT, from page 1

educational background with them, according to the bios provided.

Colón Ortiz is an artist, teacher, and community leader. A proud, island-born, Puerto Rican, she attended Holyoke schools and graduated from Wheaton College with a degree in Neuroscience and a minor in Studio Arts. She owns Paper City Arts, which provides art services throughout Western Mass. Her body of work includes teaching in Holyoke and Springfield

Public schools, painting murals, leading workshops for children and adults, and collaborating with well-known local agencies such as Beyond Walls, Community Mural Institute, Holyoke Art, and Nueva Esperanza.

Barrett is an artist who enjoys creating landscapes, florals, and urban scenes, looking for the special in the mundane. She has exhibited in solo and group shows in museums and galleries on Cape Cod, Western Massachusetts, Paris, Mexico, and other

international and domestic venues. Her paintings are in numerous private and corporate collections throughout the world, including the permanent collection of the U.S. Federal Reserve in Washington, DC. Dr.

Barrett is an accomplished teacher as well. She served as an art teacher in the Holyoke Public Schools for 35 years, including 15 years as the Chair of the Art Department. She is now Senior Lecturer-Emeritus of Art Education at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst.

### BAEZ, from page 1

to learn, and over time you could see his confidence build. I care deeply about my students, and seeing Baez develop into someone who takes pride in his work, supports his peers, and carries himself the way he does, that's what this is all about."

The press release goes on to talk about Baez's other accomplishments.

"Baez's success extends beyond the classroom. As a participant in the school's Cooperative Education Program, he secured employment with Western Builders, where he demonstrated professionalism, technical skill, and reliability in a real-world construction setting. His co-op performance reinforced his classroom learning and also led to him earning the highest hourly wage in program history.

In addition to his co-op placement, Baez works after school as a dedicated staff member at Capri Pizza in Holyoke, balancing long hours between school, work, and his career training. Despite that schedule, he remains fully committed to his growth and to supporting



Eriel Suarez Baez

those around him.

Baez is also actively engaged in the Holyoke community through his involvement with Train 42, a local initiative focused on youth development through fitness, nutrition, and mentorship. The program creates opportunities for young people to build confidence, develop discipline, and connect with positive supports in their community."

Dean Tech's Principal Rosie Caracciolo compli-

mented Baez's character and dedication to improving his draft.

"Baez's story reflects the best of our school community," said Caracciolo. "He is a young man of strong character who has taken advantage of every opportunity in front of him. Whether it's in the shop, at work, or in the community, he shows up with integrity and purpose. We are incredibly proud of the way he represents Dean Technical High School."

### FINANCES, from page 1

been turned over to the City's external auditor, CBIZ. Current work is focused on closing FY2024 and FY2025 and certifying free cash before the end of the fiscal year.

Finance Committee Chair Patti Devine entered into the record an update from the City's accounting partner, CliftonLarsonAllen LLP, regarding critical reconciliation work, which included the following:

"With three different general ledger systems (City, School, and Gas/Electric),

over 60 bank accounts, and work being performed years after the fact, the project is time-consuming and challenging, but great progress is being made. Our work will also include templates, instructions, and best practices moving forward so that the City will have these resources in place going forward."

Interim City Treasurer Rory Casey provided historical context, noting that past financial practices, while well-intentioned, often lacked the structure and staffing necessary for timely reconciliation and reporting. Systemic processing errors in

the City's financial data are also being addressed, which will allow auditors to focus on more complex issues rather than routine corrections, leading to cleaner and more accurate records.

Looking ahead, FY2026 financial documents are being reviewed internally, and staff are being trained on processes the City has traditionally outsourced, an approach that has been costly and contributed to delays.

These efforts will enable more timely filings, keep the audit process on track, and improve overall efficiency compared to past years

# Send Us Your Community Summer Events

Turley Publications will print your Summer event **FREE OF CHARGE** in our **Summer Fest Supplement** which will be published **June 3, 2026**.

Total circulation of **85,000** which reaches over **200,000** readers in the Pioneer Valley. **Event Should Be Non-Profit & Open to the Public**

**FREE Calendar Listings Reaching over 200,000 Readers in the Pioneer Valley**

Event Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Time \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Description \_\_\_\_\_

Cost \_\_\_\_\_

Contact name & phone number for more information \_\_\_\_\_

Please specify if you would like your name and number printed in the paper.

**Deadline for Calendar submissions is May 6.**

**MAIL YOUR LISTING INFORMATION TO: Turley Publications, Attn: Jamie Joslyn, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069 or email\* them to: [jamie@turley.com](mailto:jamie@turley.com) \*Be sure to indicate "Summer Event" in the subject line of your email.**

# The Jack Rome Memorial 5K & Fun Walk

**May 2, 2026 • 11 a.m.-3 p.m.**

**Fountain Park, 883 Tinkham Road, Wilbraham**



**A community event to raise funds for TJO Animals in need.**

**Fun family activities and goodies for the pups.**

**Their Second Chance Begins With You!**

**Register at [TJOFoundation.org](http://TJOFoundation.org)**



**To Benefit The Foundation for TJO Animals**



*Not all superheroes wear capes. Some wear sneakers. Some have paws.*